

Looking Back on the Activities of the ASME Engineering and Technology Management (E&TM) Group

Hiroshi Honda

Tokyo Metropolitan Institute of Technology

E-Mail Address: Hondah9876@aol.com

The author became a member of ASME in 1977, and since 1999, has intensively promoted the activities of the ASME E&TM Group, which comprises Technology & Society (T&S), Management, and Safety Engineering and Risk Analysis (SERAD) Divisions, by attending National Nominating Committee as a voting member representing E&TM Group, organizing E&TM Group sessions for International Mechanical Engineering Congress & Exposition (IMECE) 2000-2004, and leading other activities, residing in Japan.

Effective November 1, 2003, the author became T&S Division Chair and has been administrating the activities of Energy & Economic Committee, Emerging Technology and Society Committee and International Committee, which were established as a result of his groundwork and/or at his proposal, in addition to those of Sustainable Engineering, Engineering Public Policy, Intellectual Property, and Ethics and Technology Committees.

The thirty seven technical divisions of the ASME are grouped into eight Groups, each comprising 3 to 6 divisions, and discussion and information exchange between the divisions are frequently made within each group, leading to various cosponsored events on many occasions. For example, when the author proposed an E&TM Group sponsored symposium at an E&TM Group Operating Board meeting, chaired by then Vice President Arnold Rothstein at IMECE 1999 in Nashville, Tennessee, the group could sponsor a symposium entitled "Successfully Managing the Risk and Development of Your Business and Technology" (Risk, Managing and Technology symbolize the three divisions of E&TM Group) at IMECE 2000 in Orlando, Florida, which included distinguished sessions such as "Toward Mutual Recognition of Educational and Professional Credentials in the Global Society", with speakers Dr. Winfred Phillips, the former president of ASME, ABET and ASEE, and President Hideo Ohashi of the Japan Federation of Engineering Societies (also, past president of JSME), chaired by the author. At IMECE 2003, the author could invite Dr. Richard Hinder residing in London, a former Science and Technology Counsellor of British Embassy, Tokyo, to speak at Joint Management and T&S Division Dinner Reception, and at an E&TM Group technical session.

At IMECEs 2000 to 2004, the author could organize sessions, inviting presidents of other American Societies, the ASME's Past Presidents Sessions, and sessions, inviting representatives of National Science Foundation, National Institute of Health and NASA, with the support of ASME presidents and past presidents. At National Manufacturing Week 2005, the author could organize sessions, inviting representatives of Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Agency and spoke at one of the sessions with a representative of DOE's National Energy Technology Laboratory.

National Nominating Committee meetings are held for four days

at Summer Annual Meeting in June to choose ASME officers of the Vice President rank or above, and on Monday and Tuesday, meetings often continue until late at night. After supporters and candidates give presentations, discussions and voting are made until one candidate gains two thirds or more of the votes; therefore, jokes by voting members are regular practice to kill time during waiting. When there is time in the evening, local bars and restaurants become a social place to nurture the feeling of togetherness.

The personnel matters of division chairs are basically handled within a group and/or a division; however, a new division chair sometimes comes from outside of the group. Executive committee members of divisions are openly invited on some occasions and selected after review of the candidates' resumes and subsequent discussion. Those are contrary to most of the JSME's cases.

When doing business of the divisions, it is often necessary and important to make a clear self-assertion and to properly deal with those assertions, especially when they are in percussion. When the parties have dissimilar interests, those that could make a stronger, more effective assertion win a decision, gaining initiatives with much freedom for further business. Also, it is sometimes necessary to get on well with his or her colleagues. One of the important roles of the division chairs is to sum up diffusive individual interests to make division activities more focused, intensive and effective ones to an extent possible. This required the author to perceive human feelings in a sensitive manner, and to run the division with an American-style team work spirit and with timely, good ideas. Young people tend to make stronger assertions than the Japanese counterparts, often leading to unjustifiable situations; however, frequent assessment of each individual's assertion and behavior leads to effective check and balance.

One of the strengths of the ASME is having national sections and chapters around the world, and at this moment of recent completion of restructuring called "Continuity and Change," ASME makes best endeavors for itself to be more widely accepted in the global arena, by listening to a variety of voices and opinions from its members around the world. (Manuscript was received on May 18, 2005.)

Reference

Honda, H., "Some Thought on American Academic and Educational Culture," *Gakushikai-Kaihou* (Gakushikai Journal) 2005-V, No. 854, September 1, 2005

Note: Gakushi-kai is the Alumni Association of the seven public ivies of Japan (Tokyo, Kyoto, Tohoku, Kyushu, Hokkaido, Osaka and Nagoya Universities) and the former Seoul Imperial University and Taipei Imperial University.



Photo 1 Taken after the author's speech, with students at the University of Tennessee, majoring in ME related disciplines and psychology at ASME East Tennessee/Oak Ridge Joint Meeting on the evening of October 4 (Saturday), 2003 at Barley's (the author (center front) and Robert Kennedy, then T&S Division Secretary (far right))



Photo 2 Joint Management/T&S Division Dinner Reception on November 18 (Tuesday), 2003 in Washington, D. C. (From left to right: Tommy Gardner, then U. S. Navy Captain and Treasurer of T&S Division, the author, then T&S Division Chair, Speaker Dr. Richard Hinder, IEE Fellow from London, and Bob Simmons, E&TM Group Vice President)