



# Show Them the GREEN

**For some workers, jobs are about more than money.**

By Josephine Rossi

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Organizations waging a battle for talent may have found a new weapon.

With hoards of media attention focusing on protecting the environment, the case can be made that organizations waving green flags will have an edge in attracting and keeping workers, especially the young and most talented.

In the United Kingdom, the supposition is already a reality. A survey by Ceridian, a global human resource services provider revealed that 69 percent of workers there welcome green benefits from environmentally responsible employers. In fact, 14 percent of the 1,000 workers surveyed would change jobs for a greener benefits package, and 35 percent believed that

such efforts would make them loyal to their organizations.

"People today recognize that they need to do more to ensure the long-term survival of our planet," Doug Sawers, managing director of Ceridian U.K., says. "Employees appear to be keen to do their [part] when backed by like-minded employers."

In the United States, Bernadette Kenny, chief career officer for Adecco U.S.A., says that although the number of green-minded employees is up, only certain workers are making eco-friendly employment a priority. "When it comes to taking less compensation for those jobs, not everyone is willing to make that leap," she says, noting that younger workers who are just starting their careers are an exception.

Adecco released results from its own green employer survey in April. While not as convincing as the Ceridian report, the findings indicate that a significant portion—33 percent—of the American workforce would be more inclined to work for an environmentally savvy company. Further, more than half feel that their current employers should be doing more to be eco-friendly.

When asked if she believes that more companies will improve their environmental stance to attract workers, Kenny says it's inevitable. "Given our current employment situation, employers are finding that good talent is scarce. Because talented applicants have choices, and for some those choices include seeking green employers, companies will need to improve their eco-image to attract workers—especially as the environmentally friendly movement continues."

There also are some subtler indications that the wave of greenery is holding its weight among workers and employers.

In 2000, the U.S. Green Building Council began issuing its Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certifications to high-performing green buildings. That year, it certified just five commercial offices. As of March of this year, there are 213 LEED-approved offices. These sites are

recognized as healthy and productive places to work that cost less to operate and maintain, and help to reduce their ecological footprints.

SimplyHired, a popular search engine that combs through U.S. job postings, powers green giant Care2.com's list of 3 million eco-friendly and socially responsible careers. The organization teamed up with screening experts KLD Analytics to weed out evil empires, offering postings from only the best U.S. public companies in terms of community impact, corporate governance, diversity policies, employee relations, environmental impact, human rights issues, and the products they create.

However, some say that the green buzz in business is mostly because of government incentive, rather than a noble will. Last fall, *The Economist* reported that most companies are becoming climate-friendly because governments have changed the rules to make it more worthwhile to do so. The article also went so far as to state that new products tend to be more efficient, so earning a green moniker might be less intentional and more likely a result of common process improvements.

Still, for whatever reason a company decides to go green, Kenny says it behooves recruiters to make it known inside the organization and out. Less than one-third of the respondents in Adecco's survey said they knew their employers' environmental policy.

"[Workers] are connecting the dots on how companies behave," she says. "If the talent shortage increases, applicants will continue to be very selective and will want to work with the employer of choice in any area or line of business."

Going green may be one more way to gain that edge.

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**Josephine Rossi** is senior associate editor of T+D; [jrossi@astd.org](mailto:jrossi@astd.org).

## You're Getting GREENER

Not working for an eco-friendly company? Conservation International says anyone can follow these tips to reduce stress on himself and the planet.

- 1. Turn off the lights.** The energy saved from 10 million employees turning off lights not in use for 30 minutes each day is enough to illuminate 50 million square feet of office space.
- 2. Opt for online mailing lists.** Nearly 62 million trees are destroyed and 28 billion gallons of water are used every year to produce catalogs.

- 3. Put your monitor to sleep.** Screen savers aren't energy efficient. So, set your monitor to sleep or power off when you're away for more than 10 minutes.

- 4. Use the stairs.**

- 5. Make your printer's toner last.** Economy mode uses up to 50 percent less toner and prints twice as many pages as other higher-quality settings. Duplex printing also uses half the amount of paper.

- 6. Recycle and reuse paper and office supplies.** Recycled paper production generates 74 percent less air pollution than regular production, and saves trees, water, and energy.

- 7. Buy 100 percent post-consumer waste, chlorine-free paper.** It's made entirely from recycled products and lacks chlorine—one of the biggest polluters in the paper-making process.

- 8. Curb "phantom electricity."** Many appliances still consume energy—and emit roughly 12 million tons of carbon in the United States alone—even when turned off. Plug office equipment into a power strip and turn it off at night and on weekends.

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**MORE**/[www.conservation.org](http://www.conservation.org)

# Businesses Continue to Push for Lifelong Learning



Organizations in the United States have long complained that the country's educational system fails to adequately prepare students for the workforce. Now, faced with concerns that demographic changes will make existing skills gaps worse, the business community is taking a stronger role in pushing for improved school performance.

The latest example is a report issued by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Center for American Progress. Titled "Leaders and Laggards," the report essentially grades each state and the District of Columbia in a number of categories, including academic achievement, post-secondary and workforce readiness, and return-on-investment. The study found that data is insufficient

in many states to measure academic progress or drive improvement. Not surprisingly, it also concluded that most states aren't doing enough to prepare students for jobs or higher learning—a theme that's consistent with other recent reports.

The new report card was released with a reform outline that calls for a number of structural changes to the nation's educational systems, including

- improving teacher quality through higher starting salaries and pay-for-performance structures
- placing greater emphasis on student performance as a measure of teacher effectiveness
- permitting greater innovation in educational models, including online learning programs, early college

enrollment, and apprenticeships

- improving the quantity, quality, and timeliness of data on academic achievement
- emphasizing better management and accountability for principals, superintendents, and other school officials.

Other groups are speaking up, too.

A number of organizations, including the Conference Board and the National Center on Education and the Economy, have issued similar papers that call for major overhauls to the U.S. educational system. In addition, the Business-Higher Education Forum created a coalition to recommend law reforms to support business needs. Bill Gates and Eli Broad recently announced a \$60 million campaign called "Strong American Schools." Its goal is to put educational reform on the national agenda for the 2008 presidential races.

Why all the attention on education? The landmark 2002 No Child Left Behind law is due for reauthorization this year, and many organizations see it as an opportunity to strengthen the primary and secondary education pipeline.

And there are reasons to believe that the system needs help. The most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress, a nationwide survey of academic achievement conducted by the federal government, showed that less than 40 percent of high school graduates are proficient in reading, and less than 25 percent are proficient in math. For organizations looking to younger workers to remain competitive, those are worrisome numbers.

Reauthorization of NCLB is a top priority for Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Massachusetts) and Representative George Miller (D-California), chairmen of the Senate and House committees that will tackle the law this year, but it's unclear what form the final bill will take. One thing is certain, however, the business community will not lack a voice.

—Kermit Kaleba

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# Healthcare Searches for Retention Cure

Aside from patients, healthcare employers may need to administer remedies for their own workforce as they struggle to retain existing workers and recruit new ones.

About one-third of healthcare employers said it's harder to retain employees this year compared to last year, according to a recent CareerBuilder.com survey. At the same time, more than 75 percent plan to hire new employees in 2007. Strong industry job growth may be driving workers to look for better opportunities, and motivating employers to put competitive measures into their recruitment and retention efforts.

"Healthcare is a recession-proof industry that has experienced strong levels of job creation in recent years," says Rosemary Haefner, vice president of human resources at CareerBuilder.com. "To remain a highly sought-after employer, a company needs to evaluate how effectively key factors—such as earning potential, career advancement, and investment in professional development—are conveyed."

Specifically, the survey cited dissatisfaction with opportunities for advancement and learning as well as increased workloads among healthcare workers.

"Thirty percent said they're dissatisfied with the training and learning opportunities at their current positions," notes Kate Cheeseman, healthcare

marketing specialist for CareerBuilder.com. She says that employers should continually evaluate the value of their training offerings and how effectively those opportunities are being promoted to current and prospective employees.

"Whether they are computer proficiency classes, tuition reimbursement, or free registration to healthcare conferences, these opportunities won't serve as incentives if people don't know they exist."

Ninety-four percent of large healthcare organizations (more than 50 employees) and 62 percent of small healthcare organizations (50 employees or less) expect to hire new employees this year. Based on CareerBuilder.com data, the positions in highest demand are nurses, radiology technicians, respiratory and physical therapists, pharmacists, medical assistants, and other healthcare support staff.

With 42 percent citing the inability to find qualified workers as the biggest impediment to their recruitment efforts, healthcare employers reported they are bolstering workplace flexibility (49 percent), salaries (38 percent), bonuses (28 percent), and benefits (18 percent) to retain current employees.

No information was available concerning adjustments to training and development.

## BALANCE PROMOTES ETHICS?

Employers who want to improve ethical behavior in the office can start by offering workers a more flexible schedule. According to Deloitte & Touche, there is a relationship between work-life balance and ethical conduct on the job.

"People who invest all of their time and energy into their work may unintentionally become dependent on their jobs for everything, including their sense of personal worth," says Sharon L. Allen, Deloitte's chairman of the board. "If they believe that an ethical dilemma will affect their professional success, it's harder [for them] to make a good choice."

The company's 2007 ethics and workplace survey reported that 91 percent of employed adults agree that workers are more likely to behave ethically at work when they have a good work-life balance. The workers cited high levels of stress, long hours, and inflexible schedules as the causes of an imbalance. Sixty percent thought that job dissatisfaction is a major reason why people make unethical decisions at work, and said a flexible work schedule is the second most important factor for job satisfaction. (Compensation ranked first.)

While the behaviors of management and direct supervisors ranked as the top two forces supporting an ethical workplace, the survey showed that reinforcement of criminal penalties and ethics training may do little to deter unscrupulous behavior. One-tenth of those surveyed said that criminal penalties for code of conduct violations help foster an ethical workplace environment, and only 16 percent believed that ethics training has a positive influence on behavior.

"Training is a very good awareness tool to make employees understand the ethical dilemmas they can and will face, but by itself, it can never substitute for a good example or role model," says Harold J. Tinkler, chief ethics and compliance officer for Deloitte.

**MORE**/[www.deloitte.com/us](http://www.deloitte.com/us)





## Employers Still Not Addressing the Brain Drain

In spite of the attention that talent shortages caused by a rapidly aging workforce is receiving, only 14 percent of employers worldwide have strategies in place to recruit older workers and only 21 percent have implemented retention strategies to keep them participating in the workforce.

“A surprisingly large number of organizations are still viewing upcoming retirements as cost-savings opportunities,” explains Jeffrey A. Joerres, chair-

man and CEO of Manpower, a global employment services firm. “But this is dangerous and shortsighted because older adults will become one of the most important sources of talent for the future workforce.”

According to the company’s research, the extent to which employers around the world have addressed older worker recruitment and retention issues depends on several factors: the size and demographics of the labor pool, the degree to

which talent shortages are occurring, and the presence of government legislation or programs that either promote or discourage older workers’ employment.

Japan and Singapore are far ahead of their international counterparts. Eighty-three percent of Japanese and 53 percent of Singaporean employers are trying to retain their older employees. On the other end of the spectrum are Spain and Italy with only 6 percent of their employers putting such strategies in place.

### Retention strategies were more prevalent than recruitment of older workers.

“One key reason that Japan and Singapore are so much more focused on keeping their aging employees is because they have government legislation and incentive programs designed to promote such activities,” says Joerres. “Countries such as Italy and Spain do not have the same government-inspired call to action.”

The government connection is most apparent in Japan. While the country excels at keeping its older workers, only 12 percent of employers reported having strategies in place to recruit them. Manpower attributes the difference to the fact that the legislation in Japan is focused on extending older workers’ tenures, not hiring them. In 19 of the 25 countries where employers were surveyed, retention strategies were more prevalent than the recruitment of older employees.

“The conundrum on the horizon is that older employees—who have the talent companies need most—also have the financial freedom and employment options to retire or downshift into a more flexible work arrangement,” notes Joerres. “But it may be a few more years before employers determine how to effectively offer the part-time roles that mature adults prefer.”

**MORE/**[www.manpower.com/Research-Center](http://www.manpower.com/Research-Center)

## Employees: If you were given more training, how would it affect you?

I would feel more confident . . . . .	58%
I would be more competent . . . . .	45%
I would be a bigger asset to the company . . . . .	41%
I would be able to use my time more effectively . . . . .	34%
I would be more productive . . . . .	32%
I would have a better chance of promotion . . . . .	28%
I would be less stressed because I would be more effective . . . . .	26%
I would be able to enjoy a better work-life balance . . . . .	23%

*\*Participants could select more than one answer*

Source: "The Future of Learning," SkillSoft Benchmark Study 2007



## PRESSURE POINTS

According to RJC Associates, a San Francisco-based career advisory firm, 22 percent of American workers have been driven to tears as a result of workplace stress.

Others reported

- damage to company property (16 percent)
- fear that their workplace isn't safe (10 percent)
- physical violence on the job (9 percent).

Ironically, the firm also said incidents of verbal abuse in the workplace have fallen by 45 percent since 2000.

## LITTLE TO CHANGE BY 2010

The annual Ken Blanchard Companies survey of training and HR managers and corporate leaders concluded that organizational business issues and top management and employee development challenges won't change much by the end of the decade.

### Among the survey results:

- Developing managerial and supervisory skills remained the top employee development challenge for the last five years.
- The top two business challenges for 2007 are new competition and the feasibility of growth and expansion while facing a lack of skilled labor.
- Respondents cited an engaged workforce as the driver for the success of many organizational initiatives and a key to retention and service.
- Fifty percent of top management and 57 percent of HR workers said that the skills shortage is the most important organizational problem in 2007.
- Respondents expected both industry consolidation and global competition to increase by 2010. They also expected technology issues to intensify.
- Respondents predicted an increasing need to focus on selection and retention of key talent, succession planning, and increasing innovation.
- Leadership capacity and creating an engaged workforce will receive less focus in 2010.

**MORE**/[www.kenblanchard.com/thoughtleadership/research\\_findings/2007\\_corporate\\_issues/](http://www.kenblanchard.com/thoughtleadership/research_findings/2007_corporate_issues/)



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