

ASTD Media Contacts: Kristen Fyfe 703.683.8192 [kfyfe@astd.org](mailto:kfyfe@astd.org) Jennifer Homer 703.683.8123 [jhomer@astd.org](mailto:jhomer@astd.org)

## ***Succession Planning Presents Challenges for Most Companies***

*New research offers recommendations on building the talent pipeline.*

**(Alexandria, VA)** – March 10, 2010 Future success for any business depends in part on who is leading the business, yet according to new research from the American Society for Training & Development ([ASTD](http://www.astd.org)) the majority of companies admit their efforts in succession planning are weak.

As the global economy struggles out of the recession it is incumbent on business leaders to identify key positions, critical knowledge and skills, and the talent needed to meet short- and long-term goals, as well as put in place a working process for developing and advancing employees in the succession pipeline. Despite this demand only 14 percent of companies surveyed by ASTD said their organization's succession planning efforts were successful to a high or very high degree.

ASTD surveyed leaders from 1,247 organizations for its new study *Improving Succession Plans: Harnessing the Power of Learning and Development*. Key findings include:

- Fewer than half of companies (45 percent) have a formal succession planning process in place.
- 72 percent say succession planning addresses positions at the vice-president level.
- Most companies look internally for sourcing. Only 17 percent say they look externally to feed their succession pipeline to a high or very high extent.
- 76 percent rely on nomination by a senior leader to guide the organization's choice of potential leadership talent to a high or very high extent.
- Many companies are involving learning professionals in succession planning activities.
- There is a significant correlation between funding for succession-related development and success in the planning process.

The study also offers recommendations for creating metrics, candidate selection, and key practices to cope with barriers to effective plans. A "Lessons Learned" section shares some of the wisdom gained from study respondents.

*Improving Succession Plans: Harnessing the Power of Learning and Development* is free to ASTD members and may be downloaded from the ASTD Store at [www.store.astd.org](http://www.store.astd.org).

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About ASTD

ASTD (American Society for Training & Development) is the world's largest professional association dedicated to the training and development field. In more than 100 countries, ASTD's members work in organizations of all sizes, in the private and public sectors, as independent consultants, and as suppliers. Members connect locally in 132 U.S. chapters and with 30 international partners. ASTD started in 1943 and in recent years has widened the profession's focus to align learning and performance to organizational results, and is a sought-after voice on critical public policy issues. For more information, visit [www.astd.org](http://www.astd.org).

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