

June 14, 2007

Note from the Speaker:

This is a revised handout incorporating content from the session which was generated by the session participants on pages 5, 6, and 8. Thanks to all who attended!

Recap of the key proposal requirements as covered in the session:

- The session proposed is clearly a learning experience versus a presentation of information. (pgs. 5-7)
- Interactive delivery methods are used in the session design and clearly described in the delivery methods. (pgs. 8-9)
- The proposed session meets content requirements (relevance, tracks/topics, target audience, applicability, speaker qualifications, etc.) (pg. 10)
- The proposed session content is clearly applicable back on the job and is accurately described in the Application-Focused Learning Objectives (pg. 11)
- The proposal is correctly submitted supplying all required information into the online submission system. (pgs. 12-14)

ASTD 2007 International Conference & Exposition

ASTD Briefing: How to Submit a Winning ASTD Conference Proposal



ASTD 1
Tuesday, June 5, 2007
12:00-1:30 p.m.

Learning Objectives:

- 1) Design a Session proposal with the needs of the learner in mind.*
- 2) Develop a session that meets content and methods requirements, prior to submitting the proposal.*
- 3) Navigate the online proposal submission process to correctly submit a proposal for consideration.*

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To Get the Most from the Session:

- Be open to new ideas
- Think creatively
- Participate fully but respectfully
- Apply your new knowledge right away!

What Do I Want to Learn Today?	Notes/Questions
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

How to Submit a Winning ASTD Conference Proposal Pre-Test

Mark your choice:

Question	Notes/Answers
<p>1. What is the primary reason for ASTD conference education sessions?</p> <p>a. To help participants learn from each other and network.</p> <p>b. To offer an opportunity for speakers to gain exposure for their companies, products, or services.</p> <p>c. To provide new information and knowledge for participants to use on the job.</p>	
<p>2. Conference sessions should always be conducted as lecture-based presentations with PowerPoint slides.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">True False</p>	
<p>3. PowerPoint is a suitable means to deliver a session as long as the slides are interesting and informative.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">True False</p>	
<p>4. The Program Advisory Committee selects all conference sessions from proposals.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">True False</p>	
<p>5. Proposals are reviewed against which of the following criteria:</p> <p>a. Clarity of learning objectives.</p> <p>b. Session content that is relevant to the audience and meets requested topics.</p> <p>c. Diversity of speakers.</p> <p>d. All of the above.</p>	
<p>6. Application-Focused Learning Objectives show the session participants what they will be able to apply back on the job.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">True False</p>	
<p>7. Proposals may be submitted online at any time of year.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">True False</p>	
<p>8. When a proposal has been successfully submitted, the submitter will receive notification by which method?</p> <p>a. Email notification within 24 hours.</p> <p>b. On-screen verification immediately.</p> <p>c. Hard copy letter via postal mail.</p>	
<p>9. All instructions, including screen shots for proposal submission can be found online.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">True False</p>	

Learning Objective 1: *Design a session proposal with the needs of the learner in mind.*

Topic: Reframing Conference Sessions as Learning Experiences

ASTD is looking for sessions aimed at the participant and developed from the standpoint of what they need to know and learn. The more you can put yourself in their place to develop your session, the better your chances of being selected and receiving good evaluations from participants who attend your session.

The ultimate goal should be the learning of the participant rather than a showcase for your talents, products, and services. You will gain exposure for those things by doing a good session with something tangible for the participants to take away.

Good Questions to Ask Yourself Include

- What does the learner need to know?
- How will they use it back on the job?
- What is ASTD asking for in terms of content/topics?

Ideas for designing conference session learning experiences:

Ideas generated by session participants:

- Small groups by topic
- Set up/model the experience
- Best practices sharing/distillation
- Brainstorm
- Quizzes
- Use Learning Styles
- Self-directed learning
- Open Space Technology
- Create framework for day-to-day use/application
- Applying it back in the real world
- Write it, say it, draw it, apply it
- Have learners write out how they will apply key concepts to take back
- Learning transfer
- Teach-back
- In-session practice
- Briefcase study (five second select options from a menu relevant to situation or topic)
- Create learning atmosphere (get out of the way, discovery, facilitate)
- Peer learning

Topic: Using Learning Styles

- **Visual:** Learners who need pictures, diagrams, and other visuals
- **Auditory:** Learners who need to hear information
- **Kinesthetic:** Learners who need hands-on learning

How can you apply learning styles to conference education development?

List your ideas from the small group exercise here:

Note: the following are ideas generated by the session participants.

Visual:

- Pictures not bullets on PowerPoint slides
- Card-sized PowerPoint handouts
- Props (also Kinesthetic)
- Movie clips (with proper licensing!)
- Famous speeches on film (again, with proper licensing)
- Animated PowerPoint
- Vivid colors, borders, frames
- Posters on the walls
- Environmental graphics

Add your own:

Auditory:

- Storytelling
- Music
- Buzz Groups
- MP-3
- Multiple voices
- Speaking
- Embedded video on PowerPoint

Add your own:**Kinesthetic:**

- Egg drop experiment (task: create a device to catch a raw egg; choose height for drop. Use for teamwork, creativity, etc.)
- Energizers
- Take a poll—have learners stand, move, raise hands, etc.
- Metaphoric body activities
- Treasure hunt activity
- Provide handouts with note-taking space
- Interactive pads for group response

Add your own:

Topic: Delivery Methods for Conference Education

ASTD audiences expect speakers to use good delivery skills rather than relying on lecture and PowerPoint presentations as the sole means of delivery. Not all speakers have a training background. However, anyone can use a variety of methods even in a large group, even in theater seating. ASTD sets a few rooms with round tables to facilitate exercises but due to reduced capacity of those rooms, they are in limited supply.

Here are some tips to help you plan an interactive delivery.

- Limit your PowerPoint by using it to highlight key points, and post instructions for activities rather than listing all of your content.
- Encourage participants to interact with your content by pairing up with people near by in the row to discuss key points.
- Instead of having people raise hands to respond to a question of "how many of you are..." have them stand up.
- Incorporate a pre-work activity into your description so that anyone interested in the session knows how to prepare in advance. This could be bringing a case study, statistics, ideas, questions, sample problems, etc. from their own work or organization.
- Have people group around the perimeter of the room in specific groupings (by job function, interest area, etc.) to discuss something content-related.
- Give them an assignment to do after the conference; something that will ground the learning and help them apply it back at work.
- Small groups can be formed by having people work with others immediately adjacent in the rows in front or behind.
- Depending on the size of the group, ask learners to move to the opposite side of the room to find someone new to talk to.
- Develop a handout which captures the key information in a format that allows the learner to incorporate their own insights, results of group discussions and exercises, and serves as a resource for future use.

What are your ideas?

Ideas generated by session participants.

- Visual representation of data (Edward Tufte)
- Ban PowerPoint
- Appropriate music
- Gallery walk of flip charts on walls
 - Timed key questions
 - Small groups
 - Start-up activity
- Business simulations
- Discovery maps
- Colorblind—use blind folds and puzzle pieces to get groups working together
- Computer-based polling
- SMS texting using participants own devices
- Brainstorm
- Three group rotation
- Post-it notes—rotate topics on board
- Use email for follow-up or pre-work

Add your own:

Learning Objective 2: *Develop a session that meets content and methods requirements, prior to submitting the proposal.*

Topic: What ASTD Requires and the Reasons Why

It is an honor to be asked to speak at an ASTD conference. Sessions are developed from proposals and by invitation based on the overall program topics developed by the staff and the committee and with input from past participant surveys and evaluations.

The committee members review each proposal using the following criteria:

The proposed session must:

- clearly apply to the target audience
- fit into one of the five tracks
- be delivered by a speaker with substantial topic knowledge and experience facilitating learning experiences and/or speaking to large groups

In addition reviewers will assess the following:

- Is the content current and practical, cutting edge or innovative as it relates to work-place learning and performance?
- Do highlighted programs and initiatives demonstrate measurable business impact and results?
- Is the proposal complete, accurate, and clear? Proposals that do not follow the instructions will be ineligible.
- Is the content clear, specific, informative, and directly linked to the learning objectives?
- Are the learning objectives written to show how the content can be applied back on the job according to the instructions for Application-Focused Learning Objectives? Can the objectives realistically be met in the time allotted?
- Will the recommended proposals create a balanced slate of speakers representing diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, organizations, and internal/external practitioners?

TIP: It is far better to give learners one piece of truly useful information than to cover many topics with too little depth.

Topic: Application-Focused Learning Objectives

The reason ASTD puts so much emphasis on how you write your learning objectives is to strongly encourage you to think deeply about the session you are proposing. We want these sessions to be top-of-the-line in terms of content, delivery, and applicability for the learner. **Session participants evaluate sessions positively or negatively according to how much they can use the information on the job.**

Application-Focused Learning Objectives are a bit different from conventional learning objectives. These objectives clearly state what the session participant should expect to be able to do with the session content when they return to their jobs. The objectives, and the content, should have enough depth that learners can take something tangible back to use in their work.

In writing the objectives, you must go beyond concepts like, “identify” “name” or “discuss.” If they were to be able to identify, name, or discuss XYZ, what would happen then? How would that make a difference in their work? Your answer to that question is the objective. Be sure to begin with a verb denoting the action.

Avoid passive words like ***learn, understand,*** and ***know*** and extra words like ***learn creative techniques to design*** or ***determine how to analyze***. Go right to the action word: **Design, Analyze,** etc. for the lead in. Be sure that your objectives are realistic and achievable for the learners as well as in your time frame.

TIP: Follow the tips and sample objectives in the online RFP. Your learning objectives will be a key factor in evaluating your proposal.

Learning Objective 3: Navigate the online proposal submission process to correctly submit a proposal for consideration.

Topic: How it works

The online proposal submission process is housed in a data management system that ASTD purchases from a vendor. It is resident on their server. Proposals are input to the system, reviewed by the committee and staff in the system, and when selected, become sessions in the same system. Once a proposal has been approved as a session it is published to a live website which is linked to the conference website. In this form it is called the Schedule Builder and allows conference participants to read session descriptions and speaker profiles, search for sessions by topic and day, and create a personalized itinerary of sessions they would like to attend.

Submission Hints

Login and e-codes

Every person who submits and/or is listed as a speaker receives a unique e-code which is their password to enter the system to submit a proposal, modify a previously submitted proposal, and update an individual profile.

Preparing Proposal in Advance

It is imperative that you write your proposal in advance using your preferred word processing program. Then you will paste your entry into the title, description, objectives, and methods fields. Other fields require that you select from a menu or list. Once your proposal is entered it is resident in the system in separate fields. ASTD is not able to send a copy of the proposal. Please keep a copy for your records.

Proposal Fields

See the page 10 for a template of the fields you will need to fill in or select. Please review the online instructions with screen shots for the visual appearance of the screens.

Navigating the System

All required fields are marked with an asterisk (*). Text fields, including speaker bios, have a maximum character capacity of 2,000 characters which includes the spaces. Be sure to check your character count before you paste in the selection. If the text exceeds the maximum, you will see an error message.

Verification of Submission

Once you have completed your proposal and submitted it, you will see a verification message onscreen that it was successfully submitted. If you don't see that message, logout and login again, then click Modify Proposal to see if your proposal is listed. If not, you will have to begin again.

Resource Links

Speaker Information Page (all conference speaker information including updates, links to online proposal submissions, proposal information plus Speaker Orientation links and Speaker Kit pages.)

http://www.astd.org/astd/conferences/speaker_information

Speaker Orientation Page (contains a video of attendees and veteran speakers discussing what makes a good conference speaker and multiple resource documents to help you do a great job of speaking at ASTD.)

http://www.astd.org/astd/Conferences/conference_speaker_orientation.htm

Sample Conference RFP Home Page (note this is for the 2008 TechKnowledge® conference. The International Conference site will function the same way but has different tracks, formats, target audiences, and topics.)

http://www.astd.org/astd/Conferences/TechKnowledge_RFP_Homepage.htm

PDF of Instructions for Application-Focused Objectives

<http://www.astd.org/NR/rdonlyres/6ECB4F79-FA04-4C63-B44B-7C0F052B5D03/9460/TKApplicationFocusedLearningObjectives2.pdf>

PDF of Submission Instructions and Screen Shots

<http://www.astd.org/NR/rdonlyres/888D68FB-0024-4211-90CA-1D2D50E23EB8/11838/TK08instructionswithscreens.pdf>

Proposal Fields. Follow the instructions online and in the PDF of screen shots.

Steps	Details
Login	-Returning submitters/speakers use existing e-code or request that it be resent to your email address. -New submitter/speakers create a new login profile. Your e-code will be sent to you.
Select/Add Speakers	Search the database for a speaker already in the system. OR Add a new speaker. Be sure that you have all contact information (address, phone, email) and a short bio. These are required fields.
Areas of Expertise	All speakers will be asked to select up to three areas of expertise which will assist ASTD in finding speakers for specific topics and sessions as well as requests from Chapters and members for speakers.
Industry Affiliation	All speakers will be asked to identify their industry affiliation which will help in recruitment.
Title	Enter the session title.
Duration	Select the appropriate duration from the list.
Format	Select the proper format from the list.
Track	Select the correct track from the list.
Target Audience	Select the target audience that best fits your topic from the drop-down menu.
Learning Approach	Select the learning approach that best fits your topic from the drop-down menu.
Description	Paste in your prepared description. (maximum: 2,000 characters including the spaces.)
Learning Objectives	Paste in your prepared objectives.
Delivery Methods	Paste in your prepared delivery methods.
Enter Speaker Reference	Search for the reference name which may be in the database. If not found, add new reference. Be prepared to enter complete contact information.
Submit Proposal	When you've completed all steps click <i>Continue Proposal</i> to submit your proposal. You will see a verification message onscreen that your proposal was submitted.

How to Submit a Winning ASTD Conference Proposal Post-Test

Answer Key

Question	Notes/Answers
<p>1. What is the primary reason for ASTD conference education sessions?</p> <p>a. To help participants learn from each other and network.</p> <p>b. To offer an opportunity for speakers to gain exposure for their companies, products, or services.</p> <p>c. To provide new information and knowledge for participants to use on the job.</p>	<p>C is the correct answer but A is also true although not the primary reason.</p>
<p>4. Conference sessions should always be conducted as lecture-based presentations with PowerPoint slides.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">True False</p>	<p>False—Some content works better with lecture but the ASTD audience expects current approaches.</p>
<p>5. PowerPoint is a suitable means to deliver a session as long as the slides are interesting and informative.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">True False</p>	<p>False—ASTD encourages speakers to limit PowerPoint to a few support slides.</p>
<p>4. The Program Advisory Committee selects all conference sessions from proposals.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">True False</p>	<p>False—Of the over 200 potential slots about 125-150 are selected from proposals. Others are special programs developed each year such as Legends.</p>
<p>5. Proposals are reviewed against which of the following criteria:</p> <p>a. Clarity of learning objectives.</p> <p>b. Session content that is relevant to the audience and meets requested topics.</p> <p>c. Diversity of speakers.</p> <p>d. All of the above.</p>	<p>D—All of the listed criteria are key factors in determining selections.</p>
<p>6. Application-Focused Learning Objectives show the session participants what they will be able to apply back on the job.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">True False</p>	<p>True—this is a key requirement of the ASTD audience—applicability back on the job.</p>
<p>9. Proposals may be submitted online at any time of year.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">True False</p>	<p>False—there is an open submission period each year for each conference which is announced on the website and via emails to members and past submitters.</p>
<p>10. When a proposal has been successfully submitted, the submitter will receive notification by which method?</p> <p>a. Email notification within 24 hours.</p> <p>b. On-screen verification immediately.</p> <p>c. Hard copy letter via postal mail.</p>	<p>B—an immediate on-screen message appears verifying the successful submission.</p>
<p>11. All instructions, including screen shots for proposal submission can be found online.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">True False</p>	<p>True—there is a dedicated set of webpages with complete instructions, requirements, criteria, and screen shots of the online template.</p>