

# Ideas for Building Momentum as a new Affiliate Organization

## AO Quarterly Networking Hour Zoom Meeting

Participating in the AO Quarterly Meetings is very helpful.

Everyone in the Working Equitation Sport is very helpful and friendly. Do not hesitate to reach out to anyone with questions.

## How to Use Facebook to Grow Your Affiliate Audience

This is not a “how to” for Facebook. The best source of this is Facebook itself. The purpose of this document is to share some ideas on how others are using Facebook to grow their affiliate and the sport.

One of the perks of Facebook is that one like of a post will make the post visible to many others. And those people do not even need to have liked your page or be in your group.

### Facebook Groups versus Facebook Pages.

I suggest you do a search on the internet to see more details on the differences between the two.

A Page is great to push information and to have more control on the flow, and groups are great to build a community. I started with a FB Page, and then saw Treasure Valley Working Equitation's FB group (see their listing on the [USAWE AO page](#) for the direct link to their FB Group), and how well it was creating community and making a positive impact. They inspired me to create a group. I strongly suggest you like their group and watch what they are doing as an example.

Watch a few FB videos on how to create a group or page before you get started. Technology changes so much that any suggestions below may be outdated by the time you read this.

### Facebook Group Ideas

Working Equitation Team Idaho already had a base of folks from an existing club. They also reached out to all the instructors in the area already teaching Working Equitation in some form. They started with an in-person event and invited the club members and the instructors. This was win-win for all. They streamed the event live on FB.

WETI created a pdf of all the events the instructors and clinicians were planning for the year and posted this under the files section of the group. In addition, they posted flyers of clinics. They are very active.

One nice thing about a FB Group is a setting that automatically creates a welcome new members post. This brings them all back because it includes their name. You can suggest that new members share a photo of themselves.

If you like to educate, posting something from the USAWE.org website each week is helpful. For example, something about dressage to help folks learn more about the sport. There is so much in the rules that it is hard to digest it all at once, so a little at a time makes it fun. When doing this, please

remember to provide a link to the source of your information, and acknowledge the source so you do not get accused of plagiarism.

Posting videos of WE from YouTube inspires folks.

Encouraging members to share pictures of practices also inspires. And again, any time someone interacts, it shows up on their page and then in the feed of all their friends.

A FB Group makes it easy to ask questions of your members to keep them engaged and include them in your community.

## Event Ideas

Walla Walla Valley Working Equitation (WWVWE) hosts a clinic/schooling show each year with a judge. This gives folks exposure to different teachers and an opportunity to learn from those judging. It is organized so the dressage clinic is followed by the dressage part of the schooling show. And we give time for review of the tests. This helps folks stay focused on one topic or trial at a time. This is helpful for both beginners and those wanting to get better at one or two aspects of that trial.

Team Idaho put on a show as a mini camp-and-cup (July 2023) where the clinic is first and then the show. Another great idea for learning. It really helps folks be successful at a show.

Creating a community with other teachers in your area, even if you teach, is a great idea. The more folks you can include the better. We all have special skills and talents to give and the more we give, the more the sport expands and the more we can help folks.

Play Dates (Playdays) are a great way to practice and meet folks. If you can get other members who have obstacles and an arena to host these play dates, it shares the work load and it is helpful because horses get to experience new venues.

WWVWE is also scheduling an obstacle building party to bring people together build their arsenal of obstacles.

Another idea gleaned from Kristine S. is to give a talk at the local library about the sport of Working Equitation. This created the opportunity to get volunteers, which this sport depends upon to make it fun.

WWVWE has hosted a few Zoom meetings for scheduling events, partly because the community is very rural, and some members are an hour away from each other.

## Ideas From Delta Working Equitation

We started our journey with a weekend clinic with Stephanie Kame & Michele Lackey. We put our clinic information on FB and in the Midsouth Horse Review, our regional horse magazine. We had membership bags available at the clinic check in for those who were enthusiastic about continuing their WE journey.

After our initial clinic, we identified several skills that we all needed to learn to successfully complete the L1 obstacles, so we mapped out a lesson plan to build a set of skills for all of the group.

Next, we scheduled a group meeting to discuss our learning path and discuss upcoming clinics in TN which are 5 or more hours away. We are 5 hours from Jane Rennet and 9 hours from Bulls Gap. There are no closer options. Members have the flexibility of traveling in March to attend both clinics. Our hope is to elevate several members to have at least L1 skills within our group to assist other members.

Our AO has obstacles that we are constantly trying to work through. Here are a few hot topics for us:

1. Problem: DMWE does not have a dedicated WE trainer in our group.

Solution: We are engaging our Eventing trainer for our building block skills (leg yielding, turn on forehand/haunches, dressage, etc.).

2. Problem: DMWE does not have a dedicated barn to set up courses, store obstacles, and practice.

Solution: We have been invited to book our Eventing trainer's barn when they are not having schooling shows. It's convenient for the group to ride there. The obstacles are only brought onsite when in use, then removed afterwards. We have had a member offer to allow us to set up a course permanently at her new arena. This will be our solution unless a trainer steps into the group and wants to house the group.

3. Problem: DMWE does not have easy access to clinicians due to lack of formal instructions in our area.

Solution: We plan for larger clinics to be able to pay for clinician travel expenses plus fees. This is limiting, as clinicians are generally booked almost a year in advance.

4. Problem: DMWE does not have internal WE expertise yet.

Solution: We have broken down our learnings into smaller, universal technical skills for right now.