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A Note From The President



Dear ASTD Friends,

Welcome to 2009! I am always intrigued by having a full new year spread out before me, an expanse of the unknown open to plans, hopes, and dreams. Last year brought us many lessons learned, some unpleasant, some not, some worth bringing into the New Year. To borrow from Dickens, "it was the best of times; it was the worst of times..." I recently read that an upcoming study by the ASTD and the Institute for Corporate Productivity (I4cp) "Learning in a Down Economy" shows that 38 percent of companies surveyed are placing more emphasis on learning during this downturn. Sounds hopeful, but let's remember lessons learned. To remain essential to our businesses, we need to remain professionally competitive, even as budgets and resources are being trimmed. As I looked toward leading this chapter year, I thought, "How can we do that?" A look at our chapter mission helped. *The Middle Tennessee chapter is a network of learning & development professionals building connections to each other and our community to create a world that works better.* I saw that our resources are our connections to each other and to our profession. So, this year we will **Learn from the Best**. We will learn from each other, and in doing so, we have the means to build credibility for ourselves and for our profession.

At the January Board planning session, *Learn from the Best* was enthusiastically embraced for the possibilities it offered to realize the potential of the resources within our local, regional and national community of professionals. This spirit also infused chapter goals, which address three key areas:

1. Enhance the visibility of the learning profession and local learning professionals in Middle Tennessee in order to support retention of learning roles in organizations.
2. Maintain the vibrancy and solvency of the chapter.
3. Support chapter members' professional competitiveness through programs and other knowledge channels.

Board action plans address these three areas with direction from our members. Over 35% of you responded to the annual survey and believe me; board members have gone through the data with a fine tooth comb. You spoke, we listened. As a result, your membership this year will bring you:

- Monthly programs relevant to enhancing your professional practices
- Training basics format targeted to young professionals
- An updated website that will be easier to navigate and contain more virtual resources
- Expanded community service partnerships for increased visibility
- Peer communities of learning through Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
- Monthly e-newsletter
- And more!

So, stick around. Your ASTD Middle Tennessee membership will provide you with professional development through networking, learning, and giving back. This New Year should be among the Best!

Regards,

Toby

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2009 Board
of Directors

JANUARY MEETING: Thursday, JANUARY 15, 2009

Learn from the Best!

Join us in welcoming the new year and kicking off our 2009 theme "Learn from the Best" through celebrating the achievements of two of our 2008 Golden Torch Award Winners, facilitated by Past-President Rick Moffett.

* Achieving Results - BMI, Inc.

- Toby Cannon, Director of Training & Development
- Michele Reynolds - Associate Vice President, General Licensing Business Development Services
- Don Jackson, Director, Coaching, General Licensing

* Community Service - Marty Nord

WHEN

Thursday, January 15, 2009 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Central Time Zone

HERE

Bethel College
1801 West End Avenue
Suite 350
Nashville, TN
USA

Thursday, JANUARY 15, 2009
4 pm - 6 pm

TENNESSEE RECOGNIZES LEARNING BY PROCLAIMING LEARNING WEEK

The week of December 8th through 12th of 2008 was proclaimed, by Governor Phil Bredesen, as **Employee Learning Week** to recognize the value of learning and the important link between a highly skilled workforce and organizational success. The Middle Tennessee Chapter of ASTD wants to recognize the following organizations for their 2008 employee learning activities (please stand when your organization has been called):

American General Life and Accident
Insurance Company
Bass, Berry & Sims
Center for Nonprofit Management
First State Bank
Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee

Healthways
Kroll Background Screening
Lattimore Black Morgan & Cain
Servpro Industries
Tennessee Center for Child Welfare



2008 Chapter President, Rick Moffett, and Co-VP of Marketing and Communications, Caitlin Stewart-Congdon receive the proclamation from Governor Bredesen (center).



ASTD TechKnowledge 2009 Conference & Exposition

Las Vegas, NV
January 28-30, 2009

[Register Online](#)

**Register Before December 31st and
Save \$150.**

According to the **ASTD State of the Industry Report**, use of technology-based learning continues to be on the rise. This trend is sure to continue as organizations face reduced travel budgets and economic challenges in 2009.

Keep your organization prepared for whatever challenges await. ASTD TechKnowledge offers you more than **80 sessions** on technology-based learning, with multiple delivery formats to best suit your learning style.



ASTD 2009 International Conference & Exposition

Washington, DC
May 31-June 3, 2009

[Register Online](#)

**Register Before December 31st and
Save \$350.**

Position your organization for continued success. Attend this industry leading conference and gather latest trends and best practices on a wide-range of relevant **content to help you succeed in any situation.**

This premier event for workplace learning and performance professionals welcomes attendees from more than 70 countries. The conference features 200+ educational sessions from industry leading experts, and a world-class EXPO filled with the latest products and services available from top suppliers.

Teams Stay Strong with Personal Accountability

Fads. We've all seen them. In the 1960's it was the Hula Hoop, in the '70's it was Disco, in the 80's big hair, and in the 90's and beyond it was ...

Team-building!

Yes, the "team" headed to the mountaintop! Or to some golf course in Arizona, a fly-fishing expedition in the Boundary Waters of Canada, or if the budget allowed - an African Safari! But if the budget was tight, training games at a local hotel sufficed. Or maybe an afternoon of river-rafting. And after the rafting the team returned with the New Office Mantra: "We got wet together so now we can work together!"

Fad-driven thinking. It's part of our world. The Event Mentality. It's common in organizations everywhere. But, do these fads and events do much good? As one corporate client admitted, "Yeah, we tried team-building one *Tuesday* ... but it didn't work for us!"

The truth is: *There are no quick fixes to long-term problems.*

The overflow of books on our shelves, the motivational CDs in our cars, the one-time events and fads we engage in rarely create organizational change. Over the last 20 years we've seen Total Quality come and go. The Learning Organization arrived then vanished. Strategic Planning came, slipped away, returned, and then left again. And 360 Feedback was all the rage ... and maybe still is. And somewhere along the way team-building took the organizational world by storm.

Has it worked? You decide. Ever hear statements like these?

"The team didn't get it done!" "The team missed the deadline!" "The team wasn't given a clear mission!" "The team lacked resources!" "The team didn't reach the goal!"

Yes, we have actually learned to ... *hide behind the team.*

It's not that the phrase "team-building" is bad, but it's time to refocus - on people. Don't buy the popular myth: "There are no 'I's' in TEAM!" Wrong! Every team is full of "I's" and when the "I's" take care of themselves, the team can do great things. The solid foundation of an effective team is a timeless idea: PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY. When team members are each willing to look inside and ask questions such as, "How can *I* help the team reach its goals?" "What can *I* do to support others on the team?" and "How can *I* be excellent in my own role today?" the team is strong and on its way to accomplishing its mission.

So skip the trip to the river. Stay home, stay dry, and build the team by practicing *personal accountability*.

It's no fad. It is here to stay.

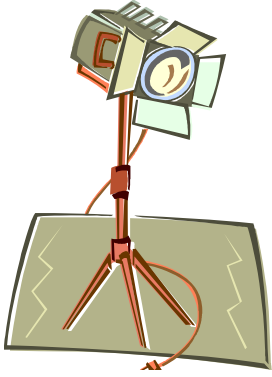
John G. Miller

Author of *QBQ!* and *Flipping the Switch*

With Kristin Lindeen

QBQ! speaker/workshop facilitator

SPOTLIGHT MEMBER OF MONTH



1. Name – Linda Hughes
2. Hometown – Cuba, Missouri (Actually, I think of Nashville as my hometown)
3. Family status (married, kids, grand kids, etc.) – Single
4. Current Position & Company – Associate Director, Training and Organizational Development
5. Years in training field– 16
6. How long have you been a member of ASTD?- 10+ years
7. What do you value most about your membership? The connections I have made. I know if I have a question about a topic, there is a group of talented individuals with an answer. That's very powerful!
8. Interests and/or Hobbies – I love to travel. This year I visited the Oregon coast and will make plans to return. I'm also an avid reader of mystery novels. I'm a big James Patterson fan.
9. What would be your ultimate dream job? Providing assistance to anyone who wants to learn. I volunteered with Junior Achievement and seeing the look in the 3rd graders eyes when they learned something new is priceless. It's why we do what we do.
10. What is your favorite thing in life and why? There are so many favorite things, however I would say family. All of my family lives out of state, so the time I get to spend with them is very precious. Being away from them has reminded me how important it is to say close.
11. What is the best advice you can give to a new trainer? Number 1: Learn all you can and build those relationships that will carry you through good times and bad. Number 2: Never be afraid to ask questions. No one person knows everything. If you don't know the answer or even where to start, rely on those relationships you have developed to help guide you. Number 3: Join ASTD to build the relationships you will need.
12. Other Comments – Having served the chapter in several capacities including President, I encourage everyone to get involved with ASTD. Take the plunge and be part of the leadership of the chapter. It builds your strength, knowledge, and leadership. Chapter service prepares you to go in so many directions in your career. Try it, I think you will enjoy the challenge.

The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.” -- William Ward

To learn and never be filled, is wisdom; to teach and never be weary, is love.”
anonymous

Organization Development Special Interest Group (OD SIG)

The purpose of the OD SIG is to:

- Share leading-edge best practices
- Introduce issues and opportunities and share possible solutions
- The SIG also invites non-OD speakers on occasion to learn their perspective or expectations.

OD SIG MEETINGS

Meetings are held bi-monthly. The 2009 meetings are scheduled for February, April, June, August, and October on the first Monday of the month, from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm. Meetings take place at CCA.

“The most important object in Boy Scout training is to educate, not instruct.” Sir Robert Baden-Powell, boy scouts founder

He who ceases to learn cannot adequately teach.” anonymous

GAMES

PEOPLE

PLAY



NAME OF THE GAME: Where Is The Fire?

Objective: Prioritize and decide what is important.

Audience: Group of any size, very effective with leaders

Materials: index cards or paper and pens

Instructions: Set the scene: Ask the audience to imagine that they are sitting at their desk working away. All of a sudden, their CEO or security person announcing over the public address system that they office must be evacuated in 2 minutes. They will not be returning anytime soon, but they can bring 5 items with them. They can only bring things they can carry in their hands – no desks, water coolers, etc. Ask them to write down the 5 items they have decided to bring out of the building. Give them 2 minutes to decide, because after that they must evacuate!

Debrief Discussion:

- How easy was it to select the items?
- Of the items you picks, how many are job related?
- What it difficult to limit it to only 5? If you could have picked more, what would you have selected?
- Why did you pick the items you selected?
- Do you generally prioritize before beginning your workday or workweek? Do you prioritize outside of work – when deciding what social events to attend or skip, or when deciding which chores to do first?
- When you prioritize, how do you decide what could come first, what you will skip, what you will delegate? How should you or could you do this better?

Defend Your Decisions Against Disorder

Most would agree that it is wiser to simplify matters than to confuse them. But, think about what we do when we scramble things – whether it's eggs, alphabets, or our thoughts. Scrambling does just the opposite – it complicates things. It deliberately mixes things up. Scrambling can be used tactically in some situations. It can be used to forestall a deadlock, make people work harder, force through a last-minute demand, or flesh out new perspectives.

Decision making, however, should be approached in an orderly fashion.

When things are scrambled, it's more difficult to compare apples to apples; you feel rushed even if you are not; and anxiety builds.

It takes self-confidence to stop the scrambler within. These steps can help:

1. Have the courage to say, "I don't understand."
2. Keep saying, "I don't understand" until you do.
3. Insist that matters be discussed one at a time.
4. Recognize that you do not have to talk about things the way that others.
5. Remember scrambling tends to backfire. If you are the scrambler, you will soon have others as confused as you are.
6. Watch for the mistakes you tend to make when you are confused.

Your key defense is to never to make a decision on an issue until you understand it – whether deciding to hire, implement, engage, create, or disassemble or retire. In these times, we will all have to make some tough decisions, sooner or later. Practice and courage help unscramble those scrambled eggs in the mind.