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The Rapids of Change, by Robert Theobald. \$16.95 hardcover, \$9.95 softcover from Knowledge Systems, Inc., 7777 West Morris St. Suite 301, Indianapolis, IN 46231. Tel. (317) 241-0749. Credit cards accepted.



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n Practice

Leaving on Good Terms

Odds are you'll move to better jobs several times in your career, and that means you should learn to exit gracefully. "Failure to leave a job tactfully and professionally can do serious damage to your future," says Andrew Sherwood, chairman and CEO of Goodrich & Sherwood Company, a human resource management consulting firm in New York City. "Once you have made the decision to leave your present position," says Sherwood, "immediately begin planning the steps for your resignation."

If you have been discreet throughout your job search, chances are that no one in your company is aware of your decision to leave. Now is the time to meet privately with your boss—and at a time convenient to him or her. State your decision clearly. Explain that you have enjoyed working with your boss and company, but now an opportunity has arisen that is too good to pass by. Sherwood also recommends that "it is best to give nonpersonal reasons for leaving—and you should feel no obligation to provide an elaborate explanation for your resignation."

Your next move, says Sherwood, should be to prepare your letter of resignation. "Keep this brief and to the point. Give your reasons for leaving up front and include your date of departure and the projects you will complete before leaving. You might also consider stating your willingness to train your replacement and offer to be available to your successor for advice in the next few months."

Tell everyone when and where you are going, says Sherwood, and "leave your new telephone number and address to avoid losing hard-earned contacts." He also suggests you maintain relationships by sending personal letters to professional peers and organizations to which you belong.

When telling your coworkers, keep your story consistent and avoid backbiting and sour grapes. At this point it would only be damaging to complain about your boss, coworkers, or the management.

Finally, do everything possible to strengthen and maintain your bridges

within the old organization and leave on a positive note. "Remember," adds Sherwood, "sound professional relationships have the potential to open future career paths and are particularly beneficial when you need a reference for your next job."

Manufacturing Careers Rebound

Industry experts say interest in manufacturing careers is on the upswing due to the challenge of foreign competition and the rise in automated manufacturing processes. According to W. David Baker, director of the Rochester Institute of Technology's School of Engineering Technology, "Students used to think jobs in manufacturing involved dirty floors and greasy machines, but it's becoming a more sophisticated, exciting field with a lot of appeal.

"The manufacturing environment now includes computer-integrated systems such as robotics, vision systems, and computer control."

Mark Stratton, manager of manufacturing engineering education with the Society of Manufacturing Engineers notes that, "In 1987-88, there are approximately 425 institutions of higher learning offering manufacturing courses, options or degree programs. This is a 52 percent increase from 1984-85."

In the post-baby-boom era of decreasing college-aged students through-out the country, RIT's manufacturing engineering program surprisingly has maintained a steady enrollment increase, with a total of 95 students currently enrolled. The school recently formed a separate department in manufacturing engineering technology, and its upper division (junior-senior) program plans to expand to a four-year program next year. Increasingly, computer-integrated manufacturing lies at the heart of the factory of the future.

RIT's program allows graduates to work in manufacturing engineering for corporations such as GM, Xerox, GE, and Bausch & Lomb. Their assignments include working in areas that include flexible manufacturing systems

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design, statistical process control, material requirement planning, and robotics automation. Starting salaries for this year's graduates will begin at an estimated \$29,000 to \$30,000 per year.

Jirect Reimbursement Found Cost-Efficient

Submitted by Margaret Sharp, DBG&H Unlimited, Inc., Dallas.

Top management at some belt-tightening companies are saving money on their dental-orthodontic benefits plans-and, in many cases, also are providing more extensive coverage to their employees. One innovation that increasing numbers of companies have discovered is the direct reimbursement program such as the American Association of Orthodontists' Concept D R TM program, a way to implement costefficient extended coverage.

Under such a program, a company repays employees directly for dental and orthodontic costs-without involving an insurance company. The results for a company using a direct reimbursement program can be dramatic. For example, the Greenville Utilities Commission in Greenville, North Carolina, had a fund balance of more than \$13,000 after using a direct reimbursement program for 15 months. "If our savings continue at this rate," said Edward Askew, director of the Commission's support services, "we may have a full year's premiums saved within another

"If that happens, we will consider increasing the benefits coverage we offer or reducing the premiums for our 266 employees."

Low costs apparently are not unusual with such programs. According to actuarial formulae and utilization data tracked for years by the American Association of Orthodontists, employee use of dental benefits, unlike other health-care services, is highly predictable. In 1986, for instance, only 59 percent of the American public incurred dental expenses. Seventy-two percent of the individuals filing incurred annual costs of \$100 or less. And 70 percent of the claims filed for a family of four were less than \$300 annually. In fact, 93 percent of all dental treatment costs were less than \$1,000 in 1986.

(continued on page 14)

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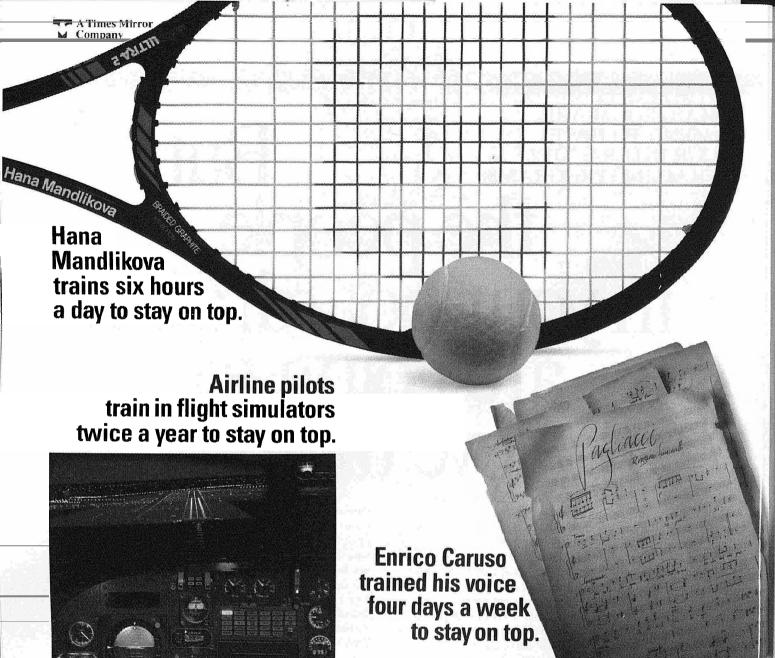
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In Practice

plicated, often-confusing insurance fee schedules with easy-to-explain, easy-to-understand instructions. Extensive forms, mailings, and claim explanations are eliminated. Employees appreciate how easy the program is to understand, as well as knowing how much money they have available to them before they make a visit to the dentist or orthodontist. Another benefit can be an increase in employee morale. Employees conceivably would identify more closely with their company as the source of the dental benefits because there's no insurance company in the middle.

Said Askew, "The bottom line is that we can provide our employees the same kinds of benefits that larger companies offer at a price we can afford."

Salter, and Alan M. Webber: Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA 02163 (\$19.95);

- Directory of U.S. Businesses Seeking Overseas Sales Representatives, Distributors, Investors, Joint Venture Partners, or Business Buyers—contact World Information Network-U.S.A., Inc., 462 Gilbert Road, #784, Mesa, AZ 85204;
- Decision Making: An Information Source Book—more than 1,000 sources on managerial decision making from The Oryx Press, 2214 North Central at Encanto, Phoenix, AZ 85004-1483 (tentatively priced at \$43.50 in North America);
- The Electronic Meeting Handbook—by Charlotte C. Purvis: MultiLink, Inc., One Market St., Lynn, MA 01901 (\$19.95 plus \$1.25 shipping and handling).

"In Practice" is edited and written by Robert Bowe. Send items of interest to: In Practice, Training & Development Journal, 1630 Duke St., Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313.

A Rash of Books

Publishers are like trees this time of year as they let drop their autumn books. It would be impossible even to list the most useful, but of that group, the Addison-Wesley artificial intelligence (AI) books bear mentioning. (Information here is gleaned from Artificial Intelligence Book Report, Barry Shulak, Editor, Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Reading, MA 01867.) Addison-Wesley has been publishing books on AI since 1977, and their commitment keeps growing.

The report describes 14 books, from Intelligence: The Eye, The Brain, and The Computer, by Martin Fishchler and Oscar Firschein, to Expert Systems for Business, edited by Barry Silverman, and from Introduction to Expert Systems, by Peter Jackson, to Artificial Intelligence and Instruction: Applications and Methods, edited by Greg P. Kearsley.

Interesting books published elsewhere include the following:

- Human Resources Manual—through Deutsch, Shea & Evans: DSE Publications Department, 485 Fifth Avenue, Suite 511A, New York, NY 10017 (\$35.00 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling);
- Changing Alliances—based on a fouryear Harvard Business School study of the auto industry and the American economy, by Davis Dyer, Malcolm S.

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