

Effective Employee Training By Alexander Gordon

Businesses have begun to realize the importance and the benefits of employee training and development. When employees are trained properly and assessed periodically, a business definitely improves. Training makes the employees up to date on the latest techniques used as well as helps the business achieve customer satisfaction and retention. They are better equipped to deal with problems and reduce outsourcing or calling specialists to deal with certain problems. Proper training is necessary for the growth of the employees as well as the business, hence a needs analysis will be helpful in determining what kind of training best suits your employees as well as in Getting the Most out of Employee Training.

Some companies give a lot of importance to the training as well as determining what the result of the training should be such as increase in profits, better performance of employees, reduced costs as well as fewer chances of mistakes due to employee errors. They even provide new employee orientation for a period of few to ensure they get familiar with the business, its policies, its products and their duties etc.

Things to Consider In Order Getting the Most Out Of Employee Training:

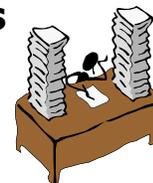
The key to getting the most out of employee training is to do a careful analysis of what sectors of the business needs extra guidance, what kind of training to give, what the expected end results are, such as, improved job performance. They have to determine the costs involved in training employees, monitoring the personnel periodically to see if they have implemented any changes due to the training and if there is an improvement in the business.



They have to have a need for the training as well as opt for training that will be best suited to meet their needs. The cost of the training should be reasonable and not too heavy on the pocket. Training employees is essential, as it will equip them to do their duties efficiently and im-

Productivity Linked To Clean Desks

By Amy Thomas



It may not be a surprise that recent studies have shown that people with clean desks tend to be, well, more productive. Thirty-three percent more productive to be exact. Is it because they have less work to clutter up their desktops? Hardly. The study also measured productivity in relation to organization skills and those who stay better organized, not only have tidier offices, but they also waste less time looking for things through piles of disorganized paperwork and more time getting their work done. Whether you're naturally neat and clean or messy may have a lot to do with how you were raised and whether you are a right- or left-brained thinker. But that doesn't mean that your genes need to dictate how productive you can be. There are several ways to tidy up that workspace and here are some tips to help you get started even if you're a complete pack rat. First, focus on keeping your desk clean. Lots of workspace will help you spread out your paper work when you need to, without losing papers, misplacing things, forgetting documents or misfiling the wrong items together. Start by freeing up some desk-

top space by getting that bulky computer monitor off the desk. A monitor arm, mounted to the side or back of your desk, will not only give you

WA3 Calendar Briefs:

- November 6 - Annual General Membership Meeting with voting and Handwriting Analysis
- November 9 and 10 - GLAStar Education Conference



President Message: 2
Tom Clark



Student Housing Conference 3
Keynote: William Strauss



NAA AIMS UPDATE: 4
Sign Up for this today



GLAStar Awards and Education 5
Schedule



Education and Event Calendar 8
for WA3



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www.wa3hq.org

Deadline:

15th of the month for next month's publication.
Submit all materials to
Alice Ehn, Executive Officer

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President's Message:

By Tom Clark

It's hard to believe that November is here and I am almost through my tenure as your president. Over the past 10 months, I have become aware of the many benefits our association has to offer that I did not realize before. In particular, all the "unknown" value from NAA (the national association). I learned of the many benefits during my visit to Washington, DC for the annual conference. I also came to realize that the members make all the difference and their level of participation makes each association prosper. I would like to encourage all of you to think about how you might contribute and help the association in the year ahead.



The association held a successful legal "town hall" forum at Weber's in October lead by Jim Fink and Karen Valvo from Reach, Reach, Fink and Valvo. The association hopes to have future events of this type as it went well and offers an alternative format and time for a membership event.

At the legal town hall meeting we learned of a court case that was headed to the Michigan Supreme Court that will directly affect your bottom line if the supreme court affirms the lower court decision. In the case of *Allison v. AEW Capital Management* the injured party fell on a snow covered icy parking lot, knew that it had snowed and that the ground could have been icy and the courts found that the Management company was still liable. Currently, the PMAM is working with all the local associations to file an amicus brief that will support the position that the lower court was not right in holding the property management firm liable. We will keep you posted on this. The case is due to be taken up by the Michigan Supreme Court in January.

Thank you all for your participation and contributions this year and lets make 2008 a year of growth and continued success for our association. Committee sign ups start now.

EO Message

By: Alice J. Ehn

Did anyone else think that October zinged right by? Now is November and we are all looking forward to the Holidays starting. But first you all need to come to the November General Membership Meeting on the 6th and vote for next years officers. There will be a handwriting analyst on hand and she will analyze volunteers handwriting for character traits. Learn what your handwriting is telling everyone.

After that, you should be signed up for the wonderful education at the GLAStar Education Conference on the 9th and 10th. See page 5 for the education schedule. This is valuable national education that you can get once every year for a nominal fee.

December will bring the Holiday Gala at the Washtenaw Country Club off of Packard Rd. We will have dinner with your choice of entrée, music, drink tickets for everyone and raffle prizes. All volunteers and the Board of Directors will be honored at this event, and the presentation of the Randolph White Memorial Award will be given. You will again be asked to contribute unwrapped toys for kids in the area. This year we are doing a PMAM PAC fundraiser at this years event. We will be selling glasses of champagne for \$10 per class for a chance to win one of three grand prizes (TBD) Trust me they will be nice. If you don't like champagne you can donate to the PAC for a chance to win so bring your check book. PAC donations can only be personal funds.

**See you at
the upcoming events.**

Managers Only
January 17, 2008
Golfside Lake
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8:30 to 9:30 am

Student Housing Conference: Dallas

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Tuesday, February 19



8:00 am Registration
9:00 to 10:30 Open Session Featuring Keynote William Strauss—William Strauss is a leading authority on American generations, a noted playwright, theater director, performer, consultant and speaker. Strauss has written or co-written ten books. He has coauthored several books on generations with Neil Howe, all best sellers widely used by businesses, colleges, government agencies and political leaders. Their first book, Generations, is a history of

America told as a sequence of generational biographies. Among Strauss's other generations books, 13th Gen. remains the top selling non-fiction book on Generation X. The Fourth Turning forecast a major mood change in America shortly after the new millennium—a change much like what actually happened after Sept. 11. The Fourth Turning has ranked among the top ten on the Amazon.com list, and its Web site has the Internet's longest-running discussion forum for any nonfiction book

10:30 to 12:00 Education Sessions (Marketing) Speakers: Rachel Kihn, Barrie Nichols, Corky Gatewood

12:00 to 2:00 Lunch on the Trade Show Floor

2:00 to 3:30 Education Session (Pre-Development) Speakers: Stephen Klee, Carol Peddy and Susan Folkemer

3:30 to 5:00 Education Sessions (Operations) Speakers: Ray Barrows, Dan Oltersdorf

5:00 to 6:00 Education Sessions (Technology)

6:00 to 8:00 Opening Reception on Trade Show Floor

Wednesday, February 20

8:30 to 9:30 Education Sessions (Legal Issues)

9:30 to 10:30 Education Sessions (Preparing for Turn)

11:30 to 1:00 Education Sessions (Post Turn)

1:00 to 2:20 Closing Lunch

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AIMS Report from NAA:

As a member of WA3, you can receive the Apartment Industry Mobilization Service reports via email by registering at http://www.naahq.org/govern_affairs/Newsletters/AIMS/aimsregistration.htm

HOMEOWNERSHIP INCENTIVES TRIMMED

Cracks are developing in the federal "homeownership at any cost" housing policy. In part due to the subprime melt-down, lawmakers and regulators are pursuing policy changes that would be unthinkable just a few months ago. On October 1, HUD published a final rule (72 FR 56001) banning downpayment assistance programs financed by charitable organizations-- AmeriDream, Inc. and Nehemiah Corporation of America are among the most prominent--with funds contributed by the builder or seller. HUD proposed a similar ban in 2001, but was forced to withdraw it by opposition.

Such downpayment programs have come under fire from the Internal Revenue Service, General Accounting Office and HUD Inspector General's Office, which have indicated that sales prices in such transactions are often inflated to allow the seller to recover the funds and that the foreclosure rates for loans involving seller-funded downpayment assistance are double those of other FHA loans. In 2006, the IRS ruled that organizations that offer seller funded downpayment support to buyers do not qualify as tax exempt charities. The impact of such a rule change could be significant for the apartment industry as Nehemiah says that privately funded downpayment assistance programs have helped over 600,000 families become home owners. During the housing boom, the percentage of FHA loans involving downpayment assistance from nonprofit groups rose from 1.7 percent in 2000 to 33.2 percent in the first quarter of 2007. This week, AmeriDream and Nehemiah Corp. filed a lawsuit seeking to block the new rules.

Meanwhile, on September 27, House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman John Dingell (D-MI) released his plan to impose a carbon tax on greenhouse gas emissions to combat global warming. The bill includes a provision to deny mortgage interest deductions to people who own large homes. Specifically, the bill would phase out the mortgage interest writeoff, beginning with 3,000 square foot houses--which would lose 15 percent of their deductions--and ending with 4,200 square foot or larger houses, which would receive no deduction. Exemptions are included for certain "historical homes," for owners who purchase "carbon offsets" and for houses built to certified high energy-efficiency standards. In a statement, Dingell said he is targeting big houses because they "have contributed to increased sprawl and longer commutes."

NEW RESEARCH FINDS COMPACT DEVELOPMENT KEY TO MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE

Changing America's land development patterns to emphasize compact, mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods could do as much to lower greenhouse gas emissions as many of the climate policies being promoted by state and national politicians, according to a new report published by the Urban Land Institute. Growing Cooler: Evidence on Urban Development and Climate Change analyzes scores of academic studies and concludes that lawmakers need to focus on local zoning and land-use decisions as well as fuel economy, clean fuels and green building standards if they want to fight

global warming.

Since 1980, the number of miles Americans drive has grown three times faster than our population, and almost twice as fast as vehicle registrations. Spread-out development is the key factor in that growth. According to the report, which can be a valuable resource to apartment firms fighting NIMBY battles, if sprawling development continues to fuel growth in driving, the projected 59 percent increase in the total miles driven between 2005 and 2030 will overwhelm expected gains from vehicle efficiency and low carbon fuels. By contrast, shifting 60 percent of new growth to compact, walkable neighborhoods would save 85 million metric tons of carbon dioxide annually by 2030. Those savings equate to a 28 percent increase in federal vehicle efficiency standards (to 32 mpg), comparable to proposals now being debated in Congress.

Depending on several factors, from mix of land uses to pedestrian friendly design, compact development reduces driving from 20 to 40 percent, and more in some instances. Typically, Americans living in compact urban neighborhoods where cars are not the only transportation option drive one-third fewer miles than those in automobile oriented suburbs. The book identifies changes in government regulations, government spending and transportation policies required to make compact "green" neighborhoods more available. An executive summary and the full book are available at <http://tinyurl.com/28mf2g>.

HC REPORT EXAMINES WHAT TODAY'S STUDENTS WANT IN THEIR OFF CAMPUS RENTAL HOUSING

NMHC has published the fifth in a series of student housing research reports, with the most recent report exploring what today's students are looking for in their off campus housing. Based on a series of 18 focus groups at 9 universities, What Do Students Want finds that today's students prefer off campus student housing to dorm life for a variety of reasons, such as cost, freedom and more space, but they appear to be most interested in the social opportunities these properties provide and the opportunity to be on their own for the first time.

As a result, they are particularly drawn to "lively" properties with amenities, such as central gathering spaces, pools and fitness centers, that promote the social interaction they want. In general, however, students were more interested in the apartment layout than property amenities. Contrary to the stereotype of students living on pizza, the number one request from the students was for larger kitchens with more counter and cabinet space. Second to the kitchen in importance was the bedroom. Overall the students said they would sacrifice living room space for larger bedrooms and more storage space.

While the report explores the 'must have' amenities for off campus student housing, much of the focus group discussion centered on how student renters want to be treated. The full report, which can be purchased at www.nmhc.org/goto/studentswant, covers: why students prefer off campus housing; the ideal student apartment; what students are willing to pay for; deal breakers; "screech factors"; the leasing experience; the ideal web site; and regional and market variations.

Front page con't:

(Continued from page 1- Employee Training)

prove business significantly. Businesses have realized that employee training is vital for the efficient functioning of the business and that they are a good return on investments.

Planning carefully and getting the most out of employee training will greatly increase job satisfaction, morale, motivation and efficiency resulting in financial gain and reducing employee turn over. Training equips new employees with the capacity to adapt to new technologies and methods, to help implement new strategies and products confidently and successfully.

Getting the most out of employee training is done by understanding in which areas you need training, what kind of training suits your needs, how much you are willing to spend, how you monitor employees and assess their performance and how the employees use their training to improve business significantly. There are firms that offer their products as well as services to help new entrepreneurs run a business smoothly.

Alexander Gordon is a writer for <http://www.smallbusinessconsulting.com> - The *Small Business Consulting Community*. Sign-up for the *free success steps newsletter* and get our booklet valued at \$24.95 for free as a special bonus. The newsletter provides daily strategies on starting and significantly growing a business. Business Owners all across the country are joining "The Community of Small Business Owners" to receive and provide strategies, insight, tips, support and more on starting, managing, growing, and selling their businesses. As a member, you will have access to true Millionaire Business Owners who will provide strategies and tips from their real-life experiences.

(Continued from page 1-Productivity)

about twenty-five percent more room to work, it'll also allow you to tilt your monitor to control glare.

Second, never, ever keep your keyboard on your desktop. If you're still reaching up to your desktop to type on your keyboard, it's time to move into the new millennium. Articulating keyboard trays and drawers not only give you added space, but they provide the ergonomics your body needs to prevent fatigue and other more serious conditions like Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.

Third, keep only the items you use often on your desk. Take a good look at some of the things you may keep within reach daily, but only use a few times a week: staplers, three-hole punches, reference books, calculators, etc. If you don't use them every single day, put them away and take them out only when you're working on a project that requires them.

Fourth, create files and use them. As soon as a project begins, create a file for it—even if it's only temporary—and keep the files for your active projects close to your desk. Move all other files to a filing cabinet.

Fifth, stop using sticky notes. Nothing clutters up a workspace faster than sticky notes that tend to fall off the thing they're supposed to be stuck to anyway. Keep a single notebook on your desk and write all pertinent information in your notebook throughout the day. If you need something, you'll know exactly where to find it and when it's no longer important, rip out the page and file it in the appropriate file. With a little overhaul of your behavior and your desk, you can become much more productive and that may mean the difference between a promotion or not.

Source: www.isnare.com

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| | 9:15-10:30 Masters of Maintenance | Motivating Associates | The Heart of Leasing | Selling to Property Managers |
| | 10:45-12:00 Love'em or Lose'em | It's Not the Money...It's the Money | Radical Service, Radical Results | Success Metrics for Better Business |
| | 12:00-1:00 Lunch Served | | | |
| | 1:00-2:15 Organizational Maintenance | Zero Delinquency | Set Yourself Apart | My Success, My Responsibility |
| | 2:30-4:00 Motivational Keynote: Jackie Ramstedt | | | |
| | 4:00-6:00 Complimentary Cocktail Reception Featuring GLAStar Idol Competition | | | |
| SATURDAY | 9:15-10:30 Advertising & Merchandising your Community | | | |
| | 10:45-12:00 60 Ideas in 60 Minutes: Fun and Fresh Marketing Ideas | | | |
| | 6:00-1:00 GLAStar Awards Banquet (separate ticket required) | | | |

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Heating Bills:

Do Heating Bills Leave You Cold?

Natural Gas Costs To Rise Sharply In 2008- Are You Prepared?

Utility costs are one of the largest operating expenses facing multifamily property owners. The demand for natural gas in the US has more than doubled over the past two decades and natural gas prices are constantly on the rise. In this heating season alone, natural gas prices are expected to increase sharply – by as much as 50%.

Until today, there was not an effective and reliable way to bill residents for heat system expenses because of device tampering and undetected hardware malfunctions. The industry has forged ahead despite some early challenges because the benefits of heat cost allocation far outweigh the risks. Thankfully, those early hurdles have been overcome and heat cost recovery systems are better than ever. Benefits include:

- Recover gas costs, increasing the value of your property
 - Receive consulting on gas conservation and heat ventilation and air conditioning systems
 - Lower resident heat consumption
 - Improve resident satisfaction through lower heating bills
- Manage costs through budgeting, analysis and cost recovery reporting tools

Heating Systems are Like Snowflakes

Every property has unique features to its heating system, and the heat cost recovery solution will need to be tailored to each

location. When you select your service provider, make sure that they are staffed by certified technicians who are trained to perform a detailed, on-site survey to evaluate and recommend the most complete and efficient utility allocation system for your property.

Cool New Hardware Choices

There are many hardware solutions on the market that can measure time; there are also new solutions that measure both time and temperature for optimal accuracy. This technology allows property owners and managers to measure the individual use of forced hot air furnaces, hydronic baseboard and fan coil boiler/chiller systems, fireplaces and domestic hot water heaters.

These advanced devices detect and remotely communicate whether each monitoring device is working correctly and if it has been disabled, which ensures flawless and accurate heat cost monitoring to recover maximum gas costs and equitable billing of residents.

ista North America, with its OptiHeat™, and OptiCool™ services offers a unique combined solution with high tech hardware and billing services that provide owners an exceptional energy cost recovery program.

Heat Cost Monitoring Systems Save Money

A heat cost monitoring system helps recover the rising costs of natural gas, and provides a rapid return on investment, thereby increasing property value. Once you start monitoring your heating costs, you will also need to have a system in place to bill your residents. Many companies offer both hardware installation and billing and support services. When selecting a company to provide your heat cost monitoring and billing services, you should consider the following:

- What hardware do they use?
- How much experience does the company have billing for heat?
- Are their technicians certified and prepared to conduct a thorough onsite survey?
- Do they have in-house regulatory expertise that is familiar with the billing regulations in your state and county?
- Are they prepared to customize a solution to meet your property's unique circumstances?
- Do they offer a call center for resident billing questions and disputes?
- What kind of training will they provide to your on-property staff?
- What kind of maintenance plan do they offer?
- Do they offer financing options?

Do they offer any additional services that can enhance your billing program?

Resources:

- www.ashrae.org - Ashrae Guideline 8p Energy Cost Allocation for Multiple-Occupancy Residential Buildings
- <http://www.price-hvac.com/media/trainingModule.aspx#flash> – Basics of HVAC Flash module
- www.ista-na.com



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Customer Service con't



Jim Fink and Karen Valvo, attorneys with Reach, Reach, Fink and Valvo presented the first ever Legal Town Hall meeting to answer any questions our members had after the recent leasing season.

Thank you Jim and Karen!



2007 Membership Drive \$500 Cash Prize Drawing

Every time you refer a new member you will get a \$20 referral fee and your name entered into a drawing for \$500 Cash to be given away at the Holiday Party, December 7th at the Washtenaw Country Club.

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Events:

NOVEMBER:

2 - Product and Service Council Meeting, Lake Village of Ann Arbor, Brainstorming Session for Vendor members to increase their exposure in membership. Cost: Free



6 - Annual General Membership Breakfast, Weber's Inn, 3050 Jackson Rd., 8:00 am, \$20. Featured Speaker: Karen Elly, owner Analysis in Motion, Handwriting expert. Also, Update from Martha Bloom on the Barrier Buster Fund and Voting of next years Board of Directors



9 and 10 - GLAStar Education Conference, Kellogg Center, East Lansing, Two day education conference and awards gala event. Get signed up today. Education cost \$99, Gala Award Event cost \$60.

27 - PMAM meeting, Quality Suites, Saginaw Rd, Lansing, 8:00 am Legislative meeting, 9:00 Board Meeting

DECEMBER:



7 - Holiday Event, Washtenaw Country Club, 2955 Packard, Ypsilanti, MI, Dinner, Dancing, Drinks and Award presentations for all Board Members, Committee Volunteers and Volunteer Instructors. Raffle prizes and Champagne Fundraiser. Bring also Toys for Tots. Cost \$60 per person, Guests welcome

11 - Director's Retreat, All past Presidents, current Board of Directors and next years Board of Directors meet to discuss the future of the association and what direction it should go. Contact current Board member if you would like input in the direction of your association.



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