

In Practice

Self-Awareness on Patrol

Have you ever had to face a rough group of trainees—the type who question everything you do, yawn and look out the window a lot, and generally don't respond positively to your well-planned presentation? Sure, it's tough. But it could be worse. Your trainees could carry guns and clubs to class.

Emily White, a consultant in northern California, says she knows all about training rough crowds. She teaches diversity awareness to California police officers.

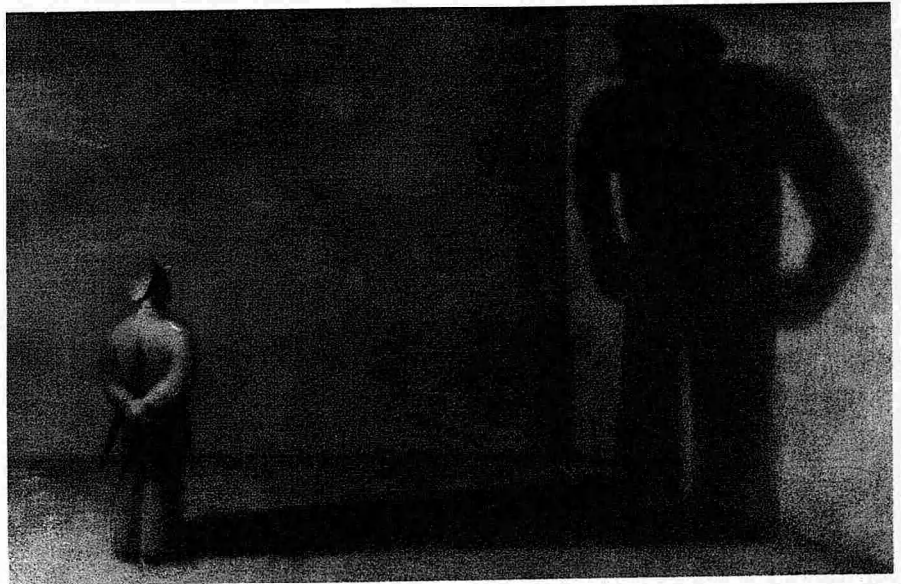
White finds her job quite difficult. With limited resources and time, she says she can barely bust through the police officers' layers of anger, apathy, and misunderstanding. She typically has only four hours to train a group of officers and help them to understand and change deep-seated attitudes.

She begins every training session by explaining her background—she was a social worker with police departments in New York—so that the trainees know she understands what police work is like.

"Police officers don't usually listen to anybody who is not a police officer," says White, "so I have to prove myself. Once I qualify, they let me stay for the class."

White says she'd like to have more time to work with the police officers but the departments' budgets won't allow it. Having only four to eight hours to train these officers, White has found, is like training with both hands cuffed behind your back.

Many of the officers would prefer not to attend the classes; they'd rather be on the streets doing their jobs. White says many deny that their departments have any problems and think diversity training is a waste



Danuta Jarecka

of time. For those reasons, much of White's time is spent winning the officers' trust and convincing them to get involved in what she has to teach them.

"It is naive to think that you are going to change a police officer's attitudes with four hours of training," says White. "At the end of these sessions, I have only begun to scratch the surface."

Instead of spending precious time teaching cultural awareness, White teaches self-awareness and hopes that the attitudes she discusses in class will be remembered when the officers deal with people on the street.

"It's more important for them to understand how it feels to be different—to understand feelings of alienation, of being alone, and of sadness," explains White. "It is only through such a process that we can begin to get officers to start looking at others around them and to understand how uncomfortable those feelings are and to use those feelings to

California cops get some diversity training. Also, companies find that going green can save them money, a new survey reports on the recession and training, and businesses from four countries view quality in different ways.

develop empathy for the people they serve."

During one exercise, White asks the officers to picture being at a party, having a good time. She asks them to picture someone asking what they do for a living and then dealing with the feelings of isolation as people at the party view them differently because they are police officers.

"It happens all the time," says White. "Police officers are suddenly treated as if they are from the moon—especially now, after the Rodney King episode."

(She refers to the incident in which Los Angeles police officers were videotaped allegedly beating King after stopping him for a traffic violation. After the officers won a court case on the alleged beatings, people rioted in Los Angeles and in many other U.S. cities.)

"Every officer, regardless of cultural background, identifies with that example," says White.

As officers unmask their emotions in the training sessions, many of them get angry, says White. She says they are angry at the training process and at their chief for making them attend the session. Many are angry because they are uncomfortable letting their emotions come out—emotions that they have been trained to keep under control and detached from their work. But White says she welcomes the anger, even though it is often directed at her.

"A lot of anger gets discharged as they get in touch with themselves," says White. "They don't know where this anger is coming from, so they focus it on the trainer, who becomes the scapegoat. They aren't angry at me but with the issues that we bring up. Some trainers can't handle that backlash, but that is what you want so that you can deal with it and get it behind you. You can't do awareness training if anger is in the way."

White feels she is working against the odds. She admits that she's barely making progress, mainly because training is only part of the answer to problems of diversity in police departments.

"Police departments, like many companies, believe that training will

fix all their problems. But many more organizational issues need to be dealt with first. Training won't change much without those other changes. It's like putting a Band-Aid over a huge wound: It helps, but it doesn't get the job done."

Seeing Green

The recent "earth summit" in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, focused on global integration of economic development and environmental protection globally. In the United States, many large and small corporations are proving too that it is not an either/or proposition. They have discovered that protecting the environment is good for the bottom line.

Ernest Lowe, director of the Change Management Center in Oakland, California, knows. He says that "old-fashioned common sense suggests that companies taking a systematic environmental stand will gain competitive advantage through cost savings, new revenues from sales of wastes and new environmental products or services, increased sales to customers shopping green, higher employee morale and creativity, and the holistic management style that goes with the turf."

One example is 3M, a company that has become famous for its precedent-setting Pollution Prevention Pays program. 3M has learned that the best way to prevent pollution is to avoid generating it in the first place. The program encourages employees who are working on its products and processes to identify pollution-prevention opportunities. Since 1975, 3,000 such projects have eliminated more than a billion pounds of emissions and have saved the company more than \$500 million.

Xerox Corporation's official policy states that it is "committed to the protection of the environment and the health and safety of its employees, customers, and neighbors." The company encourages employees to pay attention to resource conservation—to eliminate waste before it's generated and to save the costs of materials and disposal fees. Xerox provides customers with options to recycle copier cartridges and office wastepaper. The

company also has helped formulate a compound made from orange peels to replace a less environment-friendly chlorinated solvent formerly used in copier maintenance.

Leadership in developing environmental awareness can come from the top or from the ranks. The president of Weyerhaeuser recently announced a set of corporate environmental expectations that included "having Weyerhaeuser Company viewed by our customers, neighbors, and other key audiences as the environmental leader in each locale."

At USAir, flight attendants and other workers pressured the company to start recycling the 11 million beverage cans it carries each year (and to donate the proceeds to environmental causes).

Companies use a variety of incentives to motivate employees to adopt environmentally sound practices. Kodak has linked some managers' compensation in part to their performance in preventing chemical spills. The results: a 47 percent reduction in such incidents.

And a Xerox cafeteria offers free coffee refills to employees who use their own mugs instead of polystyrene cups, which often contain ozone-damaging compounds. There is no report yet on how many gallons have been consumed since the program was implemented.

— Sheila Kelly

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Training Versus the Recession

The American Society for Training and Development's National HRD Executive Survey recently looked at whether the recession has hurt or helped training. What the survey found might surprise a few people and delight many trainers.

Despite the recession, many businesses either maintained their training budgets or increased them, according to the survey.

Most of the respondents (77 percent) admitted that their companies have been adversely affected by the

recession. But, as found in a 1991 HRD Executive Survey, the effects of the recession did not necessarily mean cuts in training and development budgets. As in the 1991 survey, 40 percent of respondents reported no change in their training budgets, 30 percent reported increases, and 25 percent reported decreases.

The 25 percent who reported cuts in training also reported across-the-board budget cuts throughout their companies, or reported cuts for specific items such as travel.

Organizations that reported increases in their training budgets are focusing efforts on new areas. For example, 33 percent said their companies are focusing more on quality and total quality management. Twenty-eight percent said they are increasing their efforts in management development, 9 percent are looking at CBT and equipment and materials purchases, and another 9 percent said they are increasing efforts in all areas of training.

Other areas in which respondents said they are increasing efforts include executive development, personnel, diversity training, job skills, sales training, technical training, and career development. Some companies are increasing training in more than one area.

Though 62 percent of respondents reported that staff had been decreased or laid off in their overall organizations, 75 percent reported no losses in training and development staff.

Consultants' jobs seem to be secure, too. Forty-nine percent of the respondents reported no change in their practices of hiring consultants, 27 percent reported increases, and 20 percent reported decreases.

The recession has not changed top management's view of the value of training and development, say 51 percent of the respondents. But 44 percent said that top management's view of training has improved. The rest reported decreases in management's view of training's value.

Looking to the future, 71 percent of the respondents expect increases in training expenditures, 20 percent expect expenditures to stay the same, and 7 percent expect decreases.

Mexico Trains To Increase Productivity

A growing number of Mexican companies, Mexican industry groups, and transnational corporations operating in Mexico are gearing up to meet the challenges of the global economy by instituting training programs that aim to raise productivity and quality by increasing worker participation.

It's not a question of teaching people to do their jobs, says Jose Giral, but of teaching them to do their jobs well. Giral is general director of Grupo Xabre, a large Mexican group with major holdings in the tourism, industrial, transportation, managerial, and financial sectors, including Mexicana Airlines and

ing management salaries. Another is cutting back on management's fringe benefits and perks, such as multiple secretaries and assistants, and chauffeur-driven cars.

Another critical aspect is recognizing knowledge and encouraging employees at all levels to acquire knowledge and to innovate. "You need a lot more delegation, and a lot more authority and responsibility at different levels," Giral says. He admits that while the principle is simple, "the application is very hard, because you have a lot to dismantle. It's not fast. It takes us 5 to 10 years to change an organization."

The institute opened two years ago and was originally intended to provide training primarily to Xabre's top management. But it has been so

ONE IMPORTANT STRATEGY IS CUTTING BACK ON MANAGEMENT'S PERKS, SUCH AS CHAUFFEUR-DRIVEN CARS

Camino Real Hotels. He is one of the driving forces behind Instituto de Efectividad Xabre, Grupo Xabre's state-of-the-art productivity training center in Mexico City.

The primary purpose of the institute is to instill in Xabre's workforce what Giral calls a "culture of effectiveness." This includes a set of inter-related values and behaviors designed to break down the traditional barriers between workers and management; to increase understanding, communication, and teamwork among all staff members; and to motivate employees at all levels.

In essence, Xabre's culture of effectiveness seeks to flatten the organizational structure of its companies, moving them away from a conventional hierarchical chain of command and toward a more horizontal model, in which staff members at all levels assume greater responsibility and gain greater recognition for their efforts.

One of the most fundamental and most difficult steps is reducing the gap between management and workers. One important strategy is curb-

ing successful that a good part of its efforts is now devoted to training key staff from other companies.

A large company at an earlier stage in its productivity program is Purina S.A. de C.V., the Mexican subsidiary of Ralston Purina. Juan Gargallo, president and general manager of Purina S.A. de C.V., says that the company recognized a need to increase productivity and to empower workers in order to accomplish its goals.

Gargallo says that workers need to feel that they are more than pieces in the industrial process. He admits that introducing an organizational model that includes increasing employee responsibility is not easy. He says you have to promote the idea, talk to people, and train them to convince them that the change will benefit them and the company.

Purina S.A. de C.V. believes that training first-line supervisors is a key to success. "Twice a year," says Gargallo, "all of our supervisors spend a week in a seminar learning about leadership, human relations, management techniques, and communicating

and teaching skills." The idea is to make supervisors more accessible to their employees and to convert them into peer trainers.

Giral says that many smaller Mexican companies are making similar efforts intuitively.

"If you ask them if they are engaged in productivity training," he says, "they might say no. But...that is precisely what they are doing. They are treating their people well, sharing purpose, and communicating well."

Giral says that implementing such programs to increase productivity is rapidly becoming a trend in Mexico, as it is in other countries. "This kind of training," he says, "is the only way for companies to increase productivity and compete successfully in the free-trade era."

— **Anne Geyer**

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Quality Around the World

According to a study by the American Quality Foundation and Ernst and Young, quality is certainly on the minds of businesses in at least four countries: Canada, Germany, Japan, and the United States.

The study looked at several business practices to see how quality affects the way companies operate in the four countries. The representatives of virtually every organization surveyed said they believe that quality is a critical factor in their companies' strategic performance.

More than half of the companies from all countries evaluate the business consequences of quality performance at least monthly. Quality performance is reviewed less than annually or not at all by 18 percent of U.S., 14 percent of Canadian, 9 percent of German, and 2 percent of Japanese companies.

In terms of customer focus, German and Japanese companies place more importance on incorporating customer research into the design of new products and services than do North American companies. About 40 percent of Canadian,

Japanese, and United States businesses place primary importance on customer satisfaction in strategic planning. About 22 percent of the German businesses do.

Japanese companies use technology twice as much as U.S. companies do in meeting customer expectations. But companies from all countries expect to increase their use of technology to meet customer expectations during the next three years.

The study also looked at how companies view process improvement—the practice of continuously reengineering the processes by which products are created and distributed. Of the companies surveyed, those in Japan were more likely to emphasize process simplification and cycle-time reduction than were those in the other countries. About half of the Japanese companies use process simplification or process cycle-time analysis more than 90 percent of the time. Fewer than 25 percent of the businesses in Canada, Germany, and the United States "always or almost always" use those practices to improve business processes.

When asked if they expect to increase employee involvement in quality-related teams, businesses in all countries except Japan said they would. Japanese companies expect little change; they already have the highest rate of widespread participation of employees in regularly sched-

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uled meetings about quality, according to the survey. But 64 percent of the Japanese companies that responded said they do not organize most of their employees in quality-related teams.

For more information about the study, contact Ernst & Young, 1600 Huntington Building, Cleveland, OH 44115; 216/861-5000, or the Ameri-

can Quality Foundation, 253 West 73d Street, New York, NY 10023; 212/724-3170.

Tackling ADA Fears

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission estimates that it will receive up to 15,000 charges of disability discrimination before next July—in other words, in the first year after the Americans With Disabilities Act went into effect for most U.S. companies.

Are businesses worried about failing to comply with the new law? Are they taking action to avoid problems? According to a survey by the Bureau of National Affairs, many are.

A little over half of the respondents (54 percent) feel that their organizations are "mostly" prepared to deal with ADA requirements. Forty-three percent said they are "somewhat prepared." Only 2 percent said their organizations are "not very" prepared to deal with the requirements.

Most of the employers surveyed (57 percent) have made "moderate efforts" to comply with the law, 31 percent say they have made "extensive efforts," and 12 percent say they've made "minimal" efforts.

According to the survey, 79 percent of respondents expect their organizations to expend moderate (51 percent) or extensive (28 percent) efforts on ADA compliance during the next year.

In the survey, human resource professionals said they are "very concerned" (32 percent) or "moderately concerned" (44 percent) about potential litigation resulting from the new law. Twenty-four percent were "not very concerned." Yet many HR professionals (69 percent) said they are "very familiar" with the ADA.

The survey also revealed some good news for consultants: 37 percent of the respondents expect to use outside experts during the next year to help them comply with the ADA.

"In Practice" is edited and written by Craig Steinburg. Send items of interest to "In Practice," Training & Development, 1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043.