TRAINING TODAY

CHICAGOLAND CHAPTER ASTD WORKPLACE LEARNING & PERFORMANCE

SPRING 2008

A MAGAZINE FOR WORKPLACE LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE PROFESSIONALS IN THE CHICAGOLAND AREA

Letter From the Editor

Are you a life long learner?

I marvel at what I regularly learn from my peers. Over the years I have received many gifts from fellow professionals – wisdom in the form of feedback, sharing what they have done, sharing what hasn't worked and what they would do differently.

20 years ago, as a newly promoted sales trainer for the Tombstone Pizza division of Kraft Foods, I was given the task of creating a sales curriculum. No budget for curriculum development or program development. No budget to buy any existing programs. (That is why we hired you.) So, as a rookie I set out to determine what the needs were. And I took a very important step. (I'm not sure if I realized how important it was at the time.) I talked to professionals who had done it before. I came across a professional who had created a new hire orientation and training program for sales professionals in a consumer products company – for a direct store delivery sales force. Wow. It was like Christmas, such a gift! He shared it openly, gave me a copy. I'm guessing it saved me months of design time, because so much of it was relevant.

I didn't know about CCASTD at the time. I found that resource via old fashioned networking. What a gift that we can belong to a vital and active professional community. We can find help when we need it and we can offer assistance to give back. I like this balance.

We are hearing from resources this issue that are sharing their expertise with us on various topics. Angela Seigfried shares with us some insights on measuring the effectiveness of our sales force. We gain insights into what it is like for participants in workshops where English is not their first language. We also touch on a traditional topic of getting learning transfer. Cyndi Maxie shares tips for speakers. And more.

I hope when you need a resource you can find one and that you have an opportunity to share with someone else when they are in need.

Until next issue,

Renie McClay
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Training Today, the magazine of the Chicagoland Chapter of ASTD, is published four times a year as a service to its membership.

WINNER APEX'98 AWARDS FOR PUBLICATION EXCELLENCE

Ending the Blame Game: *Rethinking Transfer of Training*

by Vince Cyboran, Ed.D.

Our mad dash to workplace performance, competence, and relevance requires the utilization of a comprehensive set of tools, including rapid instructional design, prototyping, blended learning, and levels of evaluation. We are walking examples of best practices! So why then is our old nemesis 'transfer of training' still proffered as a blanket explanation when the results of a performance initiative are less than spectacular? The implication being that the training was inadequate. How should we respond to such challenges?

Consider the following scenario. An organization has implemented a new project management system. A considerable amount of time and money have been spent on both training (classroom-based, self-paced, and synchronous demonstrations) and knowledge management. Electronic evaluations were done on Levels 1 through 3 through the LMS. The Level-1 (Reaction) evaluations indicate that the learners were extremely satisfied. The Level-2 (Learning) evaluations indicate that the learners did extremely well on authentic assessment tasks built into the classroom-based and self-paced e-Learning. They were able to complete all of the required performance tasks, under the proper conditions, at the right level of performance and within an agreed-upon amount of time. Unfortunately, the Level-3 (Behavior) evaluations show that many of the learners can't use their newly acquired knowledge and skills on the job. There are multiple potential causes for this performance dilemma. Though it would be difficult to argue that there isn't a transfer-of-training problem at play here, it is the adequacy of the explanation that must be challenged. Identifying a situation such as this as a 'transfer-of-training problem' is a bit like stating that a broken-down truck, stuck in traffic, has a 'mobility problem.' *Referring to a transfer-of-training problem is descriptive, not explanative.* The deeper questions to consider are: "Why is there a transfer problem?"; "What are we going to do about it?"; and "What is the story behind the numbers?" Let's explore this problem further, focusing on the training component of the performance initiative.

A review of the Learning Plan demonstrates that it is inadequate. There are two principal areas of concern: the Evaluation section and the Implementation/Rollout section. The Evaluation section did not clearly document which levels would be evaluated and how those levels would be evaluated. For there to be a positive Level-3 evaluation, plans must be set in place to ensure that learners have realistic and timely on-the-job, post-training assignments. There must not be too long a time between training and on-the-job assignments. Further, there needs to be a requirement that learners use their new skills on the job. The use of the new skills must be documented. The Implementation/Rollout section did not clearly document all communication requirements with stakeholders, that includes reciprocal communication between Workplace Learning Professionals (WLPs) and the learners' managers at the appropriate times. The expectation must be set that managers will actively participate in performance improvement initiatives. Both WLPs and managers are responsible for the success of the initiative. For our scenario, let's assume we found that there was no clear expectation set for managers to be involved following the training.

Now that we know the genesis of the Level-3 problems, how do we proceed? It's time for some performance triage. A brief set of workplace assignments can be quickly created that serve as a model for all managers. Managers can then modify the assignments as need be. Because we never start from scratch, these assignments can potentially come from managers who have actively participated in the rollout of the project management system, especially those who have participated in the creation and/or review of the training. Granted, there is a larger problem looming here: how did the Learning Plan get approved with such glaring errors? This larger problem has to do with process and procedure; it must be fixed, but fixing it will not immediately help solve the problem with the implementation of the new project management system.

My caution is that we not let 'transfer-of-training problems' become another knee-jerk, blame-the-training cry. Junior instructional designers and trainers are especially vulnerable when confronted by this line of thinking. If the training has been designed well and the learners have done well in Level 2, perhaps scoring perfectly, then the training can't get any better. Learners can't score 110% on performance assessments! It is up to us as WLPs to communicate clearly and strongly both during the planning and implementation phases of learning initiatives. Doing so can help stop the blame game and allow us to focus on productively and collaboratively improving workplace performance.

Vince has over 20 years experience in the fields of Training and Education. He has worked for Hewitt Associates, Unitech Systems, NETg (when it was Deltak), Arthur Andersen & Co., and John Hancock Insurance. He has graduate-level teaching experience in both Training and Development and in Education. Since 2004, Vince has been teaching full-time in Roosevelt University's Graduate Program in Training and Development, focusing on instructional design and e-learning. He holds an Ed.D. in Curriculum Studies from DePaul University, an M.S. Instructional and Performance Technology from Boise State University, and a B.A. in Education from the University of Illinois.

Measure Twice, Cut Once

by Angela Siegfried, CPLP

"The only man who behaves sensibly is my tailor; he takes my measurements anew every time he sees me, while all the rest go on with their old measurements and expect me to fit them".

Nobel Prize winner — George Bernard Shaw

Mr. Shaw's tailor was a smart man. Having spent 15 years in the learning and performance field I know how critical measurement is to any business, yet it is often overlooked. We lean toward doing business the same way we always have just because we always have!

For those of us supporting a sales environment, how do things get measured? By numbers and money! Surveys and smiley face evaluations can only support your worth for so long. While, measuring the skills of your sales force and the ROI of your training can be daunting, you owe it to yourself and the organization to put some substance behind all the grueling work you and your teams invest in educating the people who are responsible for increased business growth.

Is your training making an impact? Are you seeing an increase in productivity from your participants? Are your sales teams making, or better yet exceeding, their goals? It is likely that the success of your organization is in part due to your training programs.

This year I challenged Lisa Swanson, one of my team members who is a Sales Learning and Performance Instructor at Allied Insurance, to focus on evaluating the effectiveness of our sales training and measuring the success of our sales force. Lisa has spent this year learning how to measure ROI and developing an evaluation program for our learning and performance team.

Lisa's passion for evaluation and her belief in ROI is contagious. In fact, for the first time in fifteen years, I too am excited about unveiling the story the numbers will tell. I think Lisa's story and perspective will inspire you to create your own evaluation initiative. I invited Lisa to share her insights as she began her journey in measuring and evaluating learning.

AS: Our department historically has had little in the way of measurement for our training. What are your biggest challenges or apprehensions about taking on such a mammoth project?

LS: *One of my biggest challenges is effectively and efficiently integrating measurement. As you mentioned, our department hasn't measured ROI on our programs. Since this is something new, there will probably be resistance to the process. Getting everyone on board, creating a positive environment for honest sharing of information and getting executive buy-in to the process are important challenges to overcome.*

AS: In the financial world, ROI is a measurement of historic data and usually includes the ratio of the money that is either lost or gained in relationship to the money invested. How does training ROI differ?

LS: *It doesn't! ROI is the monetary value of business performance compared to the cost of the program. The formula for ROI is net program benefits (program benefits – costs) divided by program costs times 100. This is the same formula used in evaluating other investments where ROI is traditionally reported as earnings divided by investment.*

Sometimes you'll hear terms such as return on information, return on inspiration, return on intelligence or return on innovation. These are cute phrases, but in business, ROI is return on investment and reporting it as anything else is confusing and lacks credibility.

AS: How would a training organization prepare to measure ROI?

Evaluation Levels

1. Reaction and Planned Action
2. Learning
3. Application
4. Business Impact
5. ROI

Source: *Return on Investment in Training and Performance Improvement Programs,* 2nd Ed. By Jack J. Phillips, Butterowrth_Heinemann, Boston, MA 2003.

LS: *Preparation for measuring ROI begins when a program is in the development phase. At this time, organizations should be able to answer the following: How will data be collected? From what sources? At what time during the program implementation will the program be evaluated? Who will be responsible for collecting the data? It is also important to evaluate whether the program warrants measuring to such a level. Measuring at all five levels of evaluation takes time and resources. Some things to consider when deciding which level to evaluate at are:*

- *purpose of the evaluation*
- *program need*
- *program profile*
- *stakeholder needs*

Examples of programs that should be evaluated for Business Impact and ROI are those that are:

- *linked to operational goals and issues*
- *important to strategic objectives*
- *highly visible*
- *programs top executives are interested in evaluating*
- *high in cost*
- *significant in the amount of time invested*

AS: It seems equally important to measure the intangible benefits a training organization provides too. What areas should be taken under consideration?

LS: *There are benefits of training that can't be credibly converted to money, so they're not. I agree it is equally important to report these benefits. Some examples of intangible benefits from the book Make Training Evaluation Work, by Jack Phillips, Patti P. Phillips and Toni K. Hodges are:*

- *increased job satisfaction*
- *increased organizational commitment*
- *improved teamwork*
- *improved customer service*
- *reduced complaints*
- *reduced conflicts*

AS: There are a number of evaluation models to measure ROI, what helped you choose one that was right for us?

LS: Most evaluation models are closely related and build on the work of the others. The most accepted and commonly used is the four-level framework developed by Donald Kirkpatrick. Jack Phillips built on the work of Kirkpatrick by adding a fifth level, a process model, and developing guiding principles to ensure stan-

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dardization and consistency. The combination of Kirkpatrick and Phillips is used on a global basis in about 80 percent of the learning and development functions according to the American Society for Training and Development. So, when choosing what was right for Allied, I went with the choice of the majority.

AS: Lisa, before measuring training, what questions should you ask yourself?
LS: *How will the information be used, who are the key stakeholders that the results will be communicated to? Does the cost of the program warrant the cost of the time and resources it will take to measure? What data can be converted to money? How will you collect the data needed, and from whom? What are our company's goals with regards to our program results?*

AS: What are some of the things you wish you would have known before you started this endeavor?
LS: First, I wish I would have known that it's best to plan evaluation as the program is created. Since most of us already have existing courses, planning evaluation now may be more challenging. We may meet with more resistance and struggle with getting everyone on board.
The other thing I wish I knew was the importance a participant's manager plays in the transfer of learning. The number one thing affecting learning is the manager before the program, the trainer before the program is number two, and the manager after the program is number three. Two of the top three influencers are the manager! You can find more information on this in the book, "Transfer of Training" by Mary L. Broad and John W. Newstrom.

AS: Measuring and evaluating ROI isn't free. To help readers who might want to justify the need of such a tool, would you share your thoughts about what the biggest wins are for investing in a project like the one you are working on?
LS: *Investing in measurement and evaluation allows us to show the results of our learning investment, so we continue to receive the funds needed for our programs and are able to maintain or enhance our present status and influence in our organization. It's all about making money, saving money and avoiding costs.*

AS: Lisa, thank you for spending time with me and sharing your experience with SMT readers. Can we meet again in six months to hear about your progress?
LS: *You're welcome and I would love to meet with you again. I do have one last website that I feel is a great resource for ROI, if readers want to learn more go to www.roiinstitute.net . Invest in your training evaluation, measure it, test it, measure it again. You are sure to make an impact the first time you present the results to your senior leadership, which in turn builds credibility, and proves how important the educational investment is.*

Angela Siegfried, CPLP, is the Sales Learning and Performance Director for Allied Insurance in Des Moines, Iowa. Angela's primary responsibilities include consulting with internal sales associates and independent agents to design, develop and deliver educational offerings that assist customers in meeting their goals. Angela's background is in leadership development and training. Prior to joining Allied, she spent twelve years working in the airline industry. In addition to designing and delivering training for executives, managers, customer service representatives, flight attendants, sales representatives and ramp service personnel, Angela held positions as Training and Culture representative and General Manager. Angela is an active member of the local and national chapter of the American Society for Training and Development, acting as V.P. of Community Relations for the Central Iowa Chapter of ASTD. She is also an active member of the Professional Society for Sales and Marketing Training.

Tapping Into the Tower of Visual Learning

by Catherine J. Rezak

When an organization's message to its employees is critical, taking a big-picture approach can provide powerful results.

Consider these two business scenarios:

- One of the United States' largest health-insurance carriers is being rocked by escalating costs, increasingly complex regulations and exasperated customers. The company wants to improve service, simplify procedures and build stronger relationships with customers. Doing so will affect 6,000 employees in four states.
- One of North America's largest parcel companies has developed an aggressive growth strategy to position itself as a stronger global player. In order to make the transformation, more than 12,000 employees in nearly 300 offices will have to do business differently, even though the company already is quite profitable.

At first glance, these seem like very different situations. But they're not. As with most companies today, these companies are dealing with major organizational change, and they need commitment from a large number of employees — and they need it immediately.

In circumstances such as these, employees always have important questions as the new strategies and initiatives begin to play out. Why are we changing? What's the plan? What will we be doing differently now? How will this make us better? How does this affect my job?

If these questions aren't answered — and answered well — resistance is sure to follow. And that's exactly why many forward-thinking companies are taking a "big picture" approach to their communications challenges.
Literally.

Words, for all their variety and beauty, often fail to convey complete messages on their own. Whether laden with jargon, shaded by nuance or hampered by imprecision, written and/or spoken language is not the most effective way to deliver comprehensive information to large audiences. Print and broadcast media have known this for decades, relying on images to reinforce a point, whether it's a picture of a burning building on the news or a luscious apple pie in an advertisement. The same principle applies to the business world.

In the case of business scenarios such as those outlined above, memos and talking-head speeches just don't work without additional context — the messages are received incompletely or, worse, completely tuned out. But our capacity for comprehension increases exponentially when the message taps into the power of visual recognition as well.

That old saying about pictures being worth a thousand words holds particular value in business situations. Research has shown that the eyes process and assimilate information faster than any other sensory input, and many companies are beginning to embrace this fact. One approach to employee communication that's gaining rapid acceptance, particularly in large corporations, is the use of "maps" to educate and motivate a workforce around organizational changes.

Maps are generally large, colorful table-sized visuals that are designed to capture and convey information relevant to a company's issues. These vibrant graphic representations are coupled with the hands-on elements of an educational concept known as "discovery learning," — a learning methodology which actively involves participants in the learning process instead of subjecting them to the passive download of information that's common to PowerPoint presentations, lectures and newsletters.

As maps have increasingly been used in communication and educational settings, formal and informal studies have identified four key advantages over traditional learning approaches:

Motivation to Learn:
Maps that utilize discovery learning techniques help draw learners into the learning environment and keep them interested and involved. As they seek information, work with peers and explore ideas, their natural curiosity is aroused and ultimately satisfied. The "fun factor" is high when games, simulations, colorful visuals and competitive challenges are used to create an experiential environment for learning.

Acceleration of Learning:
Because maps are so highly engaging, learners quickly begin using their minds to digest new information, make connections to their previous experiences and pull together disparate pieces of knowledge. Assimilation of the program's content, therefore, is accomplished more easily and quickly.

Acquisition and Retention of Learning:
In self-report studies and post-session evaluations, learners consistently report and/or demonstrate better understanding and recollection of information and skills after receiving them experientially, when compared to more passive learning approaches.

Transfer of Learning to the Job:
Because well-designed maps mirror or illustrate learners' actual job environments and because they have clear job connection activities and exercises built into the experience, learners are more likely to transfer new knowledge or skills to the workplace.

Consider, for example, how the health insurance company mentioned earlier used one of Paradigm Learning's Discovery Maps™ to align and unite its employees around a new mission and several critical business strategies in less than three months. Using its map as a visual metaphor for this "journey," the program incorporated physical activities and team exercises to help participants explore and discover relevant information

Before implementing its program, the company surveyed employees to find out what they knew about the new core strategies; the response was dismal. One year after using the map, a similar survey showed responses up by 244 percent, with 94 percent of the respondents saying they not only were aware of the changes, but they support them and actually live the cause.

Likewise, the parcel courier mentioned earlier had similar results with its own map. It had an ambitious goal to expand its role in the global marketplace, intent on increasing its service to more than 220 countries. Yet despite initial efforts to convey those

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transformation plans to more than 12,000 employees, it found only 48 percent of its workforce had even "minimal" knowledge of them. So they used a map program titled "Where Our Business is Going," which combined strong visual elements with experiential activities. After deploying the map at a series of training sessions, 95 percent of its employees reported comprehension ranging from "good" to "excellent."

In both cases, the custom-designed imagery incorporated graphic depictions and specific facts about the companies and their business issues. Each map had a starting point — showing the company's current situation — and an ending point — showing where the company would be in the future — with the path between the points showing the expected milestones and potential pitfalls the company might face along the way.

Competitive games, case studies, simulations, videos and online exercises often are developed to enhance the experience, allowing participants to have fun while connecting the messages to their daily activities. Whatever the mix of exercises, a discovery learning experience incorporates three key components:

- Participants must gather, assimilate and internalize information in order to learn
- Participants, working in small teams, discover and learn together in ways that promote peer interaction and reinforcement
- Participants must be able to connect the new knowledge to their own real-world jobs and responsibilities.

This ensures people will not simply sit back and wait for information to come to them — they will find it themselves. The result is a faster learning process, with higher levels of retention than traditional approaches. With learning time in short supply, and learning opportunities in great demand, the discovery learning methodology and organizational maps are being used more and more in today's employee training and communication initiatives.

Conclusion

Rapidly changing technologies, marketplace globalization, aggressive competition, escalating costs and an ever-growing war for talent mean that a company must provide ongoing — and effective — learning opportunities for its employees.

To be successful, these learning opportunities must impart the most important knowledge and develop the most critical skills. They must motivate learners to want to learn. They must educate employees as rapidly as possible. And they must transfer the learning to the workplace. Maps — with their high level of visual appeal and their use of a learner-driven methodology that encourages exploration and discovery — are a clear way for organizations to accomplish this educational goal.

Catherine J. Rezak is chairman and co-founder of Paradigm Learning, a training and communications organization specializing in the design of business games, simulations and Discovery Maps®. Paradigm Learning has created highly acclaimed business games and simulations in the areas of talent leadership, business acumen, project management, team building and leadership. Cathy focuses on a variety of projects, most notably in the areas of new product development, marketing and client relations. She is a frequent speaker at corporate learning events, including International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) annual conferences. She has appeared on CNN Financial News and has had articles published in such journals as Strategic Communication Management, the Journal of Organizational Excellence and Project Management Network. From 2003-2006, she served as president of ISA ***— The Association of Learning Providers.***

Paradigm Learning has found that there are five essential ingredients for a successful map-based learning experience:

1. ***Team problem solving*** *— During a map exercise learners must be engaged in problem solving with other learners, using their combined knowledge and experience to achieve a goal.*
2. ***Hands-on learning*** *— Active participation by learners where they explore information and ideas to help get brains engaged in the learning process.*
3. ***Guided discovery*** *— Learners must be guided along a path toward discovery of ideas, concepts and information. This means:*
   - *A learning design that builds ever increasing understanding and comprehension in learners without causing frustration or apathy*
   - *A learning facilitator who is a guide rather than a teacher during the learning activities.*
4. ***Reflection and Connection*** *— Insights learned must clearly connect to real workplace issues. It's all about connecting content to context.*
5. ***Learner Accountability*** *— Well-designed map programs place learners "in the driver's seat." Although the road is paved and road signs provide assistance, learners must have the wheel and are accountable for getting to their destination.*

Seven Tips for Savy Speakers

by Cyndi Maxey

Most training and development professionals enter the field knowing that their role entails a considerable amount of time in front of learning groups. While today's learners participate in online, blended, and web-based programs as well as classroom training, they expect the learning leader to be an accomplished presenter — no matter the format!

If it has been awhile since you've assessed your presentation style and ability in front of groups, take a moment to review the tips below. Many of them apply to webinar presentations as well as those that are face-to-face. And the tips will help you with other aspects of your job that require making presentations; for example, when you're called upon to

…present the new training curriculum to your team…

…impress the boss with your budget plan for 2008…

…welcome all the new employees in the auditorium…

…or generally make a great speaking impression in little time. Remember, every time you present, you are being considered, observed, and judged for bigger and better things.

1. Look the part right from the start.

Your professional dress, hair, handshake and handouts will set up that you mean business. For women, pants and a jacket with a conservative line and a firm lapel are optimal. This choice allows you to move just about anywhere, use a microphone if needed - (the firm lapel works well for lavaliere microphones) - and yet maintain your style and femininity. You can show your individuality with a bright color, simple jewelry, and well-groomed hair. Both men and women should always wear a jacket of some kind (casual or formal, depending) to the presentation; you can opt to take it off if needed. Men should keep in mind that a tie and/or nicely tailored casual shirt set a tone and make an important professional first impression. The absent-minded professor look is not the look to go for!

2. Really, really think through your opening.

All speakers say "Thank you for coming." Come up with a more meaningful statement that gets right to business like "If you've read a newspaper in the last year, you know how our customers' businesses have struggled through this economy." Or ask a question that gets them involved like: "How many of you are finding former customers harder to close this season?" If you plan and use these simple openings, you really will stand out as almost nobody else does.

3. Involve the group ASAP.

This doesn't mean you have to have your audience sprinting around the room and coloring flipcharts but it does mean you need to break them out of passive mode and into active mode. Ask them questions, ask for a show of hands, pass out a handout with startling information, or ask one key person to comment on something. When you involve your audience, you accomplish two purposes; you connect them to you and you manage your nervousness. When someone else is talking, the focus moves away from you and you can listen and tie in what is said to your next point. You should also bring nametags for a larger group; first names only in large marker print work best.

4. Don't fall into the "Too much, Too fast, Too apologetic" trap.

If the meeting or training event is running late or questions begin to take too much time, don't try to squeeze everything in. Let the group know without over-apology that you'll focus on what you think they'll be most interested in and then you will just skip through some slides and help them master the most important information. Their questions are almost always more important than what you planned to say anyway; consider it an honor if you get a lot — it means they care! By all means, you must cover the important material your learners need to succeed; but just don't rush through it.

5. Think beyond the product.

Everyone in business has a product or service to sell. If you focus on "results" or what the product brings, does, causes, etc. instead, then you will be gearing your presentation beyond the ordinary. Every time you start listing numbers, percentages and qualifications, you tune in to the analytical side of your audience but you lose the emotional side of the sale. We as humans recommend, refer, and buy based on feelings…about the service, you as the presenter, or the trust we have around the whole picture. Get the listener focused on his or her problems or customers and how you have solved similar problems and met similar needs in the past. Get the learner focused on the why's behind the what's of the topic and you will set yourself apart from most presenters.

6. Be prepared with your best savior stories.

Tell them how your company's approach saved the sale, saved a good client, or saved the day! Use specific names and dates only as needed; the key is to communicate the concept. Today's audiences say they love success stories because they can immediately apply the concepts! And don't forget to throw in a "what I learned from my mistake" story of your own or someone else's if it seems appropriate and motivational to the group. Think of the difference between seeing an ad for a new cell phone vs. calling three of your best friends who have the model for their testimony. Which will you believe? Encourage learners to share their own stories as well.

7. Don't let hecklers or negative comments get to you.

Some people just can't tolerate listening; others have something else going on in their lives and you happen to be the easy target. Someone with a sincere gripe or question may also be present, but treat them all similarly. Acknowledge that you see what's going on: "Sam, I've noticed your strong response to these ideas. Is there something you'd like me to address?" Respond to an angry comment similarly; "Joe, I can appreciate how you feel, and we also don't like this situation. What we can do is…" Always take control; the other learners expect you to and consider it part of your job as the learning leader.

Finally, remind yourself that you and only you care the most about the outcome of your presentation. Review these tips frequently and remember that you make a new impression with each group you address. Set yourself for success with each program you present. You never know who is watching, commenting, and recommending you for future projects.

Cyndi Maxey, CSP, is a seasoned speaker, facilitator, coach, and coauthor of five books on speaking and communication; the latest is ***Speak Up! A Woman's Guide to Presenting Like a Pro*** *— coauthored with Kevin E. O'Connor, due October 2008 with St. Martin's Press. Cyndi is a 25-year member of CCASTD, having served in many leadership roles. Visit her Performance Store http://www.cyndimaxey.com/performance_store.html for more free articles and special offers on books and e-books.*

12 Elements of Great Managing

Written by Rodd Wagner and James K. Harter Ph.D

Reviewed by Dr. Kathleen H. Watland, Director for Graduate Programs in Training and Workplace Learning, Saint Xavier University.

"What control do managers really have in improving employee motivation or commitment? Employees are either motivated or they are not."

This is a common lament among managers. However common this lament may be, it is largely untrue according to Rodd Wagner and James Harter, authors of ***12: The Elements of Great Managing***. Wagner and Harter argue that most employees' motivation and commitment levels will positively respond to specific work experiences. Managers can influence their employees' motivation and ultimately their performance by attending to or providing specific work experiences. Through extensive research spanning more than 10 years and including interview data from more than 10 million employees and managers, Wagner and Harter believe they have identified 12 experiences or "elements of work life" that, given the proper attention by managers, will positively impact employee motivation, commitment, and performance.

Some of the 12 Elements are not particularly distinctive or surprising. For example, one of the elements, "Materials and Equipment," is ensuring that the employee has the necessary tools to perform the job. This is simply common sense. However, experience in various organizations has demonstrated that common sense is not always *commonly practiced*. It is the *practicing* of common sense that is experienced by employees, rather than what is *known* by the manager or organization to be appropriate. Consequently, even the most basic of the 12 Elements are worth consideration and reflection by all managers. Of particular interest is that half of the 12 Elements directly relate to employee opportunities to learn, progress, and receive practical feedback in the workplace. Elements such as "Someone Encourages My Development" and "Opportunities to Learn and Grow" underscore the importance of providing continuous opportunities for employee development and progress. Wagner and Harter's findings related to employees' strong interest in continual progress and growth may stem from their discussion on classic motivational theories, including the work of Maslow and McGregor. Further, Wagner and Harter make important distinctions between "pleasurable" work experiences and those with deeper meaning, including opportunities for employees to "advance the work of the company."

Wagner and Harter's book provides an interesting framework for managers to use when considering employee motivation and commitment. This framework places employees' motivation and commitment primarily under the control of the manager. For some managers, paradoxically, this view is both inspiring and disconcerting. Disconcerting, because in some ways, it is easier to believe employee motivation and engagement are internal forces beyond the manager's control. For some, the strategy has been to hire "pre-motivated" employees. Taking the view that managers need to design and provide work experiences to maximize employees' motivation shifts the responsibility. Clearly, managing and leading employees to reach their full potential is a daunting challenge. It is difficult and painstaking work. Yet, this view of increased manager control is also inspiring because it presents managers with both a hope and scaffolding that may assist them in providing work experiences that may positively influence their employees' motivation and commitment.

Training When English Skills are Light

by Claudio Pinto

"…people within any given workforce are diversifying as quickly as the workplace itself, leading to the incorporation of multiple cultures and languages in many organizations."

The globalization of business and immigration is allowing people to work and live in the world in ways no one before the 21st century could have predicted. Economic, business, and political trends are shaping the world at large and challenging individuals and organizations everywhere to figure out how to engage, learn, and grow. One key challenge confronting these organizations is that the people within any given workforce are diversifying as quickly as the workplace itself, leading to the incorporation of multiple cultures and languages in many organizations.

Internal training is now complicated by the variety of backgrounds, languages, and cultures of the employees as well as the specific roles and responsibilities their employees must fulfill, from an administrative assistant to the chief financial officer. If an individual participant is moving between multiple cultures both inside and outside of work, the training environment becomes even more complex. When you combine all of these variables within organizational learning, you have a clear picture of what most Fortune Global 2500 organizations and their privately held equivalents face on a day-to-day basis. How is a company to achieve new levels of efficiency, introduce new products and otherwise continue to grow and succeed if the internal learning environment doesn't continuously reinforce the objectives of the company through learning that all employees can relate to?

There are some specific challenges that individuals approaching an organizational learning situation from a different contextual background can face:

- Individuals may be forced to read documents word for word if they lack knowledge of grammar and syntax, causing overall lower comprehension. The same comprehension difficulties can be caused by unfamiliar vocabulary and idioms.
- Readers may have difficulty with more complex and compound sentences. They may lose the meaning of references within the text, such as with frequent use of pronouns. Pronoun usage may be different or less frequent in the native language. Connectives may be overlooked or misunderstood, resulting in a loss of the relationships between concepts and ideas.
- Readers may have difficulty adjusting their reading strategies to match the author's intent or purpose. They may not be familiar with a particular story "grammar" or the organizational patterns of informational text. They may not be familiar with specific genre and the literary devices used in text.
- From a purely linguistic standpoint these factors may also come into play:
  - Different conceptual frameworks may be activated that misguide their reading
  - Expectations of what is normal may differ and cause breakdowns in coherence
  - Cause and consequence chains can differ and/or be more emotional, evoking strong reactions in the reader
  - Symbols may differ
  - Pedagogy may differ
  - There may be differences in what to attend to and what to ignore
- Readers often use strategies that are applicable to their L1 (First Language). These may or may not transfer into the L2 text.
- In the case of web-based or non-classroom based learning the level of comprehension may be further eroded by the fact that there is no readily available support from co-workers as the training is being presented. Web-based training is also often enhanced by integrated video or audio sequences, which affords a further challenge to the second language learner in that the rates of comprehension decline in comparison to text comprehension.

All of these points indicate that including cultural considerations in training and documentation is absolutely necessary, whether your training is for clients, customers, or employees. Worst-case scenarios of product training materials that do not clearly demarcate the scope and span of use of a product or a production objective which is understood by one business unit in Germany to mean "good quality" and in another in Turkey to mean "quality is acceptable" could have odd consequences to the bottom line.

I think one of the clearest lessons, albeit fictional, of what the learning challenges might be for an L2 person is the learning adventures of Viktor Navorski ("The Terminal"). Viktor played by Tom Hanks, finds himself sealed in at JFK Airport while awaiting the resolution of diplomatic ties between his homeland of Krakoshna and the United States. Learning English by watching TV, comparing an English book to its equivalent Krakoshnian edition and his interaction with a seemingly endless repertoire of language groups beyond English was the basis of his knowledge. The result being that when offered to exit the airport via a legal loophole he does not understand the statement or consequences of the proposed exit process.

Translation and localization of training and learning programs within the organization can often not only be effective in creating greater knowledge and understanding of the business objective, but also create a more coherent organizational culture. The client/market side of the equation is as revenue-critical in that client and markets not only expect products and services in their respective languages, but often will penalize organizations that do not extend their knowledge into the local language and culture. Learning and training elements of products and services directed at markets should always have some option to be experienced in the language and culture of the recipient target clients.

In summary one might consider that language and cultural inclusivity is the most effective way to create long term value for organizations and their communities. Learning and training programs that support language and cultural inclusivity will go a long way to creating sustainable global organizations.

Mr. Claudio Pinto is the Director of Marketing for Transware, he has extensive experience in international communications and business development. A graduate of UC – Berkeley, he has consulted and directly participated in the development of multiple multi-lingual sales and marketing programs in the Americas and Europe. Transware is leading provider of translation and localization services to the global training and learning industries. The company provides, via its global operations centers, multi-lingual, media and cultural program management for the top companies in training and supports all language aspects of marketing and global communications programs for organizations.

CCASTD Board Member Profile
Robert Addis, Director of Community Relations

TT: Why did you want to be on the board?
RA: *As my graduate classes were winding down, I realized that I wanted another avenue to continue my own learning and exchange ideas. School had provided that and now CCASTD offers me the opportunity to continue learning and growing. You get what you put into something; the more involved I am in CCASTD the more I meet people, learn, share, and take my experience and learning to a new level.*

TT: What is the greatest strength of CCASTD?
RA: *Its members and the opportunities that abound to share in our goals, issues, tools, and ideas.*

TT: What do you think is the most pressing issue for professionals in the learning/performance field today and how do you recommend they deal with those issues?
RA: *I have a particular perspective due to the fact I work in a distinct field but the most pressing issue in the learning field is the ability to align training with the business, whether that involves documenting a Return on Investment or taking a strategic place at the table. In social service, training is the go to for many things, but training professionals are seldom consulted when it comes to planning, development, and implementation of any goals other than to a plan a certain number of trainings. In social service, training is a mandated necessity and I think as workplace professionals, we have to change that image.*

Training is not merely a "necessary evil" as I have had one CEO describe it, it is a human performance tool and our goal has to involve revealing its power, its scope, and its value to the organization and ultimately the clients being served.

TT: Is there a professional book you would recommend?
RA: *Two!*

One is coming out of my master's program at Roosevelt University: "Planning Programs for Adult Learners: A Practical Guide for Educators, Trainers, and Staff Developers." This is currently my bible. I use it to assist in any program I am building. I am sharing it with my staff and we tweak it to serve our needs as a team.

The other book would be "The Leadership Challenge." It has helped me recognize my greater potential not merely as leader from my own perspective but as a leader of people and of teams, with control over how those people see me and my capabilities.

TT: How did you get into this field?
RA: *Purely through necessity and accident. I had worked with clients for 8 years, and I was burned out. At about that time, a position opened for a training assistant.*

The interest in training came from a brief stint in college working as a bank teller. I worked for Boatman's Bank and their training team always had so much energy and so much fun, at orientation and through monthly region meetings. I made a mental note to myself at that time that I wanted to be a trainer…funny how life happens.

TT: Do you have words of advice you give to people entering this field?
RA: *Be willing to continuously learn, evaluate, and revise yourself. Be open and accessible for evaluation and critique and push your own knowledge limits. The field and the demands on our field seem to be changing and evolving rapidly, so it helps to keep a sense of humor and perspective about ones role.*

TT: What do you do when you are not working?
RA: *I watch old movies. I spend so much of my time in meetings, talking, and reading, so when I don't have to work I pretty much want to give my mind and my mouth a rest.*

If you are interested in getting involved with Robert Addis and Community Relations, you can contact him at 312-738-5941 or addisr@ucanchicago.org.

What Your Peers are Reading

Design
by Tom Peters.
How to design your business, your products, your marketing, or design ANYTHING. It is written more in a resource style, not long narrative. It makes it easy to grab quick messages. A great lesson within – men cannot design for women's needs. Another great message – creativity and innovation, lacking in many top business programs, should be core and not elective.

The Girl's Guide to Being a Boss, without being a bitch
by Caitlin Friedman and Kimberly Yorio
Not everyone woman has had a female role model to learn from. This book shows it is possible to be powerful without being possessive and opinionated without being brassy. It is fun to read with lots of call out boxes. It is a humorous guide to finding balance between boss and bossy.
Renie McClay, Editor of Training Today

High Impact Learning, Strategies for leveraging business results from training
by Dr. Robert Brinkerhoff
I like the perspective that if you bring focus and intentionality to training, you will have better results (and that those results are tied to business goals!). On the flip side, the strategy is easier said than done.
Diana Oye, Director at Large for CCASTD

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Alliance Organizations

ACPI
Association of Career Professionals International: www.acpinternational.org

CCASTD
Chicago Chapter of the American Society for Training & Development: www.ccastd.org

CISPI
Chicago Chapter of the International Society for Performance Improvement: www.cispi.com

CODIC
Chicago Organizational Development Institute Chapter: www.codic.us

ICFC
International Coaching Federation of Chicago: www.chicagocoaches.com

NSA-IL
National Speakers Association-Illinois: www.nsa-il.org

ODNC
Organization Development Network-Chicago: www.odnetwork.org/odnc

SHRP
Society for Human Resource Professionals (Chicago Chapter of SHRM): www.shrp.org

SITE
Society of Insurance Trainers & Educators: www.insurancetrainers.org

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