

CAROC MARKET WATCH

(A Monthly Trends & Forecasting Report)
September, 2004

WORK WEAR TURNS FORMAL

Corporate honchos are tired of casual Fridays turning into casual Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Although fashion trends don't change as often or wildly for men as for women, they do change. Casual is out for men--the suit is inching its way back. Formal wear trickles down to younger generations as a sports jacket with Dockers. For those who want to stick to casual—it's the polo shirt of the 1980s! Preppy is back!

Women's fashions whisper femininity instead of screaming sexiness and bare skin. The business suit is classic, but updated with color in pin stripes, nipped-in waists, and a little puff on the shoulders. Dresses are back! Dresses, skirts or pants can be worn with one of the most forceful fashion comebacks: the cardigan. [Business Monday, OC Register](#), August 9, 2004

THE RISE OF "GENERATION AND"

More young people want to make money and produce profits **AND** they want their work to have meaning. Businesspeople that have been in pursuit of the almighty dollar for years are suddenly asking, "Is this all there is?" Coincidentally, nonprofit organizations are eager to hire individuals with knowledge of business and industry.

Charity in the U.S. is an \$800 billion industry and is growing but before you give up your position in the public or private sector keep the following in mind:

- Competition for funding among the two million registered charities is fierce so you'll probably spend most of your time fundraising.
- Decisions in the nonprofit world tend to be made by consensus and only after endless discussion.
- Be ready to give, not take. You'll probably have to take a cut in pay.

[Fortune](#), August 2004

EXECUTIVE COACHING PAYS OFF

Executive coaching has become an important tool in helping newly hired managers assimilate. Called "onboarding", the practice can save employers money by helping new leaders transition to new jobs more smoothly. A recent study of 100 senior executives of Fortune 1000 companies showed that the return on investment from executive coaching was almost six times the initial cost of purchasing the services. [Business Monday, Orange County Register](#), August 30, 2004

HOT TECHNOLOGY

From a small segment of the computer peripherals business, flat screen production has grown into a sizable industry at the center of a global struggle for dominance. The makers of flat screens, all located in Taiwan, South Korea and Japan, are racing to finish new factories and stake a position in what will become their biggest and most lucrative market.

The screen industry is setting the agenda for scores of related businesses world-wide, from chemical makers in Germany to electronics retailers in the US. Flat panel makers have started to underwrite graduate studies programs, creating a research infrastructure and future employee pipeline common to other large industries.

Last year for the first time, computer buyers purchased more flat-screen monitors than traditional models. The television market is an even bigger opportunity for flat-screen technology. For the flat-screen TV business to take off, manufacturers will have to lower their costs and product prices closer to ordinary TVs. [The Wall Street Journal](#), August 30, 2004

MIDDLE MANAGERS MAKE IT HAPPEN

Senior executives may come up with the most brilliant strategy in history, but if the people who design products, talk to customers, and oversee operations don't foster innovations in their own realms, none of that brilliance will make a difference. It is the middle manager who turns the vision into reality and they have a number of characteristics in common:

1. **Comfort with Change.** They are confident that uncertainties will be clarified. They also have foresight and see unmet needs as opportunities.
2. **Clarity of Direction.** They choose projects carefully and, with their long time horizons, view setbacks as temporary blips in an otherwise straight path to a goal.
3. **Thoroughness.** They prepare well for meetings and are professional in making their presentations. They have insight into organizational politics and a sense of whose support can help them at various junctures.
4. **Participative Management Style.** They encourage subordinates to put in maximum effort and to be part of the team, promise them a share of the rewards, and deliver on their promises.
5. **Persuasiveness, Persistence, and Discretion.** They understand that they cannot achieve their ends overnight, so they persevere – using tact – until they do.

[Harvard Business Review](#), July-August 2004

HIGH-TECH SALES

High-tech vending machines are about to open new sales channels for thousands of products: batteries, videos, DVDs CDs, cell phones, memory cards and more. Revenue from these machines will double to \$70 billion by 2010. The new or retrofitted machines will enable credit card customers to buy goods valued at a few dollars to more than \$100 for major items.

ATMs will offer many more services within five years. Customers will be able to cash checks, wire money and buy money orders. They will also be able to buy tickets to movies, sporting events and shows, or buy cell phone minutes. Local retailers can benefit by posting ads on ATM screens and dispensing discount coupons from ATMs. [The Kiplinger Letter](#), June 18, 2004

UNCLE SAM AND HOME DEPOT WANT YOU

Home Depot, facing intense competition from Lowe's and Wal-Mart, is looking for leaders to help improve customer experiences, overhaul information technology and expand overseas. They want managers who deliver results, act strategically, and drive excellence. Home Depot CEO, Robert Nardelli, has discovered that Uncle Sam has already trained his latest pool of managerial candidates. Home Depot has enlisted more than 360 ex-military officers into their management training program. The recruits are intense, smart and hardworking – and with four to eight years in the military, they have real leadership experience, often under challenging circumstances. [Fast Company](#), September 2004

OPPORTUNITIES IN ENGINEERING FOR WOMEN

There is no question that the demand for engineers is about to pick-up. The male-dominated industry expects to face a mass exodus in the next five years as a large number of engineers reach retirement age. One of the biggest untapped sources of potential engineers is women. Twenty to 25 percent of students graduating from college engineering programs today are women. More women are also in leadership roles in the industry. [At Work Extra, Orange County Register](#), July, 2004

PROPERTY TRENDS

The stronger economy is reviving demand for office space, but there's still no shortage of vacant offices. With overall vacancy rates fairly high in many cities, now is a good time to renegotiate leases that expire in a year or two or to upgrade office space to newer buildings with more amenities. Booming foreign trade is fueling office demand in Southern California while San Jose is still smarting from the tech shakeout. The big growth area for builders is hospital construction which will go like gangbusters for the next two years. [The Kiplinger Letter](#), July 9, 2004

THE WORLD OF HOME OFFICES IS BOOMING

More home businesses are ramping up to full-time operation. The number of full-time home-based businesses has risen to 9.9 million in 2004 and the number of part-time home businesses has fallen to 5.2 million. The shift reflects a five-year shake-out. Marginal home-workers are heading back to the office and a paycheck while successful ones are cranking it up a notch.

Although running a booming business from home risks transforming a home into a workplace, there is a clear trend toward integrating home offices and home life. Steelcase and other vendors are designing hip, upscale office furniture that makes work look more like home. In addition to pretty furniture, however, the integration takes people skills and great family communication. [Business Monday, Orange County Register](#), July 12, 2004

LEADERSHIP SECRETS OF SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS

1. Resiliency is Key. (Episode: "Rock Bottom") In today's global economy, leadership is all about your multitis: multinational, multicultural, multilingual. Marooned in an unfamiliar abyss, SpongeBob must summon his willpower and resources to learn a new dialect, land some grub, and find his way back to Bikini Bottom.
2. Don't Rest on your Laurels. (Episode: "Employee of the Month") A leader strives to keep his edge. After winning employee of the month 26 times in a row, SpongeBob finds his streak at risk. He rushes to out clean, out cook, and out work his rival Squidward. "Having pride in your work," he says, "is the only thing that makes it all worthwhile."
3. Know your Employees' Limits. (Episode: "Squid on Strike") Looking to cut costs, Mr. Krabs docks workers for such infractions as "breathing" and "existing." When SpongeBob and Squidward protest, they're fired; spurring them to "dismantle the establishment" (a goal SpongeBob takes literally). [Fast Company](#), September 2004

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Carol Hume
Coastline ROP
chume@coastlinerop.k12.ca.us

Gerry Kawamura
Coastline ROP
gkawamura@coastlinerop.k12.ca.us

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