



TEC Check



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TEC, INC.

TEC Talk

The Human Touch: Your Most Powerful Connection

The ritziest car in the world won't take its owner anywhere if he or she doesn't know how to drive it.

The same principle applies to technology. You may be developing or acquiring the "best system ever" (retail, information management or customer service, for example) but your considerable investment in hardware and software can be wasted if your employees can't or don't want to use it.

Oh, they may muddle through it all eventually, but at a terrible cost to your organization. You can end up with frustrated people, an underused system and a very poor return on your investment.

What's the moral of this story? It is that *people*, not just features and quality, are responsible for the real success of a new system implementation. People must learn to work with your system and maximize its benefits. If they don't, your efforts—and your business—may fail.

"We believe an organization is open to change only when its people are," says Kaie Pohi Latterner, TEC president and founder. "To create the acceptance of change, an appropriate amount of resources must be dedicated to the human side of an implementation project."



Kaie Latterner
President, TEC, Inc.

Here's what TEC means by "human side":

▶ Employees must learn to understand and accept the reasons for a new system, and their expectations must be managed to remain realistic about its potential.

▶ The project must align with corporate objectives and have management buy-in. Executives should "talk the talk, walk the walk," and have strong leadership skills.

▶ You want people to *want* to learn about the benefits of the new system. Therefore, communication about these benefits should occur frequently and in many forms to ensure understanding, acceptance and execution.

▶ To apply their new skills accurately, people must learn and practice system functions. Adequate training and documentation provided before go-live will prepare them for on-the-job effectiveness.

People feel confident and excited about the future when they understand, accept and even embrace change.

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- **The Critical Importance of Business Processes**
- **TEC Workshop News**
- **More Consultants . . .**
- **More Clients . . .**
- **More TECHniques!**

TEChniques:

How to Be a Better Communicator

1. Get your point across when speaking by being clear and concise. Believe what you say!
2. Encourage others to express their views, even contrary ones. Be interested in what *they* say.
3. Listen carefully, act responsively and clarify to ensure mutual understanding.
4. Demonstrate poise in front of groups. Use good body language and eye contact.

Client Connection: Eckerd Corporation

Eckerd Corp., a drug store chain based in Largo, Fla., launched a series of systems changes in 1999 that were unprecedented in the company. It purchased seven Retek modules to be implemented over more than two years, including a 15-month rollout to all 2,650 stores in 20 states and 10 distribution centers.

The prospect of training more than 300 associates in 20-plus critical functions at Eckerd's headquarters and eventually all store associates on these new systems was challenging. Assistance was needed.

"We chose TEC because of its proven track record. No other provider has the retail and Retek product knowledge that this team does," says Doug Sheasley, VP and Retek project manager, Eckerd.

Since signing on as their training vendor early in the implementation planning process, TEC's relationship with Eckerd has matured beyond providing leadership in the creation of customized training classes and plans, documentation, computer-based training, store rollout and go-live support plans and more. It's become a true partnership of people and services.

"TEC's knowledge and confidence put this really massive effort into perspective for us," says Carrie Shelby,



communications manager for Quantum Leap, the name of Eckerd's systems initiative. "Their project plans were very thorough and gave us great direction and guidance. They're a very professional group and everything they've done has been very positively received."

This year, Eckerd's second implementation wave saw TEC deliver four of our customized Train-the-Trainer™ sessions to Eckerd Support Center coaches and the field support team, among other projects. Currently, Support Center associates are attending training delivered by the 23 coaches now well versed in the Retek system. This training is supported by all the plans, documentation and tools developed by TEC in 2001 to prepare for the first go-live date in early 2002. Having a cadre of Retek super users prior to implementation increases the comfort level with the system and enhances the level of change readiness for Eckerd.

"The TEC team has been phenomenal," adds Jim Mavres, training project manager, Quantum Leap. "Regina Hunt and her group have been tremendous. Their turnaround time, project management and training skills, experience and encouragement have made huge contributions to our efforts. I would recommend them to anyone implementing Retek systems. They're doing a great job for me and the company." •

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▶ People often believe that a new system should simplify operations and create efficiencies. In reality, it is the business processes that need to be simplified, or "reengineered," to create the efficiencies. The new system only *facilitates* this simplification.

▶ The new business processes must be reflected in the organizational structure and job descriptions. Incentive and reward systems created in conjunction with the implementation, evaluation and feedback phases will encourage employee adoption of the new technology and processes.

"End-users aren't the only people affected by a system change," adds Latterner. "Members of the project team implementing the change also must possess leadership, change management, organization, decision-making and communication skills to handle their stresses and responsibilities. If necessary, training to develop these skills should be provided to this group."

TEC knows from experience how to identify and act on these human and system needs.

"We recommend the use of our Needs Assessment tool to determine actual training, educational and

career development needs associated with a new system or other significant change within an organization," explains Latterner. "We identify perceptions of how things are and we know what they should be for optimal results. This process provides a road map companies can follow to make informed budget and human resource decisions and program plans."

Armed with this critical information, an organization can prepare its employees for success. People at all levels will feel confident and excited about the future when they understand, accept, and even embrace change. Moreover, appropriate and adequate change management and training will reduce frustration by end-users and increase their acceptance of changes that accompany new technologies.

"Trust me," says Latterner, "people are still the key to everything! Your company is only as good as the way your people, processes and technology work together. Solid decisions about all three will benefit your organization for years to come." •

"We believe an organization is open to change only when its people are."

Introducing: Jill Anderson

If you've worked with TEC consultant Jill Anderson, then you know she never stops moving.

This energetic lead trainer and documentation specialist is presently pouring her power into TEC clients, including The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Co. (A&P) and Eckerd Corp. She also excels at delivering our exclusive Train-the-Trainer™ workshops and another key TEC course offering, Productivity Under Pressure from Pritchett & Associates.



Jill Anderson

A TEC consultant since 1999, Jill is a self-described "detail person" who also sees the big picture of client situations. She thoroughly immerses herself in all aspects of a project before focusing on the most critical elements for her audiences.

"I work everything down to user level details, because users make or break a system," Jill says. "We will succeed if our team can build users' confidence and present things from their viewpoint. And,

of course, we want to have some fun in the process!"

She spent several years with ExecuTrain, an international computer training company, is a Microsoft certified trainer, and has taught Teachers Association management courses.

Jill delights in all aspects of her work with TEC. "I don't do anything I don't believe in 100 percent," she declares. "I personally believe I'm doing the right thing for people; otherwise, I couldn't do it.

"It truly knocks my socks off when I see the light bulb go on in people," she adds.

"They realize I really do care that they 'get' what we're teaching them. That's really what TEC folks are all about." •

It truly knocks my socks off when I see the light bulb go on in people.

A Powerful Partnership: TEC and Purple Cactus Technologies

"Strong on their own, more powerful together."

That's a statement in an ad appearing in *Integrated Solutions for Retailers* that promotes a new partnership between TEC, Inc., and Purple Cactus Technologies. The ad describes how Purple Cactus provides retail software to its retail clients and that TEC provides many supporting training services to help these clients achieve successful system implementations.

The arrangement is an elegantly simple one between two firms that share a fundamental operating philosophy: ***that people are the essential element of a successful system implementation.***

Purple Cactus (www.purplecactus.com) is an established retail software and system specialist that serves mid-market general merchandise, specialty goods, grocery and department store customers. From offices in Cleveland, Ohio, it produces and sup-



ports its own Java-based retail software suite and turn-key or custom implementations, and offers a host of software design and development, project management and consulting services. Key clients include Value City Department Stores, the Philadelphia Zoo, Christian Bernard jewelers, and J&R Music World.

Both TEC and Purple Cactus were looking for strategic alliances that would complement their core businesses while extending their reach and expertise. The right people, the right approach and the right product came along at just the right time for this mutual connection.

"We are really excited about this new partnership," says Kaie Pohi Latterner, president, TEC, Inc. "Purple Cactus and TEC share many characteristics: energy, creativity, optimism and, most importantly, a belief that people must come first. This pairing is a great fit and a terrific extension of what TEC does best: helping people learn and succeed."

Purple Cactus President Randy Severo concurs. "Our operating philosophies are very closely aligned," he explains. "We know our business, and TEC knows theirs. Our strength is developing enterprise level software solutions and offering high quality customer support. TEC's strength lies in its incredible understanding of what it takes to achieve a successful implementation. We're really pleased that TEC will be at the front-end of implementation and training for our products."

If you're attending the National Retail Federation (NRF) show in New York City in January 2002, visit Purple Cactus and TEC at booth #1517 and learn for yourself why the two companies are strong on their own and more powerful together. •

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*Providing the right solutions
to meet your training needs.*

TEC Workshops Set for 1st Quarter 2002

We're taking our show on the road in 2002 by visiting three terrific regions with a series of TEC's own skill enhancement workshops.

Clearwater, Fla., is the site of our Train-the-Trainer™ package of workshops, plus Pritchett & Associates' Productivity Under Pressure, between Jan. 28-31.

Irving, Texas, is our next stop from

Feb. 25-28, when we present our very own and exciting Retail 101™ course. Then we move north to Minneapolis, Minn., with our Forecasting 101™, Inventory Management 101™ and Productivity Under Pressure courses, offered from March 25-28.

You can find out more about these valuable workshops and register online quickly and easily at www.TECconsultants.com. Everything you need to know is at your fingertips! •



www.TECconsultants.com

Featured TEC Program: Retail 101™

To compete in today's marketplace, retailers MUST prepare their employees—from headquarters staff to sales floor personnel—to improve their organization's performance.

They need look no further than TEC's own **Retail 101™** workshop for help!

Retail 101 is a face-to-face, hands-on learning program that teaches retail fundamentals to employees throughout a company. It brings the various functions of retailing full circle and explains how all roles and responsibilities impact other functions.

The 4-day workshop is designed to significantly improve each participant's knowledge of key retail

activities in order to:

- ▶ improve competency,
- ▶ eliminate costly mistakes,
- ▶ raise customer service levels, and
- ▶ build company allegiance.

TEC's Retail 101™ workshop is the perfect solution to the problem of orienting new hires who need retail skill development. And it's a great way to educate people in critical support functions like IT, Legal, HR and Finance about how their functions and responsibilities figure in your overall success.

Certified and highly qualified train-

ing professionals deliver Retail 101, which can be customized to fit any retail organization.

Retail 101 can run a full week or be condensed to a potent few days. TEC can conduct it at any location you prefer. Or, you may choose to attend one of our open enrollment Retail 101 workshops (see article above).

Retailers will also want to check out TEC's own **Forecasting 101™** and **Inventory Management 101™**, two info-packed workshops that teach retail employees how to execute and improve these critical business functions.

Don't wait to be your best! Act and prepare now with Retail 101. •

