



TEC Check



Volume 3, Issue 3
2003

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

TEC, INC.

TEC Talk

'Partnering for Success' at Retail Systems/VICS 2003

Is there a systems integration in *your* future? Could you benefit from learning how to maximize relationships with project partners to help achieve outstanding results?

Then plan to attend "Systems Integrations: Partnering for Success," TEC's special Technology Briefing at Retail Systems/VICS 2003!

This special event will feature a panel of highly qualified and seasoned professionals with **Aldata Solution Group; BLT Soft, Inc.; BearingPoint, Inc.; The Home Depot; Marketmax, Inc.; Michaels Stores, Inc.,** and **TEC.** They'll address vital partnership issues, build a live case study with audience input, and answer questions during the event's Q&A session.

This special briefing will be held from 8:30 a.m.-12 noon on Monday, June 9, in room E265 in Lakeside Center, McCormick Place, in Chicago,

Those with the most to gain by attending it are retail executives, IT and business project managers, software providers, system integrators, trainers, and change management and technology consultants.

"Productive and collaborative working relationships are essential to accomplishing the myriad of project goals associat-

ed with complex systems integrations," says Kaie Pohi Latterner, TEC's president and founder. "That's why our briefing will offer multiple ideas, approaches and solutions to help vendors and retailers work together creatively and effectively to achieve successful systems integrations."

The panel of speakers will open the session with brief introductions. The guest panel features:

- ▶ Jyrki Ihanainen, Senior Vice President, Global Sales, Aldata Solution Group
- ▶ Mark Thompson, Vice President, BLT Soft, Inc.
- ▶ F. Craig Kempf, Senior Manager, Retail/Wholesale, BearingPoint, Inc.
- ▶ Chris Hancock, Manager, Merchandising Process Management, The Home Depot
- ▶ Dan DeHart, Senior Director of Operations, Professional Services, Marketmax, Inc.
- ▶ Gale Binder, Vice President of Systems Development, Michaels Stores, Inc.
- ▶ Regina Hunt, Senior Project Lead, TEC, Inc.



Find TEC in booth 833!

Kaie will moderate the live case study and ensuing Q&A session.

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In the next issue:

- **Organizational Learning**
- **TEC at Retail Systems 2003**
- **More Consultants . . .**
- **More Clients . . .**
- **More TECHniques!**

TECHniques

Make Better Business Presentations

1. Have SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, with Timetables.
2. Write your goals down. Check them often.
3. Write an action plan with goal achievement steps and people to help and support you.
4. List obstacles and actions to overcome them.
5. Set realistic completion dates for each goal.
6. Visualize success; suspend disbelief. *You can do it if you believe you can!*
7. Analyze progress; adjust your action plan.
8. **Celebrate success** and thank supporters.

We'll Be in Booth #833

TEC consultants will staff booth #833 on the show's exhibition floor, which is open June 10-12. Come by and see what's new, get your questions answered, and learn how TEC can help you!

The Retail Systems 2003/VICS Collaborative Commerce

Conference explores and highlights the recent systems implementations from retail industry-leading companies. Visit www.TECconsultants.com or www.retailsystems.com for more information. •



Introducing: Becoming a TEC Consultant

What makes a TEC, Inc., consultant unique?

Consultant Coordinator Cathy Golden knows. Working with TEC since 1999, she works closely with TEC's growing group of professionals to manage their workloads and help assemble client teams.

Experience, Flexibility Are Critical

Cathy says that TEC identifies many consultant candidates through personal referrals from existing consultants, clients or even previous business associates.

"We want consultants who have walked in our clients' shoes," she says. "That's why we seek people with successful track records working in retail, training development and delivery, change management, business process design and communications – skills that are important to our clients."

Many consultants are well-versed in several of these areas. Cathy says their first-hand knowledge and experience enables them to "hit the ground running."

"Flexibility is extremely helpful on projects with tight time frames," Cathy explains. "A TEC project team member can perform multiple tasks on the project, which reduces the ramp-up time that might occur if three different consultants were assigned to three different tasks."

Working from locations around the country (such as Minneapolis, Minn.; Green Bay, Wis.; Dallas, Texas; and Chicago, Ill.) the consultants are professionals who maintain strict TEC client confidentiality. That's because each consultant wholeheartedly embraces our vision, mission and core values and is committed to integrity in client and other business relationships.

Consultant Talents Are Matched to Needs

TEC carefully tailors its project solutions and consultant assignments. "When forming a project team, we look first at the client's situations, needs and culture,"

Cathy explains. "Then we review each consul-



Cathy Golden

tant's experience, skill sets, technical expertise and personality to make sure our team has the right mix to match the needs of the project.

"No matter the difficulty of their tasks, TEC consultants work quickly and efficiently," she continues. "And, because they are technology savvy, they have an innate ability to quickly pick up on new software and all its intricacies. In fact, our clients often call us to get answers to procedural questions!"

TEC's own detailed Project Methodology process helps guide each phase of a project. Specific stages require specific skills. That's why some consultants, such as the Project Lead, Business Process Analysts and Change Management Specialists, start at the beginning with a Needs Assessment and other "first steps" of a project. Others, such as our Online Help Specialists and Editors, join later after documentation is written.

Whatever their level of involvement, these professionals get the job done and get it done right.

Now you, like Cathy Golden, know why TEC consultants are unique. Rest assured that when you work with TEC, you're working with people who are truly committed to working with you. •

TEC's Core Values

Honesty: We are open and honest with each other and with our clients at all times.

Quality: We identify and evaluate methods, products and technology to continually improve the quality of our work.

Integrity: We will grow the company by following our tradition of treating our clients and team members as our most important resources.

Value: We provide an outstanding return on our clients' investment by applying the full extent of our experience and creativity to everything we do.

Update: Assessing the Need for Training

One change usually leads to another, doesn't it? New technology, for example, is accompanied by new information needs. Moreover, the benefits of updated software are realized only when employees understand and know how to use it.

Keeping employees current on ever-changing hardware, software, performance and management skills can be a

never-ending and costly challenge. But a company that ignores this challenge does so at its own peril.

TEC understands how critical these issues are and why they must be addressed. As TEC's Kaia Poho Latterner says time and again, "We at TEC believe that your company is

only as good as the way your people, processes and technology work together."

Training acts like oil to keep these three gears turning together smoothly. Training enables your employees to take the greatest advantage of a company's substantial investments in new systems and software – the very technology it needs to function and thrive. And, like the lubricants in an engine, training has "levels" that must be checked and refreshed regularly to keep your operations from grinding to a nasty halt.

So how can you determine who needs what training and when? By assessing the needs of your people and organization on an ongoing basis.

Know Your Needs, Identify Gaps

A Needs Assessment is the most important tool you have to define and plan a training initiative or project of any kind. At TEC, we apply our time-proven Needs Assessment process to help our clients identify learning gaps in their organizations. We use it to identify the current state of skill sets and compare

those skills to the required outcomes. Then we customize and build people-oriented deliverables (such as TEC's solutions and services listed on page 4 of this newsletter) that address and eliminate performance gaps.

TEC's Needs Assessment experts can assess three key areas:

▶ **Training needs** – offers a look at current positions and the knowledge and skills needed for required performance.

▶ **Educational needs** – determines knowledge and skills required to prepare for a future job.

▶ **Developmental needs** – ongoing or career-focused needs exercises that identify what employees must do to develop their careers.

After our thorough Needs Assessment process is completed, TEC recommends and delivers customized plans that will close learning gaps and achieve organizational goals efficiently and cost-effectively.

Successful organizations and successful individuals value continuous and frequent learning. Be part of this community by continually assessing *your* organizational training needs. •



A QUALITY TEC NEEDS ASSESSMENT WILL HELP YOU:

- ▶ Identify business needs
 - ▶ Determine required performance standards
 - ▶ Determine deficiencies
- ▶ Identify learning preferences
 - ▶ Identify training topics
 - ▶ Identify changes to address in training
- ▶ Identify audiences (user groups) for training
- ▶ Plan the training approach
 - ▶ Develop and document the evaluation strategy
 - ▶ Estimate the costs and benefits of the training
 - ▶ Define or develop a supporting case for action

News and Notes: TEC News from Coast to Coast

KCCO-AM Interviews Available! TEC's own Senior Project Lead Regina Hunt has begun a second year as a guest on KCCO-AM's "Strictly Business" radio program in the Twin Cities. Regina shares TEC's business improvement tips and techniques with morning listeners every three weeks. Now YOU can hear these informative broad-

casts at www.TECconsultants.com. Just click on "What's New" and follow directions to hear streaming audio of recent interview segments. Each lasts close to eight minutes. New segments will be added frequently. •



Visit www.TECconsultants.com for info about TEC's solutions and services!

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Looking Ahead: Get Back on Track with Solutions From TEC!

While the economy can't yet be described as "robust," things *are* starting to brighten a bit.

"It may be time for your organization to look ahead at needs overlooked during 2002-03," advises Kaie Poho Latterner, TEC's president. "TEC offers a variety of services and solutions that will help get your company back on track."

Take a look:

Customized Systems Training, Support

- ▶ Interactive courseware
- ▶ Face-to-face, virtual classroom and blended solutions
- ▶ An array of learning objects, references, job assistance tools, simulations and practice exercises

Business Process/System Design/Documentation

- ▶ User-friendly design
- ▶ Documentation standards and templates
- ▶ Easy-to-follow steps and procedures
- ▶ Process clarification, analysis and streamlining
- ▶ Systems and user testing models

Change Management and Communication

- ▶ General consulting services on topics such as:
 - Methodologies
 - Change management team composition
 - Success factors
 - Sponsors and change agents
 - Defining the vision
 - Overcoming obstacles
 - Communications



Kaie Poho Latterner
 President, TEC, Inc.

- ▶ Pre-implementation Strategy / Planning Workshop
- ▶ Productivity Under Pressure Workshop (specifically designed by Pritchett & Associates to support change management activities)
- ▶ Change management information and communication package
- ▶ Executive "prep" sessions
- ▶ Read Now / Act Now / Learn Now™ program

Group Productivity, Management Skills and Competency Development Workshops Including:

- ▶ Conducting Effective Meetings
- ▶ Development and Growth in the Workplace
- ▶ Effective Management Skills for the New Manager
- ▶ How to Manage Conflict
- ▶ MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) and Team Building
- ▶ Team Building for Systems Integration Project Teams
- ▶ Transforming Stress into Power
- ▶ Retail 101®
- ▶ Forecasting 101®
- ▶ Inventory Management 101®
- ▶ Train-The-Trainer™ Series

TEC: Your Partner of Choice

"TEC should be your partner of choice for several reasons," says Kaie. "We can help you determine your organizational needs. We develop cost-effective strategies and plans to meet your goals. And we deliver practical programs that quickly produce desired results. Our goal is always to exceed your expectations!" •