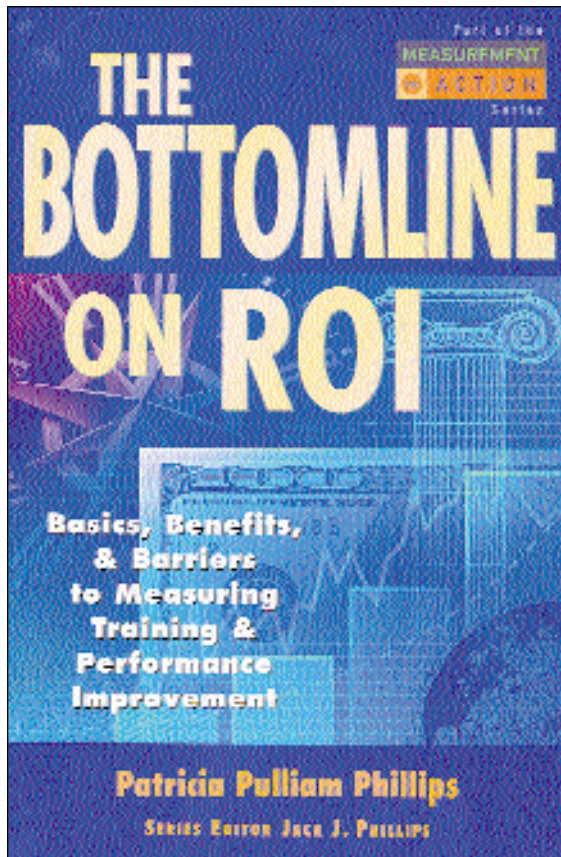


BOOKS



The Bottom Line On ROI

By Patricia P. Phillips

Reviewed by Deanne Bryce

Are you interested in being seen as a business partner who earns the respect of senior management? Understanding and embracing return-on-investment methodology is an essential first step.

Read *The Bottomline on ROI: Basics, Benefits, and Barriers to Measuring Training and Performance Improvement*, by Patricia Pulliam Phillips and you'll discover that it lives up to its name by covering the basics of measurement and evaluation, the benefits to a balanced ROI methodology, and the barriers to successful ROI implementation.

Even if you already know about such basics as Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Evaluation, cost-benefit analysis, and Jack J. Phillips's Five Levels of Evaluation, it's interesting to see how the author distinguishes the differences between each approach. Pulliam Phillips outlines how you'll need to determine which level of evaluation makes sense for your organization. The criteria include reviewing

- the effectiveness of a program in meeting organizational goals
- program cost and visibility
- size of target audience
- extent of management interest.

ON THE NIGHT STAND

By John Baldoni



First, a confession: I used to scan Dewars celebrity profiles for "last book read." I thought I'd gain insight into that person's taste and intellect. I decided that if I

were ever profiled for such an ad (in my dreams!), I'd have a good book to mention. So, here goes.

As one who works in leadership development, I look to history for inspiration. H.W. Brands's *The First American: The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin*, David McCullough's *John Adams*, and Richard Norton Smith's *Patriarch: George Washington and the New American Nation* are three biographies that bring the drama and precariousness of the early American experience into perspective. Anyone working with entrepreneurial startups, as well as companies undergoing change, would do well to study how our founding fathers imbued their enterprise with a strong culture and lasting values.

Two new books on leadership also deserve a place on my nightstand. *Leading Quietly* by Joseph L. Badaracco Jr. is a clear-eyed look at the role that behind-the-scenes leaders play in shaping and guiding their organizations. *Leadership on the Line* by Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky is a pragmatic examination of leadership challenges in the real world. Both books combine compelling stories with robust frameworks that provide context as well as practical lessons.

Dewars, are you listening?

John Baldoni is an author and consultant on leadership communications and development. His newest book, co-authored with Eric Harvey, is *180 Ways to Walk the Motivation Talk*; jbaldoni@LC21.com.

The benefits

The book's series editor, Jack J. Phillips, a prolific author on the subject of measurement and evaluation, presents the benefits to ROI in his foreword and the many examples that Pulliam Phillips draws from Phillips's other work. The author introduces six categories of benefits, with topics such as demonstrating a program's contribution and eliminating ineffective programs.

The barriers

Although the book teeters close to being promotion for the Phillips's work as consultants, Pulliam Phillips does provide a 15-question assessment that can help determine whether your organization is a candidate for ROI implementation. Chapter 6 describes the barriers to ROI implementation:

- high cost
- fear
- lack of time, skills, discipline
- faulty or inadequate initial analysis
- false assumptions.

Included are suggestions for overcoming the barriers.

The book is short, a little over 100 pages, but each chapter has helpful tables, figures, and exhibits. The bottom line: The book proposes that a trainer who understands and uses ROI methodology for the right programs will be seen as a business partner and earn the respect of senior management.

The Bottomline on ROI by Patricia Pulliam Phillips. the Center for Effective Performance. 120pp. US\$16.95 (paperback) Circle 290 on reader service card.

Deanne Bryce, founder of *LeaderStrength Systems*, works with individuals and organizations to focus, build, and adapt their leadership strengths; dbryce@leaderstrength.com.