

The ASTD Membership Survey

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A Report of the Results . . .

In April 1965 each member of ASTD received a comprehensive questionnaire covering many facets of ASTD. President C. D. Campbell's letter of transmittal said, "Your opinions, desires, and needs form the substance of ASTD activities . . . Your Board of Directors needs this information as a base for its decisions . . . Our objective is to shape the policies, programs, and activities of ASTD, giving full consideration to the interests of the members of ASTD. In this way your Board can make decisions that will benefit you and ASTD."

The Board of Directors thinks that a great deal of useful information came from the survey; that the information will be helpful indeed in its decision-making. The Board thinks also that you may be interested in the results and has asked that this article be prepared for the *Journal*.

Two types of data are available from the questionnaire—quantitative, which

gives useful information about the make-up of the Society and the categorical opinions about the activities of ASTD; and qualitative, which gives us a depth of understanding about our Society and the feelings of the membership. Both kinds of data are important to the planning and activities that will be productive.

All members received a questionnaire in April. By mid-June, 65% had been returned and is the basis for this report.

Profile of the Membership

Important to the understanding of and planning for any organization is the knowledge of the background—age, education, experience, etc.—of the membership. Following is a "profile" of the membership. The right-hand column is the statistical data derived from a tabulation of the questionnaires. The left-hand column is a narrative description of the "highlights" of the tabulated material.

We are generally a mature group. Most of us are over 40, but we have a significant number less than 40—some even in their 20's.

Age

Age	% of Members
20 - 30 years	4
31 - 40 years	38
41 - 50 years	32
over 50	26

Education

We are a fairly well educated group judging from the formal education completed—a large majority having at least a bachelor's degree, with a significant number holding an advanced degree.

<i>Highest Education</i>	<i>% of Members</i>
Finished high school	3
Entered college, but did not graduate	15
Received bachelor's degree	45
Received master's degree	28
Received doctor's degree	9

Experience

Generally, we are an experienced group of trainers—a large majority of us having been in the field over five years and a significant number, over ten years.

<i>No. of Years Experience in Training & Development</i>	<i>% of Members</i>
0 - 1 year	3
1 - 2 years	7
2 - 5 years	27
5 - 10 years	25
over 10 years	38

However, no single academic discipline seems to be common to the major field of our degree work. Most frequently the major field of study is education or psychology. However, it appears that, in many cases, trainers have been educated in the field of work characteristic of the business in which they are employed. That is, electronic engineers appear as trainers in the electronics

industry; forestry majors appear as trainers in the government forestry service; physicists appear as trainers in the aerospace industry, etc.

Where We Work. The type of employment and the kind of training responsibility the membership has may be important to planning the activities of ASTD.

Place of Employment

We represent the training staffs of almost every type of institution—banks, manufacturing, electronics, hospitals, service organizations, the government, private consultants, etc.

<i>Employed in</i>	<i>% of Members</i>
Private industry or commercial organizations	75
Government—city, county, state, federal	15
College—university	5
Consulting	3
Other	2

Size of Responsibility

Our members are employed in institutions ranging in size from very small to the industrial giants—the majority having responsibility for training in medium to large organizations.

No. of People

Less than 25

25 to 100

101 to 500

501 to 1,000

1,001 to 5,000

5,001 to 10,000

10,001 to 25,000

25,000 and over

% of Members

—

2

9

10

40

18

11

10

What We Do. The type of position and the type of work performed by the membership is likewise important to consider in planning ASTD activities.

Who We Train

Our training activities are diverse in terms of the types of trainees we service. They cover the full range of employee groups from production line operators through top management. Included also are military personnel and students.

<i>Employee Group</i>	<i>% Who Have As Primary Responsibility</i>	<i>% Who Have As Secondary Responsibility</i>	<i>Total %</i>
Supervisory	80	18	98
Middle management	72	16	88
Top management	28	21	49
Office	20	26	46
Sales	23	20	43
Technician	18	23	41
Production worker (factory)	17	23	40
Engineers & Scientists (technology)	15	20	35
Safety - all employees	16	19	35
Apprentice	14	14	28
College students	15	13	28
Military field personnel	5	5	10
High school students	4	4	8

Additional Responsibility

Nearly three-quarters of us have responsibilities other than for training in our places of work. Most frequently, these are organization development, management appraisals, employment recruiting, testing, house organ editorship.

Responsibility Other than Training

Yes

No

% of Members

73

27

Methods, Concepts, Techniques

We all rely on the lecture for at least part of our work. Close to one-half of us use programmed instruction and a significant number are interested in p.i. Business simulation is being used by about one-third of us; another one-third is interested. Fewer of us appear to be skilled laboratory trainers, but there is a significant interest. Visual aids including films figure prominently in our work. The "J" courses have not been forgotten.

Method	% Who Use	% Who Have An Interest in
Lecture	100	—
Work Project	52	17
Sensitivity or laboratory (T-group)	17	40
Business simulation (gaming)	31	36
Instrumented laboratory	11	31
Visual aids (other than films)	96	—
Films	95	—
JIT	52	10
Programmed instruction	44	43
JRT	25	14
Role-playing	68	19
Conference	90	4
Buzz groups	63	6
JMT	19	15
Case	66	9
In-basket	25	31
Incident Process	40	29

About ASTD

Several items in the questionnaire relate to the various activities of ASTD. From the responses to these items, an "image" of ASTD and its activities, as held by the members, can be constructed, as follows:

About the Journal, 96% say the *Training Directors Journal* is a needed publication; 77% say it is a well-balanced publication; 72% say it is a "practical" publication.

Seventy-one per cent rely on the *Journal* to keep informed on developments in the training field.

Chapter Activities. 94% say that chapters should stress activities that help

the trainer to do a better training job; 73% say chapters should have programs that stress design and structure of learning experiences; 72% say programs should stress learning theory; 29% say community activities should be stressed; 18% say social activities.

Twenty-one per cent think the chapter award program is a needed activity; however, a high per cent are neutral or have no opinion on this.

National Conference. 52% say the national conference programs are generally worthwhile. However, there is a high neutral and no opinion response, possibly because some members have not been able to attend. Forty per cent attend fairly regularly. Sixty per cent would like to see the national organiza-

tion sponsor regional workshops or institutes.

Research in Training. 82% think ASTD should encourage research in the training field; 45% (with a high neutral and no opinion response) say the ASTD Research Fund is a needed activity.

Forty-eight per cent say *Training Research Abstracts* is a needed publication, and 35% rely on it to keep informed of developments in the training field.

Professional Image. 89% consider ASTD the professional association of trainers in the United States. Fifty-six per cent say ASTD to the trainer is about the same as the ABA is to the lawyer, IEEE is to the engineer, and APA is to the psychologist.

Fifty-nine per cent think ASTD should develop a code of ethics.

Seventy-six per cent think ASTD should be active in shaping policy of federal government programs such as the MDTA and OEO.

Special Interests. 78% would like to be more closely associated in ASTD with trainers doing the same type of work they are, and 75% say ASTD should have some way to meet more adequately the needs of special interests such as sales trainers, those interested in programmed instruction, management development, volunteer workers for agencies, engineering trainers, etc.

Membership Involvement. 45% of the membership have held or now hold an officership or committee assignment in their chapter; 76% are willing to take on such responsibility.

Summary and Conclusions

This has been a resume of the quantitative data tabulated from the questionnaires. The knowledge gained is important to the planning for future activities and the improvement of present ones.

Much more information than has been reported here is available from the survey. The last section of the questionnaire asked for comments on several subjects—chapter meetings, the national conference, training as a profession, the *Journal*, the role of ASTD in federal government programs such as MDTA and OEO, services of the national headquarters, the Annual Institute in Madison, the Membership Directory, and ethics. A wealth of qualitative data and excellent suggestions, as well as criticism, is now available. These comments will be used by the officers and national committees in their planning.

The Board of Directors sincerely hopes that the use of the membership survey results will assist in shaping the organization in a manner constructive and appealing to the entire membership.

Plan now for . . .

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