

News You Can Use

by Haidee E. Allerton

SCHOOL-TO-WORK, AND FAST!

FORGET COLLEGE! Technology companies are looking for high-school graduates to fill the unfilled 190,000 information technology jobs at large and mid-sized U.S. firms. One-third of IT companies engage in full-time recruiting.

In fact, students at a Washington, D.C., high school have been taking special courses preparing them to be computer network administrators. Local technology companies donated the computers for the training and have promised to hire all of the students who pass standard certification exams, for positions paying \$25,000 to \$30,000.

Several factors driving the demand for high-tech training are

▶ **a skills gap.** Businesses can't find enough workers who know technology.

▶ **standardization.** Standardizing to a specific platform saves companies money in the long run, but more IT workers are needed for the short-term, sometimes chaotic transition.

THE TOP FOUR

THE HR management consulting firm Goodrich and Sherwood Associates of New York surveyed corporate chief executives on what CEOs value most in staff members.

Here are the top four characteristics:

1. loyalty
2. sense of humor
3. hard work
4. integrity.



▶ **migration.** More IT workers who know the ins and outs of Windows programming and administration are needed.

▶ **new software every day.** Called "disruptive technology" by the Harvard Business School, new technology development is typically full of bugs at first and drains productivity. That's where highly skilled technology workers come to the rescue.

(Source: *The Global Knowledge Network, an IT education company based in Waltham, Massachusetts.*)

THE BUSINESS REPORT

DURING THE PAST three years, there have been more than 30 IPOs (initial public offerings) of staffing services companies, reports Office Specialists of Peabody, Massachusetts.

That reflects increasing credibility for staffing firms

in the investment community. The change is accompanied by these trends in the staffing industry:

▶ **consolidation.** Acquisitions have increased to meet the demands for national contracts, sole-source suppliers, and competitive pricing.

▶ **onsite management.** Companies are providing internal people to manage their flexible workforces.

▶ **one-stop shopping.** Increasingly, staffing firms can provide a wide range of services, including temporary-to-hire, traditional temporary staffing, project management, and office and technical support.

▶ **Internet recruiting.** The Internet has become a viable tool for finding qualified candidates and processing their applications, especially in technical recruiting.

▶ **executive recruiting.** Increasingly, staffing firms are placing professionals with high-level skills, including upper-level managers, CFOs, and CEOs.

▶ **niche market development.** Many staffing firms are choosing to focus on a particular market, such as accounting and legal.

▶ **quality.** Staffing firms are just beginning to use quality initiatives to differentiate themselves from their competitors.

A WORK-LIFE THING

COACH UNIVERSITY, which says it is the world's largest virtual training organization, has launched Attraction U, specializing in teaching the principles and practices of attraction. Not physical attraction, but how to attract into your work and life the things you value most.

The training is conducted via "teleclasses," teleconference calls with a trainer and five to 20 coach trainees. Participants can dial in for attraction courses each week from their offices, homes, or cars. Participants also have access to the Attraction U Website with discussion boards, top 10 lists, worksheets, models, lesson plans, and other program-oriented resources.

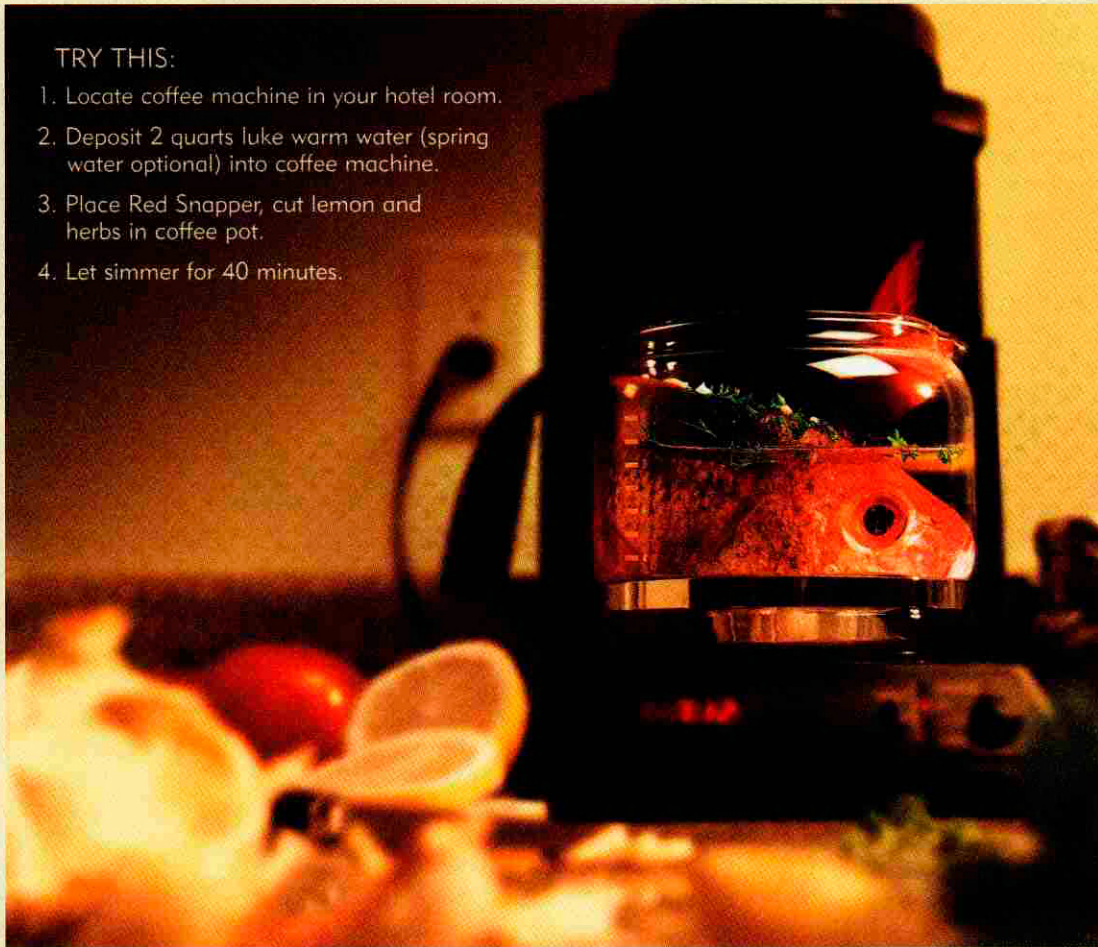
For more information, contact Sandy Vilas, president of Coach University, president@coachu.com or in Houston, 713.952.6224. Coach University's Website



YOU'VE BEEN IN A HOTEL FOR A WEEK.
YOU WANT A HOME COOKED MEAL.
WHAT TO DO? WHAT TO DO?

TRY THIS:

1. Locate coffee machine in your hotel room.
2. Deposit 2 quarts luke warm water (spring water optional) into coffee machine.
3. Place Red Snapper, cut lemon and herbs in coffee pot.
4. Let simmer for 40 minutes.



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DOUBLE DOSE OF REALITY

DESPITE SCADS OF new technology with the potential to deliver training, the preferred approach is still stand-up, classroom instruction, according to a recent study by the Human Resources Strategies Group of Deloitte & Touche in San Francisco.

Nearly all—80 percent—of participating companies in the study said that stand-up training is their main delivery method, accounting for about 81.3 percent of all training.

Says Deloitte & Touche HR director Robert Cooper, “Even with decreased technology costs, we found that the use of multimedia training is considerably lower than that of classroom instruction.”

The study, *Education & Development Best Practices*, identifies successful training practices in a

broad range of industries. Cooper says that using more multimedia and other technologies for training delivery “won’t happen overnight” because of the huge front-end commitment required. He estimates that it takes between 80 and 350 hours to develop a one-hour, full-scale interactive training program, compared with 20 hours for a stand-up course.

THE 7.7 MILLION women-owned businesses in the United States employ more workers than do the *Fortune* 500 companies, according to Women’s Connection Online.

What’s more, women-owned businesses are being formed at twice the rate of new businesses in general and are more likely than those to still be running after three years.

is <http://coachu.com>. Interviews with current coaches are available.



TALENT SCOUTS

SOME HIGH-PROFILE companies have joined forces to establish the Talent Alliance, a privately funded, not-for-profit organization that is endorsed by the National Alliance of

Business, The Business Roundtable, and the Information Technology Association of America. The new alliance is committed to helping workers and companies address the effects of the rapidly changing economy and labor market.

Charter members are from such varied industries as high-tech, health care, financial services, and oil and chemicals. They include AT&T, DuPont, GTE, Johnson & Johnson, Lucent Technologies, NCR, TRW, Unisys, and United Parcel Service. The idea was conceived two years ago by human resource professionals at AT&T.

Trend Watch

HERE ARE some hot trends—and their perhaps even hotter sub-trends—according to the Kaplan firm in New York.

Trend: Rampant changes in technology

subtrend: traveling technology-repair vans

Trend: More women in the workforce

subtrend: Rent-a-Wife services

Trend: More minorities in higher positions

subtrend: multicultural marriage counseling

Trend: Home-based businesses

subtrend: home-office organizing consultants

Trend: Fast pace

subtrend: power napping centers

Trend: More distance learning

subtrend: instant language translation of courses on the Internet

Trend: Information as a product

subtrend: information packaging

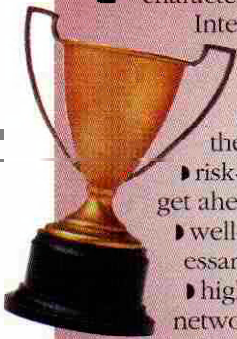
Trend: Backlash to healthy living

subtrend: cigar clubs, casinos, and sugar-loaded products

The trends are from *Going Indie: Self-Employment, Freelance, and Temping Opportunities* (Simon & Schuster, 1997).

The alliance’s aim is to pool resources to save money on training and to foster a highly skilled workforce. The alliance will help workers learn and develop new skills continually. The goal is for the skills to be transferable

CAREER ALL-STARS



PEOPLE WHO advance in their careers share certain characteristics, according to Battalia Winston International, an executive search firm based in New York.

Career all-stars are

- ▶ visionary and can articulate the future in their fields
- ▶ risk-takers who are willing to change jobs to get ahead
- ▶ well-groomed and well-dressed, but not necessarily handsome or beautiful
- ▶ highly visible through their marketing and networking efforts
- ▶ givers who donate their time, resources, and energy
- ▶ involved in their communities and industry associations, showing leadership in both
- ▶ worldly, well-read, and well-traveled
- ▶ joiners and doers, with a wide circle of social contacts.

across jobs, companies, and industries.

The Talent Alliance's services include a job-applicant matching system, an online database; shared training and education courses from member companies; career growth centers offering individual management services; and a FuturesForum providing experts' insight into issues and trends affecting em-

ployees and employers, with platforms for workplace forums and seminars.

For more information, contact Talent Alliance at 212.614.4103.

COMPLETE COVERAGE

THE AMERICANS WITH Disabilities Act of 1990 has caused some confusion over what exactly is consid-

COFFEE... UH, MILK...BREAK

CIGNA—A HEALTH CARE, insurance, and financial services corporation—is providing comfortable, discreet places for nursing employees to pump milk.

The amenity is part of CIGNA's Working Well Moms program, which also includes at no charge these services:

- ▶ advice from a lactation consultant
- ▶ access to a hospital-grade electric breast pump
- ▶ a carrying case with milk storage system, bottles, breast shields, and hygienic tubing
- ▶ literature on nursing topics.

A spokesperson says that the program has reduced infants' illnesses and, thereby, mothers' absenteeism, by an estimated 27 percent.

How To

HERE ARE SOME QUICK tips from Summit Consulting Group of East Greenwich, Rhode Island, for people working at home.

▶ If you're interrupted by call waiting, write down the last exchange between you and the first caller. Then when you return (quickly), you can begin with: "You were saying that..." That helps assuage the annoyance of being put on hold.

▶ If you use an independent

Internet provider and also have AOL, don't

access AOL directly. Access it through your Internet provider by

opening AOL after you're online, choosing "TCP Connection" from the pull-down menu and choosing "flash session" from the AOL mail choices. All of your mail will be collected fast without having to sign on and off with each screen name.

▶ Always use a phone with a mute button. The baby's crying or the dog's barking can crimp your credibility. Says one

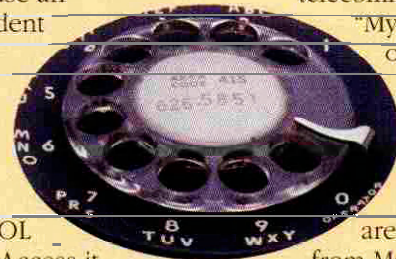
telecommuter,

"My dog once

belched into the speaker phone."

The tips

are adapted from Marketing & Business Consultants of Dunedin, Florida.



ered to be a disability and which ones are covered.

To clarify one area, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has issued guidelines regarding the coverage of psychiatric disabilities under Title 1 of the ADA. One guideline is that employers can't ask job candidates whether they have ever been mentally ill. In addition, employers must make reasonable accommodations for people with psychiatric disabilities, including adjusting workplaces and schedules.

A new report, released by employment law attorneys at Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler in New York, helps explain what is a psychiatric disability, how to comply with the ADA

regarding such disabilities, and what constitutes reasonable accommodation of the 10 most common disabilities.

In the report, Ellen Martin, a specialist in employment law and the ADA, reviews court decisions over the past five years on cases brought under the ADA's Title 1 provision.

For more information, contact GCI Group in New York, 212.546.2200.

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