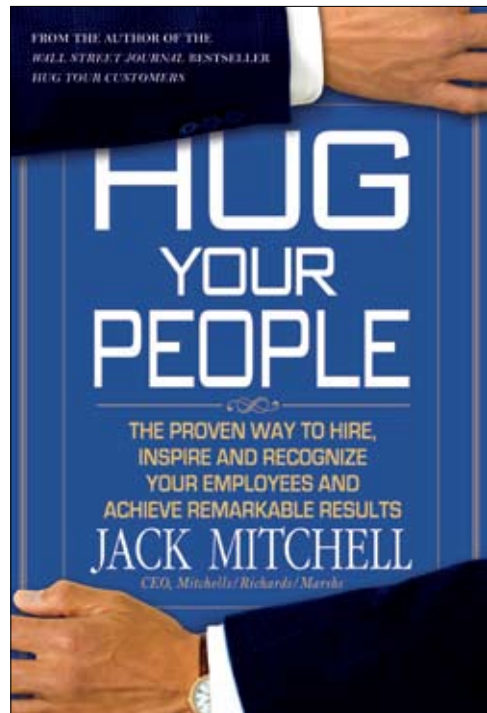


## GROUP HUG!

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 Hug Your People: The Proven Way to Hire,  
 Inspire and Recognize Your Employees and  
 Achieve Remarkable Results  
 .....

By Jack Mitchell  
 (Hyperion, 288 pp., \$19.95)

Reviewed by Nancy Seebert



It seems that each year in our modern world, we adopt more technology to help us in our work. We have fewer face-to-face talks; we outsource help and call centers to other countries; and heaven help you if you want to talk to a real human being with all the automated “press 49 for...” business tools.

There is a gap that has been created. And, in this reviewer’s humble opinion, if we do not fix it, the next generations may not know how to talk to each other at all.

Jack Mitchell is the co-owner of several well-known family-owned clothing stores—Mitchells, Richards, and Marshs. He is also the author of a bestselling book on serving customers, and on a crusade to bring back the good old fashioned hug. In his new book, *Hug Your People*, Mitchell seeks to revolutionize the concept of human interaction in the workplace.

“Hugging” defines Mitchell’s mission to bring human contact back into our lives, not necessarily by actual touch-

ing (we know how that could become misconstrued in the workplace), but through genuinely “knowing” those with whom we do business and with whom we work. It is achieved via an understanding of what will keep them as employees or colleagues and what is important to them. Mitchell includes many anecdotes from his own experiences at his upscale clothing stores. He also offers stories from other well-known business leaders with examples similar to his own.

The book is filled with real accounts about real people. Mitchell provides simple and clear descriptions of his principles on “hugging” your associates—regardless of whether they are

the sales team, the cleaning staff, the delivery people, the backroom financial wizards, the marketing and advertising departments, or outsourced staff.

Why does the author do this? Why is this a secret? Mitchell has discovered that being nice, hiring more nice people, trusting employees, instilling pride, and recognizing staffers generously creates and sustains happy employees, which then creates happy customers, clients, patients, or whomever converges with your business. It's called human connection—what a concept!

In interviews with his employees, we find that they actually love to come to work. Trust, pride, recognition, and appreciation can represent a major culture change. And the key is that it must be genuine.

Mitchell states that “giving great personalized customer service has always been the foremost goal in my family, but one thing we never lose sight of is that you can't possibly deliver great service if you don't treat your own associates right.” Some of his revolutionary concepts include

- Being nice to employees (and hiring nice people to begin with)
- Trusting them (they deserve it and will work even harder and smarter to continue to earn that trust)
- Instilling pride in them (they are more productive when they are proud of their work)
- Including them (since you can't do it alone)
- Generously recognizing them (not only with money, but don't be cheap either).

He describes this culture of niceness quite clearly. Reading the book makes me feel as though I am speaking with an older uncle and listening to words of wisdom that actually make sense.

*Hug Your People* is relevant to all types of leaders, managers, potential leaders, students, organization development, and training and development

professionals. If we can help people understand this crucial culture change, our work environments, and as a result, our customers, could all experience greater happiness and satisfaction. And satisfaction in the workplace can itself bring about increased retention, customer service, profits, and more.

If I could give this book 10 cups of coffee I would. Since I cannot, I give it a rousing four cups.

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**Nancy Seebert** is program manager for Workforce Development for Providence Health and Services in Portland, Oregon; [Nancy.Seebert@providence.org](mailto:Nancy.Seebert@providence.org).

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## BOOKS //

### Pace of Change

**T+D EDITORS DISCUSS THREE TITLES ON TRAINING, DELIVERY, AND TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF**

#### Return on Learning: Training for High Performance at Accenture

By Donald Vanthournout, Kurt Olson, John Ceisel, Andrew White, Tad Waddington, Thomas Barfield, Samir Desai, and Craig Mindrum (Agate, 190 pp., \$28)

For more than 30 years, global management consulting and technology services firm Accenture ran a 96-acre training campus in Illinois. By the late 1990s, roughly 1,000 employees received instruction there each week. However, with the proliferation of computer-based training and Internet course delivery



mechanisms, Accenture's senior executives began to question the use of centralized training, and the rapidly growing corporation decided to make a change.

This book details the reinvention of the company's training and development program. Using strategic planning and leadership, return-on-investment methods, advanced technologies, and "phenomenal learning," the company created enhanced, cost-effective programs with measurable business impact.

The steps in Accenture's learning revolution are divided into focused chapters with summary points after each. Facets covered include the creation of a knowledge-sharing culture; how to avoid letting technology overshadow training values; the creation of an engaging learning program; involvement of management in training program design and goal setting; and the alignment of programs with organizational objectives. The book will be available in paperback by the end of 2008.

Aparna Nancherla

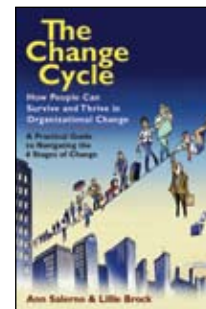
#### The Change Cycle: How People Can Survive and Thrive in Organizational Change

By Ann Salerno and Lillie Brock (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 181pp., \$19.95)

Change is inevitable. Some of us welcome it, but most of us fear it. In *The Change Cycle*, Salerno and Brock offer fresh hope to those managing workplace change.

Drawing on organizational and psychological research and 15 years of studying and teaching change, the authors map out change in a six-stage cycle. They navigate readers through the change cycle by describing the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of each stage.

The authors use a traffic light metaphor to symbolize employees' movement through the cycle according to predictable responses to workplace change. The



initial red stages of loss and doubt alert employees to stop and gather information about the new change. When employees enter the yellow stages of discomfort and discovery, they naturally pick up momentum and can begin making decisions. The understanding and integration stages conclude the green change cycle phase, where employees maintain a steady speed, enjoying greater productivity and satisfaction.

Salerno and Brock write honestly, enabling readers to reflect on their own change experiences. And the authors' sense of humor gives the book a light-hearted, easy-to-read quality.

Ann Pace

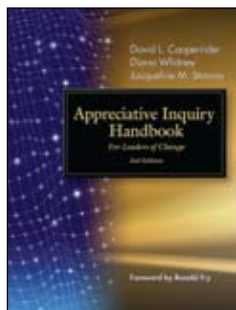
The Appreciative Inquiry Handbook: For Leaders of Change, 2nd Edition

By David L. Cooperrider, Diana Whitney, and Jacqueline M. Stavros

(Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 454 pp., \$49.95)

The Greek philosopher Diogenes Laërtius gave us the quote, "Nothing endures but change." And for modern business leaders, from McDonald's to NASA, the first edition of this book has served as a map for using appreciative inquiry (AI) to engage employees to affect change across their organizations.

This edition has been revised and updated from the 2003 version with current case applications and several mini lectures defining the AI philosophy, plus a new lecture explaining "The Liberation of Power," or the six reasons why AI works.



The updated book delves further into the "4-D" concept surrounding discovery (interview), dream (organizational vision), design (understanding possibilities), and destiny (declaring intent) phases of an initiative. The companies used to illustrate the 4-D process in the first edition are back, with additions and updates on practical usage of AI. A new chapter titled "The Spirit of Designing," offers new insight on the design phase with examples from graphic and architectural designers.

The heart of the book provides worksheets, slides, and tools that relate AI's pertinence for business leaders, and that, too, is broadened in the update.

Juana Llorens

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