

# Workforce (un) Readiness

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## EAP and HR in Strategic Alliance

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# Workforce (un) Readiness

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**GOAL:** to encourage participants to look at workforce (un) readiness as an opportunity to carve a niche for EAPs.

With already existing resources including referral sources, EAPs can create an alliance with HR to become a reliable adjunct that creates and delivers services that will upgrade the skills of new and incumbent workers.

# Workforce (un) Readiness

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## **3 Learning objectives / outcomes for the this session:**

- 1) to understand workforce (un) readiness and its implications from an EAP/HR perspective
- 2) to review (un) readiness across an employee spectrum that includes entry level, incumbent, aging and transitional workers
- 3) to brainstorm (that's participate) with peers ways that EAPs can create a stronger alliance with HR and seize this opportunity to create a valuable niche

# *What is Workforce Readiness and WHY the (un)?*

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**Definition:** simply put it is “Preparing for the **workforce.**”

- Assisting educational institutions to understand the needs of employers
- Prepare students for entry into the workforce and assist adults who are joining or rejoining the workforce
- Insure incumbent workers remain ready

The **(un)** is because we are simply **un**ready.

# Workforce Readiness

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Workforce Readiness includes the preparation of a qualified workforce through the public schools, vocational and technical colleges, adult education opportunities, remedial employee training, and continuing professional development. Such efforts mandate collaboration between business / industry, local, state, and national government, educators, and the local community.

Michigan State Council Leadership Conference, 4/25/2005

**Oops ... they left out collaboration with EAPS!**

# What's the Problem?

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There is a **'jobs' revolution** going on. As jobs become more complex, skills of employees decrease and therefore the gaps in readiness increase.

**Loss of jobs?** Most jobs have not fled across any borders or out of the country – they simply dissolved. In 2004 outsourcing made up less than 10% of American Jobs.

# What's the problem?

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- 78 million baby boomers retiring within the next 10 years
- 48 million Generation X employees coming to the workplace behind them with huge skill gaps
- Global business, trade agreements and outsourcing are dislocating workers
- Technology: The fastest growing occupations through 2008 will be in technology and information management.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics : ...“60 percent of all future jobs require training that only 20 percent of current workers possess”
- Funding is a systemic problem for education, community organizations, and business

# What's the Problem?

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The currency of the global economy is KNOWLEDGE: what we KNOW – not what we have or have done. America remains the economic and military power of the world.

The **key** is not just Knowledge or Skill: BUT Flexible knowledge and flexible skills.

# What's the Problem?

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THEREFORE: The Jobs Revolution is PROGRESS for people with flexible knowledge and flexible skills. But to those unemployed and those not 'ready,' the Jobs Revolution doesn't sound so good. We need to marry education and re-education and employment. This is the dominant strategy by which we land and hold jobs.

# What's the Problem?

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We will not be going back to recover what earlier generations, and we, once had. The model of recovery is wrong. We are in a **revolution** and revolution simply means:

1. Revolving, single or orbit or rotation
2. Complete change of method or condition
3. Change, reorganization, ***transformation***, upheaval
4. Substitution of a new system of government

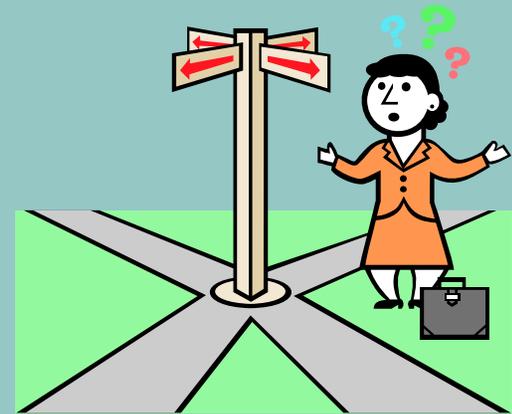
# Workforce (un) Readiness

## Speaker's Interest

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### Intersection!

- EAP Professional
- HR Professional
- Rotary Chairperson  
of College Mentoring  
Program
- Research



# Workforce (un) Readiness

## EAP Professional



## **EAP Professional - CEAP**

- Special Interest in Organizations and how they work
- Workplace Demographics – the mixing and mingling of the generations
- Succession Planning or lack thereof
- Forward thinking and creating new niches for EAP

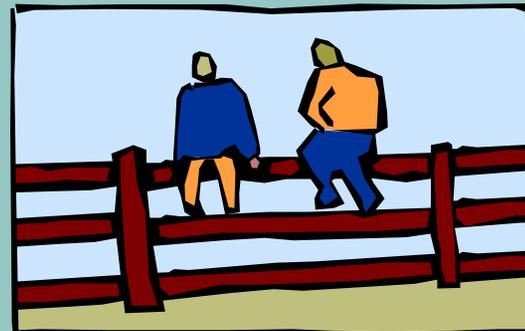


# Workforce (un) Readiness

## HR Professional

### The other side of the fence:

- **My current Workforce Reality:** Working Knowledge of EAP *changes* to 'have to know' knowledge for HR.
- **Recruitment and Retention:** Entrants Lack Critical Skills; Graduates Lack Life Skills; Incumbents are 'behind;' Transitionals just want to buy some time.
- **Recruiting the 'unemployable':** low unemployment rates = the unemployable, the transients, the new entrants and then the skilled 'unemployed.'
- **SHRM chapter involvement:** local Chair of workforce readiness.



# Workforce (un) Readiness

## Community Involvement



**Community Involvement is a MUST  
for EAPs....**

## **Rotary International**

- Local Club Involvement
- Creating a College Student Leadership Mentoring Program
- Rotarian Article 10/05

# Workforce (un) Readiness

## *Rotary International*

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### **Staying a Step Ahead**

The Rotarian, October, 2005.

Suggests that many issues stem from the organization and not from the individual within it. The article challenges EAPs to branch out or expand performance management and organizational assistance.

An innovative approach to employee assistance programs can boost efficiency.

# Workforce (un) Readiness

## *Rotary International*

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### **Staying a Step Ahead**

The Rotarian, October, 2005.

### **Performance Management VS Traditional EAP**

“...today’s employers are faced with additional issues caused by the shift from a product-based to a knowledge-based economy and the communication challenges caused by the diversity of gender, age, and ethnicity that exists in the modern workplace.”

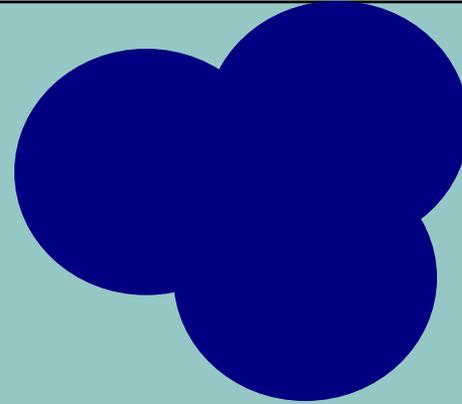
# Workforce (un) Readiness

## *Speaker's Interest*

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### **Full Circle**

*The sum of the parts is  
greater than any  
one part!*



**THEREFORE** ...Work in Rotary led back to realization that there were issues with college Student work life readiness; HR work led to realization that there were entrant, incumbent and transient worker issues; Review of EAP led to realization that a niche is available that fits the core technology of the field – organizational assistance.



# Workforce (un) Readiness

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**What's keeping our  
workplaces un-Ready?**

# Workforce (un) Readiness

## *Global Work-Life*

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The labor shortage appears to have intensified globally; a new Manpower poll of 37,000 employers in 27 countries finds even China and India are having hiring problems.

WFC Resources Newsbrief, May 2007

# Workforce (un) Readiness

## *College Students – hope and worry*

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### **College Dropouts**

- The fastest growing population in the U.S.
- Just 54 percent of students entering four-year colleges in 1997 had a degree six years later in 2003 puzzling workplaces and educators alike
- Others taking 6-8 years to graduate
- This decline in graduates and delayed graduation may starve the workplace of critical thinking skills acquired through higher education. And majority of graduates are still Anglo – in a Global Economy.

# Workforce (un) Readiness

## *Workers- entrants, transients and incumbents*

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- While the number of new careers is increasing, the life-span of applicable knowledge is decreasing. College degrees and new knowledge maintains relevancy for much shorter time periods (The Jobs Revolution).
- Technological upgrades and constant 'learning to learn'
- Reorganization of Workplaces
- Low unemployment rate – pickings are fewer in both US and Canada. What does the unemployment rate (%) mean? i.e. who is unemployed?

# Who is unemployed?

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## US – 2004 Statistics

HS Dropouts	9.4%
HS Graduates	5.45%
College Graduates	3.10

Bureau of Labor Statistics

**BRAINS WILL BEAT BRAWN IN  
WORFORCE READINESS**

# Workforce (un) Readiness

## *Younger Workers*

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### **Employers must compliment younger workers or lose them**

“Childhood in recent decades has been defined by stroking – by parents who see their job as building self-esteem, by soccer coaches who give every player a trophy, by schools that used to name one “student of the month” and these days name 40. ...’the upshot: A lot of today’s young adults feel insecure if they’re not regularly complimented.”

The Wall Street Journal, April 2007

# Workforce (un) Readiness

## *Younger Workers' Parents*

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### **Helicopter Parents**

Is a term for a person who pays extremely close attention to his or her child or children, particularly at educational institutions. They rush to prevent any harm from befalling them or letting them learn from their own mistakes, sometimes even contrary to the children's wishes. They are so named because, like a helicopter, they hover closely overhead, rarely out of reach whether their children need them or not.



# Workforce (un) Readiness

## *Younger Workers' Parents*

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### **Helicopter Parents**

Yikes! They are even in  
the job application  
process.

# Workforce (un) Readiness

## *The Boomer Dilemma*

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### **We all know that...**

With 78 Million Baby Boomers preparing to retire, human resource professionals face a skills shortage that will have a direct impact on organizations.

So...we keep trying to hold on to the boomers with:

# Workforce (un) Readiness

## *The Boomer Dilemma*

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1. Insider Recruiting-penetrating boomer demographic to fill key staffing shortages – Home Depot partners with AARP
2. ReFirement Strategies – redefine attitudes and expectations: Retire Retirement
3. Reinvention of Retirement – continuingcareers.com, Gray Hair Management, The Boomer Group: all connect Boomers with employers
4. Continuing Careers – keep on working

**What's the voice of the Boomer?**

**The Story of JAMES - I just want to retire!**

# Workforce (un) Readiness

## *The Organization*

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**Succession Planning ...**

**Or lack thereof.**

**Fail to plan...plan to fail!**

*We can't just blame the worker.*

# The shift to Readiness

## *SHRM Initiatives*

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Workforce Readiness initiatives have become a focal point of SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management). SHRM Focus Groups have identified significant Skills Gaps in

1. new entrants
2. incumbents
3. transitional workers.

# Workforce Readiness

## SHRM Future of the Labor Pool Survey

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**These SHRM initiatives provide opportunity for EAPs to carve a new niche in service.**

EAPs are well equipped to address, or coordinate response to, **the 5 areas** that a 2005 SHRM Future of the US Labor Pool Survey identified as skills deficiencies:

- 59% lack overall professionalism
- 58% lack written communication skills
- 47% lack analytical skills
- 44% lack verbal communication skills
- 36% lack interpersonal skills

# Workforce Readiness MVSHRM\* Survey

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Local SHRM of 200 HR Professionals  
Email Survey – 4 questions  
23% Response Rate

## **I: Skills Deficiencies:**

From your current work experience, please rank order the five areas identified by SHRM as workforce skills deficiencies with 1 being the highest and 5 the lowest.

\*MVSHRM = Mohawk Valley Society of HR Managers

# MVSHRM Survey

## Verifying The Problem

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### I: Skills Deficiencies: Results –

(ranking 1-5)

Analytical skills	3.33
Interpersonal skills	3.06
Verbal communication skills	3.06
Overall professionalism	2.93
Written communication skills	2.60

(suggests all are a needed bundle)

Other written in: computer and technological skills

# Workforce (un) Readiness MVSHRM Survey

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## II: Employee Category:

From your work experience, please rank order the following employee categories in regards to skills deficiencies, (i.e. which category is most deficient, etc) with 1 being the highest and 3 the lowest.

- |                              |        |
|------------------------------|--------|
| 1. Incumbent workers         | 51.1%* |
| 2. Entrants to the workforce | 25.0%* |
| 3. Transitional workers      | 25.0%* |
- \*(rounded)

# Workforce (un) Readiness MVSHRM Survey

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## **IV: About the respondents:**

Please type in your **title**: varying HR titles from generalist to VP.

Please type in your **industry**: very diverse – and representative of many, many industries

And **# employees** in your organization 22 – 18,000.

# Workforce (un) Readiness MVSHRM Survey

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## III: EAP and HR

Does your organization have an EAP program?

Yes **78.7%**      No **21.3%**

If yes, has your EAP initiated consultation with you suggesting programs or allied services to address these deficiencies?

Yes **24.3%**      No **75.7%**

If no to # 2, has your organization initiated consultation with your EAP on programming for any of these deficiencies?

Yes **7.1%**      No **92.8%**

# Workforce Readiness

## What's being done?

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### **SHRM's 2007 Goals:**

- Co-sponsor with Junior Achievement: Ground Hog Shadow day in February 2007.
- Implement Alliance Agreement with the Office of Disability Employment (ODEP).
- Co-sponsor Disability Mentoring Day with ODEP, and (6) SHRM State Councils.
- Partner with the AARP on the National Advisory Council on mature workers to provide information on the recruitment, hiring and retention of mature workers.
- Provide SHRM members with information, resources, and educational opportunities to assist them in addressing their pending workforce skills shortages.

# Workforce Readiness

## What's being done?

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### **Entrants to the Workforce:**

#### **Work Readiness Certificate Programs ~**

developed to accelerate the educational and economic advancement of youth and adults struggling in today's economy.

#### **Purpose ~**

create job ready candidates and to assure employers that candidates have basic skill mastery in the 3 R's as well as business skills.

#### **Examples ~**

Wage Certificate Program, Workforce Skills Certification System, Work Certified Program, WorkKeys Career Readiness Certification and the National Work Readiness Credential.

#### **Success ~ TBD**

# Workforce Readiness

## What's being done?

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### **Transients – falling through the cracks?**

Many transient workers don't necessarily want to work. Many do. Some work just to earn money to 'get them through for a while.' Others are job and industry hoppers. Some are unemployable and try to work and need help to 'rehab' and become job ready.

# Workforce Readiness

## What's being done?

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### **HS and College Students**

SHRM initiatives speak often to the HS student in regards to shadowing; Mentoring and Leadership initiatives such as our Rotary Club can assist college students. More *Career* Preparation is needed on college level.

**FYI:** An interesting conversation with a College Director of Career Services.

# Workforce Readiness

## What's being done?

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### **Incumbent Workers**

- WIB and Workforce Development  
Money available to train incumbents to increase transferable skills
- Organizations need to be engaged in succession planning

# Implications of Workforce (un) Readiness on *EAP Service*

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## Some thoughts...

- Increase in *difficult* performance referrals
- Demand from HR and Orgs for fixes
- The effect of a shrinking work population on EAP contracts and \$\$.
- Workforce Readiness fits in the *ready, willing, able and fit* of performance management
- What else?

# Workforce Readiness

## *Why should EAP be involved?*

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- Because of the implications we just discussed
- Employers are struggling ~ you can help!
- It will improve EAP's role ~ internally and externally
- Promotes a more strategic view of the EAP function
- Takes a proactive approach that could save on the organization's bottom line in terms of lower recruiting costs, turnover costs, and training costs
- Challenges the EAP to attend to the organization as a whole
- Nationally, the EAP profession will be advanced
- Challenges EAP to revolve, transform and be forward thinking.

# Workforce Readiness

## *Tools for the EAP*

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1. Strengthen your EAP with working knowledge of HR and how organizations work.
2. Research: Read *The Jobs Revolution*, © 2004 by Steve Gunderson, Roberts Jones, Kathryn Scanland
3. Be involved with business/community groups/orgs.
4. Gather your adjunct resources.
5. Survey your client companies with the 5 SHRM skill gaps.
6. Review your performance referral data for insight.
7. **What else? – Your Turn**

# Workforce Readiness

## *What can EAP do?*

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The workforce for the next 20 years has already been born and is projected at a 30 million person deficit!

**Can we afford to lose even ONE?  
What WILL EAP bring to the table?**

# Workforce Readiness

## *What can EAP do?*

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Thank you for your interest in building a strategic alliance with HR to help make our workforce ready.

*Thank you for attending  
this session!*

*Norma*