

TWO GREAT HRD CONFERENCES BACK-TO-BACK

EDITOR'S NOTE: For the first time in more than a decade, ASTD is involved in the design and programming of two major HRD learning experiences during the same year: ASTD's 34th Annual National Conference & Exposition, June 18-22 in Chicago; and the International Federation of Training and Development Organization's 7th International Training and Development Conference, June 12-15 in Washington, D.C.

Acting as the IFTDO Secretariat, ASTD has the added responsibility of hosting the IFTDO Conference, which is being held in this country for the first time.

With the "back-to-back" scheduling of these programs, many training professionals are asking, "Which program is best suited to my needs," or "Should I plan to attend both Conferences?"

To help answer these and other questions relating to the two events, ASTD General Manager Darius Van Fossen, representing the Journal, recently got together with the Design Committee chairpersons of both of these great conferences: IFTDO Design Commit-

tee chairperson Leonard Nadler (The George Washington University); and ASTD National Conference Design Committee chairperson Lee Beckner (Ogden Service Center).

Van Fossen: What specific objectives and purposes did each of your committees have in mind when designing these HRD events?

Nadler: For the IFTDO program, which we have dubbed "A World Congress on Human Resource Development," the basic thing we were concerned with was to be sure this event would be a truly *international* conference . . . not just an American conference with a couple of foreign speakers. We were interested in obtaining as much international representation as possible, and presently, we have scheduled speakers from more than 30 countries.

To help maximize the opportunity for cross-cultural idea exchange, we developed a series of *not* sessions, but unstructured activities that will allow participants to share HRD experiences.

We have been very careful not to duplicate the ASTD National Conference program. I am a member of the ASTD National Conference Design Committee and Lee Beckner is a member of the IFTDO Conference Design Committee. This has allowed us to keep constant communication while working on the design of both programs.

Beckner: I would agree . . . we have done very well in communicating back and forth in an effort to keep these programs unique, but at the same time, we have established a "bridge" between the two events for both international and American trainers.

The ASTD National Conference Design Committee's primary objective was to provide as many learning experiences as possible for ASTD members and foreign visitors who may choose to come to Chicago after the International Conference.

Nadler: We've said to the international trainers planning to attend the IFTDO Conference, "If you want to learn more about what is happening in training in the

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United States, we urge you to attend the ASTD National Conference." Most of the IFTDO program topics are concerned with *international* and *cross-cultural* training experiences.

Beckner: In both cases, I think we are trying to provide something that appeals to the new and senior trainers, as well as provides attention to the array of topics that fall between these areas.

Van Fossen: **ASTD has been noted for its excellence in conference and meeting design. . . . What unique design elements have been incorporated into these programs?**

Beckner: One feature that ASTD Conference attendees will find new this year is the addition of a forum to present research reports that have direct implication to the HRD field. Also, with Chicago being the location of several fantastic training facilities, we are working on providing tours of several of these training centers for interested participants.

We have scheduled an outstanding array of concurrent sessions, experience exchange workshops and special interest group sessions. Sunday, June 18, has been named "Professional Development Day." For this special day, all ASTD Divisions (Community Development, Organization Development, Media, International, Sales Training and the newly established Technical Training Division) are planning program activities of interest to all attendees.

This year, we are using a "track" system to facilitate programming identification. The subject tracks include: The Training Function, Management Development, Technical Training, Sales Training, Organization Development, Media Planning & Production, Community Development, and General Interest.

Nadler: In the international

training field, on a lot of topics, there are several points of view. We are planning three "plenary" or general sessions. Each session will feature a panel format, allowing the opportunity for several points of view, on a particular topic to be expressed at the same time.

Each panel will consist of three presenters from different parts of the world discussing the same topic, but from a different perspective. After a brief presentation by each panel member, a moderator will guide a period of interaction among panel members.

After a break, participants will have an option. If you want to hear more about what one of the panel

members has said, each presenter will be conducting a special "break-out" session. If you feel what was discussed at the plenary session was enough, you can attend one of the several concurrent sessions covering a wide range of topics that differ from the plenary session.

Another interesting feature our Committee developed is the "Common Room," which will be open every day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Here, attendees will be able to informally share ideas, experiences and friendship. All programs will end at 4 p.m. to enable attendees to go sightseeing and engage in various social and cultural events.



Recently in Washington, D.C., ASTD General Manager Darius Van Fossen (center) got together with ASTD National Conference Design Committee chairperson Lee Beckner (left) and IFTDO International Conference Design Committee chairperson Leonard Nadler (right) to discuss the design, objectives and unique features of both of these HRD events.

**"ASTD IS PLANNING THE
LARGEST AND MOST
COMPREHENSIVE EXPOSITION
THE HRD PROFESSION HAS
EVER EXPERIENCED!"**

We are planning several "pre-Conference" events that include plant tours, visits to several of the unique HRD-related facilities in the Washington, D.C. area, and "social tours" of historic interest.

We are not scheduling anything after Thursday afternoon because we expect participants, for the most part, to be going on to Chicago for the ASTD National Conference.

There will be an IFTDO Conference Spouse Program which will feature two panel presentations. One session will feature American women talking about women in different parts of the U.S., focusing on culture and customs. Another session will feature a panel of international women sharing their cultures and customs with the

group. We hope these panels will facilitate international exchange among Spouse Program participants. We also have three other sessions planned for the spouses, and they are invited to attend any of the regular sessions.

Van Fossen: **Are both of these events featuring training equipment and services exhibits?**

Nadler: Our Committee decided not to have an exhibit or exposition . . . not because it is not important, but if we had an international exposition in Washington, foreign companies and suppliers would find the costs prohibitive, leaving the Committee open to criticism about bringing foreign participants to the U.S. to sell them American products. We felt it would be much more important to maintain an in-

ternational balance, so we are producing an *International Resource Directory* which will contain advertising and HRD resource list-

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"The Training Function" is designed for individuals with relatively new or impending responsibilities for training and human resource development. (Persons with experience in this area are encouraged to consider other ASTD seminars, where their advanced experience level is more consistent with course objectives.)

For More Information, Call or Write:

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ings from all over the world. This Directory, the first international HRD resource listing of its kind, will be valuable for years to come and will be updated periodically.

Beckner: ASTD is planning the largest and most comprehensive exposition the HRD profession has ever experienced! Nearly 200 different exhibiting suppliers will be represented in three large exhibit halls at The Conrad Hilton Hotel. Films, slides, audio equipment, video systems, books, packaged training programs, consultant services — these are but a few of the many different products and services that will be on display in Chicago.

For More Information

For a detailed brochure and registration information on the International Training and Development Conference, contact: IFTDO Secretariat, Dept. TDJ, P.O. Box 5664, Madison, WI 53705.

You will find complete information on ASTD's 34th Annual National Conference on pages 25-40 in this issue of the Journal.