

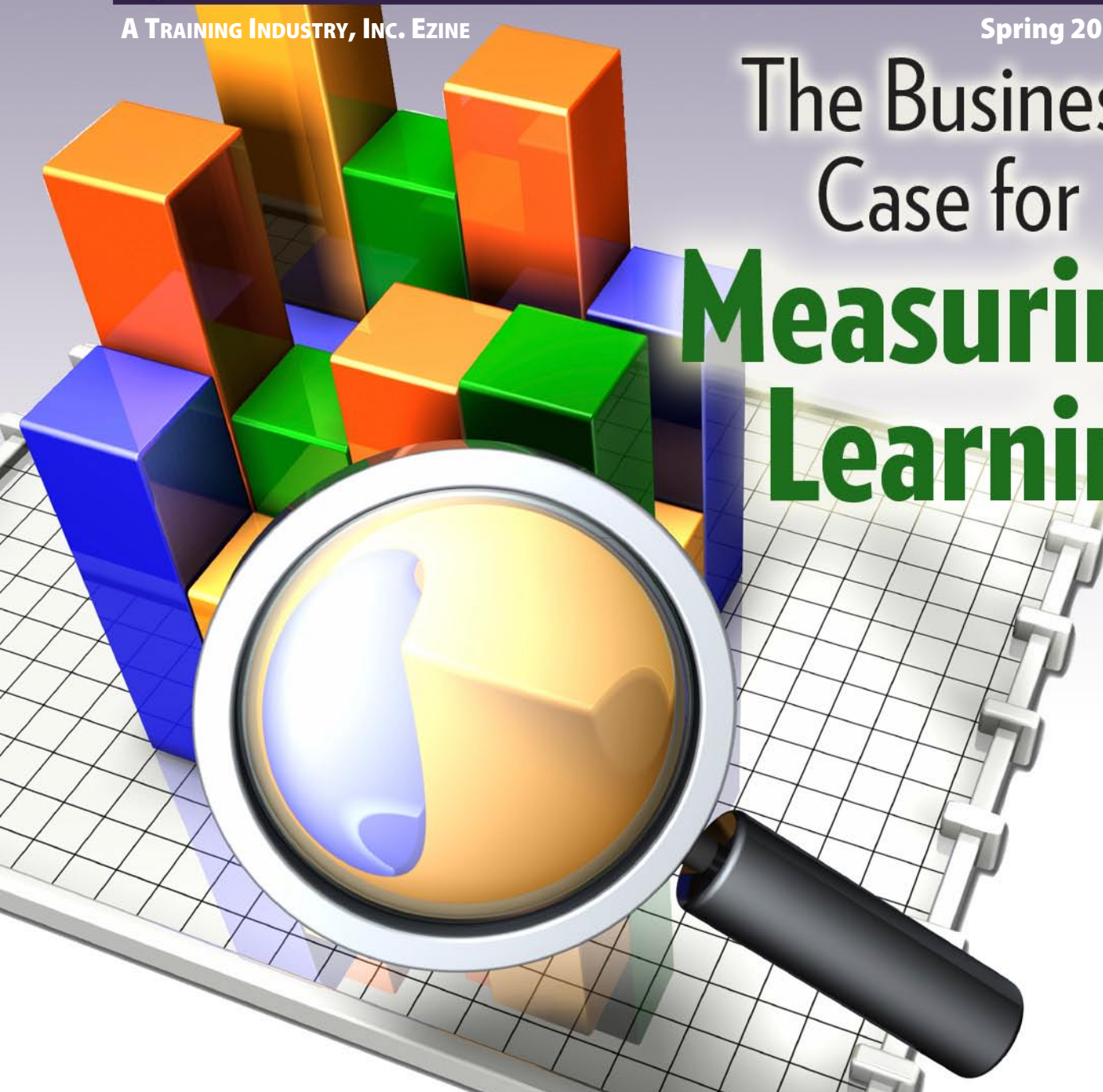
Business Perspectives on Managing World-Class Training

Training Industry

Q U A R T E R L Y

A TRAINING INDUSTRY, INC. EZINE

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The Business Case for Measuring Learning

- Blended Learning: Making Sense of the New Mix
- Training Technology: Bringing Senior Leaders on Board

IN THIS ISSUE

THOUGHT LEADERS

From Where I Sit

By Doug Harward

As we move into a more positive training industry, it's time to get creative and think ahead. **3**

At the Editor's Desk

This issue's guest editor, Kee Meng Yeo, knows we've come a long way as an industry. But it's time to take back the lead and move to the next level. **7**

Winning Organizations Through People

By Dr. Michael O'Connor

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People are motivated by their own values. Separating myths from fact can help you harness expectations and deliver real change. **9**

Learning Technologies

By Rick J. Crowley

A learning infrastructure requires processes, governance and technology. Are your solutions hitting the optimal mark? **11**

Performance & Productivity

By Charles Jennings

Training is more likely to succeed with managers actively involved. Engaging managers before and after is a safe bet. **13**

Closing Arguments

By Tim Sosbe

Handing high-potential employees can require careful consideration from the start. Does your organization have plans for the next generation? **34**



A D I N D E X

You're just one click away from the industry's leading suppliers.

RAYTHEON PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	2
TRAINING INDUSTRY TOP 20	6
INTREPID	8
SOFTSCAPE	10
SUPPLIER DIRECTORY	12
RWD	14
ALTUS	18
ADOBE	22
YOU MAKE THE CALL	26
ELEMENT K	35



WHILE EVERYONE HAS VALUES, THEY ARE OFTEN LATENT

PERSONAL VALUES: MYTHS & FACTS

In 1970 I did my thesis on the subject of personal values in an era before it had become popular. Since that time I have seen a wide variety of too frequent misunderstandings and misuses of this subject along with less common, but valuable insights and applications. Let's examine some of these, which are vital for anyone in business to know.

Myth #1: The best way to understand a person's values is to know their generation.

Fact: Research has repeatedly shown that personal values evolve as a function of two major forces in our lives: significant emotional experiences and socialization. Since these vary significantly among individuals, people cannot be understood by over-generalizing that individuals of the same age group or generation will have the same values.

Myth #2: Individuals have one clearly identifiable personal values point-of-view.

Fact: Many individuals are characterized by one or more of the following: lack of a clear values point-of-view, competing values, or transitioning values. In fact, much of the work of psychologists, counselors and coaches is due to these conditions.

Myth #3: The behavior of many people can be understood by their persona temperament, not their values.

Fact: People tend to be creatures of habit, especially when they have to cope with difficult situations or are distressed. As such, people are more likely to do "what they would do" not what their values tell them they "should do." As such, while everyone has values, they are often latent, not the driver of our actions.

Myth #4: The personal values of today's generation are unique and different from prior generations.

Fact: Throughout history the same four re-occurring patterns of beliefs have described human beings across cultures, including the differences among individuals and groups within them. While well-meaning people may use new labels in an effort to understand the values they see, the same internal motivating beliefs and disbeliefs have guided people in a cyclical pattern identified by a variety of researchers from many countries.

Myth #5: The key to personal success is knowing and giving people what they want based on their personal values.

Fact: Success in the real world for ourselves and others is based on being able to discover and deliver realistic solutions that can work for all based on shared commitment to both one's own well-being as well as that of others with different personal beliefs that are just as important to them as ours are to ourselves. This often requires effective communications, decision-making and problem-solving practices that are not natural and must be both learned and consciously chosen.

Dr. Michael O'Connor is a recognized thought leader, executive coach and founder of Life Associates, Inc. Michael is the co-author of "The Leadership Bridge Program (Situational Leadership II & DISC)" and the book, "The Leader Within." E-mail Michael at droconnor@lifeassociatesinc.com.