



**Human
Factors
and
Ergonomics
Society**

FELLOW PROFILE

Name: Andrew S. Imada

**Degrees, certifications,
etc.:** Ph.D., CPE

Current status: President, IEA,
A. S. Imada & Associates



Biography (How you got involved in the field, your major career activities and milestones):

The career journey began when I took a position at USC and I prepared for a course in human factors in a degree program for practicing managers and military officers. This gave me the opportunity to merge my training as an industrial / organizational psychologist with the physical dimensions of human interface. Early in my career, industry's emphasis was on quality and productivity, with particular interest with what the Japanese and Europeans were doing in these areas. I taught in Japan on two different occasions and met several Japanese colleagues who worked with me to come up with the concept of participatory ergonomics. We presented the first workshop on participatory ergonomics at the First International Symposium on Human Factors in Organizational Design and Management (ODAM) in 1984 and the idea has grown ever since.

Hal Hendrick and Ted Brown were colleagues at USC and we organized events and activities that evolved into what we now know as macroergonomics. It was an exciting time to be there to have contributed to the genesis of a paradigm that recognizes the organizational and contextual aspects of human interface that can truly make a difference in peoples' lives.

The university encouraged faculty to do consulting work to bring practical experience back to seminars and workshops. I was fortunate enough to be able to be involved with interventions that were eventually published. After twenty years of a dual university-industry existence I left the university to work with industry full time.

I have had the privilege to serve on the Board of Certification for Professional Ergonomics (BCPE), currently a member of the National Research Council's Board on Human Systems Integration (BOHSI) and have worked on Councils for HFES and IEA. All of these have been richly rewarding experiences. It gave me opportunities to learn from and work with bright people to achieve worthwhile ends. These activities have allowed me to repay the profession for a career that has been better than I could imagine. As with most work of this kind, the returns far exceed my contributions.

Employment History (List top 5 positions):

University of Southern California, 1979-2000

A.S. Imada & Associates, 1989 –

IEA, 2009 -

What were your significant contributions to the field?

Participatory Ergonomics

Macroergonomic interventions in industry

Did you receive any notable awards or recognition during your career?

HFES Fellow

IEA Fellow

1997 Liberty Mutual Prize

2000 Liberty Mutual Medal

What advice would you give someone considering HF/E as a profession?

Be open to a wide range of ideas and course work. You don't know what you don't yet know. What I thought I wouldn't have to know because I was never going to use it, was based on not knowing what I was going to do.

Great lessons will come from unexpected places, people and events. The best teachers came in the form of friends, books, events, and crises unrelated to my major area of study. I thought I was going to great universities to learn from teachers in classrooms. Instead, I learned from others in casual conversations, from pain and from observing others. Be open to these opportunities to learn from people who are different from you.

While you are acquiring all this great information and becoming the professional you will become, figure out what you are really trying to do. Overcoming each hurdle in education, career or professional life is followed by more hurdles. Unless you figure out why you are doing it, it will just be series of accomplishments with no real meaning. One of my best friends uses this Einstein quote to set our compass: "Concern for man and his fate must always form the chief interest of all technical endeavors. Never forget this in the midst of your diagrams and equations." Ergonomics has provided me the opportunity to fulfill this advice.