

TEC Check



Employee Training: Why It Matters Now More than Ever

The recent economic downturn has led many employers to curtail or eliminate what often are considered non-essential expenses.

Unfortunately, employee training and education often fall victim to this thinking – and to the budget ax.

"It's like the old expression about cutting off your nose to spite your face – it's not something you want to do!" says Kaie Pohi Latterner, president and founder, TEC, Inc. "When times are tough, the smartest thing a company can do is invest in its people and prepare them for the rebound when it occurs."

Training is Smart Business Strategy

Training magazine annually honors 100 companies for understanding, embracing and using training not only to deliver business results but also to support their corporate values and enhance the work lives of their people.

The magazine's 2002 Training Top 100 companies spent more than \$6 billion on employee training in 2002, despite the uncertain economy. The companies made the list because each has a clear understanding of the link between an organization's ultimate prosperity and the extent to which individual employees are encouraged to develop their potential. On average, their employees spend 63 hours in formal training each year. The Top 100 also invest more in their work force – 4 percent of payroll as opposed to the all-industry average of just 2.6 percent.



Kaie Pohi Latterner
President, TEC, Inc.

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The magazine says the key is to strategically align personal development and training plans with overall corporate missions, goals and objectives. Ideally, this should occur while simultaneously providing ample opportunities for individuals to grow and prosper in ways they desire.

That's a message TEC has been evangelizing since 1984.



"We at TEC believe that your company is only as good as the way your people, processes and technology work together," Kaie says. "Well-planned training helps employees maximize their on-the-job performance and use their improved skills and capabilities to achieve their organization's or employer's objectives."

"A training program, integration or change strategy can only be effective when it is totally accepted and even

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In the next issue:

- Conflict Management
- TEC at NRF
- More Consultants . . .
- More Clients . . .
- More TECHniques!

TEChniques

Giving Superior Customer Service

1. Be friendly and flexible.
2. Take notes; don't work from memory.
3. Say you're sorry when a mistake is made.
4. Take responsibility for things; never blame.
5. Act like everything matters to customers.
6. Do more than you have to or is expected.
7. Do exactly what you say you will do, when and how you say you will do it.
8. Try hard to give customers what they want.
9. Follow up to ensure satisfaction!

Source: Larry Winget's *Just Do This Stuff*

Employee Training, from page 1

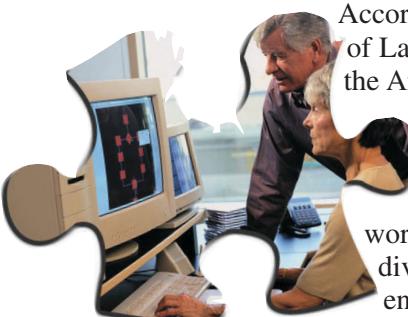
embraced by people at all levels within an organization," Kaie continues. "In fact, end-users will ultimately determine failure or success."

But keeping up with the latest and greatest changes in technology requires investments in equipment, systems and, most importantly, people. That's why continuing education should be an integral part of today's business strategic planning.

Prepare Today for Tomorrow's Work force

Many factors are affecting the employment pool of today and tomorrow.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) 2001 Report on the American Work force:



► In just a few decades, we will have a growing class of retirees and a shrinking work force. An increasingly diverse group of Americans entering the work force will bring with them the need for new ways of organizing and managing work.

► Our economy is making an unprecedented transition into highly skilled, information-based industries. This shift has created a "disconnect" between the jobs that are being created and the current skills of many workers.

The DOL also estimates that by 2008, some 160 million U.S. jobs will have only 154 million American workers to fill them. That's why attracting, training and keeping qualified employees will be critical to the survival of many firms.

Remember, too, that people evaluating job offers look closely at available tuition reimbursement, and other educational and employee development opportunities.

Choose the Right Training for the Right Reasons

"While many companies today are looking very, very closely at how their training funds are being spent," Kaie observes, "too many are still spending millions for software and pennies for training."

Companies can fall into the trap of putting employees

through training programs that are too software-specific – an easy mistake to make, but one that ignores the fact that systems are designed to literally systemize a set of business processes.

Employees can always learn what buttons to push and how. What's truly needed, though, is for employees to understand why and when to push those buttons in order to help the company meet its strategic objectives.

An article entitled "ERP Training Stinks" in the June 2000 issue of *CIO* magazine says, "The consensus that's emerging is that the training that matters isn't techy, 'this field shows this; this button does that' training. In fact, what we normally call training is increasingly being shown to be relatively worthless.

"What's called for, it seems, is an ability to figure out the underlying flow of information through the business itself," the article continues. "The traditional view of training may blind the unwary to its significance and to the tightly woven links that exist between training, change management and staff adequacy."

This is demonstrated in the changing ways in which people are trained. John L. Setaro, Ph.D., shares some current trends in instruction:

- The use of "off-the-shelf" or "canned" training programs will decline, he says, and the demand for *customized* training will increase dramatically.
- A growing proportion of corporate training department budgets will be spent on external vendors who will create customized training programs. The resources required for increasingly complex training will fuel this shift from predominately in-house efforts to external partners.

"Know that people make your company!" Kaie declares. "Their skills, abilities, loyalty and job performance determine your success and growth. So help your employees stay sharp in every aspect of their work. An investment in them is an investment in your organization's success." •



Note TEC's new address and phone number!

We're now located at 241 173rd Ave., St. Petersburg, FL 33708.

Our new phone number is 727-391-9232.

Visit www.TECconsultants.com

Introducing: Patti Gliniecki

TEC consultant Patti Gliniecki is a shining example of a professional who is passionate about her work and who continually seeks to improve her skills.

Since her college days, it seems that Patti was always on a path to TEC's door. Armed with a B.B.A in Marketing and Management from the University of Iowa, Patti joined IBM in 1986 and facilitated the "learning trend" from

“It’s so exhilarating when it all comes together and the picture is complete. All our hard work is finally put to good use.”

typewriters and word processors to personal computers. She later managed an IBM Training Center in Minneapolis.

Patti then became the Sales Force Automation/

Training Manager with Land

O'Lakes. Her responsibilities included training and managing the technical computing needs of 800 off-site salespeople. She also developed all of the courseware and programs that she taught and managed.

It was at Land O'Lakes that Patti developed her love of writing, process management and fastidious attention to detail. She turned that love into a career as an



Patti Gliniecki

independent consultant and worked with American Express Financial Advisors, AT&T Wireless, Seward Learning Systems, Brooks Brothers and Ann Taylor.

Patti joined TEC in 1998 as part of our documentation team. With TEC, Patti participated in preliminary needs analyses and development of training documentation for clients Syms, Payless Cashways, Eckerd, Kroger and A&P. Her specialties include

needs analysis, process definition and documentation, and developing large writing projects.

"I enjoy working for TEC because of the people and the genuine collaboration that goes into every project," says Patti, who is now TEC's Lead Documentation Specialist. "I have gained so much knowledge from so many smart people on our team! Each consultant brings a unique gift to the total picture."

"TEC offers a fantastic environment for realizing and continuously improving your true skills by watching those around you," she adds. "We've been blessed with fabulous clients who are a true pleasure to work for. It's so exhilarating when it all comes together and the picture is complete. All our hard work is finally put to good use." •

News and Notes: **TEC News from Coast to Coast**

TEC Forms Alliance with ProfitLogic



TEC now provides customized training and system documentation services to ProfitLogic's Merchandise Optimization solution customers. ProfitLogic is the creator of the first and most widely implemented Retail Merchandise Optimization (RMO) solutions.

"Our companies share a mutual dedication to customer success," says Steve Leven, vice president of client solutions, ProfitLogic.

"Our association with TEC will enable us to offer the highest quality training resources to our customers so that they will be able to take the greatest advantage of our software and achieve their financial and performance goals," he adds.

TEC's Kiae Pohi Latterner also is pleased. "Our experienced consultants, using TEC's people-oriented and

“Central to our decision to engage with TEC was its focus on the ‘people side’ of training, which is rarely found in the software field.”

*Steve Leven,
ProfitLogic*

proven training methodologies and creative resources, will be able to offer ProfitLogic customers the finest available technical education and support possible."

Leven says he's proud to work with TEC.

"TEC's skilled consultants possess considerable retail software expertise and retail industry experience," he states. "Organizations that adopt new technology like ours need proper training to realize the full benefit of our software solutions. Central to our decision to engage with TEC was its focus on the 'people side' of training, which is rarely found in the software field."

TEC and ProfitLogic are currently engaged in training programs at Old Navy, a division of Gap, Inc., and at a leading home improvement retailer.

New TEC Video/CD Produced Learn about TEC and what we can do for *your* organization with our new video / CD! It presents our capabilities and uses excerpts from our Retail Systems 2002 pre-show seminar, "The Human Side of Systems Integrations: The Essential But Often Forgotten Element" to tell our story. Call us or e-mail TEC@TECconsultants.com for your copy today!

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Addressing the human side of your training and systems integration needs.

TEC Will Share ‘Secret Formula’ and Exhibit at NRF

TEC will present a special “Systems Integrations: The Secret Formula to Success” free BIG !dea Educational Session at NRF’s BIG Show in January.

TEC’s “Systems Integrations: The Secret Formula for Success” educational session at the National Retail Federation’s (NRF) BIG Show, being held Jan. 12-15, 2003, in New York City, will reveal the complex aspects of systems integrations and how retailers can successfully introduce and adopt new technologies.

We’ll deliver our session on **Tuesday, Jan. 14**, from **11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.**

in Room #3D08 of the Jacob Javits Convention Center. No pre-registration is necessary; the session is free to all registered NRF show attendees. We’ll also occupy booth #762 during exhibition hall hours on Jan. 13-14. You can find BIG Show 2003 registration info at www.nrf.com.

“We will unveil TEC’s trademark approach to incorporating the ‘human factor’ in the complex planning and deliv-



ery of systems integration initiatives,” says TEC president Kaie Pohi Latterner, who will present the midday session.

Her presentation will address the critical function of strong business processes, the necessity of selecting high-quality partners, and effective ways to involve end-users of technology. She also will explain the roles of change management, communication and training in a successful retail systems integration.

“Retailers in senior management, information systems, finance, merchandising, logistics, operations, inventory control, training and communication functions affected by new technologies should attend this seminar,” says Kaie. “They’ll learn how to make very positive contributions to their own organization’s integration of new retail management systems.”

For more information or additional session details, call TEC at 727-391-9232 or visit www.TECconsultants.com. •

News and Notes, from page 3

Our own TEC Trekkers completed their Avon Breast Cancer 3-Day event in October in Los Angeles! Kaie Latterner, Regina Hunt, Cathy Golden and Kelly Vanderkolk joined 4,659 walkers on the 60-mile journey from Santa Barbara to Malibu. Together they helped the Avon Breast

Cancer Foundation net more than \$6 million for research.

TEC’s Trekkers say that their experiences were unparalleled and incredibly uplifting. They also thank their supporters for their words and contributions.

Way to go, everyone! •



Avon walkers Kaie Latterner, friend Ron Craycraft, Regina Hunt, Kelly Vanderkolk and Cathy Golden.