

# NEWS YOU CAN USE

## A Love Match

By Eva Kaplan-Leiserson

Are you and your job a match made in heaven? Or is it more like a match made in, well, the other place? In this month of kisses and candy, we invite you to take a closer look at one of the most important relationships in your life.

In the midst of a slowing economy and swelling layoffs, not to mention terrorist attacks that forever changed the workplace, many people

are stepping back and reevaluating their jobs and career paths as life seems shorter and more fragile than it once did.

That's not to say that there's a mass exodus of workers from their jobs. In fact, according to the Herman Group » [www.hermangroup.com](http://www.hermangroup.com) consultants who predict business trends, the economy and the events and aftershocks of September 11 have created a

cocooning effect. Many people are wrapping themselves up in the warm security of their current jobs. They may not love what they're doing or their bosses, but they're polishing their skills and waiting for the right opportunity.

Whether you're a cocooning worker awaiting a new opportunity or a laid-off one looking for the next step, what better time is there to ponder

Illustration by Peter Bennett

Do you love your job? Does it love you?

the question of what you want in your professional life?

Career development expert Caela Farren suggests that you ask yourself

- Am I living my values? Make a list of your values, and check that they fit with the work you're doing.

- Is my work meaningful? Do you make a difference in the lives of others? Do you contribute to your customers, company, or community?

- Does my company treat me with dignity and respect? Is your loyalty returned? Disrespect is a form of abuse.

- Do I use my talents, and are they appreciated? Are you doing what you're

good at, and are you appreciated for your unique contribution?

- Do I have a great manager? Don't put up with a manager who doesn't support your career growth.

- Do I have a life? Assess the quality of your life. What's present? What's missing?

Answering those questions and examining and acting on the answers thoughtfully can help ensure that your job and you live happily ever after.

Send press releases or short articles on news, trends, and best practices to **News You Can Use**, T+D, 1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043. Email [nycu@astd.org](mailto:nycu@astd.org).

## Global 360

**China** is speeding ahead on the information technology train. *The Register* [www.theregister.co.uk](http://www.theregister.co.uk) a UK online magazine whose slogan is, "Biting the hand that feeds IT," recently reported on China's decision to make information technology courses mandatory for children as young as five years old. By 2005, says Li Lianning, director of the department of basic education, IT courses will be compulsory in all secondary schools and in primary schools located in cities and other developed areas.

**The Japanese** have often been early adopters of technology, but e-learning seems to be a different case. A recent survey by Gartner Japan Ltd. found that only 3 percent of Japanese firms are using e-learning for training.

Another 2 percent of firms report that they have plans to introduce e-learning within the next year, and 3 percent say they might use it within the next three years. But 30 percent of firms said they had never heard of e-learning, and almost 19 percent said they weren't interested in it.

The survey defined e-learning as "using an online service that provides study material via a Website." The most common reason given by firms that had no plans to introduce e-learning was that it was hard to visualize the positive effect it would have on the company. Gartner notes that, to be successful, suppliers must be able to explain clearly the benefits of e-learning to customers.

[Source/ www.asiabiztech.com](http://www.asiabiztech.com)

## Training Drafted

Last month, we confirmed the importance of training in an economic downturn. Demonstrating in greater detail the role training will play in the post-September 11 world and economy are these training trends from Herb Cohen, president of performance improvement firm Provant Vertical Market Solutions:

1. Training will help workers refocus, rebuilding confidence and restoring productivity.
2. Distance learning will be embraced to address travel concerns, but companies will be choosy about products and providers.
3. Values training will get more respect as company leaders recognize the importance of interpersonal ties and the role of values in restoring confidence.
4. Companies will implement post-downsizing training to give remaining workers the technical and management skills to manage increased workloads.
5. Targeted retention efforts will help keep and develop key performers.
6. Companies will place priority on empowering employees and call in training to serve that function.
7. Leadership development will be even more crucial as organizations realize the importance of leadership in lean times.

Says Cohen, "To engage employees, restore their balance, and improve performance, top management will rely on training as a strategic tool."

## Policy News

A snapshot of U.S. federal legislation and policy initiatives affecting workforce development and the HRD profession.

### Congressman Kirk and Department of Labor Officials Attend Public Policy Council Meeting

Illinois Congressman Mark S. Kirk (R-IL) and the Department of Labor's special advisor to the assistant secretary of employment and training spoke to ASTD's Public Policy Council in Lake Forest, Illinois. Vince Seritella, chairman of the Policy Council and director of the Grainger Learning Center, hosted the meeting, which focused on job training in the current economy and distance learning in 2002. Also in attendance were members of local workforce investment boards, the regional DoL representative, and ASTD Chicago chapter leaders.

### Aviation Security Act Mandates New Training Requirements

In response to the September 11 terrorist attacks, the *Aviation Security Act* sets training standards for baggage screeners. By September 2002, the newly created Transportation Security Agency must hire and deploy 28,000 screeners. The Agency, part of the Department of Transportation, will oversee and ensure the safety of all travel. ASTD president and CEO Tina Sung has contacted Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta to offer ASTD's training resources and members' expertise.

For more,  [www.astd.org/virtual\\_community/public\\_policy](http://www.astd.org/virtual_community/public_policy).

## E-News

Distance education is harder on women than on men, says a recent report by the American Association of University Women. The report, "The Third Shift," says that U.S. women taking distance-education classes must squeeze study and online time into their day in addition to the first and second shifts of a full-time job, homemaking, and child care. Women compose the majority of online learners, says the report, and often choose distance education in order to stay home with their children or because they feel uncomfortable in a classroom of younger students.

 [Source/The Chronicle of Higher Education](http://www.aauw.org/2000/3rdshift.html)  
More info: [www.aauw.org/2000/3rdshift.html](http://www.aauw.org/2000/3rdshift.html)



We've known that e-learning can help people's career and educational endeavors, but now it can also help their family life. Park University and e-learning company VCampus have joined together to produce a series of free course modules for families of deployed U.S. military personnel. Topics include stress management, talking to children, family finances, routine maintenance, and more. The Homefront Project can be accessed at [www.vcampus.com/homefront](http://www.vcampus.com/homefront).

## NewsFlash

Have you heard about **MonsterLearning?** Monster.com recently launched an **educational portal** that enables people to search for online and offline courses, conferences, and instructional materials. The site also offers articles and discussion forums on working and learning.

 [Source/www.monsterlearning.com](http://www.monsterlearning.com)