

■ The New Era of Mobile Learning

Business Perspectives on Managing World-Class Training

Training Industry

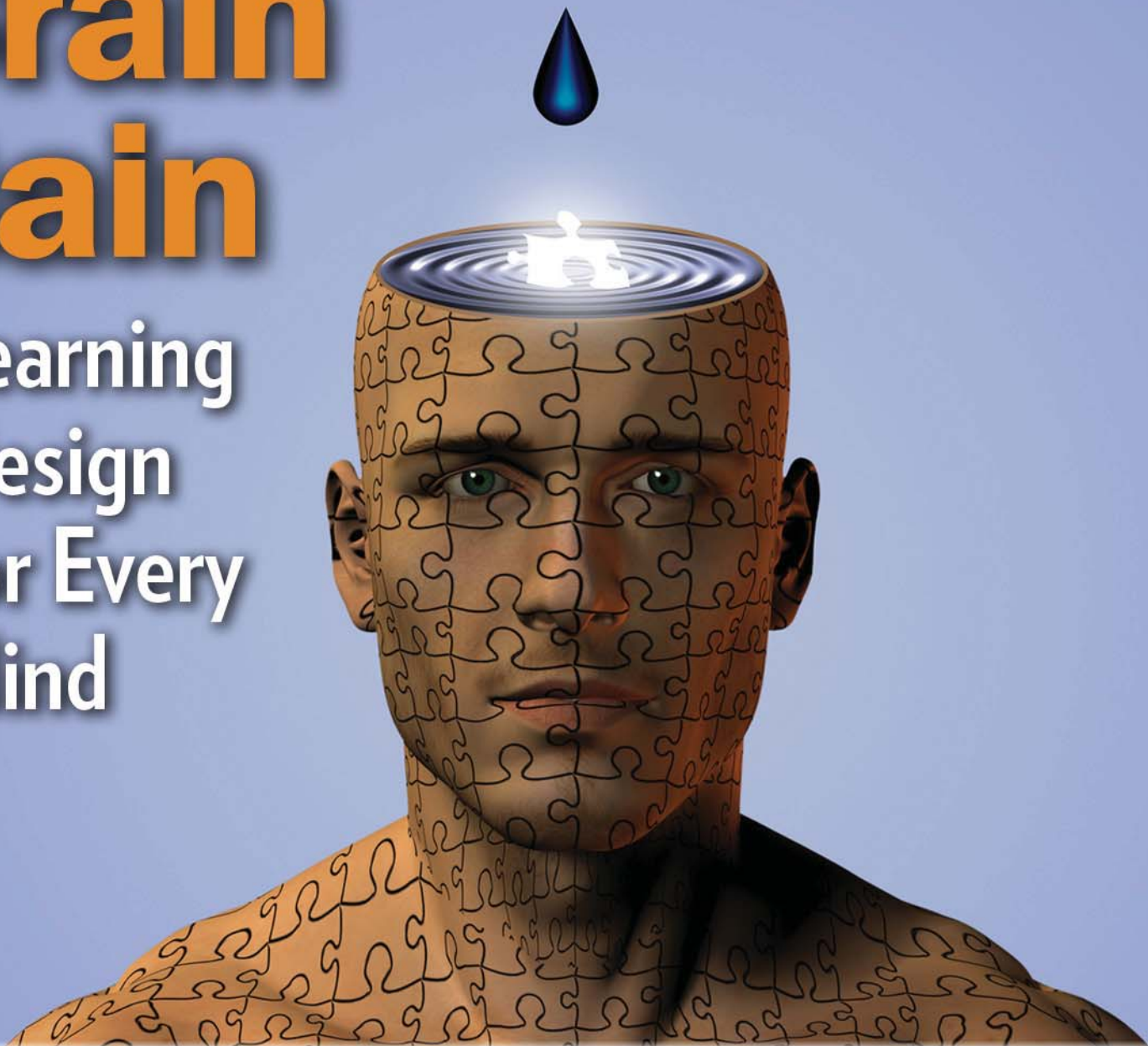
Q U A R T E R L Y

A TRAINING INDUSTRY, INC. EZINE

Fall 2010

Brain Gain

Learning Design for Every Mind



- Waste Reduction: Engaging Managers to Improve Performance
- The New World: Developing Leaders Around the Globe

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PERFORMANCE LEARNING INVOLVES AN OPEN, SEARCHING APPROACH.

PERFORMANCE LEARNING

As an executive adviser, coach, facilitator and speaker, I continue to be a participant in real-life, high-consequence situations where people either accept or reject the many opportunities each of us has to learn. Working recently with a company to help it shape its strategic business development, I heard a couple of widely different comments about the value of the process. So what explains these very different and common reactions to the daily learning opportunities in our lives?

What Is 'Performance Learning'?

Performance learning is intended to improve our individual or collective performance. It has a clear intention to achieve better results—whether in the direction of strengthening productivity or satisfaction. As such, “performance learners” seek forward movement, while “non-learners” are comfortable with the current state (whether their own or their organization’s). I have found it easy to identify performance learners by their preference to stretch versus remaining comfortable.

Performance learning involves an open, searching approach. Its essence is a positive emotional state that increases the likelihood of cognitive gains (new knowledge, skills, insights, attitudes, practices) by contrast with the inverse personal dynamics that self-limit the performance and, ultimately, both the effectiveness and success of their non-learner counterparts.

Performance learners *truly* get it! They have learned through the daily school of life that focusing only on their existing strengths yields decreasing benefits. Instead, they capitalize on both their natural and pre-

viously developed strengths to broaden and deepen their tool kit in the direction required to successfully meet (and often exceed) continually changing expectations. I continue to be reminded that the single most common cause for those executive non-learners who eventually self-destruct is holding on to the outdated, irrational belief that success in the past will continue in the future.

How Do We Learn to Perform?

At this point, you are probably asking this question—especially if you are a performance learner. How people learn—with or without the aid of technology, tools or techniques—was validated long ago. The learning process follows the same sequence, whether it involves a key job result area or task, a work process, selling or servicing, managing, or making strategic decisions. It begins with *Awareness*, which is followed by *Acceptance*. In turn, this state of openness contributes to further *Understanding*. And, this is strengthened through practice of such *Applications* and their subsequent refinement by ongoing fine-tuning *Analysis*. Finally, this new performance learning becomes *Integrated* into who we are as a dynamically evolving, newer and better contributor to our own lives and that of others.

Dr. Michael O'Connor is a recognized thought leader, executive coach and founder of Life Associates, Inc. Michael is the co-author of “The Platinum Rule,” “People Smart” and “Customer Smart Selling & Service.” E-mail Michael at droconnor@lifeassociatesinc.com.