



## July 2016 Newsletter

The 4<sup>th</sup> of July means different things to different people, but for most of us, it includes family and friends of one sort or another. It includes grilling out, water fun, hot sun, and warm memories. At the end of this day when the skies turn dark, we sit in a fog of smoke with bursts of purples and greens sounding off with a bang for victory. Thank you to the men and women who have given their life or have served or continue to serve our great country!

### What's happening in July?

**ATD Nebraska's July Summer Social** will take place at Werner Park this year! Members are invited to bring the whole family for an evening of fun on July 21! Follow the link located later in this newsletter or visit the ATD Nebraska website at [www.atdnebraska.org](http://www.atdnebraska.org) to learn more. Register by July 14 to reserve your tickets for this annual event!

### Watch for it in August!

#### **August Program:**

Register now for the August 10 program, *Assessments Through the Learning Process*.

## **CPLP Information and Orientation WebEx free to members!**

August 2 & 4: Register now for a free informational session to learn the benefits and process to earning the coveted CPLP designation.

Shonda Walker; Director of Communication

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## **July Quick Links**

**Talent Selection Vs. Talent Identification**

**Why Stress May Not Always Be Bad**

**Light My Fire**

**Why in the World Should You Think of Joining a Board?**

**12 Ways Learning & Development is Like Baseball**

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## **Talent Selection Vs. Talent Identification**

**Written by: Amber Hutchinson, VP of Programming**

**“Take me out to the ballgame. Take me out with the crowd!”** Be glad you can’t hear my off-key singing right now! As we get ready for our ATD Nebraska Summer Social at Werner Park, I have been thinking about baseball and its relation to what we do. ATD = Association for Talent Development. Talent Development? Baseball teams know a lot about talent development, don’t they? I read an article by John O’Sullivan that was posted about youth baseball programs titled “Our Biggest Mistake: Talent Selection Instead of Talent Identification.” In the article, he notes that Talent Selection is the culling of players with the current ability to participate and be successful in events taking place in the near future. On

the other hand, Talent Identification is the prediction of future performance based upon an evaluation of current qualities. John goes on to argue that "Talent selection is pretty simple, talent identification is an art. One yields great results today; the other builds elite athletes (individuals) and winning teams for the future."

This article caught my interest because I just did some interviews and hiring within my area at work. It made me think about how I went through that selection process and what I was looking for. Was I looking for the person who already possessed what I needed in the "now" or was I looking for that prediction of future performance? Maybe they didn't have specific experience related to my current job, but they had that extra something that I could predict would do well for my team in the future. And I could train and develop them in those abilities they may not have as much experience in.

Much like a baseball coach, I'm building and developing my team. I can't just think about the games I want to win in the short term, but where I want my team to be at the end of the season and future seasons! Because in the end, no matter if you are a sports team or a corporate team, we are all looking for the BIG W!

I hope to see you all in July at Werner Park where I promise to sing quietly off key during the seventh inning stretch!

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With over 250 members, we reach a variety of workplace learning and performance decision-makers. The Nebraska Chapter offers a monthly program sponsorship package or you can customize your own.

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## Why Stress May Not Always Be Bad

Written by: Jen Wichern, VP of Education

I've always been the type of person who likes to keep busy. From elementary through high school I participated in multiple extracurricular

activities (musicals, debate, tennis, basketball, dance, etc.) outside of attending school. In college, I took a minimum of 18 credit hours and worked two part-time jobs to keep my brain engaged. As an adult, I take on multiple projects at work, am the VP of Education for ATD Nebraska, and am a wife and mom to two small kids. There are days when I feel stressed out. I'm sure most of you have felt that way, as well.

I recently read an article by Dr. Travis Bradberry titled, "How Successful People Stay Calm." I thought it would teach me some tricks on how to keep calm when I'm feeling overwhelmed. It did that, but it also opened my eyes to something else: our performance increases when we are under a moderate amount of stress.

I encourage you to read it, not only to find ways to help you be more successful, but to understand how stress isn't always a bad thing.

[How Successful People Stay Calm](#) by Dr. Travis Bradberry

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## Light My Fire

**Submitted by: Kristi Rutledge, Secretary**

***Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire. ~ Plutarch***

After an organizational realignment last year I asked our restructured leadership team to use their smartphones to capture images depicting the culture they hoped to create in their newly defined division. My company, like many companies, is working to become a learning organization; an organization where associates are encouraged and supported in their continual quest to learn and grow. So I wasn't surprised to see a number of images that represented continuous learning. During our discussions it was clear that our leadership team wasn't yearning for more structured learning opportunities but that they wanted to create an environment where learning occurred spontaneously and was a normal part of the work day.

Four themes emerged during the smartphone culture activity, and we decided to form teams to create and implement activities that would

promote each theme.

The *Growth and Opportunity* team piloted two mini-saturation activities that produced promising results. They defined a saturation activity as one where individuals research a topic with no specific agenda in mind and collect “dots” of information that they share with teammates to enhance knowledge and build business acumen. The strength behind the saturation activity is that it taps into an individual’s natural curiosity and encourages her to learn for the sake of learning. It is one way to build the collective knowledge of a team that can be drawn on when the need arises.

Here’s what they did.

- Selected a cross-training opportunity where existing associates would be learning new processes related to an unfamiliar insurance product
- Selected a broad research topic and created mini-saturation plan guidelines to provide to cross-training participants with their definition of a saturation plan and generic suggestions on where and how to research insurance topics
- Restructured the cross-training training plan to provide time for research and debrief sessions

Participants were invited to a pre-training meeting where the mini-saturation plan was explained, the research topic and saturation guidelines were distributed, 30 minutes of production time was designated for research, and report out instructions were shared. The concept was new and the participants listened in stone-faced silence. The *Growth and Opportunity* team then went into a wait-and-see mode.

The participants came to the first training session prepared to share what they had discovered, each one offering a different product perspective. The facilitator helped weave their contributions into a practical product description that spoke to the participants’ interests. The initial skepticism of the participants had turned into enthusiasm for the process and their discoveries. The activity also generated more questions than it answered; a delightful outcome to trigger further investigation!

The *Growth and Opportunity* team was encouraged by the results of the cross-training pilot and repeated a similar process with a new hire class that yielded equally encouraging results.

The mini-saturation activities were designed to:

- Encourage independent research and thinking

- Create more interest and engagement in learning
- Provide broader exposure to learning content
- Build business acumen
- Support an environment that encourages challenging the status quo

Like the Flipped Classroom model, the mini-saturation activity puts more of the responsibility for learning on the shoulders of participants and provides greater opportunity for individuals to take their time with the learning process to ensure they grasp the content. The learning completed outside of the classroom is then built upon during the scheduled class time. Unlike the Flipped Classroom model, the mini-saturation activity does not provide pre-recorded content to review or even a set research path. Participants have more freedom to customize their learning experience. The learning completed outside of the classroom is then shared, interpreted, and augmented during the scheduled class time. The learning outcomes are less calculated and therefore the model is more suited to use with ancillary content than it is as a way to train core concepts.

The activities are not without their challenges. Although encouraged by the enthusiasm and contributions of the participants, we have not discovered a reliable way to measure the impact of the activities; prioritizing time for independent research in a production environment is difficult; and connecting the “dots” of information to provide functional learning requires a skilled facilitator. From a facilitator’s perspective it’s easier to package tidbits of learning into bitesize chunks and serve them to participants, but it’s more satisfying for participants to forage for their own tidbits.

The culture teams have been disbanded, but the results of their pilots and other activities have been shared across the division. The hope is that other areas will start sprinkling their training with mini-saturation activities to help light the fire of learning across the division.

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## Why in the World Should You Think of Joining a Board?

Written by: **Ralph Wojcinski, VP of Finance**

Periodically, ATD Nebraska promotes open Board positions. You'll see them advertised at our monthly programs, and you might hear about them through your professional affiliations. You might wonder why you would want to join any Board.

A saying comes to mind—"Is that what's bugging you, Bunkie?"—a question made famous by that famous old philosopher, Eddie Lawrence. Look him up. He's an old-school comic. You might recognize his voice.

Some people have an image of a Board member as one who sits in judgement; one who utters "Harumph" and is pretty stuffy. With ATD Nebraska, nothing could be further from the truth! Our Board members are volunteers in the most positive sense of the word. We are full of ideas and do our best to make our members' experience the best it could possibly be.

As an ATD Nebraska Board member, I have had the opportunity to serve and learn. My experiences with the Membership, Education, and Finance teams broadened my horizons beyond belief! I learned skills from my peers that are directly applicable to either my professional and/or personal life. I can't tell you how much I appreciate the people on our Board.

Networking is important for most of us. As a Board member, you will

expand your networks—you'll interact not only with Board members, but those Chapter members and members of the community you'll work with.

Your experiences will enhance your profile within your organization, as well as within your community—your Chapter community—as well as those you will touch anywhere with your knowledge and guidance.

If you are a lifelong learner, or just want to gain some new skills, then this is the role to be in. You won't be tied only to functions within your team; you'll have the opportunity to join in the work of other teams on our Board.

Lastly, your experience on a meaningful non-profit Board can be a boost to your career. Many companies hiring executives won't consider an applicant without this vital experience.

Not convinced to join us? Curious? Have a question? Contact me any time. I'll be happy to discuss it with you. You can also talk with any Board member about the benefits of joining the ATD Nebraska Board.

Be on the lookout for open Board positions in the future!

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## **Upcoming Events!**

**July 21: ATD Nebraska July Summer Social at Werner Park**

**August 2: CPLP WebEx Information & Registration**

**August 4: CPLP WebEx Information & Registration**

**August 10: Assessments Through the Learning Process**

## **12 Ways Learning and Development is Like Baseball**

**Submitted by: Jill Banaszak, Past President**

Our upcoming ATD Nebraska Summer Social at a Storm Chaser game on July 21 made me start thinking about baseball and if there was any connection of the sport to the world of training. A quick Google search showed I wasn't the only one wondering about those similarities.

And wouldn't you know it—in June of 2014, Rick Ayers, Assistant Professor in Teacher Education at the University of San Francisco published an article in the *Huffington Post* about *12 Ways Teaching is Like Baseball*. Rick is in scholastic education, so just replace "school" with "company" and the sentiments are exactly the same.

THE BLOG

## **12 Ways Teaching Is Like Baseball**

06/30/2014 02:41 pm ET | **Updated** Aug 30, 2014

- [Rick Ayers](#) Asst. Professor in Teacher Education at the University of San Francisco

**1. Everyone has seen baseball, even played it, and thinks they could probably do pretty well on the field. In reality, it is incredibly hard.** While many people have some ideas about teaching and opinions about teachers, they really have no idea how difficult it is.

**2. In baseball, even if you are at the top of the league, you experience failure every day.** You will experience tremendous joy, even elation, but also crushing disappointment. In fact, success only comes by having things go right sometimes within a project where failure often happens.

**3. The richest teams, and the richest school districts, have everything better, from facilities to staffing to the personnel they can afford.** When a scrappy poor team does well, commentators hold it up as evidence that money does not matter for success. But the exceptions prove, and sometimes simply reinforce, the dominant rule.

**4. You have to keep a steady commitment, not get emotionally side-tracked, in order to perform every day.** That is, you can and should get emotionally involved. But your emotions will get the better of you if you hold a grudge or you can't let go of a conflict. You have to start each day fresh, believing it can be a positive day for you.

**5. Baseball is deeply enriched by immigration from all over the world.** So is teaching, so are our schools. Immigration is not a "problem," it's the coolest thing about our communities.

**6. Baseball can only be evaluated by the accumulation of multiple measures, an explosion of data, and judgments are weak when it is evaluated by a single metric.** Indeed, Sabermetrics, which has transformed baseball, is based on a careful evaluation of over 50 statistics. Those who rely solely on batting average or win records get a skewed idea of what is happening. Evaluating kids and teachers with a single test score is distorting reality and narrowing curriculum. Excellent schools like Central Park East use a wide range of narrative, performance, and qualitative evaluations.

**7. Disgustingly selfish bosses don't hesitate to take away pensions from ballpark employees if they can get away with it.** Same with school and state bosses. Think Wisconsin's Scott Walker.

**8. People think you get three months off but really you are working hard all year.** And you work ridiculous hours during the season. 'Nuff said.

**9. It ain't over 'til it's over.** Never give up. We witness tragedy and heartbreak but we also witness miracles, every day!

**10. You can talk about the baseball technique all you want but in the end it is an art, something that is only learned by doing, over and over and over.** You can only learn by doing and paying close attention to what works and does not work. Then when you think you have it down, you have to improvise and change your plan because new circumstances arise. We even say, "That kid threw me a curve ball."

**11. While you feel that you are performing alone out there, ultimately it is a team sport and requires deep collegial engagement.** Often teachers work behind closed doors, alone. But the

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**12. Baseball is a long story, about a whole season, with smaller stories inside of it.** Each game is an epic story, and there are smaller stories inside of that, the innings, and smaller stories inside of that, each at-bat. The layering on of incredibly complex encounters, of a thousand decisions and choices, is what makes the teaching life so rich and complex.

One way baseball is not like teaching: **The salary.**

**Follow Rick Ayers on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/rick\\_ayers](http://www.twitter.com/rick_ayers)**

My only experience with baseball was one season of T-ball where as a parent you praised the kid for not picking dandelions in the field and one season of "real" ball where you wished for rain so the game would be cancelled. (Sorry baseball parents, I'm glad my kid stuck with hockey.) Hope you enjoyed the article. Play ball!

## New and Renewing Members

**Liz Bradley**, Bellevue University  
**Elizabeth Curtis**, Nebraska Medicine  
**Brian DeVeney**, Omaha Steaks  
**Julie Dygert**, Bellevue University  
**Sarah Hampton**, Nebraska Medicine  
**Stephanie Kasperek**, OneWorld Community Health  
**Kathy Swensen**, Swensen & Associates  
**Melodi Szymczak**, WCTS  
**Sommer Wiegert**, Nebraska Medicine

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