

**2004 ASTD**

**BE  
ST**

**AWARD  
WINNERS**



**GOLD SPONSOR OF 2004 ASTD BEST AWARDS**

SumTotal<sup>™</sup>



SumTotal Systems  
congratulates our clients on  
their ASTD BEST Award wins

AT&T  
ACCENTURE  
HEWLETT PACKARD  
TELUS  
THE SCHWAN FOOD COMPANY

ACCELERATE PERFORMANCE. ACCELERATE PROFITS.

1 866 SMTOTAL (866 768 6825) [www.sumtotalsystems.com](http://www.sumtotalsystems.com)



Building Talent



Enterprise-Wide

Supported by the Organization's Leaders

Fostering a Thorough Learning Culture

**ASTD BEST Awards Reception**

The Roof Terrace Restaurant  
At The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts  
Washington, D.C.

Tuesday, October 5, 2004

5:30

**Cocktail Reception**

6:15

**Opening Remarks**

Gay Gilbert  
Administrator, Office of Workforce Investment  
Employment and Training Administration  
United States Department of Labor

6:30

**Awards Presentation**

Pat Crull, Chair, ASTD Board of Directors  
and Vice President, Chief Learning Officer, Toys "R" Us, Inc.  
Tony Bingham, President and CEO, ASTD





## ABOUT ASTD

ASTD is a leading association of workplace learning and performance professionals, forming a world-class community of practice. ASTD's 70,000 members and associates come from more than 100 countries and thousands of organizations—multinational corporations, medium-sized and small businesses, government, academia, consulting firms, and product and service suppliers.

ASTD marks its beginning in 1944 when the organization held its first annual conference. In recent years, ASTD has widened the industry's focus to connect learning and performance to measurable results, and is a sought-after voice on critical public policy issues.

## 2004 ASTD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### **Pat Crull**

ASTD Chair of the Board  
Vice President, Chief Learning Officer  
Toys "R" Us, Inc.  
Wayne, New Jersey

### **Rita Bailey**

ASTD Chair-Elect  
Chief Executive Officer  
QVF Partners, Ltd.  
Carrollton, Texas

### **Tony Bingham**

President and CEO  
ASTD  
Alexandria, Virginia

### **Frank J. Anderson, Jr.**

President  
Defense Acquisition University  
Fort Belvoir, Virginia

### **Jim Beckham**

Director, Global Process Improvement  
Dana Corporation  
Maumee, Ohio

### **Ed Betof**

Vice President, Chief Learning Officer  
BD (Becton, Dickinson Inc.)  
Franklin Lakes, New Jersey

### **Maude DiVittis**

ASTD Officer  
Senior Vice President, Learning and Organizational Development  
MTV Networks  
New York, New York

### **Dennis Gay**

Consultant  
Ashland, Oregon

### **Kimo Kippen**

Vice President, Human Resources  
Renaissance Hotels North America  
Washington, District of Columbia

### **Jane Massy**

Consultant  
Cambridge, United Kingdom



**Kevin Oakes**

ASTD Treasurer  
President  
SumTotal Systems, Inc.  
Bellevue, Washington

**Colin Pitt**

General Manager, Corporate Performance Centre  
St. George Bank Limited  
Sydney, Australia

**Howard Prager**

Director, Corporate Education  
Lake Forest Graduate School of Management  
Lake Forest, Illinois

**Stephen H. Rhinesmith**

ASTD Secretary  
Partner  
Mercer Delta Consulting  
West Chatham, Massachusetts

**Allison Rossett**

Professor of Educational Technology  
San Diego State University  
San Diego, California

**ABOUT THE ASTD BEST AWARDS**

The BEST Awards recognize organizations that demonstrate enterprise-wide success or achievement as a result of employee learning and development. The 2004 BEST Award program received applications from 83 organizations in nine countries. These organizations submitted quantitative and qualitative information to ASTD about their learning and development practices and programs. Their applications were assessed by members of the BEST Awards Advisory Committee through a blind review process.

The 2004 ASTD BEST Awards honor 24 winning organizations from Canada, Hong Kong, India, South Africa, and the United States. These winners “get it”: They apply learning as a strategic goal and champion a learning culture. They are BEST at **B**uilding talent, **E**nterprise-wide, **S**upported by the organization’s leaders, fostering a **T**horough learning culture.

**2004 BEST AWARDS  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Curt Plott**

Chair, BEST Awards Advisory Committee  
Consultant  
Washington, District of Columbia

**Barbara Kres Beach**

Executive Director, Corporate Strategic Relations  
Management Concepts  
Vienna, Virginia





**Melinda J. Bickerstaff**

Vice President, Knowledge Management  
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company  
Princeton, New Jersey

**Dale C. Brandenburg**

Director, Institute for Learning and Performance Improvement  
Wayne State University  
Detroit, Michigan

**Patrick Cataldo**

Associate Dean, Smeal College of Business  
The Pennsylvania State University  
University Park, Pennsylvania

**John W. Coné**

Consultant in Corporate Learning  
Scottsdale, Arizona

**Larry Conley**

Conley Consulting Group  
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

**Donald L. Cordes**

Associate Director for Curriculum and Evaluation  
National Chief Information Office Training and Education (Retired)  
Veterans Health Administration  
Coolin, Idaho

**Thomas F. Dungan, III**

President  
Management Concepts  
Vienna, Virginia

**Tony Hain**

Dean of Graduate Studies and Extension Services  
Kettering University  
Flint, Michigan

**Michael G. Hansen**

Hansen & Associates  
Potomac, Maryland

**Gary Jusela**

Partner  
Mercer Delta Consulting  
Atlanta, Georgia

**Bill Kline**

Principle  
The Learning Point  
Newnan, Georgia

**Tom LaBonte**

Managing Director  
Workplace Performance, LLC  
Huntersville, North Carolina

**William W. Lee**

Director of Education Research and Development  
Emergency Cardiovascular Care Division  
American Heart Association  
Dallas, Texas

**Ursula Lohmann**

Ursula G. Lohmann, Ph.D., LLC  
Bethesda, Maryland

**Lee Maxey**

Chief Learning Officer  
Pathlore  
Duxbury, Massachusetts



**Lynda McDermott**

President  
EquiPro International  
New York, New York

**Donna McNamara**

Vice President, Global Education and Training  
Colgate-Palmolive Company  
New York, New York

**Jeff Oberlin**

Chief Learning Officer  
Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago  
Chicago, Illinois

**Colleen Petersen**

Director of Talent Management  
Risk Management Solutions  
Newark, California

**Charles Presbury**

Senior Director, Leadership Development  
The McGraw-Hill Companies  
New York, New York

**Nancy Randa**

Deputy Associate Director for Talent Services  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Washington, District of Columbia

**Brenda Sumberg**

Director, Education Systems Alliances (Retired)  
Motorola University  
Motorola Corporation  
Chicago, Illinois

2004 ASTD  
**BE  
ST**  
AWARD  
WINNERS





## Accenture

Learning from experience, failures as well as successes, is a vital part of the enterprise-wide commitment to learning at Accenture, a global provider of professional and technical services with more than 100,000 employees. A Win/Loss Review is conducted after every sales opportunity, and lessons learned are documented in a globally accessible database that's part of the company's knowledge management system. Employees learn safely from mistakes made in cutting-edge simulations that cover a wide range of business-critical skills, as well as from the failures and challenges shared by colleagues as part of the learning experience.

Two years ago, when the CEO asked for revitalized training, the training organization seized the opportunity to make learning a strategic business function, leading to a new learning curriculum that created "our organization's professional" at each career level and unique curricula for each of the four diverse workforces. In essence, the learning strategy defines the product strategy of the business, and makes the strategy a reality.





## American Express Company

American Express is continually looking for new ways to further improve the high quality service it provides to customers around the world. Recently, the company took a hard look at its customer service training program in order to develop a more robust curriculum for its representatives. A simulated call center environment called SIMON (Simulated Online Network) was created. SIMON allows learners to practice typical tasks without the risks involved in helping a live customer. Feedback comes from the application, instructors, and coaches. The simulation curriculum is combined with a unique technology called LARA (Language Recognition Application), which helps learners meet customer needs by phone more quickly and effectively.

SIMON has new employees meeting minimum job standards in less than half the time; some are even outperforming existing employees. Its success led to the expansion of the SIMON program, the creation of a desk-to-desk Web-based training tool to enhance learning for existing employees, and a new employee development tool that identifies gaps in knowledge or skills and prescribes specific training to fill those gaps.





## AT&T Corporation

AT&T is changing the way learning is integrated into business functions. This shift has accelerated AT&T's time to market, funnel growth, and sales production. Integrating training into operation support systems has reduced cycle time and improved customer satisfaction. Training discussions have now become business discussions as AT&T Learning links programs to business goals, supporting efforts that have the greatest impact on the company's success.

To establish budgets and develop learning strategies that align with business priorities, AT&T uses a series of teams: a Learning Board, including senior business leaders and the chief learning officer; a Learning Council comprised of mid and senior business unit representatives; and senior members of the learning planning team.

Training has contributed to quality improvements in AT&T Sales. After receiving training on how to coach agents to identify, qualify, and track sales leads, managers estimated the percentage of quality leads improved by 50 percent and time for new agents to become fully productive decreased by 26 percent.

A revamp of traditional courseware for the ordering function—now using Web-based simulations and training, with some classroom time—resulted in shorter training days and the opportunity to reuse modules in other areas of the business.





## Booz Allen Hamilton

The Development Framework put into place at Booz Allen Hamilton “challenges current beliefs in the training industry because it explicitly places the role of the classroom experience tangential to development rather than its cornerstone,” says the company. Placing development closer to where most learning occurs—on the job—helped shift the role of the manager from “user of talent” to “developer of talent.” The framework has guides for every employee level, with career roadmaps consisting of individual and group development activities: on-the-job experiences, specific project tasks, readings, mentoring, and coaching. The framework relies on two and a half years of research articulating how people develop.

Executive Learning Circles, a recent addition to the framework, provide experience-based learning. In groups of eight leaders, with support from a coach as needed, the circles let executives network, share experiences and insights, solve problems together, and have time to reflect, experiment, and apply new knowledge.

The company's executive coaching program has been calculated as having a return-on-investment of nearly 700 percent. Under rigorous analysis by an outside ROI expert, the monetary benefits fell into four categories: improved teamwork, quality, retention, and team member satisfaction.





## **Defense Acquisition University Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (AT&L)**

Integrating knowledge sharing into the learning environment is one of the success stories at Defense Acquisition University (DAU), the corporate university of the United States Department of Defense, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology & Logistics (DoD AT&L). The knowledge sharing and communities of practice structure consists of publicly accessible knowledge communities focused on acquisition processes, with the goal to connect people with know-how across all field organizations worldwide.

The extended enterprise of customers, suppliers, partners, and shareholders also has access to the knowledge sharing communities, as well as to other learning programs. New in 2003 was a partnership with suppliers to offer program start-up workshops, where DoD and supplier program managers come together to create the foundation for executing a successful program.

Keeping employees up-to-speed with business changes is the mission of DAU's recent Rapid Deployment Training Initiative, which has teams create new learning material for a digital repository—and be used by on-site mobile training teams—within five days of the change.

Performance metrics indicate that since 1998, DAU has increased the number of students trained from 33,000 to 72,000 per year; reduced faculty/staff from 643 to 540; and cut student travel costs from US\$31 million to \$18 million per year. The savings freed resources for e-learning, curricula modernization, and extended reach. This helped fund DAU's Continuous Learning Center with over 60 modules that now has over 200,000 registered users, and expanded the reach of DAU's learning products into over 116 countries worldwide.





## **Deloitte & Touche USA LLP**

The key to effective new learning solutions is sometimes marketing and communications. Deloitte & Touche discovered and met that challenge after launching its learning Website—a virtual university and centralized learning hub for its 30,000+ workforce. Investment in a marketing/communications arm of the training organization significantly contributed to increases of 816 percent in learning Website users and 745 percent in e-learning courses completed. That outcome was also influenced by strong support for the introduction of the firm's virtual classroom tool, which includes consulting, training, and hands-on assistance for instructors; “Getting Started Kits” for instructors, learners, and content developers; and weekly “Getting to Know the Virtual Classroom” demos.

A global competency model links learning to individual performance, and business development is a core competency. Using a structured process starting at the top, the learning organization consults each year with business function leaders and develops learning strategies that will help the firm reach its business goals.

Results of efforts to embed business metrics and accountability measures into learning programs are evident in firm-wide revenue growth of 19 percent. Specific improvements also were measured: a five-point increase in employee satisfaction with “learning and education” and six-week improvements in cycle time for access to learning.





## The Dow Chemical Company

Learning begets learning at The Dow Chemical Company with Six Sigma methodologies applied to major learning projects to ensure the best solutions are implemented. During the past year, a Six Sigma project led Dow to create a new in-house role—HRD Technologist—to accomplish courseware development and updates previously handled by an outside supplier. The result was a significant cost savings and a 25 percent improvement in cycle time. Company-delivered Six Sigma courses have been integrated into another initiative: a partnership with a university to offer future leaders an MBA program. Portions of the Six Sigma curriculum have been approved for credit in that program.

In 2001, Dow's Executive Management Team developed a comprehensive "people strategy," with continuous learning as one of five key elements. Each business unit addresses people development and performance capabilities when developing its strategy and plans, and each employee has goals aligned with the plan. Because skill and knowledge development is primarily the responsibility of the functions (manufacturing, finance, and so forth), each function is represented by a learning leader on the enterprise-wide Learning Leadership Team. The Functional Learning Leaders ensure that the learning curricula, resources, and tools are meeting the needs of the businesses and functions to continuously improve individual and organizational capabilities.

To link learning to performance, the company focuses on learning as part of employee goals, employee development plans, and performance reviews. Part of the corporate scorecard and all business scorecards are measures of employee alignment (I know what to do), enablement (I know how to do it), and motivation (I want to do it).





## Equity Residential

Learning's tie to business strategy goes deep at Equity Residential, a *Fortune* 500 owner, operator, and developer of multifamily rental properties. The connection is embodied in the learning function's mission: To be an "internal profit center" (ensuring return-on-investment). The branding statement—Making Learning Easy—aligns with the company's: Making Life Easy.

To work toward the corporate objective for 2004—becoming a better, more focused sales organization—Equity Residential created a new Action Selling training program based on a review of "best of class" sales organizations in other industries. Besides a two-day program, there are 18 "skill drill" sessions (with an industry-specific video), a redesigned "mystery shopping" evaluation, and a new prehire selection instrument for sales personnel. Diversity training has been refashioned as modules within existing programs (sales, customer service, team building) to demonstrate the business impact of diversity awareness.

Those programs are expected to generate results at least as impressive as past results. A new STAR mentoring program in one division achieved a 29:1 ROI, creating a 6.4 percent drop in voluntary employee turnover. Overall leadership and mentoring programs have reduced voluntary terminations by 15-20 percent over two years. A customer service/leasing training initiative is credited with increasing lease renewals and generating US\$30 million in revenue; sales training led to a 40 percent increase in mystery shopping scores among leasing consultants.





## HP

As with any merger, the 2002 combining of Hewlett-Packard and Compaq systems and workforces brought enterprise-wide challenges. It also gave the new HP Workforce Development and Organizational Effectiveness Organization the opportunity to standardize solutions, develop and simplify processes, and streamline operations. A global team of learning professionals, distributed across every function and business in the company, ensures learning is aligned with business requirements. The organization has built the world's largest corporate learning management system with a support staff to ensure access to solutions and counseling 24 hours a day, across the globe. The infrastructure drives a "culture of learning." Systems review and track performance and development plans; e-learning solutions can be localized for learners; and all solutions are measured for impact on learners' development, performance, and business goals.

Leadership is just one of the recent learning and performance efforts at HP. A senior leadership program was developed and deployed in 240 days, including executive coaching, e-learning on finance, a workshop with a business simulation exercise, 360-degree assessment, and an executive challenge exercise. Success led to the next assignment: Adapt the program for team managers and managers, in half the time—make it global, make it shorter, and increase the number of participants. Mission accomplished.





## ICICI Bank Limited

Improvements in customer satisfaction, cycle time, and sales revenue resulted from learning initiatives at ICICI Bank Limited, as mergers and rapid expansion created the need for hundreds of new hires at the bank, which calls itself “The Indian face of global banking.”

After hiring 800 new recruits having little or no banking experience, ICICI suffered a dip in customer satisfaction scores. To meet that problem head-on, the bank created a new Structured Workplace Induction & Functional Training (SWIFT) program to orient new employees and provide online performance support. The program includes a video on customer service, structured visits to a bank branch, interaction with senior managers, e-learning banking software and role simulations, and online performance support. In less than a year, satisfaction ratings improved 49 percent.

ICICI saw similar improvements in turn-around time for cash, remittances, and account opening processes. Nineteen employees were trained in Six Sigma, problem-solving, and change agent roles and responsibilities, and then asked to spread their new knowledge to employees in 300 branches. A new blended learning program in “Selling Skills for Bankers” resulted in a 50 percent increase in sales and a 66 percent increase in cross-sell figures.





## **KLA–Tencor Corporation**

“The future belongs to those who learn”—that’s the mission statement of the Corporate Learning Group at KLA-Tencor, a leading supplier of process control equipment for the semiconductor industry. But the commitment to learning starts higher, with the CEO and president, who not only have championed creation of an executive development program, but also serve as teachers. The program, which originally targeted 30 top executives, has now been rolled out to 400+ managers at the director level.

Learning also becomes part of the strategic corporate objectives. Once those objectives are set, the Learning Group submits a proposal (based on clearly defined business metrics) for how it can support each objective. At least one learning objective with a measurable performance outcome is a part of every employee development plan.

A recent major corporate initiative is the adoption of a 7-Step Problem Solving Methodology, which provides a common approach of addressing problems through a predefined process by identifying root causes and focusing on process improvements to prevent recurring problems. The program has been rolled out to all employees worldwide as well as to key suppliers.

Other successes at KLA-Tencor include an Innovative Workshop introduced by IDEO. This process takes a human-centered approach where observation, brainstorming, processing, and rapid prototyping are used to cultivate collaborative ideation resulting in innovative problem solving.





## Lockheed Martin Corporation

Expanding access to leadership development was a strategy selected by Lockheed Martin to improve employee performance and retention. The strategy included an integrated curriculum for each level of leadership, plus programs to drive functional excellence. One-fourth of the leadership team participates each year, and each program includes a visit from an executive officer. A very visible symbol of this commitment was construction of a state-of-the-art Center for Leadership Excellence, which also saved US\$5 million a year by shifting programs from area hotels.

Lockheed Martin has also freed up \$30 million for learning and development by creating a shared services Learning function that partnered with individual businesses to perform the following:

- reduce duplication among 100,000 courses in 70 different businesses and create a core curriculum
- reduce duplicate learning licenses
- reduce duplicate supplier agreements and seek quantity discounts
- replace 43 learning management systems with one.

Through those and other efforts—such as extensive e-learning, coaching, mentoring, and talent management programs—Lockheed Martin improved its “intent to remain” index by 17 percent.

Learning is directly linked to business development activities. Policy requires training for most proposal teams to develop their vision and strategy to win new business. There are skills assessments of the implementation team and training required for specific program positions.





## **MTR Corporation Limited**

Consistent adherence to high safety standards is a key goal of MTR Corporation Limited, Hong Kong's Mass Transit Railway Corporation. Thus, the learning unit is proactive in keeping up-to-date on safety issues that need to be incorporated into training. It establishes direct communication with line managers, participates in operational forums and safety committees, and stays abreast of undesirable events occurring on its system as well as others. Job training and refresher programs are created or updated to bridge performance gaps.

Twice a year, front-line staff are required to attend refresher programs that use case studies, role plays, and various simulators. In addition to simulations targeted to drivers, station managers, and control room operators respectively, MTR has created an Integrated Training Facility to help the three work groups collaborate more effectively in handling problem situations.

Improved productivity was achieved at MTR through a "multi-skills development" and "total operations" program which helps staff learn to work beyond the traditional job boundaries of either front-line operation or maintenance. The effort resulted in improvements in flexibility of staff deployment and emergency incident handling. A "Skill Gate" incentive system encouraged employees to complete the additional training.





## **Northwire, Inc.**

The smallest company in this year's BEST winner's circle—with 122 employees—spent 12 percent of payroll on learning and performance, and the results are bringing smiles to management and employees. A major learning initiative at Northwire, Inc., a manufacturer of custom wire and cable, is creation of the Extrusion Technology Certificate in conjunction with Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College-NR. The certificate replaces eight to 12 weeks of one-on-one, on-the-job training and six to eight months of supervised training for highly technical extrusion positions. The two-semester program is taught on-site at Northwire; all core class credits are transferable to other degrees.

The results: The 320 one-on-one training hours were replaced by 160 hours of hands-on and classroom time. The skill level of new employees has risen two-fold. More employees are requesting career development plans. Productivity is up and employee turnover is down. Employees' monthly incentive compensation—determined by quality rates and amount of scrap—averaged eight percent over the past eight months.

Northwire identified five key competencies most likely to lead to quality problems, and then for each one, developed learning plans, process picture maps, and assessment tools. Now, an employee spotted with skill gaps will be referred for qualification or requalification classes, instead of corrective action (disciplinary) counseling.





## Ochsner Clinic Foundation

Three years ago, the Ochsner Clinic Foundation set out to re-create nearly every aspect of its infrastructure after merging a clinic, hospital, and foundation. The benefits team, performance evaluation team, and service culture team created models for the first year. Each year since, those teams have added to their approach in consultation with leadership, management, and employees, plus research on best practices.

In 2002, Ochsner launched its Learning Institute to “inspire employees to continually learn and grow in alignment with the goals and needs of the organization.” Every employee must create a learning map and meet an annual learning commitment: eight hours for employees, 24 hours for supervisors, 40 hours for leaders. In 2003, the company launched its Leadership Institute: a dedicated off-site training center that uses the executive team as instructors.

The board of directors receives progress reports on the Leadership Institute's metrics and linkages to current initiatives, “so that the learning, leader, and organizational performance connection is visible and tangible.” Employees receive monthly and quarterly progress reports on the organization's annual goals. Managers make sure employees' goals are linked to the organization's goals, answer questions about the connection between organizational and individual goals, and coach employees to improve individual, department, and organizational performance.





## Old Mutual

Old Mutual Business School, established in 2001, is the learning unit of Old Mutual, a South African financial services company now based in London, and with operations in the United States, United Kingdom, and India. The core purpose of the business school is to understand and align learning to business imperatives. That alignment is achieved by assigning a learning consultant to each business unit to link strategy and performance requirements to a workplace skills plan and to individual development plans. The Learning Path Framework, categorized according to the five different levels of employees in the organization, combines business learning requirements, individual learners' needs, the competence requirements of roles, and future development options. The learning approach is action research with case studies derived from organizational successes and failures.

One key example is strategy engagement. Beginning with successful strategy dialoguing sessions between its top 200 managers and the executive leadership, the learning unit drives strategy broadly across the organization through cross-functional courses that address basic, intermediate, and advanced understanding of strategy development and execution.

Old Mutual's mission of enriching lives extends beyond its employees to South Africa: Besides supporting primary education, the organization established a Rural Economic Development Initiative that encourages business development in disadvantaged communities by offering skills training and financial support.





## **PeopleSoft, Inc.**

Maintaining solid earnings while adjusting to the acquisition of a billion-dollar company and fending off a hostile takeover attempt was the recent business challenge for PeopleSoft and its Corporate University. After the acquisition, the Corporate University delivered transition training to all managers, created courses on virtual teams, delivered a two-day integration course to the 5000 newly-acquired employees, and provided cross-company technical training on each organization's products.

To avoid nonbillable travel and time away from clients or selling, the Corporate University took a blended learning approach and created academy-style training delivered over live Webcast. The academies take a course that involved five days with an instructor and modularize it into six lectures lasting three to four hours each. Coupled with the lectures are Seminars OnDemand, Self-Study reading, and exercises on a hosted environment. Those academies attained a tremendous cost savings as students completed meaningful training without the expense of travel or lost billable time.

The performance management process at PeopleSoft includes goal setting, training plans, coaching, and performance reviews. A Website supports employees and managers by providing process steps, timelines, job aids, and e-learning courses. Use of e-learning courses soared after a redesigned Website and database allowed employees to create and save an individualized training plan. Instead of browsing a list of hundreds of available courses, employees can click on their job role and see suggested resources specific to their role and needs.





## The Schwan Food Company

"Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow," the slogan of the learning unit at The Schwan Food Company, applies to individuals as well as the entire enterprise. The CEO of this 25,000-employee manufacturer of frozen foods has deemed leadership and development a corporate imperative to help Schwan meet its goal of doubling in size by 2007.

Last year was the company's Year of Development. The work done to create a Senior Executive Development Program (SEDP) has become a model for leaders to use in developing employees at all levels. Two years ago, there were no individual development plans. Now, after hundreds of managers completed a course in Developing Direct Reports, there are almost 1000. The SEDP program has placed 12 members in senior-level positions and increased the company's leadership bench strength. SEDP members are spearheading several significant projects, including one to revitalize a failing part of the business that the CEO spun off as a separate business entity.

An English as a Second Language program has created a safer and more productive workforce and vastly increased retention. Several other learning initiatives, including training and tools for a new product development process, have contributed to positive business results.





## Sterling Bank

Unattained goals aren't considered failures at Sterling Bank. This Houston, Texas, bank with approximately 1100 employees pushes decision-making as close to the customer as possible. Employees take on "stretch" or "breakthrough" performance goals. Even when those goals aren't met, more is achieved than when "more reasonable" goals are set.

The bank's learning and performance unit recently changed its name from Sterling University to Organizational and Career Development. They felt that the term "university" was too limiting, now that employees are gaining skills as performance consultants as well as trainers. Learning and performance are closely linked: Job-specific certification programs include achievement levels that are tied to measurable business goals, as well as to individual incentive plans. The annual Performance Excellence Process (PEP) directly relates the appraisal process to career development and learning.

Communication is critical when decision-making is decentralized. All employees have access to customer information; all new employees receive New Hire Orientation, with a follow-up session two months later to ensure everyone is "walking the talk." Employees are made aware of how their job roles tie into the overall strategy and goal of being "The Perfect Company." Perfect Company measures related to customers, shareholders, community, and employees are reported quarterly.





## TELUS

Operational efficiency in the traditional wireline market and cash flow growth through data/IP and wireless solutions were key 2003 success stories for TELUS Corporation in British Columbia, Canada. The Learning and Development team played a pivotal role by significantly increasing and enhancing training in customer service, sales, technology, and leading change.

Teamwork is a core corporate value. To embrace it, the learning organization created the Training Excellence Forum, where business unit training leaders share best practices and resources. Through their e-learning author network, more than 100 developers share design expertise. Training for dealers gets significant attention via e-learning modules and a team of field trainers who provide onsite training. Field trainers are being equipped with Blackberry wireless devices, so they can update the central training database after each visit and capture needs to be addressed during the next visit.

Leadership is another strategic focus at TELUS. A High Performance Leadership workshop, created for the Consumer Solutions team, became the springboard for similar training across the company, with workshops customized for each business unit. Strong leaders in each unit serve as facilitators, while other in-house experts deliver components of the training. Senior leaders personally introduce and close each workshop.





## **Toshiba America Business Solutions, Inc.**

Risk losing valuable sales professionals? “Not an option,” said the senior vice president of Toshiba America Business Solutions, Inc. But the drawn out schedule of the current training process created that potential risk. In response, the company created a custom training program called S.W.A.T.—Special Weekly Acquisition Training—to meet the specific needs of newly acquired dealers and get them completely trained and selling Toshiba products more quickly.

In late 2002, the company acquired the first of many dealers that had never sold Toshiba products. To meet this different training need, the Training and Dealer Development unit created S.W.A.T., a distilled and more efficient version of its existing blended learning program. But it's delivery, not content, that sets S.W.A.T. apart. It relies on a mobile training kit that travels from dealership to dealership with the training team. The kit includes 20 laptop computers, wireless network, LCD projector, and participant and manager materials. Learners leave the field only twice for local two-day seminars, and training is complete in 60 days.

For newly acquired dealers, Toshiba links learning to performance by measuring productivity and employee retention. After nine months, S.W.A.T.-trained dealers reached 100 percent of brand sales, compared to 50 percent for dealers trained in the old system; S.W.A.T. dealers had 92 percent retention, compared to 60 percent for others. It's free to dealers, and they love it.





## Unisys Corporation

Career Fitness is the rallying cry for Unisys University, the corporate learning arm of Unisys Corporation. And the secret to being “career fit” is continuous learning and development, linked to business realities. Business-critical information and career development tools are delivered to employees in the Web-based Career Fitness Centre, which shares business strategy and goals, and provides tools that demonstrate how performance, development, and career growth tie into the bigger business picture.

An innovative part of the Fitness Centre is MyConsultant, a portal for sales people. Gaming theory keeps the sales learners engaged: a “Mission Impossible” concept for building persuasive presentations and a “Matrix Reloaded” adventure for client business analysis. The initial “game” for presentation techniques is followed by instructor-led learning and ongoing reinforcement with a Web-based tool for creating a presentation outline.

Applying lessons learned is standard procedure for Unisys University, which learned that major organizational change won't “stick” without extensive education and marketing to company insiders, plus engaging business units early in the planning. Three years ago, a major change initiative drew less-than-effective results because it focused only on taking a top-down approach, Unisys admits. Unisys University took those lessons to heart and is using a new “bottoms-up/top-down” approach in an initiative now underway to change how services are delivered to clients.





## Whirlpool Corporation

Learning gets put to immediate use at Whirlpool Corporation, which takes a systems approach to integrate an employee's personal development plan to the strategic objectives of the company. As individuals pursue development goals, they're assigned projects that require them to apply new skills learned from mentoring, e-courseware, or classroom workshops. That lets the employee and manager assess the effectiveness of the development plan as well as the impact on organizational performance.

Whirlpool's most innovative learning initiative is its core competency basic certification program for all salaried employees. Designed to support the transformation to a customer-centered organization, the curriculum is a series of nine e-courses, each of which is supplemented for employees with proficient and mastery levels, in three competencies: innovation, customer excellence, and customer-centered operational excellence.

The basic curriculum "breaks open the middle of the organization," says Whirlpool, driving deeper engagement and involvement through e-courses, short leader-led discussions, and affinity groups. Mentoring and 360-degree assessments also let employees receive feedback and coaching on how they can make an impact. Leaders become skilled in how to lead the transformation and engage employees; they learn to ask employees to apply their new skills to solve problems and to encourage and coach through storytelling.





## Wipro Technologies

Learning from mistakes is such a part of the culture at Wipro Technologies, a provider of information technology services based in Bangalore, India, that it has a special award called “All for the Best,” given to employees who share their mistakes and the lessons learned. To augment the supply of graduate engineers, Wipro created an Academy of Software Excellence (WASE) program in conjunction with a premier technology institute. Fresh graduates from computer science and math disciplines work at Wipro for four years while completing a master’s program.

Wipro maintains a balanced scorecard that has learning and growth as a core parameter. The goals and objectives for the head of each Strategic Business Unit have a “people objective,” with learning parameters tightly coupled to business parameters. At least five percent of the billable time of every employee should be spent on learning. Learning opportunities—such as part-time courses in management and technology, an in-house mini-MBA program, and other specific programs—have helped boost Wipro’s employee satisfaction rating from 64 to 75 percent in the past year. A Behavioral School, which focuses on communication and relationship management skills, has resulted in noticeable improvement in customer interaction and satisfaction.





*Linking People,  
Learning & Performance*

1640 King Street Box 1443  
Alexandria, VA 22313-2043 USA

Tel 800.628.2783 703.683.8100

Fax 703.683.1523

[www.astd.org](http://www.astd.org)