



The
Advantage
Way

CALENDAR

Web Briefing:
**Courageous Training: Bold
Actions for Business Results**
Thursday, September 17, 2009
2:00-3:00 pm EDT

**Human Resources
Planning Society (HRPS)**
Strategic Investment in Learning
September 15, 2009
10:00-11:30 am EDT
Robert O. Brinkerhoff and Tim Mooney
Advantage Performance Group

ASTD Conference
Washington, D.C.
May 30-June 3, 2009
**Guarantee Performance
and Business Impact**
Robert O. Brinkerhoff and Tim Mooney
Advantage Performance Group

**Using Evaluation to Drive
Strategic Change in Leadership
Development**
*Alejandro Reyes
and Lisa Graham—Dell, Inc.*
*Tim Mooney—Advantage Performance
Group*

**Yes, You Can Guarantee
Business Impact from Training!**
Robert O. Brinkerhoff
Advantage Performance Group

The Way to Success

CHANGING THE WAY THAT TRAINING WORKS

My wife and I have always owned a dog, mostly golden retrievers, which in our opinion are the next best thing to a stuffed animal. Or maybe a doorstop that eats.

Given this proclivity to admire and enjoy dogs, it was an easy task for the new book, *Courageous Training*, (published last year with Tim Mooney) to identify what sort of dog we'd liken a really savvy and bold training leader to. Our answer: a bulldog - in particular a special breed of bulldog we call a Business-Goal Bulldog.

First, a few words about Bulldogs: The ancestors of the lovable and droopy-jowled Bulldog were selectively bred centuries ago on the British Isles for baiting bulls. In this cruel and deplorable form of "entertainment" the original Bulldog had to be very ferocious and so courageous as to be almost insensitive to pain. Fortunately this nasty form of "sport" was outlawed in 1835 in Britain. Since that time the Bulldog has been known for being "kind, resolute and courageous with a general appearance and attitude that suggest great stability, vigor, strength and dignity." (American Kennel Club)

We admire the Bulldog's reputation for being tenacious, strong and courageous. And we admire that they are not afraid to go after big things. We admire the courageous training leaders we have known for similar abilities. Though hardly any of them have droopy jowls, all these leaders clamp down on the business goals that underlie the requests they receive, and they refuse to release their analytical grip until they completely understand the business issue. They refuse to limit their vision to narrowly defined training issues and needs, but always see the larger picture of the business, its goals and its needs.

Courageous training leaders we have known view all training requests and inquiries through a conceptual lens that drives them and their clients to answer important questions: Why is training needed? What business results can and should it deliver? Where are the new capabilities needed the most? These courageous training leaders seem to have this framework wired into their thinking. Everything that they do - identifying training needs, handling training requests, formulating training strategies - is processed thoroughly so that questions of Why (ends) will always be clarified before talking about How (means).

Training leaders from the forty-plus companies that make up our Advantage Way User Group inspired this Bulldog metaphor. We noticed time and again how they doggedly work to understand and build the business case for training, setting clear and measurable performance improvement and business goals for learning investments; or, when this business case cannot be concretely made, they suggest alternatives to training. Having a Business-goal Bulldog mindset is always important, but in these

challenging economic times it is even more critical. We recommend their practices to all training practitioners. So – droopy jowls or no – get out there and be a bulldog. Go after big things like delivering measurable results for the business!

Sincerely,

Rob Brinkerhoff

P.S. Tim Mooney and I have written the book, *Courageous Training*, which delves into this topic and is available [online](#) from Berrett-Koehler.

Robert O. Brinkerhoff, EdD, is a global thought leader on training effectiveness and evaluation, and creator of The Advantage WaySM and Success Case Evaluation Method[®].

[Advantage Performance Group](#) is a performance development company whose Advantage WaySM approach guarantees measurable business impact from training.

Please visit our [website](#) or contact Tim Mooney at Advantage Performance Group for more information via email: TMooney@advantageperformance.com

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