

TIPS AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOUR ATTENDANCE

COMMUNICATE VALUE AND SHOWCASE ROI

This toolkit is designed to provide helpful resources as you plan your attendance at the upcoming SHFM National Conference. It provides an easy template for framing the overall value proposition, sharing the benefits of attendance and communicating the importance of conference to your broader organization. SHFM provides an opportunity for business knowledge and industry networking you can't afford to miss!

HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR OPENING THE DIALOGUE:

- **Plan your top takeaways** before you even register for the National Conference. Having a solid plan for your participation at the conference helps you get the most out of your attendance.
- **Share the knowledge you gain and the ROI.** When you return, convey the information you gathered at conference with your colleagues.
- **Review the following expenses worksheet** where rates are listed to see if you qualify for special discounts. Register on or before September 9, to qualify for the early registration rate.

STEP 1

KEY CONFERENCE BENEFITS

To be most effective in justifying the conference, you need to clearly articulate the connection between your organization's requirements, the conference program and relationship building opportunities. Do not assume your manager will be able to automatically make those distinctions. To support this process, use the following to help you focus on the key benefits. It's all in the positioning!

- **Exceptional Educational Sessions:** Hear stimulating keynote perspectives and participate in unique general and breakout sessions.
- **Unparalleled Relationship Building:** Network face-to-face with other industry professionals, operators and suppliers from around the country.
- **Business Opportunities:** Set appointments in advance with potential customers and look for new business opportunities with potential customers you will meet at the conference.
- **Innovative Products & Services:** Explore tools, technologies and processes and how to apply them to improve company offerings, products, workflow and more!
- **In Addition:** Identify benefits specific to your organization based on the conference program.

STEP 2

CALCULATE OVERALL CONFERENCE EXPENSES

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CONFERENCE EXPENSES

Calculating conference expenses requires a little more than just looking at the registration fee. Use the following Expenses Worksheet to develop a cost estimate for attending conference. We have included some of the information to get you started. When presenting this information to your manager, be sure to emphasize the value and all the benefits that are included for an informed decision about the ROI.

EXPENSES WORKSHEET

Enter your customized information in the writable fields under amount.

ITEM	FEE	SUM
Registration*	\$1,175 (SHFM Member Early Registration) \$1,275 (SHFM Member Registration) <hr/> \$1,625 (Non-Member Early Registration) \$1,725 (Non-Member Registration) Early Bird Date: On or before September 9	\$
Flight		\$
Palmer House	\$355.51 per night (includes tax and resort fee) X # of nights	\$
Transportation to Hotel (Cab Fare)	\$45 cab fare from Chicago Midway International Airport (MDW)	\$
Transportation from Hotel (Cab Fare)	\$45 cab fare to Chicago Midway International Airport (MDW)	\$
Mileage Reimbursement	Driving to conference or to the airport? Distance X \$0.725 per mile (IRS standard for 2026)	\$
Parking Reimbursement at Hotel	Daily Valet: \$85 per night Self-parking: \$57 per night	\$
Food Reimbursement**	Most, but not all, meals are included in the price of the conference.	\$
TOTAL		\$

* Must register on or before **September 9**, to qualify for this early registration discount.

** Conference attendees receive a dinner/reception on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday evenings, breakfast and lunch on Wednesday and Thursday. All meals are included in the registration fee.

**EXPERIENCES,
NETWORKING AND
OPPORTUNITIES AT
SHFM CONFERENCE = PRICELESS!**



COMMUNICATION

PREPARE YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH

"The Society for Hospitality and Foodservice Management is an industry association focused on connecting the most influential experts in workplace amenities and foodservice. Attending their conference will help our organization stay current with service trends and industry benchmarking. As the business landscape evolves, this is a critical year to monitor innovations and best practices to keep our company efficient and ahead of the curve."



SAMPLE JUSTIFICATION EMAIL

Dear <manager's name>,

As [Organization] continues to prioritize [efficiency/cost reduction/ experience], I'd like to invest three days in October to bring back direct, actionable strategies from the **2026 SHFM National Conference** — the premier event for workplace hospitality and foodservice professionals.

The conference will take place at the Palmer House in Chicago, October 6-8, 2026. It provides industry-specific education sessions that are directly applicable to my work. Many of the presentations are tailored to < your profession > professionals and give information on how to < list benefits to your responsibilities >.

I have already identified several sessions that will give me better insight into how we can improve our processes. Getting the information in a seminar format will also greatly reduce the time and costs < your organization's name > would normally incur in researching the topics. < You will need to insert the session descriptions which most apply to your responsibilities. >

At this conference, I am also planning to meet with <list customers and colleagues - providing specific names or amount of contacts you will meet, even better > and will have an opportunity to renew or sign new contracts with them. In addition, I will be able to sell our company's services to a number of potential clients, including <list>, and I'm looking forward to networking with industry leaders from around the country.

< All registration fees are listed below. The travel costs vary as well and should be changed to reflect your costs. >

As an SHFM member, the full price conference fee is \$1,275 but can be reduced to \$1,175 by registering on or before Wednesday, September 9.

Here is the breakdown of conference costs:

- Roundtrip Airfare: <\$xxxx>
- Ground Transportation: <\$xxxx>
- Hotel: \$355.51 per night = <\$xxxx>
- Meals: <\$xxxx>
- Conference Fee: \$1,275 (\$1,175 on or before September 9)

The total costs associated with attending this conference are: <\$xxxx>.

I'm happy to discuss this further and share my session plan. I'm confident this investment will pay dividends for [Your Organization] well beyond the conference itself. In my absence, I've arranged key responsibilities to be covered by < person(s) covering >.

Thank you in advance!

< your name here >