

Leaders to Follow



Business Leadership Forum: USA Institute Finance Programs Take Off

The **Business Leadership Forum: USA** has changed its format and goals over the past five years to keep step with the continuing changes in the emerging free-market economies of Eastern and Central Europe. Among the major changes is the development of custom-tailored programs designed for the particular professional interests of specific business sectors.

In response to this need, the Institute just completed the pilot program for the **Business Leadership Forum: USA "Executive Education Workshop in the US for Finance Professionals"** (May 24-June 7, 1997).

The "**Executive Education Workshop in the US for Finance Professionals**" is the first in a series of programs developed at the request of leading European business executives in the sectors served. For the "**Executive Education Workshop in the US for Finance Professionals**," Institute officers worked closely with finance executives to discover their needs, goals and capabilities.

This process began in the Czech Republic, with a letter of invitation (cosigned by Prague's Chamber of Commerce) to major financial institutions including banks, insurance companies and stock brokerages.

From the information gathered directly from potential customers in Europe, the Institute designed the "**Executive Education Workshop in the US for Finance Professionals**" to meet the specific needs articulated by the participants. The box to the right details their custom-tailored schedule.

During the first day of their program, the participants met with U.S. executives in their counterpart businesses, to discover particular needs and interests of the participants. With this information, the Institute organized meetings for the participants to help them achieve their stated professional goals.

- **Introduction and Orientation/Executive English seminars/seminars at the University of North Florida, School of Business.** These program components are included in all **BLF:USA** programs. They were customized for the participants in the pilot program, to emphasize finance terminology.
- **Business Meetings & discussions with Florida firms interested in doing business with Eastern & Central European firms.** These meetings were arranged prior to the participants' arrival in the U.S. based on the materials submitted by the participants, including their company literature and professional credentials.
- **Custom-tailored business meetings, targeted to pinpoint participants' special interests and needs in the United States.** These custom-tailored meetings, which supplement the scheduled Business Meetings and discussions, were arranged following the participants' U.S. arrival.

Finance program at work in ILI offices:

P. Timbie, I. Kaplan, P. Vosmikova, P. Prokop



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***Business Leadership Forum: USA
Institute Finance Programs Provide Unique Opportunity***

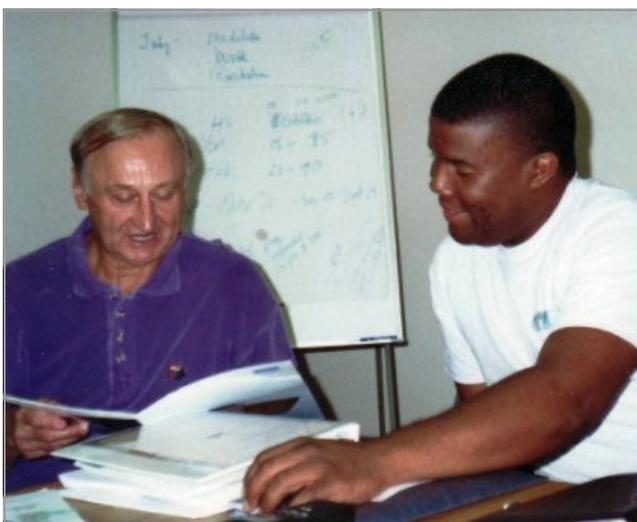
The participants in the **Business Leadership Forum: USA "Executive Education Workshop in the US for Finance Professionals"** pilot program were **Ing. Ivo Kaplan**, Director, **SPGroup a.s., Prague**, and **Petr Prokop**, Chief Financial Officer, **Ceska Pojistovna, Prague**. These finance executives enjoyed unprecedented access to top executives in their professional sector, enabling them to form their own international professional network of successful executives. Through business presentations and meetings, American executives gave helpful insights into successful business practices in the U.S.

Presenter **Leo Niedzwiecke**, Agent for **Prudential Insurance Company**, an industry leader in the U.S., remarked that "this program introduces you to your U.S. colleagues—now it's up to you to act on the knowledge you gained." **Doug Wilder**, CEO of the **Wilder Group**, a consulting firm to American CEO's interested in maximizing their company's potential, con-

firmed this observation and added that "now the participants can send an email to their new American colleagues to discuss areas of mutual interest."

Ing. Kaplan had very specific goals for his **BLF: USA** program, involving an assessment of current investment opportunities in the United States. He was quite successful in focusing his activities in this direction and met American business leaders who could give him the information he sought. "We're on the right track professionally" was Ing. Kaplan's summary remark concerning the range of his Czech firm's finance activities.

The pilot program offered a unique chance for the prepared European executive with direction, focus and a willingness to accept advice and assistance from his or her American counterparts. We look forward to our next **Business Leadership Forum: USA "Executive Education Workshop in the US for Finance Professionals"**



Two Presidents confer: ILI President Jarda Tusek talks over business development ideas with African American Chamber of Commerce President Joseph Carswell in the ILI offices.

ILI UPDATE

- ILI President Jarda Tusek recently returned from a European visit which included the Czech Republic. He talked with firms interested in import/export activities with American companies, and with candidates for the **Business Leadership Forum; USA**. His next scheduled trip is June 15-25, during which time he'll meet with potential clients in the Czech Republic and Germany.
- **Global Ventures Group** is currently working with two European clients, helping them develop deals with American firms interested in importing their products. **TradeNet** is involved in another deal to import food products from Europe to the United States.