

speaking guests to "please leave your values at the front desk." 4) In a Tokyo hotel, a sign in English said, "You are invited to take advantage of the chambermaid." (For copy of brochure call 440/446-1946)

ONLY 10% WORK IN TRULY PARTICIPATIVE ENVIRONMENT

Possibly less, estimates Work in America Institute. This figure is at odds with other surveys -- e.g. see lead article -- which say at least one-third of US enterprises have "employee involvement" or "participation" programs. Some surveys put the number as high as 75-80%.

The gap isn't hard to explain, says Jerome Rosow, pres. Participation has proven its power to energize continuous improvement so it isn't surprising organizations want to be on the bandwagon. But: "It's hard to expand participation thruout an organization. In our work with hundreds of companies over the years, we have found that many haven't moved participation beyond rhetoric. Or their efforts are confined to stand-alone or pilot programs that don't affect much of their total workforce."

NEW REPORT FOCUSES ON INFRASTRUCTURE

Participation, Achievement, Reward (PAR):

Creating the Infrastructure for Managing

Continuous Improvement addresses the gap between

the rhetoric of participation & its actual status. It shows how leading-edge companies close the gap. Their experience suggests some steps for organizations to increase the quality & impact of employee participation:

1. **Assure that employees & managers know participation will entail enormous changes** in roles & responsibilities by educating them thoroughly about business plans & economics.
2. **Reinforce desired behaviors by giving time & resources to align systems** (structure, mgrs' roles, training, com'ns, performance appraisal, pay).
3. **If unions are present, make them full partners at every stage:** planning, design, implementation & evaluation. Recognize a continuing central role for collective bargaining, but get commitment to shift more issues into joint problem-solving forums at various levels of the org'n. Develop jointly all key principles & guidelines for goals & activities, covering issues like team structure, training & flow of info.
4. **Give employees open access to info** on performance, plans, competition, & customer needs, so they see how their work affects the goals.
5. **Involve employees in designing & implementing new systems**, including choice of suppliers -- & provide adequate, effective training in the use of new technology.
6. **Involve workers in checking impact of new technology** on health & safety.
7. **Provide channels for 2-way com'ns;** & training in com'n skills.

(\$95 from Work in America Institute, 700 White Plains rd, Scarsdale, NY 10583; 914/472-9600)

AFTER LIVING THRU MANY MGMT FADS, ORGANIZATIONS AT LAST REALIZE THEIR WORKFORCES ARE KEY TO A COMPETITIVE EDGE

Especially in a tight labor market. Survey by Watson Wyatt Worldwide (5th in a series since '87) is practitioners' guide to areas needing work. 9,144 workers from all job levels & all industries participated. Findings:

1. **Communication of goals & strategies is working.** A majority understand organizational goals & directions (83%); their job responsibilities (87%); how their job affects external customers (94%). And 64% both understand & share their organization's values.
2. **Communicating how employees achieve the goals is the barrier.** Only 43% feel the skills & competencies needed for successful performance toward goals are well defined. Just 38% say the info needed to accomplish their work is widely shared.
3. **Upward communication remains poor.** Only 36% say their organizations actively seek their opinions & suggestions. Only 29% report their organizations act on employees' suggestions. Yet 43% say their organizations encourage employee involvement. Organizations "that can crack the puzzle of upward communication will unlock the potential of their workforce & really turbocharge their strategies," says Paul Sanchez, global com'ns practice dir.
4. **Trust is still the issue.** While 52% say they generally believe info from sr mgmt, only 35% characterize the level of trust between sr mgmt & employees as favorable. Only 30% feel they are treated as valued partners by their organizations.
5. **Transparent communication missing.** Reasons behind decisions need to be better communicated. Only 32% describe mgmt decisions as timely, same percentage that feel they're good ones (32%). 72% say the rationale behind mgmt decisions often is not explained very well.
6. **Immediate supervisors still the key.** They're praised for their ability to deal fairly with everyone (48%), encourage teamwork (49%), clearly communicate goals & assignments (46%), get the work group the resources it needs (46%), help solve job-related problems (44%).
7. **But supervisors' interpersonal skills need work.** 36% of workers say their supervisors are good or very good at facilitating work groups discussions; 33% feel their supervisors are good coaches.
8. **Participation in decisionmaking fair.** 65% feel they have enough "say" in how their work gets done, but only 55% report they have decisionmaking authority to meet the needs of their customers.



9. **Job & pay satisfaction:** 61% are satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs; 70% are satisfied with the opportunities provided to use their skills on the job. 50% are satisfied with their level of pay -- the highest positive response received in these surveys over 10 years.
10. **Pay for performance:** Still talk in most companies. Only 30% see a clear link between good performance & pay increases in their organizations -- not much changed from 28% back in '87.
11. **Company loyalty is ambivalent.** 52% are satisfied or very satisfied with their companies. Only 54% would recommend their company as a good place to work; but 53% would stay with their current companies even if they found a comparable job elsewhere [not surprising when you consider it's human nature to stay with what's familiar regardless of negative qualities]. (Full report from 1-800-388-9868)

CLASSIC TECHNIQUE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION STARTS WITH RESEARCH

"Healthy Shoes for Healthy Feet" is a public education campaign motivated by research. It has a strong dose of social responsibility since its effectiveness will reduce business for the sponsors.

MAKING THE CASE THRU RESEARCH

Surveys by the American Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Society (AOFAS) found:

- 90% of women wear shoes that are too small; 88% wear shoes 1 or 2 width sizes smaller than their feet
- 80% have had foot problems & 80% report pain
- 72% have 1 or more foot deformities
- The average woman has not had her foot measured in over 5 yrs
- 90% of the 795,000 annual surgeries for bunions, hammertoes, neuromas & bunionettes (4 most common problems linked to poorly fitting shoes) are had by women, & 75% of them can be attributed to wearing poorly fitting shoes. Total cost of these surgeries for women is about \$2 billion. Average time lost from work is 4 weeks/person, bringing total cost to about \$3.5 billion
- Half the women surveyed expressed dissatisfaction with their ability to find dress shoes that are fashionable & comfortable despite the fact that 60% say they pay between \$50 & \$200 for shoes

TARGETING THE PUBLICS THAT CAN SOLVE THE PROBLEM

1. For shoe manufacturers, a program was developed to recognize those that meet established scientific guidelines for the construction of "healthy" shoes. AOFAS Seal of Approval, given to these manufacturers, alerts consumers to this.

2. **Retailers** are offered "When the Shoe Fits" seminars -- half day courses for sales people in foot anatomy & professional shoefit.
3. For **consumers**, AOFAS collaborated with Nat'l Shoe Retailers Ass'n & Pedorthic Footwear Ass'n to produce "Ten Points of Proper Shoefit" -- brochure & countertop display designed to inform consumers on how to select properly fitting shoes. These have been distributed directly to consumers, physicians' offices & shoe stores.

Manufacturers that receive the AOFAS Seal of Approval are encouraged to print the "Ten Points..." on their shoebox. American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons supports the effort thru development of its "Wear It Safe" shoefit public educ program. (More at <http://www.aofas.org>)

"ONE WORLD" GLOBAL MARKETPLACE BUNK, SAYS INTERNATIONAL FIRM

"Do your homework," advises Haselow Marketing Communications.

"The concept of a single 'global marketplace' is simply wrong.... Although advanced computer-based communications technologies, such as the World Wide Web, have helped transcend national borders, there is no such place as 'one world,' nor do we dwell in a 'global village.' In the shank end of the 1990s, our world continues to be fragmented into nation states, whose inhabitants are separated further by differences in religion, language, ethnic origin, historical accident & political convictions."

SOME TIPS

- 1) Involve local nationals in every major decision;
- 2) English is not a universal language;
- 3) Prepare a matrix of significant differences & similarities;
- 4) Tailor a core message for use in various markets considering writing style, tone & visuals;
- 5) Translate carefully;
- 6) Learn the local meaning of colors & flowers.

MISCOMMUNICATION SHOWS HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO DO YOUR HOMEWORK

- A. The "thumbs up" gesture, with the hand elevated & the thumb extended upward from a lightly closed fist (a way of saying "everything's fine" in most countries), is considered very vulgar in Australia;
- B. Americans typically wave goodbye with an upright arm & hand moving from side to side in a horizontal arc. Europeans' gesture for goodbye is to hold their upright arm & hand with the palm outward while moving only the fingers up & down in a flapping motion. The American gesture can be misinterpreted in some parts of Europe as rudely meaning "no" & in other areas as "get away from here."
- C. Translation bloopers: 1) GM's old standard slogan, "Body by Fisher" was translated into "Corpse by Fisher" in the Flemish dialect spoken by about half of the Belgian population. 2) Kentucky Fried Chicken's famous tag line, "finger lickin' good," was mistranslated into Chinese as "you'll eat your fingers off." 3) A Paris hotel advised English-