

## **Worldwide Training Industry News (Jan 09)**

### **Managing Diversity a Growing Challenge**

**Aberdeen Press and Journal (Scotland) (01/26/09) P. 8; Forsyth, Ian**

Under the United Kingdom's incoming Equality Bill, statues for prosecuting discrimination based on age, sexual orientation, and religious belief will be expanded in the public sector. The equal opportunity bill, intended to simplify existing legislation, will likely have a secondary effect on the private sector as these firms must respect statutes on equality and diversity when dealing with public firms. The passage of the Equality Bill is one of several actions that is placing more pressure on organizations to improve hiring and employee treatment practices. The Equality and Human Rights Commission is about to put the construction and services sectors under the microscope in two formal audits. Auditors will examine the disproportionate number of female workers in the services sector who earn less than their male counterparts, while the construction sector inquiry will focus on allegedly unfair hiring practices for ethnic minorities.

### **Manager Training at the Super League Level**

**Financial Times (01/26/09) P. 10; Baxter, Andrew**

Participants in Davos, Switzerland's World Economic Forum (WEF)'s internal executive program--or Global Leadership Fellows--have been working to create the agenda for the annual event, which is taking place the week of Jan. 26. After, they will go attend two weeks of academic studies in other locations. The program focuses on "creating global leaders of tomorrow", says Gilbert Probst, the program's dean and one of the forum's managing directors. The three-year class requires that fellows spend 80 percent of their time on regular jobs at the forum, including oversight of its activities, and the other 20 percent on scholastic training, offered by institutions such as the Columbia Business School, Insead, and the London Business School. The initial group of 32 fellows graduated in 2008, and there are 64 in the next three cohorts, all of whom have a minimum of a master's or doctoral degree and between five and seven years of work experience. While the strength of the WEF name and the unusual nature of the program drew 2,500 applications in 2008, Probst states he intends to keep each cohort at between 20 and 30 members. Columbia was selected for its expertise in subjects such as macroeconomics, international relations, and geopolitics, while Insead was chosen for its excellence in leadership issues and training. Meanwhile, the London Business School was chosen for its expertise in executive training, entrepreneurship, team leadership, and finance.

### **Distance Learning Helps India Address Its Voracious Demand for Managers**

**Financial Times (01/26/09) P. 4; Yee, Amy**

With the aid of technology and distance learning, Indian computer-training company NIIT's NIIT Imperia division and others in that nation are working to train more managers and instruct students in order to fulfill India's high demand for skilled employees. Begun in 2006, NIIT Imperia's IIM-Indore distance-training program has ventures with the Indian Institutes of Management in Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Indore, and Lucknow, and the Institute of Management Technology in Ghaziabad and the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade in New Delhi. Tutors from these entities remotely instruct students at 19 NIIT centers throughout India, who must initially pass an entrance exam. The classes taught last between four and 18 months and usually involve three-hour evening courses two times per week that cater to working professionals. When they are done, students get certificates in management, marketing, strategy, and additional disciplines. IIM-Indore employs a high-tech distance-learning network of computers, software, Webcams, headphones, and microphones. Biju Madhavan, a revenue manager for the Indian hotelier Park Hotels, is taking a class on sales and marketing. As full-time business school was not doable, partly because Madhavan has a wife and child to support, he notes that NIIT Imperia provides a "great opportunity for working students to get in touch with premium institutes." In 2009, NIIT Imperia intends to accept 3,000 students, versus 700 in 2008, and has 2,200 alumni.

### **Companies Look to Training as Antidote to Economic Downturn**

**Nation's Restaurant News (01/21/09) Berta, Dina**

Restaurants across the country, anticipating a long-term recession, are increasing their investment in employee training and development to get the most out of workers. "We need our employees to sell more and waste less, and they can only do that with confidence if they are taught how," said Kat Cole of Hooters of America, the Atlanta-based chain with more than 470 locations. The vice president of human resources said the restaurant is testing employee productivity through its point-of-sale system because it

is easy to monitor. CKE Restaurants Inc., the Carpinteria, Calif.-based parent to the 1,185-location Carl's Jr. and the 1,912-location Hardee's food chains, recently announced its formation of the Star Academy training centers for restaurant managers and a Web-based management training program for franchise employees. These training programs will also be available to its international franchisees, the company stated. Dallas-based sandwich chain Which Wich?, San Diego-based Garden Fresh Restaurant Corp., and Dallas-based Brinker International are rolling out training programs for their franchises that include online resources, intranet-based testing, and Web-based certification for sous chefs, respectively.

### **How Do You Picture Yourself in a Virtual World? University of Leicester (01/14/09)**

The MOdeling Of SecondLife Environments (MOOSE) project is exploring the use of three-dimensional multi-user virtual environments for teaching digital photography in university courses. The University of Leicester's Beyond Distance Research Alliance is researching how groups of students can socialize and engage in virtual environments for more productive information and knowledge exchanges. Meanwhile, London South Bank University researchers have uncovered previously unknown perceptions of students' identity through avatars and are investigating how being known as an avatar affects group discussions and negotiations. Leicester's Matthew Wheeler says some students perceived missing body language and personal cues when communicating through an avatar. The lack of body language did not drastically affect the conversation because the students knew each other in real life and were able to identify each other based on the appearance of the avatar. Although universities are considering incorporating Second Life into their programs, the researchers say that many educators and students may find themselves lost in the virtual world. To create a usable virtual world, the MOOSE project will create a framework to encourage students' engagement and socialization in a virtual environment designed for learning, and build guidelines for developing students' transferable skills through Second Life.

### **10 Leadership Styles Great Leadership (01/14/2009) McCarthy, Dan**

Leaders might be comfortable with a particular style, but certain situations might require them to operate outside of their comfort zone. In the Situational Leadership model, directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating are the four ways that leadership styles are classified. For example, directing involves defining roles and tasks and closely supervising the "follower," while coaching allows for more two-way communication. In the supporting style, the leader facilitates and takes part in decisions, but the delegating approach puts day-to-day decisions in the hands of the follower. Meanwhile, coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pacesetter, and coaching are styles that are based on emotional intelligence competencies. For example, the coercive style is the "Do what I say" approach that works best in turnaround situations, a crisis, and with problem employees. Leaders can use the authoritative style to stress their vision, and it is especially helpful when direction is needed in an economic or business downturn. Leaders become more effective when they are able to adapt to different styles.

### **Managing a Multigenerational Workforce Building (01/01/09) Vol. 103, No. 1, P. 46; Aker, Jenna M.**

The workforce now contains several generations of workers, each with their own communication style that managers must accommodate. To ensure the needs of each member of the workforce are met and respected, employees and managers must undergo diversity training. These training sessions should be given in several formats to make sure they are accessible to all generations. Full-day training is ideal for Baby Boomers and Traditionalists, while podcasts and downloadable sessions are best for Generation X and Millennial workers. Formal training alone is not sufficient to ensure the generational workforce works well together. To achieve this goal, experts recommend managers encourage respect within the work environment by acknowledging the achievements of younger workers and not relying too heavily on one age group. Mentoring is another tool managers should employ to not only transfer knowledge, but also foster intergenerational respect. Older workers training younger employees should be provided training on how to foster collaborative environments. In addition, mentoring will afford older workers the opportunity to learn new techniques and obtain technological proficiencies from their younger colleagues.

### **Retaining Mature Workers Key to Holding off Job Shortages Business Ledger (12/29/08) Stoltz, Jeremy**

Recent studies point out that 76 million Baby Boomers are nearing retirement, and there are fewer workers in subsequent generations to replace them. With U.S. job growth estimated at 40 percent over the next two decades, the nation will be short by up to 8 million workers in 2010 and 26 million short in

2035, which is why human resource experts say companies need to retain and retrain their maturing workforce. Additionally, the Employment Policy Foundation reports that 80 percent of the future workforce will express a skills shortage, which is an already emerging trend among today's workers as technology skills become more desirable among firms. Managers will cope with long vacancies and difficulties retaining skilled workers, which is why retaining older workers through flexible schedules and phased retirement plans is important. Through five easy steps, organizations can retain workers. The first is to create flexible schedules, part-time work, and similar programs for mature workers, and the second is to offer continuous skills training. Thirdly, firms need to garner feedback from workers about what they need. Finally, organizations must create solutions to collect, store, and transfer institutional knowledge and strive to reduce cultural biases against older workers (i.e. their inability to learn new things).

### **Turning Interpersonal Training Into Results Chief Learning Officer (01/01/09) Patterson, Kerry**

The aim of corporate learning is to modify people's behavior such that the organization's desired outcomes are realized. To improve employees' interpersonal skills, some key steps need to be taken. This includes identifying business results that needs improving. This requires an organization to look at key performance indicators and asking what is truly desirable. The next step is to identify behaviors that if enhanced will lead to the sought-after results. The actions that are being taught must relate directly to key results, otherwise, the training will likely cause in monetary and time losses. Conducting a positive deviance study can also help identify particular behaviors that affect the desired results. This involves looking at successful departments, companies, or work groups and seeing what they did differently. Next, it is important to access the work of scholars and practitioners who have researched the connection between the behavior in question and its outcomes. At this point, a training program can be designed that incorporates practical components like live modeling with lectures and discussion. It is also crucial to focus on motivation as well as ability, explain why the skill is necessary, and to test for effectiveness through interpersonal tests.

### **Prove the Value of Training by Measuring Outcomes Personnel Today (01/14/09) Armen, Arif**

Training managers must develop viable metrics to measure the return on investment of their programs to ensure their budgets are not slashed in lean times. Metrics also can aid managers in the administration of their programs, allowing for the replacement of ineffective, expensive instructor-led programs with online learning opportunities. Learning management systems can be useful to collect data, but experts warn that not all data provided is accurate. To choose the best system, training managers and executives must examine the measurement needs of the program and select a program that meets those needs in the simplest way. Data must be centralized to ensure all users can view the information and to facilitate reporting.

### **Rescue Renews Focus on Training Wall Street Journal (01/17/09) Pasztor, Andy; Carey, Susan**

The Federal Aviation Administration is moving to enhance training procedures for flight attendants in light of the successful emergency landing of US Airways Flight 1549 on the Hudson River on Jan. 15. The rescue could not have succeeded, safety experts argue, without the presence of a highly trained crew to help all 155 passengers evacuate safely. Prior to the incident, federal aviation officials were already pushing to revise crew rules to require "hands on" emergency drills and training annually instead of once every two years. Capt. Chuck Hogeman, who heads the Air Line Pilots Association's human factors and training outfit, said the recent near-catastrophe should help make airlines "more receptive" to heavier training. It will likely be easier for investigators to agree on lessons and outcomes from this incident, one airline safety expert said, because the disaster turned out well and there is no need for finger-pointing among airlines and manufacturers.

### **Decisions 2.0: The Power of Collective Intelligence MIT Sloan Management Review (Quarter1, 2009) Bonabeau, Eric**

Today's fast moving business climate calls for quick and accurate responses and more in-depth assessments of possible opportunities. Information technologies like the Internet provide access to greater data on clients, employees, and other stakeholders. But such data needs to be used and analyzed appropriately when making decisions. This requires gathering "collective intelligence" using information markets, collaboration software, social networks, and other tools. Companies might approach this as "outreach," or extracting knowledge from individuals or groups that are typically overlooked. A useful tool

for this purpose is InnoCentive, a Web site that companies can use to post problems and ask for suggestions. Some companies seek to gather knowledge in an "additive" fashion, or getting information from a variety of sources and averaging it. Best Buy, for example, uses internal information markets to predict a variety of activities. Another useful approach is interaction among group members, or "self-organization," which can help create value through tools like Wikipedia, Intellipedia, and Digg. However, it is essential that the interaction mechanisms correctly designed. Certain decisions that require a greater degree of expertise can be assisted by such things as the Delphi method or the use of a prediction market that is adjusted for participants' risk profiles.

**Amid Economic Decline, Some Job Sectors on the Rise  
Boston Herald Online (01/11/09) Crimaldi, Laura**

With a number of organizations laying off workers, the candidate pool is flooded with skilled workers who will push less skilled workers aside as they fill the few job openings left. In Massachusetts, the unemployment rates is surprisingly below the national average at 5.9 percent as of November 2008. Northeastern University Associate Director of the Center for Labor Market Studies Paul Harrington says job searches will drag on, and better educated candidates will edge out unskilled workers for even entry-level and unskilled positions. "The labor market is still a personal institution. It's a network of personal relationships. Occupational programs closely tied to the job market have automatic connections to the field. They can make a phone call for you," Harrington explains. Bunker Hill Community College, with help from Nstar, offers a training program in utility work, which couples classroom and on-site work at Nstar. Students earn an associate's degree and then become top candidates for openings with the energy firm.

**Why Business Needs to Learn to Love Wikipedia  
Montreal Gazette (Canada) (01/08/09) Joel, Mitch**

Mitch Joel, president of the digital marketing and communications firm Twist Image, says that more organizations need to learn to embrace Wikipedia's infrastructure. "The Wisdom of Crowds: Why the Many Are Smarter Than the Few and How Collective Wisdom Shapes Business, Economies, Societies and Nations," is a top-selling business book by James Surowiecki. Printed in 2004, the book's premise is that "all of us are smarter than any one of us." Joel states that the overall knowledge, power and wisdom of a group is what makes a group succeed, not only in an arena such as Wikipedia--which is the biggest repository of information on the Internet--but also in business. Besides breaking down information that is continually being updated and altered, Wikipedia also shows organizations the benefits of mass collaboration. One of the largest human-resources expenses comes from replacing and training workers. Joel concludes by asking: "What if all of that tribal knowledge [the stuff we learn and then file away in the back of our brains] could be passed on, shared and saved, instead of dying in someone's e-mail or voice mail?"

**What Can Coaches Do for You?  
Harvard Business Review (01/09) Kauffman, Carol; Coutu, Diane**

To examine the corporate coaching field, researchers from Harvard Business Review conducted a survey of 140 top coaches. They found that the leading reasons for hiring a coach were developing the talents of high-potential executives, acting as a sounding board, and tackling failure-prone behavior. The average hourly cost of coaching was found to be approximately \$500 per hour, about equivalent to what a leading psychiatrist in Manhattan charges. Very few coaches are specifically hired to address personal issues, according to the survey, but the vast majority of coaches nevertheless end up helping executives with personal matters. Respondents had mixed views on such things as the need for certification or psychological training for coaches. The researchers also found that although coaching is seen as an increasingly important business tool, the core components of the sector have yet to solidify. Corporate coach Ram Charan believes that as the business environment becomes more complex, coaches will become part of executives' learning process and facilitate judgment in critical areas. He also predicted that the coaching sector will remain disjointed until after a few coaches merge forces to create a brand.

**Water Utilities' Labor Force Crisis Aided by AwwaRF Research  
Water Online (12/03/2008)**

The American Water Works Association (AWWA) and the Awwa Research Foundation co-sponsored a workshop in November 2008 to address the workforce shortages and challenges facing water utilities and other employers. With a large number of workers reaching retirement and fewer students obtaining scientific and technical degrees, experts agreed a collaborative industry approach could stem the tide of retirements and impending workforce shortages. Participants also discussed best management practices to

stem the workforce crisis. AwwaRF Executive Director Robert Renner said, "It's estimated to continue over the next 10 to 15 years. The challenges facing water suppliers mirror the shift in the U.S. labor force as a whole. AwwaRF has sponsored research in anticipation of this trend to provide water utility managers with the data they need for planning and to help them develop effective strategies." Studies map out ways in which water utilities can modify their recruiting, training, and retention strategies to prevent workforce shortages, retain necessary knowledge, create viable succession strategies, and continually improve the organizational culture.

**How Do Organizations Know if They Are Ready for Sustainable Transformative Change?  
European Journal of Management (12/22/2008) Vol. 8, No. 4, P. 102; Harris, Marilyn E.;  
Becker, Gerard F.; Hallcom, Anne Saber**

Clarity of communication, appropriate empowerment, and understandable accountability in the organizational construct are the drivers of successful transformative change. Organizational leadership, culture dimensions, and maturity of major functional units can all affect whether organizations are ready for sustainable transformative change, while "leveraging" can enhance such efforts. For example, organizational leadership can create a team and humane orientations to help build a working environment that is conducive to change, and leveraging activities can boost cooperation and create more enthusiasm for transformative efforts. The Socio-Economic Equation for Systemic Success is used to explore the leveraging of transformative change. There are no "quick fixes" for transformative efforts, and success may have to be defined within a context of a cycle of change. Ultimately, readiness may not matter, because organizations will be faced with developing and transforming their operations in order to survive in the 21st century.

**Combat Workforce Changes by Focusing on Talent Management  
HR Pulse (Quarter4, 2008) P. 40; Lucid, Luellen; Hale, Jamie**

The healthcare industry faces a number of challenges when it comes to its aging workforce. With some changes to HR policy, experts say organizations will keep pace with current trends. High turnover among hospital workers can be remedied by making a few changes. Experts suggest organizations redesign retirement policies to offer additional benefits and incentives to critical personnel who choose to work longer. Jobs also can be redesigned to suit the needs of older workers, including the creation of shorter shifts and reductions in physical labor. Retention requires hospitals to recognize the diverse needs of all working generations. The Silent Generation (the oldest workers) needs flexible schedules, while Baby Boomers are looking for better work-life balance, which may require a shift in their roles and responsibilities. Generation X looks for workplaces encouraging team interaction and leadership skills, while the Echo Boomers will be attracted to work environments that emphasize the use of the latest technologies. In addition to attracting workers from multiple generations, organizations should tap workers from diverse backgrounds, especially those often under-represented in the healthcare workforce.

**Workplace Issues Shift in 2009  
Montreal Gazette (Canada) (01/10/09) P. F10; Sankey, Derek**

A bad economy could result in more job reductions in 2009. Workers will be seeking stable companies with a history of surviving tough economic situations, a strong reputation, and the financial ability to make it through difficult periods. Job hunters might begin to focus on firms and industries that appear least at risk to layoffs in 2009. In addition, managers will have to discover ways to involve their workforce and keep up morale. Firms will still have to keep top talent since leading performers are the ones who will become most valuable as companies attempt to maneuver their way through the financial crisis. While it may be appealing to terminate worker development and training initiatives when times are tough, that could result in a badly-prepared workforce when the economy improves. "For those who remember, we are going to have reoccurrences of the issues that were evident in (1981-85)," states Gary Agnew of the human resources and business consulting company Cenera. If corporate leaders do not focus now on creating a long-term, diverse workforce, they could encounter problems when growth returns.

**Talking Business -- Invest in Training and Support Relocation of New Staff to Ensure Skills  
Availability  
PrintWeek (01/02/09) P. 12; Novick, Dani**

During tough economic times, Mercy Search and Selection managing director Dani Novick says it is vital that companies and employees talk with one another and overcome those challenges. Novick states that companies must be supportive and flexible, while workers should be dedicated, adaptable, and "not try to hold the employer to ransom." She says quite often workers have to relocate to get new jobs, which can

cause stress on them and their families, something companies need to take into consideration. The solution is "often not monetary aid, but rather offering access to advice and support." In addition, training to promote strength in a business is crucial and should be part of the succession and contingency initiative in any firm. Novick says all too frequently, "we hear a rather limited appraisal of training in terms of companies trying, and often failing, to assess a direct return on investment." While she concedes that training certainly has definitive benefits, "another angle to consider is that of insurance," namely through hiring and retaining good employees. "Having strength in depth, whether it is multi-skilling to cover a wide range of operations or preparation for promotion, provides that level of cover for specific one-off issues, while apprentices will provide the talent coming through for the longer term," Novick notes. She states that the economic crisis will probably continue for some time, meaning companies will have to deal with the need for a "short- to medium-term increase in support for relocation head on, while making sure they have long-term training and development plans to build strength in depth."

**Get Them While They're Young: Tomorrow's IT Pros**  
**Computerworld Canada (01/08/09) Smith, Briony**

The Canadian Coalition for Tomorrow's ICT Skills (CCICT) is hoping to increase the number of students studying information technology through its new National ICT Week event. "We need to get the word out as to how the world is changing, and change people's attitudes toward IT as a career plan," says CCICT executive director David Ticoll. The National ICT Week events will be split over several days in the late fall across five Canadian cities, and will contain different parts for specific audiences, including educators, employers, and students. Half of the event will focus on seminars, meet-and-greet sessions, and contests and awards, and the other half will feature demonstrations of innovative IT technologies in various industries. "In addition to being afraid of the dot-com crash fall-out and offshoring, [students] don't really think an IT career is competitive," Ticoll says. "But the reality is that the demand profile is changing: around 25 per cent of IT workers are business analysts, and those are the most in demand." Info-Tech Research Group analyst Jennifer Perrier-Knox says it is important to emphasize that IT careers are a good fit for the millennial worker because they offer job flexibility, interesting work, and the opportunity for advancement. Technology Association of Canada president Bernard Courtois says another strong approach is to show how IT relates to interests that people already have, and how those interested in improving the healthcare system or the environment, for example, can do so through IT.

**More and More, Schools Got Game**  
**Washington Post (01/04/09) P. C1; Chandler, Michael Alison**

Teachers are increasingly incorporating video games, virtual reality, and simulations to improve education. Business and science classes are starting to use sophisticated software that allows students to test out potential careers, practice skills, or explore history through simulated adventures in national parks, ancient cities, or outer space. The military and medical schools, which use games and simulations to train new personnel, are helping to boost the use of video games in classrooms. Advocates argue that games can teach vital skills such as teamwork, decision-making, and digital literacy. Games also can challenge students just enough to keep them interested in reaching the next level. "There is a revolution in the understanding of the educational community that video games have a lot of what we need," says Jan Plass, co-director of the Games for Learning Institute at New York University. Game designers are replacing the violence in video games with equations and educational challenges. For example, Dimension M is a suite of math games that require players to learn about functions and solve equations to stop a biodigital virus from taking over the world. The Federation of American Scientists is promoting games as a way of inspiring new scientists, and has developed two games in which players fight bacterial invaders in a blood vessel. A recent revision to the Higher Education Act authorized the creation of a research center for assessing and developing educational technologies such as simulations and video games.

**Reinventing Your Business Model**  
**Harvard Business Review (12/08) Vol. 86, No. 12, P. 50; Johnson, Mark W.; Christensen, Clayton M.; Kagermann, Henning**

Established corporations often have a hard time reinventing their business model even though many organizations are considering this option as they try to find a way to survive in the rocky economy. Fortunately, there are several simple steps that can help companies properly envision a revolutionary business model. The first is to design a customer value proposition, which determines how the business model is shaped to meet the customer's needs if it is not currently addressed by competitors. The next step is to create a workable profit formula for the new business plan, which should include a revenue model, cost structure, margin model, and resource velocity. Finally, organizations should strive to identify key resources and key processes that are necessary to ensure new business models are properly implemented.

### **Skills Development More Crucial than Ever in Tough Times Times (UK) (01/06/09) P. 53; Spellman, Ruth**

In the wake of layoffs and declining sales, leaders and managers face a number of challenges. They cannot predict how the declining economy will impact sales or jobs. In order to withstand the downturn, it is important for companies to supervise successfully and meet customers' needs. A survey in the United Kingdom by the Chartered Management Institute found four things that business leaders are worried about the most--rising business costs, reduced credit levels, the effect of employee disputes, and inadequate skill levels. The survey found that business confidence is declining due to the economic situation and cash flow problems. In addition, a large number of companies felt that the only solution lies in curbing staff development. However, cutting back on skills development would be problematic for long-term sustainability. The survey found that 18 percent intended to migrate to new jobs next year, while more plan to "get qualified" or "build transferable skills." This indicates that workers view qualifications as a way to make them more employable. It is more critical than ever to invest carefully in skills development, otherwise companies might have to deal with future unproductivity.

### **Teaching Intangibles With Technology ICT Results (01/05/09)**

European and Israeli researchers have developed an education system that focuses on teaching students critical thinking, social interaction, discourse, rhetoric, and self-expression. The system helps instructors track who is participating in classroom discussions, how often they contribute, and how valuable those contributions are. The European Union-funded Argonaut program has developed discussion software that maps conversations, which enables classes to break into small groups to discuss topics via computers. The Argonaut system provides two levels of feedback to teachers. The first provides quantitative data in a graph that displays who is talking a lot or not at all and who has not contributed to discussions in at least 15 minutes. The second level uses artificial intelligence to provide qualitative data on the types of statements students are making and their potential value for the discussion and underlying learning process. The second level is a learning program that builds on records of previous discussions, with the aid of annotations by teachers that highlight the types of comments that are relevant or irrelevant, and the different types of arguments. Conversations are presented to teachers in a visual graph and describe the ongoing discussion. Teachers can use the observations made by the software to suggest that a group broaden its discussion.

### **New Grant-Funded Project Meant to Improve Educational Technology University of Arizona (01/05/09) Everett-Haynes, La Monica**

University of Arizona (UA) scientists have received a \$300,000 Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency grant to develop artificial intelligence and education technology that mirrors the consumer tracking algorithms used by sites such as Amazon and iTunes. The researchers, led by UA professor Paul R. Cohen, want to maximize a tutoring system model by using data on learners to improve the feedback provided by intelligent tutoring systems. "Teaching people means making a sequence of dependent decisions," Cohen says. "We're trying to optimize the value of each decision by reasoning algorithmically about how it sets up the student for future learning opportunities." The researchers are developing a program that would be capable of already knowing what a student knows and matching that knowledge with comparable students before suggesting specific texts, exams, videos, educational games, demonstrations, and other Web-based educational tools. The technology would be able to direct students to the best possible learning experience for each student, refining each student's curriculum as it learns more about learners in general. Preliminary findings from a pilot project suggest that students who used the model learned more quickly and were able to retain information better, and that the program improved as more students participated.

### **Which Kind of Collaboration Is Right for You? Harvard Business Review (12/08) Vol. 86, No. 12, P. 78; Pisano, Gary P.; Verganti, Roberto**

When attempting to launch a successful collaboration, there are a number of choices that participating organizations must make. The first choice is whether or not the collaboration should consist of an open or closed connection. A closed network is useful if the organization has identified the area of knowledge that contains a solution to a current problem. The trick to this choice is then to ensure the organization chooses the right collaborators from that particular field. On the other hand, an open model is not as limiting because it allows for participation from a large number of problem solvers in different areas of expertise. It is important that organizations bear in mind that open models are not as effective as closed models at attracting the best talents. Organizations must have the capability to evaluate solutions at a

minimal cost. The second choice organizations must make when designing a business partnership is whether to maintain flat or hierarchical governance. Hierarchical governance is a good choice for organizations that have the capabilities and knowledge necessary to define the problem and select the most effective solution. Flat governance is best suited for organizations that do not have the ability to maintain focus or perspective on the problem at hand. Similarly, flat governance is best when all organizations have similar stock in their collaboration.

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