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DiversityPlus

Connecting Innovative Women and Diverse Companies to Corporate America and the Government Through Supplier Diversity

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Opportunities in the Energy Industry

Managing Consumer Energy Usage with **Artificial Intelligence**

Transforming the Energy Industry
Today and in the Future

Supplier Diversity Drives Competitiveness in the **Utilities Industry**

Developing 'Intentional' Social Media for Value Generation

Sunny Cyprus
Offers Shining Investment Opportunities

How 'Shift Disturbers' Drive Workplace Innovation



Innovation & Productivity in Procurement

Blockchain:
Anticipating Supply Chain Transformation Through the Newest IT Disruption

Transforming Procurement Systems
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Building a Procurement Function
to Deliver an Excellent **User Experience**

EDITORIAL: "CHAIN"ING TECHNOLOGY: BLOCKCHAIN IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN



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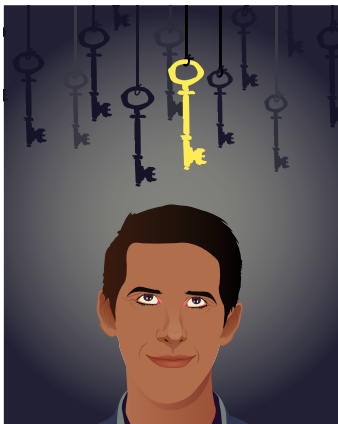
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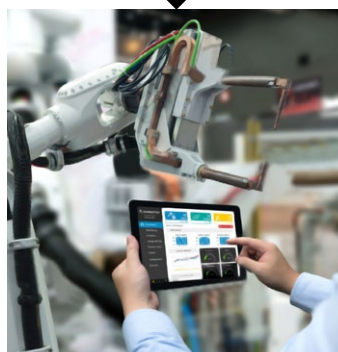
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EDITORIAL DESCRIPTION:

DiversityPlus Magazine's primary mission is to bring cutting edge information to thoughtful corporate supplier diversity executives and diverse businesses to help create an environment for more contract opportunities. Equally important, is for corporations to understand the importance of helping their most innovative minority suppliers build scale and become sustainable over the long term.

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"Chain"ging Technology: Blockchain in the Supply Chain

Once the excitement over Bitcoin died down, the underlying technology began getting more attention. All the cryptocurrencies are created with blockchain technology. In the simplest of terms, blockchain is a coding process in which blocks of data, created by transactions, are linked together to create a chronological and secure public digital ledger.

It is increasingly studied as a means for increasing transaction security because the linkages across computer systems prevent people from making alterations. As is true for most sophisticated new technologies, the full impact of blockchain takes a while to understand. However, there is growing support for the belief that blockchain will have a significant impact on supply chain management.

There are many reasons for believing blockchain will become a standard technology in supply chains at some point in the future. It is a flexible, adaptable method for tracking and authenticating transactions. For business purposes (as opposed to use for a cryptocurrency), blockchain is built on Hyperledger, enabling processing across a variety of different network infrastructures and processes.

Oracle and IBM are two leaders in building platforms on Hyperledger. Two of the potential and important uses in the supply chain are blockchain technology's ability to synchronize ledger information from multiple suppliers and to create transaction records that cannot be changed but are shareable among suppliers.

The implications include enhanced supply chain transparency, benefitting suppliers and their customers, and improved collaboration among suppliers. For example, blockchain transactions can record every movement of goods when they are transferred between supply chain network nodes.

Early identification of an issue will lead to more efficient responses for problem resolution. Blockchain is also scalable which means it could very well lead to an improvement in diverse supplier participation by making it easier to track an unlimited number of large and small suppliers. Smart contracts, aka self-executing contracts, are digital contracts

using blockchain technologies for performance tracking, and they will contribute to the ability to manage all supplier contracts, too.

Blockchain technology is already creating a new industry of startups developing supply chain solutions. Provenance, Monegraph, Ambrosus, and Blockfreight are just a few examples. It may be surprising to discover that companies are already using blockchain in their supply chains.

Walmart is using blockchain to track pork sources from China. BlockVerify's clients are using the company's blockchain-based anti-counterfeit system to track, on a global basis, pharmaceuticals, diamonds, luxury items and electronics to identify counterfeit products, fraudulent transactions, diverted goods and stolen merchandise. Blockchain can improve inventory management, reduce costs and errors, and ultimately improve customer service.

The relative newness of blockchain applications means the nascent industry has enormous room for growth. There is a need for many more startups across industries. Each industry, like food or clothing or logistics, has unique supply chain management needs.

Blockchain is an impetus for innovation, and that is what diverse suppliers are so good at developing. Blockchain is so new that there are also plenty of opportunities to bring solutions around things like standardization within a particular supplier chain.

Other opportunities include blockchain strategies for supply chain management to maximize efficiencies and blockchain in the cloud. There is also a need for more startups that have the expertise to assist clients with implementing blockchain technology in their supply chains.

Bitcoin continues to have a doubtful future, but blockchain has a certain future. It is already being used on a daily basis as an enterprise solution across industries.

It was initially used by the financial industry, but its use is rapidly spreading. The best word of advice we can offer is for current diverse suppliers to get involved in the technology now so they have a say in how their customers implement this new supply chain management system. The second piece of advice is directed at potential startups.

This is an emerging opportunity for tech suppliers in areas of blockchain systems implementation, software-as-a-service and consulting.

Blockchain is not a future technology. It is a present technology with an exciting future.

Corporate Strategic Opportunities and Supplier Diversity Information



Dr. Fred McKinney, Ph.D.
Managing Director,
MBE Programs, Tuck School of
Business – Dartmouth College

I served on a panel during the Canadian Aboriginal Minority Supplier Council (CAMSC) conference in Toronto with Lotti Robertson Hammons of FCA, Victor Chew of Penda Productions and Marcia Seymour of TD Bank. The title of the session was “Diversity is Our Strength: Turning Diversity Data into Strategic Opportunities.” Supplier diversity professionals in attendance were most likely looking to me for a discussion on the importance of spend data, economic impact information and connecting this data to the corporate supplier diversity strategy. These are very important and relevant topics. Economic impact, in particular, is something I have been spending a significant amount of time researching, speaking on, and consulting with large organizations as they attempt to justify and promote the work of supplier diversity professionals.

As I prepared my remarks, I could not help but think that the title needed editing. Instead of “Turning Diversity Data into Strategic Opportunities,” I thought it more important to reverse this phrase to “Strategic Opportunities that Require Diversity Data.”

The reason for this is we in the minority business development and diversity space need to focus on the “macro” strategic opportunities all organizations have instead of focusing initially on what we do in business diversity from a “micro” level. The standard way of looking at supplier diversity is the unequal relationship between a supplier and a buyer. It is noteworthy that the etiology of the word “supplier” and “suppliant” come from the same Latin word meaning to “beg humbly” – not exactly consistent with equal footing. The next phase of supplier diversity is to explore and develop the relationship between businesses with common strategic interests. Begging humbly or not humbly can rarely result in strategic opportunity and respect between businesses.

Corporations make strategic decisions everyday, whether it is exploring new geographic and demographic markets, acquisitions, divestitures, alliances, reorganizations, and other important decisions that can dramatically change the trajectory of a company. By reversing the emphasis, we can then ask the important question: What do these strategic opportunities mean for diverse businesses, and what data do diversity professionals need to maximize these opportunities? Here

are some examples from recent business news.

General Electric, one of the quintessential conglomerate companies and success stories of the 20th century, realizes that to continue that success in the 21st century, it will have to change just about everything. A partial list of companies/business units that GE has announced it is selling or has recently sold includes a healthcare software business, GE Transportation, GE Industrial Solutions, GE Lighting, GE Capital, GE Appliances, GE Water and others.

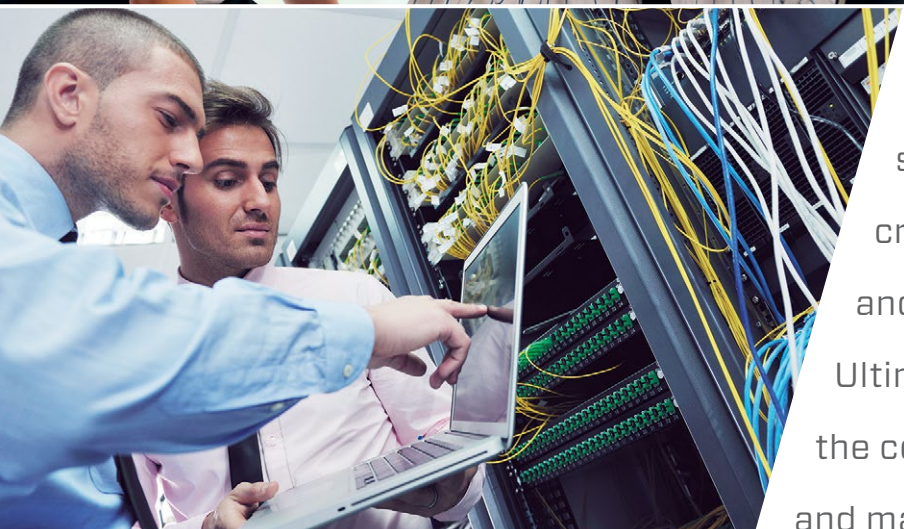
GE is not alone in its efforts to shed assets that no longer fit within its new corporate strategy. The opportunity for diverse businesses is for diverse businesses to acquire the assets that are now being shed by GE and other corporate giants. This can solve a large organization’s problem of selling an asset at the best price, while simultaneously growing a significant minority-owned and controlled enterprise.

Traditionally, Wall Street investment banks are hired by large corporations to assist in the divestiture of business units. This practice makes perfect sense because Wall Street firms have the experience in selling businesses to individuals, companies and private equity organizations that it has established long-term relationships with over many transactions. However, the problem with this approach from the perspective of minority entrepreneurs is that we are not included in these transactions.

If corporate supplier diversity professionals could be “in the loop” when their companies are making these decisions, minority businesses and minority entrepreneurs would be in a much better position to have the opportunity to be involved in these transactions. And in the case of a minority company if a minority-controlled group actually wins the bidding process to acquire one of these large corporate transactions, we would witness the next phase of minority business integration into the global economy.

To some minority entrepreneurs, this must seem like dreaming the impossible dream – how on earth will they be able to put together the resources to make a multi-billion bid on corporate assets? The fact of the matter is very few of the buyers in these transactions put up cash, and even fewer put up their own cash. This is not to say that they do not need to have access to cash. They clearly need to be able to demonstrate the

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***THE VALUE OF
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Celebrating Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Forever

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The U.S. Postal Service's newest stamps acknowledge the role science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) plays in keeping America a global leader in innovation. The STEM Education Forever stamps were recently dedicated during the 2018 USA Science & Engineering Festival at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center.

"In an increasingly competitive world, proficiency in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics — collectively known as STEM — is more critical than ever," said U.S. Postal Service Marketing Vice President Steve Monteith, who dedicated the stamps.

Monteith also referenced the importance of STEM in the development of Informed Delivery, one of the Postal Service's latest innovations. Informed Delivery allows customers to see a digital preview of their incoming physical mail and also allows customers to track packages and reschedule deliveries — all from the convenience of the user's computer, tablet or mobile devices.

"Informed Delivery is one of our most exciting innovations, and it's already very popular with nearly 9 million users so far," said Monteith.



Continental Leaders Inspire Next Generation of Women in Technology and Engineering

AUBURN HILLS, MI

International technology company Continental hosted a "Women in Unique Roles" lunch experience at its North American headquarters location in Auburn Hills.

Moderated by Vickie Thomas, City Beat Reporter for WWJ Newsradio 950, four of Continental's female leaders held a discussion about the state of women in technology and engineering management. Aruna Anand, Head of Continental Engineering Services North America; Catherine Loss, Head of Retread Worldwide for Commercial Vehicle Tires; and Beyza Sarioglu, Head of Hybrid Electric Vehicles, North America, candidly discussed their career journeys. Mary Reardon, Head of Talent Acquisition for Continental in North America, also discussed how Continental is fostering flexible work practices and actively increasing diversity and inclusion in management.

"As a leader in technology, Continental's growth is fueled by diversity and inclusion. We are committed to fostering opportunities for women and minority leaders in STEM and plan to continue to increase the percentage of women in technology management," Reardon said. "We are successful with this by creating and maintaining an inclusive culture with a positive work environ-



ment."

Women are 8 Times More Likely than Men to Work in Occupations with Poverty-Level Wages

WASHINGTON, D.C.

There are 4.2 million women who work in occupations with poverty-level wages, more than eight times as many as the 0.5 million men who do, according to a new analysis of the gender wage gap by occupation released by the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) in advance of Equal Pay Day on Tuesday, April 10.

Women earn less than men in almost all 121 occupations for which there are enough data to calculate the gender wage gap. Women in the vast majority of occupations—107 of 121—face a sizeable gap, earning at least five cents less on the dollar than men working full-time in the same occupation. Women face the largest wage gap as personal financial advisors, where women in that job

earn just 59 percent of what male personal financial advisors earn.

The analysis finds racial disparities compound gender inequality in the labor market. Black and Hispanic women are more than twice as likely to work in service occupations as White women. Hispanic women's earnings are lower than the federal poverty threshold for a family of four in two occupational groups: 'service' and 'natural resources, construction, and maintenance' occupations, and they are just \$1 above the threshold in 'production, transportation, and material moving' occupations. These three occupational groups employ a significant share (39.6 percent) of all working Hispanic women.



SBA Women's Business Centers Help Launch Women-Owned Small Businesses

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The U.S. Small Business Administration recently announced the addition of nine new Women's Business Centers with a mission of helping women entrepreneurs start and grow small businesses. The opening of these new centers will provide assistance and resources to entrepreneurs in new and expanded markets around the nation.

"The funding of these new Women's Business Centers expands women's access to resources to help their businesses succeed," SBA Administrator Linda McMahon said. "This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Women's Business Center program and I am proud to be a part of the expansion of resources and services to women entrepreneurs across America. The work these centers provide is one of the most valuable forms of assistance to help women entre-



preneurs, who are an engine for economic growth."

The SBA Women's Business Centers are a national network of more than 100 centers that offer one-on-one counseling, training, networking, workshops, technical assistance and mentoring to women entrepreneurs on numerous business development topics, including business startup, financial management, marketing and procurement.

Nearly Half Report IoT Security and Managing Increasing Amounts of Data as Greatest Challenges in Cybersecurity

NEW YORK CITY

Forty percent of professionals report that managing increasing amounts of data and connected device (Internet of Things) security pose the greatest cybersecurity challenges to their organization over the next 12 months, according to a recent Deloitte poll.

Respondents also identified third parties/extended enterprise (16.3 percent) and managing digital identities (13.5 percent) as the next largest challenges. Yet, only 14 percent report their organization's cybersecurity program as mature, with cyber risk managed holistically across the enterprise.

"The hyperconnected and increasingly intelligent nature of today's world requires organizations to continually rethink their approach toward cybersecurity," said Irfan

Saif, Deloitte Risk and Financial Advisory Cyber Risk Services principal, Deloitte & Touche LLP. "Cyber risk is more ubiquitous than ever before, and has to be embedded into the very crux of business operations in order to manage the challenges that organizations are facing now – and to prepare for new challenges that will undoubtedly arise in the future."

When asked how confident they are in their organization's ability to manage cyber risk and information security, fewer than 1 in 5 (19.4 percent) said they are "very confident." And when it comes to mitigating attacks on digital identities, the poll reveals nearly 30 percent of respondents report the rise of cloud computing and mobile internet access as the greatest challenge.



Intel Closing in on Major Workforce Diversity Milestone

SANTA CLARA, CA

By the end of 2018, the company expects the makeup of its workforce to match the percentage of women and minorities in the US tech industry, two years earlier than its original goal of 2020 announced in 2015.

"If we're trying to create products for the future, the population of that future has to be represented recently," said Barbara Whye, Intel's vice president and director of business HR for CISA and chief diversity and inclusion officer.

The idea of chasing representation refers to using the market availability, or how many skilled people are in the labor market for certain job categories, as a hiring goal.

But while Intel might be in the homestretch for achieving representation, the company's latest diversity report, out Tuesday, shows the work toward diversifying won't end with a certain percentage point. And for now, progress is moving less than a percentage point at a time.



Like many companies in tech, including Google, Facebook and Apple, Intel makes its demographics public. Only, it does so twice a year, instead of annually. Since about 2014, this industry data has given us evidence to substantiate the sneaking feeling that tech is dominated by white men.

The 50-year-old company has taken an aggressive stance at diversifying its workforce, starting with CEO Brian Krzanich's \$300 million pledge toward diversity efforts back in 2015. Intel's tried not only to figure out how to attract diverse hires, but keep them and promote them over time.

New Fund Will Help People, Businesses Prosper in the Digital Economy

PURCHASE, N.Y.

Mastercard reported its initial \$100 million contribution to the Center for Inclusive Growth Fund, part of a \$500 million commitment to support initiatives that focus on long-term economic growth for everyone. The company first announced these plans during its fourth-quarter 2017 earnings as an extension of an ongoing commitment to do well and do good.

The fund has been designed to deliver on philanthropic goals shared with the Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth. Chief among these goals are to reduce income and information inequality, increase financial inclusion and workforce skills development, and make people and businesses more resilient in the face of a rapidly changing economy.

"There are too many people today who are disconnected from the resources and connections they need to survive and thrive," said Ajay Banga, president and CEO, Mastercard. "In establishing this fund, we hope to increase the agility and ability of people around the world to navigate change and be successful."



Americans Prefer Companies Over Government as Their Partner of Choice



NEW YORK CITY

The role a company plays in its employees' retirement security has shifted tremendously in recent decades, as employees take on more responsibility in the planning and saving for their retirement. Yet many Americans prefer predictability and a guarantee in their retirement planning – when asked if they would rather have their

employer provide a set retirement paycheck for life or provide them with money to invest themselves, the steady paycheck wins by 58 percent to 42 percent.

This is one of the latest findings from the Role of the Company Survey commissioned by MetLife. Americans have accepted the shift in responsibility for their own retirement security, as 54 percent say that individuals are primarily responsible for their own retirement security, versus 27 percent who say companies and 19 percent who say government.

But employees want a partner in their retirement planning and they want their company to fulfill that role, as they were six times more likely to want companies to be more involved – not less – in providing for their retirement security in the next five to 10 years (61 percent vs. 9 percent).

Women Have Fundamentally Different Journeys to Financial Wellness, Merrill Lynch Study Reveals

NEW YORK CITY

A new Merrill Lynch study conducted in partnership with Age Wave, "Women and Financial Wellness: Beyond the Bottom Line," celebrates the progress made by women while examining the financial challenges women still face throughout their lives, and offers potential solutions. The study finds that 70 percent of women believe that men and women have a fundamentally different life journey, reinforcing the need to better understand women's financial concerns and opportunities. The study is based on a nationally representative sample of 3,707 respondents, including 2,638 women and 1,069 men.

"Women have come a long way both personally and professionally, but when it comes to their finances, there is still a trail



left to blaze," said Lorna Sabbia, head of Retirement and Personal Wealth Solutions for Bank of America Merrill Lynch. "As women are at a tipping point to achieve greater financial empowerment and independence, it is even more essential that we support women in helping them pursue financial security for life. This includes encouraging women to invest more of their assets, save earlier for retirement, and pursue financial solutions that closely align to their personal values and life paths."



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HOW 'SHIFT DISTURBERS' DRIVE WORKPLACE INNOVATION

BY SHANIQUA THOMAS

Innovation in the workplace is something all companies claim to want. Yet being a fan of innovation and actually creating an environment where it happens are two very different things. For many firms, the difference comes down to how well key individual players known as “shift disturbers” are understood within the organization.

Shift disturbers are innovation champions with the skills and charisma to inspire others to follow in their footsteps. Understanding them – or even actively trying to become one – starts with an awareness of their creative confidence and competence, the key processes shift disturbers tend to use, and the way a shift disturber flows with (or against) existing organizational culture. Following are three key areas with practical examples given for real-world implementation.

HOW CREATIVE COMPETENCE AND CONFIDENCE MAKE SHIFT DISTURBERS POSSIBLE

Shift disturbers shake up the status quo with their competence and creative confidence. While some argue that a certain business “moxie” is innate, most shift disturbers have deliberately cultivated their “let’s try it” mindset with self-help and self-empowerment resources. Their positive attitude is also backed by real competence – many are outstanding performers in their individual specialties, which gives them an extra edge as they seek to push boundaries.

In fact, it is this deep knowledge of their business niche that helps make their innovative power possible. They know how things work ... and where they don’t, they’re willing to put in the effort to read up on the work rules so that they can have a better view of how to break them.

This does not necessarily mean shift disturbers thrive on non-stop disruption. They have a healthy respect for systems that work and incremental improvements. But, they stand apart from other employees in that they are less afraid of failed experimentation and more resilient in the face of attempts at new processes that don’t work out.

How does this play out in a practical way? When top performers propose unique solutions to ongoing corporate issues, they are self-identifying as potential shift disturbers. Encouraging this innovation and allowing reasonable room for experimentation will help keep them engaged and keep the company as the primary beneficiary of their skills.

Key players – known as “shift disturbers” – drive change. By understanding their outlook and methods, it is possible to display more of their best traits in one’s own innovation practices.

WHICH TOOLS AND PROCESSES ARE FAVORED BY SHIFT DISTURBER TYPES?

Shift disturbers have a group of favored processes and tools that help them execute their ideas. While some are consistent with good corporate citizenship, others may be viewed as “anti-corporate” behaviors. Recognizing these processes and tools in play can help differentiate between up-and-coming innovators who need to be encouraged and straight up disruptors who need to be managed.

Positively viewed tools and processes of shift disturbers are research, collaboration, and team-building. Driven by a deep curiosity, shift disturbers enjoy going deep on key issues and building connections between ideas from seemingly unrelated areas. They like networking and collaboration with other “doers” in the organization, and they can use their enthusiasm and influence to build strong teams who can execute swiftly on new ideas, at times even creating new pathways through existing governance structures (and strictures).

However, at times their tendency to question existing protocols, work across divisions, and circumvent established management hierarchies could throw up red flags. In companies where a bias toward innovation is not a regular part of the corporate culture, this can feel extremely threatening.

In these cases, it is important for managers to look at the intention behind the actions and determine if there is an innovative drive in play or whether the employee in question is a poor fit for the





organization long-term. Are they seeking to make improvements, or is there some sort of a turf war going on? It is not always an easy call, but understanding the high need for variety and improvement of natural shift disturbers can help keep these players inside the organization while allowing management to separate out true disruptors.

HOW DOES ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY AND CULTURE FIT INTO THE LIFE OF A SHIFT DISTURBER?

As shift disturbers execute their ideas, existing organizational strategy and culture will factor into their plans. Those seeking straight disruption create an impact not unlike a bull raging through a china shop. However, while innovative shift disturbers will certainly make waves, they are seeking the improvement of their home organization, not its annihilation, and it shows in their approach.

Most shift disturbers have a real awareness of the personal impacts their work will have on their teammates. They may explicitly articulate the cultural norms that they will be disrupting or present innovation plans that include a

HOWEVER, WHILE INNOVATIVE SHIFT DISTURBERS WILL CERTAINLY MAKE WAVES, THEY ARE SEEKING THE IMPROVEMENT OF THEIR HOME ORGANIZATION, NOT ITS ANNIHILATION, AND IT SHOWS IN THEIR APPROACH.

certain period of adaptation for workers used to a different system. As they look toward bringing their ideas to life, they will also include calculations around whether the current organization culture will act as a barrier or an accelerator for their vision or proposed change.

Managers and HR team may also see that shift disturbers make careful study of organizational strategies a central part of their lives. After all, it is difficult to change what is not well understood, and while shift disruptors can bounce back quickly from failures, they do like to see a certain amount of success from their efforts. As a result, their actions will be informed by an understanding of the current organizational strategy, even if they

acknowledge that the strategy is imperfect for their innovative purposes.

In practice, most smart shift disturbers use the organization culture and strategies as a springboard. Outside the organization, as independent entrepreneurs, they would be without support or funding for their proposals. Inside the organization, they can find practical support and encouragement for their innovative experiments.

As a result, the better they become at understanding and navigating the current corporate culture, the more likely they are to thrive. Supporting them can thus be as simple as helping them build deeper partnerships with key influencers or cultural leaders inside the organization.



TRANSFORMING PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS WITH TECHNOLOGY

TECHNOLOGY WAS ORIGINALLY AN ENABLER FOR STREAMLINING PROCUREMENT PROCESSES. NOW TECHNOLOGY HAS BECOME A TRANSFORMATIONAL ELEMENT THAT IS DRIVING PROCUREMENT INTO A DIGITAL FUTURE.

BY GERALD DONALD



P

rocurement and Human Resources have a lot in common from a technology perspective. Both functions can automate many of the transactional activities, freeing up staff time to concentrate on important things. For procurement, the important things include being able to make informed decisions based on market data and supplier intelligence, utilizing smaller and more agile suppliers, improving supply chain activity tracking, incorporating sustainability into purchasing decisions, and improving agility and innovation, just to mention a few.

Technology is the driver of change and impacts all the factors mentioned, from data-based decision-making to providing agile services to department heads. In 2018, more procurement functions are moving toward high-tech solutions like cloud-based solutions, dashboards enabling data manipulation for decision-making, intuitive intelligence that produces greater value for the business, and cross-organization collaboration.

The future holds even more disruptive technology-based innovations like blockchain-based supply chain tracking systems, predictive transactional procurement systems, and social intelligence through collaborative technologies.

NEW WAVE OF PROCUREMENT TECHNOLOGY CHANGES PROCESSES

Procurement was once the quiet function issuing purchase orders and RFPs as ordered by various department managers. The function could be defined more as a transaction processor than a critical value producer.

Technology is transforming the procurement function, just like it is transforming so many other functions from finance to manufacturing. Technologies already in use include social intelligence, collaboration platforms, B2B networks, mobile applications, big data and big analytics, and cloud technologies. The Internet of Things (IoT), blockchain, and predictive transactional procurement are just a few of the technologies that are still relatively new and not broadly used, but as they mature, procurement will continue to transform.

The procurement function is changing, and technology is at the core of the change as it enables pro-

curement's new role as a value producer rather than a buyer. The transformation from a transaction producer to a strategic sourcing function is ongoing, but it is fairly recently that companies have looked at procurement as critical to value production rather than cost containers. Value is a comprehensive concept that includes getting the best price, but it also considers things like supplier risks, predicting material demands for inventory management, identifying market trends, supplier collaboration, innovation and sustainability.

Moving from transaction processing to value production is only fully realized through digital technologies as procurement ceases to be a siloed function and becomes an integrated function. For example, IoT enables enhanced supply chain monitoring or gives the procurement function insights into consumer preferences which influences materials and supplier selection.

COGNITIVE PROCUREMENT

Currently, procurement is using state-of-the-art digital technologies for procure-to-pay systems, spend analysis, contract management, supplier management and sourcing. These are first steps in moving procurement

from a manager of costs to one that is more efficient, agile and collaborative. The future holds much more in terms of tech transformation, some sooner rather than later.

Predictive analytics, for example, can provide information based on the interdependence of things like price indices and material prices. The analytics lead to price forecasts and help to identify the leading indicators with the most impact on prices.

One of the implications is that procurement needs technical knowledge to identify critical data needed for forecasting and to analyze the analytics. This is a key change for the procurement function which has been traditionally transaction-based rather than predictive. In the future, procurement functions will utilize machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) to develop even more precise and accurate predictive analytics. Already there are open-source platforms available for adaptation to a particular enterprise.

Ever heard of "cognitive procurement?" This is a technology in which AI or cognitive computing is applied to a procurement process. This is applicable to the here and now, but the future will embrace technology advances that make the use of intelligent and



THE PROCUREMENT FUNCTION IS CHANGING, AND TECHNOLOGY IS AT THE CORE OF THE CHANGE AS IT ENABLES PROCUREMENT'S NEW ROLE AS A VALUE PRODUCER RATHER THAN A BUYER.



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— IRENE ROJAS STANBURY,
CEO OF LEMONKIND

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advanced analytics more refined and applicable to a broader range of procurement processes.

Cognitive computer is already used for procurement negotiations, per a chief procurement officer survey, but it will increasingly be used for processes like supplier portfolio optimization, predictive supplier quality, fraud detection, process efficiency improvement, and market intelligence. Tradeshift is a supply chain finance firm that is already using "Ada," an AI layer on its commerce platform that can learn from user interactions and improve business processes. Ada can give instant responses to requests concerning transactions, procurement, payments, spend, etc.

TRANSFORMATION PROMISE OF THE POTENTIAL OF BLOCKCHAIN

Some companies are already using blockchain in their procurement functions. Among those is the mining company BHP Billiton which uses blockchain for its supply chain.

Originally tracking everything through spreadsheets, BHP began working with ethereum to use blockchain to record movements of materials, specifically wellbore rock and fluid samples. Ethereum is an open-source software platform built with blockchain technology.

BHP requires its vendors to use the technology in order to collect live data. The data is then accessible as information through a dashboard that offers options. The way it works is that the blockchain solution has fixed information that cannot be changed, like the location of a well, but it is updated with metadata to incorporate relevant new information that is immediately accessible.

CREATING MORE VALUE

Procurement continues to lag behind in the adoption of technology compared to other business processes. That scenario is changing as forward-thinking procurement leaders explore the use of advanced technologies for beginning-to-end procurement processes.

“

THE RESEARCHERS LOOKING AHEAD DO NOT SEE FEWER POSITIONS, BUT THEY DO SEE THE NEED FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE THE SKILLS TO UTILIZE THE TECHNOLOGY TO CREATE MORE VALUE.

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Some people are concerned that technology, like cognitive procurement assistants, will replace people. The researchers looking ahead do not see fewer positions, but they do see the need for people who have the skills to utilize the technology to create more value. That may be the biggest challenge – getting people into procurement who have technical and analytical skills.

Chances are technology will manage analyzing suppliers, materials sources, costs, purchase order issuance, smart contracts, monitoring, reordering, inventory management, and payment through integration with accounts payable. Yet, people are always needed to ensure the quality of the data collected and the accuracy of the machine learning. Computers, like people, can make mistakes.

BLOCKCHAIN: ANTICIPATING SUPPLY CHAIN TRANSFORMATION THROUGH THE NEWEST IT DISRUPTION

The nascent technology called blockchain is a secure electronic ledger that can improve the transparency, efficiency and innovation in supply chains. The future is already here as innovative startups develop and implement blockchain platforms.

BY VALERIE GOMEZ

In layman's terms, blockchain, not to be confused with cryptocurrency like bitcoin, is a secure electronic ledger that records each transaction by adding unique "blocks" of data to a string of blocks of data. Cryptocurrency uses blockchain technology, but blockchain is seen as a new paradigm for information sharing that can improve transaction tracking in a variety of industries and processes. In fact, blockchain offers the promise of supply chain transformation through improved transparency, increased traceability of materials and processes, improved compliance, and reduced costs and risks of fraud on a global basis.

Though blockchain technology is still in the early stages of research as an underpinning of secure transactions, it is a technology gaining speed in terms of interest and utility. Once fully developed for practical and reliable applications across industries, it could easily create a new foundation for supply chain systems.

TRUSTED TRANSACTIONS AROUND THE WORLD

Blockchain is the technology underlying cryptocurrency, but as a foundational technology, it has enormous potential for the tracking and management of supplier activities. It is a public electronic ledger that can be shared among dissimilar users, and it also creates a record of transactions that cannot be changed. Each record is time-stamped and linked to the previous transaction records. Each transaction is a block, and each block is linked to a specific user. The only way to update a blockchain is by user consensus.

Blockchains enable smart contracts which are self-executing contracts in which contract terms are written into the lines of code and exist in blockchain networks. They enable trusted transactions to be carried out across anonymous parties without the need for legal, governance and enforcement mechanisms.

It is easy to imagine the potential for streamlining supply chain processes and contracts. Deloitte developed a supply chain model in which blockchain technology drives value. The model begins with gaining access to source material data for R&D material choices and to enable closed-loop design. Supply chains with a blockchain underlayment require a large amount of data before



the technology can be implemented. The next step is increasing opportunities for co-planning and sharing forecasts between suppliers and customers which reduces inventory risks.

There is a decrease in administrative and sourcing costs, and an increase in transparency, when smart contracts replace paperwork and transactions are recorded on the blockchain. There is increased visibility and compliance of outsourced manufacturing, and the ability to provide consumers and regulators with a clear picture of supply chain steps and activity. The blockchain enables a company to determine, at any step, what materials to recall or which activity needs further inspection.

BLOCKCHAIN IS NOT SOME FAR IN THE FUTURE TECHNOLOGY. IT NEEDS REFINEMENT, ADDITIONAL TESTING AND RESEARCH, BUT IT IS ALREADY IN USE.

CLEARING 'SEEING' TRANSACTIONS

Supply chain visibility is improved in a number of ways and can lead to improved operations.

For example, companies can track total purchases for particular materials across the supply chain or identify material demands in a variety of locations to improve inventory management. Improved visibility enables a company to issue smart contracts that enable faster payment to suppliers. This not only improves the payment process. It also enables a company to utilize smaller, innovative, diverse startups who need rapid payment to maintain cash flow.

Blockchain can give companies more control of outsourced manufacturing because it connects each stakeholder in the supply chain. Unlike the traditional supplier relationships, the parties participating in the blockchain do not need to know each other.

It also offers transparency because each party involved in the blockchain will have a copy of it. Each transaction is validated by users in the network who perform complex computations that prove "work" was done before they can add new blocks to the chain. Using blockchain, smart contracts trigger delivery notices, digital invoicing and automatic payments through a financial system.

Corporations utilizing this technology will not only experience increased traceability of materials supplied by their vendors. The corporate brand will also benefit from enhanced supply chain activities.

Using blockchain could eventually be standard practice because it is ideal for a globalized supply chain which can be difficult to closely monitor. Blockchain improves response times to problems that occur during end-to-end tracking. The programming of blockchain allows the use of "if-then" and "if-else" statements when certain conditions occur, simplifying the decision-making process.

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

Bitcoin was one of the earliest uses of blockchain, and some analysts predicted it would not endure. However, persistent technical professionals saw the potential to apply blockchain to other uses.

Financial services was one of the

first industries considered because of the need for an improved transaction tracking system with heightened security. Now innovative companies like Provenance are already implementing blockchain technology in supply chains. The company envisions "a future where every physical product has a digital history, allowing you to trace and verify its origins, attributes and ownership."

The Provenance blockchain platform has two data systems. One system consists of transparency tools, and the other is a traceability system. The company is already applying the technology to supply chain processes in a variety of industries, like sourcing of coffee beans and tuna.

There are a number of pioneering companies developing and deploying secure blockchain systems. Blockchain is not some far in the future technology. It needs refinement, additional testing and research, but it is already in use.

Blockchain is here, being utilized, and a technology that is destined to transform supply chain systems. It is still a young technology but is already proving it is a powerful one, too.



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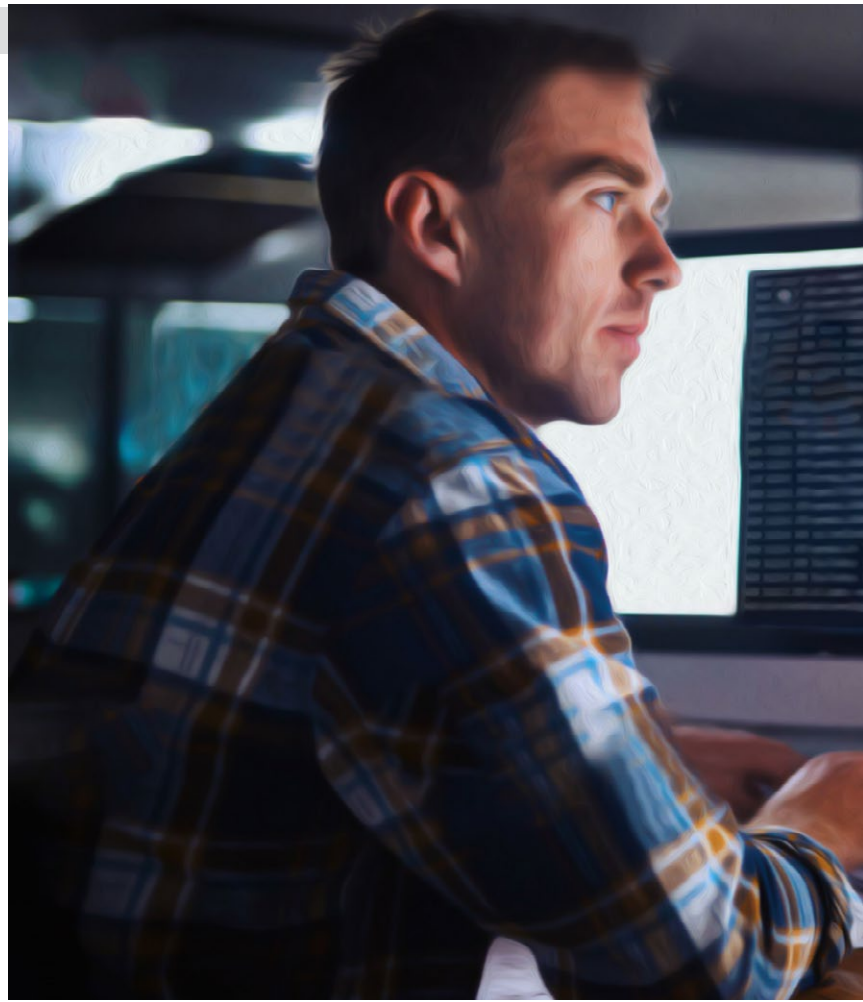
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BUILDING A PROCUREMENT FUNCTION TO DELIVER AN EXCELLENT USER EXPERIENCE

Procurement practices play a big role in enhancing user experience (UX) by helping organizations bring product plans and designs to fruition.

—
BY BETTY ARMSTRONG



The procurement function is a critical function in every organization, yet it remains on the sidelines in many respects. Departments design products and services, and procurement enters in the middle or end of the process. Handed a set of completed specifications, the sourcing and buying staff bring the product to life through RFPs issued to find the appropriate vendors and materials.

If the goal is to create products offering the ideal User Experience (UX), procurement practices should support the effort from beginning to end in two ways. One is to create a UX for the organizational members who access procurement systems and work with procurement staff. The second is to include procurement in end-to-end processes with the goal of maximizing the seven factors of the end UX.

PROCUREMENT GETS A VOICE

Every process has a value chain which is expected to deliver the outcomes that customers expect. Procurement's value chain has traditionally begun with the needs of its internal customers, like department heads and project teams requiring a variety of materials and vendors.

However, procurement plays a much larger role when the function is viewed as a contributor to UX

which extends to the organization's customers. Rather than meeting the needs of individual departments, procurement engages with the business in an end-to-end process from product ideas to product delivery to the marketplace. This change in focus requires procurement to develop a wider knowledge of business goals and strategies and to have a voice during, and not after, the development of strategies.

UX was pioneered by Peter Morville, an expert in information architecture, in response to a need for dynamic planning. The complex business environment today is rapidly changing, making traditional planning processes inadequate. Dynamic planning considers context and is social and agile. A cross-functional group of business people are engaged in the process (social); the product and services goals and roadmap consider the corporate culture and processes, end-users, and external environment (context); and planning is conducted while continuously learning (agile). A project is balanced between business context, user needs and behaviors, and content.

UX is a key tenet of dynamic planning and has seven factors: useful, usable, findable, desirable, accessible, and credible.

Procurement can provide required input during dynamic planning to enhance most UX factors. Sourcing and procurement professionals may offer innovative solutions to make products more useful and usable, create a more desirable brand, improve user trust, and increase user value. Procurement is the function that locates reliable and sustainable materials meeting design specifications, logistics services, and a host of vendors who contribute to the UX.



One such strategy is to drive improved supplier experiences to attract the suppliers who can bring the most benefits to the organization.



CREATING A SEAMLESS EXPERIENCE

Procurement can play a pivotal role in creating a seamless experience for product end users, if the function joins the organization's strategic efforts. Procurement must contribute more than cost savings.

First, senior procurement officials should get a seat at the decision-making table for strategic dynamic planning and have representatives on project teams. The heart of procurement's ability to improve UX is its relationship with suppliers because the suppliers are innovators and have a wealth of knowledge about consumer and business needs in the marketplace. They have familiarity with available materials and other resources, design innovations, and even the company's competitors.

Procurement best practices focus on maximizing supply chain value, utilizing several strategies to develop and enhance supplier relationships.

One such strategy is to drive improved supplier experiences to attract the suppliers who can bring the most benefits to the organization. Improving the supplier experience includes implementing a high-quality communication system; providing opportunities for suppliers to collaborate; enabling supplier opportunities to introduce innovative ideas, products, materials or services; streamlining the procure-to-pay process to encour-

age diverse SMEs to participate in the supply chain; and using data analytics to help suppliers grow and improve. An enhanced UX benefits the departments accessing the procurement system and product end users.

As procurement becomes a strategic partner, the function will need to invest in becoming savvier in the technology area. Technology within procurement has focused on automating RFPs, contracts, cost analysis and other traditional operations.

Procurement practices to support the organization's strategic goals will move toward embracing the latest technologies like analytics and artificial intelligence for decision-making and supplier support. Technical procurement professionals will also need to stay abreast of technologies in process of development, like cognitive strategic sourcing and blockchain. Not only will these kinds of technologies enhance the procurement function; they will enable the procurement people at the strategic planning table to contribute to the discussion in a meaningful way for the entire organization.

JOINING THE DECISION-MAKING TEAM

The procurement function becomes part of a collaborative team that includes finance, information technology, legal and suppliers. Managing unit costs moves toward a focus on the total cost of ownership. Strategic suppliers are included in procurement's long-term planning. Procurement becomes a fully integrated function within the organization.

The word "strategic" is used over and over again because it succinctly defines the changing role of sourcing and procurement. Once a department tucked away in a back office with staff waiting for department orders, it is now responsible for helping the organization achieve competitive excellence now and in the future.

Best practices support a procurement function with a focus on UX. Collaborative strategic sourcing is a process in which procurement and internal customers work together, rather than separately, to establish objectives and strategies. For example, procurement, finance, and the product engineers work together from the beginning of the process to contract negotiations and beyond to contract monitoring. Unit cost alone does not drive supplier selection. A host of factors are included like risks, innovation and total cost of ownership.

Bringing the chief procurement officer to the senior management strategic planning table is one step. Including procurement in product design discussions and on project teams is another step in enhancing UX. The information that sourcing and procurement brings to the table is discovered through procurement best practices in Supplier Relationship Management and in embracing and anticipating new technologies.

MANAGING CONSUMER ENERGY USAGE WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Oceans of data already flow from the installation of millions of smart meters. Artificial intelligence can turn the data into energy solutions for consumers, maximizing energy efficiency and lowering costs.

BY DONNA BENJAMIN

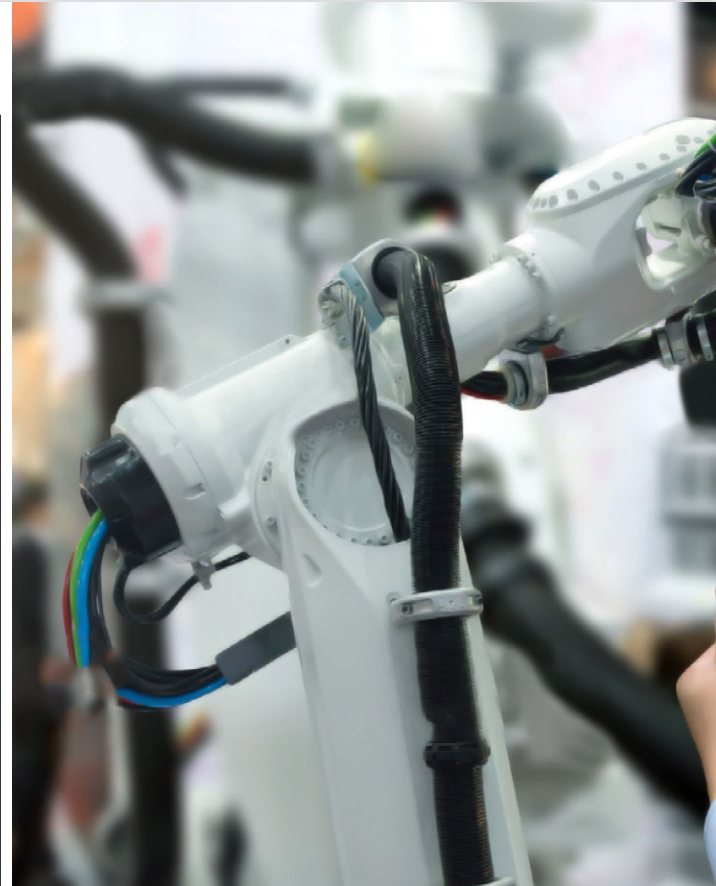
Millions of smart meters installed in American homes and businesses are creating a tidal wave of raw data. Unlocking the information contained in that data is the focus of utilities companies that are developing strategies to utilize advanced technology for the purpose of containing costs while maximizing energy efficiency.

In the next stage, machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) play a major joint role, enabling machines to turn processed data into solutions. AI turns machines into "thinking" systems that can do things like predict power failures, identify the customers who are the best candidates for demand response programs, provide the utility company with information that enables it to improve repair scheduling with the least amount of disruption, and improve the integration of the electric grid with alternate power sources.

Taking Energy Supply and Demand to the Next Level

Machine learning is the ability of machines to learn without human intervention. AI is machine intelligence, meaning a machine or program can perceive the environment and take action.

The joint technologies are driving the transformation of the power production industry. For example, what if the electric grid could predict when power failures will occur? Machine learning and AI can make that possible by monitoring the performance of equipment and comparing that performance to what should be occurring. The predictive analytics produced would signal if a misalignment exists in the power system, and AI would try to find the appropriate solution, like redirecting power or a system adjustment.



Another anticipated advantage of utilizing AI is improving the integration of renewable energy systems with the power grid. As more people move to sustainable energy sources, there is a growing need to transform the system to achieve the greatest efficiency. The newer sources of energy, like solar power and geothermal, use state-of-the-art equipment, while the upgrades to the nation's three electric grids have not kept pace.

One reason is the high cost of infrastructure improvements. Another reason is the necessary focus on cybersecurity has redirected funding and attention toward software updates and security systems.

Though moving toward the use of renewable energy sources is important, the addition of a variety of energy production systems makes it more difficult to manage energy supply and demand at the grid. The current system is not designed to accommodate these newer systems, leading to a higher risk of peaker plants being turned on when demand exceeds supply. There is agreement that using peaker plants is not efficient, and it is costly to utility companies. The costs are passed on to end users.

Research on utilizing AI to improve a diversified energy production system is in the early stages, but there is no doubt it will be a critical element. AI will learn from the data patterns and revolutionize the flow of energy in both directions, improving stability on the demand side and enable the increase in renewable resource production. An added benefit is that more efficient energy production can lower greenhouse emissions.



Getting Smarter and Going Local

The Department of Energy has invested billions to move the grid system to a smart grid which improves data collection from the smart sensors installed in homes and businesses. It is estimated that the U.S. electricity grid will need a \$2 trillion investment by the year 2030 for network upgrades. The investment is crucial, if the smart grid is to produce maximum results, because of the high volume of data generated. Producing actionable information within a desired timeframe is essential to a smart grid operating efficiency.

The smart grid is central to the ability of utilities to engage consumers in power generation at the industrial and residential level. The massive amount of data flowing between systems will enable AI to optimize the bidirectional flow of power between customers and the utility company. AI enables local autonomous control of the power flow.

This is important as the national power system continues to decentralize and become market oriented. The massive grid system is subject to delays if centralization of AI is used because significant computations are needed to make optimal decisions. Decentralizing the power system will bring numerous benefits to consumers, including continuous power supply no matter what energy sources are used, scalability of systems as areas grow and demand more energy, and fewer disturbances. The American Council for an Energy-Efficient

Economy estimates consumers could save \$80 billion in electricity bills as a result of the smart grid and the analytics produced from the grid, smart meters, data from third-party sources, distribution lines, charging stations, and IOT devices.



Streamlining an Archaic Energy System

Machine learning and AI are the technologies that turn massive amounts of data into useful information and enable computers to manage the complex power system. AI also has the potential to improve customer services by assisting consumers with selecting the most advantageous services and providing intuitive voice responses when customers have questions or issues to resolve. There is a need for software developers who can turn AI opportunities into real-world solutions.

One trend is the increased use of cloud computing, presenting an opportunity for diverse services providers that have the capability of producing sophisticated big data analytics and can offer large storage ability. Other opportunities include developing innovative metering solutions; utilizing alternative energy systems that can be connected to local utility systems; and providing training services to utility companies that need to develop a deeper understanding of analytics, AI and machine learning.

Of course, equipment security and cybersecurity remain critical challenges. Cybersecurity concerns protection of the power grid and utility system data, and protection of consumers' personal data.

The energy industry anticipates a future in which machine learning and AI will streamline services, limit disruptions, lower consumer costs, better enable the integration of alternative power supplies, and lower greenhouse emissions.

There are many challenges to overcome, and one is the fact that tens of millions of homes and businesses have not installed smart meters, creating data gaps. Another is the variety of data sources, adding complexity to the network.

The march toward a smarter and more efficient energy system continues.

THE ENERGY INDUSTRY ANTICIPATES A FUTURE IN WHICH MACHINE LEARNING AND AI WILL STREAMLINE SERVICES, LIMIT DISRUPTIONS, LOWER CONSUMER COSTS, BETTER ENABLE THE INTEGRATION OF ALTERNATIVE POWER SUPPLIES, AND LOWER GREENHOUSE EMISSIONS.

TRANSFORMING THE ENERGY INDUSTRY TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE

The energy industry is transforming in many ways and largely due to the development of advanced technologies. The short-term and long-term outlook finds customers getting more control and increasing use of green energy sources.

BY WILFRED SMITH

The energy industry is one of the most volatile industries in the world. Pricing fluctuations, natural disasters, politics and a growing green energy sector contribute to the industry's volatility. In the midst of what often seems like a chaotic global marketplace, the industry as a whole is transforming itself by utilizing advanced technologies that improve customer services and reduce environmental impacts. In the United States, the energy industry also faces challenges like the renegotiation of NAFTA and environmentalists who support keeping certain areas closed to oil and gas drilling in order to preserve the natural landscape.

Despite the volatility and the need to find balance between over-regulation and innovation, excitement is pervading the industry as forward-looking advanced technologies give utility customers more control, make green energy production more cost efficient, and enable better management of supply and demand.

Mixed Bag of Trends

The energy industry's transformation is accelerating. One major change is that the U.S. has become an oil and gas exporter, in pursuit of President Donald Trump's goal of achieving energy dominance and energy independence.

The future of oil and gas exports is largely dependent OPEC and the NAFTA renegotiation which could lead to opening up new export markets in Mexico. The future of shale oil also looks strong because production costs are up to 50 percent lower than they were in 2015, and they are expected to stay lower. Liquefied natural gas production is also expected to remain strong.

The renewable energy industry is a mixed bag of trends. The growth in green energy utilization is heavily dependent on the U.S. government's policies and regulations. For example, the Trump administration is focused on the oil, gas, and coal segments of the energy industry, and it has twice proposed large budget cuts for the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE). The reductions impact programs designed to lower the cost of solar energy and

significantly reduce the availability of research funds. The final DOE 2019 appropriation is currently being analyzed, but it is clear that the energy industry must take the lead in advancing alternative energy sources.

Storing the Power of the Wind and Sun

The current trend that will extend far into the future is continued movement toward increasing reliance on renewable energy. Technology is at the heart of the



trend, making a number of things possible.

One is the continued growth of renewable energy resources that include wind, solar power, geothermal, liquid biofuels, hydropower, and wood or other types of biomass. In the short term, the U.S. Energy Information Administration projects a continued rise in wind generation for the next two years and continued increase in solar electricity generation. A likely long-term trend is significant increases in wind and solar power. A University of California-Irvine study predicts that investments in greater storage and transmission systems could enable the U.S. to meet 80 percent of its electrical needs with solar and wind power.

One of the challenges to overcome is the need to store enough energy to meet needs for several weeks. Developing new technologies for energy storage is another industry trend. Scientists are considering the feasibility of a storage system that could store at least 12 hours of the nation's electricity needs.

One of the factors holding back more rapid advances of solar and wind power use in commercial, industrial, and residential facilities is battery technology. The fluctuations of energy output from solar and wind can have a major impact on the electrical grid, causing voltage drops locally or even massive blackouts. This is what

happened in South Australia when it pursued rapid installation of wind and solar power units without preparing the grid.

The fail-safe approach has been to add a network of fossil-fuel generators to handle energy demand peaks. A better approach is to develop battery storage capable of handling electrical grid needs, enabling continued installation of solar and wind energy systems. There are enormous opportunities for innovative companies to develop lithium-ion batteries or futuristic energy storage solutions.

Turning Waste into Energy

The long-term energy industry trends include an increase in waste-to-energy solutions and microgrids.

Waste-to-energy solutions can solve several problems at once. One is the reduction of dependence on fossil fuels. Another advantage is the recycling of waste, keeping it out of landfills and the ocean. "Waste" is a word that includes a variety of materials – biomass (plant or animal materials), nonbiomass (plastics and petroleum-based synthetics), glass, and metals. Just recently, it was reported that the Great Pacific Garbage Patch is now more than 600,000 square miles in size. This makes the development of new waste-to-energy production systems on a global basis an imperative.

It is expected that energy production will continue to move toward more local control. The future could hold an increasing reliance on microgrids which enable customers to produce and use power on a local basis. Microgrids are localized grids that are not connected to the main grid system. The microgrid is more flexible than the large main grid and is a good solution for integration of renewable energy systems, like solar power. The Department of Energy's Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability is tracking a variety of microgrid activities and R&D efforts. This is an area ripe for new and innovative suppliers.

Finding Balance

The transformation of the energy industry will also be impacted by other events, such as the increase in the production of electric cars. Advancing technology is driving the trends, from the reductions in energy production costs to the development of alternative power sources. The U.S. has decided to take a leading role in producing and exporting fossil fuels, much to the dismay of environmentalists.

However, this conflict is representative of the challenges the energy industry faces. It is an industry that includes rigid governmental controls and a network of innovative suppliers. Finding balance between the two is the ultimate challenge.

The fluctuations of energy output from solar and wind can have a major impact on the electrical grid, causing voltage drops locally or even massive blackouts.





SUPPLIER DIVERSITY DRIVES COMPETITIVENESS IN THE UTILITIES INDUSTRY

Utility companies are embracing supplier diversity as a path to increasing competitiveness in a transforming marketplace.

BY JAMES HSU

As the energy industry transforms, it is leading to a more locally-based network of utility companies serving communities, many of which are multicultural. National Grid is a good example of a regional natural gas and electricity company serving a specific area and recognizing the importance of supplier diversity for connecting with, growing, and improving the communities it serves in New York, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts.

The utility industry's focus on including minority and women-owned businesses in the supply chain has produced a variety of strategies that are built on the belief that competitiveness is strengthened through inclusion. Diverse suppliers bring new perspectives and ideas to an established industry that is undergoing a transformation.

Putting Commitment into Action

The utility sector came into the spotlight in June 2016 when an Ernst & Young 2016 industry report found a lack of gender diversity in senior-level positions and women accounted for only 16 percent of board members. Though this report concerned one aspect of workforce diversity, it brought attention to the industry diversity gap which extends to the supply chain.

Diverse organizations, like the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC), have joined the effort to diversify the energy industry. In autumn 2017, WBENC launched the WBENC Energy Executive Program (EEP) to assist women-owned businesses to become valued participants in the global energy supply chain. The EEP program is underwritten by Shell

Oil Co., making this a corporate strategy and a commitment to increase the participation of diverse businesses in the supply chain.

Utility and energy companies are developing a wide variety of strategies. National Grid, for example, has developed a dynamic business strategy that includes assisting diverse suppliers with certification, sponsoring business development programs, offering supplier mentorship programs, and providing programs to increase access to capital.

The utility sector is undergoing a transformation as part of the larger energy industry transformation. In the past, the utility sector was largely protected from disruption, making it a stable industry that people could count on to provide power when it was needed.

Today, the same companies are faced with many disruptive forces. Two of those forces are technology and consumer awareness of the environmental impacts of energy production. Utility companies need to produce cleaner energy, assist residential and business customers with embracing energy-efficiency measures, comply with increasing government regulation, maintain service reliability despite increasing electricity demands, and improve customer service. They must also stay current with technology which includes smart grid technologies, other green technologies, and increasing production of electric vehicles.

Improving Communities Through Supplier Relationship Building

In the past, electricity consumers had little say in utility operations, but today communities are more informed and more active in addressing their needs. Traditional supply chain approaches did not focus on diversity, yet diversity is precisely what the utility sector needs in order to connect with the communities they serve.

Traditionally, a utility business developed technologies in-house, but that limits the ability to modernize and keeps the business inward focused. Given the complexity of the operating environment, capital requirements to modernize, and the need for greater capabilities, it makes sense to leverage external skill sets found in suppliers. Adding diversity brings new perspectives, creativity, new technologies and important community connections.

Utility companies use numerous strategies to build diverse supply chains. Duke Energy won the 2017 Edison Electric Institute's Excellence Award for the company's efforts to advance purchasing opportunities for diverse suppliers, particularly for its innovative approach to relationship-building.

The highest quality supplier diversity programs today go way beyond developing registration portals. Business strategies should be proactive in reaching out to MWBEs. Duke Energy's strategy includes hosting business development events, sponsoring educational

workshops and industry seminars, and promoting the personal and professional development of supplier representatives. When given the award, Edison Electric recognized that Duke Energy has proactively sought diverse suppliers, and the efforts have made a lasting positive impact on "economic development locally, regionally, and nationally."

The utility sector is a complex sector in a state of transition. Suppliers need a deep understanding of the energy industry in order to compete for business, and the best way for them to gain that understanding is for utility companies to offer or sponsor educational programs in various communities. These programs provide information on the utility industry, operations, strategies and policies, and they also offer opportunities for personal interaction. This is also a strategy to attract MWBEs in the technical arena. In many ways, supplier training and development programs enable diverse suppliers to gain knowledge of the utility sector value chain.

Opportunities as Diverse as the Supply Chain

Another message the utility companies should send to the community is that there are many opportunities for diverse suppliers.

An example is LEM Products, a woman-owned manufacturer of safety and industrial-grade tags, labels, and signs. The diverse supplier has a product area that is specifically focused on the energy industry. The company manufactures ANSI- and OSHA-compliant products that address the concerns of utility companies, like signs that are weather-resistant or contribute to increased safety. In addition to products for the utility sector, there are products for oil and gas, nuclear, and wind sectors.

The National Utilities Diversity Council's "Best Practices Supplier Diversity Toolkit" offers some helpful ideas for advancing supplier diversity in the utilities, telecommunications, and cable and broadband industries.

There are many examples of utility companies that are leaders in supplier diversity. For example, Southern California Gas Co. offers a Supplier Showcase to educate suppliers on the contracting process. Experience has shown that early integration into the contract process increases diversity in the supply chain. Georgia Power educates suppliers on its communication process. Sprint offers supplier networking events. Pacific Gas & Electric connects prime suppliers and potential diverse subcontractors.

Each utility business needs to develop a strategy that reflects its needs and the community it serves. Diverse suppliers need to take advantage of the outreach efforts of utility companies. There are many opportunities for diverse suppliers in this traditionally non-diverse sector.

Disability Works ... in the Supply Chain

Inclusion is a principle that should embrace every aspect of a business – culture, policies and practices, talent recruiting and management, and general operations. Today, there is also increasing focus on disability inclusion in the supply chain.

BY JEREMIAH PRINCE

Diversity and inclusion (D&I) is a principle that began with a focus on Human Resources-related policies and initiatives. For people with disabilities, it meant companies made a sincere effort to recruit people with disabilities and to provide necessary accommodations to ensure they had real opportunities to succeed. Today, that principle has expanded to embrace everything the company does, meaning it impacts internal and external business activities.

Research has proven that disability works in the workforce, but now companies are realizing that D&I, including people with disabilities, in practice should lead to better products and services. That means disability works in the supply chain as well as the workforce. Leading companies are using a variety of focused strategies and employee groups to attract businesses owned by people with disabilities and businesses that proactively utilize people with disabilities in various capacities.

SHARED COMMITMENT

Building a competitive, sustainable business today requires more than good business acumen. It requires a commitment to diversity as one element of Social Responsibility. D&I once applied mostly to the workforce, but today it is a commitment to employees, customers and communities, and the supply chain. The initial concentration has been on D&I in the supply chain based on gender, race and multiculturalism, but this approach excludes the large diverse population of people with disabilities.

Diverse suppliers are important to the supply chain for many reasons. One is that supply chain diversity gives a company access to new ideas, products, materials and services, and it is a source of innovation. Diverse suppliers also offer knowledge about and access to diverse, global, changing and/or growing marketplaces.

To realize these advantages requires, first, finding the top, qualified suppliers and, second, developing a shared commitment so that everyone remains on the same path. The shared commitment is not just between the employer and suppliers. The organization as a whole should have a shared commitment to increase diversity in every aspect of business activities, including the supply chain.

ENGAGING ALL RESOURCES

An organizational culture that proactively supports diversity will have employees at every level and involved in every initiative, activity, and project who actively help business leaders find suppliers owned by people with disabilities or suppliers who employ a substantial number of people with disabilities. They share the commitment to corporate social responsibility, sustainability and competitive success.

Including people with disabilities in the workforce and diverse suppliers in the supply chain is not just the right thing to do. It is a competitive strategy as well.

The responsibility for finding qualified suppliers is not only the responsibility of sourcing and procurement personnel. It is everyone's responsibility in a culture of inclusion and acceptance. That means a variety of resources are engaged in the effort to locate suppliers who either are owned or managed by a person with a disability or suppliers who have successfully included people with disabilities in their organizations. The same resources assist Human Resources with finding qualified people with disabilities as employees and contracted labor.

The organization as a whole should have a shared commitment to increase diversity in every aspect of business activities, including the supply chain.

Resources include online recruitment and supplier portals, but that is not nearly enough to accelerate the inclusion of people with disabilities. In fact, some highly qualified talent may not have easy access to an organization's website or portals unless it is disability-friendly. Other resources for building a supply chain that includes people with disabilities are all Employee Resource Groups, not just the ERG for people with disabilities.

Additional resources are Tier I and Tier 2 suppliers, people responsible for D&I workforce and supplier initiatives, special teams like those responsible for



ensuring the company practices global social responsibility and sustainability, business partners, diversity associations like the US Business Leadership Network (USBLN), supplier conferences, community members, and employees and their families.

It is well-developed networks and a shared commitment with all stakeholders that strengthen the development of a supply chain that includes people with disabilities.

INCLUSION AND ACCEPTANCE

It is important that global businesses understand that inclusion does not mean enabling suppliers in developing economies, or in countries that are known to be biased against people with disabilities, to take advantage of cheap labor. Social responsibility includes ensuring fair labor and business practices for all people are a core value. For example, there are global suppliers who operate in “sheltered workshops” which are actually factories with exploitative and unsafe working conditions. As U.S. businesses continue to expand globally, they need to understand the local systems and terminology to ensure social responsibility is truly practiced.

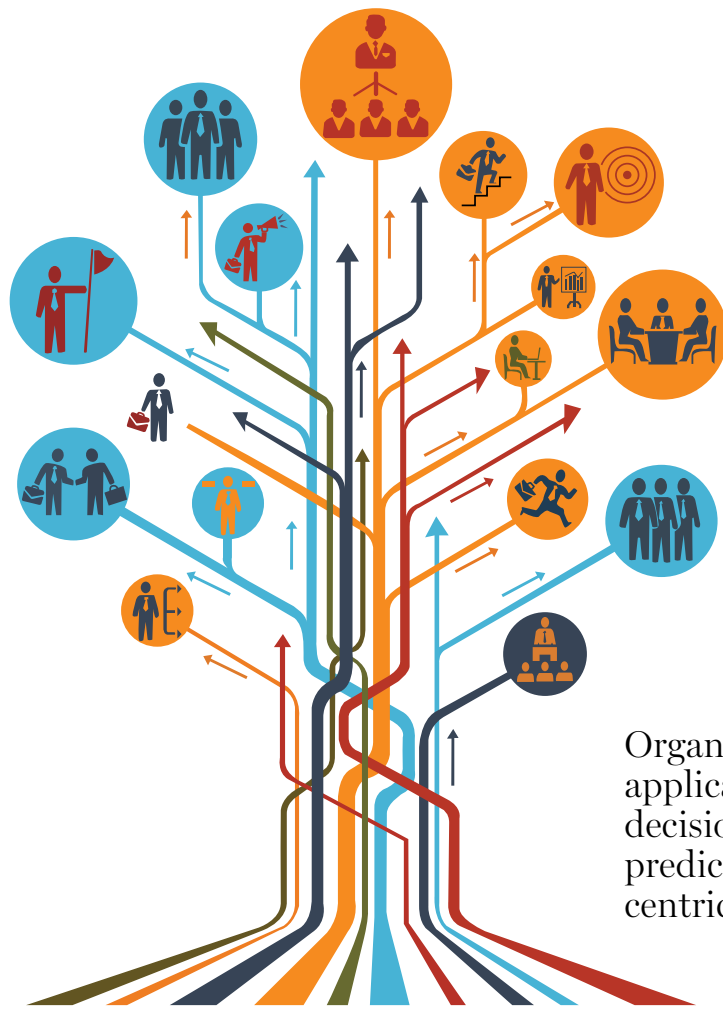
IBM is a corporate leader in supply chain diversity. The company has a global supplier diversity program that is centrally driven but relies on its business units in various geographic locations for real-world implementation. The resources include procurement commodity teams, community relations managers, diversity program managers, market development executives, and technical teams.

As U.S. businesses continue to expand globally, they need to understand the local systems and terminology to ensure social responsibility is truly practiced.

The company developed and uses various toolkits to assist diverse suppliers, including suppliers owned by people with disabilities, and regularly interacts with external organizations like the USBLN. To expand inclusion of people with disabilities, supplier eligibility policies direct that people with disabilities-owned businesses can be 51 percent owned, managed, and controlled by one or more persons with disabilities or a service-disabled veteran, or it can be a supplier that employs a large number of people with disabilities.

It is a culture of D&I that serves as the foundation for building a company that includes employees and suppliers with disabilities because it means the company has gone beyond accommodation. A culture of acceptance is also necessary so that the D&I of people and suppliers with disabilities is embraced by everyone across the company as important to corporate success. Everyone is proactive in finding talented people and innovative businesses and helping them flourish.

To develop a supply chain with businesses owned by people with disabilities requires a shared commitment and collaboration. It also requires a successful communication system to ensure recommendations make it to decision-makers and are not lost in the noise of daily operations.



USING DATA AND PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS TO DEVELOP LEARNING LEADERS

Organizations are regularly finding more applications for data analytics to improve decision-making. One application is predicting future events to improve user-centric leadership development tools.

BY **DAVE DESOUZA**

Globalization and a continuously changing business environment have made traditional out-of-the-box leadership development practices obsolete for most organizations. Leaders need agility, flexibility, intercultural adaptiveness and the ability to lead new team configurations driven by technology, i.e. virtual teams. They must be able to lead across diverse cultures, have a high ability to learn quickly in a dynamic business environment, and be adept at managing relationships and self.

Building an effective global leadership development program is as complex as the global business environment, so companies like IBM have embraced data and predictive analytics to keep leadership development aligned with the needs of the global enterprise. Globalized enterprises in a continuously changing business environment need continuously learning leaders who remain aligned with corporate strategies and goals.

GLOBALIZATION CHANGES LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM NEEDS

Sam Palmisano, former IBM CEO and chairman, recognized globalization was a different dynamic than multinational-

ism. He pointed out that "...IBM and its clients have changed structurally, operationally, and culturally in response to globalization and new technology."

Globalization requires an organization to be a "Globally Integrated Enterprise," requiring significant changes in organizational culture. He understood that global leaders need unique competencies and must be able to strengthen a globally integrated business culture that transforms and sustains business success.

In 2015, IBM developed the Transformational Leadership Framework (TFL) which is "dynamic, fluid, and fits where we are in our transformational journey" per the IBM website. The purpose of the TFL is support the building of an agile enterprise culture and pivot the company to cloud and cognitive solutions. The TFL identified 11 skills and behaviors of effective leaders in a globally integrated organization, embedding them into various development programs and creating tools for IBMers to assess themselves against the behaviors.

Traditional leadership development is proving to be inadequate because it does not recognize the need for continual learning and adaptability. The programs are focused on delivering information based mostly

on hindsight. Employees are rotated through various functions and geographies, completing out-of-the-box training programs. Collected data measures the past. In the meantime, the organization grows flatter and more global, mobile, changeable, and innovative. Organizations are finding they lack the leadership skills needed for a fast-paced external environment and an organization requiring leaders who can build new enterprise capabilities and create a culture that enables the workforce to adapt as needed.

Transformational leaders, versus transactional leaders, are people who can inspire others to follow and promote a culture of innovation, ideas, and change.

KEEPING DEVELOPMENT IN SYNC WITH ENTERPRISE NEEDS

Though descriptive analytics are currently used, they stop short of delivering the information needed to deliver foresight.

Gartner IT developed a continuum of analytics for learning leaders. It begins with descriptive analytics (What happened?) and moves to diagnostic analytics (Why did it happen?), predictive analytics (What will happen?), and finally prescriptive analytics (How can we make it happen?).

Predictive analytics is an approach to data mining and has four attributes. There is an emphasis on prediction, rapid analysis measured in hours or days, business relevance, and ease of use. Predictive analytics are used to keep leadership development tools attuned to enterprise needs and to customize development programs. Data is collected from development programs to identify employee behaviors exhibited when people are using the development tools. Predictive analytics anticipate how a person will respond to things like real-world scenarios so the development tools can adapt and drive desired learning.

Predictive analytics are also used to predict factors like the future of particular markets and the buying behaviors of current and potential customers across cultures. These analytics are crucial to identifying the learning that leaders need for future success as they manage culturally diverse workforces and change.

As managers at different levels exercise their skills and competencies, the leadership development program must measure the impact of the training. Does the person in a particular role deliver the desired results? Predictive analytics can anticipate behaviors so that necessary adjustments can be made to the training tools. The analytics enable the organization to

Predictive analytics anticipate how a person will respond to things like real-world scenarios so the development tools can adapt and drive desired learning.

predict the returns on a leadership position. In a continuous change environment, new leaders must learn rapidly and apply that learning for exponential growth.

Sandy Ogg is a former operating partner at Blackstone's Private Equity Group and a former chief Human Resources officer for Unilever. The founder of CEO.works,

Ogg is a strong believer that an organization's management culture drives its ability to successfully manage change. He also believes that the way a company develops future leaders or emerging talent is critical to developing the culture the organization wants for the future, and management development programs and employee evaluations must reflect the mindset, capabilities, and behaviors needed. Predictive analytics can inform as to whether the development efforts are working.

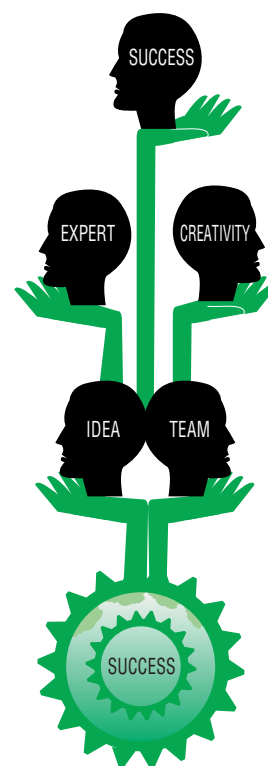
MEASURING RESULTS RATHER THAN ACTIVITY

IBM is a leader in the use of data and predictive analytics for leadership development. One of the changes the company made was switching from measuring activity to measuring business results. The analytics consider things like how well managers are able to meet customer needs or successfully pursue strategic goals.

IBM's perspective is that "developing leaders is not just about creating innovative, experiential and practical learning opportunities and resources, but also fostering a partnership with the business to be the trusted advisor, helping to drive behavioral change where needed. It's about helping leaders influence their peers to drive greater collaboration and self-direction. Ultimately, it's about modeling what it truly means to be a transformation leader."

Predictive analytics can help an enterprise build a desired culture, make human capital decisions that impact business results, and provide insights into leadership development. The reality is that what was done in the past is likely not right for the future.

The analytics can close leadership skills and competencies gaps by prescribing future leadership development.





LEVERAGING MILITARY SKILLS TO DRIVE CORPORATE INNOVATION

FOR COMPANIES TO BECOME **TECHNOLOGY INNOVATORS**, THEY MUST LEVERAGE THE **CREATIVITY AND SKILLS** OF ALL EMPLOYEES. MANY ARE DISCOVERING THEIR EMPLOYEES WITH **MILITARY TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE** ARE **KEY PLAYERS** FOR **DRIVING INNOVATION**.

BY ROYSTON ARCH

A lot of focus has been placed on hiring veterans, and military reserve and National Guard members because they have earned the right to be full participants in the economy. There is another reason that is equally important. People with real-world military knowledge and skills have often worked on innovative projects, like robotics, and have applied technology in a variety of ways. They are efficiency experts and regularly utilized their skills to improve procedures and processes while working as team members in a continually changing environment.

These are precisely the kind of skills organizations need to remain competitive today. Employers are realizing that tapping into the knowledge and skills of this employee group is a strategy for driving the exact kind of innovation needed today.

CONVERTING CREATIVITY INTO INNOVATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Fostering an innovative culture in which all employees eagerly participate in processes for developing creative solutions to meet client or customer needs is not easy. One of the characteristics of an innovative culture is that employees have opportunities to express their ability to problem solve or to present new ideas that represent the proverbial "thinking outside the box."

Companies have focused on hiring veterans with great success. Now it is time to take the process to the next level: Utilizing the ability of military-trained employees to innovate products and services, work comfortably with technology, and thrive in a continually changing business environment.

Converting creative ideas into real-world solutions

is innovation. If there is anything difficult to define in terms of desired end goals, and processes to reach those goals, it is innovation. By its very definition, it is a unique idea, method, process, service, or product, which sounds obvious, but innovating is not a simple process. It takes people who are willing to participate. Hiring veterans and other military-trained people is one step, but not fully utilizing their talents is a wasted opportunity.

Jorge Barba, a serial entrepreneur and blog writer focusing on innovation, was asked what one simple thing a company can do to change their perspective of innovation. He responded by saying that companies "get in their own way ... impeding people from doing the things that drive innovation."

To innovate, people need freedom, diverse teams, resources, encouragement, support and challenge.

GET OUT OF THE WAY

The first step in leveraging military skills to drive innovation is to recognize the employees have the creativity, knowledge and skills the company needs to innovate, set end goals and then get out of the way. In military terms, the company needs to follow the "Commander's Intent" in which leaders define what a successful innovation will look like.

The Commander's Intent is a key strategy for maintaining relevancy and applicability in a dynamic environment.

There are also military personnel who developed skill sets related to developing and managing global supply chains or global logistics.

STEP BACK AND LET PEOPLE SUCCEED

The military skills that can help a company drive innovation also include teamwork and assuming leadership roles on projects. This is why it is important to include veterans and other military people on company project teams (and then step back). They understand team support and team performance, and the importance of team success.

They also have "people skills" in that military personnel work and live with a diverse group of people, so they have developed high-level communication skills and appreciate different perspectives. This is a key quality for promoting innovation because people cannot feel intimidated when sharing unique perspectives and ideas.

Companies successful at innovating do not hem their employees in with preconceived notions. It is tempting to view military-trained people as a homogenous group of rigidly trained people who need specific instructions to perform on the job. The U.S. military has had to adapt as much as organizations do to the ever-changing global business environment.

TO INNOVATE, PEOPLE NEED FREEDOM, DIVERSE TEAMS, RESOURCES, ENCOURAGEMENT, SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE.

It is a vision of what fulfilment of the end goal will look like once achieved, recognizing in the meantime there is lack of complete information and ever-changing conditions. The top leader's purpose is to empower subordinates to be flexible, adaptive and innovative in reaching goals. The FedEx CEO used this strategy to define an intent of getting all packages safely, undamaged, and on-time to their destination. The managers were free to find innovative ways to meet the end goal, which included new schedules and routes, adapting sort schedules, and scheduling extra planes and truck trailers.

Military-trained people know how to improvise and how to innovate, while working within basic ground rules. They also have trained on and worked with state-of-the-art technology in areas like autonomous technology and robotics. Millions of military people have developed, worked with and/or improved defense technology. They have designed and built autonomous unmanned vehicles, including drones, able to enter areas dangerous to humans and written software to automate services. The military invests in developing nanotechnology, virtual simulators, gaming, new safety materials, a range of high-tech war machines, and now artificial intelligence and machine learning.

During an interview with Major General H.R. McMaster, he said, "First and foremost, we need leaders who can adapt and innovate ... and soldiers who join the Army expect it to be hard. ... They want to be challenged."

The army immerses soldiers in complex environments and tests their ability to adapt to changing conditions and unforeseen circumstances, two situations defining the marketplace.

GIVE THEM THE OPPORTUNITIES

Company managers need to provide their military-trained employees with the appropriate opportunities that enable them to utilize their knowledge and skills to innovate. Recognizing these employees have unique talents that can contribute to the company's mission is important to developing a successful culture of innovation.

Sometimes this may require training the leaders to overcome stereotyping of military employees. As the experts consistently point out; no employee group can be excluded for a company to have a true culture of innovation, the foundation of competitiveness.

SUNNY CYPRUS OFFERS SHINING INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The island of Cyprus evokes images of sunny days and the sparkling Mediterranean Sea. Global business investors find the business opportunities as bright as the days are sunny.



Cyprus has several distinctions. It is the third largest island in the Mediterranean, has over 300 sunny days a year, and is a natural magnet for global tourists. For global investors, a major attraction of this modern island is that it is a commercial hub, sitting at the crossroads of Asia, Europe and Africa.

A stable government, updated infrastructure, business-friendly regulatory and tax system, prosperous economy, skilled workforce, and European Union membership make Cyprus shine for global investors and exporters. Though the population is small at approximately 1.2 million people, the country has a large international reach.

SMALL DOMESTIC MARKET BUT SIGHTS SET ON LARGE GOALS

Cyprus, like most countries, has had its financial troubles that were initially triggered by the collapse of the financial markets in 2008 that became an economic crisis in 2013. Thanks to a remarkable and aggressive effort on the part of the government, the economy is now growing again and financially stable.

The population may be small, but the country's international economic activity is large. Cyprus has bilateral agreements with 10 countries plus the trade agreements that came with its 2004 membership in the European Union. The one area of difficulty that Cyprus must resolve is the fact two-thirds of the country, home to Greek Cypriots, is at odds with the remaining one-third, consisting of Turkish Cypriots. The U.S. is assisting with negotiations to resolve the division.

The small domestic market has not stopped Cyprus from becoming an international economic force. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is growing

at a fast pace for two primary reasons. One, the government of Cyprus is encouraging foreign investors to join its efforts to continue expanding its infrastructure, assist with an emerging energy sector, and significantly grow its tourism and technology industries. Cyprus is also an excellent location for exporters to establish a home base for exporting to Africa, Europe and the Middle East.

BY WILLIAM BELL

EVERYONE IS WELCOMED

Despite a still recovering economy and as the government continues to pay back the European Union for a 2013 bank bailout, Cyprus expects to experience almost 3 percent GDP growth this year. The tourism industry has played a big role as foreign investors participated in major infrastructure projects that include a luxury marina, casino resort and hotels. Cyprus has set a goal of doubling the tourism industry and attracting €20 billion in new investments by the year 2030. Should the government meet its goals, tourism will account for approximately 30 percent of GDP by the end of the same year.





With most days sunny and pleasant, Cyprus believes the investments can create a tourism base that spends up to 600 percent more per day than it spends now. Luxury hotels, yachts, glittering beaches, a growing medical and wellness tourism sector, and an integrated casino resort due to open in 2021 will all provide opportunities for foreign investors during development and after by meeting a need for supplies and services.

Per the U.S. Embassy, there are many investment opportunities for entrepreneurs and businesses in other industries besides tourism. They include professional services, and energy and related services. The energy sector has become a key sector with the discovery of deep-water natural gas reserves in the Cyprus economic zone. Additional thriving sectors include banking and finance, large developments like a large technology center, banking and financial services, shipping, and information and communications technology. The 10th largest merchant fleet in the world is in Cyprus, benefitting exporters to the EU and other locations.

HELP IS READILY AVAILABLE

In addition, business startup financial assistance is available from the Cyprus government's Industrial Development Services of the Ministry of Energy, Commerce, Industry & Tourism. The Cyprus Investment Promotion Agency is a government-funded nonprofit established to promote Cyprus investments and to support investors.

The Cyprus government has a sophisticated network of funding opportunities to encourage foreign investments. One of the interesting aspects of Cyprus is that it has a variety of indirect tax and VAT incentives designed to induce investors to consider Cyprus offerings like a Cyprus Holding Company, aircraft importations, purchases of residential buildings, and more.

Setting up a business requires working through the Department of the Registrar of Companies and Official Receiver. The country has a generous tax system designed to attract investors. There are no capital gains taxes, except in the case of real estate disposal, a

dividend participation exemption, and other liberal aspects. There is a low corporate tax rate of 12.5 percent on worldwide income, and all tax regime requirements comply with international, OECD, and EU laws and regulations. Cyprus also has an Intellectual Property rights box regime which offers generous tax deductions for research and development expenses.

There are equally liberal employment taxes to encourage businesses to hire people and to bring needed workers to the country. The official languages are Greek and English, making it easy for Americans to communicate with locals and government officials.

GEOGRAPHICALLY BEAUTIFUL AND BEAUTIFULLY TRANSPARENT

Of importance to foreign investors is the transparency the government has put in place to ensure corporations operate legally. One requirement is an annual audit. Another is a requirement to prepare consolidated financial statements.

Cyprus also reformed its investment laws so they are fully compliant with EU requirements. The investment legislation is as generous as all the other incentives. There is no restriction on investment types and no tax on most investment income amounts, to name just two incentives for investment.

Cyprus is geographically stunning, and its people are friendly. If this makes Cyprus sound like a perfect place to live and invest in, then it is easy to understand why this small country has been so successful at building a strong economy despite severe challenges.

Cyprus does have an embassy in Washington, D.C., and there is a Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It is easy to obtain information about doing business in Cyprus, and that is exactly what the country has worked hard to achieve.

Cyprus is beautiful, sunny and open for international business.



EXECUTIVE COACHING ADAPTS TO CHANGING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Originally, executive coaching was approached as a remediation effort to correct senior leadership problems. It has evolved into a process that focuses on assisting executives with meeting business and personal goals.

BY INGRID JOHNSON

The executive coaching process has transformed over the last two decades. In the past, it was a remediation program designed to help executives overcome leadership deficiencies. Now the coaching process is about helping executives successfully lead while maintaining personal balance and high performance. Coaching is about realizing full potential as a leader in order to meet organizational and personal goals.

The transformation from a process that was largely negative to one that is mostly positive is in response to the changes in the marketplace and advancing technology, and changes in the workforce as new generations enter with different expectations and work styles. It could be summed up as: Executives are coached to successfully manage change.

COACHING TO MAKE AN IMPACT IN AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD

Change is continuous as companies adopt new technologies; become globalized; and develop diverse, multigenerational workforces. Senior leaders are the people who set the tone for the organization's culture, direct the company through major upheavals like mergers and acquisitions, and guide the strategic direction for ongoing success into the future. The overwhelming amount and speed of change in every direction requires executives who can stay resilient and personally balanced.

The need for personal balance and resiliency is a major driver of the transformation that executive coaching has undergone. Once a "problem correcting" or remediation effort to correct identified leadership problems causing organizational under-performance, it is now a positive process for helping



**COACHING IS ABOUT REALIZING FULL POTENTIAL AS A LEADER IN
ORDER TO MEET ORGANIZATIONAL AND PERSONAL GOALS.**

leaders embrace continuous change as a source of opportunity to fulfill the company's vision while maintaining personal balance. Executive coaching also assists top managers with identifying their personal vision and its relationship to organizational success.

What does this really mean? Executive coaching is used to help business leaders improve self-confidence, achieve better work-life balance, and effectively lead a diverse workforce to meet strategic goals.

Research has shown that executives who are successful leaders have certain qualities that traditional coaching never addressed. These qualities include the ability to self-regulate and not get overwhelmed; increased self-awareness; a high level of emotional intelligence; and the ability to maintain an open mind to new ideas, perspectives, and approaches.

The intended results of successful coaching can lead to higher organizational productivity, improved competitiveness and improved working relationships. The executive enjoys benefits like improved focus, emotional stability, and better ability to balance work and personal lives.

HOW IT WORKS

Executives, like CEOs and VPs, usually are coached by an external coach. Ultimately, the organization needs to create a coaching culture in which all managers coach the leaders at lower levels and talent with a high potential to become leaders in the future. External coaches meet with the executive client to establish a rapport. Coaches use a variety of processes and tools to assess client needs and capabilities. Commonly used are 360-interviews, but these interviews are conducted with a variety of stakeholders who include board members, staff, other executives and some employees.

To increase self-awareness, the executive will explore his or her personal vision and core values. These are critical to achieving emotional balance. The coachee develops a personal statement that identifies personal and organizational goals, and what is needed to reach the goals. Starting in this manner gives the executive a foundation for guiding reactions and behaviors.

The executive's development plan is co-developed, and the coach and executive work from the plan. Executives meet with a variety of stakeholders during the coaching program to enhance self-reflection and better understand organizational needs. The information gathered from the various meetings is used to refine and target the development plan. It is important for the goals to be personal goals for becoming an excel-



lent leader, and these goals must reflect what the client wants and not what everyone else wants. The development plan supports the personal goals.

Coaching success depends on the willingness of the executive to be coached and to be honest with the coach and to himself or herself. Normally, at the executive level, external credentialed coaches are used because they bring knowledge and diverse experience. A one-on-one relationship is developed, and the program is a blend of coach-client discussions and formal development opportunities. The International Coach Federation and PricewaterhouseCoopers research reported in the "2016 Global Coaching Study" that other positions are coached and, in fact, the top two positions held by clients are manager and executive, followed by business owners, team leaders, and staff members.

Developing the ability to adapt to change is often one of the top goals of executive coaching today. The purpose is to help executives stay on course despite the intense pressure and stress associated with frequent change. Self-regulation is one of the most important skills that senior managers should develop because it puts the leader in control of his or her responses.

Coaching strategies will continue to transform, and internal coaching will likely increase as organizations grow to understand the importance of developing a coaching culture. There is an upward trend in the use of executive coaches. There is also greater use of activities like mindfulness meditation because it promotes emotional intelligence and successful interpersonal relationships. Older executives may be uncomfortable with these types of strategies, but as they make way for younger leaders, these types of programs will likely grow in numbers.

Today there is much more awareness of the linkage between behavioral and organizational psychology and executive leadership skills. Executives must understand human nature and dynamics in order to lead people through change.

The Promise of 5G is Lightning Fast Wireless Technology

The tech movers and shakers are working on the next generation of wireless technology called 5G. It is a tantalizing promise of lightning fast processing speeds that will trigger a tsunami of technology advances.

BY KAREN WHITE

Fifth generation (5G) connectivity is the future, and the future could arrive in full force as early as the year 2020. In the present, 5G networks are about to be launched in select cities, beginning a new avalanche of technological advances. When 5G connectivity becomes a full reality, it will become a catalyst for enhanced virtual reality capabilities, smart manufacturing, smart cities, and expanded implementation of the Internet of Things (IoT).

The possibilities are endless for improving the lives of people in their homes, workplaces, cities and regions. 5G also opens up new supplier opportunities and will surely spark innovative startups, becoming an economic generator.

5G is the hot topic at tech conferences, and there is good reason for the excitement.

MYSTERIOUS WORLD OF 5G TECHNOLOGY

5G wireless systems is not a futuristic technology because it already exists and will be launched by major wireless carriers, like Verizon and AT&T, at some point in 2018.

The nascent technology is a bit of a mixed bag of features right now. Some 5G networks will cover a large area and be extremely responsive but no faster than 4G for a while. Other networks will be lightning fast in smaller areas. It is safe to say that eventually the technology will cover the nation like 3G and 4G does now and also have exceptionally fast data transmission speeds. In the early stages of deployment, 5G will not be compatible with the current 4G connectivity. The process of implementation and upgrades will roll out over time.

5G networks are expected to manage much greater data loads, achieve the fastest speed developed to date, be more responsive, and be able to connect many more smart technologies to the network. 5G mobile broadband will eventually be implemented by the four largest mobile communication companies: Verizon, AT&T, Sprint and T-Mobile.

Qualcomm is a leader in 5G implementation and will soon offer the X20 modem which will maximize 4G speeds in preparation for moving to 5G mobile broadband. Qualcomm is anxious to offer the modem in the belief that 5G is the future of wireless systems.

The technology behind 5G is OFDM coding, currently used in 4G, supplemented by a new system for connecting data sent through radio waves to the network backbone. In the future, it is likely that the full advantages of 5G will be realized when the data transfer networks emanate from home or business routers sending data directly to the backbone, rather than through cell towers. Consumers and businesses will enjoy lightning fast downloads and browsing experiences.

WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES

5G is not just a new "technology toy." The implementation of 5G connectivity will bring enormous benefits to consumers and businesses, like more competitively priced internet access and more efficient mobile data transfers. The 5G technology will benefit internet access and mobile technology that includes smartphones, laptops, and other wireless devices.

This creates a whole new set of opportunities for technology suppliers and service providers. Though 5G connectivity will rely on the major mobile carriers for implementation, there will be a need for suppliers who can assist consumers, businesses and government agencies with taking advantage of the technology.

There are areas where early 5G implementation is already anticipated to provide advantages across a spectrum of users. One is enhanced virtual reality capabilities and improved movie downloads because of the increased data download speeds. The lightning fast speed of full 5G connectivity means a movie could be downloaded in 3.6 seconds.

Consumers will benefit in other ways. One anticipated application is the enhanced ability of IoT vehicles to communicate with each other while on the road. Imagine a car that knows to break because the car in front of it is braking or swerving. Only lightning data transmission speed can provide this ability.



At the 5G Mobile World Congress held in Barcelona, Spain, the near-future practical possibilities of 5G were introduced, and in some cases there were actual demonstrations. Virtual reality is one application.

Of more importance is the possibility that 5G will enable rapid growth of smart cities. IoT-enabled cars on the 5G network will have continuous connection with each other and various sensors placed on streets and streetlights. The push to make practical and safe driverless vehicles is accelerated with 5G networks. The 5G technology will also improve bank communication, city transportation systems and pedestrian walkway lights.

WANTED: FORWARD-LOOKING INNOVATORS

It does not take much imagination to recognize that a whole new set of unimagined uses and opportunities will develop the closer 5G networks become reality.

The major U.S. telecommunications companies are preparing to implement the first 5G networks in various cities, but there is a lack of devices able to connect to it. Though some companies like Qualcomm and Intel have developed mobile chips, there is a need for more 5G-enabled connected devices to take full advantage of the power of 5G connectivity.

Some other industries that can benefit from 5G include manufacturing, energy, environmental systems, utilities, retail and cybersecurity. As the networks are launched and grow, there will be a need for software and hardware companies able to supply materials and services to support the system. There is also a continued need for innovative companies that can develop the appropriate devices able to connect to the 5G networks.

5G is a technology for the digital generations that want everything instantly. Launching the 5G networks is only a first step into the technological future.

DEVELOPING 'INTENTIONAL' SOCIAL MEDIA FOR VALUE GENERATION

THE SPEED AT WHICH SOCIAL COMMUNITIES MOVE MEANS UNDESIRABLE RESULTS AS WELL AS POSITIVE ONES CAN BE AMPLIFIED. BUSINESSES MUST LEARN TO MANAGE THE SPEED OF SOCIAL TO CAPTURE THE FULL VALUE OF THE SOCIAL COMMUNITY.

BY JOSHUA FERDINAND

One important fact that has emerged since businesses began using social media is that developing a value-generating online social community requires careful planning. The second important fact is that the speed of social can lead to negative consequences as easily as it can produce positive results. Getting heard and staying relevant in the heavily populated social media system is challenging, but successful engagement of the right crowd can produce phenomenal business results.

Developing a social media community begins with understanding that it is not a virtual salesperson trying to push products and services nonstop like a continuously running advertisement trying to reach everyone online. Used to its full advantage, social media is an engagement tool that can humanize the business, meaning it is about building relationships with the right crowd.

DEVELOP CARING COMMUNITIES

The speed of social media means that one negative comment about a product or service can reach thousands, maybe millions, of people in a matter of hours. That rate of speed can also enable positive comments to move just as fast.

Think of social media in terms of a personal friendship. When people are true friends, they do not spread malicious gossip about each other. There is a relationship based on trust and good intentions. Brands should approach social media with a similar perspective. Developing a relationship via social media with current or potential customers, versus direct marketing, is the ideal approach for a savvy consumer base.

One goal of businesses using social media should be



to build a strong, positive reputation as a company that cares about communities made up of consumers and businesses. It is easy to attract the wrong crowd when social media is used as a direct marketing tool. The right crowd is one that is engaged, and there are several intentional strategies that increase engagement with people most likely to support the brand.

How does a company develop a lasting relationship with people in cyberspace? One strategy is to offer feedback when consumers praise the products or services, or mention they are seeing intended results. For example, a company sells nutritional products, and someone posts that her health is improving as a result of consistent use. Offering encouragement and congratulations makes the business a "friend" who truly cares.

Like any relationship, social media relationships need nurturing. Ignoring online community comments is likely to attract the seemingly endless number of people looking for an excuse to criticize a brand.

ACCESSIBILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS MATTER

Closely connected to offering feedback is the need to ensure all followers on various business social media sites can gain access to staff to resolve issues or can find desired information about products and services.

Companies are increasingly using chatbots to assist with maintaining positive communication with the online community. The chatbot technology emerged as machine learning advanced, and natural language processing humanizes the chatbot. Chatbots are software applications that mimic human speech, simulating conversations with real humans. Smaller businesses with limited IT budgets and unable to develop their own chatbot software programs can still take advantage of this technology via sites like Facebook Messenger.

Of course, developing engaging social media content is always crucial to building the desired group of followers. Engaging content makes people want to join the community and to share information. Engaging content is a two-way street, too. A business, for example, that encourages followers to tell their story supplements the story the business tells.

LEGO is an expert example of a company that has successfully mastered building a social media following. The company's social strategy is built on the two basic needs of its customers – the need to play and build as a community, and the need to take pride in a personal creation. LEGO has amplified social media results in various ways, including running a competition; maintaining a crowdsourcing platform that encourages people to submit ideas; and issuing an invitation for children to build an imaginary "Kronkiwongi" based on their personally creative ideas. LEGO reaches out to its followers with interesting focused content and lots of opportunities for interaction with the company and between followers.

ALWAYS LISTENING ... TO THE RIGHT FOLLOWERS

To manage the speed of social requires the business to always be listening in order to capture opportunities for brand building amid the loud noise.

The noise includes negative and positive comments, and both need responses as quickly as possible. The positive comments should be amplified via the company's response. A comment may offer new ideas for product uses, a suggestion for new products, ideas to improve packaging, a push for increasing social responsibility in a particular community, and so on. In effect, the followers are offering marketing and innovation, so having the ability to pull out creative ideas is important. There are ways for all sizes of companies to "listen" without investing a lot of resources, like Google Alerts which is free.

One of the challenges that organizations face is deciding which social media platforms to manage. Trying to maintain communication on all the sites is a herculean task, even with monitoring software. It is noisy online, so the key is to determine the specific sites where the target audience is found. It is direct engagement that builds relationships and not the company's mere presence on the social media sites.

LIKE ANY RELATIONSHIP, SOCIAL MEDIA RELATIONSHIPS NEED NURTURING. IGNORING ONLINE COMMUNITY COMMENTS IS LIKELY TO ATTRACT THE SEEMINGLY ENDLESS NUMBER OF PEOPLE LOOKING FOR AN EXCUSE TO CRITICIZE A BRAND.

To stay on track, measure results. Data and analytics offer guideposts, keeping the effort productive. Categories of measurements include output (what the company is producing), out-takes (new perspective consumers develop after brand exposure), and outcomes (changes in audience activities after brand strategy exposure). Quantitative and qualitative data collected in each of the categories includes volume, sentiment, and momentum. The ultimate goal is to be one step ahead of the social community.

These are just a few strategies that can cut through the social media noise and enable a business to intentionally develop a positive brand. Trying to do too much can lead to doing things that have little or no impact in attracting the right social media crowd.

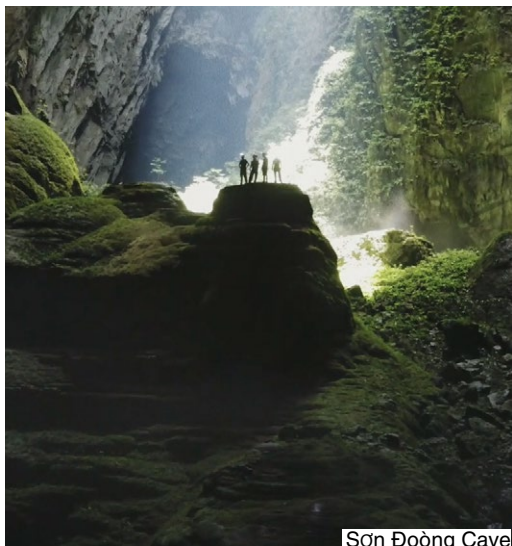
Target the audience, be responsive with relevant content, and monitor results are the three primary strategies for developing relationships. Be a friend to the followers. Be intentional.

THE AWE- INSPIRING BEAUTY OF VIETNAM

Ecotravelers are discovering Vietnam's treasure trove of natural wonders. The country is a spectacular mix of breathtaking mountain views, gently flowing rivers, thick forests and a rich historical culture.

BY PAMELA GRANT

Some places are just so beautiful that it is difficult to capture the awe inspiring natural environment in words. Vietnam is a country that continues to overcome its war-torn history and is now focused on protecting its natural wonders and biodiversity. The opportunities are many for ecotravelers to contribute to the effort by carefully choosing the sites and tour guides that ensure some of the money spent goes toward communities and protecting the environment.



Sơn Đoòng Cave

The exotic landscape is filled with caves, waterfalls, forests, limestone karsts and mountains. There are also large national parks protecting the enormous variety of biodiversity. If there is time during a visit, Vietnam also has a number of unique historical sites like the Giac Lam Pagoda and the Hue Imperial City (Citadel).

TRANQUILITY IN THE VIEWS

Vietnam has a large tourist industry that many people still do not realize. The country has been challenged the last couple of years to find ways to protect its natural environs from the damage that large numbers of people can inflict, unless they are very aware and very careful to leave a small footprint. Today, its seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites are attracting thousands of visitors each day.

As the green tourism industry grows, it creates opportunities to personally experience the breathtaking beauty of places like north Vietnam's Halong Bay with its almost 2,000 islands or Phong Nha-Kẻ Bàng National Park which has the world's largest grotto and underground river, and the Sơn Đoòng Cave to name just one of the many caves carved by nature.

A good place to begin exploring Vietnam is in the national parks because there is so much to see and do, and money spent



Halong Bay



Giac Lam Pagoda

benefits the environmental effort. In Phong Nha-Kẻ Bàng National Park, ecotourists can take a silent boat trip through Phong Nha Cave and then hike up a limestone mountain to Tien Son Cave where 19th century Cham altars remain. On the way to the Tien Son Cave, visitors can look out over rice fields, sugar fields and a spectacular mountainous countryside filled with meandering rivers. The views deliver a sense of peace and tranquility.

Cat Ba National Park on Cat Ba Island near Halong Bay has a wealth of wildlife that includes the endangered golden-headed langur, civets, deer, dozens of bird species and plenty of hiking trails. The trails take hikers up, down and around the mountains, and some are quite



Hue Imperial City (Citadel)



Phong Nha-Ké Bang National Park



Adventures in Phong Nha-Ké Bang National Park



Hanoi and Hoa Lu Trang An

strenuous. The views over the mountains are worth the hike. The Cat Ba Archipelago is a UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve Area in recognition of the extensive aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

The two national parks mentioned are just two of the most popular among many national parks. Ecotourists are encouraged to use tour guides for many of the activities in order to get the most out of the activities and for safety's sake due to the steep climbs and dense vegetation. Tour guides can share wise advice born of experience, such as "use your hands" when walking the steep trails.

Ecotourism companies like EcoTravel and Vietnam Eco Travel offer full-day and longer tours and they contribute part of the money to local communities. Working with a company also makes it easier to select among the many outstanding places to visit.

For example, EcoTravel offers multi-day tours of the Pu Luong Nature Reserve which gives visitors an opportunity to enjoy a place that is less visited by tourists due to its remoteness and offers a wealth of activities that include visiting villages and eating local cuisine as well as enjoying the gorgeous vistas of terraced fields and mountains. You can ride bikes, walk trails through lush forests, kayak on the Pu Luong River, and go rafting on the peaceful Cham River. The tour company can also arrange for you to spend your nights in village homes for true cultural immersion.

Blending sightseeing with spending time with locals truly enriches the visit. Vietnam Eco Travel offers a one full-day tour that includes Hanoi and Hoa Lu Trang An. It includes bicycling or boat trip and eating Ninh Binh cuisine that is strictly home cooking kind of meals, that incorporate local specialties like goat meat. Hoa Lu Trang An is where you can visit the ancient capital city of Hoa Lu and amazing geological formations forming numerous grottos and take a boat trip on the Ngo Dong River.

GOING GREEN(ER)

There is too much to see and do in Vietnam to capture it in one description.

In addition to the wonderful natural environment, there are many cultural sites. The Ho Dynasty Citadel was built in 1397 with stones weighing more than 20 tons. The My Son Sanctuary has 70 ruins that were once Hindu Temples and tombs used between the 4th and 14th centuries. A visit to the Hue Complex of Monuments is a way to see a wealth of royal facilities that include the famous High Noon Gate, tombs, pagodas, monuments and temples. The Giac Lam Pagoda in Ho Chi Minh City is a fascinating place that serves as a pilgrimage site, is filled with gilded figures of Buddhas, and has a peaceful garden.

This is just a sample of the many places to visit in Vietnam. Vietnam is so green naturally due to its dense vegetation, but it is getting greener. The focus on green tourism is strong today because excessive tourism was causing much damage to delicate natural areas.

Businesses and the government are working together to promote sustainability and to increase the number of green tours and hotels. The Responsible Travel Club of Vietnam is a group of travel agencies that are promoting environmental conservation and protection across the entire supply chain. The Vietnamese government has also committed to pursuing stronger sustainability measures to protect its natural treasures and heritage.

Ecotourists serious about being a true green tourist will use the services of a green travel agency. It is a way to ensure your footprint is the only impact you have on nature and that some of your travel funds go for a good cause – maintaining Vietnam's remarkable natural beauty and biodiversity in the face of increasing development.

DISCOVERING UNIQUE NEWFOUNDLAND FOOD ON THE EDGE OF NORTH AMERICA

Newfoundland has always seemed like a far-off place for only the hardy. Now it's becoming a culinary destination because the food is as unique as the landscape.

BY JOHN JACOBS

Far from the madding crowd is Newfoundland, an east coast Canadian island with a story reaching back to ancient Paleo-Eskimos and roaming Vikings. There remains a certain aura embracing this large island that evokes an adventurous spirit in anyone who visits.

One of the truly unusual experiences is trying a variety of the unique, traditional recipes that use local ingredients. Each dish contains a touch of adventure to remind people that great countries and great cuisine are built because of the amazing adaptability and resourcefulness of people.

Even the names of the popular foods are a reminder that Newfoundland is unique in every way. There are foods like Figgy Duff, Jiggs Dinner, bakeapples, flipper pie, and so many other iconic foods and recipes found nowhere else in the world. Eating Newfoundland traditional recipes is for people ready for a serious break from standard fare.

HARDY FOODS FOR HARDY PEOPLE

Newfoundland is a large island with deep historical roots that continue to go deeper with each archeological discovery. Located in the Newfoundland and Labrador Canadian Province, it is a locale defined by its ruggedness and a Norse history, reminding us that there were an-



Jiggs Dinner

cient people who came before us who had to find ways to adapt in order to survive.

The Newfoundland traditional cuisine is like no other found around the world, and locals continue to preserve the remarkable recipes at home and in restaurants.

Newfoundland is a location where only the hardy live. The island was formed by tumultuous activity when tectonic plates collided, and its wild beautiful natural landscape does not let anyone forget they are really newcomers.

Newfoundland recipes are embedded in a history in which natives and explorers had to make do with what they could find. It has a cold climate, a sea-based food history and a cuisine based on resourcefulness. That resourcefulness produced interesting foods like Figgy Duff, a pudding made with molasses, ginger, allspice, flour, butter and sugar, and Jiggs Dinner made with salt beef, cabbage, and vegetables, a nod to the Irish settlers.

WHAT'S IN A NAME? NOT WHAT YOU WOULD EXPECT

The food in Newfoundland is also an interesting mix of recipes with names that do not necessarily reflect the main ingredients. Bakeapples are one example. Most people would assume the bakeapple is a baked apple. Surprise! It has no relation to an apple. It is called a cloudberry

in most parts of the world. The bakeapple or cloudberry is a large edible orange raspberry-like berry with a peach-apricot-honey flavor and smells like apples when warmed in an oven. It is used in pies and jams, or served smothered in a thick cream.

The growing season is short in Newfoundland because of the cold climate, but late summer and early fall bring a wonderful variety of fruits and vegetables. In the summer, there are cantaloupes, cranberries, grapes, melons, strawberries, partridgeberries, blueberries and watermelons plus many other imported fruits. They appear in dishes like corn salad with pineapple and apple and fruit tarts.

Not surprisingly given the climate and rocky terrain, hardy root vegetables are staple foods. They include potatoes, turnips, carrots and beets. Other vegetables are grown, too, including spinach, broccoli and cabbage.

The traditional seven-layer dinner consists mostly of vegetables that include potatoes, green peas, carrots, onions and green onions. Sausage and rice are the remaining ingredients for the seven layers. Baked in the oven, the seven-layer dinner is filling and will serve many people.

CALL OF THE WILD: SEAFOOD AND MOOSE

Here is another surprise: cod tongues are not really tongues. They are fish filets cut from the cod's throat and fried.



Seal flipper pie



Toutons



Dish 'n' brewis

Fish and seafood, especially cod, are centerpiece foods in Newfoundland. Seal flipper pie is a dish that has been served since at least the 16th century. Seafood chowder, lobster, smoked stuffed clams, scallops, blue mussels, fish cakes and other types of recipes are found in this remarkable locale. Dish 'n' brewis (pronounced brews) is boiled hard bread and boiled salt cod. The popularity of fish and seafood reflects a seafaring culture that has endured for thousands of years. The aboriginal Beothuks (now extinct, circa 1500 or earlier) relied on fish for sustenance, and fish remained in the traditional diet of European settlers.



Vanilla custard pudding



Seal flipper pie



Figgy Duff

Yet, there are traditional meat dishes, too, like steaks and burgers made out of moose, which were introduced into the wild in the early 1900s. Meals may also



Bakeapples

include roast beef, chicken, ham, turkey and arctic hare.

Any discussion about Newfoundland food is remiss without mention of Figgy Duff. It's another name that could lead you to make the wrong assumption. It does not have any figs in it. It is a traditional boiled or steamed pudding consisting of sugar, butter, flour, ginger, allspice, cinnamon, and "figs" that are actually raisins.

Toutons make a great breakfast food. It is fried bread dough that is often covered with molasses.

FINE CUISINE IN THE FAR NORTH

Though the countryside is rugged and the weather cool or cold most of the year, there are restaurants serving dishes that can only be described as unusual, delectable, and worthy of competing with the world's finest cuisine. Many of the fine dining restaurants are located in St. Johns, the capital of the Newfoundland and Labrador Province.

Think in terms of beaver served with au jus, raw scallops, seared duck breast with mint and partridgeberry chutney, and moose pasta. End a meal with blueberry sorbet or a traditional vanilla custard pudding. In this land where rugged meets stylish sophistication, you can order a Quidi Vidi Brewing Co. craft beer made with water from a 25,000-year-old glacier.

There is plenty to fall in love with in Newfoundland, and the traditional and iconic foods top the list for anyone looking for a culinary adventure.

THE NATIONAL CENTER REFLECTS ON A SUCCESSFUL RES

Largest economic development gathering in Indian Country held in March

LAS VEGAS, Nevada

The National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development (the National Center) recently concluded a successful 2018 Reservation Economic Summit held at the Mirage Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, RES 2018 had more than 2,000 attendees from across Indian Country, corporate America, and the federal government who came to the event to share their expertise, network, and create new business opportunities.

“RES 2018 was a tremendous success, and we thank everyone who participated and helped make it the place where Indian Country does business,” said Chris James, President and CEO of the National Center.

“Business got done, connections were made, and the depth and breadth of the Indian Country economy was on display for all attendees to see. For us at the National Center, RES is not an end, but rather the catalyst for the work we do throughout the year to advance economic development in Native American and Alaska Native communities. We look forward to continuing our work in 2018 and beyond.”

Highlights of the four-day conference include:

- The RES scholarship golf tournament at the Las Vegas Paiute Resort, which raised thousands for the National Center’s scholarship program;
- A revamped trade show, with exhibitors grouped by business area in order to boost foot traffic;
- Remarks from senior officials at major employers such as IBM, Lockheed Martin, MGM Resorts, Google, Northrop Grumman, Alaska Air, and many others, as well as Native Leaders such as Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye, Idaho State Representative Paulette Jordan, and MHA Nation Chairman Mark Fox;
- The Indian Progress in Business (INPRO) gala to honor deserving individuals, tribes, and businesses that are making invaluable contributions to the Native American economy;
- Conference sessions that covered some of the most important business topics for the American Indian and Alaska Native economy, including energy, telecommunications, technology, contracting, gaming, and many others; and
- The Buy Native Procurement Matchmaking Expo that paired qualified suppliers with procurement opportunities.

In addition, the National Center announced a \$300,000 partnership with the KeyBank Foundation that will support the new National Center Procurement and Technical Assistance Program, or NCTAP, as well as the Native Edge Institute. NCTAP will expand the National Center’s procurement and technical services to new areas of the country, and Native Edge Institute will offer one-on-one counseling to businesses and entrepreneurs.

The National Center also announced that it will be revamp the Native Edge program – the online portal where one can find qualified employees and job openings, network, learn about potential RFPs, and access much of the material found at RES. As a part of this revamp, the National Center will add a lending component through the participation of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs). Native Edge will also be made free to all users.

“This was our 32nd annual RES, and the 32nd time I’ve been a part of this incredible event,” said National Center Board Chairman Derrick Watchman. “Each RES offers something new that makes me excited about the future of the Native economy. That was certainly the case in 2018. From coast to coast, up to Alaska, and as far away as New Zealand, Native peoples are on the cutting edge of business. Those who took the time to participate in RES and share with and learn from others will no doubt create a strong and prosperous tomorrow for our communities.”

Next year’s RES is scheduled March 25-28, 2019, at Paris Las Vegas.



Ameritech Financial Recommends IDRs to Address High Burden Felt by Black Student Loan Borrowers

ROHNERT PARK, Calif.

College tuition costs are rising, and that means that the cost of attendance for many may require student loans to cover. For certain populations that historically borrow more for college, that could make repayment difficult, specifically black students who borrow at higher rates than their white peers.

Ameritech Financial, a document preparation company that helps borrowers with federal repayment plan applications, reminds borrowers who struggle to make payments that federal income-driven repayment plans may help ease some financial stress and get them on track.

"Every borrower has a different student loan experience that can be good or bad for their financial future," said Tom Knickerbocker, executive vice president of Ameritech Financial. "Though student loans can be a great burden for many borrowers, they can be managed with the right resources."

Black students borrow at higher rates than any other race at all types of higher education institutions, but the disparity is greatest for four-year public schools. Based on data from 2012, about 86 percent of black students attending a four-year public school borrowed to fund the education, while the rate was about 60 percent for white students. Additionally, black students borrowed more than their white peers. Those numbers are likely much higher for borrowers today.

Additionally, borrowers of color may struggle to repay those loans more than others. With lower household incomes than white borrowers, black borrowers may have trouble affording their payments. In fact, nearly 50 percent of black students default on their federal student loans.

Income-driven repayment plans (IDRs) may provide relief to federal student loan borrowers who cannot afford their monthly payment. Such plans calculate payments relative to income and family size and may end in forgiveness at the end of 20 to 25 years in the program. Borrowers with high payments as compared to their low income may see their payments reduced.



AWIS Report Finds STEM Industry Lacking Diversity and Funding for Women

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Association for Women in Science (AWIS) will release its groundbreaking report, Revolutionizing the STEM Entrepreneurship Ecosystem, outlining systemic entrepreneurship barriers to opportunity and access for women in STEM. In addition, the report provides actionable recommendations for businesses, investors, and entrepreneurship support programs to expand funding opportunities, increase diversity and cultivate gender equity in STEM. AWIS is a leading global organization that advocates for women in STEM.

"Women STEM entrepreneurs face a whole host of systemic inclusion challenges. Over the last four years, more than 200 companies made their initial public offerings, yet fewer than 20 were led by women CEOs and only four of whom were led by women of color," said Janet Bandows Koster, Executive Director and CEO of the Association of Women in Science. "Working with entrepreneurs and investors across the country, AWIS is able to understand why conventional approaches are failing and identify tangible ways to address these issues effectively. Every investor, business leader, accelerator director, and woman in STEM should read this report."

Among other solutions, the new AWIS report outlines the following answers to systemic entrepreneurship barriers faced by women in all disciplines of STEM, especially women of color:

- Funders, entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurship support program leaders should seek connections to organizations and individuals with a demonstrated track record of engagement with diverse founders;
- Incubators and accelerators should remove "weed out" philosophy and keep entrepreneurs engaged through holistic support; and,
- Investors should start collecting demographic data on founders and their leadership teams and boards and share it openly.

The research draws on findings from the AWIS STEM to Market (S2M) two-part program that galvanizes inclusive and productive STEM entrepreneurial ecosystems. STEM to Market is funded by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. The report will be presented today at the AWIS Summit on Innovation and Inclusion: Women at the Forefront of STEM in San Francisco with nearly 200 of the most influential STEM leaders in attendance including Bahija Jallal, PhD, President, MedImmune and Executive Vice President, AstraZeneca; President, AWIS National Governing Board; Sue Desmond-Hellmann, MD, MPH, CEO, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Tony Prophet, MBA, Chief Equality Officer, Salesforce; Melinda Richter, MBA, Global Head of Johnson & Johnson Innovation, JLABS; and Rachel Haurwitz, PhD, President and CEO, Caribou Biosciences.



Gartner Says Sustainable Business Growth in Midsize Organisations Will Be Built on an Ecosystem Platform

Prioritising an Ecosystem Platform Will Accelerate Digital Adoption and Delivery in MSEs

STAMFORD, Conn.

The top two business priorities for CIOs of midsize enterprises (MSEs) in 2018 are growth and digital transformation. However, 57 percent of MSEs are not yet delivering digital initiatives, according to findings from Gartner Inc.'s 2018 CIO Agenda Survey.

"Digitalisation has the benefit of expanding MSEs' market horizons — a critical success factor for this size of organisation," said Luis Anavitarte, research vice president at Gartner. "As part of an overarching digital business technology platform, MSEs should build an ecosystem platform to strengthen their competitiveness and enable sustainable business growth."

Digital business is supported by technology platforms in five areas — the ecosystem, customer experience, data and analytics, information system and Internet of Things (IoT). "As vital as these platforms are, it's important to recognise that they can be built incrementally. By focusing on the ecosystem platform, you can build the digital business technology platforms over time as your digital business expands — and may even find that they are not all needed," said Mr Anavitarte.

As a first step, MSEs should align the organisation's strategic thinking to the platform concept through an internal digital platform, because the platform shapes the organisation's reasoning around the concept of platforms. It will help employees to share best practices across business units, leverage competencies including operational and strategic innovation, achieve rapid prototyping, bring new business capabilities to market more quickly, and coordinate the business ecosystem.

Most Americans look to research universities for innovation leadership, finds Polsky Center

Innovation Indicator reveals challenges for U.S. global competitiveness

CHICAGO, IL.

An overwhelming majority of Americans are looking to research universities to be the foremost drivers of innovation at a time of anxiety over global competition, according to a new Innovation Indicator survey from the Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the University of Chicago.

The Polsky Innovation Indicator found that 71 percent of Americans believe research universities are a "major force" in driving U.S. innovation, considerably more than the number who said that of large corporations, startup businesses or government. The survey also points to real challenges for global competitiveness, with just one in four people viewing America as the global leader in innovation. That suggests a growing need for universities to provide leadership through field-defining research and applying new knowledge to benefit society.

"Even though innovative ideas continue to flow from American universities and businesses, greater global competition means we need to do even more to maintain our leadership position," said Steven N. Kaplan, faculty director of the Polsky Center and the Neubauer Family Distinguished Professor of Entrepreneurship and Finance at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. "That takes both research funding and energizing people to commercialize that research through discovery and entrepreneurship."

The Polsky Innovation Indicator was conducted in April by NORC at the University of Chicago and released to coincide with the UChicago Innovation Fest, which runs May 1 through June 3, celebrating pioneering discovery and entrepreneurial endeavors at the University.



Continued from page-8

Corporate Strategic Opportunities and Supplier Diversity Information

financial wherewithal to finance the transaction using cash, debt and perhaps equity, but even more important than this is the ability to demonstrate a profitable strategy for the acquired asset.

This is also where supplier diversity professionals can play an important role based on what they know. Supplier diversity professionals know talented entrepreneurs who have the potential to be part of a bigger company than the one they are operating. In "Tao Te Ching" it is said that you "run a country like cooking a small fish." In other words, paying attention to the details and acting carefully and suc-

cessfully in a smaller company may demonstrate the ability to successfully operate a much larger enterprise. I believe we have minority entrepreneurs who are just as talented as the non-minority entrepreneurs who are seeing these opportunities almost exclusively.

The divestment of business units by large corporations takes place all the time. What is rare is the inclusion of diverse entrepreneurs in these opportunities. Supplier diversity professionals can help change the dynamics of minority business development by helping us get in this game. You have the data and the knowledge to make this work.

CommonBond Study Reveals the Missing Benefit in Employee Financial Wellness

New Research Uncovers That Student Debt Affects All Ages – Not Just Millennials – and Highlights Best Practices for Company Financial Wellness Initiatives

NEW YORK CITY

Financial technology company CommonBond today released the results of one of the most comprehensive employee financial wellness benefits studies to date. This research revealed the extent to which student debt affects employees' financial wellness, as well as how companies are meeting – or not meeting – the financial wellness needs of their employees.

The study included over 1,500 workers across five industries, in addition to more than 500 human resources executives. By comparing the perspectives of these groups, this research reveals the effects of student loan debt in the workplace, and how human resources teams can improve the financial wellness of their employees. Its key findings include:

Student debt cuts across all age groups, including parents who are taking out loans for their children. Almost 75 percent of all workers have taken out loans to fund their own education, while 21 percent of workers expect to take out a loan for a child or other family member's education in the next five years. This debt has a serious impact on well-being: employees with student debt were nearly twice as likely to be stressed about their personal finances.

Human resources executives prioritize benefits for employees without student debt. For employees with student debt, student loan repayment is the most-requested financial wellness benefit; however, human resources teams rank student loan repayment as their third priority.

Employees do not think their benefits are as innovative as human resources executives believe. Seventy-one percent of human resources executives see their benefits offering as innovative, compared with 50 percent of employees.

Student loan benefits attract talent, retain employees, and



improve work performance. Seventy-eight percent of employees with current or future student loan debt want their employer to offer this benefit, and 65 percent of employees over age 55 in these categories want the same.

"From this study, we've learned that student loan debt affects a much larger proportion of the workforce than previously realized," said Leigh Gross, vice president, partnerships at CommonBond. "Our data also shows that financial wellness programs that feature student loan benefits can increase employee engagement and retention, regardless of age group. From this research, we hope to develop new initiatives that enable human resources executives to offer effective financial wellness benefits, and better engage top talent in this competitive marketplace."

CommonBond is a leader in higher education financing, with its CommonBond for Business™ platform offering a complete student loan benefits solution for employers. CommonBond for Business includes an industry-first student debt evaluation tool, student loan financing and refinancing, and an employer-led student loan repayment benefit. The company has over 250 CommonBond for Business partners.

BANKS MUST INVEST IN RESKILLING THEIR WORKFORCES TO SEIZE AI-DRIVEN GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES, ACCENTURE REPORT FINDS

NEW YORK

Although bank leaders recognize that intelligent technologies are reshaping the core banking process and can transform customer experiences, few plan to significantly increase investments in reskilling their workforces to enable these technologies in the near-term, according to a report by Accenture (NYSE: ACN).

Based on two surveys – one of 100 banking executives and another of 1,300 non-executive bank employees – the report, “Future Workforce Survey - Banking: Realizing the Full Value of AI,” es-

timates that if banks invest in artificial intelligence (AI) and human-machine collaboration at the same rate as top-performing companies do, they could boost revenues by 34 percent and raise employment levels 14 percent by 2022.

“As AI becomes more nuanced, its role in banks is moving beyond automation to elevating human capabilities,” said Alan McIntyre, a senior managing director at Accenture and head of the company’s Banking practice. “To benefit from the potential of AI, banks need to implement ‘applied intelligence’ – combining technology and human ingenuity – across



all areas of their core business. To achieve this, they will need commitment from the highest levels of leadership and an understanding that this evolution will require a dramatic change in their workforce.”

According to the report, 76 percent of the 100 senior executives surveyed said that intelligent technology will be critical to their organization’s market differentiation, and 39 percent believe it will be behind every innovation they implement in the next three years.

While banks recognize that getting human-machine collaboration right is critical, few have acted to unlock the value that lies at the intersection of people and intelligent machines. For instance, bank executives believe that only one in four of their employees, on average, is ready to work with AI. Further, only 3 percent of the executives said their organization plans to significantly increase its investment in reskilling their workers in the next three years.

“Banks’ lack of commitment to upskilling and reskilling employees to learn how to collaborate with intelligent technologies will significantly hinder their ability to deploy and benefit from them,” McIntyre said. “The only way for banks to benefit from applied intelligence is by ensuring that the data and systems are managed to be fair, transparent and accountable – and people are essential to training machines to achieve this ‘responsible AI.’”

More than one-quarter (28 percent) of the 1,300 non-executive bank employees surveyed said they work with intelligent technologies more than half of their workday. Overall, the employees are optimistic about the impact of AI; two-thirds (67 percent) believe it will improve their work-life balance, and more than half (57 percent) expect it will expand their career prospects.



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Bipartisan Duckworth-Kennedy-Durbin Bill Would Help Strengthen Veteran-Owned Small Businesses

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), John Kennedy (R-LA) and Dick Durbin (D-IL) introduced bipartisan legislation to help expand economic opportunity for Veteran small business owners. The Veterans Small Business Enhancement Act would allow Veteran small business owners to acquire equipment and property that the federal government no longer has a use for by adding Veterans to the list of eligible recipients for federal surplus property, which already includes women and minority small business owners as well as Veterans Service Organizations.

"When our Veterans return home from their service, they deserve our full support as they transition back into civilian life, and that includes supporting their efforts to build and manage a small business," said Duckworth. "This bill will help Veteran-owned businesses expand their operations, reduce costs, and create jobs across Illinois and around the country. Our nation should be doing much more to help our Veterans and I'll be working with Senators Kennedy and Durbin and other members on both sides of the aisle to pass this legislation."

"Our nation's heroes deserve every bit of support we can give when they return home from their service," said Sen. Kennedy. "This bill empowers veteran entrepreneurs by increasing their access to affordable equipment and property. Helping veterans' small businesses succeed will help create jobs and grow our economy. I will continue to work for the men and women who have devoted their lives to serve and protect our country."

"Part of honoring the sacrifice our nation's veterans have made means supporting them when they return home," said Durbin. "That is why I am proud to join Senators Tammy Duckworth and John Kennedy in introducing the Veterans Small Business Enhancement Act, which would encourage small business growth and give veterans opportunities to succeed at home."

As a member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, Senator Duckworth has advocated for the more than 2.5 million Veteran-owned small business across the country, including the approximately 80,700 in Illinois. As more Iraq and Afghanistan-era Veterans transition out of the military and begin their next career, this number will only increase.

The General Services Administration (GSA) has overseen distribution of federal surplus property for 15 years in partnership with the Small Business Administration (SBA) and State Agencies for Surplus Property (SASP). When there is no federal need for excess property, SASPs disburse the property to eligible recipients who otherwise may have been unable to acquire it. This legislation is supported by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and the National Association of State Agencies for Surplus Property (NASASP).

"As President of the National Association of State Agencies for Surplus Property representing all 50 states, 6 territories and over 67,000 donees around the country as part of the Federal



Tammy Duckworth, United States Senator

surplus Property program, we commend Sen. Duckworth for her initiative and vision to secure, for over 2.5 Million veterans who own small businesses, the opportunity to secure surplus property for their operations," said Kristy Fierro, President of the NASASP. "By introducing the "Veterans Small Business Enhancement Act, Sen Duckworth has taken the lead to help those men and women who have served our country by allowing them to access surplus property through our state agencies."

Through the donation of vehicles, equipment, and other property, Veterans can grow their businesses, thereby creating jobs and increasing the tax base for localities, and most importantly, helping Veterans in America succeed. NASASP will support passage of this legislation as it is considered in the US Congress and we look forward to working with the federal government to make this a reality."

U.S. News and Aetna Foundation Release Inaugural Healthiest Communities Rankings

WASHINGTON, D.C.

U.S. News & World Report, the global authority in rankings and civic journalism, in collaboration with the Aetna Foundation, the independent charitable and philanthropic arm of Aetna, recently announced the inaugural Healthiest Communities rankings. The new report evaluated nearly 3,000 communities nationwide across 10 categories, from education and population health to infrastructure and economy. In addition to assessing which communities offer their citizens the greatest opportunity to live a productive, healthy life, the rankings offer insight into the best approaches for improving public health that can be shared and implemented across the country.

"For nearly thirty years, U.S. News has evaluated hospitals, colleges and other sectors for the benefit of consumers, recognizing the importance of access to trusted, in-depth information," said Eric Gertler, chairman of U.S. News. "Healthiest communities is an extension of that effort, giving citizens, community leaders and policy-makers the tools to assess health in their communities and develop a blueprint for positive change."

Employers and Employees Embrace Automation but Fear Loss of Workplace Humanity

NEW YORK

Rather than fearing the robot, employers and employees are embracing its potential with open arms, new data from MetLife reveals. But, they are worried about losing a sense of human connection within the workplace.

More than half (56 percent) of employers have a positive view of automation technologies that can help companies do human jobs (e.g., artificial intelligence, analytics, collaboration tools and robotics), compared with 20 percent who are pessimistic, according to MetLife's "16th Annual U.S. Employee Benefit Trends Study" (EBTS).

On the employee side, nearly half (49 percent) are optimistic, while only a quarter (24 percent) are pessimistic. This breaks down along gender and generational lines: Men (54 percent) are more optimistic than women (43 percent), and millennials (63 percent) are more optimistic than Xers (47 percent) or boomers (38 percent).

Still, both employers and their workers have trouble reconciling their optimism around automation with their desire for human connection. About half of both groups (46 percent of employees and 51 percent of employers) worry the workplace is becoming less human.

"While automation is the next workplace frontier, the biggest fear is that work is losing its human touch, likely due to unmet needs for personalization and recognition," says Todd Katz, executive vice president, Group Benefits at MetLife. "Employers who are able to balance their—and their employees'—desire for innovation through automation, while creating great work experiences, will be tomorrow's talent leaders."

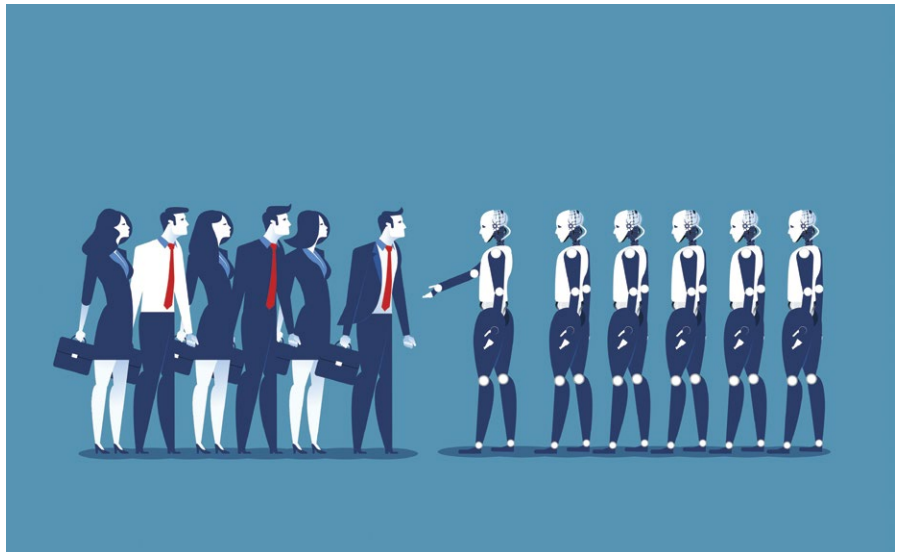
Creating Human Experiences

This year's study shows that employees increasingly see work as an extension of themselves and that personalized options—for professional development, work schedules and employee benefits—go a long way toward building loyalty and trust.

- **Work/life blending:** Eighty-seven percent of workers whose employer enables them to manage life in/outside of work are more loyal and satisfied. Nearly three quarters (72 percent) report that having the option to work remotely is important to their work/life balance. And offering a flexible schedule—something 74 percent of employees say is important when considering a new job—builds loyalty. This is more critical now than ever; the percentage of workers

interested in contract or freelance work, as opposed to full-time salaried jobs, has increased—partly because of the 'make your own hours' lifestyle allowed. More than half (57 percent) of employees say they're interested in freelance work, compared with 51 percent last year. And it's not just interest; 24 percent of employees say they plan to leave their full-time jobs for freelance work in the next five years. Choice and flexibility strengthen loyalty.

- **Financial wellness:** Customized benefits attract talent. Like last year, employees want their employers to flex when it comes to benefits. The ability to customize benefits to meet their needs (70 percent) remains a high loyalty driver—and is a greater recruiting advantage than the ability to work from home (73 percent vs. 65 percent). Trending upward from 2017, six in ten employees—and 69 percent of millennials—now report that they're willing to pay more to have benefits choices that meet their needs, up from 52



percent. One of their biggest needs? Financial wellness. Eighty-four percent of employees describe financial wellness programs (e.g., planning, education, workshops, tools) as offerings they want or need. Yet only 18 percent of employers currently offer them. And fewer than half (43 percent) of workers believe their employer understands their personal financial pressures—down from 54 percent last year—showing a missed opportunity for building connection and trust.

- **Commitment to "my success":** While 77 percent of employers say they are committed to their employees' success, only 65 percent of workers agree. Fewer than two-thirds (63 percent) believe their company teaches them the skills they need to succeed in their current position, and roughly the same percentage (60 percent) feel appreciated most of the time. Workers who do feel appreciated at work are 19 percentage points more likely to say their company is committed to their success. Even small gestures can make a difference.



OUT TO WIN: ADOPTING BUSINESS STRATEGY FROM GOLF'S MATCH PLAY

Match play in golf is an exciting head-to-head competition that focuses on reaching end goals by assessing the competitor's situation at each hole. In business, match play becomes an all-out strategy to beat the competition with acumen, flexibility and adaptability. — BY VINCENT PANE

Patrick Reed won his first Masters championship in April, and it was a particularly interesting win for the golfer. Reed is known mostly for match play golf game performances in which a golfer plays head-to-head against an opponent, and each hole is a win, loss or draw. Most golfers use a stroke play scoring system in which the total number of strokes is counted against a field of competitors. The type of scoring chosen determines the strategies employed to win.

Match play requires competing one-on-one, anticipating the opponent's strategy at each hole, and responding accordingly. This is not any different than the situation a business faces when a competitor has decided to increase its market share of an existing market. Business match play requires playing to company strengths, leveraging an oppo-

nent's weaknesses, and adapting strategies to win more customers.

GAME ON!

In match play, a golfer is doing battle golf hole by golf hole in order to win a point one hole at a time. It takes steel nerves and the ability to rapidly adapt strategy at each hole based on an assessment of the other golfer's strengths and weaknesses.

A winning match play golfer uses a strategy similar to the one that the hamburger chain Wendy's used to bring heat on its competitor McDonald's. One of Wendy's competitive differences has been the fact its beef patties are always fresh and never frozen. McDonald's recently decided it, too, would offer fresh beef in its iconic Quarter Pounder food item and some other sandwiches.



It is game on. McDonald's assessed one of the marketing strengths that Wendy's claimed (always fresh beef), decided to go after some of Wendy's market share, and announced its new strategy. Wendy's responded with a new strategy – a series of ads and tweets that are written with humor and directly enter battle with McDonald's. It was a brilliant move.

Wendy's strategy makes it clear the food chain was playing against McDonald's and understood McDonald's weaknesses (i.e. most food items still have frozen beef). The Wendy's strategy also used traditional marketing and social media to reach the largest audience. A good example of the humorous Wendy's tweets is the one the company wrote after McDonald's fresh beef announcement. "Hey @McDonalds, heard the news. Happy #NationalFrozenFoodDay to you for all the frozen beef that's sticking around in your cheeseburgers." It garnered tens of thousands of likes and tens of thousands of responses.

McDonald's and Wendy's are in a match play in which Wendy's decided to proactively protect its market by playing one-on-one against McDonald's. Wendy's strategy has many of the same elements a match play golfer uses in game strategy. Wendy's was off to a quick start in responding, played smart by zeroing in on McDonald's weak spot (still sells frozen beef products), and put pressure on McDonald's which put the competitor on the defensive.

GAME POINT!

Game point for Wendy's in this match play. The interesting feature of a match point golf game though is that each person must anticipate an opponent's strategy at each and every hole. McDonald's cautiously did not respond to the humorous tweets, and Wendy's likely harmed its competitor's new marketing ploy with its sassy ads and tweets.

McDonald's weakness is that it really does still use frozen beef in most products. If it responds to Wendy's by adding more fresh beef products, the company will look like it has lost the "hole" and is chasing the competition. Wendy's moved to the next proverbial hole by recently posting a five-track mixtape on which a singer raps out weaknesses in McDonald's and Burger King's businesses, like broken ice cream machines and slow drive-thru windows.

Golfer Patrick Reed has always been known as an aggressive player. In match play, a golfer wins, loses or draws at each hole. It requires the ability to maintain nerves of steel and be prepared to implement smart adaptable strategies.

There are many ways to win at match play, so the golfer must be able to employ a particular strategy quickly and accurately while holding emotions

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back. Holding the emotions back means not responding to the opponent, even when he sinks a long putt, while mentally responding by developing a plan based on the assumption the golfer will win at each hole.

BECOME A DISRUPTER

The match player needs to take an early lead, play each and every hole because each hole offers an equal point reward, and be the opponent's disrupter. The golfer disrupts an opponent through a series of behaviors, like walking faster than an opponent normally walks. Wendy's disrupted McDonald's market plan by injecting ads and tweets that blatantly makes fun of McDonald's announcements and plans.

The match play golfer must be prepared for the opponent to try the same strategy and have a plan to respond to the strategy. Should McDonald's or Burger King ever respond, there is no doubt Wendy's has a new strategy in mind. Yet, each move the hamburger chains make could earn them points. The game is far from over.

Conceding putts to a golfing opponent is allowed in match play. The golfer needs to use the ability to concede very carefully. Concede too much too early in the game, and the player may find that was a mistake. Some golfers never concede putts, forcing the opponent to follow through each hole. This has the effect of rattling nerves, depending on the opponent. There is no doubt that McDonald's has not been responding to Wendy's at this point because it means conceding points. The fresh beef options are limited (one point lost) or the milkshake machines really are broken most of the time (another point lost).

Match play golf is a head-to-head competition. Businesses like Wendy's that decide to implement this kind of strategy get the attention of the marketplace. However, it requires business nerves of steel because there is no certainty as to how the competition will respond.



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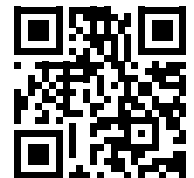
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