

CAROCP Market Watch

California Association of Regional Occupational Centers and Programs

(A Monthly Trends & Forecasting Report)

May 2006

TAKE THIS JOB AND CUSTOMIZE IT *(All Sectors)*

Author Ken Dychtwald, along with management consultants Tamara J. Erickson and Robert Morison, have written a new book called *Workforce Crisis: How to Beat the Coming Shortage of Skills and Talent*. In part of the book, the authors examine how companies should tailor the workplace to meet the needs of the over-55 crowd, the time-squeezed mid-career employees, and the fickle under-34 group. They advise to retain top talent you need to tailor work to fit the different stages of life.

Over-55 crowd: Mature folks often have higher levels of job satisfaction, productivity, loyalty, and enthusiasm than do their younger colleagues. Moreover, seasoned workers are less likely to job-hop, get torn apart by issues of work-life balance, engage in egocentric battles with colleagues, or suffer from burnout. What they do want, however, is meaningful work, recognition of experience, and a flexibility that will allow them to reduce or alter responsibilities at the sunset of their careers.

Mid-career employees: Management often doesn't fret too much about the needs of those between the ages of 35 and 54. That shouldn't be the case, since some in this group may feel growing frustration as their careers stall and they fail to move up into senior management. Moreover, such workers may feel sandwiched between obligations to kids and aging parents, while others may be trying to reenter the workforce after taking time off to raise children. Employees in this group often value flexibility and aid in meeting obligations. Fresh assignments and training can reinvigorate their careers. They may crave more leadership opportunities, long sabbaticals, or both.

Under-34 group: This group emerged as the least satisfied and least engaged. They want respect, independence, self-defined work schedules, and challenging duties with sufficient compensation in pay or time off. Employers who want to keep them have to build an engaging, friendly, and high-performance environment. Empower young staffers, expose them to different opportunities, and – perhaps most important – stay in touch with former employees and make it easy for them to return if they leave to try out other jobs.

[BusinessWeek](#), April 24, 2006

WASH YOUR HANDS *(Health Science and Medical Technology)*

Finally hospitals are turning up the heat on hand hygiene. With rising alarm over hospital infections, which cause 90,000 deaths annually, a growing number of hospitals are adopting aggressive hand hygiene surveillance and monitoring programs, and in some cases imposing penalties for doctors, nurses and health care workers who don't follow the rules. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention is collaborating with the nonprofit Institute for Healthcare Improvement and two leading infection control professional

societies in a program to boost compliance using behavior-modification techniques, “best practice” guidelines, and rigorous programs to monitor adherence. John Boyce, an infectious-disease specialist who helped write the CDC hand hygiene guidelines, runs a free instructional web site at handhygiene.org, where more information can be found. The Wall Street Journal, April 5, 2006

THE PICTURE FRAME WORTH 1,000 BOOKINGS (*Arts, Media, and Entertainment Technology*)

For serious photographers – as well as designers, illustrators and other artists for that matter – eye-catching online portfolios have become more important than ever. Many clients now use them as the primary basis for evaluating prospective hires. There are a number of software products that let visual artists showcase their work. None match the all-around sophistication of liveBooks, which has attracted such A-list organizations as photography agency Magnum and the Fraenkel Gallery in San Francisco, as well as photographers who shoot for magazines such as *Vanity Fair*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Glamour*, and *Time*.

The flash-based software lets artists easily create attractive sites that emphasize their images. Users can quickly build customized password protected presentations for specific clients. And the software lets artists control whether or not visitors can print or save any image, eliminating worries about the prized picture being misappropriated. Fast Company, May 2006

PREPARE TO BE ZILLOWED (*Finance and Business*)

Plug in your address to zillow.com and you get an aerial photographic map that shows your home’s estimated market value, or you can check out the value of someone else’s home. Zillow stands for “zillions of pillows.” The zillion stands for the massive amount of data they need to calculate the valuations of 65 million homes, and the pillows are evocative of the home. Every real-estate transaction has the hard, analytical side, as well as the soft, squishy side. As zillowers look up their boss, blind dates or job candidates, one might ask if this is an invasion of privacy. There have been surprisingly few complaints because as a society, we have decided that home values should be publicly available to avoid unfair taxation and to contribute to an efficient real estate market. Newsweek, April 24, 2006

WORKING FROM YOUR CAR (*Transportation and Engineering and Design*)

Nearly 88% of Americans drive to work each day, with an average round-trip taking 52 minutes. But what’s now dead time is quickly becoming productive with these high-tech car toys:

- **Turn e-mail into voice mail** – If checking your BlackBerry has ever caused you to narrowly miss a head-on collision, try getting your e-mail read to you over the phone. Once you get used to hearing your e-mail narrated to you by a monotonic computerized voice, the jConnect service (\$15 a month) is actually quite liberating. JConnect even lets you create an oral reply, which it then sends as an audio file attachment.
- **The information interstate** – Now that the phone carriers are finally building high-speed wireless networks, you can drive for miles without losing your Internet

connection. The modem will cost you a little more than \$200, and the service is \$80 a month.

- **Everything at your fingertips** – Instead of just firing up your computer in your car, you can install a car computer. The StreetDeck (\$1,699, plus roughly \$500 for installation) lives in your trunk and has a touch-screen display in the dash. A simple swipe of your finger will pull up driving directions, MP3s, satellite radio, or even a DVD. You can perform system diagnostics and even hook up a rearview camera. [Fast Company](#), May 2006

SURGICAL PRECISION *(Health Science and Medical Technology)*

Pilots use a detailed pre-flight checklist before taking passengers' lives into their hands. So why wouldn't operating room surgeons and nurses be subjected to the same rigorous preparation? Kaiser Permanente has implemented a pre-surgery checklist at their medical centers nationwide. Before a surgery starts, everyone in the operating room says their name, what instruments they'll need and what their role will be. The team then double-checks the patient's name, procedure, and critically, which body part will be operated on. Sounds obvious, but surgical errors do happen and they're on the rise. There were 89 wrong-site surgery errors in 2005.

A breakdown in communication is the most common culprit behind cockpit and operating room errors. However, in aviation, whistle-blowing is encouraged. Pilots are not penalized for reporting an error or a near miss. Historically, mistakes in hospitals have been kept quiet out of fear of malpractice lawsuits or the loss of medical licenses. So in addition to the pre-surgery checklist, everyone in Kaiser's operating rooms is encouraged to speak up. [The Orange County Register](#), April 20, 2006

IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT *(Information Technology)*

NASCAR and DirecTV are partnering to enhance the spectators' experience at NASCAR events. They are testing cameras that enable the viewer to watch all of the race car driver's in-car cameras, all of the pit stops, his car data and the race camera on his race car. The idea is a television race broadcast specifically produced from the perspective of your favorite driver. NASCAR also has a handheld device called the NASCAR Nextel FanView that enables fans to cycle through seven or eight in-car cameras, get the television feed, data feeds, radio broadcast and listen to the drivers. It brings all of the excitement of racing, without the danger, to spectators. [Fast Company](#), May 2006

WHAT MAKES A HIGH SCHOOL GREAT? *(Education, Child Development, and Family Services)*

If you want to understand what's happening in some of America's most innovative public high schools, think back to your own experience in that Petri dish of adolescent social stratification known as the cafeteria. Were you a jock? A theater geek? A science whiz? Whatever your inclination, it determined where you sat. Now imagine that each of those tables was a school in itself – with a curriculum based on sports, drama, science or art and a student body with shared interests and common aptitudes. That radical idea is transforming thousands of high schools. A one-size-fits-all approach no longer works for everyone. Emphasis is now on establishing smaller learning communities in high schools of 1,000 students or more with the goal of no more than 600 students in a learning

community. For parents and students, these schools mean an often bewildering array of choices – small schools within larger schools, specialized charter and magnet schools for things ranging from fashion design to computer programming, and even public boarding schools for budding physicists or artists. On the plus side, students get more adult attention and are less likely to be lost in the crowd. They can focus on subjects they really care about while still getting a grounding in the basics. Some educators think this boutique approach comes with a cost: the loss of a common experience that brings everyone together under one big roof. Newsweek, May 8, 2006

NEW FOR THE HYPOCHONDRIAC (*Health Science and Medical Technology*)

Biophysical250 has developed a high-octane blood test that scans for more than 200 potentially devastating problems, including heart disease and cancer. The thinking is that annual physicals can't catch everything, and doctors can miss subtle signs of diseases early in their progression. Biophysical Corp's. test, by contrast, looks for the first chemical hints of illness by analyzing biomarkers – proteins and other bits in the blood associated with specific diseases. Customers contact Biophysical for an appointment and a technician visits to draw blood. Three weeks later clients receive a report outlining risk factors, a consult with a Biophysical doctor, and a breakdown for their own physicians. The downside is the tab: \$3,400. The company says its comprehensive workup is priced at 10% of what a comparable battery of tests would cost a la carte – but it's not likely to be covered by insurance. Fast Company, May 2006

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California State Standards for Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Industry Sectors

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|---|---|
| 1. Agriculture and Natural Resources | 9. Health Science and Medical Technology |
| 2. Arts, Media, and Entertainment Technology | 10. Hospitality, Tourism and Recreation |
| 3. Building Trades and Construction | 11. Information Technology |
| 4. Education, Child Development and Family Services | 12. Manufacturing and Product Development |
| 5. Energy and Utilities | 13. Marketing, Sales, and Service |
| 6. Engineering and Design | 14. Public Services |
| 7. Fashion and Interior Design | 15. Transportation |
| 8. Finance and Business | |

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