

CBI NEWS



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SOFTWARE UPGRADES: It is more than Information Processing

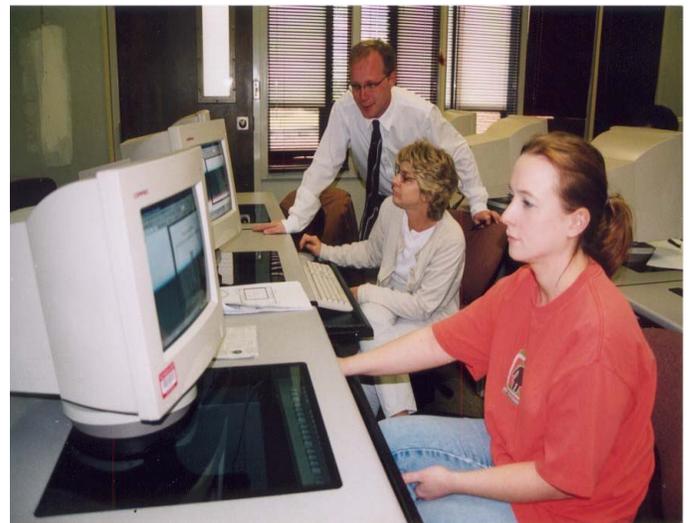
In our modern world, where information is the backbone of business, companies routinely are faced with the option of investing in newer versions of software packages. It seems that as soon as the latest version is installed, there is a newer and more productive version being introduced. For individuals, the features of the newer version may be insignificant, but for businesses, where information processing affects the bottom line, these features may be momentous.

Aside from software's ability to make technology easier to deploy, use, and manage, there are other factors that make

upgrading an essential part of the business process. Employee development and retention also are major reasons for upgrading software.

Employee development is essential to a company's bottom line. Software companies research how software is being used and use this information to gain a better understanding of what businesses want and need. These research results are incorporated into the latest version of the software

Therefore, by upgrading software, businesses maximize the human potential in your organization and ensure that employees have the best resources available. Deferring the purchase of



new software versions makes it more difficult for employees to stay current and upgrade skills as technology changes, ultimately minimizing your employee potential.

Before purchasing new software, companies should explore the benefits and disadvantages. Cost should not be the only issue.

By Jimmy Bowman
Instructional Technologist for the Center for Business and Industry

Contact the Center for Business and Industry at Virginia Highlands Community College for customized training.

276-739-2430

MYTHS SURROUNDING LITERACY IN THE WORKPLACE

"Our organization does not have a literacy problem. Most of our employees do not have positions that require reading and a lot of paperwork."

FACT: Workers on average read 97 minutes a day and read everything from labels and printouts to manuals.

"Our organization does not have a literacy problem because we only hire people with a Grade 12 education."

FACT: Recent findings indicate that many people with a Grade 12 education do not possess the basic skills required to perform effectively at work.

A CHECKLIST FOR YOUR COMPANY

The following checklist will help you determine your organization's need for workplace education.

Has your organization:

- Significantly changed methods of production or service delivery in the past two years?
- Changed or upgraded computer systems?
- Changed skill requirements for entry level jobs?
- Increased or decreased in size?
- Increased quality standards?

Has your workforce:

- Experienced an increase in the average age?
- Become more diverse?
- Had a high turnover rate?
- Been required to do more reading and decision-making now than in the past?

If you answered yes to two or more questions, your organization may need workplace education.

Call 276-739-2548 to discuss training options for your employees.



*Check the CBI
Training Guide for other
great classes that are
scheduled!*

CONVIENENT COMPUTER TRAINING

Powerful laptop computers, experienced instructors, printers, cabling, and accessories brought to your door will minimize lost time for your workers while they are in training. Using the portable computer lab, VHCC will

deliver business and industry training to your site, at ours, or to anywhere in between. One course or several - no program is too large or too small. Call the Center for Business and Industry at Virginia Highlands Community College today for a free quote at 276-739-2548.

BUSINESS SEMINARS-SPRING 2003

The Interviewing Skills Workshop-This workshop is designed to enhance the interviewing skills of managers in any organization. During the workshop, participants will be able to plan, conduct, and obtain feedback on simulated interviews using the key points applied to a wide variety of interviews in organizational settings. Cost: \$100.00

Wednesday, February 19 or April 9,
8:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Using The Performance Appraisal to Facilitate Employee Growth-This workshop is designed primarily for managers and other supervisory personnel who conduct performance evaluations. The goal of the training is to make participants

aware of the important leadership opportunity the performance review provides and to demonstrate and practice guidelines for effective written and verbal communication to be used during the performance interview. Cost: \$100.00
Wednesday, March 12 or May 7,
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

"Who Moved My Cheese?"-This training, based on Dr. Spencer Johnson's best-selling book, offers a direct, entertaining approach on how to increase success and reduce stress in times of change. Participants will explore the fear of change and learn ways to deal with change in the workplace. Cost: \$ 45.00

Friday, April 25
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

BUSINESS SEMINARS CONTINUED-SPRING 2003

Myers Briggs Type Indicator-Do you prefer to live in a decisive, planned way or in a spontaneous, flexible way? Do your interests flow to people or ideas? Identify your preferences by taking the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and learn to value your differences. Each person will complete an assessment on Thursday evening, and participate in an active, fun workshop Saturday morning. Participants will receive an individualized interpretation packet,

identifying their four-letter type. Handouts will include materials about career choices, work contributions, learning styles, and romantic relationships for each of the 16 types.

Thurs., March 6 from 6 pm – 9 pm and Sat., March 8 from 9 am – 12 pm
Cost: \$50.00

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SBDC)

The SBDC provides one-on-one counseling, business education opportunities and resources to help small business owners or managers improve their business. The sole objective is to

help Southwest Virginia businesses prosper and increase job opportunities. For more information contact the SBDC located on the campus of Virginia Highlands Community College at (276)739-2474.

VIRGINIA CREEPER FLY FISHING, INC. A SUCCESS STORY FOR THE SBDC

“Let’s go Fly-Fishing,” is the sign on the door of Virginia Creeper Fly Fishing Shop located on the J.E.B. Stuart Highway in Abingdon, Virginia. Bruce Wankel started this business in 1994 to provide a retail fly-fishing specialty store, guide, and outfitting services for Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee residents and tourists drawn to the natural beauty and pristine trout streams of this area. This original location, in a converted “gas station/convenience store,” was chosen because of the easy access to prime fishing waters and the tourism related to the famous Appalachian Trail, Iron Mountain Trail and Virginia Creeper Trail.

Since the shop’s inauspicious beginnings, Bruce’s philosophy of providing excellence in customer service and his expertise and attention to detail as a professional guide has generated a following of fly-fishing enthusiasts from all over the mid-Atlantic and southeastern states. The business now uses four expert guides during peak season to keep up with demand.

The Virginia Highlands SBDC has enjoyed a long-term relationship with Mr. Wankel since 1994. So, on Sept. 5th, when the opportunity arose to purchase and relocate his business to an

“upscale” log structure near his current facility, he called. Mr. Wankel requested assistance with the review of his business expansion plan and the preparation of proforma financial statement to present to prospective lending institutions. The analysis of the potential for increasing retail sales was critical in determining the feasibility of the move.

It was important that this project be on the “fast track,” since his present leased facility was to be abandoned as part of a VDOT highway expansion project. By Sept. 13th, the financing proposal for the purchase of the real estate and improvements and renovations was completed. Five banks expressed an interest and made offers to provide financing. Virginia Highlands SBDC continued to provide analysis and advice until the final decision was made and the loan with a local bank was closed on Oct. 30, 2001.

The Virginia Creeper Fly Fishing Shop opened for business at its new location on Jan. 3, 2002.

*Need a way to organize and access all of the Human Resource sites on the Internet? Check out www.brgopher.com. It provides links to 82 HR Topics from *Absenteeism to Workplace Violence*.*

SCHOLLE CORPORATION USES WORKKEYS FOR PAY INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Mr. Lynn Veasey, Plant Manager at the Chilhowie Scholle Corporation plant, heard his first WorkKeys presentation from Virginia Highlands Community College in July 1999. His vision linked the components of the WorkKeys System to a plan for a

and elected to participate in an individualized training plan. Employees first set out to achieve the benchmark level for any skill in which they were deficient for their current positions. The first pay increment could be earned by getting certified in the person's current job assignment (example, Packer). This included achieving the WorkKeys skill levels and demonstrating on-the-job proficiency. A second pay increment could be earned by achieving competence in a second position (Machine Adjuster); and the third pay increase from being cross-trained and demonstrating skills in the third position (Quality Inspector). Employees are able to increase their base rate of pay through these three achievements, but the program is entirely voluntary.



Scholle Corporation located in Chilhowie, Virginia

"Pay-for-Knowledge" wage incentive program for the plant's hourly employees in manufacturing and maintenance.

Mr. William R. Scholle invented the concept of "bag-in-box" packaging, which is used at the 100,000 square-foot facility in Chilhowie to produce syrup bags for Coke fountain drinks. Chilhowie supplies 55 percent of all United States Coke bags.

The goal Mr. Veasey set when he became Plant Manager in Sept. 1998 was to design a multi-skills based assessment system and cross-training program. Scholle maintains round-the clock manufacturing operations, not even stopping a line for break and lunch periods. With a workforce of fewer than 100 employees, this creates a challenge. Cross-training all employees so each could effectively perform the job of Packer, Machine Operator, and Quality Inspector was the objective. Job Profiles were completed for these three positions in the spring of 2000. Four skills were determined to be most critical for all three jobs: Observation, Teamwork, Locating Information and Reading for Information.

Quality Inspector Carolyn Powers stated, "I believe that the WorkKeys System was an excellent starting point for our "Pay-For-Knowledge" Program. It provides assurance that all employees have the basic knowledge needed to perform well at each training level."

By Jan. 2001, employees had completed the WorkKeys skill assessments, received their results

WorkKeys Job Profiles were completed for the Maintenance positions in May 2002, and training is currently underway for those employees. In addition to the four skills used by the manufacturing positions, the Maintenance Mechanic jobs included Applied Mathematics and Applied Technology. The third phase of the "Pay-for-Knowledge" program will be the delivery of management development training to prepare direct labor employees for promotion into supervisory positions.

This system has allowed Scholle to continuously meet and exceed the plant's manufacturing output targets, as well as achieve continuous improvement in safety and attendance goals. Each quarter employees receive the same operations briefing that the Plant Manager presents to the company's owner. Mr. Veasey also reports results at an end-of-the-year celebration. The four-hour event for each shift includes a one-hour meeting, a one-hour cook-out, and two hours of release time to go home early with pay. Of course, this requires that Lynn be up for 24 hours to be at each session: 3:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 7:00 p.m. He does not report his sleep deprivation rate or his weight gain.

Endorsing the WorkKeys System, Mr. Veasey stated, "It has proven to be the foundation that the Scholle, Chilhowie, management team needed to develop a successful employee pay incentive program. I would like to thank the staff of VHCC for their professionalism and dedication to the needs of the Scholle Corporation".

Former VHCC student and Abingdon native Doug Blevins is featured in the "Southerners" column in the August 2002 issue of Southern Living. Doug is the Miami Dolphins kicking coach, though he has never been able to play football. Read his inspiring story to learn how he refused to let physical limitations block his path to success.

DISCOVER YOUR STRENGTHS

Write your name with the hand opposite from the one you normally write with. How does it feel? This is an opening exercise in the Myers Briggs Type Indicator workshop to be held March 6 and 8.

You can do it, but it takes more time and concentration, correct? Well, this is how we feel when we must perform job responsibilities that are opposite from our natural preferences. We seem to be born with preferences for the inner world of ideas or outer world of people, and with preferences for how we take in information, how we reach conclusions, and how we orient our lives—planned and orderly or spontaneously.

The MBTI is based on Carl Jung's theory of personality types. It has been well-researched and is in use worldwide. There are no correct or incorrect answers; you choose answers to questions based on your preferences. The results will show you 16 unique paths to excellence, which will lead you to

The Thursday evening, March 6, session will give participants an opportunity to complete the inventory. The Saturday morning, March 8, workshop will be interactive, and participants will receive a packet of materials with information for their individual four-letter Myers Briggs codes. Besides being applied in business, classroom, and team building, the MBTI has been used for career and marriage counseling. Other uses include matching college roommates, parole officers and offenders, and foster children and prospective families.

Most of all it is fun! You will be amazed when we recognize your strengths and will laugh when we point out potential pitfalls. For more information, call (276)739-2430 or toll free (877) 207-6115.

“WHO MOVED MY CHEESE?”

“Sniff” and “Scurry,” the mice; “Hem” and “Haw,” the little people. The four imaginary characters depicted in the Spencer Johnson story are intended to represent the simple and the complex parts of ourselves. Some of us sniff out change early; some scurry into action. Others may deny and resist change or learn to adapt after seeing that change can lead to something better.

This simple parable is an amusing story about four characters who live in a “Maze” and look for “Cheese” to nourish them and make them happy. The characters are faced with unexpected change.

One of them deals with it successfully, and writes what he has learned from his experience on the maze walls. Some of the truths: “Smell the cheese often so you know when it is getting old;” “Movement in a new direction helps you find new cheese;” and “When you move beyond your fear, you feel free.”

Friday morning, April 25, join a lively workshop using the video with “Sniff,” “Scurry,” “Hem,” and “Haw.” Participants will explore the fear of change and learn ways to deal with change in the workplace. For information call (276)739-2430, or toll free (877) 207-6115.

NEWS TO NOTE

A Career Services Center has been established at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center for employers to list job vacancies and access students from eight colleges and universities.

Center staff will post the position, job description, application requirements, and other pertinent information on the web site and on the bulletin board in the student lounge. The benefits to employers include: free advertisement of employment vacancies, free publicity for your business, improved pools of candidates who have

college degrees or who are degree-seeking, and the opportunity for placement of student interns. To list a job vacancy, call (276)469-4073 or e-mail cestep@swcenter.edu. View the Center's Planning Toolbox and Career Resource Links at www.swcenter.edu, then click on Career Services Center.

Become a member of the Southwest Virginia Society for Human Resource Management for \$25 per year. Send dues to Mr. Greg Thompson, c/o The United Company, P.O. Box 1280, Bristol, VA 24203-1280, with member name, employer, and mailing address.

CBI PARTNERSHIPS

The Manufacturing Technology Center, in partnership with the Center for Business Industry at VHCC, provides engineering and management consulting support to local industry. Through implementation workshops and direct-service projects, the MTC assists industrial clients in Lean Manufacturing, Quality Management System and Industrial Engineering services.

The implementation of Lean Manufacturing principles has become a focus service of the MTC. Workshops are available in the following areas:

- Principles of Lean Manufacturing
- Value Stream Mapping
- 5S System of Workplace Organization
- Cellular Manufacturing
- Set-up Reduction
- Total Productive Maintenance (TPM)

Implementation assistance and on-site workshops are available upon request. Please contact the MTC office for further information and registration.

Phone: (276)739-2544

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ISO AUDITOR COURSE

The Manufacturing Technology Center is organizing a local ISO Lead Auditor Course for the ISO 9001:2000 quality standard. This 5-day highly participative course provides comprehensive training in the revised ISO 9001:2000 standard and the ISO/TS 16949 automotive supplier Technical Specification, including a review of provisions and requirements, auditing processes and procedures, the registration process and more. The course

includes lectures, exercises, workshops and role plays in small group sessions.

The course is accredited by the IRCA and meets the training portion of the requirements for certification of ISO 9000 individual Quality Management System (QMS) Provisional Auditors, QMS Auditors and QMS Lead Auditors. This course also meets the IATCA requirements.

Please contact the MTC office for further information and registration.

Phone: (276)739-2544

THE IMPENDING CRISIS: TOO MANY JOBS TOO FEW PEOPLE

A new book published in November 2002 is grabbing the attention of corporate leaders. ***The Impending Crisis: Too Many Jobs, Too Few People*** by Roger Herman, Tom Olivo, and Joyce Gioia reviews a number of trends that are converging to create an unprecedented dilemma for employers. The authors predict that the economy will heat up again soon, and by 2010, we will have a shortage of 10,033,000 workers. For more information, see www.hermangroup.com/coming_in_june.html.