



IAF Canada Newsletter - November 2007

The mission of the IAF is to promote, support, and advance the art and practice of professional facilitation through methods exchange, professional growth, practical research, collegial networking, and support services. This is accomplished through peer-to-peer networking, professional development, and annual conferences which are critical means for fulfilling the mission and reflecting our core values.

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Who Are We? A Mini-Census of our Canadian Membership

The IAF Board recently exchanged several e-mails around the profile of our membership. This tweaked my interest, so in mid-October I did a quick scroll through our membership list. (You can do the same by clicking on "Find A Facilitator" on the IAF global web site home page at www.iaf-world.org.) This is what I found.

In Canada, we are overwhelmingly an association of consultants: some 147 of 188 members (78%) work in consulting firms. Of the remaining 41 members, 8 (4%) are employed in other fields in the private sector. Some 32 (17%) work in the public sector (health care, education, or one of our three levels of government). We have a single member (0.5%) employed in a non-governmental organization.

There are many implications to draw from these numbers. The most obvious is that we have potential to grow our membership among the many "in-house" facilitators working in both the public and private sectors. We also clearly have a lot of work to do to make IAF as attractive to the thousands of facilitators who are not members as it is to you who are.

One point that struck me very strongly was how few consultant members have their web sites posted as part of their contact information in “Find A Facilitator”. You can add your web site very easily. Simply go to the IAF web site and click on “LogIn”. Enter your User Name and Password. Up at the top of the next page to appear will be “Welcome *Your Name*”. Click on “Edit My Profile”, enter your web site in the space near the end of your profile, hit “Update” and it’s done. (You can check by going back to your personal listing under “Find A Facilitator”.) Outside organizations do use our listing to locate facilitators. Without your web site, no potential client or colleague has any way of knowing what you can do.

Welcome New Members, and

A very warm welcome to IAF to our newest members, who have joined since August:

- Angela Anderson, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory
- Solange Belleforte, Kamloops, British Columbia
- Bryan Boyle, Wyoming, Ontario
- Coleen Davidson, Amherst, Nova Scotia
- Daniel Dezainde, Gatineau, Quebec
- Anne Marie Downey, Edmonton, Alberta
- Julie Fillion, Ottawa, Ontario
- Micheline Flannery, Ottawa, Ontario
- Kim Ghostkeeper, Edmonton, Alberta
- Susan Hollett, Shoal Harbour, Newfoundland and Labrador
- Frances MacNeil, Toronto, Ontario
- Roman Melynk, Toronto, Ontario
- Cameron Tulloch, Hamilton, Ontario
- Monica Wilson, Beaconsfield, Quebec

Congratulations

Gary Walker of Brampton, Ontario, is our newest IAF Certified© Professional Facilitator. Gary was successful at a certification event held in Santa Fe, New Mexico in October.

Conference Updates

North America (Atlanta, April 10-12, 2008)

The final list of workshops and presenters will soon be up on the North America Regional web site (www.iafna.org). Registrations are coming in from around the world. The current “early bird” Conference fee for IAF members (\$US675.00) will be in place until January 7. And the true cost for Canadians to attend just keeps getting lower and lower! There will be an IAF certification event prior to the Conference, as well as a set of pre-conference workshops. And the plenary sessions and individual learning events within the regular Conference will be excellent. The web site has lots of information, and there will also be special communications directly to you as the program and other features of the Conference are finalized.

We hope to announce by the end of December the site of the 2009 North America Conference. It will be held in Canada. We plan to have a very high-profile presence in Atlanta.

Australasia (Adelaide, South Australia, November 28-30, 2007)

It's still not too late to hop a plane to Australia to enjoy the IAF/AFN Australasia Conference in Adelaide. Workshops range from “An Appreciative Inquiry into Difficult Clients” to “Facilitating Community Engagement”. Access the Conference web site through www.iaf-world.org.

Africa (Johannesburg, South Africa, July 23-24, 2008)

If Australia is not exotic enough for you, perhaps the 3rd IAF Africa Facilitators Conference will be more to your taste. The Conference will be held at the Pilanesberg Reserve, outside Johannesburg. Especially exciting is the fact that the Conference will feature the first IAF facilitator certification event to be held in Africa. The Conference web site can be found through www.iaf-world.org.

Asia (Bangkok, Thailand, August 27 – 28, 2008)

This will be the 11th annual IAF Asia Facilitators Conference. The July 2007 Conference in Kuala Lumpur drew delegates from over 25 countries around the world. Next year's theme, “The Savoury Spices of Facilitation”, gives you a pretty good idea of what to expect. The Conference web site is already up (via www.iaf-world.org).

Europe (Groningen, Netherlands, October 3 – 5, 2008)

This will be the 15th IAF Europe Conference. It will be held on the campus of Hanze University of Applied Sciences, in Groningen, a city founded in 1040. The web site will be up soon and accessible through www.iaf-world.org. The recent IAF Europe Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland attracted many Canadians, both as delegates and as workshop leaders.

Below the Waterline: News from the Board of Directors

Is it 80% or 90% of an iceberg that is hidden below the waterline? Regardless, the image is familiar to us all. It's much the same in our professional, volunteer, and personal lives. Four years of research and writing produce a book. A year of preparation builds to a three-day conference. Six months of intensive training gives us the physical fitness and self-confidence to challenge our first half-marathon.

Not surprisingly, the vast majority of the work of IAF also takes place "below the waterline". Each member of our Board of Directors wears two hats. The one is our membership on the Board itself, where we serve as the stewards of the organization, responsible for its policy direction and financial health. The other is our operational role, in which we are each responsible for a specific portfolio, be it Regional representation (Australia/New Zealand, Africa, etc.), or a Strategic Initiative (Professional Development, Conferences, etc.), or a combined administrative/policy charge (Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Chair Elect, or Past Chair).

Members of our Board live literally around the world. A 2:00 p.m. conference call for me in Ottawa means that Stephen Thorpe, our Secretary, is busy taking notes at 2:00 a.m. at his home in New Zealand. An e-mail sent by Prabu Naidu, our Asia Regional Representative, at 5:00 in the afternoon when he is leaving his office in Singapore, reaches his United States counterpart, Michelle Golden, while she is still tucked into bed in St. Louis. Her reply arrives at Prabu's computer when he, in turn, is asleep. Jim Campbell and Jerome Passmore, our Europe and Africa Regional Representatives, sit almost in the middle, in both time and space, of this crisscrossing communication traffic.

The combination of roles, the asynchronous nature of most of our communications (and the awkwardness of timing our direct interactions), and the financial and logistical issues that limit our face-to-face meetings to one a year, make participation on the IAF Board the most stimulating, challenging, and (yes) time-consuming volunteer experience of my life. And I have only been a member of the Board for just over three months!

Over those months, here are just some of the strategic and operational issues that have occupied the Board:

- a major report on certification, which will be formally coming to the Board at its December conference call, but which has already sparked much on-line discussion;
- follow-up on the five strategic directions identified at our Board meeting in July;
- what “shared services” we need to be able to provide to each of our Regions and Strategic Initiative Coordinators (no small matter in an organization as widely distributed, as regionally idiosyncratic, and as limited in its staff and financial resources as IAF);
- potential accreditation of educational and training institutions offering formal programs in facilitation;
- redesign of our global web site;
- revamping our membership database;
- policies on affiliated organizations; and (that old stand-by in any volunteer organization),
- by-law amendments.

The Board will also soon be considering a major organizational redesign to try to bring IAF’s structure and resource base more in line with our organizational needs. And the 2008 budget is just coming together.

Meanwhile, each Region is in the midst of planning its own conferences, handling membership liaison, producing communications, managing its web site, and continually trying to identify best practices through sharing our individual experiences. At the same time, certification events, community outreach initiatives, management of our global web site and communications, and many other activities are taking place under the direction of our Strategic Initiative Coordinators.

More news on all of these initiatives will come to you through the [Global Flipchart](#), this [IAF Canada Newsletter](#), or one of the Communications Team’s [IAF Member Update](#) bulletins. But what you read and experience will really be just the “tip of the iceberg”.

IAF Canada Monograph Series

For some time, the IAF Europe Region has published short monographs prepared by its members on special issues in facilitation. So I thought, why not do something similar in Canada? We have lots of our own facilitation challenges and issues. So here’s the idea. I am looking for short articles (5 – 10 pages) that discuss some aspect of facilitation or our facilitation practices. Your article could be an original work, or something you have previously published that you feel still has relevance. (If previously published, we probably simply need to acknowledge its source.) Sample topics could include:

- virtual/distance facilitation;
- communities of practice (how they form, how they work);
- business practice issues;
- facilitation challenges in various settings (not-for-profit organizations, culturally-diverse groups, First Nations communities, government agencies, public or private companies, etc.).

There are dozens of other possibilities. Don't worry if you feel you lack writing skills: that's why the world has editors. Go where your energy and passions are, and others will want to go there with you! We can publish articles as they become available. I'll kick-start the series with an article on "Consensus" that originally appeared in the IAF journal, Group Facilitation, in 2002. Look for it next month.

Opportunities Available

Global Flipchart "Member of the Month"

Each month, beginning in November, IAF's Global Flipchart will profile a member from one of our Regions. A Canadian member will be featured in May 2008. So don't be modest. If you feel you have an interesting practice, let us know about it. Here's the information that Global Flipchart is looking for:

1. What is your name?
2. Where are you located?
3. How long have you been a member of IAF?
4. Tell us a little about the organization you work for. What is its name? What does it do?
5. What is your job within the organization?
6. How do you use facilitation in your work?
7. Share a recent facilitation experience (a mini-case story of no more than 250 words). What did you do? How did you do it? With whom did you do it?
8. If you could share one thing you have learned with other facilitators around the world, what would it be?

So if you would like to share your story, please send it to me and to our Global Flipchart Editor (Jim Troxel) at globalflipchart@iaf-world.org by March 1. Include a jpg digital photo of yourself as well. In fact, why not send me your story anytime? I think members in Canada would be interested in learning more about one another. We'll include a profile in each of these Newsletters.

Global Communications

If you have experience in marketing or communication, IAF could use your help. We are looking for ways to enhance global member communication by announcing job opportunities, sharing on-going volunteer needs, and enhancing our on-line Facilitator Resource Centre with new tips and articles from our members. And those are just a few

of the possibilities. If you are interested, please contact me, or feel free to get in touch directly with IAF's Strategic Initiative Coordinator responsible for Communications and Publications. Tammy Adams can be reached at tadams@chaosity.com or by telephone at (480) 775-8756.

IAF Canada Newsletter

If you love the look and feel of this Newsletter, do nothing, and you can expect more of the same. If you have some graphic design abilities, and if you feel that everyone would enjoy a better-looking little publication, please let me know (John Butcher, jbutcher@magma.ca or (613) 725-2280).

IAF Canada Web Content

IAF Canada and IAF United States collaborate as "IAF North America". We have a joint web site (www.iafna.org). It would be nice to post more Canada-specific content on the site. Some ideas include a professional development and networking "Events Calendar" (events can also be posted on the IAF global web site), and profiles of members and their facilitation practices. Would someone like to organize this?

And Finally

Global Community Outreach

This global Strategic Initiative reflects IAF's long-standing commitment to community service and development. A volunteer was needed to work on the global Community Outreach Committee, and to serve as a liaison and communication source with members in Canada. As a result of a notice in the September Newsletter, Nancy Van Boxmeer of Toronto has stepped forward to join the Community Outreach Committee. Thank you, Nancy!