

Training's

VIEW
GUARD

Take this job and love it.

You may have seen the TV ad with the tagline “Life is short. Do what you love.” That could be the motto of the nine people featured this year to represent training’s new guard. When you hear their stories, you can’t miss the passion they bring to their work. They love what they’re doing, and it shows. They’re plugged into the new energy infusing the training world, thanks to a large amount of capital, unprecedented public attention, and a growing demand for capable employees. If learning is the currency of the knowledge economy, the new guard controls the ATMs.

Like many of you, these folks have reinvented their work lives at least once in the past 12 months—because they wanted to, not because they had to. Take Eric Watson, who broke out of a 21-year career with one company to push his personal and professional limits for a new employer in a new state. Or Colleen Petersen, who jumped into e-learning at Cisco after years of being a traditional training developer. Or Tanya Cruz Teller, whose training helps young people gain marketable skills and learn to be community leaders.

While technology shows up in many of this year’s new guard stories, it’s not the main focus. The Reynolds twins are doing great things with multimedia, but their greater achievement is the risk they are taking in being boldly innovative in the stodgy world of instruction.

Training’s new guard learns from but isn’t crushed by failure. Michael Gaffney, president of Unexus University, started his first online venture in 1985. Although that product didn’t fly, Gaffney used the experience to mold his approach when founding Unexus.

If you bring your whole self to the job, if you feel a creative restlessness to keep improving, if you work from the heart, you are part of training’s new guard. We picked these nine men and women to stand for all of the people who are catching the new wave of training and using it to make a difference in their work and in the results they create for their employers. Read their stories as if you were reading your own.

You can test your new-guard quotient by taking the quiz on page 56. Development Dimensions International designed it as a self-assessment of some of the competencies of training’s new guard.

Here are a few characteristics that unite the new guard:

- finding common ground where there seems to be none
- championing projects that violate the status quo
- breaking boundaries
- keeping abreast of trends
- pioneering new approaches or technology
- maintaining a positive spirit.

Truth or Consequences

TRAINING'S NEW GUARD

Erline Belton

Founder and principal

The Lyceum Group

Roxbury, Massachusetts

Age: 56

Growing up, Erline Belton's six children knew there was one thing they couldn't get away with: lying. Belton has turned that passion for truth into her life's work and believes that honesty in all things can advance, or even save, an organization. She speaks from experience: As corporate employee relations director at Digital Corporation in the mid-1980s, Belton witnessed firsthand the company's demise. "One cause of the downfall at Digital was that people didn't tell the truth," she says. "People would collude to put the company's best foot forward. [Dishonesty] becomes part of the culture until it's no longer recognized."

Since forming The Lyceum Group in 1991, Belton has worked with organizations as varied as Applebee's restaurants, the Cleveland Film Society, and the U.S. Department of Currency. Although her work in truth-telling can be characterized broadly as a diversity initiative, Belton finds the word *diversity* divisive in many ways. "We've attributed such fuel to it. You create sides by the very nature of how the word is understood." Belton also notes that diversity already exists in any situation: "You have diversity regardless of people's outer covering; it's just more visible." Belton prefers to describe her work as "promoting and maximizing individual and organizational effectiveness," which can be seriously compromised in an atmosphere of dishonesty. Belton knows she's got her work cut out for her: "Most of us have learned how not to tell the truth," she says. "Society doesn't value truth or being reflective. People are fearful of truth-telling because they fear rejection."

Belton's usually brought into an organization in one of these circumstances:

□ The organization has a leader who understands that diversity issues are imped-

ing business success.

□ There's a "diversity" problem, in which case Belton faces a reactive situation.

□ A middle manager wants to improve the functioning of his or her team.

□ The board of directors orders it.

"Most people are looking for ways for people to work well together," says Belton, who calls those ways "right relationships." Organizations can perpetuate myths and fallacies that hamper right relationships in all kinds of ways. Belton cites as an example a company that lets people founder in jobs that don't suit them; she calls them the "walking wounded." Say an engineer becomes a manager. He's swayed by the money and the prestige of the new position, but he can't handle the responsibilities. "If you're in a job that doesn't suit you, relationships won't come together," Belton says. She believes that to be truthful—and to maximize individual and organizational effectiveness—we need to make all job roles honorable, no matter what level.

When Belton begins work with an organization, she tries to create an atmosphere of safety by working with small groups and allowing employees to create and affirm their own group norms. Then, she says, "The first tool I give them is themselves." She asks participants to go through a process of self-examination to answer the questions, *Who are you?* and *How did you come to be who you are?* "Part of looking at yourself is discovering who you are and who you want to be," she says. "So often, we're defined by others and live by beliefs and assumptions that aren't really our own. People must learn that they make choices about who and how they want to be, and that there are consequences to those choices. They also must decide who they are not." Without that knowledge, people can become the walking wounded—without

purpose or passion.

Once she opens the door to self-examination, Belton leads her clients to see that we all have our individual truths and that multiple truths can coexist. Although that coexistence can cause tension and even schisms, through enlightened management and supervision organizations can create a collective truth that will then lead to changes in the company's behaviors, structure, culture, and values. "People have to bring their hearts back to work," she says. "Organizations can be blessing blockers: People working together can achieve more than they ever thought possible. Watch children play; they're so *in* it, so joyful. We can do that in the workplace, but first we must believe that it's possible."

Belton has been a member of the walking wounded herself, but in a different way. She faced many obstacles as a black woman trying to succeed in the mostly white HRD profession, but admits that she put up many of those obstacles herself. "People found me intimidating, because I tend to be direct. That was *my* problem, because it held me back. I also created a set of high standards, because I believed I had to be better than everyone else. I built up a wall around myself with that need to be perfect and didn't leave any room for people to engage with me. I had to figure out how to let other people contribute. I learned that it didn't mean I had to be less than good."

Belton's mission stems from her belief that people create living legacies—in themselves, in their families, and in their work. "Things happen for people when they can live with purpose and passion. I look at the planet as a total system. It's all relational, and we're all in it together. This work nourishes my soul."

Diving Into Online Education

TRAINING'S NEW GUARD

Michael Gaffney

President

Unexus University

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Age: 46

Michael Gaffney is a big believer in failure. "Failure is a valuable commodity," he says. "It creates ongoing learning by pointing to what should have been. Many times, failure validates an option that has been taken off the table. Failure increases the chance that your next effort will be a success." It's a good thing, too. Gaffney attempted to found an Internet company in 1985, a text-based job search tool called Worknet. "We were eight years ahead of our time," he says of the product's failure.

Perhaps Gaffney's belief in the power of positive thinking stems from his experience as an athlete and a coach. He coached the Canadian Olympic diving team for 11 years and advocates applying the principles of high-performance sports psychology to the workplace, especially mental preparation and training techniques, and goal-setting. "Those techniques are often used by executives, although they may not know it," he says. "Often, the only muscle they're moving is their mouths." Gaffney believes that although we should all give "a gold-medal-quality performance every day," we shouldn't become obsessed with the objective but be path-oriented. By paying attention to the path as well as to the end result, we gain ongoing learning from failure.

Gaffney's path has taken him through a number of performances. As vice president of HR for Newbridge, a global telecommunications equipment manufacturer, he facilitated a reorganization that created "customer-facing" teams. He describes that effort as a demand-driven model that taught employees to "feel the customer's satisfaction and pain." In 1995, Gaffney played a key role in creating Newbridge University, which serves the company's 3,500 employees in Ottawa, Washington, D.C., Wales, and Hong Kong. In 1996, Gaffney took the courses he'd developed for Newbridge

outside the company and started Learnsoft Corporation, which focused on developing training products for managers in the technology sector. Why the specialization? "Many people feel that management is management," he says. "Technology management is a different animal, and those managers get really frustrated in a classroom talking about techniques for companies that make potato chips or shoes."

Fast-forward four years to 1998. Learnsoft's product has morphed from a 10-day classroom mini M.B.A. to a wide range of CD-ROM offerings to a Web-based curriculum. The company's flagship product remains the same: the CATM, or Certified Advanced Technology Manager program, which offers instruction in such areas as change management, strategy, finance, marketing, and product development. While the delivery mechanisms were still evolving, Gaffney had a realization: The Internet plus multimedia plus Learnsoft's CATM curriculum added up to an online M.B.A. that was virtually ready to launch. Learnsoft already had the courses, content, and professors; all it really needed was a partnership with a degree-granting institution. Good thing Gaffney's a positive thinker.

"People looked at me like I had two heads," says Gaffney. He shopped around for a partner, proposing that Learnsoft would supply content, delivery, and service; all the university would have to do is grant the degree. The idea went over like a lead balloon. But, true to form, Gaffney wasn't deterred. "When it became clear that we weren't going to get a university partner, we decided to become a private university and go through the accreditation process ourselves." Thus was born Unexus University, which welcomed its first class of 12 e-M.B.A. (executive M.B.A.) candidates on January 17, 2000. The students, all

Canadians, work at such companies as Nortel, Lucent, and Cisco: Their average age is 38. They'll spend two and a half years earning their M.B.A.s, taking classes six weeks on, one week off. That schedule is another legacy of Gaffney's sports training: "People who are short-tasking have a higher completion rate," he explains. "It's like wind sprints."

Unexus was the world's first private, Internet-based, degree-granting university. Its 20-person staff, divided among offices in Ottawa, Ontario, and Fredericton, New Brunswick, is mostly academics and technologists. The company's five software developers work from home. A six-member board of directors takes care of corporate governance, and a 12-member advisory board weighs in on content and curriculum, acting as trend watchers. Gaffney describes the environment as "aggressive," noting that the online M.B.A. market is competitive. Learnsoft went public in December 1999, and by the end of March the stock value had increased 800 percent. Plans call for Unexus to turn a profit in early to mid 2001.

What's next for Gaffney and Unexus? Through a partnership with CfBT, a global education and training provider, Unexus will be offering the e-M.B.A. in Malaysia. "East Asia has a rapidly growing technology industry with executives demanding relevant management training," says Gaffney. "Malaysia has the Multimedia Super Corridor, making it the ideal hub for Unexus in Asia." CfBT will represent and market Unexus, establish a student support center, and provide student information. Unexus is looking for similar business partners in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China.

Tom Muir
Director
Sales Colleague Development
Warner-Lambert Pharmaceuticals
Morris Plains, New Jersey
Age: 45

You Gotta Know What You Don't Know

Right up front, Tom Muir admits that he's not exactly the poster boy for work-life balance. A self-described workaholic, Muir confesses to keeping a dictaphone next to his bed to record nocturnal worries or brainstorms. He attributes some of his drive to the example set by his father, a Liverpool dock worker: "He worked 12 hours a day, seven days a week until I was about nine, which was the first time I remember him having a day off other than Christmas or Easter. He gave everything to be successful. His definition of success was what he did for his family."

The rest of Muir's energy and drive we can chalk up to one simple fact: He loves his job as director of sales colleague development at Warner-Lambert Pharmaceuticals. "I like my work, and I feel quite comfortable being a workaholic," he says. "We really do drive results and make a difference. I feel very lucky." Muir aspires to share that passion for HRD with everyone around him, admitting that he had a hidden agenda when he first came to the job in March 1998: "Sometimes training and development is viewed by companies as a place to put people who need staff experience. I wanted everybody in the organization to want to be a part of my department." Muir seems to have gotten his wish, saying that he has the most positive department around and that he has to chase his staff of nine out of the office at 6 p.m.

When he first took the job, he spent the first few months in what he calls "a window of opportunity of stupidity." "I just

walked around and asked people, *Why'd you do that? How'd you do that?*" Muir's willingness to admit ignorance and pursue learning led to the needs-based learning initiative he quickly put into place for all 500 sales colleagues. The program has become known as the Warner-Lambert Healthcare Way. It encourages the sales staff to figure out what they need to know, to know what they don't know, and then to pursue appropriate learning to fill the gaps.

The framework is a Web-based career-progression matrix that identifies the 24 job types within W-L Consumer Healthcare. For each job type, necessary skills are categorized in six competency areas: technical, policies and procedures, functional, leadership, communication, and management. Each skill has an associated learning element. Employees can perform self-evaluations on those skills that, when combined with their managers' assessments, create a personal-skills inventory. Not only do the matrix and inventories help sales colleagues plan their own development, but they also serve as guidelines for succession planning and training planing and scheduling.

Simultaneously with developing the Healthcare Way, Muir went to work on revamping the training evaluation process, wrestling it into consistency and accuracy. Here's how it works:

- Level 1. In this paper-based step, all evaluation forms are the same, no matter what the delivery method.
- Level 2. Conducted at intervals throughout the training, written tests are

completed anonymously, and the answers are reviewed as a group.

- Level 3. Evaluation at this level is conducted in three steps: 1) a manager accompanies the sales colleague on sales calls and evaluates performance, based on personal observation; 2) six months after the training, the manager provides feedback on skills and behavior via the Website; and 3) trainees create individual development plans that they review with their managers periodically in an ongoing evaluation effort.

Persistent, consistent evaluation also supports another of Muir's goals: to prove that training drives performance and that the company's investment in education pays off. "I want my boss to support HRD with financial resources," he says frankly. "If [the program] falls short of revenue goals, I don't want training cut. We have to invest in educating our people." Muir currently administers an annual training budget of about US\$2.5 million, of which \$850,000 is reserved for discretionary spending. Although some folks were skeptical of the initiative at first, "the feedback has been heartwarming," he says.

What's the secret to Muir's success? "If you get a plan—a good plan—and just work it with dogged persistence, it's amazing the adversity you can overcome. Our program can stand on its own, and I would benchmark it against anything."

Wired and Inspired

TRAINING'S NEW GUARD

Colleen W. Petersen

Manager of Learning and
Development

Cisco Systems

San Jose, California

Age: 50

Colleen Petersen jumpstarts her 12-hour workdays with a double, nonfat latte but says that what really energizes her is being part of a company that believes that e-learning is the future of the Internet. Cisco's Website proclaims: "One day, training for every job on Earth will be available on the Internet." Cisco CEO John Chambers has been delivering that message at industry trade shows and public events for the past several months.

When the head of one of the largest companies in the world says e-learning is important, it is. And Petersen, as a manager of e-learning for leadership development, is right in the center of the action. Cisco, a global networking company with a range of hardware and software products, adds employees at such a fast rate that it will need 10,000 managers by 2004. Petersen is part of the leadership team that created a worldwide system for training Cisco managers. Managers from any of Cisco's 250 offices will be able to go online at any time to work on the requirements in their personalized learning

To Russia With Love

Sometimes a small good idea turns into a great big idea. Colleen Petersen and colleague Rodney Jackson, in search of a "product" that their business simulation students could manufacture, chose puppets. The Cisco managers from around the world who were taking the course turned out 150 puppets, complete with carrying bags. Petersen and Jackson hit on the idea of giving them to a Russian orphanage.

Not satisfied with a one-time act of charity, Petersen and Jackson began to solicit help for the orphans that would make a real difference in their career options. Hewlett Packard and Microsoft joined Cisco in donating and installing 14 computers loaded with Russian and English versions of Microsoft software. Cisco supplied connectivity and sent people from its staff in Russia to train the youngsters to use the Internet. Every child at the orphanage had a Cisco sponsor that provided gifts of clothing, books, and toys. Now, the Russian youngsters may take part in Cisco's Networking Academy, a computer school held at locations around the world.

For information on the Russian orphanage project, email cisco-kids-russia@cisco.com

portfolios.

"We're building a self-service learning culture," says Petersen, "and moving away from the typical training programs." One step toward this new world is to provide accountability by tracking results. "We measure everything," says Petersen.

Learning programs are widespread at Cisco. The company lists training as one of its benefits and provides an average of 40 hours of training a year to each employee. For the moment, e-learning is a small part of the total picture. The company delivers from 2 to 5 percent of its training via computers, intranets, and the Internet.

For many courses, "Our managers may choose between leader-led and e-learning," says Petersen. "It's not either-or." She says many managers prefer e-learning for the way it honors different learning styles.

This year, Petersen's team built an e-learning portal for leadership development on the Cisco intranet. The portal is a virtual door to an array of courses, libraries, databases, and learning communities.

Learners will be able to connect with an instructor and with other managers pursuing the same learning goals. Soon, the portal will become part of a companywide training management system.

Cisco and Petersen are a good match. The company welcomes quick-thinking risk takers like those who make up the e-learning team. "It takes a certain sort of personality to work here," says Petersen. "You have to be comfortable not knowing all of the answers. We want to change before the market requires us to, so we're always looking for the next right answer."

Petersen came to Cisco via a route that is increasingly common for women in the training field—from secondary education to a training company then to a corporate training unit. Armed with master's degrees and steeped in instructional design and training product development, she was a natural to anchor Cisco's leadership development e-learning team. It's that multitalented, high-energy team for which Petersen seems most grateful: "I couldn't do my job without them." Close teamwork, especially in which technical and teaching skills combine, is one hallmark of training's new guard.

Petersen loves her job but hasn't let it become her whole life. She and her husband live in a sequoia forest in Saratoga near San Jose, with a variety of household pets and two of their seven children who live at home. She teaches a community workshop for parents on how to set limits, belongs to a women's book club, "tries" to work out, and grows herbs and roses in her spare time.

What spare time?

TRAINING'S NEW GUARD

Paul and Peter Reynolds

Founders and principals

CF: Cosmic Blender/FableVision

Watertown, Massachusetts

Age: 38

Make Mine a Double

When they were but 12 years old, the Reynolds twins started their own newspaper. Paul did the writing, and Peter provided illustration. Thus began a lifelong creative collaboration that manifests itself today in the animation and multimedia-development firm called Cosmic Blender and its sister company FableVision.

Clients that go for a whirl in Cosmic Blender find themselves in open office space with yellow and purple walls, blue velvet couches, huge television screens, and awards aplenty on display. Providing creative, editorial, design, and production services for all kinds of learning projects, Cosmic Blender employs about 40 staff. On a visit to the offices around noon, you can find most of them eating family-style around a large table in the kitchen. The firm provides lunch daily, and keeps the kitchen stocked with sodas, candy, and ice-cream sandwiches. Employees are young, energetic, casually dressed—and happy. “Everything I’ve ever learned, I do all at once here,” laughs Dawn Haley, FableVision’s studio manager.

The Reynolds brothers foster a sense of whimsy in all that they do. The Cosmic Blender Website offers visitors two options for viewing the information: Shaken (Shockwave) or Stirred (HTML). “We try to bring out the kid in everyone,” says Peter. Cosmic Blender’s corporate learning projects are a concoction of multiple media mixed with solid instructional design. The basic ingredient of every project is telling a good story.

“Most clients know their content, but it

can take them three hours to explain it,” says Paul. “Front-line employees usually don’t have time for the long version. Give us two or three minutes, and we can tell your story for you. Our job is to hear the whole story and all of the details, then create a strategy that cuts through the clutter and engages the learner.”

The downfall of many traditional training approaches, the Reynoldses believe, is that they present packages of details and expect learners to open and digest them. “We must make them want to open that package,” says Paul. “Using storytelling as a technique makes it easier for the learner to answer the question, *What is the personal meaning and context for me?*”

Before any design or production begins, the Cosmic Blender team first works with a client to hear the whole story, then considers three basics: learning objective, audience, and possible obstacles. Then, “We try to find an emotional spark or trigger that will prompt curiosity and discovery,” says Paul. Corporate learning projects currently being whipped up in the Blender are

□ WineBUZZ (Starwood Hotels and Resorts). A video-based program developed as support for classroom instruction, designed to migrate to Web delivery sometime in the future. The overall learning objective is an introduction to wines, designed to increase the comfort level of Starwood’s food and beverage employees in recommending, selling, and serving wine.

□ Call center training (MediaOne). Being developed in new SightPath technology, this program is designed to

transform current offsite learning into video-based, Web-delivered instruction. SightPath allows a client to send media-rich applications over the Internet and cache them on its local area network. The technology eliminates the need to store media on CD-ROM and bypasses the bottleneck of live video streaming.

□ Leadership development (a major international consulting firm). This CD-ROM product features high production values; full-motion, full-screen video; and customized games. “Our goal is to make it so engaging that partners with no time will be compelled to use it,” says Paul. Many of the learning products feature original characters and animation from Cosmic Blender’s sister company, FableVision.

Cosmic Blender specializes in designing a comprehensive campaign to support the new learning programs. “You must market the learning content to the learners,” says Paul. How do they do that? Well, for WineBUZZ the campaign included posters, hats, t-shirts, temporary tattoos, and a 20-second MPEG sent over Starwood’s intranet. A screensaver that provides a theatrical preview of scenes from an upcoming CD-ROM piqued the curiosity of Staples store associates about a new selling-skills program. “There has to be a commitment to ongoing promotion of the program, which weaves the learning into the culture,” says Paul. “If you change the culture, you change behavior.”

Tanya Cruz Teller

Associate Director of Training

YouthBuild USA

Somerville, Massachusetts

Age: 28

Head, Hands, Heart

When she was in college, Tanya Cruz Teller always thought she'd work in Latin America or Israel after graduation. But then she had an epiphany: "How could I put my precious resources and energy to work elsewhere when my own back yard is not how it needs to be?"

Those precious resources and energy are now being put to work on behalf of YouthBuild USA, a nonprofit organization for which Teller serves as associate director of the training and learning center. And, boy, does she work—often 80 hours per week. "I'm on a mission," she says simply.

YouthBuild provides educational and vocational training to underprivileged youth at 145 sites across the United States, serving 5,000 constituent trainees per year. Not content to call it just an organization, YouthBuild's staff refers to it as a "movement." And perhaps it is: After all, the organization's mission is to help young people radically turn around their lives. By offering them programs that teach not only academic, but also marketable construction skills, YouthBuild is providing them with a foundation for successful lives. Further, the program teaches youth the value and reward of community service and leadership: Many of its construction projects involve renovating housing for low-income and homeless families. Participants alternate a week in the classroom learning traditional academic subjects, with a week on a construction site, learning skills hands-on.

Although Teller's many responsibilities include orienting and training regional and national YouthBuild staff, her

Georgia on Her Mind

In addition to her work with YouthBuild, Teller is on loan to the Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention. Founded and chaired by Jane Fonda, G-CAPP is a nonprofit campaign that works to reduce the rate of adolescent pregnancy in Georgia. Teller is working with G-CAPP's Youth Leadership Core, providing leadership development training and working to restructure the organization to include youth in decision making. The goals of the YLC are to ensure that Georgia's youth

- play an active and meaningful role as leaders in their communities
- participate in state and local government as advocates for issues that affect young people and their communities
- are recognized as true citizens and decision makers and are well prepared to participate in the voting process when old enough
- gain skills necessary to perform successfully in the work environment.

favorite duties are working with the Young Leaders' Council. The council is composed of 25 YouthBuild participants who are elected by their peers. Teller works with them on such skills as facilitation, presentation, strategic planning, and goal setting. "These young people are making policy decisions that affect the whole YouthBuild movement," she says with pride. When working with the group, "I have to check myself for adultism," she says. "I try to take the healthiest aspects of both age groups: Adults need fun and breaks; young people need respect and challenge."

Teller also works with a smaller group of 10 who constitute YouthBuild's Alumni Council. Those are appointed YouthBuild graduates who have started alumni clubs in their areas. "I am committed to involving young people as training team members," Teller says. "I try to increase their skills through their roles and exposure, and I learn from them as well. Our ultimate goal is to give them roots and wings."

One of Teller's signature approaches

to training is what she calls "Name It and Claim It." She guides participants to identify how they've internalized oppression or colluded with it. She describes it as a process of "unpacking our baggage, having the courage to claim it as ours, and committing to working to clean it up." To do that, Teller sets up as many safety measures as possible and describes her role as "validating, modeling, and calling folks on things. I strive to move people personally and to involve them head, hands, and heart."

Teller's family tree is a melting pot all its own. Her parents are Filipino and East European Jewish-American; her grandparents are Spanish and Chinese. She grew up in Guatemala. She has studied in Israel and worked in Grenada, Cuba, and Turkey. She's learning Hebrew and Tagalog. Of those many multicultural influences, the one that most informs her work and her passion is something she learned from her mother's Filipino culture, which places strong emphasis on community and family: "Everyone has something to give."

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Eric N. Watson

Executive Director of Diversity

and Workforce Capability

The Williams Company

Tulsa, Oklahoma

Age: 44

Thinking Differently About Difference

For the past 21 years—ever since he graduated from college—Eric Watson had worked for one company. But in March, he did something that amazed and surprised everyone. He decided to leave The St. Paul Companies and move to Tulsa, Oklahoma, to become executive director of Workforce Capability for the Williams Company, an oil and natural gas business.

Early in his long career at the giant insurance company, Watson worked in the claims division, but something was pulling at him. “My father taught me to see things differently and not to get stuck in my environment,” he says. In the 1990s, Watson became the company’s diversity officer and then vice president for global diversity. That willingness to reinvent his career from the ground up makes Watson one of training’s new guard.

If you think diversity is all about race

and gender, you haven’t been keeping up, says Watson. “The new diversity is about differences of all kinds, even those that come from within a company itself.” For many businesses, diversity is the guarantor of growth and change in the new economy. Watson believes you won’t get much innovation if everyone looks, thinks, and acts the same.

Watson did his best to encourage the people at The Saint Paul Companies to think differently about difference. He built diversity strategies that encompassed organizational culture and change, interpersonal relationships, leadership, and demographic representation. “Those are powerful creators of differences in any company,” says Watson.

Day to day, he handled staff development, leadership training, human resource planning, performance management, process measurement, and

work-life programs. He also consulted the CEO and the senior management team about their roles in diversity and cultural change.

Between wall-to-wall meetings, he found time to help employees who were experiencing diversity in all its new meanings. “I counseled forty-something white males about new professional choices they didn’t know they had.” He saw people with issues about race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religious choice, veteran status, and geographic origin—all part of the company’s broad definition of diversity.

Little by little, Watson began to broaden his thinking about diversity. Comparing notes with his counterparts in other companies, he concluded that mergers, acquisitions, and other changes in company ownership caused more friction about differences than any other factor. “Restructuring puts people in a

different place. Their reactions aren't that different from a work group in which there are ethnic differences," says Watson. "The corporation expects them to produce, regardless of the need to adjust to differences."

Watson noted that compelling people to do more work with fewer resources produced the same kind of tension that diversity experts have long known how to diffuse. For Watson, diversity tools seemed ready-made for dealing with radical organizational change.

Watson is already thinking about what corporate diversity will look like in 2005. He believes it will have at least these characteristics:

- a shared mindset about a company's vision and strategy
- application of the vision and strategy from top to bottom
- translation of the vision and strategy into business goals
- comprehension of how everyone contributes to those goals no matter where they work or how "different" their situation is.

"You can't give up on race and gender," says Watson, "but you shouldn't make them the whole measure of success. At the same time, you need to get women and folks of color into leadership roles or you won't be able to do the larger things. Our thinking about diversity needs to be more results-oriented than in the past."

Says Watson, "In three years, you should be able to judge the diversity of a

company by the answers to these questions: *Does anyone at the executive table speak another language? Who isn't from the United States?*"

In five years, Watson expects leaders to be modeling the behaviors of a truly diverse company. "By that time, leaders should no longer need to talk about what diversity means or whether there's a business case for it. They will respect differences and be willing to develop and promote people who aren't like themselves."

Watson gives the business five years to be skilled at hiring, retaining, developing, and managing a diverse workforce. "Our EEO policies should be living things, not words on paper. And there should be an environment that innovates and drives high performance through learning."

In five years, there has to be a clear capacity for managing change and being flexible, says Watson. "Our companies need to be employers of choice, even in the midst of such events as a merger or downsizing. An organization that wants to retain talent will have a clear path for people to take. They won't have to wait for a tap on the shoulder."

In the new diverse workplace, Watson sees himself being successful if he works himself out of his job. "A lot of people would say 'not in our lifetime,' but I think diversity will evolve to where it's not called *diversity*. It's really about capability."

A Short Report

In the fourth grade, Eric Watson was the tallest kid in his class. At five feet, seven inches, he was an obvious choice to play center on the school's basketball team. But 5'7" turned out to be Watson's full height, and that shaped his future in basketball, and to some extent in life.

Throughout high school, as other basketball players grew taller, Watson moved from playing center forward to playing guard. A talented athlete as well as a good student, he attended Livingstone College on a combined academic and athletic scholarship. In his second year, he faced up to the reality of being a short basketball player in a world of towering competitors. He decided to quit the team and give up the athletic part of his scholarship. But he dreaded telling his family. When he did, his uncle said, "Well, you're finally growing up."

Watson never gave up his interest in sports and now gets involved in his children's athletic activities as coach, spectator, and fan. Jarrod, age 14, plays football. Alex, age 10, plays soccer and basketball. Last year, Watson coached his daughter's teams, which sometimes meant leaving work at 3 in the afternoon. "It was the first time in my career I'd ever done that. It taught me how out of control I was about work. I used to work on Saturday mornings and after church on Sundays for a couple of hours."

TRAINING'S NEW GUARD

Kathleen Wright

Business Development Director

LearnWare

Baltimore, Maryland

All The Wright Moves

Suppose it's a hot day and you sell water. That's a good description of Kathleen Wright's job as business development director for LearnWare, a Baltimore-based company that develops custom training programs for the Web and other electronic delivery media. With e-learning booming and everyone scrambling for content to put on Web portals and learning platforms, she has little trouble finding clients who want their conventional training programs transformed for electronic delivery.

Wright categorizes LearnWare's clients, who range from startups to corporate giants, according to how much bandwidth their products require. A narrow-bandwidth client might be a professor who wants to "migrate some class notes to the Web." A midsize-bandwidth client needs video clips, animation, or audio to help demonstrate complex concepts. "Our high-bandwidth clients, where we really shine, want to transform their material into a multimedia product." With the advent of cable modems, she expects more of LearnWare's clients to go to "straight Web-based products" rather than hybrids of CBT and WBT. LearnWare also hosts clients' Websites and operates a video server.

"We do more than just convert programs for electronic delivery," says Wright. "We customize them, and we build them on a concept called mastery

learning. That's a three-part process for mastering a task." It calls for providing learners with background information and some knowledge about the task, easily supplied with computer software. Then, learners get the opportunity to practice newly acquired skills in a safe computer environment. Finally, they apply the skills in a simulated setting with mentoring and feedback.

"We approach the creation of training programs from an educator's perspective, and that's what makes LearnWare unique," says Wright. "You can find plenty of companies that create presentations for the Web, but most come out of advertising, not education. Our method is to take a content expert and cocoon him with a software designer and an instructional designer. Together, they transform content into computer software. That's where the magic is. It's like a musical trio."

LearnWare, now 10 years old, started out as a subsidiary of Johns Hopkins University. Its founders, Clayton Ajello, an epidemiologist, and Louis Biggie, a professor of advanced physics at Hopkins's Whiting Institute of Engineering, first trained health-care workers in 40 countries to provide women's reproductive health services. For the past three years, LearnWare has been a licensee of Hopkins, entitled to use its seal in advertising while remaining an independent for-profit business.

Wright's background is in education.

Like her mother and grandmother, she was an elementary and middle school teacher, but soon branched out. After studying comparative education in Europe, she went to work for MacMillan Publishing Company as a sales representative, selling books to school systems. Numerous mergers and acquisitions reshaped the publishing industry, and Wright found herself selling educational technology and software for Simon and Schuster.

"The Internet intrigued me as a tool and a potential training vehicle. In publishing, we were always looking for ways to deliver learning anywhere, anytime, to people of any age." LearnWare was able to help clients do that, and so Wright signed on. Like many of training's new guard who are involved with the Internet, she is excited to "be part of something that could revolutionize learning."

At press time, *Training & Development* learned that Kathleen Wright had left LearnWare for health reasons. She was unavailable to be

How Do You Stack Up Next to Training's New Guard?

Training is dynamic; jobs are not the same as they used to be. If you are not changing and developing, chances are you are not stacking up. This short, self-scored assessment will help you determine how you measure up against some of the competencies for training's new guard.

For each statement, rate yourself in two areas: experience and feedback. You should NOT be evaluating your skill level, just your experience and the feedback you have received. It might be easiest to complete the experience column first and then the feedback column.

Experience: quantifies how frequently you have demonstrated this action.
0= no experience, 1= limited experience, 2= some experience, 3= much experience

Feedback: quantifies the amount of relevant feedback you have received specific to the actions below.
0= no feedback, 1= limited feedback, 2= some feedback, 3= much feedback

	Experience	Feedback
1. proactively building positive relationships with multiple internal partners (supervisors and staff)		
2. finding common ground among several groups when there seems to be none		
3. offering knowledgeable or articulate responses to spontaneous, difficult questions that arise outside of the classroom		
4. finding ways to meet challenging internal or external customer requests (consistent training across geographic boundaries)		
5. describing goals or future states in a way that provides clarity and excites interest		
6. making complex decisions that require input and involvement from others		
7. encouraging boundary breaking in how we conduct training		
8. championing a project that violates the status quo		
9. overcoming major resistance to an initiative that I am trying to implement		
10. generating a long-term strategy for meeting training and development needs		
11. implementing an innovative training and development project that has not been done before		
12. keeping abreast of current trends		
13. implementing or expanding projects or initiatives on a global or international basis		
14. managing a critical initiative that has significant impact on the company's or employees' performance		
15. planning for and tapping into internal, external, and capital resources to manage a complex project		
16. seeking and using insights from culturally diverse sources and individuals		
17. working under extreme pressure (time constraints, conflicting priorities, lack of resources)		
18. establishing and implementing measurement systems to evaluate the initiatives I undertake		
19. maintaining enthusiasm and focusing on the positive, after disappointment or rejection		
20. acting as an entrepreneur to uncover opportunities others do not see, and then applying my decision-making skills to determine which possibilities to pursue		

How to Score:

Add up the total for each column, and review the feedback in the appropriate cells below.

LOW Under 30

To meet the "new guard" threshold, seek opportunities to broaden your experiences. Look carefully at the areas in which you rated yourself a 0 or 1, and volunteer for those types of initiatives. In your performance management plans, set goals around leading new and innovative projects that challenge existing assumptions, require you to think and work differently than you have in the past, and broaden the types of people and problems you typically encounter.

Seeking feedback on how you have handled a breadth of experiences is a must for effective development. Consider building a feedback loop into all projects of a specific size or time commitment, regardless of whether your company's performance management system requires it. Encourage others to provide you with objective, accurate information on their perceptions of your strengths and development needs.

MEDIUM 31 to 45

By rating yourself in the medium range, you need to focus more closely on certain specific activities in order to round out your experience base. In addition, you should plan to build upon those areas in which the number of experiences seems low. Each new experience should be deliberately pursued to help you grow, expand your skills, and broaden your comfort zone.

You are moving forward in obtaining feedback, but there are opportunities for improvement. At the start of each significant project, explain that you will be seeking feedback, and ask those who will be providing it to agree to do so. Set up a realistic feedback plan—perhaps at key milestones or by using formal feedback instruments. Work with those that will provide the feedback to develop the plan so that all of you learn from the process and agree on how the feedback loop will be implemented.

HIGH 46 to 60

Congratulations for putting yourself into situations that broaden your experience base and challenge you to think and work in new ways. Recognizing and adapting to changing business scenarios are crucial to develop competencies in the domains of leadership, interpersonal skills, management skills, and personal traits—those domains are critical for training's new guard.

By obtaining feedback on a variety of different initiatives and activities, you should have an understanding of your strengths and areas for improvement. Continue to solicit this feedback especially for new and different projects. If you are getting feedback in just one manner (for example, orally with an anecdotal flavor), consider establishing a more formal feedback process to enhance the information you are gathering.

Are you new guard?

Tomorrow's leaders are engaged in challenging work experiences today. The pace at which business, and indeed training and development, is changing requires new ways of being successful. Leaders in this environment must be able to adapt quickly to changing customer needs and specifications. Developing this agility is gained by engaging in a diverse and challenging array of experiences. Further, it is essential that as emerging leaders you receive frequent, focused feedback on your development against future demands. Examine your experiences and the feedback you received carefully to make your own assessment of where you currently stand against training's new guard.

One step further

As a follow-up exercise alongside the formal feedback column, you might want to complete a performance self-appraisal to provide an overview of how you see your skills versus the people who provided feedback. Where your performance self-appraisal is lower than the feedback you received, seek additional experiences and feedback in those categories so that your confidence increases with this experience. Where your self-appraisal is higher than your feedback, meet with your managers to structure more frequent and formal feedback so that you understand how others see your strengths and development opportunities. If the scores are consistently high, keep up the good work!