



2008 Board Of Directors

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A Note From The President



Dear ASTD friends,

Back in August 2007 the cover story of my *Fast Company* magazine was titled "Why We Hate HR." When I saw the cover of my copy of this month's *T&D Magazine*, it was, in the words of baseball great Yogi Berra, "like deja vu all over again." The article by David Maister is titled, "Why (Most) Training Is Useless." I thought, "Oh no, here's some diatribe about our profession in which we are all described as being shallow, superficial hucksters."

As I began to read the article I caught myself nodding in agreement and thinking this guy is right on the mark! It actually began to make me feel good to be a part of the workplace and performance profession. If you have not read the article you are probably thinking, Moffett has lost his mind agreeing with a guy who says most training is useless. Well, let me explain.

The article contains criticism about what all of us would consider inferior attempts at training. Some of the characteristics I gleaned about "useless training" from the article are:

- Providing training prematurely so it ensures that it will not get implemented on the job.
- The "trainer" presents on a topic that is entertaining and informative BUT is not designed to actually make needed changes in workplace behavior.
- The training concentrates on knowledge acquisition rather than skill development.
- The training is a solution for all problems, ignoring such things as flawed performance management systems and reward systems, people not buying in to the importance of the training, and people lacking some basic knowledge required to perform the skills being trained.

Maister suggests that if we follow the above, training can be an "immensely wasted opportunity." As workplace learning and performance professionals, we know that if we actually do the opposite of the above, our training programs can be very powerful and successful. So let's be sure to follow the suggestion of Mark Twain and "Do the right thing. It will gratify some people and astonish the rest."

Regards,

Rick Moffett

MAY MEETING: Thursday, May 15th, 4-6 pm

"Pwonging, Twittering, and Tagging: The Future of Training and Learning"

The future of teaching, training, and learning will be greatly impacted by emerging trends in online technology. These include social networking, interactive websites, and thin client tools such as Google Docs. This talk will center on these emerging trends and technologies and discuss how to best leverage them for effective training.

Objectives:

Attendees will be able to:

- Discuss the merits of micoblogging tools such as Twitter and Pwonce.
- Create a web form for online surveys using Google Spreadsheets.
- Identify educational applications of social networking sites such as Facebook.
- Apply tagging techniques to video sharing sites such as YouTube or TeacherTube.
- Understand how to create a simple blog.

Speaker Bio:

Dr. John St. Clair is the Executive Director of Training and Technical Services for the Tennessee Board of Regents Online Degree Program (RODP). The RODP coordinates certificate and degree programs offered by the technology centers, colleges, and universities of the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR). Prior to joining TBR, Dr. St. Clair was an Associate Professor of Mathematics at Motlow State Community College.

Meeting Location:

New Horizons Computer Learning Center
Metro Center
227 French Landing Drive
Suite 400
Nashville, TN 37228

MAY MEETING: Thursday, May 15th, 4-6 pm

**Submit
Articles &
Ideas To
Your
Newsletter**

The Middle Tennessee Chapter of ASTD continually strives to bring you the most useful, timely content.

This newsletter belongs to you. We need your contributions!

Please submit articles, ideas, and suggestions to the newsletter editor, Angela Ellis by the ***second Thursday of each month.***

Her email address:

angela.ellis@cat.com

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OUR MAY MEETING SPONSOR

Verizon Wireless sponsors this month's meeting. Join me in thanking the folks at Verizon for supporting ASTD's Middle Tennessee Chapter.



**Anyone who stops learning is old,
whether at twenty or eighty.
~Henry Ford**

**I am learning all the time.
The tombstone will be my diploma.
~Eartha Kitt**



Who knew volunteerism could be so much fun!
The discussion was lively and humorous at the April Meeting.



Pat White facilitates interesting, thought-provoking activities and engages the participants in discussion.



Sandi Conatser from the Country Music Hall of Fame details volunteer opportunities with the organization.



Kirra Menees from Ronald McDonald House explains her organization's services and needs.

Fostering Productive Volunteer Relationships

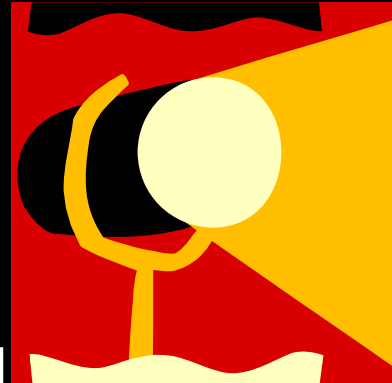
Pat White led group exercises. One of the exercises focused on the truth and myths of volunteering. The participants answered questions about why volunteer leaders are necessary and how successful events happen.

Speakers from Ronald McDonald House and Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum gave presentations about their organizations and volunteer opportunities available for tour guides, meal preparers, and gift bag assemblers.

The meeting took place at the National Federation of Independent Business. We discussed the different archetypes of volunteers, including egomaniac, whiner, winner and know-it-all. We discussed how to manager each of them using our skills as learning professionals. We determined ways to utilize the strengths of each and help them be successful volunteers.



SPOTLIGHT MEMBER



OF THE MONTH

1. **Name** – Nancy Collins
2. **Hometown** – Pittsburgh, PA
3. **Family status** (married, kids, grand kids, etc.) – Single...with cats. I'd be the cat lady with 17 cats if I could.
4. **Current Position**- Training Project Manager, National Federation of Independent Business
5. **Years in training field** – 10+
6. **How long have you been a member of ASTD?** - 7 years
7. **What do you value most about your membership?** - The ability to network and learn from training colleagues, and find out what's new in our industry.
8. **Interests and/or Hobbies** – In 2007 ASTD awarded me the Golden Torch Award for Community Service, as I've been a volunteer docent for 5 years at the Nashville zoo. I also enjoy the arts in general, especially jazz music, the Nashville Symphony, plays, performances, touring historic homes, that kind of stuff.
9. **What would be your ultimate dream job?** It's pretty simple, actually: One in which I can make a contribution or make a difference...move the needle to improve things.
10. **What is your favorite thing in life and why?** Great food and great wine in a great setting!! I met someone once who said, "If I didn't have to eat, I'd never miss it." Not me – I'd sorely miss it.
11. **What is the best advice you can give to a new trainer?** - Help people learn by hands-on practice and/or teaching each other. Move away from lecturing as fast as you can.

Learning Styles by Angela Ellis

You are probably familiar with the three main learning styles of your audience. They are kinesthetic, auditory, and visual. Today, many top learning managers are considering some additional, more specific learning styles to ensure that every type of learner receives maximum benefits from the learning experience. Let's review those styles.

1. Kinesthetic learners learn best with movement and activity. They will appreciate field trips, participation in demonstration. They also learn through virtual reality and any type of manual manipulations. That is, anything they can touch, play with, or doodle on.
2. Musical learners appreciate rhythms. Learning that includes singing, rhyming, listening to songs. Some simple ways to include rhythms in training are through finger snapping, hand clapping, and foot (or pencil) tapping.
3. Linguistic learners need words, whether they are seeing, hearing, and saying them. For this type of learner, a learning event should include discussion group, lecture, brainstorming, written exercises, or story telling.
4. The Visual/Spatial learner retains knowledge best when the learning includes animation or illustrated depictions, such as charts, graphs, drawings, collages, maps, and videos.
5. The scientific learner needs math and science activities to maximum his/her learning. This could include problem solving, statistics, quantities, calculations, or scientific demonstrations. Remember taking biology lab in school so you could learn by doing?
6. Interpersonal learners prefer to do activities with others. In a learning environment this might include games, exercises, discussions, one-on-one training or coaching.
7. Intrapersonal learner value independence. This self-paced learner might need to develop a personal action plan. Give him the choice of how and where to learn and ask him to share personal concerns.

The State Department of General Services is seeking training professionals to provide training in the following areas. If you are interested in providing service in any of these areas, contact Jacqueline Wicks in the GS Human Resource Office.

- Keyboarding / Typing Skills
- General warehouse safety and proper lifting techniques
- Team Building

To apply or for more information, please contact: Jacqueline Wicks, Training Officer, Human Resource Divisions/DGS, State of Tennessee
Office: 615-253-2398, Fax: 615-741-5605 email: Jacqueline.Wicks@state.tn.us

Generational Differences: Accepting Diversity or Encouraging Discrimination

By Matthew A. Daniel

Much emphasis has been placed on generational differences in the training and development community in recent years. As a millennial, I have listened to countless training sessions and read a plethora of articles describing how I am different from my more matured co-workers. While these sessions often begin with pointing out how Generation-Y is made of tech-savvy individuals always looking to make processes more efficient, they often finish with a downright clobbering.

While I believe that my peers (and mentors) intend to bring what was once a revolutionary concept to the table in a professional manner, they often spend the majority of their time complaining about Millennials or facilitating this unhealthy dialogue in their classrooms. As professionals in this field, we cannot deny the existence of difference between generations, however we must not lose focus on the importance of addressing diversity as a whole. I was among the first to incorporate cross-generational communication into my company's new-hire diversity course; nonetheless, it was a small portion of understanding diversity as a whole.

If we addressed gender, racial, or socio-economic differences with the same zeal we now draw on to address generational differences, we would likely be rebuffed as bigots. While this is a hot-topic in the workplace today, -- and forgive me for mentioning a hot-seller in the marketplace: *Beware the Millennials, they're coming for your job!!!* -- let us not isolate or disparage the future leaders of the workplace.

The moment we believe we have arrived at an understanding of diversity is the moment we have failed to understand that diversity is constantly changing.