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## August 2016 Newsletter

Like me, most of you have more than likely been busy getting the kids back to school. A new school year is so exciting with new classes and new teachers. A curriculum that has been improved from the prior year and ready to be unleashed on the up-and-coming eager learners. Much like the Trainer's Institute coming in September!

### What's Happening in August?

#### August Program:

The August 10 program: [Assessments Through the Learning Process](#)

### Watch for it in September

#### Trainer's Institute!

Early Bird registration now through September 1! Visit the [website](#) for more information and to [register](#)

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# August Quick Links

**Books, Training, and the Quality of Your Tools**

**Tech Tool Tip - Padlet**

**Back to School Time!**

**Engagement Through Gaming**

**Why Are You a Member of ATD Nebraska?**

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## **Books, Training, and the Quality of Your Tools!**

**Written by: Jonathan Titus, President**

Rather than give you my summer reading list as I did one year ago, I'd like to share some recent findings on testing, assessment, and evaluation. I think this pairs well with our upcoming speaker, Eric Shepherd, who will speak on the subject of [Assessments Through the Learning Process](#). Please join me August 10 over the lunch hour to hear from Mr. Shepherd, the CEO of QuestionMark. Furthermore, the upcoming [Trainer's Institute](#) offerings beginning September 13 fall in line with this subject matter. In particular, check out Evaluation and Application on October 4.

Whether you are assessing learning programs, testing learners, evaluating facilitators, reviewing employee performance, measuring training impact, or even creating a survey for benchmarking purposes, the quality of the tool you use and the structure of both the questions and the response options can make or break your efforts. From my experience, some of the leading experts in this arena are Jim and Wendy Kirkpatrick, Ken Phillips, and Will Thalheimer. Please join in the conversation on our LinkedIn group ([ATD Nebraska Chapter](#)), and share the other gurus you may already rely on for this knowledge sharing.

I only have space here to share a couple brief tips to get you started, but I'd love to share more advice if you need it or more direction to help you conduct your own

research in the most efficient and effective manner. Don't be shy; please contact me! Here are my top three tips:

**1. If you are using a rating scale (e.g., "Likert") for responses to a question, use an odd number.**

Odd-numbered scales allow participants the option of choosing a neutral response, which is a perfectly valid response ([Phillips, 2007](#)). You can achieve this with a 1 - 5 scale or a 0 - 10 scale. The advantage of a 1 - 5 scale is quicker testing time. Some advantages of 0 - 10 (an 11-point scale): Your survey can be more comparable to competitors, it will result in fewer neutral scores, and it's better for both Net Promoter Score (NPS) and the more general Satisfaction metrics. Odd scales, or "forced choice" scales, can be useful when more discriminating choices must be made, but are known to result in more frustration and more incomplete surveys on the part of the respondents.

**2. If you are trying to get the most information possible out of a level one evaluation in regards to the success of a training session, ask questions that will indicate results of future level two and level three surveys.**

In other words, asking how relevant participants think the new knowledge is to their work is a statistically valid and reliable preview of the amount of application you can expect. Furthermore, asking how likely participants think they are going to use the new knowledge on the job (outside the classroom) is a statistically valid and reliable way to predict the extent to which the knowledge will impact business. Although these are going to be rough estimates and depend on many other variables that could be in play, they are much more valuable than whether or not a participant liked the training.

**3. If you don't have plans to (or can't) change it, don't ask about it.**

If you can't act on it, what's the point? Value your respondents' efforts and time constraints by asking only the questions you need to ask and only what you have control over.

I hope this gives you a good start to refresh your knowledge of testing, assessment, and evaluation. Of course, if you're still wondering what I'm reading, I'm happy to share Patrick Lencioni's *The Ideal Team Player* and Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner's *Learning Leadership*. I picked up both of these at the amazing ATD 2016 conference – for free! I'll also give away a choice of one of the following books to someone who comments on our LinkedIn group about this subject. If your name is randomly drawn, I'll contact you, and you may choose from *Crucial Conversations*, *Now Discover Your Strengths*, or *How to Win Friends and Influence People in the Digital Age*.

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## Our Sponsors!



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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.

## Tech Tool Tip - Padlet

Written by: Karen Wegner, Director of Engagement

Have you ever needed an easy way to share a variety of learning resources with people who aren't part of your organization? To address this need for a recent workshop, we created a Padlet page. It's free and easy to use!

(<https://padlet.com/kgwegner/automate>)

If you find tech tools interesting, stay tuned for a free upcoming ATD Nebraska webinar on tech tools!

A screenshot of a Padlet page titled "Automate! Programming Workshop" by Karen. The page is a grid of seven content blocks. The top block is "Augmented Reality - Aurasma" with a video thumbnail. The second row contains "Agenda" (a document thumbnail), "Building Automation Systems" (a video thumbnail), and "Problem-based Learning" (a document thumbnail). The bottom row contains "Automate YouTube Channel" (a video thumbnail), "Open Badge Available!" (a badge thumbnail from Metropolitan Community College), and "A Teacher's Story" (an article thumbnail). A dark grey footer at the bottom contains the text: "Your text caption goes here. You can change the position of the caption and set styles in the block's settings tab." The Padlet interface includes a top navigation bar with "SIGN UP", "LOG IN", and "SHARE" options, and a red plus button in the bottom right corner.

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# Back To School Time!

Written by: Liz Brumels, Director of Certification

It is back to school time for most of the students in our lives. As we send them off with wishes for a successful year, it's a great time to think about how to make a successful year for the learners we interact with in our work. I did a quick search for "Back to School Tips" and found many articles geared toward getting children ready for school. What resonated with me was how easily the same tips could be applied to learners of all ages. Here are a few of my favorite tips:

1. **Set up for success** – Create a comfortable space with limited distractions and include necessary supplies.
2. **Have an agenda** – Time management can help you stay on top of everything you need to do.
3. **Have fun** – Incorporate fun into your work and learning to make it more enjoyable.
4. **Ask for help** – Seek help when you need it whether it is a trusted colleague or a book or online resource.
5. **Celebrate accomplishments** – Take time to recognize successes and achievements. Celebrate milestones along the way to the end result.

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## **Engagement Through Gaming**

**Submitted by: Teresa Gan Wolfe, Director of Marketing**

**Written by: Brian Jackson**

Most managers wouldn't consider playing video games during the workday a productive use of employee time, but Dan Pontefract, chief envisionsor of Telus Corp.'s transformation office, thinks differently. When Pontefract joined the company in 2009, he saw that engagement in the workplace was pretty standard, hovering right above 50 percent. However, he wanted to improve those rates. "How are we all going to proverbially sing from the same choir sheet?" Pontefract recalled asking himself, speaking during a recent webinar. "Employee engagement is a measure of your culture. Maybe there's a case to be made that you need to invest in the employee experience, simultaneously putting your customers first." His answer? A speed skating video game.

The method takes the idea of gamification literally. Employees play the game over six weeks as part of a competition; races take place every Friday. However, the goal isn't necessarily to "win." The game teaches Telus's leadership principles. "We want to teach empathy," Pontefract says. Winners get to choose which charity will receive a corporate donation. The game, among other efforts, has been wildly successful. Pontefract reports that in 2015, engagement hit an all-time high of 87 percent.

View source: [IT Business](#)

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**Upcoming Events!**

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## "Why Are You A Member of ATD Nebraska?"

Written by: **Ericka Juno, VP of Membership**

Has anybody ever asked you "Why are you a member of ATD Nebraska?" I am frequently asked that question, and there are so many possible answers it is hard to limit myself to a 30-second elevator speech response. Here are some of the things I love to talk about:

- **Professional development** – From the [monthly programs](#) and [newsletters](#) to my work on the [board](#), there are many opportunities to improve my professional skills. What is the last thing you learned to improve yourself?
- **Career resources** – [Resume reviews](#), [mock interviews](#), and [mentoring](#) all help me to advance my career. These tools are not just for when you are job hunting! Is your resume current? Are you ready for your next opportunity?
- **Networking** – From [getting connected](#) at programs to the summer and winter socials, I have met so many talented professionals. I always know someone who knows someone when I have a question. And let me tell you, my boss has noticed! Who is the last talent development professional you met that wasn't at your company?

As I mentioned, it is hard to stay at 30 seconds. If you want more information, check out the links or contact me (or any of the board members)! There are a lot more benefits. Why are you a member?

## New and Renewing Members

**Travis Barton**, PayPal

**Melissa Brady**, Mutual of Omaha

**Devra Bram**, Booz Allen Hamilton

**Chris Buschelman**, PayPal

**Linda Ciochetto**, PayPal

**Jessica Couser**, PayPal

**Melanie Dasovic**, Centris Federal Credit Union

**Kayte Dickson**, PayPal

**Mary Dworak**, Applied Underwriters

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**Marisa Gift**, Lutz  
**Bob Gittins**, PayPal  
**Daniel Hall**, PayPal  
**Justin Hamilton**, PayPal  
**Abbey Howard**, Kiewit Corporation  
**Michael Kwiatowski**, PayPal  
**Lisa Lewis**, PayPal  
**Christine Lynch**, CSG International  
**Alisen Mayfield**, Centris Federal Credit Union  
**Tim Munderloh**, PayPal  
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**Corrissa Thomas**, PayPal  
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**Amanda Yankah**, Early Out

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