

Train the Trainer Workshop Report- Weston, Florida, 2008

by *Sita Chokhavatia*

The art of teaching medicine is most often self taught and molded by self sought role models and mentors. Most trainees are ready to learn but may not like (as did Sir Winston Churchill) being taught nor like being critiqued. Providing constructive criticism for the trainees' procedural and cognitive skills is often challenging. So attending the TTT workshops structured specifically towards teaching gastroenterologist teachers provided a wonderful opportunity to be trained in the art of training gastroenterology trainees. The WGO/ACG sponsored TTT workshop I attended in Weston, Florida, was designed to teach international faculty the art of teaching by an exceptional international faculty led by Drs Toouli and Quigley.

The 4 day meeting was unique in several ways: The course content focused on adult education which is distinct from childhood education and included the acutely relevant topics of teaching procedural skills; assessment/evaluation and providing feedback; critical appraisal of studies and designing trials; writing manuscripts; presentation skills. The format of initial assignment to one of several small groups was balanced for ratio of international/national attendees and gender in each group. The sessions were designed to create a team spirit of striving for excellence in the assignments as well as in the "sporting" events. The interaction between attendees (trainees-educators in their institutions across the globe) and trainers (renowned international faculty) created a fun environment conducive to easy learning and the realization that issues such as credentialing and disruptive colleagues have neither geographical boundaries nor uniform solutions. The workshop provided the opportunity to hear global perspectives and make lasting international friendships. The international organizing staff was super efficient and friendly and made the meeting a truly special experience.

I highly recommend this workshop to all colleagues training fellows/residents/medical students (all truly adult trainees although, on occasion, the behaviors of some may belie this) and seeking techniques to refine their skills at teaching adults and furthering faculty development. As a Buddhist proverb states: when the student is ready, the teacher appears- so did TTT!

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