

# Training Scene

American Society for Training & Development  
Newsletter of the Massachusetts/Greater Boston Chapter



## This Month's Feature

### **MARCH 11, 2004: DEALING WITH MANDATORY AUDIENCES, DEAD AUDIENCES AND OTHER PROBLEM EMPLOYEES**

Presenter  
John Ford  
*Manager of Technical Vitality  
Ceslestica, Inc.*

Thursday  
March 11, 2004

5:00pm - 6:00pm  
Registration, Networking &  
New and Prospective Member  
Orientation

6:00 pm - 7:00 pm  
Refreshments

7:00 pm - 9:00 PM  
Program

Sheraton Lexington Hotel  
727 Marrett Road  
Lexington, MA 02421  
781-862-8700  
www.sheratonlex.com

Members: \$35.00  
Non-Members: \$45.00

Register by Tuesday  
March 9, 2004

Register After March 9,  
Add \$5.00

*Member's guests may attend at  
the member fee as long as fees  
are paid in advance*

Did you ever wonder why the audience is just looking back at you? Did you ever want to ask if there was someplace else they would rather be other than in training? Did you ever wonder what you could have done differently and come to the realization that you did everything you could think of, and nothing worked?

Well these questions, and others just like them, are the type of questions training and education professionals have been asking themselves since organized training began (in a cave with an instructor name Zork - 51 Ways to Use a Club).

In this two-hour presentation, we'll explore what it takes to engage the audience no matter why they are attending your program. We'll look at ways to make the learning journey work for all attendees (including the instructor). We will take time to explore various tools and techniques that can be used, and ones that have been used and shouldn't be ever again.

You will find the simple steps to making training work again and again (the secret is you already know these). You'll learn steps for helping the audience take responsibility for their own learning and be able to you how they know they

*Continued on page 2*

**Cancellations:** *In the event of the cancellation of a program due to inclement weather, notification will be left on our voice mail. Please call 617-731-2783.*

To register please send check to ASTD  
Mass/Greater Boston Chapter  
PO Box 67262, Chestnut Hill MA 02467

For information or to register online:  
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Pre-registration and  
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Please call the Chapter Office at (617) 731-2783 for information on how to contact any Board member.

### Training Scene

Is published ten times per year, and is the official newsletter of the Massachusetts/ Greater Boston Chapter of the American Society for Training and Development.

Direct requests regarding submitting articles or advertising to: Chapter Office, ASTD, PO Box 67262, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467  
Phone: (617) 731-2783

### Submissions:

Articles and announcements for inclusion in Training Scene may be emailed to:  
[trainingscene@massastd.com](mailto:trainingscene@massastd.com)

## March Meeting

(Cont.)

learned. You'll participate in an interactive discussion of the training improvement process and how to keep each event as crisp and fresh as the first time you delivered it.

***Not only will audiences want you to come back, you'll want to go back as well.***

**John Ford** is the Manager of Technical Vitality for Celestica, Inc. In this position, John is responsible for the overall technical well being of the global engineering and manufacturing

workforce. A major portion of his energies goes into partnering with the college and university community worldwide to develop programs and projects aimed at keeping Celestica's competitive edge in the Electronic Services Manufacturing industry. John has worked with the American Council on Education assisting companies interested in gaining college credit recommendations for their internal training programs and has served as a Consultant with Thomas Edison State College to design a Management Sciences Masters Degree Program for the New Jersey State College Association.

## President's Message



### Adapting to Change

Despite the fact that there are a lot of us "Baby Boomers" out there, has

anybody else noticed that the work force seems to be filling with "younger" people? How many of you are finding that the humor that you insert into your training sessions just doesn't have the same affect on the students as they use to?

Children born in 1986 are graduating from high school and entering the work force. Here are some examples of references known to us that will be meaningless to the class of 2002:

- They have never feared nuclear war.
- "The Day After" is a pill, not a movie.
- Black Monday in 1987 holds the same historical significance for them as the Great Depression held

for our parents.

- The expression "you sound like a broken record" means nothing to them.
- They never took a swim and thought about "Jaws."
- The original "Star Wars" looks fake to them.
- They have never heard "Where's the Beef?" or "I'd walk a mile for a Camel."
- Kansas, Chicago, Boston, America and Alabama are just places to them, not rock bands.

Although we don't want to, we get older every day, and so do our examples. I will close by reminding you that one of the reasons you have all succeeded in this career field of ours is your ability to adapt to change. After all, that's the business we are in. It is our job to be able to communicate our message to our participants in a manner that they will understand, and, more importantly, learn from. We have all learned that it is our responsibility to know our audience.

*Larry Habart, President*

***With the increasing trend toward outsourcing corporate training and development functions, today's corporate t&d professionals need to be prepared to compete with the external vendors knocking on their corporate executives' doors through effective marketing and PR strategies.***

**W**hile ROI has been touted as the critical measurement of the value your internal training organization delivers to your company, simply reporting ROI to company executives is not enough. "ROI is just one part of a total framework demonstrating the value of your department to the company," advises Holly Burkett, SPHR and Principal of Evaluation Works. As internal training professionals, "You're still selling products & services, and building relationships with your customers," says Burkett.

Effective marketing and public relations are as essential for internal training professionals as for the external trainers knocking on your VP's doors. And those external training vendors are your competition.

"In today's economy, anyone who can readily be outsourced WILL BE," says Suzanne Jackson, President of Four Leaf Public Relations ([www.fourleafpr.com](http://www.fourleafpr.com)), a firm specializing in corporate image and visibility campaigns. A recent ASTD *State of the Industry Report* confirms that companies of all sizes are

increasingly outsourcing their training functions.

So what can internal training professionals do?

**UNDERSTAND THE CUSTOMER'S BUSINESS GOALS**

Think of yourself as a training vendor, and of all the business units you support as your customers. With limited budgets, they'll only buy products from you that address critical business goals in a cost effective way.

To get from business goals to training & development needs, Burkett suggests you regularly ask your key stakeholders several fundamental

- a. What are your critical short- and long-term business goals?
- b. What are the gaps between what your employees know and do now and what they need to know and do *in the future*?
- c. To what extent, if any, can training & development help close the gaps?

In addition to these regular, structured gap analyses, Jackson recommends ongoing, casual "relationship building" conversations.

"You have a competitive advantage called proximity," she says. "Not many training providers can say they're with their customers on a daily basis."

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questions:

Over lunch, in the hallways, after meetings, Jackson suggests, "Ask your customers continually what's happening in their part of the business and how your training & development organization can help."

Jackson recommends that, in addition to regular conversations with management, you also talk regularly with front line employees. Find out what their needs are and how your programs have made an impact on their day to day jobs. Then in your conversations with management, she says, "you can share the employee intelligence data that you've been able to get because you're in such close communication with such a large segment of the company's employee population."

### KNOW THE BUSINESS, KNOW THE CULTURE

Leveraging proximity can provide an additional advantage. As an internal company employee, you understand your company's business and culture better than any external vendor ever could. You speak the language.

In "Outsourcing the Training Function: Results from the Field" (*Human Resource Planning*, Gainey & Klaas, March 2002, v25 i1 p16), the authors caution that, "external suppliers may not be able to understand an organization's culture well enough to perform effective training in certain areas."

It is essential that you continually develop your understanding of your company's business and leverage this insider knowledge by tying your programs and services to the unique needs of your business.

### CLEARLY DEFINE THE PROGRAMS

"Training interventions succeed because of proper planning," says Burkett. She suggests involving your customers in defining:

- a. the purpose of the training or development program (what business goals will it support?)
- b. the desired learning outcomes (linked to business needs)
- c. evaluation criteria to be applied to determine whether the program was successful

Involving the customer will build your credibility and, at the same time, help the customer to understand the importance of their involvement in the evaluation process.

"The real stuff happens after people complete the training program," she says. "Managers need to realize their role in helping to make trainings successful."

### TEAM UP

Unless you're a one-person training department, it is essential for you to partner with your co-workers in the training organization on all of your marketing and PR efforts. Even if each of you has a different set of programs you run or a different division of the company you support, "Every member of your internal training organization needs to be conveying consistent messages about the overall value of your department," says Jackson. You need to become evangelists not only for your own programs and services but for the services of your whole department.

Teaming up with others in your training department can also spark

ideas for cross-over programs, blended learning solutions and help you to develop critical efficiencies in processes and program delivery.

### DELIVER THE GOODS

Simply put, after understanding the customer's business goals, you have to deliver products and services tied directly to those goals, in a way that provides maximum benefit. Numerous other articles have addressed how to deliver top-notch training and development programs. The rest of your PR and marketing efforts hinge on your ability to deliver.

### COLLECT THE DATA

Your ROI metrics must demonstrate the value your programs have added to the business. How did the program help to achieve business goals? How did the program increase productivity? What new capabilities do participants now have? These metrics are more meaningful than number of people trained or number of classes offered.

In addition to metrics, Jackson suggests, "Collect testimonials, quotes from training participants and 'success sound bites' - anecdotes on how the training program you delivered made a difference to the business."

Burkett suggests taking it one step further. "Bring selected program participants back to the executive team to talk about the value of what they learned and how applying it back on the job positively impacted the business. Your program participants become 'learning ambassadors', your programs gain credibility and you're perceived as a business partner."

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But what about the programs that haven't been successful? Jackson advises, "Be honest about what has NOT been successful and let your customers know what you'll be doing differently next time. The basic law of good PR is to tell the truth."

### **CRAFT THE MESSAGE AND DELIVER IT — OVER AND OVER**

The critical last step in your PR/marketing plan is to communicate clearly the value of what you and your training department do through numerous communication channels. You need to be highly visible to the rest of the company. Everyone should know who you are, what you do and how your programs help the company to achieve business goals.

If your company has internal news vehicles, be sure the results of the programs and services you've delivered for the business are featured regularly.

The leadership of your training department should be in regular meetings with senior executives. Use these opportunities to share ROI metrics and "ambassador testimonials" on programs that have helped achieve business goals.

A training & development newsletter offering useful professional development tips to employees and managers, and brochures detailing the programs and services you offer are important pieces of marketing collateral. Distribute these materials in all of the training programs you deliver, in new employee orientations and in functional department and management/leadership meetings.

You and your training organization should have a strong web presence on your corporate intranet. Develop a "corporate university" or "learning portal" website offering easy access to a wide range of professional development tools to all employees. According to the 2002 Outsell Briefing on Corporate Training & Learning, "more than ever, users are looking for one-stop shopping opportunities." If you and your internal training department can provide that "one stop shop", company managers will be less likely to want to go to outside vendors.

Be sure to market your industry expertise as well. "Everyone in the training department needs to work to improve their own reputation in the industry," says Jackson. "Get published, speak at events, and become known in the training industry as experts. Then within your own company make sure that senior management knows they have ready access to in-house industry-recognized experts." With such expertise in-house, why would someone go outside the company for training & development resources?

### **BE THE PREFERRED PROVIDER**

"You don't want to be the default trainer because you're there. Strive to be the training provider of choice," says Jackson. Assume that you're always being compared to external training vendors. "You have to show that no one else can do the job better than you," says Jackson. "Performance, along with a well-crafted marketing and public relations plan can ensure that you get 100% market share."

*Melanie Snyder is a Senior Training Consultant for LexisNexis. She is project manager for the company's talent management systems initiative, the corporate learning portal and internal marketing and PR for Corporate Training & Development. She is also a freelance writer with articles published by Harcourt Educational Publishers, SIRS Discoverer, The News Leader (a Gannett daily newspaper), Charlottesville Business Journal and other national, regional and special interest publications.*

## **Your Chapter Needs You**

*Are you a Writer?*

*Have you been published lately?*

*Would you like to be published in Training Scene?*

*We are looking for articles for future issues of Training Scene on contemporary Training and Development Issues. If you have an existing article or would be willing to write one, please contact us at [MASSASTD.COM](mailto:MASSASTD.COM) or call the office (617) 731-2783*

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1/3 Page Ad	(2 1/4 x 10")	\$150
1/2 Page Ad	(7 1/2 x 4 1/2")	\$230
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