

Shareholders Reap What You Sow

Companies that have superior human capital practices create superior returns for their shareholders. That's the major conclusion of a study of North American companies by Watson Wyatt Worldwide. The study found that a significant improvement in 30 key areas of human capital management is associated with a 30 percent increase in market value. The 30 practices identified in the study were grouped into these key dimensions:

- recruiting excellence
- clear rewards and accountability
- a collegial, flexible workplace
- communications integrity
- prudent use of resources.

The study's data shows that a significant improvement in recruiting excellence is linked to a 10 percent increase in market value. Of the six critical recruiting practices with a positive correlation to market value, the two most important are hiring professionals who are well equipped to perform their duties and designing recruiting efforts to support a company's business plan. Each of those practices is associated with a 2.3 percent gain in market value.

More info www.watsonwyatt.com

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It seems like we've all gotten pretty comfortable with the idea of Big Brother. In a poll on the Workforce Online Website, 73 percent of respondents thought that companies should be able to monitor employees' email. However, 81 percent felt that employees should be notified first. Only 22 percent said that their company currently monitors email.

As to why, 54 percent of respondents agreed with the statement, "Most employers want to monitor emails only to avoid legal problems or improve productivity, not pry into personal lives."

Source www.workforceonline.com

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AchieveGlobal, a performance consulting firm based in Tampa, Florida, recently asked trainers and managers in a variety of industries about the importance of various skills, knowledge, and behaviors

needed to cope and get ahead in today's rapidly changing work environment. Welfare-to-Work programs and low unemployment have brought many employees into the workplace who have had little exposure to the real world of work. Skill deficiencies can cause organizational challenges such as low productivity, high absenteeism and turnover, and poor prospects for promoting from within.

So, what to teach new workers?

- basic steps to success, such as appropriate dress, regular attendance, and expected attitudes and behaviors
- getting and processing information
- communicating effectively
- being flexible
- working as part of a team
- balancing work and home
- handling emotions and conflicts.

More info www.achievetglobal.com

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Two-thirds of people acting as caregivers for elderly relatives lose out at work by forgoing promotions, pay raises, and training opportunities, says a study conducted by the National Center for Women and Aging at Brandeis University and the National Alliance for Caregivers.

The study focused on 55 people who spend more than eight hours per week providing unpaid care, for an average of eight years. The respondents reported making frequent work sacrifices, both large and small. Other findings of the study show that

- 69 percent reported arriving late or leaving early
- 67 percent took time off during the day to attend to an elderly dependent
- 64 percent used sick days or vacation time for caregiving duties
- 29 percent passed up a promotion or training assignment
- 25 percent refused a transfer.

Source *the Washington Post*

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Coaching can be a good thing for organizations and employees alike. The International Coach Federation and Link-

age recently surveyed more than 4,000 corporations on their involvement in corporate coaching. Just a few of the findings:

- Both internal and external coaches are used as a perk for top performers.
- The primary benefits of coaching are improved individual performance; bottom-line results including profit, client service, and competitiveness; development of people for the next level; confidence raising; skills and self-empowerment; goal achievement; relationship improvement; and retention.
- Respondents' greatest challenges with coaching are getting enterprise-wide buy-in, executive buy-in, and modeling; impatience on part of upper management with the time investment required for coaching to work; and finding credible, expert coaches who are aligned with company values.

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More than one-third of people surveyed identified communication skills or interpersonal relationship skills as the most important quality in a good boss, according to a study commissioned by Personnel Decisions International. Forty-two percent of respondents said poor skills in those areas make their bosses less effective.

How can business leaders go about improving those critical skills? Susan Gebelein, senior vice president of PDI and co-author of the *Successful Executive's Handbook*, recommends:

- Inspire trust. Show genuine concern and interest in others. Treat everyone fairly and with respect.
- Foster open dialogue. Listen carefully and encourage the open expression of ideas and opinions. Don't judge; strive to understand.
- Build organizational relationships. Cultivate relationships inside and outside of the organization. Stay in touch with employees at all levels.

More info personneldecisions.com

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