

EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

The Next China Revolution

Jonathon Levy

Given its size, need, technological capacity, and track record of success with improbable scenarios, China could become the global e-learning giant of the future.

According to Levy, China is the perfect target for investment in an e-learning solution for its transition to a labor-based economy. The large number of Chinese workers currently faces a dramatic lack of skills and knowledge. To compete globally, they must be updated rapidly.

China can accomplish that if they adopt a leapfrog style of implementation. That means passing over the current state of e-learning to a more powerful and effective solution. By doing that, they avoid the problematic strategies of early online training.

Suppliers should be aware of the tremendous market need in China. Levy goes on to discuss different examples in Chinese economic and political history that indicate its ability to carry out such an unlikely remedy, and how such a solution could place China way ahead of the e-learning industry pack.

For complete text, see page 58.

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Demystifying Performance: A Roadmap

Dennis L. Gay and Thomas J. LaBonte

This first of a two-part series on human performance improvement and performance consulting, Gay and LaBonte explain their straightforward step-by-step approach on how to make the transition from trainer to performance consultant.

The first step is to partner with internal clients by conducting an initial meeting. During this meeting, trainers should discuss the problem and identify any gaps in performance. The best way to do that is to shift the dialogue from training-specific questions to a more comprehensive discussion about overall performance.

Once the performance gaps are identified, the trainer should then convince the client to collect root-cause data in order to accurately determine the real cause of the problem. That way, the trainer can identify how much of the problem requires training and how much involves nontraining workplace actions to solve it.

For complete text, see page 64.

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IRS Goes E

Martha Gold

The second in a five-part series of case studies on enterprise-wide e-learning, this article takes an in-depth look at how in 2001, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service began an enterprise-wide e-learning system for its 110,000 employees.

The first step involved convincing the IRS's 12 separate business departments to promote the switch from predominantly classroom-based training to online learning. Next was a requirements-gathering process that helped the group acquire a learning management system and integrate it with HR systems.

Corporate culture also required a shake-up. Support from management helped employees make the transition to accessing courses and other work-related info from their computers. But that didn't happen overnight: The IRS spent 12 years dabbling in computer-based learning and blended solutions to make workers comfortable with the enterprise-wide change.

The final phase of implementation is still in progress. The IRS is integrating learning with work performance so employees can access content in the context of doing their jobs. Eventually, the IRS wants to make that content available to the entire federal government, while setting internal content management standards.

For complete text, see page 76.

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Training Sweetens Hershey's Core Strategy

Linda Strange and Paul Hennessey

Most companies would cringe at the thought of implementing sales training during serious labor, management, and ownership problems. But not Hershey Foods. Last year, it did just that when it changed its trade funding process. The results of the initiative, called Blue Chip, couldn't have been sweeter.

What made Blue Chip successful? For starters, it was a broader, market-based approach to training: Learning was connected to strategic corporate sales goals. Plus, the external instructors understood the company, the industry, and Blue Chip strategy. Training was individually tailored for salespeople, managers, and executives in order to provide only the most relevant and effective skills. Sales teams received follow-up training and coaching about important negotiations, and initiative results were tracked and reported.

Crucial lessons from Blue Chip:

- Link training to bottom-line initiatives, not just build skills.
- Understand your company and the industry trends.
- Find an executive who can help you connect skills with initiatives.
- Provide options rather than a single recommendation.
- Make training an ongoing process, not a one-time event.
- Use short-term success to fund long-term projects.

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Using Leadership to Implement Leadership

Clark Aldrich

In this follow-up, Aldrich addresses questions raised in his article, "The New Core Leadership," from the March issue of *T+D*. He says the way to get organizations to embrace leadership as an enterprise competency is to demonstrate leadership.

Leaders need to build power to gain influence. They can do that by documenting, executing, and seeing great ideas through, in addition to completing all strategic projects. Long-term power can be attained by targeting star employees and helping high-potential people.

Leaders also need to successfully uncover and introduce ideas by working with others. They should take the time to listen to other people in the organization. By bringing in quiet members of the group, leaders will gain credibility and respect.

Another key factor to demonstrating leadership is the moderation of workplace tension levels. Tension extremes are necessary to generate ideas, but moderate tension is needed to get things done. While it may seem manipulative, Aldrich maintains that it's a constant goal of any successful leader.

For complete text, see page 94.

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