



MARCH 2019



The next [Knowledge Transfer Workshop](#) is April 11 and 12.

Be more effective in teaching others what you know. The Knowledge Transfer Workshop gives you the tools and processes to cross-train individuals or teams, get new hires up to speed quickly and efficiently, and prepare for the retirement of employees with information critical to your business. (12 1/4 HRCI/SHRM credits)

The Hard Evidence for Building Soft Skills

Soft skill development empowers learners with abilities that yield benefits in productivity, retention and profitability for years to come. But only 25% of companies report satisfaction with their soft skills training. To examine why something that has such a positive impact seems to be so hard to develop, the research arm of Workforce magazine partnered with Bellevue University to do a deep dive into the real world of soft skills.

As reported in [Making the Business Case for Soft Skills](#), nearly 600 respondents were surveyed on the state of training, measurement and evaluation of soft skills at their organizations. Notably, these L&D professionals were asked how they make the business case for training soft skills to their bosses, senior leaders or executive boards. Given that 63% of the organizations in this study reported a substantial or critical gap in soft skills, the pressure to remedy this gap is considerable.



Key findings from the study include:

1. The Soft Skills Gap is Widening.

Employee soft skill gaps are bad and getting worse. L&D leaders are responding by prioritizing soft skills training programs. "Only 22 percent of organizations say the

gap is shrinking, while 47.3 percent say it's staying the same and 30.8 percent say it's widening."

2. It's Hard to Assess Soft Skills.

Most reports regarding soft skills acumen are anecdotal. It is crucial to prioritize the soft skills training to clarify measurable soft skills contributions to ROI. The study found the majority of respondents saw the greatest needs in the areas of communication, decision-making, and collaboration. **And most reported that face-to-face, in-person training was the most likely to yield recognizable changes in behavior.**

3. Successful Soft Skills Training Requires Leadership Buy-in and Investment.

"Support for soft skills begins at the top. Without leadership buy-in and budgetary dedication, soft skills training won't produce the desired outcomes." The survey data indicated that organizations identified as leaders in this area are much more likely to use soft skills training in a variety of ways. These include formal classroom training, coaching, onboarding of new hires, as well as other less formal methodologies. These soft skills leaders have several different approaches which lead to better measurement outcomes and a better business case for teaching, investing in and applying soft skills.

As one survey participant commented:

"Soft skills need an integrated approach. Nothing works in isolation, and each needs careful design. The right sort of on-the-job learning and peer reflections on a shared experience is necessary."

Our face-to-face experiential approach focuses on changing behavior by incorporating real-work situations. Give us a call at 503.206.8369 to find out more about our soft skills offerings.

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Collaboration by Design

*Dr. Thea Spitzer introduced the essential elements of collaboration in her presentation, **Create a Winning Culture of Collaboration**, at the PacificSource March Speaker Series.*



Thea demonstrated how successful companies increase their profitability using collaborative tools.

Our thanks to PacificSource, HR Answers and Reliant Behavioral Health for hosting this presentation.

Attendees received a copy of Thea's white paper, *Collaboration by Design*, which you can [download here](#).

John Cochran of Executive Forum, Deborah Jeffries of HR Answers and Stuart Burke of PacificSource paused

for a photo op during Create a Winning Culture of Collaboration.



OUR UPCOMING PROGRAMS



[Knowledge Transfer Workshop](#)

April 11 and 12, 2019

Provide the tools and processes for effective knowledge transfer — to cross-train individuals or teams, get new hires up to speed quickly and efficiently, and meet succession needs as employees prepare for retirement. (12.25 HRCI/SHRM credits)

[**Register Now**](#)



[Leadership Lab™](#)

May 10, 17, 24, June 7 and 14, 2019

Mid-level managers strengthen their interpersonal skills, increase accountability, enhance team performance using interactive experiences (30 HRCI/SHRM credits)

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