

Stats Appeal

You sprinkle them liberally in presentation slides to convince the executive management team that, yes, training does help retain workers. They're what you lug into the corner office to justify a blended training approach that includes c (classroom) and e (electronic) solutions. They help you establish the value of training.

So many stats, so little time? Here are some numbers to replenish your files. And some just for fun.

The Other Payoff

A recent study provides definitive evidence that training investments can yield financial returns for companies and their investors.

An ASTD research white paper—"Profiting From Learning: Do Firms' Investments in Education and Training

Pay Off?"—claims that organizational training investment data helps to predict a firm's future total stockholder return, gross profit margin, and income per employee, among other financial performance measures. The report, produced in conjunction with Saba, goes on to say that investors may be able to improve their stock portfolio performance if they consider firms' training expenditures when making investment decisions.

According to ASTD director of research Mark Van Buren, "It's clear that firms' training expenditures positively affect other indicators that investors use to evaluate stocks." He adds that both companies and investors can benefit by tracking and reporting training expenditures.

More www.astd.org/virtual_community/research

Sources Revealed

A recent consortium benchmarking study of seven companies—Dow Chemical, Edward Jones, Great Plains, LensCrafters, Sears, South African Breweries, and Southwest Airlines—reveals that their employees receive an average of 29.11 hours of training annually. So what training sources do the companies use most often? Here's the scoop.

four-year colleges and universities	85.7%
other firms, including consultancies	85.7%
community and junior colleges	71.4%
product suppliers	71.4%
technical and vocational institutions	57.1%
union, trade, or professional associations	57.1%
federal, state, or local governments	28.6%
other	28.6%

Source "Recruiting and Retaining Employees: Using Training and Education in the War for Talent" (ASTD and SHRM, 2000)

Mobile Cause

By 2005, there will be approximately 1.3 billion mobile telephony users and more than 500 million mobile Internet subscribers worldwide, according to Allied Business Intelligence. North America, western Europe, and Asia-Pacific will lead the wireless pack.

Slacker@Work.com

According to Jupiter Media Metrix, U.S. consumers will receive an average of 4,000 personal and 1,600 commercial emails in 2005—up from 1999 averages of 1,750 and 40, respectively.

With so much online competition, it's time to consider what your email address says about you. For instance, if you post a resume online or communicate with potential employers via email, you may want to polish your image.

"Your email address—no less than your resume itself—is a message, a communica-

tion aimed at a potential employer," says Neil Fox, chief information officer at recruitment firm MRI. "If you think no one's paying attention to that string of characters, you're wrong."

The most obvious email mistake made by job candidates, according to Fox, is using a questionable email "handle." HotBabe and StudMan are examples of names that would make any employer who's sensitive to sexual harassment issues think twice before contacting someone for an interview.

Fox's advice: "You're better off with a businesslike approach. Use some variation on your actual name, your location, or even a random sequence of numbers and letters." Also, be sure to use a personal email account; it tells the recipients that you separate personal business from company business.

Poll Positions

Here are some online reader poll results from *Learning Circuits*.

What do you call digital learning?



The big e-learning issue of 2001 will be



UpData

An increase of \$680 in a company's training expenditures per employee can generate, on average, a 6 percent improvement in total stockholder return the following year, according to ASTD.

Dot.Com Trivia

What was the first Web domain name registered?

Answer: Symbolics.com, registered on March 15, 1985.

Source Network Solutions

Market Watch

A 2000 *Training* magazine industry report pegs formal training budgets in the United States at \$54 billion. According to International Data Corporation, the corporate training market stands at \$66 billion and will continue to increase steadily at roughly 5 percent per year. Says W.R. Hambrecht + Co e-learning analyst Trace Urdan, "Though \$66 billion is a big number to play in, the real thing that has people excited is a number that would be much larger than that."

Traditional classroom training still reigns supreme, but there's rising investor interest in Web-based training. According to IDC, the market for Web-based corporate training will increase from the current \$2 billion level to \$11.5 billion by 2003. The pumped-up interest is fueled, in part, by recognition that training extends into other realms—such as educating online customers and distributors about products and services—also known as customer focused e-learning.

Source *Upside* magazine

User-Friendly E-Learning

Here are stats from a recent ASTD-MASIE Center study that focused on how organizations can increase learner use and acceptance of learning technologies. Of 700-plus surveyed e-learners,

- 87 percent preferred to take digital courses during work hours
- 52 percent preferred e-learning in a workplace office area
- 84 percent would take a similar e-course if offered again
- 38 percent said they generally preferred e-learning to classroom training.

LET'S SIZZLIN' SITES SIZZLES

Sizzlin' Sites for Doing Business in Canada

Whether you're considering a business startup in Toronto or a corporate expansion to Montreal, here are some Websites that can help pave the way with business stats, tax tips, and regional data.

□ The **KPMG LLP** site offers Canadian survey data, special reports, and tax tips for entrepreneurs. KPMG's *Business Advisor* newsletter is also available. Start at www.kpmg.ca.

□ Industry Canada's **Strategis** site offers comprehensive business information in such areas as finance, licenses, copyrights, and industry statistics and overviews. It's a beefy site; too much valuable information to list here. Find it at strategis.ic.gc.ca.

□ The **Invest in Canada** site offers business news, special reports, and economic data organized by Canadian region and major metropolitan area. Go to www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/investcan.



Quick Tip

Remember eons ago when you had to type an entire URL to find a site? Check out this navigation shortcut from @Work reader Brian Shaffer: For dot.com addresses, drop the *www* and *.com* and type in the basic site name. Press Control-Enter and you're in business.

@Work covers Internet trends, news, and tips. Send items of interest to atwork@astd.org.