

Wed., January 27, 2010

Monthly Learning Event
6–8:30 p.m.

Doubletree Club Hotel
7 Hutton Centre Drive
Santa Ana 92707

January Monthly Learning Event

The Wild Idea Club

Tools for Better Consulting, Better Teams, and Better Outcomes

Presented by Janine McDonald and Linda Krall


Imagine a workplace or consulting project where employees don't complain about problems. Imagine working with your family to generate creative ideas to solve issues in your personal life. Imagine joining a new club—the Wild Idea Club.

Join ASTD-OC on January 27, 2010, to:

- Discover an easy, step-by-step approach that harnesses the collective genius of the team you're working with to drive innovation, improve efficiency, and increase morale.
- Adopt tips and techniques to help people generate ideas and select the best ones.
- Practice the best ways to capture, record, research, and follow through on those ideas.
- Devise strategies to help your people pitch their ideas.

As an added bonus, see Graphic Facilitation in practice. This technique provides a visual system to capture information and ideas in real time while documenting and inter-actively supporting group processes.

Visit the ASTD-OC January calendar page and register for this Monthly Learning Event today.



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

2010 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."

Tuesday, January 12, 2010
6–8 p.m.

Career Management SIG Meeting

Whether you work inside an organization or for yourself, you're the leader of your life. Finding financial security, job satisfaction, or meaningful work is an ongoing journey, not a destination. As such, you need a travel (i.e., career) plan that allows for detours and unexpected situations. The Career Management SIG will be focusing on helping you create a self-employment plan. We'll cover topics of interest whether you're currently employed or in career transition.

Location: 2101 North Main Street, Suite E, Santa Ana 92706

Wednesday, January 27, 2010
6–8:30 p.m.

Monthly Learning Event: The Wild Idea Club

Imagine a workplace or consulting project where employees don't complain about problems. Imagine working with your family to generate creative ideas to solve issues in your personal life. Imagine joining a new club—the Wild Idea Club. Join us for January's Monthly Learning Event. Visit astdoc.org to register today.

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

Facilitators: Janine McDonald and Linda Krall

January 27 thru 29, 2010
Three-Day Event

ASTD TechKnowledge 2010

Since 2001, ASTD TechKnowledge® has provided attendees with the latest information, best practices, and learning technology resources available. Experienced practitioners—and an EXPO full of leading suppliers—provide tangible results that can be implemented immediately. Visit www.astd.org to receive more info or to register for this event. Remember to provide the ASTD OC Chapter ChIP number, CH8091, when registering for a National ASTD event.

Location: Las Vegas, Nevada



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

- Wednesday, January 27
- Wednesday, February 24
- Wednesday, March 24



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."

Orange County Chapter

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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

Leadership Index

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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 these forums. But, we hope you will because we get together frequently in the real world, too.



Have you joined the discussion yet? Don't be left out. Visit the ASTD-OC

website for more information on signing up or
<http://linkedin.astdoc.org>.



facebook

This is the Facebook "fan page" about the local chapter of ASTD in Orange County, California. It's another way you can connect with ASTD-OC and keep up to date with what's going on in the chapter.
<http://facebook.astdoc.org>



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!
<http://twitter.com/astdoc>

Is Your Training Room Lonely After Hours? Let ASTD-OC Make It Come Alive!

Does your organization have extra meeting space? Do you know of a location suitable for the ASTD-OC chapter to host Delivery Skills Course classes, Total Trainer sessions, low-cost workshops, or other meetings?

We are looking for contact/organization information from anyone who may be interested in hosting a meeting. If you are interested or know someone who may be, please contact Janine Collins at (888) 493-7266, Ext. 4677, or jcollins@wescom.org.

President's Message

What Do We Do Next?

In October 1969, a dedicated group of training professionals banded together to spread ASTD's mission of creating a world that works better right here in Orange County. They've achieved that goal, I believe, and so much more. Thus, as ASTD-OC enters its 40th year of existence, I find myself graced with the uncommon honor of asking: "What do we do next?"

I'd like to put that question into perspective.

I started with ASTD-OC because someone was networking. Mary and I were both commuting by train to work, she realized I was a trainer and started talking about ASTD-OC. I joined. For the next two years, my membership with this organization was little more than a line-item on my résumé.

My first real exposure to what ASTD-OC offered came with my enrollment in Total Trainer. Exposed to a great foundation of what a trainer does, I was graced with a serendipitous environment in which I learned something about my profession and applied it the next day. Not all in my class had that fortune. Some were unemployed trying to break into a field that interested them; some were in a support function of the field trying to move up. None of them had the opportunities to do something with their knowledge beyond the rudimentary application available within the course.

Consider today's economy, where the supply of training and development jobs is limited, and the demand and interest still exists. How far in the résumé vetting process do you think a person will get with these credentials?

Employment: Subject Matter Expertise Training
 Memberships: ASTD-Orange County
 Education: BA (in some field)
 Total Trainer

This was one of the impetuses behind my drive to resurrect the Community Services and Student Opportunities SIG. Its mission: "To partner ASTD-OC with Orange County's community organizations to further the training and development needs of those organizations while providing unique development opportunities to our members."

Need new Volunteer Orientation materials photocopies of photocopies from ten years ago? We have a designer for that. Need a facilitator for a Change Management course? We have one of those, too.

Now consider the résumé of an ASTD-OC Member who has taken Total Trainer, then applied some of what he (or she) has learned in a Community Services SIG project.

Employment: Subject Matter Expertise Training
 Memberships: ASTD-Orange County
 Education: BA (in some field)
 Total Trainer
 Experience: *Designed new-volunteer training materials for ABC Group.
 *Facilitated Change Management course at XYZ Services for ## participants.

It's this sort of Community of Practice that I'd like to see grow within ASTD-OC over the next few years.

The challenge: this growth can't come just from me. I've applied a certain formula to my career development. While it's worked for me, I can't guarantee it will work for our remaining 344 members of the chapter, nor will it necessarily work for anyone else entering our community. So I seek ideas from our members, as well as the drive and commitment to incorporate those ideas into our Chapter framework.

An example of this is our own Patricia Obrite.

Patricia became so enthused as she read about January's Learning Event—The Wild Idea Club—that she approached Anthony and me about the possibility of founding a Wild Idea Club within ASTD-OC. Our response: "Brilliant!" Patricia is currently creating a framework for the club.

Let's add a line item to Patricia's résumé based upon her initiative:

Experience: Founded "Wild Idea Club," a group dedicated to collaboratively solve the challenges faced by ASTD-OC and its members.

It's a little more distinctive. Yes?

Every training class is viewed as a safe haven for participants to practice the things they've learned: to make mistakes without impacting performance or to figure out how to apply some theory or behavior that has been identified as important to their success at work. I view ASTD-OC as a similar learning lab for our members, and over the course of the next year will seek out those opportunities to do. Thus, when a new member approaches our chapter and asks: "What do I do next?" We'll have a plan at the ready.

Sincerely,

Paul Venderley
 2010 ASTD-OC Chapter President

Musings of an Outgoing President

By Anthony Harnetz

As I hand the gavel to our incoming President and take on a new advisory role as Past President, there's a lot on my mind as there always is for me during any transition period. Unfortunately, there is not enough time or space to share the bulk of those thoughts, but below are a few that I'm finding are on the "top of mind."

ASTD-OC in Relation to Orange County

One of the things I've been musing about over the last year is how many people in Orange County work in the field of training and development. We have over 3 million people living in the county. About 1.6 million are in the workforce. Take away another 200,000, who perhaps are unemployed, and we have at any given time perhaps 1.4 million working professionals.

I wonder how many people in that group work in Training and Development (or the related fields of Learning, Human Performance Improvement, Organizational Development, Human Resources, and so forth). If we frame the question narrowly and look just for folks with formal responsibility for training inside a Learning or Human Resources department, I don't know the answer—perhaps between 3,000 and 20,000?

If we frame the question more broadly and look for all the workers having training as a key aspect of their responsibilities, I still would have no clue as to the number of folks doing "training" in Orange County, but the number would be much larger, including most workers who manage other employees. If most managers manage 10 employees or less, the number would swiftly approach 140,000.

So all year, I have been musing around the following question: "If the mission of our chapter is to help improve the effectiveness of training and employee development throughout the county, how are we doing at helping these 140,000 people better develop their employees—either through direct exposure to our chapter or through indirect exposure to people who have been directly involved with our chapter?" And if we frame the question even more broadly and ask ourselves how are we doing at helping all the people working in Orange County—and all those who would like to be working—learn, then how are we doing at helping perhaps 2 million people?

What can you, I, or the chapter in general do to improve the impact of ASTD-OC on workforce learning in the coming years? I can't say I have the answers, but given that I've been musing about the issue all year, I'm happy to report that our incoming President, Paul Venderley, has put the issue of community outreach and community impact on the table for next year. So I will continue to muse, and if you would like to muse with me, that would be great. Please feel free to send musings to PastPresident@astdoc.org, and I'll continue to reach out to you on this topic throughout the year.

Personal Musings About the Presidency

Well, the first thing that comes to mind when I think about my experience as President of ASTD-OC in 2009 is that I didn't fully realize all the benefits of the presidency in advance of assuming my role. On a purely practical level, I did not realize I would be a member of the chapter at no cost for the rest of my life, I would receive the Board Member cost for the Monthly Learning Events forever after, or the chapter would be willing to send me to ICE (ASTD's International Conference & Exposition) at no cost during the year of my presidency.

What's more, I didn't fully appreciate just how many people I would meet as President. I joined ASTD-OC originally wishing to meet people in the Orange County Training and Development community. My wish was granted as soon as I volunteered to work on the Total Trainer program. However, my ability to meet people increased ten-fold in 2009, and the numbers were so large, I regret still not having managed to follow up with many of the people I met this year (though doing so is one of the things I'm looking most forward to in 2010).

And the other thing I didn't fully appreciate was that I would receive real and valuable executive experience. This sounds like something I should have known in advance, but I somehow did not realize the activities I'd be responsible for—developing strategy for an organization, managing a board of Vice Presidents, being the person with ultimate responsibility for the organization—would translate into experience that would serve me in great stead should I have an opportunity to be part of another executive team in the future.

Of course I made plenty of mistakes as President in 2009, and as any learning professional is wont to do, I've been thinking a lot lately about what I've learned and what I would do differently if I had the opportunity to do it all over again. But the wonderful thing about all my volunteer opportunities at ASTD-OC has been that when I make mistakes, I do so in a safe environment. I don't know if any of you might ever be interested in undertaking this experience, but if you would, there is a simple path to follow to the presidency of ASTD-OC:

1. Volunteer for the chapter for one or more years, perhaps in a manager position.
2. Join the board in any position for a year.
3. Run for President-Elect in the following year. (Becoming President-Elect entitles you to a three-year stint on the board: first as President-Elect learning the ropes; then as President; and finally as Past-President, a lower-key but important role providing guidance and historical perspective to the new board.)

As I pass the gavel, I'd like to say thank you. It has been a pleasure, a privilege, and a great learning experience serving as President of the chapter in 2009, and I'll look forward to seeing and working with you in 2010.

Giving Leadership an “A” Gets an “A+”

By Rachel Brophy

Garry Ridge, CEO of WD-40, engaged a crowd of approximately 50 ASTD Orange County members and guests at its monthly learning event on Wednesday, November 18, at the Doubletree Club Hotel in Santa Ana. His talk, which highlighted various elements of his new book (co-written by leadership guru Ken Blanchard), *Helping People Win At Work: Don't Mark My Paper, Help Me Get An A*, was inspiring.

In his talk, Ridge discussed the work environment at WD-40 and how using each experience as a “learning moment” was integral to launching the company to such huge success worldwide. As he emphasizes in his book, there are no such things as mistakes, but rather learning moments (i.e., opportunities that benefit the organization while concurrently supporting the growth and improvement of the individual). Ridge stated that we all have alarm bells that signify these learning moments, and, as such, he encouraged each of us to pay attention to our own personal and professional alarm bells, so we can continue to learn from these “opportunities.”

Within the immense amount of leadership theory that exists today, a couple of elements remain common throughout. For instance, leaders need to uphold a clear vision and driven values. They must not only share their expectations with their employees but also teach them how to achieve those goals. True leaders must act as strategic drivers while also assuming responsibility for their employees (also known as a team or tribe), so the tribe, its people, and the organization as a whole can be preserved.

Even with the disparity between generational workforce behavior, a few elements are shared. For instance, all generations need to feel cared about and have a sense of belonging (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs). Ridge maintains it is the leader's responsibility to identify such commonalities, accept differences, and develop the glue that binds the generations together, thus creating an environment where they can learn from each other and strengthen the organization as a whole.

Successful organizations require a leadership point-of-view—namely, a culture encompassing defined parameters of acceptable behavior, clear expectations that are shared by all of its team members, and established values that are exhibited throughout the organization. This includes a true and accurate reflection of the job functions required by each employee, organizational culture,

and professional expectations. Effective leaders understand the importance of employee engagement and that they are responsible for employee development. If, after they've tried on all levels to help an employee succeed, the employee is still unsuccessful, both parties must accept that the job is not a good fit and the employee should be “shared with a competitor.”

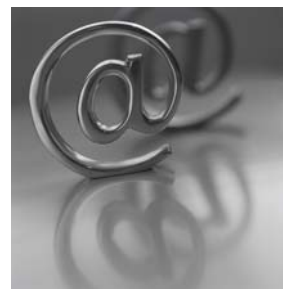
Meaningful work and a shared value system are paramount for most employees, as it fuels their passion to do good work. Such work creates positive, lasting memories in our relationships. When we succeed as a team while also excelling as an individual, employee engagement results. Once employees “own” their work, they will feel compelled to passionately act upon it, thus, assuming accountability, care, candor, and responsibility. Such dedication will also contribute to mutual respect and trust among the tribe members, persistence in continuing to work toward the organization's goals, and the ability to learn from and teach each other.

Fear is disabling. However, since feedback has a bad rap for being negative, leaders must be careful about how they provide such constructive criticism. To this end, Ridge spoke about employees' emotional bank accounts and how supervisors must make regular deposits in these accounts, so periodic withdrawals don't deplete the balance. As he stated in his lecture, “Trust is built over time by observed behavior of the leader.” As such, leaders must imitate the behavior they desire from their employees.

Throughout his lecture, Ridge was enthusiastic in providing us with great examples of a successful learning organization and how to engage and cultivate productive employees (i.e., our greatest resource).

If you missed November's Monthly Learning Event or would be interested in joining us again for another wonderful speaker, please contact us at www.astdoc.org. We strive to offer our members stimulating professional development opportunities on a regular basis. Your comments and suggestions are welcome.

About the Author



Rachel Brophy is an Education Program Specialist within the Employee Education System group at the Department of Veterans Affairs. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees in Corporate Training and Development from the California State University, Long Beach (CSULB). She

also serves as the Director of Education Development for the Los Angeles chapter of the Younger Women's Task Force (YWTF). The YWTF has a main goal of educating women on topics that are most important to them including helping prepare college-aged women for transition into the professional workforce.

Chapter Report 2009

In 2009, ASTD-OC focused on executing initiatives against four strategic goals:

1. Improve infrastructure
2. Improve networking opportunities
3. Deliver “Wow!” offerings
4. Develop member and sponsor drives

Our intent was to both develop and implement plans in each of these four areas to be carried out over 2009 and 2010. On the following pages, you’ll find information about what we’ve accomplished so far and what’s left for the future.

Improve Infrastructure

To run any organization smoothly, attention to infrastructure—all the policies, procedures, processes, tasks, and physical and virtual “equipment” it takes to run the chapter—must be paid. In an organization such as ASTD-OC, staffed by volunteers who rotate in and out of roles, a solid infrastructure becomes that much more important since there are less long-term associates able to keep things running in situations where knowledge and processes are not explicitly documented.

Therefore, in 2009, we worked to develop the following areas to help improve ASTD-OC infrastructure:

Document Storage — ASTD-OC now keeps its documents at an online document storage site, ShareFile, to prevent them from being lost in transitions throughout the years.

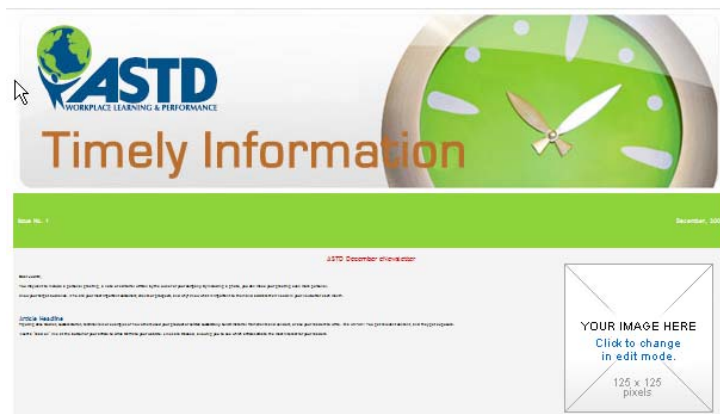
Project Management Office — We established a new board position, VP of Major Projects, to manage projects not falling under the purview of an existing department.

Volunteer Recruitment — We elevated the volunteer function to the board level with the creation of a VP of Volunteers. Our volunteer numbers climbed over 25 percent above the prior year.

Process Development and Documentation — This year, we focused on documentation in the areas of Marketing, Programs, Volunteers, Membership, and more.

Identify New eNewsletter Vendor — This year saw us move to Constant Contact for our eNewsletter to provide more versatility, resolve issues with broken links, provide useful analytics, and improve the look and usefulness of our emails. A prototype Timely Information template appears on this page.

Next year will see us go through the RFP process for both our website and the OrangeSpiel, after which we will be able to make significant improvements in both those resources. We’ll also be improving our transition process for board members and other



volunteers and improving the advance notice we provide when marketing events and other offerings.

Improve Networking Opportunities

Members join ASTD-OC for help with networking, professional development, and transitions. In 2008, members reported some satisfaction with their networking opportunities, but they wistfully wished for more—even though they weren’t quite sure what the enhancements they hoped for would look like.

Therefore, in 2009, we worked to develop the following areas to help improve ASTD-OC networking opportunities:

Devoting a Monthly Learning Event to Networking — At our January Monthly Learning Event (MLE), we devoted the entire session to tips for networking and opportunities to network. The event was greatly appreciated by the large crowd who attended—and stayed long afterward. An hour after the event ended, two-thirds of the group was still there ... networking.

Structured Networking at Monthly Learning Events — For the remainder of the year, we hosted a 15-minute structured-networking activity at each of our MLEs, helping our attendees to get to know each other better and form stronger bonds.

Online Networking — With our LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook groups, we have facilitated online networking for our members.

Mix ‘N Mingle — This year, we created a successful Mix ‘N Mingle formula: interesting venue plus a “draw” (such as an interesting speaker to lead a 20-minute activity). Following this formula, ASTD-OC hosted a much appreciated Mix ‘N Mingle at Ten Asian Bistro.

Culture of Warmth and Welcome — With greeters at the doors of our events; a board and volunteer group charged with meeting, greeting, and introducing new event attendees to each other; and a tone set by our structured networking activities, we have worked to

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create a warm and welcoming environment in the chapter.

Next year will see us try to move into untried territories with online networking while still trying to improve the way we facilitate opportunities for face-to-face connections.

Deliver “Wow!” Offerings

To remain a viable organization in 2010—when all of us have so many amazing options around how to spend our money and time and when the Internet has vastly expanded our professional development opportunities—ASTD-OC needs to provide its members with outstanding offerings that can help them in ways they won't find elsewhere. Our goal is to provide not just opportunities that satisfy our members, but offerings that make them say, “Wow!”

Mentor Program — We are currently piloting this program with five pairs of mentors and protégés, who over a 6-month period will focus on developing in a specifically-targeted area. A fuller rollout will take place in 2010.

Low-Cost Workshops — In 2009, we partnered with five great facilitators to provide five great workshops at a cost of \$0 to \$20.

Monthly Learning Event Process Improvement — As usual, we provided 12 Monthly Learning Events, and this year we listened to our members' feedback and tried to improve on our traditional format by:

- Improving opportunities to network at the events.
- Implementing many small process changes to meeting elements such as our resource table, email confirmations, job offerings, and raffles.
- Expanding the learning outside of the physical venue with follow-up resources after some of the events and streaming video versions of others (our November event was watched in real-time by folks as far away as Chicago).
- Offering out-of-the-box events (Knots, Nails, and Egg Grenades MLE and Community developed Tips & Tricks) and several events tied more to a business focus (for example, the presentation by WD-40 CFO, Garry Ridge).

Share Our Success (SOS) Program— It's with pride in our Chapter volunteers and members that we accept ASTD's (national) recognition in the Share Our Success (SOS) program. In achieving this honor, ASTD-OC demonstrated a replicable chapter best practice to be modeled by other ASTD chapters. This best practice was demonstrated during ASTD-OC's August 2009 Monthly Learning Event themed “Knots, Nails, and Egg Grenades,” which was also featured on local television through Fox Network's Good Day LA program. Highlights can be viewed on our chapter's YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/astdoc>. In the meantime, we proudly display the SOS Program's 'seal of approval.'”



ASTD-Orange County Member Denise Lamonte is interviewed by Good Day LA after participating in Knots, Nails, and Egg Grenades, our August Learning Event.

Develop Member & Sponsor Drives

Our thought is that if ASTD-OC puts more emphasis on reaching out throughout the community in Orange County—to Training, Learning, and Organizational Development departments in corporations and other organizations; to students and professors of human and organizational development; to foundations, professional groups, and other organizations throughout the county—we will be able to better promote networking, best practices, and professional development in the space we play in (human and organizational growth) throughout the county while at the same time attracting more benefits and sponsors.

Formalized Partnerships With Two Local Universities — Brandman University and UC Irvine. We are exploring possibilities to develop programs jointly with each of these universities as well as to help each other in various other ways.

Partner Better With Local ASTD Chapters and Other Local Professional Organizations — Met with the boards of all four Southern California ASTD chapters and additionally with representatives of the boards of 11 Southern California professional organizations playing in a similar space as ours (the “Alpha Centauri” project; began better using all these organizations as resources and began partnering on various projects).

Identify More Local, No-Cost Event Venues — Developed a pool of sites to contact when we need to host events.

New Member Orientation — Revamped new member packet and installed a revised process involving new member email, phone, and mail information.



How Training Can Help Achieve Cost Reduction Goals Without Layoffs

By Penn Post and Chris Stiehl

Are you looking for ways that your trainers can help achieve your company's cost reduction and profit improvement goals?

Today, companies throughout the country expect continuing declines in revenue and profit as their markets shrink, prices fall, and productive capacity goes unused. They also expect the recovery, when it comes, to be one of slow growth for several years. This is the "new normal" for revenue and profit growth. Cost reduction and cost control are vital parts of achieving revenue and profit growth goals.

Our organization recently completed a survey of Southern California financial executives about their most successful cost reduction strategies being employed today. Based on the survey results, here are nine ideas for training to help employees in every part of the company cut costs:

1. Process-improvement methods and practices training. Process improvement was selected most often in the survey as a cost-cutting methodology.

Ineffective and inefficient processes that cause waste, delays, and unnecessary costs can exist in every part of an organization. Improving processes can yield short- and long-term benefits, including:

- a. Reducing resources required. Resources can be eliminated or redeployed to activities that increase customer value.
- b. Reducing costs, improving quality, and speeding up operations at the same time.

Find out what processes are targeted for improvement in your organization and what knowledge and skills are needed. Provide hands-on education and training in those areas.

2. Multi-disciplinary team techniques and methods training. Research has shown that multidisciplinary teams very often perform better analyses and make better decisions than single department groups. The use of multi-function teams tends to increase communication and cooperation between silos within a company. Does your company have a problem with silos?

Participants in these workshops learn to successfully contribute in meetings that include engineering, marketing, manufacturing, and finance staff members, all of whom can have very different perspectives about managing the business. Training should include techniques for managing conflicts.

Multi-disciplinary teams are being used by our survey respondents as an important way to reduce costs. HR and training should be part of all cost-reduction teams, since they will be actively involved in training employees on how to reduce costs.

3. Cross-functional training was being used by many companies to increase workforce flexibility, thereby increasing the profitability potential of multi-skilled employees. A wide range of skills that give a company flexibility to meet future needs is



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always a plus, such as quickly taking over jobs previously filled by people who were laid off without delays, waste of resources, and reduced quality (for example, ability to learn quickly); quickly taking over work brought back inside from outside suppliers; and having experience with changing job definitions due to downsizing facilities or consolidating operations. Find out where your organization needs to increase the flexibility of employees. Provide training that combines cost reduction methods and cross-functional skills.

4. Negotiating skills training. Negotiating skills are needed for profitable negotiating with suppliers, distributors, and customers for prices, terms, quantities, quality, and schedules.

Participants in this training will learn how to evaluate the goals, strategies, priorities, financial situations, and needs of all parties involved, and develop mutually acceptable requirements.

The ability to understand the financial needs (financial reports) of other organizations before the negotiations can be very useful.

5. Strategic financial management development. Sound financial knowledge and business acumen are needed to understand the financial results, condition, and needs for cost reduction; actions that can be taken to reduce costs without reducing technical excellence or customer value; and the ability to motivate other employees to take action as soon as possible. Finance for non-finance managers with an emphasis on cost and asset management could meet this need.

6. Cost reduction and cost management concepts and techniques training. Survey respondents selected training in cost reduction as an important factor in reducing costs.

Cost management workshops would be in-depth learning and practice sessions for analyzing and developing actions to reduce and manage resources used in all functions. Resources include purchased materials, purchased services, personnel, equipment, facilities, and inventories. Employees are often amazed at how small changes in usage of internal resources can affect the company's profit and cash flow.

To take full advantage of these concepts and techniques, participants will need to understand revenue, costs, assets drivers, and the relationships between them.

7. Inventory management methods training. Excess inventory ties up cash and inventory-carrying costs can cause a reduction in operating profit.

Participants in this session discover the size of your current inventories and the magnitude of the effects on cash and profit. They discover the business factors that determine inventory levels and the problems that lead managers to keep extra inventory. Participants develop actions the companies can take to reduce or eliminate the problems.

They also learn how to optimize the inventories throughout the value chain including suppliers, raw materials, work in progress, finished goods, distribution chain, and customers, and how important forecast accuracy is to all parties.

8. Forecasting and planning skills training. Inaccurate forecasts and incomplete plans can lead to significant delays, waste, and frustration throughout an organization. A significant number of executives indicated that improved planning produced large cost reductions. Forecasting and planning skills are critical in times that require cutting costs to meet customer demands for price reductions while maintaining product quality and profit margins.

Involve finance managers in this training to provide forecasting and planning skills and to increase working relations between operating managers and finance managers.

9. Informing employees how their work affects costs. This can be added to other workshops given in the company. Participants would learn the organization's costs and profitability status, and the reasons why specific improvements are vital to company success. They would learn how their work affects the cost drivers directly and indirectly through other departments. They will learn how small improvements they make can have a greater influence on the company's bottom line (changes in sales volume, prices, product mix, accounts receivable collection period, inventory turnover, and productivity of equipment and facilities).

As cost reduction becomes a corporate norm, all employees, regardless of rank, should learn some elements of budgeting. We are all financial managers and purchasing agents now.

About the Authors

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Trainer's Casebook:

The Case of the Inconvenient Notice

"I'll tell ya what else they got—SMART Boards. SMART Boards! Can ya believe it?" The kid leaned back on his bar stool, ran his left hand through the mop he called hair as if he still couldn't believe it himself. He clapped his dour, more morose lunch partner on the back. "No more flying off to parts unknown to train something I'd designed off the seat of my pants the week before. No more changing things up last minute because the process changed the night before. No, boss, I'm off to a land of project managers, design documents, and training with a plan!"

The kid looked at his watch. "Whoops! Better go. Class starts

up again in 15." The kid jumped out of his seat and took off. The dour fellow signaled for the check and stared into his iced tea as though longing alone could turn it into a tall scotch on the rocks.

"He's our best trainer," the guy confessed to his drink. "Just gave his two weeks. Don't know how we'll replace him."

I'd been working on my networking skills, so I handed the guy my card. He looked at it, turned it over, and stared at the blank side.

"He's right, you know. We've been using him to create stuff on the fly for years. And he's good. Don't think I'll be able to replace him, you know?"

I nodded.

"Here's the thing. We can handle the design work. But he's got three classes that we give once a month, you know? He's doing one of 'em right now, another next week. And not one of us knows how to facilitate them. I could probably fake it, but I don't know if any of my other trainers could."

"No instructor guide?" I asked.

"No time," the dour trainer snorted. "They were his babies. Like he said, he designed and facilitated them last minute. And we were okay ..."

"... as long as he kept facilitating," I finished.

He nodded as he signed for the bill. "Gotta go," he said. "Gotta make a call. Gotta figure out how we're gonna do this without the kid."

How should the boss handle the impending departure of his star trainer? Let's open this up for discussion.

The Trainer's Casebook is a column where you can provide your insight to a training request received by another ASTD-OC member. Your response may be included in a future edition of the OrangeSpiel, where we will also share what the person did, how well that worked, and lessons learned.

How can you share your insight into this case? Three ways:

1. Locate this case study on the ASTD-OC Discussion Group on LinkedIn.
2. Find the Trainer's Casebook posted on our Facebook page at facebook.astdoc.org.
3. Send an email to GetPublished@astdoc.org.

You can contribute your own case study to the Trainer's Casebook. Send it to TrainersCasebook@astdoc.org.

Trainer's Casebook studies cannot be more than 600 words. We're counting on your word of honor that they are true examples of training requests and you have changed company and personal information to ensure nobody gets embarrassed. Your Trainer's Casebook submission should also come with a solution, complete with lessons learned, which should also be no more than 600 words.



**Experience the
Trainer's
Casebook
LIVE**
Join ASTD-OC
at a the
March Learning Event
Discover solutions
to a trainers
unanswered problems
March 24, 2010
6:00 p.m.

Return Service Requested



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Share Our Success (SOS) Program

It's with pride in our Chapter volunteers and members that we accept ASTD's (national) recognition in the Share Our Success (SOS) program. In achieving this honor, ASTD-OC demonstrated a replicable chapter best practice to be modeled by other ASTD chapters. This best practice was demonstrated during ASTD-OC's August 2009 Monthly Learning Event themed "Knots, Nails, and Egg Grenades," which was also featured on local television through Fox Network's Good Day LA program. Highlights can be viewed on our chapter's YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/astdoc>. In the meantime, we proudly display the SOS Program's 'seal of approval.'"

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