

# New Learning Tools

by Sacha Cohen

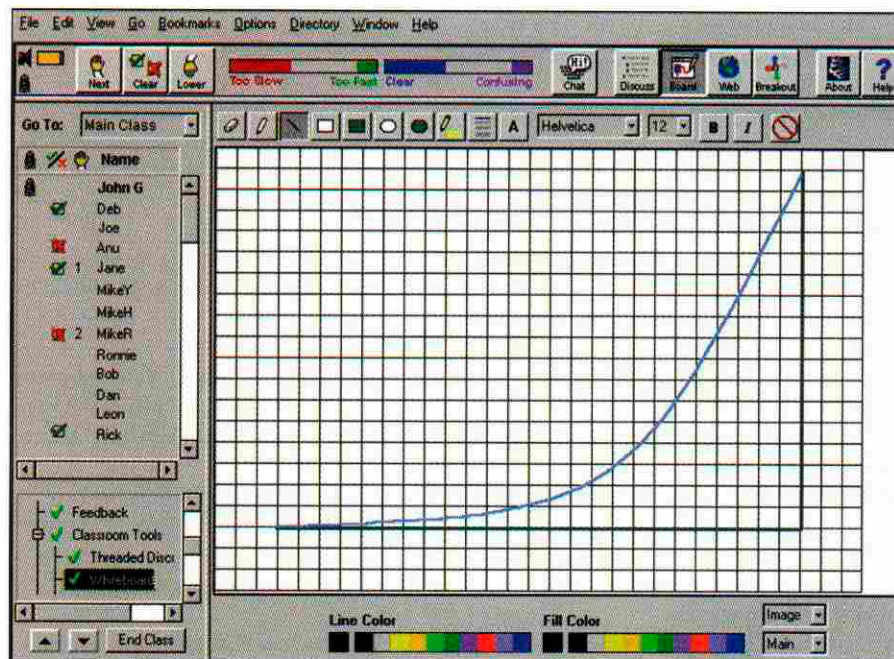
## A VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

Centra Software offers Symposium, a Java-based enterprise application that delivers live instructor-led training and self-paced learning via corporate intranets and the Internet. The software includes such technologies as real-time audio, text chat, and a shared whiteboard.

It also offers self-paced computer-based training and asynchronous threaded-discussion groups. Symposium is a Web-based server and browser application. It is platform neutral and hardware independent. The software supports Windows and Solaris platforms, and other platforms are being tested.

Each server supports up to 50 simultaneous users. The instructor interface facilitates live instructor-led course delivery of multimedia training content, microphone and whiteboard control, and participant feedback and response indicators.

Course modules can be selected directly from a course syllabus shown in the Media Window, where all training content is displayed, including presentation slides, video, CBT, and HTML.



A participant interface offers graphical feedback and response controls, access to course materials anytime, and an online class list. In addition, the software's built-in content editor lets instructors import course materials and add structure

to a virtual classroom.

For more information about Symposium, contact Centra Software, Lexington, Massachusetts, 617.861.7000; Webpage <http://www.centra.com>.

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## CUSTOMER-SERVICE VIDEO

*That's What I Call Customer Service* is a video from Producers Media International that demonstrates that great customer service is more than paying attention or being courteous.

This 16-minute video teaches trainees how to turn customers into friends. Key points are illustrated by the following short vignettes:

- ▶ greeting customers with a friendly attitude and smile
- ▶ asking questions and listening to determine what a customer really needs
- ▶ remembering to use courtesy
- ▶ apologizing and empathizing when mistakes are made or an upset customer needs help, then offering solutions.

The video costs \$695 and includes a facilitator's guide. Mention *Training & Development* magazine for a 10

percent discount.

For more information, contact Producers Media International, Santa Monica, California, 310.393.7274.

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## CAREER MANAGEMENT BOOK

Richard L. Knowdell, a career counselor and organizational consultant, offers a model of employee career management and provides the tools, in his book *How To Design and Promote a Career Development Program in Your Organization*.

The book includes guidelines, exercises, worksheets, and self-assessments for implementing such programs in your organization. Knowdell's nine-point plan contains "key elements for effective career assessment, planning, and development programs that maximize

employee potential while contributing to an organization's business goals."

The plan shows you how to

- ▶ define career development within an organizational context
- ▶ assess an organization's needs
- ▶ custom design the program best suited to your organization
- ▶ promote the program internally
- ▶ guide employees step-by-step through the process.

The 125-page paperback costs \$17.95. For more information, contact Davies-Black Publishing, Palo Alto, California, 415.969.8901.

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## CASH FLOW

Xebec Interactive Learning offers *Money in Business*, a three-part multimedia CD-ROM training program.



## CHOOSING THE RIGHT MEDIA

Advisor 2.0 is a training strategy support tool from BNH Expert Software that assists in the selection of the most effective media (such as print, tapes, classroom CBT, EPSS, and videoconferencing) to deliver training. It helps you analyze a training program and determine

- ▶ the methods and media that can be used to deliver training and the effectiveness of each option
- ▶ the direct and hidden costs for each method
- ▶ the up-front investment required to implement each option
- ▶ the savings over the life of a training product or course
- ▶ the time required to recover the initial investment.

The program contains steps, resources, and deliverables for each phase of the development process and a model for evaluating off-the-shelf and customized CBT and multimedia courses.

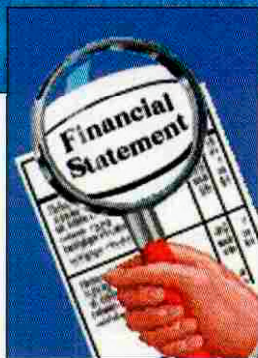
Results are presented in easy-to-follow charts that communicate the analysis effectively. Advisor 2.0 costs \$395. For more information, contact BNH, Quebec, Canada, 514.745.4010. **Circle 265 on reader service card.**

## TRAVELING MICROPHONE

Canvas Visual Communication's AudioScience microphone replaces conventional tabletop or clip-on mikes for visual conferencing applications. It helps participants move around a room and interact with an audience using a ceiling-mounted microphone designed to pick up every word.

The microphone's field of pickup is a 14-foot quarter sphere. It balances loud and soft tones so that all voices are transmitted with the same volume. The company says its pickup range is superior to traditional omnior unidirectional tabletop or other ceiling-mounted microphones.

The microphone can be clipped to suspended ceiling grids so that users don't have to lay exposed cables



It is intended for use by all nonfinancial managers and midlevel employees to help them focus on how their actions and decisions affect their organization's profitability and cash flow.

This fast-paced program combines video, audio, graphics, and exercises. There are also humorous and dramatic vignettes to which many businesspeople can relate.

The three CD-ROMs included in the series are *Introduction to Business Finance*, *Managing Cash Flow for Profit*, and *Effective Budgeting*. The last two provide detailed lessons in the practical use of cash-flow analysis and budgets in the development and implementation of a company's strategy.

All of the CD-ROMs are designed to be equally effective in self-study or facilitated group training. Each one tracks a trainee's progress and offers pre- and post-testing, bookmarking, and reproducible print materials. Both AVI and MPEG video options are provided.

In addition to the three CD-ROMs, the series includes a course administration guide and a workbook designed to help trainees relate the program to their own company.

A single learning center license for each CD-ROM costs \$1,095; the three-part program costs \$2,995. For more information, contact Xebec, Belmont, Massachusetts, 800.932.3293.

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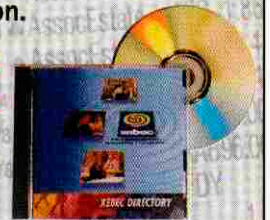
# STOCK EXCHANGE

*Money in Business* can improve the performance of every company on this list.

Xebec is the world's leader in interactive management and business skills training. We really know what it takes to increase business performance. That's why major corporations use Xebec's interactive CD-ROM programs.

Take stock of *Money in Business* and the many training programs that we offer. Simply send for our free brochure and CD-ROM directory. **Xebec. Learning tools for the whole organization.**

**FREE**  
**CD-ROM**  
**DIRECTORY**  
1-800-932-3293



*The interactive learning company*

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## ■ New Learning Tools

on the floor or damage tables.

The AudioScience microphone costs \$1,495 and includes an on-site evaluation, suggested configuration, and all required cabling.

For more information, contact Canvas Visual Communications, Montreal, Canada.

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### DIGITAL TRAINER



MicroMedium's Digital Trainer Professional 4.1 program allows users to produce and deliver training, testing, tutorials, orientations, tours, and customer communications over the Internet, intranets, networks, CD-ROM, and floppy disks.

The software helps users create powerful Windows applications that include interactivity, WYSIWYG text, images, animation, audio, video, and Internet links. They can choose from different page layouts with multiple-choice, true or false, fill-in-the-blank, and hotspot questions. No page layout editing is required.

An automatic file system automatically downloads an entire training program in a highly compressed form to an employee's hard drive, decompresses it before running, then deletes it when finished. A remote file server delivers only the portions of training that are requested by an employee.

Digital Training Professional 4.1 costs \$279.99 for the standard edition and \$975.99 for the corporate edition, which includes a performance-tracking program.

For more information, contact MicroMedium, Apex, North Carolina, 800.561.2098; Website <http://www.micromedium.com>.

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### COMPETENCY TOOL

Authors Michael M. Lombardo and Robert W. Eichinger have compiled data from long-term corporate and academic studies to present 67 career competencies and 19 career stallers and stoppers in *FYI For Your Improvement*. The guide is a handy reference for mentors, managers, and learners interested in career development and coaching.

The 67 competencies include boss relationships, diversity management, humor, work-life balance, presentation skills, negotiation, and compassion, among others. The authors address causes for a lack of competency, as well as remedies for improvement. They also highlight each competency in bulleted lists of unskilled, skilled, and overused skill indicators.

The career stallers and stoppers section of the guide helps you determine when, what, and where. When do traits become problems? What are causes and remedies? Where do I go from here? Career stallers and stoppers include a lack of ethics and values, defensiveness, arrogance, and insensitivity to others.

*FYI For Your Improvement* includes worksheets that make it easy to create a development plan for competencies you are developing or coaching someone else to develop.

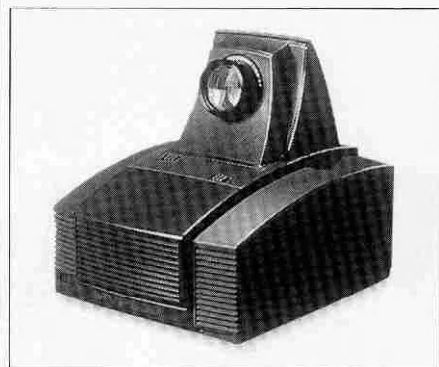
The 489-page paperback costs \$55. For more information, contact Lominger Limited, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 612.542.1466; Website <http://www.lominger.com>.

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### PROJECTOR ON THE MOVE

Lightware offers a 9.45-pound LCD projector that features a metal halide light source. This type of lamp offers more lifelike colors and produces brighter images while using less power than halogen lamps. It typically lasts 10 or more times longer than a halogen lamp and burns significantly cooler.

"Until now, no one has been able to offer the advantages of metal halide in a truly portable unit," says Andy Leonard, president of Lightware.



The model MVP800 features a pop-up lens and full PC and Mac compatibility with single-cable hookup and built-in monitor loop-through. The projector also provides full screen NTSC, PAL, and SECAM video capabilities, and features a three-watt-channel stereo amplifier and built-in speakers. It projects a 40- to 200-inch diagonal image, and features variable keystone correction up to 20 degrees for a wide range of projection angles.

The product's enlarge and freeze functions help users manipulate video during a presentation, and the curtain and pointer functions give presenters greater control over on-screen materials.

The MVP800 projector costs \$6,995. For more information, contact Lightware, Beaverton, Oregon, 503.641.7873; Website <http://www.lightware.com>.

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Send press kits and items of interest to **New Learning Tools**, Training & Development, 1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043; [tools@astd.org](mailto:tools@astd.org).