

Letters to the Editor

URGES "GRASS ROOTS" GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT

Dear Sir:

I was very interested to read Mr. Vincent A. Miller's comments in the January issue of the *ASTD Journal* regarding his position on government affairs related to training.

While I feel that a Presidential Conference on Training and Development would certainly add prestige and perhaps much influential support of training on a national level, our purpose is to do this type of activity ourselves. If we can gain support on our own, why unnecessarily involve a President's Conference? The three mentioned functions of Mr. Miller's Task Force will succeed in more applicable ways that would not even be considered at the level of a Presidential Conference.

One activity our local chapter helped initiate was a much needed local masters program in public administration geared heavily towards behavioral science as related to public administration and seminars with individuals well versed in professional public experience. All of the primary instructors that are utilized in this activity are both educators and administrators.

I believe ASTD will experience a higher level of interest and participation from governments (local, state and federal). This will grow from a real need in government to cope with its ever expanding scope and technology. Locally, the "word" is reaching out to each personnel and training officer throughout the area who is involved in government. The involvement of ASTD in providing the MPA was one tool making this possible. Interestingly enough, many non-members are amongst the "word" passers; I'll bet we recruit them! In fact, I recruited a new member from the MPA class; actually he wanted and asked to join

(little did he know I was the membership chairman and had an application handy).

The lesson to be learned here is obvious. If your local chapter is interested or oriented to government, do something for the local government group and they will ask to join. If your membership chairman is as busy as I am, you have to get the most mileage out of your chapter projects as you can. Your chapter projects *will* recruit for you!

In summation, I am happy Mr. Miller and ASTD are interested in applying themselves to training management in government. They are just waiting for ASTD to get in touch. I'm sure Mr. Miller's Task Force will be very well received wherever they will approach government.

See you in San Francisco in 1974 and in Las Vegas in 1975.

Sincerely,

DONALD MILLER
Training Officer
Clark County Personnel Office
Las Vegas, Nev.

KIRKPATRICK QUESTIONS 'MINIMALLY ADEQUATE DESIGN'

Dear Sir (and L.R. Stewart):

In the December, 1973 issue, I read Blumenfeld and Crane's article on "Opinions of Training Effectiveness," and Ed Scannell's article regarding the 1974 A.S.T.D. National Conference. Also, I

have read L.R. Stewart's "Letter to the Editor" in the February, 1974 issue.

Regarding Blumenfeld and Crane, they have a good point when they stress the need for pretesting and posttesting using a control group. I'd like to urge every training person to use this approach whenever possible in order to measure learning, behavior, and results. In my articles on evaluation, I have suggested this methodology.

However, I object strongly to their statement that this is a "minimally adequate design." Also, they state that "asking managers (or trainers for that matter) whether or not training is effective is a meaningless, inappropriate, and ineffective way to proceed." In my opinion, asking participants for their reaction is meaningful, appropriate and effective. It has limitations obviously, but, it sure beats nothing. And that's probably what is going to be done if Blumenfeld and Crane's approach is the "minimally adequate design."

Ed Scannell is trying to obtain some data from the 1974 National Conference that will help us improve future conferences. I think the reaction sheet will provide meaningful information for those of us responsible for the 1975 National Conference. It has nothing to do with "trainer ego."

Unfortunately, little or no evaluation is usually done by those people who condemn reaction sheets and insist that we must measure behavior and results in "dollars and cents." My advice is "something beats nothing." If trainers are willing to go to the time and expense of using pretesting and posttesting with a control group, that's great. But for those who can't or aren't going to do it, at least use well designed reaction sheets.

DON KIRKPATRICK
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Training Scholarship Contributed To Grand Canyon College

Don Thoren, president of the Thoren Consulting Group, Inc., has notified the Valley of the Sun Chapter, ASTD, that his firm will contribute a scholarship to Grand Canyon College for a student working toward a Bachelor of Science degree in training and development.

This scholarship will be presented through the Valley of the Sun Chapter, in the name of the Thoren Consulting Group and The Phoenix Series.

The Phoenix Series is a program of personal growth and development sponsored by the Thoren Consulting Group.

The Series has been designed to enable persons from the entire spectrum of organizations to hear, on a continuous, year-long basis, well-known personalities in the business, motivational, sales, human relations and behavioral sciences fields.

"The philosophy behind The Phoenix Series lies in the belief that a continuing series of regularly scheduled programs featuring the ideas, wisdom and teachings of such speakers will do much more to help people help themselves than will a one-shot program," states Phil Bachman, director of the Series.

"By bringing to our audiences the highest quality persons in their respective fields, we are able to offer an unprecedented growth opportunity for individuals to expand their knowledge, their potential and their horizons."

In a letter to Joyce Parker, 1973 president of the Valley of the Sun Chapter, ASTD, last December, the president of the consulting group said,

"This letter is to confirm our previous conversations regarding a scholarship for Grand Canyon College. We of Thoren Consulting Group, Inc. want to show our support of the degree program in training and development established by ASTD. We will grant a scholarship for the fall semester of 1974 in the amount of \$300 or \$500, and we would like ASTD to administer this scholarship.

"I do not wish to commit beyond 1974, but I am hopeful that we can make this an *annual* scholarship. We will use funds collected through our sale of *The Phoenix Series* as a source of this scholarship."