

EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

Enterprise E-Learning

Martha Gold

The first of a five-part series of case studies on enterprise-wide e-learning, this month Martha Gold takes an in-depth look at how in 1999, Braxton (formerly Deloitte Consulting) trained and certified 15,000 consultants from around the world in just nine months.

As you'd imagine, the changes didn't come easily. C-level executives had to be convinced to fund the venture, and IT departments had to provide the needed technical support. But once committed to the change, predominantly classroom-based courses were transformed into a blended solution of Web-based and traditional approaches. A company-wide intranet portal and comprehensive course library provided employees with a complete and accessible learning and information resource.

Through these initiatives, Braxton was able to create and maintain a customized, internally developed e-business curriculum that saved the company more than half of its previous training expenses.

For complete text, see page 28.

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The Tides of Talent

Craig R. Taylor

Current labor statistics forecast that within the next three years, nearly 10 million jobs will go unfilled in the United States. That's due in part to an aging population. But combined with the slow economy and the unknown effects of heightened national security measures, data is indicating that in the future there will be fewer workers to go around. Therefore, employers must make every effort to keep talented employees from jumping ship.

The best way to do that is to understand the forces that cause people to leave jobs. One of them has to do with leadership. According to Taylor, leader issues "become the most powerful contributor to why employees report they stay on the job and also become the primary driver that would cause them to leave." Organization issues, such as compensation and benefits, and job issues also impact why people move.

The report goes on to discuss the critical periods in terms of turnover risk. The initial two months of employment and after the first year and third year are the crucial times when most employees choose to bail.

Organizations can combat a mass exodus by developing leaders who pay attention to how people are feeling about their work and who take active steps to retain talented individuals.

For complete text, see page 34.

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From Assets to Investors

Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordan-Evans

When 25 global talent leaders got together for a think tank, key issues involving employee engagement and retention were discussed.

One key finding is that employees need to feel that they have a return on their investment in the company. Managers must develop and maintain strategies focused on talent retention, and companies need to be viewed as "an employer of choice" in order to attract and keep people engaged in their work.

These leaders came to the conclusion that during calamities such as mergers and layoffs, star employees need to be reassured and given an opportunity to share information so that they don't wind up quitting. These high-potentials need recognition for their contributions at all levels.

Several discussions centered on the importance of re-examining founding principles and understanding the motivation factors of the different generations in the U.S. workforce.

Finally, mentoring, training, the creation of a corporate development culture, and manager recognition and accountability were determined to be significant in fostering worker loyalty and commitment.

For complete text, see page 40.

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Becoming a Facilitative Leader

Roger Schwarz

The path to positive outcomes can be counterintuitive, says Schwarz. The Facilitative Leader approach is based on the idea that one's core values and assumptions can be a significant cause of ineffective leadership. Included is a quiz and detailed answer comparison that can help you determine your leadership approach.

The undermining begins when a leader is placed in a difficult situation that requires him or her to face possible negative feedback. In such cases, most people operate from a set of values that can make them do things that control the conversation or situation. That behavior creates consequences that leaders try to avoid, such as misunderstandings, lack of trust, an inability to learn work effectively, and poor quality of work life.

Facilitative leadership, however, espouses behavior according to different core values, such as using valid information, making free and informed choices, gaining internal commitment, and showing compassion for others' perspectives. These values, in turn, make it possible for people to take interest and better understand possible solutions. They may be able to identify factors the leader missed, build trust, and enhance working relationships. That creates an environment for the best outcomes possible.

For complete text, see page 51.

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