

# IOA World Café

## What You Said! A Synthesis

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010 The IOA invited the annual conference attendees to participate in a “World Café” process to answer the question: What does IOA need to be in the future? Approximately 100 people participated in the process and generated 287 responses. IOA consultant, Julia Classen of Aurora Consulting transcribed all of the responses and created this synthesis that was reported to the conference attendees on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

Below is a synthesis of the major themes that emerged from those responses. You will note in two instances there were two conflicting themes emerging. The World Café process does not gauge the “strength” or popularity of certain themes and thus additional follow up with a membership survey will provide an opportunity to examine the conflicts and other proposals to determine the depth and breadth of the themes listed below.

### *Themes of the conversation:*

- Emphasize the “I” in IOA-
  - Provide greater international content, resources and representation, conference speakers
  - Standards or practice need to be reflective of international practices
  - Certification is US centric
  - Materials and resources need to be distributed in multiple languages
  - Country codes need to be included and currency should not be barriers to participation
- Provide greater depth of content and resources
  - Conferences
    - Create conference tracks- expertise level or area of work as well for new and emerging practitioners
  - Case studies would be a helpful resource
  - Resources need to be further developed and distributed
  - The “case” for ombuds should be available from IOA and promoted as challenges to the profession continue
- Expand and become an “umbrella, holding, federation” organization
  - Expand types of practice e.g. organizational, classical, hybrids, collateral duty, health care, etc.
  - Create geographic sectors e.g. continental, country, regional, state
- Exploring strategic alliances/partnerships/ collaborations
  - With related fields, e.g. Human Resources, General Counsel
  - With other organizations- SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management)
  - With other ombuds groups

Conversely it was also stated...

- Don't become diluted

- Don't try to be all things to all people
- Remain a closely knit organization
- Sustain personal connections/ micro interactions
  
- Leverage technology
  - To deliver content
  - To make content acquisition affordable
  - To communicate with membership
- Create an IOA ombuds position
- IOA board needs to provide more leadership and act less like ombuds
- Have a more participatory decision-making model
  
- Need professional staff to grow, e.g. Executive Director, President, CEO  
Conversely it was also stated...
- Rely less on professional staff to keep members accountable
  
- Conduct business meetings professionally
- Create regional meetings, sectors, boards
  - Connect to "local" community
  - Provide opportunity to meet in addition to annual meeting
- Marketing, public relations, advocacy
  - For ombuds field
  - For ombuds offices
  - To prevent closings
  - Show cost and benefit
  - Publications, articles
- Inclusivity
  - Equal treatment of all members: voice and vote
  - Work only with non-discriminatory organizations