

In Practice

NFL Tackles Training

Along with its 1993 season, the National Football League last fall kicked off a new venture: educating executives about business strategies.

The project, developed jointly with Ryan Management Group of New York City, offers "a positive way to enhance the sport of football and to generate revenue for the teams"—the league's two main objectives, explains Juanne Harris, a marketing manager with NFL Properties, the league's marketing arm.

NFL Performance Training seminars take place at teams' training facilities. Ken Blanchard, author of *The One Minute Manager*, and Maureen O'Brien, author of *Scrimmage Training*, helped the NFL develop the curricula.

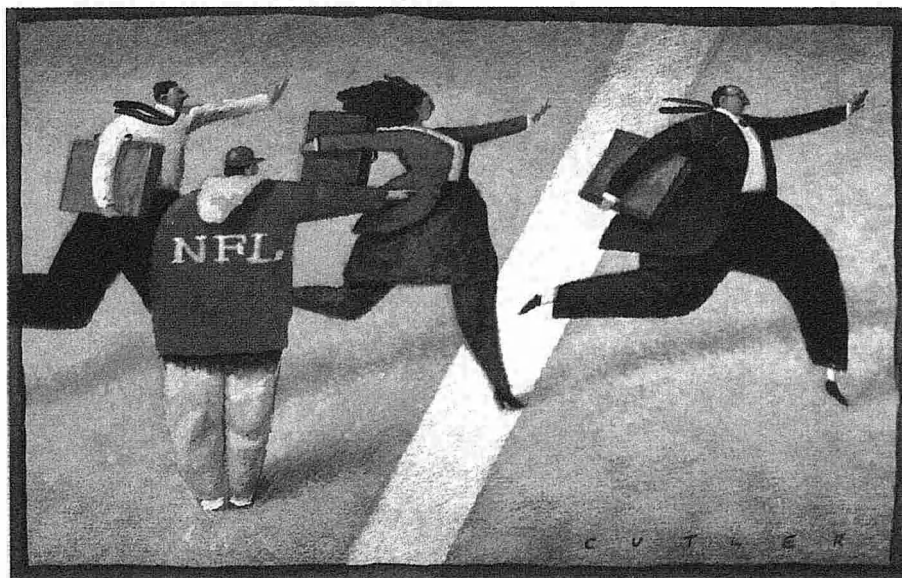
"It's not rah-rah-rah motivational speaking," says Harris. "This is serious business training."

Seminars focus on three topics: team building, effective coaching, and in-depth preparation for action. According to Harris, focus groups indicated that business executives consider the NFL expert in those areas.

According to Harris, trainers representing Blanchard and O'Brien teach parts of the seminar. Team officials, such as scouts and coordinators, give "interactive lectures" on how they do their jobs and what businesspeople can learn from their experiences.

Seminar participants also might meet players or coaches when they tour the team's facilities as part of the seminar, adds Harris.

The first two seminars took place in October, one at the Long Island team-training facility of the New York Jets and one at the New England Patriots' facility in Foxboro, Massachusetts. The three-day semi-



Dave Cutler

nars cost \$2,250 per participant.

For information, contact Ryan Management Group at 800/488-5488.

Recruiting Minority Graduates

Since 1989, major U.S. corporations have failed to recruit more diverse employees from college campuses, a new study shows.

Hanigan Consulting Group surveyed 100 *Fortune* 500 companies about their patterns of diversity in campus recruiting in 1993 and compared the findings to those of a similar study conducted four years earlier.

Hanigan Consulting's *1993 Strategic Diversity Report* found that among respondents, minorities made up 20 percent of all campus recruits—only a 4 percent increase since 1989. Thirteen percent of respondents recruited no minority employees from college campuses in 1993.

Most recruiting managers surveyed attributed the paltry increase

Executives learn lessons from the gridiron, courtesy of the National Football League.

to a lack of qualified minority candidates—an explanation that Hanigan Consulting calls “disturbing.”

“There are plenty of qualified minority candidates out there,” says Maury Hanigan, president of Hanigan Consulting. She noted that the total number of campus recruits has dropped by 55 percent since 1989, while the number of minorities

receiving degrees has increased.

“Generally, companies fail to recognize the skills and abilities of non-majority candidates,” Hanigan contends.

But some companies have the knack, the study indicates—one-third of respondents reported that minorities made up 30 percent to 40 percent of their 1993 campus recruits.

The study did not analyze why

some companies did significantly better than others at recruiting minorities. Based on her experience, Hanigan says successful companies typically build a cadre of diverse campus recruiters and train all recruiters in interviewing skills that cut through cultural bias.

“It’s very hard for any interviewer to get [his or her] biases out of the way and look at candidates’ abilities, and the culturally different ways people demonstrate abilities,” says Hanigan. Such common variations as speech patterns—such as Black English, Southern drawls, and “Brooklynese”—often negatively influence the way interviewers evaluate candidates.

Companies’ campus recruiting

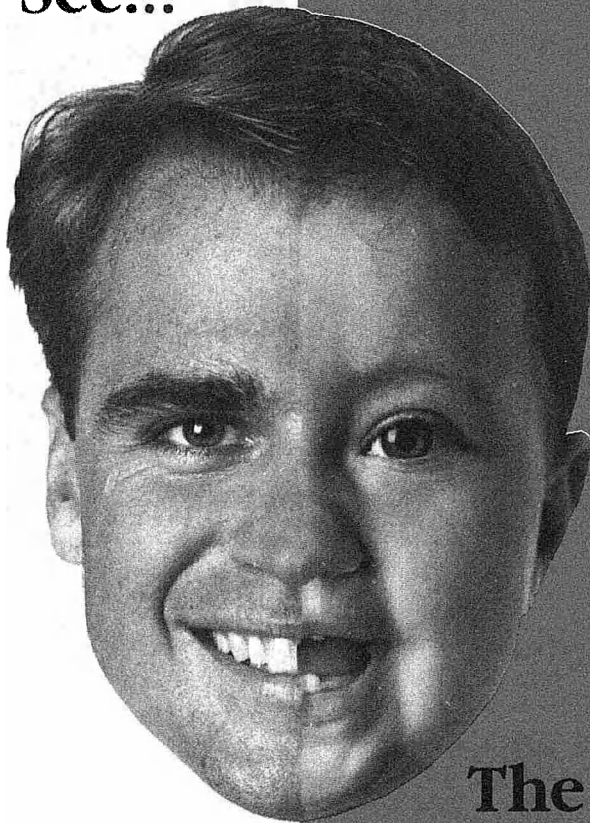
Soundbite

Inc. Editor George Gendron makes the following observations in the April 1993 Inc. issue about the role training plays in forging “next-generation” companies, such as those profiled by John Case in the same issue. (See “The ‘We’ Operation,” on page 11.)

“We’ve been hearing a lot of talk lately about setting up federal programs to help American workers learn up-to-date job skills so they can survive in the new economy. That’s exactly the kind of help they don’t need. At best, a job-training program provides a set of skills guaranteed to become obsolete a few years after they are taught. Such is the nature of the new economy. What’s required is not *job* training, but *business* training...”

“By business training, I mean teaching people the basic financial skills necessary to understand how a company creates value and makes money. I mean showing them how to read an income statement and a balance sheet, and how to use such information to gauge the health of a company. I mean giving them tools with which they can figure out on their own how to contribute to their company’s success and thereby create job security for themselves.”

The You You See...



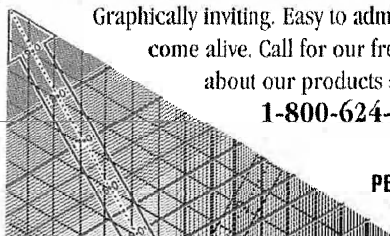
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programs have long-term implications for diversity programs, Hanigan says, because campus recruits often form the pool of candidates groomed for senior management and technical positions.

"Companies must achieve diversity in campus recruiting, or they are fighting a losing battle all the way," Hanigan says. Without a substantial pool of minorities in management-track positions, "there's no one in the pipeline to promote."

The "We" Operation

Today's hottest companies are stamping out the "us versus them" mentality of both managers and workers and replacing it with a new mindset in which everyone thinks like an owner, says writer John Case in the April 1993 issue of *Inc.* magazine.

What does it take to create a "company of businesspeople"? Case lists the following four critical elements:

- ▶ People at all levels need decision-making authority, and the company's structure must encourage them to make decisions.
- ▶ People must have the information they need to make intelligent decisions. Ground-breaking companies share key financial information—income statements, balance sheets, cash-flow plans, and budget projections—with all employees regularly and frequently.
- ▶ People need training to understand the financial information that governs the business.
- ▶ People need a stake in the results of the decisions and in the company itself.

Making Towers, Building Bridges

Multicultural management is "a question of attitude, an openness to human variety, not a question of knowledge" about cultural dos and don'ts, says intercultural trainer Fons Trompenaars of the Netherlands.

To drive home the point, reports Bob Hagerty in the *Wall Street Journal*, Trompenaars takes his students to the mythical village of Derdia—where

"yes" means "no," kisses on the shoulder mean "hello," and an outstretched hand means "go away." And where all Derdians love towers but don't know how to build them.

During his workshops, Trompenaars assigns several participants the role of expert tower-builder, and then sends them out of the room to devise a plan for teaching Derdians

to make paper towers.

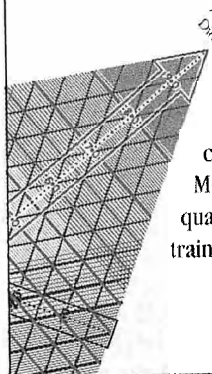
In the experts' absence, Trompenaars schools his remaining students in the ways of Derdia, including the gestures used to greet and dismiss others and how to indicate "yes" and "no." In addition, students learn the following taboos: Women never use paper or scissors in front of men; men never use pencils or rulers in front of women.

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When the "experts" return, they find themselves repeatedly kissed on the shoulder and confused by students who sound agreeable but don't carry out any instructions. The men and women refuse to use certain tools, but the "experts" can't figure out why. Usually, the tower-teachers grow increasingly annoyed and patronizing, and the "Derdians" grow increasingly stubborn. No towers get built.

The lesson, says Trompenaars: If you don't figure out the basics of a foreign culture—and respect those ways—you won't get much accomplished.

Working Flexibly

Flexible work arrangements are growing more structured and more available to professionals and managers, according to a long-term study by Catalyst, a New York City-based research and advocacy group for women in business.

In 1993, researchers interviewed HR professionals from 70 companies; 37 of the companies had participated in a 1989 Catalyst study of flexible work arrangements for professionals and managers. Forty-five other female employees who had participated in the 1989 study also were interviewed.

In 1989, flexible work arrangements for exempt employees were a relatively new phenomenon in U.S. corporations, the study notes. The 1993 study found that 38 percent of the companies surveyed had 100 employees or more working flexibly. More than 60 percent of the companies have formal policies or guidelines on alternative work schedules.

Although one-quarter of the human resource specialists said that working a flexible schedule would hobble an employee's opportunities for career advancement, 24 of the group of 45 female employees interviewed were promoted while working flexibly.

"Resistance by middle managers continues to be the single biggest obstacle to the use of flexible work arrangements," says Marcia Brumit Kropf, Catalyst's director of research. "These arrangements require a new set of management skills, the foremost being the ability to evaluate

productivity without relying so heavily on time in the office."

To order *Flexible Work Arrangements II: Succeeding With Part-time Options*, call Catalyst at 212/777-8900.

Low Literacy

Some 90 million adults in the United States—about 47 percent of the adult population—demonstrate low levels of literacy, but most of these adults describe themselves as reading or writing English "well" or "very well."

That was one major finding of the National Adult Literacy Survey, released in September by the U.S. Department of Education.

According to Education Secretary Richard Riley, the report underscores literacy's strong connection to economic status. *Adult Literacy in America* "paints a picture of a society in which the vast majority of Americans do not know that they do not have the skills they need to earn a living in our increasingly technological society and international marketplace."

The study defines literacy as "using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential." Findings indicate that people with poor literacy skills are far less likely to work full-time or to earn high wages. They are far more likely to live in poverty.

NALS assessed adults on three types of literacy:

- ▶ prose literacy, the ability to understand and use information from texts such as articles and stories
- ▶ document literacy, the ability to locate and use information in documents such as applications, maps, and tables
- ▶ quantitative literacy, the ability to apply arithmetic to numbers embedded in printed materials, such as checkbooks, order forms, and advertisements.

The study classifies adult literacy skills in all three areas according to five levels, which are based on such factors as the length and complexity of written material. Scales for each level range from 0 to 500; a Level 1 score (225 or below) indicates very

limited skills; a Level 5 score (above 375) indicates advanced skills.

Among unemployed adults in the study, the average scores for prose, document, and quantitative skills were 246, 237, and 241, respectively—42 to 49 points lower than the average proficiencies of people with full-time jobs.

Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey, conducted the National Adult Literacy Survey in 1992 for the Education Department. The study sampled the English literacy levels of more than 26,000 people in the United States age 16 and older.

Training Young People

Young adults who receive job training are more likely to get it from their employers than from any other source—especially if they are white and male.

So determined an economist who has analyzed training patterns among young adults.

Jonathan R. Veum, an economist with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, analyzed data about training drawn from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, which in 1979 started tracking a nationally representative sample of young people.

Veum examined data reported between 1986, when respondents were ages 21 to 29, and 1991. The study excluded formal schooling.

Thirty-eight percent of the young adults received some form of training during that period; 24 percent of respondents received company training, the largest percentage for all sources of training.

More young men (25.5 percent) than young women (21.9 percent) received company-sponsored training, and men received about three hours of company training for every two hours received by women.

A higher percentage of whites (24.9 percent) received company-sponsored training than of blacks (19.5 percent) or Hispanics (17.8 percent). Nonwhites and females were more likely than whites and males to seek training off the job; for example, from business schools, vocational or technical institutes, and seminars.

Participants in apprenticeship pro-

grams received the most intensive training, averaging about 27 hours a week. Only a tiny percentage of women (.6 percent) were apprentices, compared with 2.4 percent of men.

The data show that companies also are more likely to invest training in young people who have more years of schooling and who score higher on aptitude tests. This connection, according to Veum, might mean that companies overlook many workers who could benefit from training.

Veum's findings appear in the August 1993 issue of the *Monthly Labor Review*.

Coping With Overload

White-collar workers won't have time to use business improvement tools if they don't even have time to clear their in-boxes, observes Ira Chaleff, president of the Institute for Business Technology/US, in Washington, D.C.

While companies are busy teaching their managers to build teams and flowchart processes, managers are drowning in a sea of paperwork, information overload, and interruptions, Chaleff writes in the June 1993 issue of *Industry Week*.

Before people can improve business processes, they have to tune up their own work processes, says Chaleff. He suggests the following strategies:

- ▶ Determine what you don't need to know. Take yourself off unnecessary mailing and internal-distribution lists.
- ▶ Use your calendar to schedule uninterrupted blocks of time for completing critical work.
- ▶ Learn the "handle-it-once" approach to paperwork.
- ▶ Create an effective system for organizing paperwork. Group related papers, put them in folders, and label them. Work with one project at a time. Store frequently used files within arm's reach; store the rest elsewhere.
- ▶ Create an electronic filing system that complements your paper-based system. Act on and delete messages quickly. Set up e-mail folders to store messages you must keep. Use subdirectories to organize your wordprocessing files, and periodically shift dormant files from your hard drive to floppy disks for storage.

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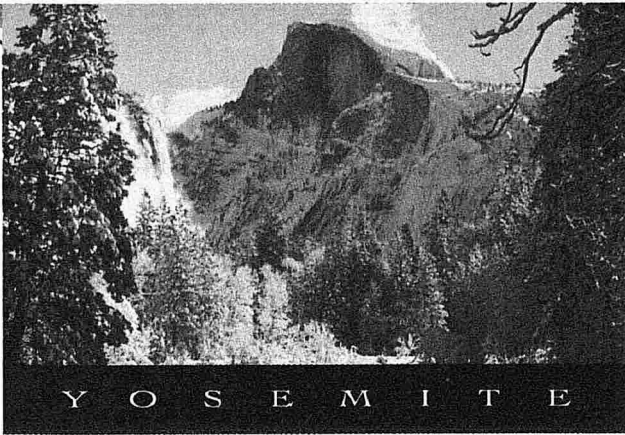


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In Practice

Boosting Small Firms

The American Electronics Association and the Council for Continuous Improvement have formed a three-year alliance to help U.S. industry, particularly small firms, improve its competitiveness.

AEA and CCI will share total-quality management and continuous-improvement training materials, exchange memberships among staff members, and cosponsor events promoting continuous-improvement processes. By pooling their efforts, CCI and AEA aim to produce an integrated, standard curriculum for continuous improvement for the electronics industry.

AEA and CCI are pursuing other alliances with trade groups, government agencies, and academia. AEA represents about 3,000 U.S. technology companies. CCI is a nonprofit consortium of more than 130 U.S. organizations.

For more information, contact CCI, 181 Metro Drive, Suite 500, San Jose, CA 95110; 408/283-1300.

Evaluating Training Videos

By Laura Winig, publisher, Training Media Review, 1 Fitchburg Street, Suite C215, Boston, MA 02143.

When you preview a training video, what do you look for? Do you have a systematic approach to judging quality and value, or do you subscribe to the I-know-a-good-video-when-I-see-a-good-video method of evaluation?

The reviewers of *Training Media Review* have developed an evaluation matrix to help trainers objectively evaluate videos. The matrix is particularly useful for comparing videos from different producers or videos on different topics, and for pooling opinions when consensus is required.

Consider the video scores you calculate from the matrix as rules of thumb only. The matrix provides quantitative measures of subjective criteria, to offer rough guidelines and help ensure that no criteria are overlooked. Here's how to use it.

Before you watch the video, decide how important each category is to your assessment process and rank

The Video-Review Matrix

Category Value 3=very important 2=somewhat important 1=not important	Category	Category Rating 3=outstanding 2=above average 1=average 0=poor	Category Score value x rating
3 2 1	Supports training goals	3 2 1 0	_____
3 2 1	Holds viewer attention	3 2 1 0	_____
3 2 1	Presentation	3 2 1 0	_____
3 2 1	Pacing	3 2 1 0	_____
3 2 1	Instructional value	3 2 1 0	_____
3 2 1	Content accuracy	3 2 1 0	_____
3 2 1	Production quality	3 2 1 0	_____
3 2 1	Information value	3 2 1 0	_____
3 2 1	Casting of women and minorities	3 2 1 0	_____
3 2 1	Portrayal of women and minorities	3 2 1 0	_____
3 2 1	Supplementary materials	3 2 1 0	_____
3 2 1	Value for the money	3 2 1 0	_____
Total			_____
Average Score			_____

each (3 for very important, 2 for somewhat important, and 1 for unimportant). For example, if you need an engaging teamwork video but can live without broadcast-quality production, you might assign "Holds Viewer Attention" three points and "Production Quality" one point.

Next, play the tape, making notes next to each category as appropriate. After you've watched the video, assign each category a rating of zero to three points, based on the following criteria:

- ▶ Three points. Outstanding. The video meets or exceeds your highest expectations in this category.
- ▶ Two points. Above average. The video meets all of your needs in this category.
- ▶ One point. Average. The video meets some of your expectations, but not others.
- ▶ Zero. Poor. The video does not meet your needs in this category.

Next, multiply each category's value by its rating and enter the score in the far right column of the matrix. Add all the scores and divide the total by the number of categories considered, to obtain the video's average score.

Then you can compare the average score to the following score key to see how each video stacks up:

- ▶ Eight to nine points. The video is highly recommended and is worth the investment. It meets minimum standards for all of the categories you consider important and exceeds mini-

mum standards for most of them.

- ▶ Six to seven points. This video is recommended as a useful, above-average program. It meets minimum standards for most of the categories you consider important.

- ▶ Five points. The video is recommended with reservations. This video has some weaknesses. It meets minimum standards for some of the categories but falls short in most.

- ▶ Fewer than five points. The video is not recommended. It will not enhance your training program.

The Oy of Management

By Karen Susman, 3352 South Magnolia Street, Denver, CO 80224.

Move over Theories X, Y, and Z. Here comes Theory M. *M* as in "Mensch Management." Mensch, a Yiddish word, means an honorable person. If all managers managed like mensches—with honesty, integrity, and respect for all people—profits would soar and the chit-chat around the office coffee pot would sound much happier.

As with any management theory worth its salt, Theory M comes with its own set of buzzwords. Learn to talk the talk, and you can walk the walk. To get you started, here's a glossary of Mensch Management terms. And have some matzo-ball soup at your next

power lunch. It couldn't hurt.

Bagel. (ba-gel) noun. Sounds like bagel. A low-fat donut with character. (A chocolate-chip bagel is not an authentic bagel.) "The trim executive said, 'I always carbo-load on bagels before a marathon budget session.'"

Chutzpah. (khutz-pa) noun. Rhymes with "foots paw." (Do not pronounce the *ch* as in chocolate but as if you're clearing your throat. Start practicing—it takes years to get it right.) 1. Guts, audacity. 2. A brazen move. "You need chutzpah to succeed in the global marketplace of the 1990s."

Plotz. (plotz) verb. Rhymes with "pots." To collapse from aggravation or outrage. "When I told my manager I wanted to transfer, she plotzed."

Schmooz. (sch-mooz) verb. Rhymes with "loose" or "ooze." To chat. "The salesperson reported to the sales manager, 'I schmoozed with everyone at the hospitality suite.'"

Schtik. (sh-tik) noun. Rhymes with "pick." A studied, overused routine. "The disgruntled customer said, 'Every time I call for service, they give me the same schtik—it's not their job.'"

Simcha. (sim-kha) noun. (Remember to practice your "ch.") 1. Rejoicing. 2. A pleasure. "The company president said to the Quality Control Captain, 'Congratulations on winning the Baldrige award. May you have many more simchas.'"

Tsimmes. (tzim-mes) noun. Rhymes with "sim less." 1. A complicated, time-consuming dish. 2. Something out of proportion. 3. Troubles. "Bureaucracy can make a simple process into a real tsimmes."

Yenta. (yen-ta) noun. Rhymes with "tent-a." (Do not confuse with *Yentl*. That's the title of a Barbra Streisand movie.) A gossipy person. "Don't tell Jim in finance anything about your performance review. He's a real yenta."

Zaftig. (zaf-tig) adjective. Rhymes with "of-tig." Plump. "Over espresso in the Red Carpet Lounge, the CEO observed, 'We're downsizing the organization. We were getting too zaftig.'"

(Source for pronunciation: Leo Rosten's *The Joy of Yiddish*.)

"In Practice" is edited and written by Erica Gordon Sorohan. Send items of interest to "In Practice," Training & Development, 1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043.