

Worldwide Training Industry News (Aug 09)

Study Finds that Online Education Beats the Classroom New York Times (08/19/09) Lohr, Steve

Students' performance in online education settings tended to trounce that of those receiving face-to-face instruction, according to a study SRI International carried out for the U.S. Education Department. The study analyzed the comparative research on traditional versus online education over a 12-year period, with the bulk of the studies done in colleges and various adult continuing-education programs. The report found 99 studies in which there were quantitative comparisons of online and classroom performance for the same courses, and an analysis determined that students doing some or all of the course online would rank in the 59th percentile in tested performance on average, versus the average classroom student scoring in the 50th percentile. Lead study author Barbara Means says the report indicates that online learning often outclasses traditional instruction, and the report suggests that online education could experience sharp growth during the next several years. Experts say the real promise of online education is delivering learning experiences that are more customized to individual students than classrooms, which facilitates more learning by doing. Philip R. Regier, with Arizona State University's Online and Extended Campus program, expects continuing education programs to exhibit the most growth in the near term, and he also predicts that online education will continue to gain ground in the transformation of college campuses. Regier says the growing use of social networking technology will hasten the evolution of online learning into a model where students help and teach each other by creating new forms of learning communities.

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On This Campus, Focus Is Jobs New York Times (08/15/09) P. B1; Greenhouse, Steven

Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio, is believed to be one of the best campuses for helping create a more skilled workforce. The college is currently retraining thousands of laid-off auto workers and collaborating with city, county, and business leaders to pinpoint and foster growth sectors. These include aerospace research and development, health care, and advanced materials and manufacturing. The college also offers more unusual degrees such as one in advanced technical intelligence that prepares students to interpret remote sensor data. Furthermore, training programs are offered for police officers, nurses, auto mechanics, chefs, and firefighters. Sinclair's Advanced Integrated Manufacturing Center boasts consulting staff who frequently advise local companies on ways to increase productivity or ramp up operations. The center's experts in robotics frequently assist in design manufacturing processes and creating prototypes of new products. Enrollment at Sinclair has increased 25 percent compared to last year to 37,000 in the wake of rising unemployment. Its tuition is also unusually low at \$2,000 per year. Sinclair currently offers 170 academic programs and features a robust scholarship component.

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Retaining Staff in a Downturn Business Times Singapore (08/17/09) Phoon, Penelope

Human resources professionals are having difficulty during the recession, especially with regard to retaining and training workers for the economic recovery and saving money. The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) advises that companies should not cut training unless it is absolutely necessary. The ACCA emphasizes the importance of ensuring the training programs that survive are focused around the business model, which itself needs to be changed to cope with the recession. Two components of business, saving and generating cash and spending wisely, should be considered. Purchasing workers should be trained in supply chain management, production workers

should learn to cut costs and waste, and the sales staff should be trained to create business in areas which have stable returns. An effective human resources strategy starts with identifying the capabilities required to make the organization effective by determining what drives value and what reduces the cost to the organization of the function. Then develop plans for those in core high-value roles and with high performance levels by placing them on the leadership path, with enhanced rewards and development opportunities. Look for opportunities to recruit from competitors and key talent, as there will be many people in the job market and many looking to move if they don't feel secure or recognized by their current employer.

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Working Globally Poses a Challenge Regina Leader-Post (Canada) (08/15/09) Sankey, Derek

Alain Verbeke, the author of *International Business Strategy*, says that expatriates play a large role in the success of company's that expand abroad, but the gap between the home office and the global sites is becoming larger. "It's a picture that shows large multinational firms are not paying enough attention to dealing with expatriates," says Verbeke. Corporate executives are weary of expatriates' abilities to carry out directions, while those in international offices feel that the head office is unaware of what is occurring at other sites. Another problem is the fact that local stakeholders in foreign countries are becoming more critical about how the companies do their business, especially with environmental and social issues. Without expatriates to translate the messages, the organizations will face problems. The firms provide expatriates with training to help them in global offices, but they typically bypass the details and costs of broader management. This requires long-term strategies to help deal with the global staff. "There is very little attention devoted to the character of the person and if they really fit well in that environment," says Verbeke. Verbeke urges companies to create systems that make sure firms are taking care of subsidiaries and ensuring that the work being done there is in line with what the company wants. Organizations should train employees in social and learning skills instead of technical expertise with regard to foreign operations. This is especially true if a firm wants to leave a country. Managers should find a middle ground between thinking that people are bad and need monitoring and people are completely trustworthy. The expectations of multinationals going into a country are higher than the local companies, which requires a new approach to managing them. Companies need to acknowledge these challenges, otherwise they will be very costly.

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Life-Long Learning Drives a Career Herald Sun (Australia) (08/15/09) Mawby, Nathan

The Victorian government in Australia has developed an initiative entitled "Skills for Growth: the Workforce Development Program," which assigns a specialist to small and medium businesses to identify the key training needs for their organization and helps them find that training. Dennis King, owner of Bendigo Auto Electrical, was the first automotive business to sign up for the program. "Any company that doesn't upskill now isn't going to last," says King. "You need to keep ahead of your opposition to stay in business." One of King's biggest interests is receiving Workplace Training qualifications for his employees to stay on top of automotive trends, such as hybrid and electric vehicles which are popular in the United States and Europe. Dealerships provide training for their vehicles, but small mechanical businesses need greater access to the training, otherwise they will not be able to fix the cars. King is currently proposing an apprenticeship program that places young workers into the industry and attracts them to stay by offering training in hybrid and electric repairs and small business management.

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6 Ways to Train Your Employees on the Cheap Computerworld (08/10/09) Pratt, Mary K.

Worksoft, Inc. is a small entrepreneurial software company in Addison, Texas. The organization acknowledges that a highly skilled technical staff is what makes the company run well. Christina Hanger, COO of the company, says that ongoing education is important because it keeps developers interested, innovative, and motivated. But training programs can be expensive, and the recession does not make it any easier to attend conferences. "It's unfortunate that training is always the first thing to fall under the budget ax, because if you're not investing in your people, you fall behind. And your workers remember that. So when the good times are back, they'll be gone," says Robert Rosen, CIO at the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases in Bethesda, Md., and a past president of Share, an IBM user group. A CIO can do many things to stretch their training funds. Managers can rotate employees to help people learn new skills. There are also three ways that workers can get their own training for free. One, CIOs can start a journal club with other managers to discuss articles and white papers can help people learn more. Two, CIOs can also go to meetings with coaches, or other managers that have the skills that would like to be obtained. Three, managers can volunteer at non-profit organizations to get more experience. This allows people to diversify their skills. Employees can attend lunch forums a couple of times a month to hear from colleagues who have expertise in certain areas. The forums can focus on all aspects of the business, so that different departments can learn about each other. Companies can also allow IT professionals to sit in on training that is used with their businesspeople because it is less expensive and it allows them to learn about the company's business units and analysis. Different departments can work together through buddy learning, by partnering and teaching each other. An established structure, such as a curriculum, for buddy learning is important to implement so that workers stay on track and fit it into their schedule. Companies can also borrow knowledge from other organizations. One group, called the IT Strategy Forum, shares their staffs, sending workers to each other's companies to learn about what is happening. The forum works because the organizations do not compete directly and there are legal agreements in place that regulate how information is exchanged and prevents members from hiring one another's employees. Mentoring is another way to develop skills. Formal programs can cost a lot of money, but executives can start their own programs internally at no cost. Workers were matched with the mentors and they worked together to enhance skills.

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Professional Development on Chopping Block Benefits Canada (08/09)

A recent survey by Accountemps found that 23 percent of Canadian executives had seen cuts to the professional development programs at their companies over the past year. Another 45 percent of Canadian executives reported no cuts to their companies' professional development programs over the past 12 months, while 31 percent said they actually saw an expansion in professional development programs over the last year. Dianne Hunnam-Jones, the president of Accountemps' greater Toronto operations, said it is important for companies to maintain or expand their professional development programs despite the recession because such programs can help boost employee morale and prevent employees from quitting. She also noted that educating employees through professional development programs can help recruit new employees and give companies an advantage over their competitors.

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Program Provides Job Training for Seniors Courier Post (NJ) (08/03/09) Rothschild, Barbara S.

Experience Works is a federally funded program that helps low-income people age 55 and older enter or rejoin the workforce. The national program provides training and pays participants minimum wage while

they intern in partnering government or nonprofit agencies. "We don't take a cookie-cutter approach," says regional spokeswoman Marcia Wilson. "We need to know a person's skills, background, any transportation problems, family care, and mobility issues." Wilson says the U.S. Department of Labor reports that there were 1.48 million unemployed workers ages 55 and older in January, an increase of 70 percent over the previous year. Wilson also notes that it is becoming increasingly difficult to live on Social Security alone, and that 35 percent of workers have no retirement savings. To qualify for the program, a person must be unemployed and be in a household where the total income is barely above the poverty level. Participants receive up to 20 hours of training at a host agency, and during training periods, which usually last for six months to two years, the program pays them minimum wage and provides other support services. In addition to income, participants receive mentoring from county coordinators and field representatives, who come from a variety of professions, ranging from truck drivers to lawyers.

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Survival of the Fittest

Financial Planning (07/09) Vol. 39, No. 7, P. 31; Kautt, Glenn G.

Planning is one component of running a business, and these plans must carry out today's business strategy and adapt the strategy for tomorrow. Managers must enhance business flexibility, particularly in times of change. To do this, they must be active agents of change, constantly on the lookout for trends and new technologies; do a "gorilla scan" to ensure that absorption in day-to-day activities does not lead to a loss of peripheral vision; reward unorthodox thinking, which encourages employees to "think outside the box;" foster a supportive culture that genuinely encourages employees to step up and take modest risks; and get the right people on board by hiring adaptable thinkers. Once a business has done a "gorilla scan" to see what lies on the horizon, it must take action.

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Stressing Value of Face-to-Face Communication

Wall Street Journal (08/17/09)

Ryuji Yamada is the president and CEO of NTT DoCoMo, which is deploying a fourth-generation wireless network in Japan in 2010. Yamada says he prefers new hires to be energetic so that they can undertake challenges. He feels that people who struggle a great deal at a younger age will develop more extensively compared to those who undertake easy tasks. Yamada also urges young people to enhance their person-to-person communication skills. He notes that many people in Japan are growing up as an only child or with one sibling, and tend to spend a significant amount of time in front of their computers. Good face-to-face communication skills are crucial for problem solving, which requires a person to look at another in the eye to leverage their vantage point, according to Yamada. He also believes that information-sharing within an organization has more benefits than drawbacks, such as potential leaks. For board members, Yamada says it is essential that they visit the company's retail stores and talk directly with people so they can successfully participate in meetings at headquarters.

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Intensified Focus: Involving Many Agencies, Center Will Provide Greater Employment Help, Job Training Through New Programs

Winston-Salem Journal (NC) (08/12/09) Craver, Richard

Local and state agencies in North Carolina recently launched the Regional Employment and Advancement Career Training center (REACT) in Winston-Salem. The center's goal is to provide an expanded level of employment assistance and job training. The center offers 12 education programs, featuring trades, construction, and health care, all designed to be completed in six months or less. The

center is funded through its first two years by at least \$4 million from multiple federal-stimulus sources. "People who are unemployed or underemployed tend to be more motivated to gain the skillsets they need to be gainfully employed again," says REACT program manager Paulette Stokes. The center also offers GED classes, career guidance, tips on the job market, and unemployment insurance claims. "What's unique about REACT is the collaboration of numerous agencies all playing a vital role in promoting a stable local work force," says Northwest Piedmont Workforce Development director Althea Hairston. Agencies involved include the N.C. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Forsyth Technical Community College, the local Job Corps office, Forsyth County Department of Social Services, local faith-based community groups, Experiment in Self-Reliance, the Urban League, Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Forsyth County, and Goodwill Industries of Northwest North Carolina. "As we continue to go through this painful process of transitioning our economy from manufacturing to technology and services, there's going to continue to be demand on these services that we can better meet now," says the N.C. Employment Security Commission's Archie Hicks.

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Using Social Networking to Recruit Talent and Implementing Training National Post (CAN) (08/11/09) Williams, Ray B.

Social networking sites like Facebook and LinkedIn are being utilized by recruiters to find new talent and train them. Approximately 77 percent of all L&D companies think that employees under the age of 25 learn differently compared to older workers, specifically in collaborative learning. Additionally, 25 percent of large companies use e-learning with their employees. nGenera, a software company, hired 70 percent of its recruits on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn because younger people are using the sites as a type of business card and resume.

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Employee Training Funds Run Low Crain's Cleveland Business (08/03/09)

The local government programs that reimburse companies for their training costs continue to function for the foreseeable future, but representatives say there is less money to go around so companies should move quickly to apply. The Cleveland Employment Connection training program and the Ohio Workforce Guarantee Program, which replaces the former Ohio Technical Industrial Training Program, recently hosted a seminar where they told 40 representatives of local manufacturers that there is already a long line of companies waiting for funds. But Susan Dukeman, regional director of the Workforce Guarantee Program, noted that funds are not awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, and the state instead considers whether the company has other funding sources, is in a growth industry, and will use the money to create more jobs. This year the policies may also favor those companies that use the funds to avoid layoffs, according to one representative. The funding levels have increased as well, so companies can get reimbursement for 75 percent of training costs, with a cap of \$30,000. Companies in growth industries can use the funds for technical training, quality training, and industry-specific training for new and current employees, as well as online training and some travel expenses.

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Software Solution Identifies Skills Gaps in the Workplace ICT Results (08/03/09)

The European Union-funded PROLIX project is developing software tools designed to analyze business processes and their associated competencies to identify skills gaps in the workplace. PROLIX has devised a methodology to ensure that what training organizations offer to workers are aligned with business requirements. Business process analysis is performed with software modeling tools augmented

with competency data related to the specific business processes supplied by process managers and human resources managers. The PROLIX tools then execute a skills gap analysis so workers can be provided the training courses they need to do their job correctly. "Once we have identified what is needed to make businesses faster or more cost-effective, we can then target training and provide a measured learning outcome," says project coordinator Volker Zimmermann. PROLIX brings together a consortium of academic institutions, testbed partners, and software development partners. Most of the participants plan to continue the partnership following PROLIX's conclusion to commercialize the system or embed parts of it into their existing products.

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Labor Department Awards \$10 Million to Retrain Older Workers U.S. News & World Report (08/03/09) Brandon, Emily

Organizations that find employment for older workers received \$10 million from the U.S. Labor Department recently for the purpose of retraining employees 55 and older for careers in high-growth industries such as healthcare. "Older Americans are an important part of the workforce, and their skills and experience are of tremendous value to our nation," notes U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis. "With expanded education and training opportunities, such as those made possible through this grant, older workers can broaden their own career opportunities and further contribute to the growth of industries across the United States." The money was split into 10 grants of about \$1 million each and awarded to organizations in Indiana, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin. The grants will be directed at older workers who have been let go and are seeking reemployment, who need to remain in the workforce beyond the traditional retirement age, or who confront obstacles to securing a new job such as a disability or a lack of English proficiency. It is the Baltimore County Office of Workforce Development's intention to use its federal grant to move lower skilled older workers into the healthcare industry and to hold on to experienced technical and professional workers after retirement age.

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Training That Starts Before the Job Begins Workforce Management (07/09) Kranz, Garry

Booz Allen Hamilton and Vestas Wind Systems have redesigned their training programs in an attempt to get new employees up to speed quickly. Booz Allen, a consulting firm in McLean, Va., has implemented a "preboarding process" for providing people with training and development tools the moment they accept a job offer. New hires are directed to an internal Web portal that offers information about their jobs and the company as well as learning activities, and Booz Allen is also accelerating the process of providing new employees with personal development plans. Preboarding will enable new hires to make immediate contributions, according to the company. "Preboarding is all about getting someone engaged and excited about being here, prior to their actually showing up for their first day," says Aimee George Leary, director of learning and development for Booz Allen. Meanwhile, Vestas, a Denmark-based provider of turbines and integrated wind technology systems with U.S. headquarters in Portland, Ore., has added an "induction program" to its training and development efforts to stress learning and to document its value. "One Vestas" consists of animated sessions in which employees, with an average tenure of two years, face questions posed by "Mr. Butler" on how Vestas' products and services differ from competitors. Vestas is also consolidating the development of job competencies, the streamlining of performance reviews and the creation of development dialogues with employees onto a single learning management platform.

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**Study: Give IT Employees What They Need to Thrive
Reliable Plant (08/01/09)**

As workplaces become more and more automated, employers are looking for ways to retain the valuable information technology workers who hold the keys to the company's institutional memory. Researchers at the University of Arkansas studying human resource issues in the IT field have found that the top reasons IT workers leave a job are exhaustion, preference for a workplace that promotes learning and change, managers who are not knowledgeable, and desire for cross-training opportunities. The study looked at IT workers in state governments, and found that 87 percent do not have enough IT staff and that retaining female workers is especially difficult. Women are less frequently entering the field and also exiting quickly due to time demands or work-family issues, says Professor Margaret Reid at the University of Arkansas. Creating an innovative, exciting, and evolving workplace is the key to retaining IT workers, says Professor Myria Allen. Those state IT departments with a strong staff and low turnover use training and development opportunities as a retention tool, she added.

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**At a Loss for Ethics
Stanford Social Innovation Review (08/09) Vol. 7, No. 3, P. 7; Kern, Mary C.; Chugh, Dolly**

People are more likely to compromise their ethics when they have something to lose rather than gain, according to new research from Dolly Chugh, an assistant professor at New York University's Stern School of Business, and Mary C. Kern, an assistant professor at Baruch College's Zicklin School of Business. In a role-play experiment, the researchers had half a group of undergraduates act as entrepreneurs attempting to buy a business with a 25 percent chance of reaching a deal, while the other half had a 75 percent chance of losing the deal. Students who were more likely to lose the deal were more willing to gain insider information about the competitor's business. Meanwhile, in a negotiation game involving MBA students, those who faced a 75 percent chance of a deal falling through told more lies and made more false promises. Chugh and Kern say people's actions are predicated on their perception of whether they have something to lose or gain. As a result, "we don't have to be in a bad economy to see more unethical behavior," says Chugh. "To protect yourself, try to figure out how the other person is seeing the situation," and do not make the person feel cornered.

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**Often, Men See Women to the Top
USA Today (08/05/09) P. 1B; Jones, Del**

Women's rise up the corporate hierarchy is often accomplished with the help of forward-thinking male mentors. Such mentors share certain traits, such as having daughters and/or having had a strong female influence in their lives. A study of male mentors to women by Catalyst revealed that male advocates of women are almost always distinguished by a strong sense of fairness. Furthermore, an overwhelming majority of men Catalyst identified as women's champions had at least one daughter. "Having daughters, seeing firsthand their struggles, fears and dreams, it makes it easier to relate to other women and their struggles, fears and dreams," says Greg Palmer, who served as mentor to Jill Alter, founder of 10 til 2, an 11-state employment-placement company. Mothers and wives also can have a strong impact on men who go on to champion women. New York Stock Exchange Group Chairman Marshall Carter says that when he was CEO of State Street, his wife convinced him to introduce flexible schedules and lactation stations. "If a woman wants advice from someone who has been there, done that, then it pretty much has to be a man," notes Restoration Hardware President Deborah Ellinger, who was mentored by Carter.

Schering-Plough CIO on Employee Training CIO Insight (08/09) Watson, Brian P.

Schering-Plough CIO Karl Salnoske developed an extensive training program designed to nurture key skill sets within his information technology (IT) organization, and he says the goal of the program was "to transform the IT organization from what historically had a passive, order-taker mentality to become a real strategic partner with the business." Accomplishing this required the creation of a "supply and demand" organization, and Salnoske says this involved placing the most technical colleagues in a delivery organization split into application delivery and infrastructure delivery. "Once the customer-facing people--we call them 'demand managers'--identify a need, then the delivery organization gets involved to decide the best way to satisfy that need," he notes. "Then the demand and supply teams work together to deliver a solution that meets the needs of the customer." This move identified a lack of skilled people on the demand management side, which became the rationale for the training program. Salnoske says the initiative focused on the competency areas of project management, customer relationship management, and business process management. He says Schering-Plough's planned merger with Merck has been encouraging for trainees. "People are more appreciative for the opportunity to sharpen their skills because they see this as something that will 1) make them better suited for a position within the new combined company or 2) make them more attractive to a potential employer, if they have to go that route," Salnoske observes.

Colleges Grow Entrepreneurial Certification Programs Miami Herald (08/03/09) Dahlberg, Nancy

Miami Dade College and Broward College did not plan on starting entrepreneurship certificate programs during the recession, but their decision has been worthwhile. A lot of people are unemployed and the colleges are helping them to get back to work. Both programs teach students how to write and present business plans, apply for financing, develop marketing and e-commerce strategies and manage a small company. The programs do not require students to take prerequisite courses or work toward a degree. Speakers often attend classes and include entrepreneurs, lenders, angel investors and e-commerce experts. Students can also participate in contests revolving around business plans and pitches. The courses are not just for students new to business, but for seasoned business owners as well. Ana Ramirez signed up for the program to learn about better running her events planning business, Weddings by Ana. In her classes she not only learned about entrepreneurship, but she also found her business network. Her classmates included a wedding photographer, a caterer, a party favors maker, a DJ and a financial expert. Ramirez's story exemplifies one of the principles of the programs, that everything in business is based on teamwork. Miami Dade looked at Kauffman-Foundation funded studies and the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship for information, and created a pathway from middle school to college for entrepreneurship. They also offer an associate's of science degree in marketing management with an entrepreneurial focus. "People's perceptions of there being a safety net in the gold watch and the pension -- we absolutely know those days are well behind us. The paycheck every two weeks is not a sure thing and hasn't been for awhile now," says H. Leigh Toney, executive director of the Meek Center. "Now people are not seeing entrepreneurship as risky as they did in the past."

Being an Effective Global Leader Bloomberg (07/31/09) Goldsmith, Marshall

Globalization is a trend that is not going anywhere. It has stretched from organizations to individuals, families, and friends. Today's global leaders build partnerships, and as operations move worldwide, leaders need to follow the supply chain that involves people with different backgrounds and communication styles. These partnerships need to be trusting and with long-term strategies in mind. This means that new skills must be developed to meet the challenge. Global leaders need to look at the global picture while working with stakeholders at every level. A Thai vice president at a multinational faced this issue and he was able to face the duality with cultural awareness by using the appropriate communication approach. He interviewed his supervisor and his boss's supervisor to understand short and long-term goals with questions like "What's our mission?" and "What's our strategy?" He then consulted his team,

planned a retreat, and held virtual staff meetings for workers in multiple countries. Leaders should also be curious about other cultures and be open to the challenges of communicating in a global business segment.

Despite Tough Times, Merrill is Ramping up Broker Training Program Investment News (07/30/09) Asci, Sue

As part of its effort to attract more talent, Merrill Lynch plans to put more resources into its broker training program. "The program never stopped, but it did slow down," says Selena Morris, spokeswoman for Merrill Lynch Global Wealth Management of New York. "The firm is recommitted to it and putting resources into [the program]." For the moment, participants in the intensive five-year training program, known as Practice Management Development will be selected by internal managers at Merrill. Starting in 2010, recruiters from outside the company will have the opportunity to identify candidates.

A Book to Achieve Your Goals Summit Daily News (CO) (07/26/09) Nicoletti, Kimberly

Author Mike Hawkins has failed in personal development and business endeavors, but he knows how to succeed. Throughout his personal life he has battled an addictive personality, which led him to overeat, overspend, smoke, drink, chew tobacco, and seek adrenaline-rushing thrills. He has been able to beat his addictions through faith and self-improvement practices. During his career, he has beat his fear of public speaking, gotten rid of his desire to control others, become a better listener, and become a good team player. Hawkins, who once worked for IBM and attended a management program at the Harvard School of Business, currently is the president of Alpine Link Corporation and works as an executive coach to help others achieve their goals. His new book, "Activating Your Ambition," discusses his difficulties and his triumphs and explains why people do not follow through with their goals and tells them how they can. He has eight principles that assist people to move from their comfort zones and create positive behaviors. "I believe most people live and work at a level significantly below their potential. People get stuck in their comfort zones and stagnate," Hawkins says. "My hope is that people will apply the eight principles in the book and find that change is not only feasible and beneficial, but can be a great experience too." The book contains practical suggestions based on Hawkins' personal experience and the experience of his clients. Hawkins feels that if the eight principles are followed, changing behavior is straightforward. For those who believe they cannot change, Hawkins feels that there are plenty of examples, such as people quitting smoking, spouses improving their marriages, and bad leaders becoming good. Once the behaviors are learned, they must be practices until the behaviors are habitual.

The ROI of E-Learning KMWorld (07/09) Schooley, Claire

E-learning can quickly yield a positive return-on-investment for companies. Globalization has made face-to-face instruction unrealistic, and recent research shows that there are no significant distinctions between the effectiveness of e-learning, classroom learning, or self-learning. With self-paced e-learning, learners can absorb content at their own rate of speed, and the ubiquitous Internet allows them to learn from virtually anywhere. Content is always uniform because of e-learning's consistency, while e-learning is cost-effective thanks to content reuse. Additional savings also can be realized because e-learning reduces the need for travel by learners and instructors. Carefully developed visuals and graphics can help explain new ideas to learners, who can gain an understanding of other perspectives through interaction via blogs, wikis, and discussion boards. Additionally, companies should make sure that content is available for multiple reviews, as well as objectively assess the financial effect of business when debating the implementation or avoidance of online learning. Key costs of e-learning for companies include those for providing additional technology infrastructure and new applications, in-house course content development, additional personnel, acquired content vendor courses, and a PR/training program for workers so they comprehend and are comfortable with e-learning.

The Career Value of a Mentor
Associations Now (07/09) Vol. 5, No. 8, P. 70; Vernon, Carol

People who have mentors have the opportunity to develop a long-term strategy for their professional future, writes certified executive coach Carol Vernon. "Research indicates that mentored individuals perform better on the job, advance more rapidly within the organization, and report more job and career satisfaction," says University of Georgia professor Lillian Eby. Individuals who are currently employed can see if their organization has a formal mentoring program, or turn to college alumni associations or professional groups. Vernon notes that if formal programs are unavailable, people may start their own process by asking what is the most valuable thing to them in a mentoring relationship, and what skills they would seek to nurture with the help of a mentor. When selecting a mentor, it is important to provide as much information about oneself as possible and to mutually determine how frequently to communicate. Some experts suggest monthly face-to-face meetings that are supplemented by regular emails and phone calls. It also may be prudent to agree that either party can end the relationship at any time with no ill effects, Vernon says. The mentoring relationship will be effective when the mentor encourages the mentee to set higher goals, provides beneficial feedback, promotes self-awareness, challenges him or her to go beyond their limits, and introduces them to key people.

A 'Better' Workforce?
Conference Board Review (07/09) Vol. 46, No. 4, P. 36; Schrage, Michael

CEOs are increasingly concerned about bolstering organizational and workforce performance, and these new concerns are altering CEO ethics and expectations. Across the globe, the highest-performing individuals in the highest-performing industries constantly strive to become better and better. Experts suggest that in today's global markets, being number one will increasingly hinge upon immediate access to sophisticated technologies, the best drugs, and the best training and education money can buy. There is a divide between how organizations decide what training or promotions professional will receive and how talented professionals invest in their own success. Executives at a Fortune 100 engineering company, for example, might require that a passionate and talented but hot-headed project leader attend anger-management sessions to cool his jets. However, how decisions are made may be the subject of transparency discussions, particularly if promotions are given to those professionals willing to undergo medical treatment or attend counseling sessions. Executives and HR must work together to improve the workforce and ensure professionals are improving themselves.

Bridging the Gap
E.learning Age (08/01/09) P. 5; Williams, Peter

Learning is a topic of regular discussion in U.K. corporate boardrooms, and research from e2train's Learning and Skills Group indicates that a big minority of learning and development professionals wants to supply more comprehensive or more frequent disclosures to the board. The overwhelming majority sees a need for a stronger connection between learning and development and central business processes and strategy. E2train's Martin Belton pointed to correspondence between his firm's findings and those of a Bersin & Associates study describing the shift from traditional and computer assisted training, e-learning, blended, and informal learning to collaborative, talent driven learning. E2train cited findings from Bersin that almost 70 percent of knowledge workers feel their biggest learning obstacle is an intimidating corpus of information. Learning and Skills Group Chairman Donald Taylor suggested that learning and development professionals must migrate from the analysis, design development, implementation, and evaluation model toward a design, develop, and deploy model encompassed by four classes of learning—contextual, just in time, must know, and just in case.

6 Tips to Keep a Mentor **Personal Branding Blog (07/29/09) O'Brien, Monica**

Blogger and career adviser Monica O'Brien offers a half-dozen suggestions on how professionals can find and retain mentors. Her first recommendation is that they find someone local, because it means they have a better chance of meeting them in person someday. "In my experience, the value of having a local network is at least tenfold the value of a having an online network in terms of job leads, collaboration, and sales opportunities," she writes. O'Brien also recommends that prospective mentees bring something to the table to give mentors a reason to devote time to them. Mentors will be more inclined to help people who follow their advice, as well as report back as having done so. O'Brien notes that mentees must be aware of the distinction between mentors and friends, never forgetting that the mentor/mentee relationship is professional. O'Brien's last and most important tip is for mentees to avoid committing stupid mistakes that will reflect poorly on their mentors.

In Lean Corporate Times, Take Charge of Own Training **Minneapolis Star Tribune (07/27/09) Reyer, Liz**

At a time when companies are reining in spending and cutting back on employee training, consultant Liz Reyer recommends that employees assume control of their own training. "Clarify what you're trying to accomplish with additional development," she advises. "What do you want to learn, and why do you want to learn it? Look at career trends and your interests, and relate them to your short and long-term life and career goals so you're solidly committed to what you're undertaking." Workers also should consider the trade-offs of professional development, as well as impeding factors such as time, money, and personal constraints. Reyer suggests that the process should start with the finding of a mentor, and that employees should prepare to explain what they are after. With one's learning goals outlined, the next step is finding the resources. "Try asking your company's development staff for ideas on books, Web sites, seminars, or other programs that fit your goals, even if the company can't fund it," Reyer says. "Learn from the people around you, too; you may be surprised by how much your co-workers know." Professional development ambitions demand a serious work ethic, Reyer says. "If you're learning a new leadership skill, learn about the new behavior through books or other methods, practice it conscientiously and reflect routinely on your progress," she advises.

Leaders Hope Green Jobs Will Help Heal Employment Void **Philadelphia Inquirer (07/31/09) Tamari, Jonathan; Spolar, Matthew**

Many residents in the Philadelphia area are signing up for green job training. One class is held at the Hispanic Family Center in Camden. A graduate landed a job with New Jersey utility Public Service Electric & Gas Co. (PSE&G). New Jersey hopes to help employ many citizens in green jobs since it just received approval to install \$515 million worth of solar panels across the region. PSE&G will hire 100 workers in the first year to install solar modules on 200,000 utility poles. An additional 100 will be added by Petra Solar Inc. PSE&G has been approved for \$240 million in energy-efficiency projects, and they plan to add 600 people to install energy-efficient street lights. "What's driving it is a conscious decision by society, by our customers, that they want to have clean air, they want to have a better environment, they want to have a positive effect on climate change," says Alfredo Matos, PSE&G's vice president of renewables and energy solutions. "All that translates into providing the products and services that our customers are demanding." Pennsylvania is also seeing a similar trend. The state has 39,000 "clean jobs," a small number of the overall clean jobs available, but it is promising for a region that had employment losses in the steel and mining industries. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers is also on board with green jobs; they are heavily involved with solar power. Some feel that manufacturing of solar panels or wind turbines and selling them to others will provide the most wealth, but however the states get involved in green projects will help them. Gov. Corzine has promoted clean energy and has included money for green jobs in his economic recovery package. The state has also paid for training, providing companies with incentives for hiring, and giving entitlements to customers who take advantage of green services. The state Labor Department put \$1.7 million into the training program at the Hispanic Family Center, and companies like PSE&G received incentives to hire graduates. The program, called the

Center for Energy and Environmental Training began in Trenton and expanded to Camden, Newark, and Somerset. They have already trained more than 100 people and will soon begin teaching solar panel installation.

Multinationals Face New HR Hurdles
Edmonton Journal (Canada) (07/29/09) P. F7; Sankey, Derek

International Business Strategy author and University of Calgary professor Alain Verbeke says expatriates are becoming increasingly essential to the success of multinationals' overseas ventures, but he sees a widening gap between head office and subsidiary offices. "Large multinational firms are not paying enough attention to dealing with expatriates," he says. Corporate executives at headquarters often intrinsically mistrust expats' skills to follow directives, while expats are becoming increasingly doubtful of how well the head office grasps firms' operations abroad. "Many stakeholder groups in local communities across the world have become much more vocal, much more aware of environmental issues, social issues," Verbeke notes. "And if you don't have good expatriates to be these continuous translators, you can get into big trouble." Although companies carry out a great deal of training to help improve subsidiary office workers' performance, they frequently skip over the costs and complexities of broader stakeholder management. "We need to look at how we can put systems in place to make sure that indeed there is initiative being taken in subsidiaries, but ... make sure that what people do there is in line with what the firm really wants," says Verbeke. He stresses that a middle ground between the intrinsic distrust of expats' abilities and the assumption that they are completely trustworthy must be established.

Emotional Intelligence Skill-Building Can Enhance Leadership Competencies
Blog Critics (07/14/09) Stock, Byron

Organizations can gain significant value in their efforts to help people develop their leadership abilities by enhancing Emotional Intelligence skills. Leadership competencies "provide organizations with a way to define in behavioral terms what its leaders need to do to produce the results the organization desires and do so in a way that is consistent with and builds its culture." Emotional Intelligence skill-building offers an approach to enable an organization's managers improve their competencies. Emotional intelligence is the ability to acquire and apply knowledge from emotions in order to make good decisions. The author uses a model containing five Emotional Intelligence competencies: Emotional Self-Awareness, Emotional Self-Regulations, Emotional Self-Motivation, Empathy, and Nurture Relationships. The first three represent the intra-personal competencies, while the last two represent the inter-personal competencies. One example of how development of Emotional Intelligence skills can obtain results is in the leadership competency of "making complex decisions." Such decisions can best be made based upon a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience, and judgment. Emotional self-awareness, emotional self-regulation, emotional self-motivation, and empathy are among the emotional skills that are called upon. Such skills enable leaders to manage their own negative emotions associated with uncertainty of decisions; take into consideration the emotional impact of change on others; adjust their explanation of the change to maximize understanding and acceptance; create a positive tone of cooperation even during difficult business situations; and identify creative solutions when under pressure.

The Crucibles of Followership
Conference Board Review (07/09) Vol. 46, No. 4, P. 70; Kersten, E.L.

Employees who are closest to their superiors--those who are the most supportive and involved--are often the most gullible to the "crucibles of leadership"--times of trial and testing--generated by their managers' foibles. Here are three kinds of crucibles of followership that drastically change the way workers learn to view their roles in reference to their managers. When a project or venture falls flat, followers must contend with the knowledge that they have put their money on the wrong horse. These workers have devoted their time and talents to something that seems to have generated nothing more than expenditures, which can spur a wide variety of negative responses, including bitterness, revenge, and disengagement. Some leaders do not have much of a backbone and have a hard time asserting and building up the interests of their team. Weak leaders pose a Catch-22 for followers who are closely involved and can create long-

lasting residual effects. Thirdly, most managers want their team members to step up and take risks, but this can be dangerous for followers, especially if their bosses lack the spine to defend them and their ideas. Workers need the assurance that if they go out on a limb, their leaders will have their back.

**Studies Conducted at York University on Business Ethics Recently Published
Business & Finance Week (06/20/09) P. 541;**

Researchers at Toronto's York University recently published a study in the Journal of Business Ethics that looks at the effect culture has on ethics-related attitudes and behavior. The study used an analytic framework that isolated the effect of cultural and national differences in order to see how these differences are related to individual level variables. As part of this analytic framework, researchers tested two hypotheses based on both cultural and national contexts by comparing groups of Chinese and American respondents together with a so-called "bridging group" of Chinese Chinese-Americans. By using this approach, the researchers were able to determine that the two ethnic Chinese groups shared a number of cultural values, though their values were significantly different than the American group. The researchers noted this finding shows that culture is much more important than national background in shaping value orientations.

**Which Hidden Strengths Aren't You Leveraging?
Rough Notes (07/09) Vol. 152, No. 7, P. 42; Paterson, Kimberly**

While many workers devote a great deal of time to correcting their weaknesses, experts suggest that paying attention to the strengths can help lead to improvements in performance. Additionally, managers that help workers realize how strengths can fill in the gaps will help workers increase confidence, master new skills, and improve job satisfaction. Coaches should help workers compile a list of strengths, including talents, skills, intelligence, experience, perceptiveness, communication, sensitivity, energy, values, education, and creativity. Workers may need to be prodded into revealing their strengths. Compiling a list of weaknesses can be helpful as well. When one examines a weakness repeatedly, a correlating strength can usually be found, say experts.