

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Focus on Performance



Within the ASTD community, performance improvement continues to be an important topic for our members and their organizations. Business leaders know that success in today's knowledge economy depends on the performance of every single individual in his or her organization. For many,

training is not simply an expense, but a way to equip employees with the necessary skills and competencies that will help them sustain a competitive advantage now and in the future.

Many ASTD members are doing more than just training their organizations' employees; they are moving into the role of performance consultant. By having a view of the entire system—at the individual, unit, and organizational level—performance consultants help their organizations solve business problems using a variety of interventions. Although performance consulting has been a specialty for a number of ASTD members through the years, more and more practitioners are moving into this role.

When colleagues or clients come to you for training, how often do you discover that training is not the best solution to their problem? Are you able to diagnose the gaps and misalignments? Are you able to communicate to line managers your business solution, implement it, and evaluate it for bottom-line impact? Those challenges face learning and performance professionals like you, and in the process you are acquiring a whole new set of tools and skills that make you a valued business partner.



President and CEO
ASTD

At ASTD, we have seen an increased demand for tools and resources covering performance improvement. Just in the past year, ASTD's Human Performance Improvement (HPI) Certificate Program experienced enormous growth and reached practitioners outside of the United States; 250 learning and performance practitioners from all over Europe attended the Performance Network Conference hosted by the ASTD Global Network Germany, and a new affiliation with the International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI) provides members with a new way to demonstrate their expertise through the Certified Performance Technologist (CPT) program. If you are working on making the shift from training to performance consulting, what are the areas that performance "stars" excel in?

Performance stars see the big picture. They understand that organizations are systems with many interacting parts. And they understand the particular business they support and the complete context within which that business operates. Performance stars are master diagnosticians; they can spot the real problem under the symptoms. Performance stars have extraordinary interpersonal skills because that's what it takes to tell people who ask for training that they don't need it.

As we all know, organizations are undergoing monumental changes in the way they conduct business and survive in this challenging economy. To be successful, individual and organizational performance must be optimized. That's where you come in. As professionals with an understanding of learning *and* performance, you can suggest solutions to help your organization overcome business problems and achieve results.

Isn't that what it's all about?