

## Product Information

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If you would like to telephone the manufacturer, you will find phone numbers on the RSVP page. But please be sure to say that you read about the product in the *Journal*!

## Customer Service Assessment

Assessment Designs International has introduced an assessment tool for the selection and development of customer service providers, the

Customer Service Skills Assessment Program.

The program focuses on key job functions and can be used for evaluating customer service employees and applicants in the manufacturing, sales, finance, retail, and other industries.

Participants watch a series of video vignettes that simulate work situations, and answer multiple-choice questions as if they were on the job. Their responses are immediately scored by a computer.

The criteria for evaluation are based on six skills identified by a job analysis of customer provider positions:

- developing positive customer relations
- discovering customer needs
- responding to customer wants
- anticipating customer needs
- working together to meet customer needs
- ensuring customer loyalty.

The administrator's kit costs \$500

and includes an instruction manual, trainee materials suitable for copying, a test video, and software for scoring. There's an additional fee of \$23.50 for each test scoring kit.

For more information, contact **Assessment Designs International**, Longwood, Florida. *Circle 186 on reader service card.*

## Kneads Assessment

More than 4,000 massage therapists now make office calls. Lest you think only companies that make herbal tea would be amenable to such a practice, Apple Computer, Merrill Lynch, and New York Life are just three firms that have brought in massage therapists to soothe stressed employees.

It's mostly CEOs and managers who use the service, but not always. Stockbrokers and other slaves of computer terminals can get head, neck, and shoulder massages without missing a trade, and employees

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at the State Department in Washington are getting government-issued rubdowns.

For about a dollar a minute in most cases, employees can get either a table massage or an upper-body chair massage right at their desks.

For more information, contact **The Body Brokerage Corporation**, New York, New York; **Corporate Stressbusters**, San Francisco, California; or a certified massage therapist in your area.

## Training Newsletter

Applied Science Associates Inc. publishes *Access ASA*, a free newsletter distributed by the Business and Industrial Services division.

The 12-page newsletter summarizes topics of interest from more than 40 trade journals that specialize in training, human resource management, documentation, and software development.

*Access ASA* covers viewpoints, products, and trends, as well as sources for additional information.

Regular features include "The User Perspective," which reports on quality improvement trends, "The Training Camp," which reports on issues that affect instructional design and delivery, and surveys on software and hardware.

For more information, contact **Applied Science Associates Inc.**, Butler, Pennsylvania.

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## Homework

According to the National Home Study Council, more than 4 million people are enrolled in home-study courses. The Council has a free publication, the *NHSC Directory of Accredited Home Study Schools*, which lists accredited schools offering home study courses, including several for employee training and development.

Available courses include management development, supervisory development, computer programming, electronics, and even robotics. The courses use learning modules in which skills are mastered one at a time. Once each study segment is

completed, learning achievement is examined before the student moves on to the next unit. Guidance from instructors is provided by correspondence, telephone, and computer data communication.

Business tuition reimbursement plans are accepted. For more information, contact **National Home Study Council**, Washington, D.C. Circle 188 on reader service card.

## Fax to Fax Design

Graphic design training firm Invision Inc. has introduced Design Line, a design service available by fax.

For an annual fee and per page charges, desktop publishers, independent or within companies, can get creative design advice by faxing projects such as newsletters, brochures, product sheets, and ads to Invision for redesign tips.

Invision's designers claim that often, all that's needed are a few minor suggestions to solve the most common problems, which they say are too much copy, not enough graphics, and too much distance between graphics and text.

The yearly fee is \$79, which includes a 30-minute video called "Design Sense," and design help for one 8½-by-11-inch page fax. Subsequent pages cost \$45 each.

For more information, contact **Invision Inc.**, Needham, Massachusetts. Circle 189 on reader service card.

## A Whalen Of an Idea

Teacher and author Tim Whalen has developed a new format for writing technical proposals.

Because internal parties associated with company projects must submit their credentials to win government and other external contracts, Whalen suggests writing proposals in a resume-like format for project participants, such as project managers, systems analysts, and accounting managers.

Whalen's proposals include a brief profile of the person, an experience summary, educational background, and descriptions of other projects in which he or she has participated.

## Lite Tools

*Just for fun. . .* Summer's over, including Indian summer, and you're getting cabin fever already.

Well, put on your shorts and fire up the VCR instead of the outdoor grill. Relax Video's "Beach Bike Ride" will take you on a 60-minute video bicycle tour along a beautiful beach without the sand getting in your eyes.

The action video with stereophonic music is meant to be watched while working out on a stationary bike. If the couch is your favorite exercise equipment you can get "Aquarium TV" and gaze at rare tropical fish to the sound of soothing bubbles. The people at Relax Video claim that 20 minutes of fish focusing will lower your blood pressure after a rough day at the office.

There's also "Sunrise/Sunset" and a host of others. The videos are \$19.95 each, plus \$3 shipping. For more information, contact **Relax Video**, New York, New York.

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For cost control, Whalen suggests storing the formats on computer to be regularly updated when projects arise.

Whalen will provide sample proposals free of charge. For more information, contact **Tim Whalen**, Arlington, Virginia.

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## Keep up with HRD research. Subscribe to *Human Resource Development Quarterly!*

*HRDQ* is the national forum for HRD research and theory. It's where the long-standing leaders and cutting-edge practitioners discuss the current advancements in HRD—and it's where you can discover the latest new HRD knowledge first.

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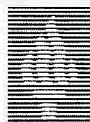
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*"New Training Tools" is compiled and written by Haldee Allerton. Send items of interest to Tools, Training & Development Journal, 1630 Duke Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313.*

# CHICO

Computer Science

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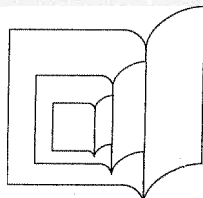
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## Product Information

If you would like more information on any product listed in "Presentation Products," circle the corresponding number on the Reader Service Card at the back of the magazine and drop it in the mail. The manufacturer will send the information you need directly to you.

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## "Go Ahead, Make My Presentation!"

On the presentation news front, there was the time the speaker decided to draw the audience in by drawing out a .357 Magnum, the "most powerful handgun in the world."

That and other presentation nightmares were recounted by trainers in a survey conducted by Dennison Stationery Products to determine what factors make or break presentations.

Speakers with stage fright, poor acoustics, and deadly topics may cast a pall, but according to Dennison's survey, it's the materials that make or break presentations.

The survey of 2,500 training specialists across the country revealed that 95 percent believe poor quality visuals make presentations less effective.

Commonly blamed by those polled were

- poorly displayed visuals
- audiovisual equipment failure
- equipment too complicated for the presenter.

More than 78 percent of the training specialists in the survey said they themselves often had problems delivering presentations because of faulty materials—easels that don't open, tape that doesn't stick, and so on.

When asked what would improve

most presentations, 94 percent chose visuals with illustrations rather than words. The three most effective presentation tools recommended by the trainers, in order of preference:

- overhead transparencies
- easel pad and markers
- videos.

White boards, preprinted flip charts, and slides were favored by 40, 34, and 32 percent of the respondents.

Dennison conducted the survey to introduce Static Images, erasable writing surfaces that cling to walls by static electricity.

And the next time your projector fails, think of the hapless soul who gave a presentation in front of a large picture window in which the audience, whom he thought were extremely attentive, could see a tornado suddenly arise and begin to bear down on them.

For more information about the survey or Static Images, contact **Dennison**, Framingham, Massachusetts.

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## Poster Presentations

Varitronics has introduced PosterPrinter to turn any standard 8½-by-11-inch sheet of paper into a 23-by-33-inch presentation, eight times the original size.

PosterPrinter looks something like a desktop copier but requires no toner or ink. Just drop in a roll of special poster paper, insert the original, and press a button to reproduce graphs, tables, maps, agendas, and other presentation aids on posters.

The posters cost about \$2 each to make and come in seven color