

Orangespiel

American Society for Training and Development—Orange County Chapter

Volume 37 Number XI

Fall 2009



An Influencer Double Header: Monthly Learning Event and Low-Cost Workshop

With Cricket Buchler

The truth is we all need to be better influencers. Hardly a day passes that we don't try to influence ourselves or others to do something different. We do our best to motivate employees to demonstrate more concern for profitability. We struggle to complete our projects on time and on budget. We attempt to lose weight or take charge of our tempers. In summary, we continually work on ways to exert our influence, but we regularly fall short.

From VitalSmarts, the organization that brought you *Crucial Conversations* and *Crucial Confrontations*, comes *Influencer*, a research-based system for bringing about rapid and sustainable change.

ASTD-Orange County is pleased to offer two opportunities to experience *Influencer* this October.

Monthly Learning Event

In spite of the fact that we're routinely trying to help ourselves and others alter behavior, few can articulate a model of what it takes to do so. It's time this changed. By drawing from the skills of many of the world's best change agents and combining them with five decades of social-science research, *Influencer* creates a powerful and portable model for changing behaviors—a model anyone can learn and apply.

Identify the skills to develop an effective strategy to overcome persistent and resistant problems! The presentation will:

- Overview the *Influencer* Model.
- Review each step of the model and provide examples.
- Provide an opportunity to practice finding vital behaviors.

Learn more tips and insights from the authors of *Influencer* at <http://vitalismarts.com/influencervideos.aspx#vid4>.



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Low-Cost Workshop

One of the most common mistakes people make in identifying the root of a problem is assuming there is only one cause. We also commonly assume there is only one solution. VitalSmarts research reveals that people who employ four or more personal, social, or structural influence strategies are ten times more likely to achieve desired outcomes than those who use only one or two.

Our low-cost workshop will provide you with an opportunity to apply *Influencer* in your personal or work life. You will pick a situation you would like to influence and:

- Discover the Six Sources of Influence as a model for diagnosing and overcoming barriers to that change.
- Practice working with the six sources to tackle your real-world challenge.
- Create your own personalized plan that employs personal, social, and structural influence strategies to achieve desired outcomes.

Download an *Influencer* Self-Assessment at <http://vital-smarts.com/userfiles/pdfs/Influencer%20Self%20Assessment.pdf>.

About the presenter:

Cricket Buchler is a Master Certified Trainer and speaker in both *Crucial Conversations*® and *Crucial Confrontations*™ Training. She has extensive international experience introducing these and other crucial skills to audiences worldwide.

**Don't forget to
bring your
business cards
for structured
networking.**

Save these dates on your calendar for upcoming ASTD-OC Monthly Learning Events:

- Wednesday, November 18, 2009, Dinner at the Doubletree Club Hotel
- Thursday, December 17, 2009, Lunch at the Turnip Rose
- Wednesday, January 27, 2010, Dinner at the Doubletree Club Hotel

Orange County Chapter

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Website: www.astdoc.org



Learning Events held monthly. Information is available in the Orangespiel and at www.astdoc.org. ASTD-OC presents topics pertinent to maximizing human potential. Guests welcome!


Change of Address: If you have a new address, please send your changes to the ASTD-OC office.
All changes must be received in writing.

Membership Information

New Member: \$120 (\$100 dues + \$20 one-time processing fee)
Renewal: \$100 annually
Student: \$65 annually (Must prove current full time status. Exempt from processing fee.)
Company: \$350 (+ \$20 one-time processing fee)

Checks, money order, Visa, MasterCard and American Express are accepted as payment.

In the spirit of diversity and in accordance with state and federal guidelines, the Society supports the principles of equal opportunity.



Both online and
printable
registration forms
for all events are
available at

www.astdoc.org

2009 ASTD-OC Events Calendar

For additional details on all ASTD-OC events, please go to our website at www.astdoc.org, and select "Events Calendar."

Monday, October 19

6–8 p.m.

ASTD-OC Board Meeting

The Board Meeting is open to all ASTD Orange County Members. Contact Anthony Harmetz at President@astdoc.org if you are interested in attending.

Monday, October 26

5:30–7 p.m.

Summer Social Series: Putting It Together

This final session will be held on the web, so you can join us in the comfort of your home (or office, if you're trying to avoid rush hour traffic). As always, registration is free to ASTD-Orange County members. Register for this event on the chapter's website, so we can include you on the WebEx Meeting invitation.

Location: Online

October 27 thru November 18

Online Workshop

ASTD National Workshop: *E-Learning Instructional Design Certificate*

This program helps you develop e-learning experiences that motivate learners to change their behavior. Invigorate your traditional instructional design with fresh e-learning techniques based on examples from organizations that have implemented successful virtual training programs. Visit www.astd.org to receive more info or to register for this event. Remember to include ASTD-OC's ChIP, CH8091, when registering for a National ASTD event.

Wednesday, October 28

11 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

Monthly Learning Event: *Influencer*

In spite of the fact that we're routinely trying to help ourselves and others alter behavior, few of us can articulate a model of what it takes to do so. It's time this changed. By drawing from the skills of many of the world's best change agents and combining them with five decades of social-science research, *Influencer* creates a powerful and portable model for changing behaviors—a model that anyone can learn and apply.

Location: Turnip Rose, 300 South Flower, Orange 92868

Facilitator: Cricket Buchler

Wednesday, October 28

2–4 p.m.

Low-Cost Workshop: *Influencer*

Discover the Six Sources of Influence as a model for diagnosing and overcoming barriers to that change. Practice working with the six sources to tackle your real-world challenge. Create your own personalized plan that employs personal, social, and structural influence strategies to achieve desired outcomes.

Location: Turnip Rose, 300 South Flower, Orange 92868

Facilitator: Cricket Buchler

October 29 thru November 19

Online Workshop

ASTD National Workshop: *ROI Basics Certificate*

This online program introduces participants to the basics, barriers, and benefits of using the ROI methodology as a tool to evaluate and support workplace learning and performance. Visit www.astd.org to receive more info or to register for this event. Remember to include ASTD-OC's ChIP, CH8091, when registering for a National ASTD event.

Monday, November 9

6–8 p.m.

ASTD-OC Board Meeting

The Board Meeting is open to all ASTD Orange County Members. Contact Anthony Harmetz at President@astdoc.org if you are interested in attending.

Tuesday, November 10

11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Organizational Development Special Interest Group

The OD SIG November speaker will be Ryan Faulkner from St. Joseph Health System.

Tuesday, November 10

6:00 – 8:00 pm

Career Management Special Interest Group

Last month, Petti VanRekom shared with a capacity crowd that the biggest mistake you can make is to believe that you work for someone else. You need to take control of your career and recognize that you are Self-Employed.

In November, she continues her discussion on creating your Self Employment plan, focusing on your product

or service (i.e. what you want to do). We'll delve into how to build on the experience, skills and knowledge you already have – and what you can do if you're burned out and want to make a drastic change.

Wednesday, November 11

4:30–6 p.m.

Training and Technology SIG Meeting: *Demofest!*

Our 2009 T&T SIG Meeting theme has been: Toolfest. Each meeting was devoted to a different e-Learning tool with presenters who showed us real applications of Camtasia, Articulate, and PowerPoint. Toolfest culminates this November with Demofest! Details to come.

Location: Orange County Fire Authority Headquarters, 1 Fire Authority Road, Irvine
SIG Leader: Karen Wales, (714) 271-9325

Thursday, November 12

6–8 p.m.

Career Management SIG Meeting

Whether you are currently employed or looking for work, you must operate from the premise that we are all SELF EMPLOYED. Given that premise, what should you do to create and maintain your personal business/career plan?

Location: Coil & Associates, 2101 Mains St., Ste E, Santa Ana, CA 92702

SIG Leader: Karen Moraski, karenmoraski@yahoo.com

Wednesday, November 18

6–8 p.m.

Monthly Learning Event

Location: Doubletree Club Hotel, 7 Hutton Centre Drive, Santa Ana 92707

Garry Ridge, president and CEO of San Diego-based WD-40 Company shares his philosophies around learning and using learning as a competitive advantage. His business philosophy, "Don't Mark My Paper, Help Me Get an A," is outlined in his book, *Helping People Win At Work*.

Both online and printable registration forms for all events are available at www.astdoc.org.



Give 'em the ChIP!

Your ASTD-OC Chapter ChIP is CH8091. When you:

- Register or renew your ASTD National Membership
- Register for any ASTD National Event or Seminar
- Purchase items (books, classes, etc.) from ASTD National

Providing your ChIP will earn ASTD-OC a financial "bonus."



Leadership Index

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Open Position •

President's Message

Farewell to the Turnip Rose

It is with regret that I announce the closing of the Turnip Rose, the home of so many of our Monthly Learning Events over our chapter's 40 year history. Unfortunately, the group that owns the facility has sold it to another group, and we have been told we will not be able to make arrangements to host events at the Turnip Rose next year.

Our December Monthly Learning Event will be our last event at the Turnip Rose, and we are hoping you will join us on Thursday, December 17, as we bid farewell. As usual, we will feature our annual *Death by Chocolate*—a medley of the Turnip Rose's most tasty deserts—along with a program that combines much unstructured networking and a chance to connect with old friends with structured opportunities to meet new contacts.

Additionally, at our December meeting, we will take a few minutes to reflect on ASTD-Orange County as we enter our 40th year. We'll conduct some chapter business as we install the new board, discuss our progress towards the objectives we developed at the start of 2010, and hear our new President discuss our goals for 2010. Save the date on your calendar now and help ASTD-OC to ring out the old year and ring in the new.

ASTD-Orange County would like to hear your thoughts, your accolades, and your critiques.

We Want To Hear From You!

Send ideas that would **make your membership in this chapter more valuable** to
PresidentElect@astdoc.org.

Comments about our Newsletter?
Email OrangeSpiel@astdoc.org.

Concerns with our website or social media efforts?
Contact websitemanager@astdoc.org.

How old is your ASTD-Orange County profile?

With the proliferation of social networking sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Plaxo, et al., it can be an effort to keep everyone we're connected with connected with us!

Take a moment out of your day to update one more connection—your connection with ASTD-Orange County. By updating your ASTD-OC profile on www.astdoc.org, you're ensuring you receive the latest information of ASTD-OC events and opportunities!

We Want You To Hear From Us!

Attach Your Badge to 40 Years of Professional Development

Forty years ago, Man landed on the moon. Sesame Street gave birth to Big Bird, Oscar the Grouch, and a host of other Muppets. Abbey Road was released in the United Kingdom. The Concorde broke the sound barrier for the first time.

Forty years ago, ASTD-Orange County was formed.

While we aren't trying to place our Chapter's formation at the same level of achievement as the former events, we are trying to show how much the human race has learned and grown since then. Sesame Street can be found online as often as on television sets across the globe. The International Space Station is close to completion, and man is now contemplating landing on Mars. Beatles music is now being played as a video game, tracking how well people can play a wireless guitar, drum set, and microphone.

ASTD-Orange County has evolved as well. Our program offerings have expanded from monthly learning events to multi-session programs. Our workshops and SIGS support members seeking to apply cutting-edge technology, from Captivate to Twitter, to their training interventions.

To celebrate, ASTD-Orange County is announcing a contest. We seek a badge, a kind of commemorative logo, to display proudly on our website and newsletter, commemorating this ruby milestone. We would like you, our members, to design it.



This contest—of course—has a few rules:

1. This contest is only open to ASTD-Orange County members in good standing.

Note: This contest is not open to the 2009 or 2010 Chapter Board members, Past Presidents, or other members of the ASTD-OC 40th Anniversary Chapter Badge Selection Committee.

2. The ASTD-OC 40th Anniversary Chapter Badge must include the following elements:

- a. "40 years"
- b. CH809I

3. The ASTD-OC 40th Anniversary Chapter Badge is not meant to replace our existing Chapter logo.

Note: The badge should be complementary to our chapter logo, which means it should be consistent with the ASTD-OC branding guidelines and color palette. You can find these in the policy and procedures page on our website. We'll also provide a link to them from the home page.

4. Submissions for the ASTD-OC 40th Anniversary Chapter Badge must be received by our Chapter Administrator, Denise Ross, on or before November 15. Denise is able to receive your submissions by email at ocoffice@astdoc.org or by mail at 9852 W. Katella Ave., Suite 187, Anaheim, CA 92804.

The winning entry will be selected by the 2009 and 2010 Chapter Boards, and perhaps some Chapter Past Presidents. The winning member will be announced on December 1, and the winning entry will be unveiled at the December Learning Event.

The prize? Your ASTD-Orange County 2010 Chapter Membership renewed—for free.

Forty years! Consider what we've accomplished in that time. Imagine what we'll accomplish in the next.

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and add to the conversation!**

Summer Social Series A Success

Our May Learning Event sparked an idea among the Board: that a discussion on the benefits of social media was good, and a workshop on how to use some of the social media resources would be better. From that spark came the Summer Social Series. These three workshops, held in New Horizons Computer Learning Center's Anaheim office, gave ASTD-Orange County members an opportunity to establish accounts on Facebook and Twitter and to start a blog that connected their brand and their business to the Social Media Network.

The series didn't just give participants a learning environment to navigate and use these resources. It also discussed best practices. We discussed privacy with Facebook. We considered what exactly one tweets in Twitter. And we mapped the preparatory steps for creating a blog. Additionally, the series was designed to create a social networking lab for participants. In each session, participants were invited to connect with other participants, thus creating a network of practitioners with similar goals. From there, the conversation of how to use each social media resource continued—in the very network the participants sought to explore.

The goal of this series was to demystify—as much as possible—some of the common social media programs that had

captured the eye of small business owners and information training practitioners alike. Edward Brandt, Summer Social Series co-facilitator, shared: "I always enjoy seeing simple questions turn into vibrant discussion where so many ideas are presented for consideration."

It was that vibrant discussion that revealed a shortcoming in the series. Each session had been planned to last 90 minutes—too little time even with facilitators focusing on the elementary functions of the programs. So some reworking was done, and in the third session, the facilitators announced a change in the topic of the fourth and final installment of this year's Summer Social Series: Putting It All Together.

This discussion, held the evening of October 26, will consider connecting one's social media efforts. For example, have you linked your blog to your LinkedIn page? Facebook? Have you fed Twitter to your blog? Facebook?

Additionally, it will discuss some social media management techniques, such as a technique facilitator Mel Aclaro calls "Listening Stations."

This final session will be held on the Web, so you can join us in the comfort of your home (or office, if you're trying to avoid rush hour traffic). As always, registration is free to ASTD-Orange County members. Register for this event on the chapter's website, so we can include you on the WebEx Meeting invitation.

The Social Summer Series is scheduled to return next summer with three new topics: Second Life, SlideShare, and perhaps YouTube.

ASTD-OC's Social Networks

No fuss, no muss. This is where the ASTD-Orange County Chapter meets online. You don't have to be a formal member of the chapter to join this forum. But, we hope you will because we get together frequently in the real world, too.



LinkedIn

Have you joined the discussion yet? So far, we have 331—and climbing—members involved with our LinkedIn community. Don't be left out. Visit the ASTD-OC website for more information on signing up or www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=142986.

Facebook

The ASTD-OC Facebook group now has new digs as a Facebook "Fan" Page. Are you a Fan yet? Keep up. Click-through our new Facebook banner from the ASTD-OC home page. Become a Fan!



Twitter

Follow "@astdOC" on Twitter. You can keep up to date (in some cases, up to the minute) as ASTD-OC Board members relate both what's coming to the chapter and what's happening right now!

Suggestions for Newcomers to the Social Media Scene

By Mel Aclaro

Recently, I latched on to a question a colleague asked in one of the LinkedIn forums I frequent: “What suggestions would some of us have for newcomers to social media?”

This was an opportune question, especially because I had just completed co-facilitating several sessions over the summer in our chapter’s Social Media Summer Series. We discussed LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and, most recently, blogging.

In my response to the question posed on LinkedIn, I had two initial reactions:

1. That newcomers approach social media not as a sales channel but as a venue through which to build relationships;
2. Secondly, that they also view social media as a larger system of bridged communities as opposed to individual/silo networks.

It’s Not About Selling

On the first point, it’s an unfortunate fact that many people, it seems, have joined social networks with a “push” mentality. That is to use social communities as channels through which to broadcast information about products and services they’d like to *sell* to other community members. Well, that’s really a model that’s more suited for the one-to-many communication style of broadcast media channels (i.e., TV, radio, newspapers). It’s not too far removed from standing on top of a hill and shouting, “buy my stuff!”

In contrast, social media has evolved with a many-to-many characteristic having a collaborative culture. In that sense, it should be entered into with the intent of allowing the voice of many individuals to help shape the message. This happens best when contributors are willing to listen to what others have to say *and* (emphasis on “and”) be willing to allow change to happen. It’s in this process that relationships develop.

As a blogger, I recognize, for example, that my articles carry an intended message when I push the *publish* button. But, the moment others who follow my blog postings begin commenting and sharing their thoughts—perhaps disagreeing, perhaps adding to my points—the message begins to take new form.

Sometimes, even new meaning.

But, what then of commerce?

All the above isn’t to say that commerce can’t or shouldn’t happen. In fact, social network culture is accepting of members transacting business. The point, though, is that in social spheres, the preference is to have trust as the basis of business transactions. In that sense, commerce and marketing takes on a “pull” characteristic as opposed to the “push” I mentioned earlier.

A System of Bridged Communities

On the second point, I guess to put it in a nutshell: my view is that I would hope newcomers see, right from the beginning, that social networks shouldn’t be viewed as closed communities with their own flavor of social media. That is, your connections on LinkedIn shouldn’t really be separate from those you have on Facebook, nor should either of those groups be considered as being separate from connections you’ve made on Twitter or YouTube. Certainly, each group has its own organizational culture. But, in the social sphere, precisely that difference is what adds the color and interest to our online personas in a venue where it would otherwise be difficult to express ourselves.

So, rather than keep our LinkedIn friends on LinkedIn and our YouTube friends on YouTube, we should instead mix-and-match social content from one network into others.

A personally interesting YouTube video shared on LinkedIn or Facebook can add expression to an otherwise bland status update. Of course, the underlying caveat is that we always do so in socially appropriate ways.

Summary

At the beginning of this article, I proposed two points: (1) that social media is more about relationships than selling and (2) that participants should practice mixing and matching social content between networks. By keeping these two points in mind, social media newcomers will find themselves well positioned for successful engagement and quick acceptance by others in the social sphere.

Mel Aclaro is the founder of MindBridj.com, a company that creates community learning portals for small businesses and non-profits. He blogs regularly on BusinessCasualBlog.com and is co-facilitator of the ASTD-OC LinkedIn discussion forum and the ASTD-OC “Fan” page on Facebook. He is an active volunteer with ASTD-OC as the Web Content Manager and is a candidate for ASTD-OC’s 2010 VP of Communications. Contact: Mel@MindBridj.com.

Mentoring Training Protégés

We seek to learn. We seek to grow. Knowledge we gather from books. Growth, either spiritual or behavioral, we gather from others.

Mentoring is a powerful form of professional development. It is the pairing of an experienced practitioner with a protégé who has identified development goals and feel they would value from the insights, support, and knowledge of a mentor. The mentor/protégé relationship allows for personal and professional growth in a less-structured environment that is free from the constraints existing in formal manager/direct report relationship.

ASTD-Orange County is pleased to announce the pilot of its Mentor program. The program provides a development opportunity that is unique and specific to the protégé and mentor in the workplace learning and development field.

A mentor is:

"A wise and trusted counselor whose primary purpose is to teach and serve as a guide."

Characteristics

- Provides guided autonomy
- Encourages protégé to develop his/her own goals and ideas
- Provides teaching and learning opportunities for both protégé and self

A protégé is:

"One whose well being, training, or career is promoted by an influential person."

Characteristics

- Identifies clear goals for the mentor/protégé relationship
- Shares progress and accomplishments
- Learns from mentor's success and challenges

ASTD-Orange County anticipates that its Mentor program will benefit both mentor and protégé participants. The mentor will be able to refine coaching and advisory skills and build a professional relationship based on shared interests and a desire to learn and grow. The protégé will focus on relevant professional development goals and have a person to use as a sounding board when faced with new or challenging situations.

The chapter seeks to match six mentors with protégés by November 2009. The pilot would last 6 months, ending in May/June 2010.

If this sounds like something you'd like to participate in, read the announcement on page 9!



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Newsflash! ASTD-OC Launches Pilot of Mentoring Program

Would you like guidance and support to reach specific development/career growth goals?

Would mentoring from experienced learning and development professionals help you reach your goals?

Then apply for the ASTD-OC Mentoring program.

As a protégé in this mentor relationship, you'll be paired with a fantastic learning and development professional who can be your sounding board, coach, and subject matter expert. You'll meet with your mentor monthly between October and March to discuss what's most important to YOU. And through the process, you'll gain valuable insight and support as you reach your development/career growth goals.

This program is limited to six mentor/protégé pairings. Get more information at astdoc.org. Follow the Mentoring links from the Home Page to our Mentoring Program page. Complete the application there, and follow the instructions for submitting your application. Applications are due by October 27.

We're looking forward to launching this robust Mentoring program, and your participation as a protégé is a key to its success. If you have any questions, contact Gina Salzman at (213) 705-0663 or g.salzman@sbcglobal.net

August Monthly Learning Event Recap

ASTD-OC held an unusual and very successful Monthly Learning Event in August called *Knots, Nails, and Egg Grenades*. It was unusual in that we held the event in a park! At the event, four of our members, who are professional team building facilitators, shared their knowledge with attendees as they facilitated a variety of team-building activities.

Working in teams, participants untied themselves after becoming a human knot, lowered hula-hoops that seemed to want to go up instead of down, and competed to throw their egg grenade the furthest while keeping the egg safe! These were just three of the six activities. Each debrief highlighted different ways to use these inexpensive, easy to facilitate activities to produce powerful learning. After the event, participants were emailed the instructions for all six activities. Now, they can facilitate these fun learning activities too!

Feedback on the event was very positive. People loved learning by participating in the activities. Working together to solve problems also provided a fun way for members to continue to get to know each other and build their relationships. Boxed lunches from Panera Bread Company were delicious and a real hit!

An unexpected bonus was that Fox News II heard about this event and wanted to film us! The Fox News producer was so intrigued by our out-of-the-box approach that he featured us on TV News on September 7 as part of a series Fox is running on Job Seeking in Southern California. The segment focused on how in today's economic climate, joining professional organizations is one way to help you in your search. The segment highlighted ASTD-OC.

As a follow-up to the Fox News piece, five of our members were invited for one-on-one interviews on Fox Morning News. Anita Goldin, Penn Post, Vera Michaels, Susan Gerke, and Denise Lamont each participated on different mornings. You can see each of their interviews at www.myfoxnews.com. Click on Job Shop, and you can find their interviews on the left.

If you didn't make the event, we're sorry you missed it! If there is interest, we'll try to do something like it again in 2010!

Susan K. Gerke

Gerke Consulting & Development LLC

www.susangerke.com

sgerke@sbcglobal.net

Changing Work Expectations

By Petti Van Rekom, Ed.D, CPT

It seems that everywhere you go you hear the term “employee engagement” discussed. Groups like Gallup and Hewitt have found that good organizations with engaged employees average 1.5 times more revenue. There’s plenty of discussion linking the lack of engagement to the different attitudes of the generations or to the organization’s culture. The common sources of lack of engagement are usually found in management practices, business policies, culture and environmental issues, and compensation and recognition factors. Added to these, right now, are employees’ economic concerns for their job and the viability of the organization.

While all are valid factors, there’s another deeper reason that, despite many interventions, employee engagement continues to be a challenge.

Changing Work Expectations

What many line managers, HR managers, OD consultants, recruiters, outplacement consultants, career counselors, job seekers, and organizations that research workplace issues have noticed is that employees’ expectations are evolving. Workers in virtually every category are seeking jobs that provide far more than a paycheck. Many are hunting for “meaningful work.” (If you don’t believe this, check out the 18 million hits this term has on Google.) Many believe that work is one of the principle means through which life takes on meaning.

Social psychologists consider this to be a cultural evolution based on world views, values, and individual motivations. Many in Western societies no longer accept work as a “means to an end.” They have higher expectations; they seek “mean-

ingful work.” Followers of Abraham Maslow would state that more people have arrived at the higher psychological level of what he called “self-actualization.”

However, organizations are slow to adapt to the change in employee expectations. As pointed out by Harvard professor Shoshana Zuboff, “People have changed more than the business organizations upon which they depend.” To meet the complexity of the workplace and employee expectations, some business leaders are trying new forms of capitalism. For example, John Mackey, CEO of Whole Foods, is a strong supporter of “conscious capitalism.”

What Is Meaningful Work?

Trying to define “meaningful work” is about as difficult as defining “happiness.” What both terms have in common is that the definition is personal and based on individual personality and life conditions (including where one lives and what is happening to the person). For some, “meaningful work” may mean a work environment similar to that of a caring family. For others it means exciting, challenging tasks filled with recognition, advancement, and material rewards. For many today, the term suggests work that provides them with joy, deep satisfaction, and a feeling of purpose.

Where Did This Trend Come From?

According to The Work Foundation, the search for meaningful work began in the 1970s. It is attributed to increased affluence in Western societies, a rise in people asking “Who-am-I?” types of questions, and the replacement of skilled craft jobs (producing a tangible output) with knowledge-based ones.

What Are Organizations Doing to Engage Employees?

Organizations interested in retaining engaged employees are attempting many different tactics. In addition, they are seeking awards that name them a “best com-

pany” or “employer of choice.”

Here are some tactics organizations are applying to engage and retain employees found in Table 1.

Self-knowledge and finding meaningful work is an employee’s responsibility. However, this search requires a positive work environment to flourish. If your organization truly wishes to help employees find meaning or purpose through their work, a much deeper knowledge of the individual is required—not what you will find on their résumés or in performance reviews. Five things your organization can do to support employees’ search for meaningful work are:

1. Define clearly the culture of your organization and that of its individual functions. Define not only the values but how they play out in expected behaviors and company policies.
2. Establish and maintain a work environment supporting both the growth of the organization and its employees.
3. Place the right person in the right job based not only on skills, strengths, and experience but on “cultural fit,” which encompasses the individual’s personality, patterns of thinking, and cultural values.
4. Give employees jobs that have meaning and significance to *them*. Be aware and take action when jobs and people change. (A new manager almost always triggers changes in expectations.)
5. Survey employees regularly to uncover potential problems and identify specific work satisfiers.

Another Employee Development Intervention

Another important intervention is to provide employees with information or

training to assist them in assessing their own work values and strengths. Help them understand what their current work expectations are and what could cause their expectations to change. Your annual employee survey may find engagement increases as you support them in their self knowledge. A good career development program will include self-assessments and goal-setting activities.

While this may sound too “touchy-feely,” remember there are a number of research studies to substantiate that:

- Fifty percent of employees are not satisfied (i.e., disengaged) with their jobs
- Engaged employees create improved business results

Searching for Worktopia

Worktopia, that perfect workplace, may be an ephemeral goal. However, despite growing unemployment, people still desire to find a great place to work. They want a workplace that allows them to apply their skills and satisfy their personal and psychological needs. As employees continue to want meaningful work, organizations with a healthy

culture, a positive work environment, and support for self-development will be more successful in increasing revenue and retaining valued employees.

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Category	Tactic
Work Environment and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide activities to maintain a "fun" environment • Support camaraderie or friendship among employees • Provide a safe, clean, attractive work facility • Support work/life balance • Demonstrate care about employees • Support community or social cause
Business Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate positive values • Insist on honest and ethical work practices • Provide open and frequent communication between employees and leadership • Establish efficient work processes • Promote existing employees based on merit • Implement an effective performance management system
Employees and Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish manager's role to coach and develop employees • Establish collaborative, non-competitive work teams • Provide mentoring for employees • Provide for diversity in the workforce • Provide regular feedback on performance
Benefits and Perks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer flexible work schedules • Offer flexible work locations ("virtual") • Provide competitive salaries and benefits • Offer perks tailored to specific needs of employees (e.g., childcare, health club, parties, trips) • Provide training and job development • Establish opportunities for career growth
Job Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match work to skills and strengths • Provide work that is interesting or challenging • Ensure clear work expectations • Communicate that employee work is valued • Recognize significant accomplishment

Table 1: What Can Organizations Do to Provide Meaningful Work?

Return Service Requested

Upcoming Events

Look inside for more information on these, and other, events.

Influencer	CEO Visit	Holiday Networking
<p>A breakthrough method for influencing those in your personal or work life.</p> <p>ASTD-OC is pleased to offer two opportunities to experience <i>Influencer</i> this October.</p>	<p>Garry Ridge, president and Chief Executive Officer of San Diego-based WD-40 Company shares his philosophies around learning and using learning as a competitive advantage.</p>	<p>We started our year networking; we'll finish it networking between a lively celebration of our volunteers and a traditional "Death by Chocolate" holiday buffet.</p>
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