



## MANAGER'S CORNER...

Here's an update regarding our community in terms of training.

Community training in FY15 saw 33 members receive competency aligned technical training via third-party vendors such as Kirkpatrick, Bob Pike Group, and Langevin Learning Services to name a few. In addition, 43 members participated in a limited pilot program with Lynda.com completing over 248 training videos spanning a variety of educational topics. Looking toward FY16, the aforementioned pilot transforms into a cornerstone training venue for community member's competency based technical training needs as well as other cross-foundational training opportunities. Stay tuned, more to follow regarding the expanded Lynda.com training community program in late September or early October.

Why are competencies important and how are they used? Even the best of the best employees will need guidance, professional, and technical development. This is where competencies fit into the schema of talent management. Competencies,

when used properly support the development of:

1. position descriptions;
2. vacancy announcements;
3. training and development initiatives;
4. and Individual Development Plans (IDPs).

A competency based position description clearly defines the worker-based knowledge, skills, and ability needed in order to perform the essential functions of the job. A vacancy announcement may use competencies to describe those factors important for successfully performing the major job duties. Assessed competencies, by either the organization or the individual, can illuminate the need for training and development from an organizational and/or individual perspective. From an organizational perspective, for example, the organization may identify a competency gap in their workforce as it relates to the current mission or perhaps the organization may be assessing future mission requirements and the necessary competencies required to perform the new mission. From the individual perspective, an em-

ployee can perform a self-assessment against current or next graded occupational competencies in order to identify strengths and weakness in their own knowledge, skills, and abilities. Competencies are broad in nature; they provide versatility to the organization and the individual employee. So when your best of the best employee seeks career guidance, professional or technical training and development from you, perhaps you will start the conversation with competencies...

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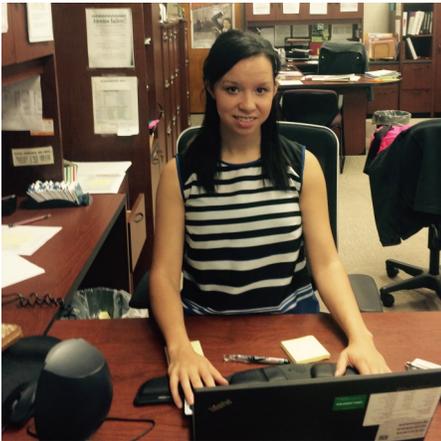
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# Appreciate Advising: Fostering Success through Enhanced Interaction

By Jessika Fusco



**Jessika Fusco** has a Bachelor of Art degree in Psychology from Ohio University at Athens, Ohio and a Masters Degree in Clinical Social Work from The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. She has 4 years of experience providing mental health counseling and case management service to youth and families as a licensed social worker. She has been with Marine Corps Community Service in the Lifelong Learning program as an Education Service Technician for over a year. She currently lives in Beaufort, SC with her husband, whom is an Active Duty Sailor. Mrs. Fusco is an avid Ohio State Buckeyes fan and loves spending time with her family.

If our primary duty as an advisor is to foster and facilitate student success in seeking higher education opportunities, it becomes our responsibility to pursue various ways to honor that task. By using the theoretical principles of Appreciative Advising, our encounters with students can be more beneficial and more rewarding than we had ever hoped. Appreciative Advising is more than just a protocol for building rapport with our students. It is a new way of thinking and motivating students towards success.

Appreciative Advising is defined as “an intentional collaborative practice of asking positive, open-ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potentials” (Bloom, 2008). Appreciative Advising is a theoretical model that provides advisors step-by-step suggestions on conducting effective advising sessions. The Appreciative Advising model includes six phases: Disarm, Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver, and Don't Settle (Bloom et al., 2008). This article summarizes the model as it relates the way in which Education Services Specialists can enhance their interactions with Marines who are in the pursuit of higher education.

Bloom et al. (2008) describe the Disarm phase as “the intentional use of positive, active and attentive listening and questioning strategies to build trust and rapport with students”. This phase could be considered the “relationship building” phase. Lawson (2009) states that the Disarm phase of Appreciative Advising has three main components: verbal communication, nonverbal communication, and the environment. Examples of verbal communication include utilizing active, reflective listening skills and engaging in unrelated small talk by providing appropriate self-disclosure, and being aware of voice tone. Examples of nonverbal communication include smiling, presenting a relaxed body posture, and maintaining appropriate eye contact. The third component of the Disarm phase, the office environment, is often overlooked. By purposefully creating a safe and vibrant work space, academic advisers help to set a positive tone for their meetings with visitors (Lawson, 2009). The primary goal of the Disarm phase is for advisors to make a positive, lasting first impression with a

student conducive to helping them achieve success.

The next phase of Appreciative Advising is the Discovery phase. Through the use of active listening and open-ended discussion, an advisor can assess an individual's situation, internal resources, external resources, and current coping skills (Huebner, 2009). Advisors should utilize the technique of open-ended questions, to assist students in identifying their individual strengths and skills set for achieving success. Not only does this assist students with realizing their potential, but it also allows for advisors to compliment and encourage students to be the best they can be. The Dream Phase of Appreciative Advising focuses on goal setting. In working with students, advisors can help assist students with identifying their dreams and goals for the future, as well as, linking the student's strengths identified in the Discover phase with the goals and dreams of the Dream Phase (Huebner, 2009). The primary task for advisors in the Dream Phase is to help students set goals while inquiring about their individual hopes and dreams for their future.

During the fourth phase of the Appreciative Advising Model, Design Phase, the advisor has the responsibility of co-creating a plan of action for the student to utilize in order to make their dreams a reality (Huebner, 2009). The Design phase involves assisting the student with brainstorming various options, providing students with the resources to encourage students to research their options, encouraging students to weigh their options and potential outcomes, and providing positive feedback (Bailey-Taylor, 2009). The best way to ensure success is by providing students with a clear idea of what they will need to do and assist in devising a list of concrete, achievable tasks to complete in order to achieve their goals. The fifth phase, Deliver Phase, involves advisors assisting students by providing them with interventions that help them to carry out their goals and plans (Huebner, 2009). These interventions can include: assisting students with reframing and changing a student's perception of transitioning to higher education, conducting an assessment of a student's resources and making referrals as needed, and generating problem-solving strategies. The student carries out the plan created during the design phase and the advisor offers support and

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encouragement.

The final phase of the Appreciative Advising Model is the Don't Settle Phase. The primary goal of this phase is termination and follows up. By following up with students after an interaction, an advisor is continuing to challenge, support, and encourage as they move throughout their transition into higher education. An advisor may assist the student in reviewing the steps that the student has taken thus far and assist them to identify the next steps to take while encouraging them to continue their quest for higher education.

Advising can be a unique process. Often enough, it is not just about helping students figure out what they want to do with their lives; it is also about teaching them how to tap into their stories, their viewpoints, and their goals to make their desires and dreams become reality. By incorporating Appreciate Advising into our daily interactions with Marines, we can assist with easing the fear and worry that often comes with unknown of transitioning to a higher education environment. For more information from the Appreciative Advising Institute, please visit: <http://www.appreciativeadvising.net/>.

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Lawson, T. (2009). Disarm: The art of first impressions. *The Mentor: An Academic Advising Journal*. Retrieved from <http://dus.psu.edu/mentor/old/articles/090722tl.htm>

## Article Update: T3S Blending Learning

According to Bill Weidow, Co-Author of the article "Blended Learning, To Boldly Go Where the Corps has Not Gone Before," T3S just completed a learning analysis based on new T&R events and is in the process of developing new blended curriculum for the Instructor, Curriculum Developer, and Formal School Management Courses. Projected implementation of the new blended courses will be 1 April, 2016.

For more information regarding this article contact Bill Weidow.

# Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program

By James Copeland



**Mr. James Copeland, Jr.** is a retired United States Air force Veteran and a retired Law Enforcement Officer for the State of Virginia and currently works for the Department of Education ,Office of Federal Student Aid Awareness and Outreach Group. Mr. Copeland earned his BS in Information System Management from Potomac College, Washington DC and his MBA from University of Phoenix Reston, VA. Mr. Copeland has also completed his Doctorate Degree in Education with Argosy University Arlington, VA. Mr. Copeland currently serves part-time as an adjunct professor in the DC Metro with several Universities and Colleges facilitating in the disciplines of Information Systems Management, Computer Forensics, and Business Administration. Mr. Copeland is also responsible for student learning program design as it relates to the classroom environment and systemic comprehension of Information Systems operation. Mr. Copeland has been a professor for approximately seven years.

Education can be a costly endeavor but a necessary credential when marketing oneself in the job market. Some may find that they must use loans in order to pay for their college education. The U.S. Department of Education has several options to assist borrowers in repaying their loans; in this article we will briefly discuss one program called, Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF). While there is not a set rule whether an applicant will truly benefit from PSLF it will depend on their income rather than their debt, as well as changes in income over the duration of the program which is ten years. Here are some important points to consider and be aware of:

## Loan Consolidation

- One lender and one monthly payment
- Flexible repayment options
- Reduced monthly payments
- Fixed interest rate
- Subsidized, unsubsidized, PLUS loans for graduate or professional students, Perkins Loans, and certain health profession loans made by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services are eligible for consolidation

Note: Private loans are ineligible for federal loan consolidation but can be used to establish the repayment period on consolidation loans.

## Income-driven – Pay As You Earn

The Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan helps keep your monthly student loan payments affordable, and usually has the lowest monthly payment amount of the repayment plans that are based on your income. Payments are generally 10% of discretionary income.

## Income-Contingent Repayment

A repayment plan for Direct Loans only that bases a borrower's monthly payment on discretionary income and loan amount. Payments are the lesser of 20% of discretionary income or a percentage (based on income) of what the borrower would pay on a 10-year standard repayment plan.

## Income-Based Repayment

Income-Based Repayment (IBR) is designed to reduce monthly payments to assist with making your student loan debt manageable. Payments are generally 15% of discretionary income. IBR has higher pay-

ments than does Pay As You Earn, but usually has lower payments than ICR.

## REMEMBER!!!!

- Applicant must make 120 separate monthly payments, they do not have to be consecutive
- Any payments made on Direct Loans prior to enrolling in PSLF are assessed to determine if they qualify and if so they are counted if made in 2007 to present year.
- Payments made on other qualifying repayment plans are counted, IBR, ICR and PAYE
- Applicant must be working full-time employer at a qualifying, 501c (3) or Government which includes federal and local
- Payments must be made within 15 days of due date
- The forgiven amount at the end of the program is not treated as taxable income

To help you determine whether any of these option(s) is the right plan for you, please refer to [Studentaid.gov](http://Studentaid.gov) for more information and resources to assess whether this is a good choice for you.

# Adaptive Learning and Fast Track Challenge Exams: Tools For Military Members to Advance Their Education

by Dr. Connie Johnson



**Dr. Connie Johnson** is Colorado Technical University's (CTU) Chief Academic Officer and Provost, working with both online and ground degree programs. She has oversight of academic and student affairs, including faculty, curriculum, student advising, registrar's office, prior learning assessment and learning center. During her time at CTU, Connie has initiated adaptive learning technology implementation, effective leadership of academics, women's leadership, leading academics through change, and effective technology implementation in online classroom.

Connie's educational background comprise of an EdD, Education / Organizational Leadership (2010) an MBA, Management (1991), Nova Southeastern University; and a BS with honors, Criminal Justice, Florida State University.

Connie has served in higher education for 20 years with extensive experience in teaching and administration. Connie's experience includes working in leadership roles at American Inter-Continental University (AIU) since 2002, including Academic Operations, Student Affairs and online learning. Prior to AIU, Connie worked for a number of proprietary colleges serving in faculty and program chair roles, and was instrumental in the advancement of online course delivery.

Increasingly, today's educators are focused on serving nontraditional students – those who have prior learning from other institutions, work experience or military training. Unlike high school graduates fresh from the prom, these adult students enter higher education with a range of experiences and knowledge they've already attained. Personalized learning techniques like adaptive learning, competency based learning, blended learning and open source learning help address their specific needs.

By providing material that works best to a student – whether auditory, visual or tactical – adaptive learning technology respects a student's time and enables instructors to see in real-time what their students know and their students need to improve on. With this knowledge, instructors can optimize their students' learning paths to ensure successful progress through the course.

## Learning Gets Personal

How does it work? In an English Composition course, a student may have strong core knowledge in grammar skills, but lack the ability to effectively construct paragraphs. The personalized learning approach, using sophisticated learner analytics, lets that student demonstrate his or her strength in grammar and then focus more heavily on effective paragraphing - the area where the most improvement is needed. Sophisticated learner analytics – such as those offered through CTU's intellipath™ adaptive learning platform – help faculty determine the specific skill or knowledge a student needs to master a topic, while allowing students to quickly move past areas of competency. As a result, learning is personalized and efficient.

Because adaptive technology provides students the ability to move through course content at their own speed and with information provided specifically for the student, it is no surprise that the learner response to adaptive learning has been positive. One student said, "I am a visual learner. Adaptive learning made the class much easier for me because it was more hands-on. It pushed me to use brain cells that would normally be docile in a classroom setting."

Personalized learning helps create relevancy by offering students an experience that adapts to their unique skill set and

knowledge base. Rather than deliver rote learning tasks focused on short-term memorization of facts and information, personalized learning guides students to acquire practical skills and knowledge they can use. A CTU student noted, "As a student who is returning to college after several years in the professional world, it's definitely taken me some time to adjust to the pace and amount of new information in the courses. But the adaptive learning technology has helped me see where I need to improve, so I can work in those areas until I become proficient."

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## Proactively Supporting Student Success

Ask any faculty member: teaching a diverse student population, including those with military affiliation, isn't easy. Faculty are placed in the difficult position of needing to deliver a specific set of learning outcomes to students who arrive to class with a wide range of skills, knowledge and abilities. One of CTU's program chairs said, "Personalized learning gives faculty members a data-driven perspective they've never had before."

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This takes learning to the next level, which is especially important in the online world where we don't have the benefit of face-to-face interaction with students. We receive real-time learner analytics that let us see if there is a class-wide learning issue or an individual concern. This data lets us respond to specific needs so we're not applying a broad, one-size-fits-all fix to address potential learning gaps."

Sometimes students may not be motivated to participate in a course because they feel they already know the course objectives. Through adaptive learning, faculty can serve a student additional content beyond what they already know. "Since I have been using adaptive learning in my classroom", a CTU online instructor noted, "Students tell me all the time that they didn't know they didn't know this much!"

## Earn Credit For What You Already Know

Since adult learning also takes place outside the classroom, CTU launched Fast Track™ in 2014 for students pursuing their Associate or Bachelor's degree. A set of technology-driven challenge exams, Fast Track allows students to earn course credit for the knowledge and skills they bring with them to the university. By passing multiple Fast Track exams, students are able to earn credits and complete a degree program faster, while saving money and reducing the amount of time to graduation.

As of August 2015, nearly 10,948 CTU students have taken Fast Track exams. There is an overwhelmingly positive response to Fast Track – one student noted, "I think it's a wonderful tool to use for adult students. Some of us have taken classes before and/or have working experience in the course. To be able to test out of a class saves time, speeds up progress, and saves money. I would definitely recommend Fast Track challenge exams."

Fast Track allows students to demonstrate mastery of course content acquired through military experience and training and "test out" of courses that may not be needed. Adaptive challenge exams can save military students time and tuition. As universities and colleges improve processes that provide

adult learners the opportunity to honor prior learning assessment, adaptive learning challenge exams are a viable and important option to reduce the time and money spent towards earning a college degree. Based on the response to Fast Track, it is no surprise that adult learners value adaptive learning - the opportunity to prove their knowledge in content areas where they have met the outcomes of the course through work prior learning, work experience or military training. Find out more about Fast Track benefits at [www.coloradotech.edu/fasttrack](http://www.coloradotech.edu/fasttrack).

For more information visit:  
[www.coloradotech.edu](http://www.coloradotech.edu).

## Lejeune Leadership Newsletter

(3rd Qtr 2015)

Are you interested in information regarding Marine Corps Civilian Leadership Development Program? Please access the newsletter below to find the following below:

### Highlights:

- **Camp Lejeune Host USMC First Seminar Course**
- **Aspiring Civilian Leaders Have Options**
- **LLI Leadership Development Tiers**
  - Tier 1: Online Development Courses
  - Tier 2: Local Area Programs
  - Tier 3: Seminars
  - Tier 4: Centrally Managed Programs

LLI Newsletter://  
[www.mcu.usmc.mil/leadership/mcclld/Documents/Qtr%203%20CLDP%20Newsletter.pdf](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/leadership/mcclld/Documents/Qtr%203%20CLDP%20Newsletter.pdf)

# BPG Training Evaluation: No More Boring Technical Training (webinar)

by Louie Sagisi



**Louie G Sagisi** is the Academics Officer at Expeditionary Warfare Training Group Pacific. He was an instructor at The Basic School and the Director of Aviation Pre-flight Indoctrination. He holds a Master of Arts in Adult Education and Training and is experienced in teaching small groups to large audiences in a military and civilian environment using a variety of training and education methodologies. His passion is incorporating active-learning techniques in curricula and serving the community through his church.

The Bob Pike Group (BPG) webinar "No more boring technical training" is a good

introduction into helping organizational trainers to shift technical training from the realm of instructor-centered presentations to participant-centered sessions. In other words, BPG provides ideas on how to make learning less passive and more active. The benefit of making a training session more interactive is that it can increase retention from as low as 20% up to 90% (Dale, 1969).

For people in positions that require an educational background in learning theories (e.g., 1750, Instructional Systems Specialist) this one-hour webinar helps to generate a few ideas on how to make learning theory applicable in the classroom. For people without a background in education, this webinar is a good primer to the world of adult-learning techniques. The topics covered were: lecture versus participant-centered training, definition of technical training, and training methods. The one-hour webinar is not intended to make you a subject-matter expert in any of these areas but to show that there is an alternative way of presenting technical subjects that can engage the students more fully than using a traditional lecture methodology. The people who should attend are educators who need a few fresh ideas on making technical training more active.

The training is offered in a live online format where the facilitator guides learners through the training. Participants can interact within a chat box and are able to exchange some ideas of how they make training more active in their own organization. For example, one of the methods presented for teaching software is a technique called the "Scavenger Hunt." In many software programs, there are many ways to do one thing. For instance, in a word processing program, a drop-down menu or a keyboard shortcut can be used to cut and paste. Instead of showing learners every way that you can cut and paste, you show the learners one way to do it and then you send them on a scavenger hunt to find the other ways that the software allows them to cut and paste. You can see how this shifts the training from an instructor-centered presentation (passive learning) to a participant-centered presentation (active learning).

Active-learning techniques like this can enhance any presentation if applied properly. In addition, these methods help learners in cognitive development: rather than telling learners "what to think," we should be teaching learners "how to think" and this webinar is a good introduction to these techniques.

## Article Update:

### Andragogy Techniques, Trainers and Educators: Enlisted Professional Military Education

by Vanessa M. Nason, Ed.D.

The submission of the article, *Andragogy Techniques, Trainers and Educators: Enlisted Professional Military Education*, for the July-August edition of the Education Community of Interest (COI) newsletter helped to bring about self-reflection and professional conversations from colleagues within the Education COI. Several gracious readers provided positive feedback about the article that not only supported the importance of curriculum and instruction as a whole, but also highlighted the need to broaden the use of adult learning methodologies in military education.

Most educators have a desire to perfect their craft in order to improve student perfor-

mance inside and outside the classroom. The exchanging of ideas about curriculum development, teaching, and learning is only one approach to impacting progressive change throughout the Training and Education Command. Currently, efforts are being pursued to promote topics relating to Curriculum Design and Andragogy techniques through professional development at Marine Corps University. Be on the look-out for professional learning opportunities that will challenge thinking and provide a tool box of resources for educators desiring to grow in their profession. In the months to come, I implore you to continue to do your part to ignite a synergy of commitment towards learning. Remember, your contri-

butions to the COI newsletter will provide the collaborative efficacy that is needed in our educational community.

Note: For more information about upcoming professional development opportunities at MCU, please contact Dr. Kim Florich @ 703-432-4682 - [kimberly.florich@usmcu.edu](mailto:kimberly.florich@usmcu.edu)

## The Langevin Experience by Thomas E. Rodgers

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My name is Thomas E. Rodgers, I serve as a Series 1712 Training Specialist with Weapons Training Battalion, Quantico and I was afforded the opportunity to attend Langevin Learning Services Training for Instructional Design for New Designers class. The class leader and performance improvement coach provided guidance and instructions into the Langevin approach to instructional design. Langevin Learning Services based its Instructional Design for New Designers on the ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate) process. Langevin breakdowns its design cycle into twelve (12) areas:

- Determine needs (training needs analysis and the when's; when should we do a training needs analysis and when do we provide training).
- Plan project (constraints, time ratios, planning considerations, estimated time).
- Analyze learners (target learners).
- List tasks (this is what you will be teaching).
- Analyze tasks (this is the now you will do it).
- Write objectives (goals, outcomes, and standards).
- Design tests (determining what type of test to be used).
- Select methods (determining the how the information will be delivered to the learners).
- Structure course (present lesson content with observation of learners, feedback to learner's evaluation of learners with a summarized lesson).
- Develop materials (lesson plans, student outlines, and handouts).
- Validate course and Evaluate (In the Langevin design validate and evaluate are provided at the same time as this is the pilot course followed by some type of post course evaluations).

The Langevin design cycle did not match the Systems Approach to Training (SAT) Users Guide in its design cycle, but closely resembled it, because Langevin Learn-

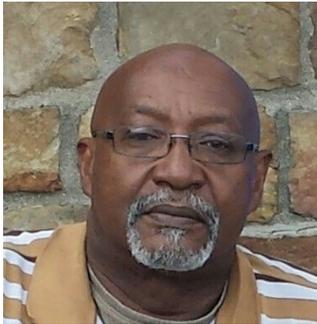
ing Services primary audience is the private sector. It was a valuable learning experience as it gives a curriculum developer or training specialist different approaches to apply the SAT process.

One of the aspects of the Langevin design process that I will use in work routine will be the validate course format. As validation is a field test of your course, the use of this outline will allow me to do an academic validation after each course conducted within the battalion to ensure that the instructional material remains current and relevant.

This learning experience provided valuable and varied design backgrounds and experiences from course attendees and the opportunity of networking with class attendees post the learning experience. Overall it was well worth the expense and time to attend this course.

# Training and Development, a Priority in the Workplace by Ted Gerard

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*Ted Gerard Training Instructor 1712*  
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Currently a Training Instructor Weapons Training Battalion, Retired, First Sergeant after 24 years of service in the U.S Army, Graduate U.S Army Sergeants Major Academy, Electrical Technology Certificate, Exchange Server Certificate presently working towards an MBA. Also, Instructed electrical theory in Atlanta, Georgia for three years. Enjoying a 36 year marriage, two sons, one grandchild.

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Managers understand that it takes well trained employees to run a successful organization. They understand that the development of the work force not only provides them with well trained, knowledgeable employees but employees that are valuable to the work place. Managers also realize that employees who feel appreciated also have a sense of satisfaction towards their job. Morale is high and they are motivated. **Yet, many organizations feel that training and development is more optional than essential.**

Training provides employees with the opportunity to gain skills needed to accomplish their jobs and be able to perform better at their present position. Training is linked to a particular subject matter and only applies to that subject, whereas development usually deals with growing broader skills that can be used in various situations. Thinking creatively, decision-making and managing are just a few. Development is more about the individual employee.

Investing in employee's training and development creates a pool of well-trained employees who tend to adapt to changes and challenges in the work place. Confident employees become more involved in the organization's business, providing new ideas that can be beneficial to the overall operation of the organization. Well trained employees share information; **transfer of knowledge is and always will be critical to the continued success of any organization.**

Of course there are challenges to training and development of employees, i.e., missed time at work, cost to attend training, a delay in the completion of projects. But the benefits outweigh the challenges. Managers should establish training and development programs that meet the needs of all employees within their organization, being cognizant of course, of the challenges. The program should also address the organizations current and **future leadership training and development needs.**

If an organization isn't providing training and development opportunities for its employees it is not investing in its current and future success. It also is not ensuring that their employees stay competitive with today's workforce. Training and development is the insurance that the organization has towards success, not only for today but also for tomorrow.

**Training and development should be essential to all organizations, not optional.**

**Investing in the work force should be a priority for every organization.**

*“Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning”,*

Benjamin Franklin

**We need a robust training and development program at the organization level, a program that continuously seeks training and development opportunities for all employees.**