

# INTELLIGENCE

## Workforce of Tomorrow II

By Eva Kaplan-Leiserson

I recently attended a panel discussion on the nexus between education and the workforce at a conference sponsored by the National Association of Workforce Boards. (These boards are made up of volunteer businesspeople who oversee U.S. state and local workforce development and job train-

ing programs.) Listening to the discussion led to this follow-up on my “Workforce of Tomorrow” Intelligence column, which discussed how to prepare youth for future work success.

 [April T+D  
www.nawb.org](http://www.nawb.org)

The session brought together these speakers:

- Kathleen Gallo, senior vice president and chief learning officer of the Long Island Jewish Health System, the largest employer on Long Island
- John Ferrandino, president of the National Academy Foundation, a U.S. network of career academies (schools within high schools)

School + work = workforce development.

- Robert Templin, president of Northern Virginia Community College and author of Virginia's workforce development plan
- Sangeeta Tyagi, director of education for YouthBuild USA, which helps low-income young people learn leadership and rebuild their communities
- Susan Sclafani, assistant secretary in the U.S. Department of Education's office of vocational and adult education.

The panel's mission was to address how education and workforce development intersect in the new economy, what skill sets employers need and educators need to build, and how education and business can work together more effectively. Here are summaries of the panel members' presentations.

**Gallo** At the largest corporate university in the health sector, workforce development is on the strategic dashboard along with finance and other high priorities. Gallo says organizations will be as successful as the employees who work for them and described the organization's best practices as, "We don't do training. We do strategic organizational learning." Her organization expects learning outcomes to affect the business. Senior executives teach classes to make learning a two-way process (execs hear what doesn't work on the front line), and there is a mandatory five-day change

management class for all employees, with outcome measures built in.

**Ferrandino** Schools need to take risks and try new strategies, but no parent wants his or her child to be experimented on. The question is, With whose child can I experiment and fail? Educators can take risks if they have the support of the community, so businesses should support creative and innovative pedagogy actively. Students also need information to be put into context, to know that they need specific knowledge for future work. And, since there isn't enough time in high school to get kids both well educated and specifically trained, community college classes, certifications, and two-year degrees are important.

**Templin** Community colleges are in a strategic position between educators and employers. But many concentrate on service delivery rather than capacity building. For example, President Bush is creating a voucher to give laid-off U.S. workers educational opportunities at community colleges. But the institutions don't have enough capacity to serve all those people, creating a bottleneck. People need to look for the white spaces (gaps) in the workforce development system and work to resolve them.

<img alt="document icon" data-bbox="291 841 308 854"/> **More on Bush's plan**  
[www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/01/20040121.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/01/20040121.html)

**Tyagi** There's no end to the nexus between education and the workforce; workers must continually refresh their skills. But the focus of many programs has been on getting people into the workforce and not on keeping skills up-to-date. We need to break out of the job training mindset and change to a workforce development mindset. Don't look at the number of people placed in jobs, but at how long they stay in them. Education should develop a tightly knit partnership with businesses, including mentoring and a commitment to ongoing training.

**Sclafani** Educators need to know what kind of knowledge and skills students need for the workforce. To do that, we need to bring academic teachers into the workplace. We also need to share data better. K-12 schools don't know how past students are doing in higher education or the workforce. Community colleges and employers need to say, "These are the strengths and challenges of your graduates." Also, teachers can learn how to do project-based or applied learning by visiting workplaces and seeing the techniques employers use.

Ferrandino argued for honest communication between schools and the business sector without "playing nice." He proposed that that might take mediation, someone acting like a

marriage broker. Gallo agreed, saying that a grass-roots effort is needed.

## Additional Information and Resources

- The Center for Workforce Preparation (CWP) at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce helps companies hire, train, retain, and advance people to develop a skilled workforce.

◀ [www.uschamber.com/cwp](http://www.uschamber.com/cwp)

- The National Workforce Association is dedicated to strengthening the United States's workforce development system.

◀ [www.nwaonline.org](http://www.nwaonline.org)

- ASTD advocates on workforce development and other public policy issues.

◀ [www.astd.org/astd/public\\_policy/policy\\_home.htm](http://www.astd.org/astd/public_policy/policy_home.htm)

# Nine Ways to Stay Stuck at Work

**1. Perfectionism.** Not living up to the high standard can make you feel like a failure. Your attempts can exasperate your co-workers.

**2. Exaggerated control.** If you need to micromanage every project, your workplace relationships will suffer and you won't learn from others' ideas.

**3. Foreseeing the future.** Blaming yourself for not seeing a mistake coming will keep you from seeing the solution.

**4. Knowing what others are thinking.** The only way to be accurate is to ask.

**5. Personalizing events.** Taking everything personally increases stress and hurts teamwork.

**6. Incomplete comparisons.** If you think others are treated better than you and see yourself as a victim, you will become one.

**7. Undeserved guilt.** Being accountable is good. Blaming yourself for everything that goes wrong is not.

**8. Reimagining the past.** If you spend your time glorifying the past, you won't work towards improving the present.

**9. Using regrets to justify inaction.** Don't let "if only" thoughts keep you from achieving your goals.

◀ Source/ human behavior expert Hamilton Beazley; [www.noregrets.org/welcome.html](http://www.noregrets.org/welcome.html)

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