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**October
2014**

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October Newsletter

Dear Contact,

Sweater weather is better weather! Ok, maybe that's pushing it a little, but sweaters signal a new season which brings new and exciting happenings! Along with the leaves changing colors and football taking over the airwaves come plenty of exciting things happening here at ASTD Nebraska!

Trainer's Institute (TI): Beyond the Basics starts October 7 consisting of two sessions each Tuesday in October. With topics like The Right Stuff, iBrand, eLearning Doesn't Have to Suck, and Training on Trial, you know you are in for some amazing opportunities not only to learn and grow but to show talent development's worth to those around you!

This month's newsletter has great news, great tips, and refreshers. See if you recognize the familiar face of the new 2014 Game Changer, find out how to keep up on your personal development, and learn quite a bit about Instructional Design.

Make it a great month!

Sincerely,

Sandi Knowski
Director of Communication

**Trainer's Institute (TI):
Beyond the Basics
Registration is Open!**



Omaha's local chapter of the American Society for Training and Development.

ASTD Nebraska is an organization dedicated to providing professional development for its members to improve workplace learning and performance.



Annual Sponsors

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If you wish to become an Annual Sponsor, please [contact us](#).

TI: Beyond the Basics - What is it?

It's 8 sessions over four Tuesdays in October that will cover the latest in Communication, Talent Development, Technology, Strategy Development, and so much more!

Who is TI: Beyond the Basics for?

It is for the more experienced professionals in our industry. The sessions are conducted in true workshop format giving hands-on skill building. The practical application of the material in the classroom will leave you ready and energized to make an impact at work right away. Whether your interest lies in Development or Delivery of Training, Developing Your Career and Your Team, Learning Technologies or Evaluating Learning Impact and Managing Learning Programs, there's something here for YOU!

Sessions (click on the session titles for more information or to register):

1. [The Right Stuff: Great Design Creates Engaging Content](#) - Learn how to use new instructional design techniques to create training content with powerful design.
2. [Training with Impact: Facilitation Techniques that Wow](#) - This is all about your presence in the classroom. Learn how to create a dynamic and lasting impact on your participants to keep them engaged through the whole training session.
3. [iBrand: Designing Your Personal Brand as a Learning Management Professional](#) - You will learn how to discover and create your image as a learning professional.
4. [Developing the Talent of Others](#) - The focus of this session is on how we close the gap between onboarding and career advancement.
5. [eLearning Doesn't Have To Suck](#) - You read that right! Learn to create memorable eLearnings!
6. [Rapid Training Design](#) - From rapid eLearning techniques to classroom course templates, learn how to drastically shrink your curriculum development time.
7. [Training on Trial: From ROI to ROE](#) - Training departments are all too often the first to be cut. Learn how to sell your training department to management and why it's more than just a cost center.
8. [The Value of Learning: Identifying Business Needs and Strategic Alignment](#) - Create the vision and strategy to ensure that your corporate learning and training initiatives are providing valuable contributions to the bottom-line.

Pricing:

You can choose your favorite sessions to attend and pay for those sessions. There is member and non-member pricing for all sessions, and you can choose to attend all sessions or the ones that you can fit into your schedule. There are even savings offered to companies who want to send multiple people!

- 1 half-day session: \$150 for members/\$200 for non-members
- All 8 sessions: \$800 for members/\$1,100 for non-members (non-

- member price includes 1-year ASTD Nebraska membership!)
- Companies wanting to send multiple people: Purchase a block of TEN (10) half-day sessions for only \$1,000!

Click [here](#) to register or for more information.

Bylaws Update

Thank you to all of you who went and voted on the proposed bylaws. The vote passed! We are now in the process of changing our name to ATD Nebraska.

[Click here](#) if you would like to review the bylaws.

Workforce Development Magazine's 2014 Game Changer: April Kassen

Submitted by: Pati Carr, VP of Marketing



Did you see it? Did you witness the "awesomeness" that is April Kassen? If you know April then you are not surprised that in August 2014, she was named one of Workforce Development Magazine's 2014 Game Changers!

April works with Children's Hospital and Medical Center as a Senior Organizational Development Consultant. She is also a **Past President** of ASTD Nebraska so of course our Chapter was already aware of some of the great things that April can bring

to an organization and to the field of Learning and Development. April says she was "thrilled" to earn this award because Workforce Development is a nationally known magazine. She adds that, "The time and effort we put into our job each day is just that, it's our job. It is a good feeling to know that it is appreciated and has value."

April credits her team at Children's as helping her to be recognized, nominated, and ultimately earning the 2014 Game Changer Award. The article from the August 2014 Workforce Development Magazine quoted her co-workers saying that "April is a breath of fresh air" and many in the ASTD Nebraska Chapter can attest to this as well. When it comes to what has helped her stand out from the crowd, April notes that she consistently will "focus on how we can do it better, save money, and empower leaders to embrace their own development. If it's mandatory, it's not fun."

April offers up this advice to those in the industry: "...do not settle for the status quo. Challenge yourself and your colleagues to put together a stellar product. If you have been doing the same thing for several years, it is time to shake it up. Go back and revisit your objectives and measure against it. Get creative with partnerships, and maximize your

time and your resources within the community, your industry and the education sector as a whole. Lastly, keep your skills fresh. Stay up to date with industry best practices. If you aren't, your competition is."

April continues to stay involved with ASTD Nebraska participating in the Past Presidents Advisory Committee and attending programs. When asked how her continued involvement in ASTD Nebraska helps her thrive in the industry, April notes that it "provides me with a networking pool of amazing professionals. Why re-invent the wheel when others in our community are faced with a similar challenge? Learning from each other and building on each other's best practices helps all of us create game-changing solutions for our companies."

All of us here at ASTD Nebraska congratulate you, April Kassen. We are so glad you are a member and that you continue to be a contributor to our chapter.

You're a Training and Professional Development Professional - So Are You Developing Yourself??

Submitted by: Michelle Anthony, CPLP

CareerJournal.com estimates that 78,000 people will enter the training and development field between 2004 and 2014. How will you highlight your value and stand out for career advancement (or, at a minimum, career sustainability)?

Many other fields have a standardized measure that showcases expertise. This is often found in the form of a license or professional credential. The accounting profession has the CPA (Certified Public Accountant) certification and the real estate profession has the CRS (Certified Residential Specialist). The finance profession has the CFA (Chartered Financial Analyst) credential.

The CPLP (Certified Professional in Learning and Performance) is a credential for training and development practitioners offered by ATD Certification Institute. It is a broad-based certification and addresses the 10 areas of expertise as defined by the [ATD Competency Model](#). Through earning the CPLP, you are able to distinguish yourself and attest your expertise in the T&D field. Credential holders prove they have an advanced understanding of the theories behind the practice and how to apply the practice to ensure results; it escalates company stakeholder confidence and increases visibility.

The registration deadline for the last testing window of the year is November 10. If you are interested in learning more about the CPLP certification, email me at directorcertification@astdnebraska.org and visit the ATD [CPLP webpage](#). We offer a free CPLP test prep program and can provide advice and feedback on obtaining this valuable credential. Why don't you email me today?

Instructional Design:

It Really Does Work!

Submitted by: Ericka Juno

I was recently working on a new training effort with a fellow trainer. She was the subject matter expert on the content, but she was also a trainer. So, I followed her lead. We had been working a while on the training project when I finally had to stop what we were doing. I said, "I hope you don't mind, but I need to break out my 'working with subject matter expert' skills." So I asked her, "In your own words, what are our objectives for this training?" Each time she told me an objective, I wrote it down and then asked her if there were any other objectives. When she finally said no, I said, "OK, let's get started."

We then went through each objective and outlined the content for that objective. We also identified potential activities and audience interactions. It was amazing how much we accomplished and how quickly we accomplished it, once we went back to the basics and started with "What are your objectives?" So, this article could be about building objectives or about sticking to the basics or about following a design and development process. Yes, I know the title is "Instructional Design - It Really Does Work!" And it does. But I think you all know that already. So I want to take a different focus, working with subject matter experts.

Subject matter experts know everything. And I don't mean that sarcastically. They really do know everything. That is why they are the experts. Here are some tips to help you when you are working with subject matter experts.

1. Remind them they are the subject matter experts and it took them years to become the expert. We are not making subject matter experts with 20 minutes of eLearning or even a week-long course.
2. Focus on the audience.
 - If the audience is brand new employees, what do they need to know? Are there references we can give them to supplement on-the-job applications?
 - If the audience is advanced in the subject already, what knowledge can we assume?
3. Focus on the objectives.
 - Don't let the subject matter expert keep adding content. If it doesn't tie to an objective, cut the content or add another objective.
 - Even if there is existing content, step back and ask the subject matter expert, "In your own words, what are the objectives for this training?" It might be tempting (and fast) to reverse engineer your objectives from your content, but that seldom gives you the best results.

Don't be afraid to push back. Just as your subject matter expert is an expert on the content, you are an expert on adult learning and instructional design. Take this as an opportunity to educate your subject matter expert. For example, when dealing with rules or compliance, most subject matter experts say you have to teach the rule exactly as it is written. But most rules are written in passive voice and are hard to understand. Explain to your subject matter expert you want to make it active voice so the learner clearly understands the rule and what actions they should take. A nice compromise is to show the rule exactly as written, but explain it in active voice. After all, the ultimate goal of the

training is for the learner to apply the rule correctly. And for that to happen, they must understand it.

Training for Consensus

Submitted by: Kathy Swensen

There is an old Chinese story about three blind men who encountered an elephant for the first time. They each felt the strange creature. Later they discussed the nature of an elephant. "An elephant is like two tree trunks, standing close together," said one. "No, no! An elephant is like a straw fan, twitching back and forth in the breeze," said the second. "You are both wrong!" said the third man. "An elephant is like a smooth polished cane with a tilted end."

When I train assessors to evaluate candidates' performance in a testing process, I often have a group of strong individuals who disagree about what they saw. In order to ensure a successful outcome to the project, I have to train the group to articulate and then agree on a rating for the behaviors they observed. During training, I review all the job simulations that will be used in the test, and then present the assessors with a simulated candidate so that they can observe and record the behaviors shown. The assessors then independently rate each behavior against a pre-established behavioral benchmark and give each benchmark a rating, using a scale that runs from Missed the benchmark to Hit the benchmark. When the benchmark is Candidate made a decision about the transfer request, the assessors are usually in agreement. But a benchmark such as Candidate began a thorough investigation into the allegation can cause disagreement. "The candidate just told the Acting Sergeant to look into it! That's not thorough!" says one. "What else can the candidate do at this point without gathering more information?" says another.

My job as the trainer is to move the assessors toward agreement while maintaining a civil environment. Early on, I did not always succeed. But now, by taking a few steps, I can always get the group to where they need to be. Some of the steps involve preparation, and some involve guiding the group process.

1. **Define the target.** As clearly as possible, define the desired behavior. What are the actions of the most highly skilled candidate? What is the standard? I aim to write each benchmark as clearly and specifically as possible so that the expectations are clear to all.
2. **Allow participants to save face.** When an assessor gives a rating that is much higher or lower than the rest of the group, he may question his ability to perform the role of assessor. And as we all know, adults often express fear as anger. In order to prevent this result, I start the training with a description of the continuum of agreement. I point out that as they represent different agencies with different policies, procedures, and expectations, they will need to articulate their expectations so that the group can come to consensus. I also present the continuum. At one end, the group is in complete agreement on ratings. As we move down the continuum, one person can say "I don't agree, but I can live with it," or "I don't agree, but I

concede to the opinion of the group." At the far end is "I don't agree. I believe strongly that we must stop and discuss this rating." Notice that there are three stops on the continuum before active disagreement!

3. **Give specific and positive feedback while participants are learning their role.** One of my most treasured comments came from a police chief who had never been an assessor before. He told me, "At the beginning of the training, I wasn't sure I could do this, but you gave me a lot of encouragement about my ratings so that I became very confident." While at times I have to redirect someone who is going down the wrong path, most often I notice successful efforts, which builds confidence in my participants. I also start the training by telling them it is my job to see that they are prepared to perform their role as an assessor, and that I will do whatever it takes to make sure they are ready.

By taking these three steps, I can train every group for success. Give specific and positive feedback while participants are learning their role. One of my most treasured comments came from a police chief who had never been an assessor before. He told me, "At the beginning of the training, I wasn't sure I could do this, but you gave me a lot of encouragement about my ratings so that I became very confident." While at times I have to redirect someone who is going down the wrong path, most often I notice successful efforts, which builds confidence in my participants. I also start the training by telling them it is my job to see that they are prepared to perform their role as an assessor, and that I will do whatever it takes to make sure they are ready.

Focus...Plan...Execute: How to Support Your Organization's Business Goals

Previously published in the NWA Business Journal in August, 2012;
Adapted in October, 2013 for use with Learning/T&D Professionals

by **Ken and Patti Leith**

All too often, planning is shorter term. Organizations should do focused planning, and the Training and Development (T&D) arm should teach the organization how to do so but also have a plan of their own. This article focuses on some best practices to achieve that.

Focus: The anatomy of a plan is that it must focus on a purpose and objectives. What are you trying to accomplish? Why? To what degree? Dream big and reach high. Everyone should know the focus to stay engaged.

What T&D can do...

- Assist employees to connect to focus.
- Lead communication about the future.
- Assist the leaders in continually communicating focus.
- Help departments connect to focus.

Plan: Next, people should create the plan. It should be goal-oriented, reaching further than today. Achieving business goals depends on your ability to make today's activities directly impact tomorrow's objectives.

What T&D can do...

- Help people learn about planning.
- Help people understand how to align actions with goals.

A proactive T&D entity also needs a relevant plan of their own to connect all learning to the results goals of the organization.

Execute: The execution template should be clear about what, who and when something should get done. Ensure that all activities have purpose.

What T&D can do...

- Show employees how to develop execution plans.
- Develop leaders to hold people accountable.
- Ensure Change Management practices are utilized.

Learning Professionals should approach all work with the goal of supporting the business. Intentionally apply curriculum. Use relevant, real world activities. Ask learners to commit to results improvement. Then, measure the improvements and tell everyone!

Patti and Ken Leith are Managing Partners of EDGES, Inc., a Strategic Planning and Process Efficiency firm based in Bentonville, AR. They also own and operate e-Gauge, Inc., a software services company specializing in talent management and strategic plan execution. You may contact EDGES at 479.203.7198 or www.getedges.com.

New and Renewing Members

Jill Banaszak, Mutual of Omaha
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Christin Benson, Union Pacific Railroad
Sean Bilodeau, McGladrey LLP
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Cara Peacock, Bellevue University
Sherry Phillips, Cox
Dan Schaecher, Lincoln Financial Group
Denise Seaman, Railway Educational Bureau
Heather Wherry, Lincoln Financial Group
Daniel Williams, Oriental Trading Company

Calendar of Events



[Trainer's Institute Session 1: The Right Stuff: Great Design Creates Engaging Content](#)

Day: Tuesday, October 7

Time: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Location: Children's Hospital, 110 N. 175th Street, Omaha, NE 68118

[Trainer's Institute Session 2: Training With Impact: Facilitation Techniques That Wow](#)

Day: Tuesday, October 7

Time: 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Location: Children's Hospital, 110 N. 175th Street, Omaha, NE 68118

[Demonstrating the Value of Training](#)

Day: Wednesday, October 8

Time: 7:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Location: Scott Conference Center, 6450 Pine Street, Omaha, NE 68106

[Social + Emotional Intelligence: Strategies for Success \(International Coach Federation\)](#)

Day: Friday, October 10

Time: 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Location: Bellevue University Main Campus

[Trainer's Institute Session 3: iBrand: Designing Your Personal Brand as a Learning Management Professional](#)

Day: Tuesday, October 14

Time: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Location: Children's Hospital, 110 N. 175th Street, Omaha, NE 68118

[Trainer's Institute Session 4: Developing The Talent Of Others](#)

Day: Tuesday, October 14

Time: 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Location: Children's Hospital, 110 N. 175th Street, Omaha, NE 68118

[Talent Development vs. Training: The Future of Our Profession](#)

Presented by ASTD-Lincoln

Day: Thursday, October 16

Time: 11:15 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: Jack J. Huck Continuing Education Center, 301 S. 68th St. Place, Lincoln, NE 68510

[Trainer's Institute Session 5: eLearning Doesn't Have To Suck](#)

Day: Tuesday, October 21

Time: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Location: Children's Hospital, 110 N. 175th Street, Omaha, NE 68118

[Trainer's Institute Session 6: Rapid Training Design](#)

Day: Tuesday, October 21

Time: 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Location: Children's Hospital, 110 N. 175th Street, Omaha, NE 68118

[Trainer's Institute Session 7: Training on Trial: From ROI to ROE](#)

Day: Tuesday, October 28

Time: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Location: Children's Hospital, 110 N. 175th Street, Omaha, NE 68118

[Trainer's Institute Session 8: The Value of Learning: Identifying Business Needs and Strategic Alignment](#)

Day: Tuesday, October 28

Time: 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Location: Children's Hospital, 110 N. 175th Street, Omaha, NE 68118



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