
Message from the President

Take it to the Next Level!

Greetings ASTD Memphis!

As always, ASTD ICE 2012 was a huge success. I don't have the official numbers yet. However, I estimate it was over 8,000 people who descended upon Denver, Colorado for this annual learning and performance event. There was a lot of positive energy in the convention center. So much energy, a big blue bear was outside looking in - very anxious to be a part of it all. I attended a few sessions, visited vendor booths, viewed social media demonstrations, networked with fellow ASTD members across the globe, and attended a dinner for Dr. Daniel Amen, author of *Use Your Brain to Change Your Age*. It has taken me a while to recuperate and process it all. In the next few months, myself and a couple of attendees (from the Memphis area) will give you a brief inside look at ASTD ICE. In addition provide some tidbits on how to "**Take it to the Next Level!**"



Make sure you join us on May 31 for the tour of Hilton's Worldwide training facility and again on June 12 to hear Kimo Kippen of Hilton Worldwide. Please register in our website www.astdmemphis.org. Remember you get the most out of your membership by becoming involved in chapter operations and working with other members. Please join us by volunteering this year to get the most rewarding experience.

Take It to the Next Level!

Debra M Bennett
ASTD Memphis
Chapter President

Upcoming Events

May 31st –Free tour of Hilton Worldwide's Learning Organization

Date: Thursday, May 31, 2012

Location: 755 Crossover Lane, Building A,
Memphis, TN, 38117

Time: 4:00 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.



Take a free tour of Hilton Worldwide's training facility and find out more about their learning organization. Tour starts at Hilton Worldwide at 4:00PM sharp at the main entrance of Building A.

Conrad N. Hilton began with a 40-room hotel in a small Texas town in 1919. Today, Hilton Worldwide is the world's preeminent hospitality company, stretching across 24 time zones. You'll find us in world capitals, rural roadsides, trade centers, vacation destinations, and everywhere in between. Ten Brands, 88 countries, 3,800 hotels, 630,000 rooms.

June 12th – Kimo Kippen, CLO, Hilton Worldwide

Date: Tuesday, June 12, 2012

Presenter: Kimo Kippen, CLO, Hilton Worldwide

Location: Holiday Inn – University of Memphis
3700 Central Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111

Time: 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.



Kimo Kippen is the VP of learning, Chief Learning Officer for Hilton Worldwide. Kimo is responsible for learning and development at all levels of the organization. Hilton Worldwide consists of ten brands in 88 countries for a total of 3,800 hotels or 630,000 rooms making it the largest hotel company on earth.

Kimo has played vital part in transforming Hilton Worldwide's training team into a more global and dynamic learning organization that aligns with the corporate vision and better meets the needs of its employees.

Kimo will be speaking on Managing the Learning Function and leading organizational change.

Kimo is also a former President of the Washington D.C. Metro ASTD Chapter and he has also served on the National ASTD Board.

Upcoming Events



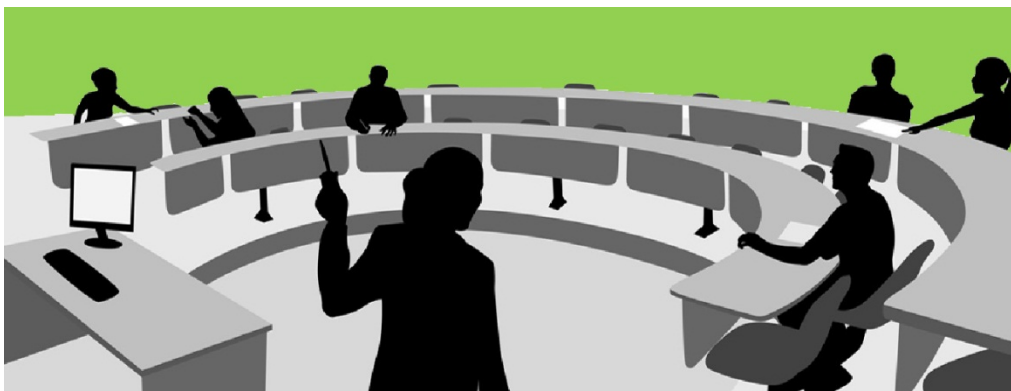
Take It to the Next Level

Memphis ELWE - Friday Dec 7, 2012

We are forming a committee to begin planning for this year's Employee Learning Week Event and we need your help.

- Who:** Any Memphis Chapter member
- What:** Help us lay out the blueprint for this year's Memphis Employee Learning Week Event and get the inside scoop of what we're planning. Don't be shy, jump in!
- When:** Monthly meetings will be held starting in April. These meetings are checkpoints to determine progress in the planning process, so they shouldn't take long.
- Where:** Meetings will be held by phone or in a location that is convenient for the committee members.
- Why:** Have fun getting other learning professionals in our local chapter and earn Bucks too!!!
- How:** Get involved by contacting Leonard Cochran today!

Office: 901.374.5698 Cell: 901.605.6231 Email: leonard.cochran@hilton.com



Welcome New and Renewal Members

On behalf of the Chapter, we want to express our thanks to the people who either joined or renewed their membership during April 2012.

NEW

RENEWAL

Anita Brackin
Director of Business and Industry Services
Mid-South Community College

Quote for the Month

“Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.”

John F. Kennedy

Meet one of our Active Members

Melissa Song

Melissa is a District Operations Trainer for the Walgreen Co. Her district consists of 30 stores that cover the Memphis area and eastern Arkansas, with a total of approximately 900 team members. Melissa has worked with the Walgreen Co. for 10 years.

Melissa's responsibilities include training on all store and pharmacy systems, and improving the level of customer service given by team members. It is also Melissa's responsibility to identify store and pharmacy level training needs, assess the training requirements to address those needs and develop the appropriate training plan. She also provides input into the development of new team member training programs and evaluates the effectiveness of those programs.



Melissa is a PTCB certified pharmacy technician, a member of PTEC (pharmacy technician educators council), and is certified to teach the InsideOut GROW coaching method. Melissa joined ASTD in January 2012.

She started out her career teaching second grade before moving into the training role for Walgreens. Melissa loves to see the light bulbs go off when the connections are made between what is being taught and the job being performed.

Melissa holds a Bachelor of Science in Education and a Master of Science in Business Administration from The University of Memphis.

Melissa and her husband have been married for 10 years and have two beautiful boys. She loves to travel and has been to more than half of states in the USA, and traveled to several different countries.

Good Readings for Learning Professionals!

How to Accelerate Innovation

In this competitive business environment, we are told to innovate to stay ahead of the competition. But what is true innovation, and how do we “out-innovate” the competition?

By Marcus Buckingham



This is an excerpt from Buckingham’s latest book, *StandOut: Find Your Edge, Win at Work*, which is available September 13, 2011.

We all revere innovation. It is the mystical driver of progress, the secret sauce, the touchstone we reach for whenever our backs are against the wall. Our managers, our leaders, and even our president cajole us to “out-innovate” the competition. In these accelerated times, we are told that “only innovation will keep us relevant, only innovation can get us ahead and keep us there.”

When we say this, what do we mean by innovation? Usually, we mean invention, and we point back to that Golden Age of invention, the Apollo years—when anything was possible, when failure was not an option, and when necessity created Teflon, freeze-dried food, the Stairmaster, digital photography, the technology inside every kidney-dialysis machine, the materials for running shoes, solar panels, better golf balls, and, of course, ARPANet, the forerunner to the Internet. Heady times. No wonder our leaders strive to harken back to them.

For most of us, though, innovation is a little less dramatic. We aren’t looking to invent the Internet. We just want a better way of doing things. We are tantalized by the notion that someone in our field has devised a method or figured out a shortcut like the “control C” or “control P” of our job, something that if we could just find it and replicate it, we would be able to take a giant leap forward in our performance and in our career.

Our employers are possessed by the very same notion. Every organization is on a near-constant search for best practice. They convene conferences of top performers, pick their brains for the precious few actions, and then capture what they hear in online knowledge centers, videos, or in the course books of their corporate university.

Though it is not always stated explicitly, the vision driving this activity is that innovation can be harvested and that, once harvested, it can be deployed at scale. Find a few key innovations—the thinking goes—and we’ll spread them to the many.

Annoyingly, the world doesn’t work that way. It is actually quite rare to discover a best practice that is transferable from person to person without lessening its effectiveness.

Whistles for everyone

Typically what happens is this: An enterprising employee will come up with a new way of doing things. This new practice will spring from within her as an irrepressible manifestation of her personality. It will be authentic and natural, and she will use it to outperform her colleagues. This success will bring her to the attention of her superiors, who will interview her to discover her secret.

Good Readings for Learning Professionals!

Her new practice will be elevated up the corporate ladder, and vetted by operations, human resources, training, communications, and legal, until eventually—stripped of its unique characteristics and the person who made them—it will be introduced to the rest of the field. There, it will end its life as just another corporate program, smoothed out and lifeless, inauthentic for everyone else, and ineffective for the company.

A few years ago in a study of top performing managers for Best Buy, I had the chance to interview Ralph Gonzalez. He had successfully transformed one of Best Buy's lowest performing stores into a repeat award winner. On virtually every metric, from revenues to profitability to employee engagement to "shrink," he had taken his team from the bottom 10 percent to the top. What had he done, I asked him, to effect such a dramatic transformation?

He told me that he had played on his likeness to a young Fidel Castro, that he had called his store "La Revolucion," that he had posted a "Declaracion de Revolucion" in the break room, that he had made the supervisors wear army fatigues. Then, as I was scribbling all this down, he told me about the whistle.

It was a brilliant innovation. Since initially his store was at the bottom of every district performance table, he wanted to give his people a way to celebrate that excellence was indeed happening in his store, and that it was happening all the time. So he gave everyone a whistle and told them to blow the whistle whenever they saw anyone do anything good. It didn't matter if the person they saw was their superior or was working over in another department; if they saw somebody go above and beyond, they were to blow the whistle.

"Didn't it make the store incredibly loud?" I asked.

"Sure," he replied, with a wide Castro grin. "But it energized the store. It energized me. Heck, it even energized the customers. They loved it."

I was so taken with this innovation I wrote about it in *Now, Discover Your Strengths*. What I didn't describe is what happened next. Having been shared at a number of company gatherings, the "whistle story" started to take on a life of its own. All of a sudden it began cropping up in different districts and regions around the country. "Whistles for everyone!"

There was even talk of devising a system to properly implement the whistle inside a store. Managers would have green whistles, supervisors white, and frontline blue-shirts regular silver whistles. Here are the 12 conditions when whistles can be blown—and here are the 20 conditions when the whistle must not be blown, no exceptions. What had begun as a vibrant expression of a particular person's personality was fast mutating into a "standard operating procedure."

Fortunately, some wise Best Buy executives, realizing that this innovation was almost entirely dependent on the presence of Ralph himself, stepped in and killed the mutation before it could spread.

Ralph's whistle reveals both the problem and the power of innovation: namely that innovation is a practice, not an idea. Invention is an idea, a novel idea, and, like all ideas, a novel idea is easily transferable from person to person. Introduce one person to the concept of personal liberty, he tells another, she passes it on to a third, and, like a benign contagion, pretty soon whole countries are swept up in the mission to secure personal liberty for all.

Good Readings for Learning Professionals!

Salvagers don't make good massagers

Innovation is “novelty that can be applied.” This means that there is a person involved, someone actually doing the applying—in other words, a Ralph. An innovation is transferable only if the person you are delivering the innovation to have the same strengths as the person who created it in the first place. What is effective and authentic in the hands of one person looks forced, fake, and foolish in the hands of another.

Two engineers in one of the social media giants offer us an example. David writes code. And he's a certain kind of coder. He is a “massager.” Give him 10 or more hours of uninterrupted coding time and he will massage the code, working and reworking it until it is so efficient and so elegant that others will read the code just to admire it. He refuses to come to the office. He works from home, alone with his dog, Bit. His best practice, he says, is extended solitude.

Not so for Luke. He's another exemplary engineer at the same company, but he's not a massager. He is a “salvager.” He takes one person's failed coding experiment, reconstructs what the person was trying to do, combines the code with another person's experiment, and creates something neither had initially intended. His genius—although he'd be uncomfortable with that label—is asking probing questions without making the original designer defensive, a practice he calls “the Guessing Game.”

During his company's once a month code-a-thons—in which all engineers who want to can stay up the entire night coding, drink a beer or two, munch pizza, and then ship code the next morning—he can be found moving from one engineer to another, playfully guessing where they were intending to take the code, and throwing in a couple of intriguing “guesses” of his own. These guesses, in turn, prompt new ideas from the original designers, which Luke then pieces together into a workable program.

Tell Luke to spend 10 hours of solitude a day and he'd see it as a punishment, not a best practice. Try to teach David the mechanics of the “Guessing Game” and he'd dismiss you as a know-nothing crank.

At my company, TMBC, we have studied the country's best high school principals, the best affiliate leaders of Habitat for Humanity, the best emergency room nurses, the best pharmaceutical sales reps, and whenever we interview excellent performers in the same role, we find this same phenomenon—extraordinary results achieved in radically different ways.

What your organization wants are not the few innovations that can be imposed on the many. Instead, what your organization wants is the discipline to capture many practical innovations, and then a way to deliver these innovations to those few people who share the strengths of the person who dreamed up each one of them.

And this is what you want too. Instead of top-down initiatives that feel awkward and inauthentic, you want to be introduced to practical innovations that you might well have thought of—but haven't yet. You want techniques that, when you try them out, feel as though you've done them before. You want to accelerate your creativity and yet still retain your authenticity. You want all training content to be first filtered through the “algorithm of you.”

Facebook, Netflix, slacker, and StandOut

Every kind of content delivery is heading this way. Facebook is now an advertising powerhouse not because it has a centralized stock of better ads, but because the first question it asks is “Who are you?”

Good Readings for Learning Professionals!

and only then, guided by its understanding of your unique profile of likes and dislikes, does it deliver ads that fit your profile.

Netflix does the same. Before you can stream a movie, it gives you a “movie quiz.” It presents you with a series of movies, asks you if you’ve seen them and how you’d rate each one. Based on the results of your quiz, it suggests only those movies that match your past preferences.

Pandora radio and Slacker radio do much the same thing with music. Both of these services, in slightly different ways, “listen” to what you choose to listen to and then play you only music that is similar to your inferred musical tastes.

In each of these companies, what’s centralized is an understanding of you. This understanding of you “decides” which content will be delivered to you. The understanding isn’t perfect—sometimes you find yourself listening to Lady Gaga when what you really wanted was a Lady Antebellum song—but it’s focus is perfect. Its focus is you: your habits, your preferences, your movie favorites, your musical quirks, and, in the case workplace innovation, your strengths.

Within your job alone there are hundreds of possible practices and innovations; across all the different people who do your job there are uncountable combinations of strengths and weaknesses. What you (and your manager) need is a Rosetta Stone to make sense of this complexity and match the right innovations to the right strengths.

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Marcus Buckingham is the founder of TMBC, a company focused on building strengths-based tools and training for world-class managers; StandOut@tmbc.com. For more information on the assessment, please email StandOut@tmbc.com.

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If you would like to share with our ASTD Chapter members a good book summary and/or an article, please send us an email to newsletter@astdmemphis.org. Your knowledge and expertise are greatly appreciated.

You Should Have Been There! – April's Luncheon Summary

How to Teach Innovative Thinking and Creative Problem Solving

**John Bachmann, PhD, Senior Lecturer and Team Leader
Peabody College at Vanderbilt.**

Review written by Sylvia Joure

Dr. Bachmann has had an illustrious career in industry, consulting and teaching. So, he came prepared for our ASTD presentation to “show and tell” us how to teach Innovative Thinking and Creative Problem Solving. He gave out a course outline with a bibliography, related articles, copies of class slides, a problem solving and decision making model of his own creation and a toolkit of exercises, including a brainstorming “brick”. Probably his greatest gift to his participants was a willing spirit to “give away” his knowledge and skill to those who could use it.

Dr. Bachmann asked us what innovation and creativity were and differences between the two. After listening to our responses, he clarified the concepts. Creativity requires divergent thinking (generation of ideas) and convergent thinking (selecting or combing of these ideas into the best results). Creativity leads to innovation when results of creative ideas are acted upon. Dr. Bachmann pointed out many good ideas go nowhere because no one had the drive and energy to push them into fruition. Research has shown that for the first time American creativity is declining. However, creativity and innovation are necessary for competitive change. Management’s challenge is to inspire and enable employees to solve problems that cannot be anticipated. A recent poll of CEOs indicated that the number one leadership competency is creativity. Dr. Bachmann points out that creativity can be taught. Therefore, anything that we can do to enhance the creativity and innovation competencies of our constituents is likely aligned with achieving corporate goals!

How can employees be more innovative? Innovative thinking is based on knowledge. There is no substitute for knowledge in your area of expertise. Creative thinking can be enhanced by understanding whether you are a right (creative) or left brain (structured and linear) thinker and developing your weaker area so that you become a bilateral thinker. And lastly, you need to believe in your ideas. Without action on creative ideas, which can happen if you don’t have a strong belief in your ability to be creative, innovation does not occur. Dr. Bachmann even recommended positive affirmations to strengthen a person’s confidence in his or her creative ideas. He pointed out that people who thought they were less creative exhibited fewer signs of creativity, and those who believed they were more creative produced more creative outputs. When you put together knowledge and experience, creative thinking, and personal confidence and motivation to act, innovative thinking occurred.

You Should Have Been There! – April's Luncheon Summary

Dr. Bachmann presented his nine step approach to creative problem solving. The first step is recognition that there is problem; often this comes from environmental scanning. The problem needs to be framed properly, stating the current situation and the desired outcome while defining real versus imaged constraints and challenging existing paradigm that can limit creative thinking. Analysis of the problem is next. Standard techniques are often used, e.g., fishbone analysis, mind mapping. During the analysis phase root causes versus symptoms, facts versus assumptions, correctable versus not correctable states are identified. Dr. Bachmann often uses “reverse logic” to test for the most likely root cause. Incubation, a phase he coined, is an important part of problem solving. It is the point where a rest period allows ideas to meld into a solution. It might be a coffee break or a night’s rest. Next comes the development of alternatives. Dr. Bachmann believes in avoiding trial and error solutions as they are time consuming and inefficient. Think of reasonable alternatives. Often there are actually only a few real alternatives. The nine dot problem had only about 6 solutions that fit the existing facts and 1 of them was the desired outcomes, which requires “out the box thinking” (another phrase Dr. Bachmann coined). The Brainstorming and Best Practices often contribute to the development of alternative. Next comes evaluation of outcomes and risks of the implementing various alternative. After agreement and commitment of relevant others, a plan with action steps is created and implemented. The process is monitored and controlled and refinements are made as needed. Follow-up involves measuring results, learning from what happened and determining if there are opportunities for further improvement. Celebrate and Recognize Results.

While there are factors that inhibit creativity at the individual, group and organizational levels, there are ways to improve and enhance creativity at each level. As training and development professionals, we can contribute to enhancing creativity, innovation, problem solving and change at all levels. Go ASTD members!!