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## HRD 5-0

### Tell Us What You Think

Last month's "Tell Us What You Think" was about visioning. Now we want to take that a bit further, and do some individual, professional (as opposed to organizational) visioning by mail. So, put some brandy in a snifter, light a cigarette, sit back in a soft chair, close your eyes, and think about where you, an HRD professional, want to be five years from now, what you want to be doing, and more important, why you'll be doing it.

OK, we all want to drink and smoke less, fish in Oregon, run that cafe in Cancun, or sail blissfully into St. Tropez, but we're looking for your professional vision of the future here, not your off-the-job, personal to-do list. Where in your particular company or industry do you want to be? What factors need to be present in your organization in order to achieve that? What realities about your company's workforce, now and in the future, are going to help or hinder you? Five years from now, what responsibilities will you have? How different will they be from your current ones? When you look at what you want ideally to be doing, does it jibe with the realities of the changing workforce? Do you look at those realities as uphill battles or windows of opportunity?

Look at yourself, your industry, and your company. Let your imagination go; then temper that with your objective predictions for the future. Write it all down and send it to "Issues," *Training & Development Journal*, 1630 Duke Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313.

*(The following is in response to the March issue's "Tell Us What You Think" concerning the HRD experience in foreign lands.)*

Hawaii does not really qualify as a foreign country, but my experience there definitely indicates a contrast between its cultural behaviors and attitudes and the mainland's.

I was the project manager for management and executive development for the Navy Acquisition Training Management Office in Norfolk, Virginia. Members of that office train managers and executives worldwide; I was assigned to train in Hawaii in 1986 and 1987.

One of my training exercises was called "Manager's Dilemma," a variation of the old conflict exercise, "Prisoner's Dilemma." It is meant to provide the instructor with a model of conflict behavior among individuals and groups. I had run it hundreds of times all over the mainland and in a variety of settings and situations. When working with groups of government employees in Pearl Harbor, however, the results were entirely different. On both occasions, the work groups showed remarkable teamwork and cooperation for the benefit of the larger group. The supportive exercises and conflict instruments that followed the main exercise served to reinforce the highly cooperative atmosphere.

My experience taught me that cooperation is indeed feasible, even if its best example is located only on a little island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

*Thom Lowther  
Virginia Beach, Virginia*

### Not Hitting the International Mark

After returning from a consulting assignment in South America, I was

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## Issues

pleasantly surprised to find that you had highlighted an article on preparing global managers ("Preparing the New Global Manager," March 1989).

As Ms. Callahan noted, the current trend of globalization has put little focus on the needs of intercultural staff-development programs. Those of us with considerable international experience can attest to the fact that our competition is not so remiss.

U.S. business management cannot engage in such profitable strategic alliances as joint ventures or even licensing agreements without a significant investment in adequate preparation. We have no time to confuse misplaced chauvinism or timorous xenophobia with preparation for a competitive advantage in the international arena. It is time to learn from the competition.

A three-day seminar on cross-cultural sensitivity training is not going to develop global managers. Long-term planning at all educational levels must include a commitment to understand the real world of international interdependence. The workplace of today is one in which competition and cooperation must be practiced on a worldwide scale.

From my overseas experience, I can state that we are far behind other nations in understanding the dynamics of internationalism, and that we are doing very little to face that reality.

Your article is an important contribution to the alleviation of the problem. I hope that it will be read in boardrooms across the nation.

Mary C. Muller  
Sarasota, Florida

## Outrageous?

(The following is in response to the January issue's "Tell Us What You Think" concerning Jack Falvey's

Wall Street Journal article attacking leadership programs.)

Jack Falvey once told me how he succeeded in getting published in the *Wall Street Journal*. He said you write something outrageous. Take a strong position opposite from commonly accepted wisdom. It makes people think, and whether or not they accept what you say, they'll love reading it.

Jack's articles continue to be the highlight of *Sales and Marketing Magazine* and never fail to create controversy. Personally, I think leadership training in all its guises carries something of value. I bet Jack thinks so, too.

J. Richard Houyoux  
The STC Group  
Blue Bell, Pennsylvania

## The Journal and Gender

I am writing to support Rita Bokma Keller's letter ("Gender Specifying," February 1989) regarding your use of the word "man" to refer to women and men.

You "could have worked around" its use, you say, but that "would have sapped meaning" from the idea the author wanted to express. In fact, the conveyed meaning is that you are speaking of men, not me or Ms. Keller or any number of other nonmale ASTD members. If that's the meaning you intend to convey, then you are on the right track.

Plenty of research now indicates that noninclusive language contributes to noninclusive images, visions, and perspectives. I had thought training and development professionals would be among the first to incorporate findings that can help us speak to greater numbers and varieties of people. I suggest you rethink your position and take a different approach in the future.

I look forward to seeing this printed along with your reply, so I

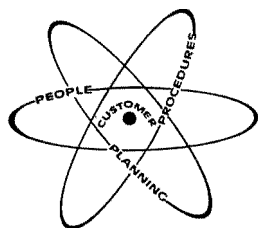
# Issues

can decide whether I wish to continue my membership with ASTD when my renewal comes due.

Lynnette F. Brouwer  
Minnesota Department of  
Education  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

[Editor's note: When using "men" to mean mankind, the Training & Development Journal does not ever intend to exclude women. ASTD's policy and our editorial practice is to be as inclusive as possible whenever possible and to include not only men and women equally but to recognize all manner of diversity in the workplace.

Members of the Journal staff feel enlightened by the views of readers



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such as Ms. Brouwer. We are more often thought to err on the side of feminist ideology.]

## Energize Me

I have never been comfortable introducing games which, though they may be a lot of fun, are unconnected to the material at hand ("Training 101," January 1989). Instead, I incorporate games as part of the curriculum, games that not only serve as excellent reinforcers of the material but also act as powerful energizers, so badly needed by midafternoon.

One example is the team-building module of a supervision course I designed. After participants view a video (which is accompanied by workbooks), I personalize the concept by using Tinker Toys. I divide the class into teams of three or four people and give each team a container of Tinker Toys. The goal for each team is to build the tallest-possible, free-standing structure in 15 minutes. After 10 minutes have passed, I ask one member of each group to move to a new team. The class reaction is always enthusiastic, and the activity never fails to pump up the group—the participants enjoy the challenge and the competition. The direct tie-in to the curriculum permits the grown-up parts of them to participate.

This activity provides a great deal more than just play. After the winning team has been acknowledged, participants answer questions in their workbooks relating to the group dynamics they observed. The consequent discussions concerning team leaders and followers, acceptance of new members to existing teams, and so on, now have an experiential base.

Another example of incorporating games is my use of Nerf balls in my customer-relations class. During skill practice, where specific responses

are taught, the participants in a three-person group take turns acting as customer, bank representative, and observer. Each time the bank representative misses an opportunity to use one of the skills, the observer zonks him or her with a Nerf ball. Fun yet effective! I find that the fun can serve as an energizer and a terrific reinforcer of course content.

Estelle Weitzner  
Key Bank of Southeastern New York  
Newburgh, New York

## The Introverted Journal

Your complaint about lack of contributions from readers to "Issues" ("Gaining the Competitive Edge Through Participation," January 1989) provokes the thought that your journal is too introverted and too concerned with ASTD publicity for ordinary HRD practitioners to be able to see anything of value.

Your January issue is a case in point. Five pages of advertising devoted to ASTD—and look at the list of office-bearers on page two: five ASTD officers, 11 directors, 17 governors, and 25 members on the editorial board. What do all those people do?

You may argue that there's a lot of good content between the advertisements. But the overall perception is of a journal that is nothing more than a PR mouthpiece for a self-serving ASTD bureaucracy. Unless or until you develop a focus on the world the rest of us inhabit, I suspect your pleas will go unheeded.

David Macleod  
Saudi American Bank  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

"Issues" is compiled and edited by Eric R. Blume. Send your viewpoints to Issues, Training & Development Journal, 1630 Duke Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313.