

DISCOVERING  
*and developing*

**HUMAN POTENTIAL**



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THE BALL FOUNDATION OVERVIEW

2003-2005

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## EDUCATION INITIATIVES

The Ball Foundation partners with school districts to help them become highly productive educational systems so that all students achieve to their full potential and develop a lifelong enthusiasm for learning. The foundation is committed to research and development and the dissemination of its learnings to the larger educational community.



## CAREER VISION<sup>SM</sup>

We believe that to succeed in a constantly changing work world, people must be adaptable. To adapt successfully, they must know their strengths and be able to recognize and shape the tasks and environments that let them make their best contribution. To help with this process, we provide aptitude-based career planning services and products that help clients develop practical, effective self-knowledge. Our service to the individual never loses sight of the importance of our role as a research foundation. Our research never loses sight of the importance of the individual.





The ambitious work of Career  
Vision<sup>SM</sup> and Education Initiatives  
calls to mind the advice of  
Chicago architect and city  
planner Daniel Burnham:  
“Make no little plans, they have  
no magic to stir men’s blood.”



SELF - KNOW

### THE BALL FAMILY LEGACY

Carl Ball could never understand why he wasn't better at playing the piano. He had good pitch and excelled at singing, but the piano eluded him. Then in the late 1960s, he took an aptitude test and discovered that he had low finger dexterity. Mystery solved.

Carl's wife Vivian also took the aptitude tests. "We discovered things about ourselves and each other that we didn't know," remembers Carl. "Those insights helped us better appreciate each other's strengths and differences and deepened our relationship. We were so impressed by our experience that we wanted to help others gain self knowledge as well."

Initially, Carl had all the employees at the seed company he led take the aptitude tests. "My intention was to find out people's strengths so that we could assign them to jobs that made the best use of their talents and abilities and that therefore were most satisfying to them." Shortly after, in 1975, Carl and Vivian established the Ball Foundation to help others discover and develop their potential.

Twenty-eight years later, the foundation remains committed to the Ball family's vision. Today Career Vision<sup>sm</sup> is a leader in research and advocacy for aptitude-based career planning, offering services to students and adults that promote informed decision-making and increase success and satisfaction in their work. The foundation's other major program,

Education Initiatives, supports systemic change to increase student achievement and educational productivity.

Carl's commitment to education reform, like his interest in aptitude-based career planning, was fostered and shaped by personal involvement. In 1991, at the age of 71, Carl retired from business; at Vivian's suggestion he earned his substitute teaching credentials and taught third grade for a year in West Chicago, Illinois.

Carl's experience in West Chicago gave him a deep and abiding respect for teachers and a passion for helping schools and districts create the conditions that would enable both the children and the adults in the system to excel. Carl's experience teaching third grade also reconfirmed his belief in each person's individuality. "If you know one child, you know one child," Carl is fond of saying to stress the uniqueness of every student.

The ambitious work of Career Vision<sup>sm</sup> and Education Initiatives calls to mind the advice of Chicago architect and city planner Daniel Burnham: "Make no little plans, they have no magic to stir men's blood." These words, which are etched in the lobby of the Ball seed companies, are also a fitting tribute to the Ball family and the legacy they have established through the foundation.

Liz Duffy  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CHARACTERISTICS OF PRODUCTIVE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

## Focus

Set a limited number of clearly defined and measurable student achievement goals that are stable long enough to attain them.

## Alignment and Integration

Organize and integrate all systems and activities around those goals.

## Innovation and Dissemination

Identify, implement, and share instructional best practices.

## Data-driven Adaptation

Identify and use external and internal data to monitor and improve processes and practices.

## Balanced Accountability

Develop a system in which all stakeholders are responsible for the attainment of student achievement goals. Ensure that spending and program authority are aligned with responsibility.

## Learning

Create a culture that encourages teachers and staff to be continuous learners.

**E**ducation Initiatives is a reform support organization committed to increasing student achievement by promoting systemic change in K-12 school districts. Reform support organizations are external organizations that work with school systems to affect scalable and sustainable educational improvements.

The foundation partners with mid-sized urban school districts to further district, school, and

partnership sites, Education Initiatives systematically evaluates its partnership work and will disseminate lessons learned to other foundations and reform support organizations.

Education Initiatives is currently engaged in partnerships in Springfield, Illinois; Kent County, Michigan; and Chula Vista, California. Although each partnership uses strategies tailored to the unique needs of the district, all the partnerships share a focus on literacy, a systemic approach to change, and a strong commitment to build the capacity of all adults in the system to be leaders and learners so that successful changes can be sustained.

**“Building greater capacity in schools begins and ends with good people.”**

— THE BALL FOUNDATION, “20/20 VISION, A STRATEGY FOR DOUBLING AMERICA’S ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT BY THE YEAR 2020.”

classroom productivity and to attain 95% literacy rates. Foundation staff establish close, trusting relationships with the districts that enable them to act as “critical friends,” encouraging teachers, principals, and district staff to adopt best practices, take measured risks to transform teaching and learning, and think differently about their work and how they function in the system. Subsequent changes in policies, structures, and instructional practices lead to improved student performance.

In order to continuously improve the partnerships and to have a broader impact beyond the

### SPRINGFIELD, IL

The foundation’s relationship with Springfield Public School District 186 began in 1992, when Harvard Park Elementary School became the first participant in the foundation’s School Design Collaborative, a shared leadership and decision-making model for school improvement. The relationship between Springfield and the foundation eventually deepened to include work both at the school and at the district level to raise student achievement. The work is guided by a partnership agreement that was signed by the foundation, the district, and the Springfield teachers’ union in 2000.

## PRODUCTIVITY

Ball Partnership Schools within the district continue to develop the site-based management and leadership skills that were introduced by the School Design Collaborative, and they receive intensive on-site training and coaching to help them realize the foundation's characteristics of productive organizations. At the district level, the foundation is helping Springfield's central office become one that both provides support to the schools and pushes them to

facilitation, the foundation's partnership with Kent ISD and KISA aims to reduce the isolation and competition between the 23 districts and to foster a shared commitment to the education of all students in the region. The superintendents recognize their mutual dependence, meaning that failure in one district ultimately affects the entire county; they have therefore reconstituted KISA around a common, county-wide vision for education.

In support of this regional work, the foundation has established a presence in Grand Rapids Public Schools, helping to coach district leaders, support shared decision-making, emphasize the importance of early literacy, promote better use of data, and reinforce connections between Grand Rapids and other districts. The foundation also has a formal partnership with Northview Public Schools based on data-driven adaptation, one of the foundation's productivity characteristics.

#### CHULA VISTA, CA

The foundation has been involved with the Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) since 2000. CVESD is a highly decentralized K-6 district, where each school pursues an autonomous path towards improvement.

**Seeing the interplay between system dynamics and individuals is a dance of discovery that requires several iterations between the whole and its parts.**

— MEG WHEATLEY, "LEADERSHIP AND THE NEW SCIENCE"

continuously improve so that all the children in the district meet or exceed standards.

#### KENT COUNTY, MI

In Kent County, Michigan, the foundation is engaged in work both at the regional level, with the Kent Intermediate School District (Kent ISD) and the Kent Intermediate Superintendents Association (KISA), and at the district level, with Grand Rapids Public Schools and Northview Public Schools.

Kent ISD consists of 23 school districts, with Grand Rapids Public Schools at the urban center of the county. Through coaching and

S Y S T E M I C

The center of this partnership is the Community of Schools initiative. The ten participating schools form Instructional Leadership Teams that receive intensive professional development to help teachers and staff disaggregate student data, identify an instructional focus, and develop a detailed action plan to align the school's activities around that focus. The ultimate goals of the Community of Schools initiative are to improve student outcomes and to increase school productivity.

with them. Dobson Academy and Hearn Academy were both established in the metro Phoenix area of Arizona; their mission is to provide a quality education where children are the priority. The schools' major strategies are: shared decision-making, ongoing staff professional development, treating each student as an individual, community collaboration and volunteerism, technology, and regular measurement of parent satisfaction.

**To restructure is not to reculture** — a lesson increasingly echoed in other attempts at reform. Changing formula structures is not the same as changing norms, habits, skills and beliefs.

— MICHAEL FULLAN, "CHANGE FORCES"

The foundation is also working with district staff to develop effective models for engaging parents in their children's education and to apply the learning from the Community of Schools to the entire Chula Vista Elementary School District and beyond, through principal professional development and other dissemination strategies.

The Springfield Ball Charter School (SBCS) in Springfield, Illinois arose out of the foundation's prior relationship to District 186, and the school maintains a uniquely positive relationship with the district. The mission of SBCS is to create a safe, nurturing environment which fosters learning through the development of high-quality, research-based academic programs, attention to the learning needs of individual children, and the involvement of parents in their child's education. SBCS's main focus areas are: literacy, numeracy, multiage grouping, and professional development.

### CHARTER SCHOOLS

In addition to these partnerships, the foundation started three charter schools in 1998 and continues to maintain relationships



“The foundation has actually helped us to reculture KISA. We are now focused on student achievement and systemic change from a regional perspective.”

Mike Weiler,  
Kent ISD Superintendent



SYSTEMIC

## KENT COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS TAKE A REGIONAL APPROACH TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Before 1999, the Kent Intermediate Superintendents Association (KISA) had some unspoken rules about what was (and wasn't) up for discussion. The superintendents talked about state-level issues or programs sponsored by the Kent Intermediate School District (Kent ISD), but they rarely tackled the critical challenges that faced their districts.

Thanks in large part to the work of the Ball Foundation, those days are over. "The foundation has actually helped us to reculture KISA," says Kent ISD Superintendent Mike Weiler. "We are now focused on student achievement and systemic change from a regional perspective." Northview Public Schools Superintendent Mike Stearns sees the shift as a way to "leverage the power of the superintendents to benefit all students in Kent ISD, not just the students in our own districts."

The common focus and regional perspective allow the 23 districts in Kent ISD to collaborate on issues that affect them all. For example, each district contributes funds to an early childhood program that uses parent educators to help ensure that all children throughout the county come to school ready to learn. The districts have also adopted common calendars and aligned their individual strategic plans with the strategic plan of Kent ISD.

Another important part of KISA's regional approach includes a focus on Grand Rapids Public Schools, the urban center of Kent County. The superintendents believe that the health of the Grand Rapids school system is crucial to the success of all districts in

Kent ISD, and vice-versa. Grand Rapids Superintendent Bert Bleke explains how this shared belief in the mutual dependence of the districts "has created a bridge between Grand Rapids Public Schools and the larger county. That work is so important, because urban school systems cannot survive without broader community support."

This collaborative approach to change has developed the superintendents' leadership skills as well. "The foundation's work with KISA has given me excellent opportunities for professional growth," says Byron Center Public Schools Superintendent Howard Napp. "The focus on strategic thinking has helped my ability to frame issues and develop questions that need to be answered in order to move forward in the most productive manner." Napp was one of four KISA superintendents who attended a leadership workshop at Harvard University. Both Grand Rapids and Kent ISD are now working with the Harvard Change Group to build systems in which there is a shared commitment to high standards for all students. Some Kent ISD superintendents and district staff are also participating in a complimentary leadership program designed by Mary Leiker, Superintendent of Kentwood Public Schools, and supported in part by a grant from the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds.

As the superintendents in Kent County have learned, developing their individual potential as leaders and collectively aligning their work has created a region that is greater than the sum of the individual districts.

**PARTNERSHIP LEARNING NETWORK**

The Partnership Learning Network (PLN) was established in 2000 as a way for all the foundation’s partners to collaborate, teach each other, and share experiences and knowledge in ways that foster best practices and innovation. Each year, the foundation sponsors a two-day conference at which representatives of all the partnership sites, foundation staff, and a number of guests serving as “critical friends” gather together to push their individual and collective

**The site council is, above all, a learning structure. Its job is to keep dreaming the school, inventing it, driving the change and learning from it.**

— PATRICK DOLAN, “RESTRUCTURING OUR SCHOOLS”

understanding of productivity and systemic reform, and how they impact student achievement. Beyond the annual conference, the PLN provides resources to allow teachers and administrators to conduct site visits between partnerships. These visits are intended to help the partners identify best practices and both give and receive feedback on their work. The PLN will continue to expand to provide additional ways to create connections among partnership sites.

**Springfield Public School District 186** serves over 15,000 students in 36 schools, grades K–12. Fifty-three percent of students are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches. The district encourages site-based decision making and distributed leadership. District 186 also maintains a highly positive relationship with the teacher’s union.

**Kent Intermediate School District (ISD)** serves over 140,000 K–12 students in 23 districts in Kent County. The county’s urban center is the city of Grand Rapids. **Grand Rapids Public Schools** serves over 27,000 students in 70 schools, grades K–12. Approximately two-thirds of students are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches. The district is focused on increasing literacy and building relationships with the community. **Northview Public Schools** serves over 3,300 students in seven schools, grades K–12. Northview’s mission is to prepare students for life’s next step.

**Chula Vista Elementary School District**, located between San Diego and Mexico, is the largest K–6 elementary district in California, with over 23,000 students in 39 schools. Forty-six percent of students are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch, and 63% of students are Hispanic. The district is highly decentralized and focuses on student-centered decision making.

S H A R E D L E A

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SHARED DECISION MAKING

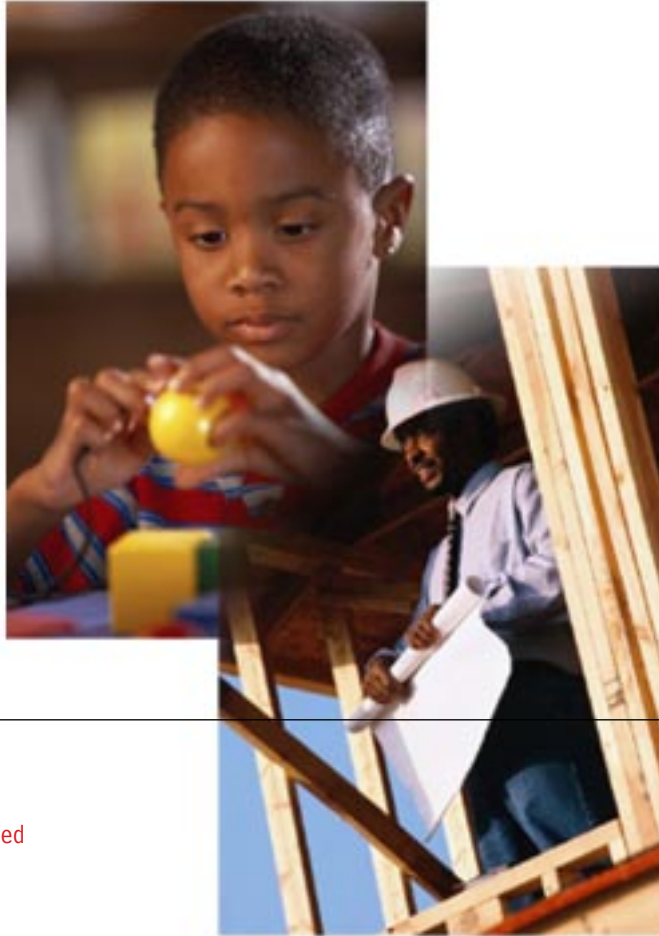
“One of the best things about being principal at a Ball partnership school is the leadership I have on my staff,” explains Kathy Crum, principal of Graham Elementary School in Springfield, Illinois. “If we decide to start a new initiative, I know I have staff that can run that program – I just need to be a facilitator.”

The development of leadership and management skills among all adults in a school system is one of the main strategies of the foundation’s partnerships. In Springfield and at the two Ball Charter Schools in Arizona, those themes are realized through the School Design Collaborative (SDC), a model for school improvement through shared leadership and decision-making. The model calls for the formation of school Leadership Teams that examine student data to determine the schools’ most important improvement needs. Design Teams are then formed to develop and implement plans for improving student learning in the areas targeted by the Leadership Team.

Moving decision-making power to the school level has proven to be an important strategy for increasing the leadership capacity of teachers and staff. “Serving on a Design Team has helped me take a leadership position and guide others to help better our school,” explains Dobson Academy teacher Jenny Stedman, who now mentors new teachers and who played a pivotal role as the school aligned its curriculum.

Teachers also speak of the School Design Collaborative process increasing their sense of ownership. “As a staff, when you’re part of the decision-making process, you feel more empowered, like the school is ‘ours’ instead of just one person’s,” says Hearn teacher Rhonda Ehnes. In turn, that empowerment has helped facilitate change. Grant Middle School teacher Cyndi Schroeder reflects, “In the past, many teachers felt resentful about being asked to do things differently, because they didn’t feel they had a voice in those types of decisions. Now we have a greater sense of ownership, and there seems to be a willingness to try new things.”

Fostering ownership and commitment has also led to increased collaboration, developing the potential not just of individuals, but of the whole school team. “We now see teachers from all subjects helping students learn their reading, writing, and math standards,” says Schroeder. At Hearn, Ehnes describes how teachers are meeting across grade levels to develop strategies for improving test scores. “Even though the state test is only given at 3rd, 5th, and 8th grades, we need everyone to feel a part of it. The teachers in every grade are working together to see how we can best help our kids.”



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“The culture of sharing and communication has heightened the level of professionalism among our staff.”

Lisa Parker,  
Chula Vista Hills Principal



P R O F E S S I O

## WALKTHROUGHS BUILD COLLABORATION AND IMPROVE INSTRUCTION

As a principal, Jeff Thiel has always spent a lot of time in classrooms. Over the past year, however, his approach to visits has changed dramatically.

“I used to watch the teacher or the students when I entered a classroom,” explained Thiel. “Now I know to look for evidence of effective learning, the quality of student work and teacher guidance. It has been a huge shift in my thinking.”

Thiel, the Principal of Tiffany Elementary School in Chula Vista, changed his approach after participating in “walkthrough” training through the foundation’s Community of Schools initiative. A walkthrough is an organized tour through classrooms looking for evidence of a specific instructional focus. The process is designed to develop teachers’ potential to provide effective instruction and principals’ potential to support that instruction.

Other principals in Chula Vista have noticed positive developments, too. “Walkthroughs have helped people to open their doors and have increased communication and collaboration,” said Chula Vista Hills Principal Lisa Parker. “Teachers are talking about the teaching and learning going on at our site. The culture of sharing and communication has heightened the level of professionalism among our staff.”

Casillas Elementary Principal John Nelson has observed that his staff has “a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning that goes with writing”

(his school’s instructional focus) and that walkthroughs have “reduced the sense of isolation among teachers.”

Teachers echo Parker’s and Nelson’s comments. Sandy Woodrum, a teacher at Tiffany Elementary, reflected that walkthroughs have “increased the trust level” among teachers, and Amy Griffin, a teacher at Casillas, credits walkthroughs with “pushing me to think about my teaching.” Chula Vista Hills teacher Meredith Bonner has noticed “more communication among teachers about practices and strategies, partly due to doors opening up in walkthroughs. I think my classroom practices have improved because I’m better able to understand what my colleagues expect and how I fit into the big picture. I also feel more confident that what I’m doing reflects best practices.”

Walkthroughs focus on teaching and learning has helped teachers like Bonner improve their teaching strategies, and has given principals like Thiel a new way to approach instructional leadership. Such changes have been an important part of the schools’ efforts to help all students achieve to their full potential.

THE CAREER VISION MODEL



SELF - KNOW

**C**areer management in the 21st century is an ongoing process that involves continually evaluating the fit between an individual's work profile, the work environment, and that individual's career vision. The goal is to make informed choices throughout one's life that result in satisfying and meaningful work, successful job performance, and overall satisfaction with life. The CareerVision<sup>SM</sup> model sequences the key elements for sound career decision-making, and individuals learn

Because aptitude patterns remain relatively stable across the lifespan, this assessment provides the baseline for all current and future work.

Second, CareerVision<sup>SM</sup> clients construct a "career vision," a detailed picture integrating personal information with current opportunities in the world of work. Understanding one's self and having a vocabulary to talk about one's aptitudes, interests, personality and values is essential to defining priorities and making decisions.

Third, the CareerVision<sup>SM</sup> model reinforces the continuous change aspect of career development, with learning loops that spiral upward as individuals progress on their career and life paths. With each successive cycle, individuals learn more quickly, mastering the knowledge and skills needed to successfully design their careers and lives.

The quality of an individual's career depends on how well he or she can make decisions and solve problems related to career issues. The CareerVision<sup>SM</sup> model enables individuals to respond to change in healthy ways, anticipating future challenges and making necessary adjustments based on objective information.

**The building of a career** is quite as difficult a problem as the building of a house, yet few ever sit down with pencil and paper, with expert information and counsel, to plan a working career and deal with the life problem scientifically, as they would deal with the problem of building a house, taking the advice of an architect to help them.

— FRANK PARSONS, 1909, THE "FATHER OF VOCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY"

to cycle confidently through the model with each career or life change they face.

The CareerVision<sup>SM</sup> model is unusual in three ways.

First, CareerVision<sup>SM</sup> believes that understanding one's natural abilities is essential to achieving ultimate work satisfaction. Thus, all CareerVision<sup>SM</sup> clients complete the Ball Aptitude Battery<sup>®</sup> in their initial assessment.

# ● Career Vision<sup>SM</sup>

## SELF KNOWLEDGE: THE KEY TO REALIZING HUMAN POTENTIAL

Understanding one's unique aptitude pattern is essential to navigating the complex and challenging workplace of the 21st century. Aptitudes are the ability to learn to acquire a skill or task. Every individual has a unique pattern of aptitudes, which has significant implications for individual performance and satisfaction in different work environments. Research and experience show that individuals

Career Vision<sup>SM</sup> assists both individuals and employers by providing objective, aptitude-based career assessments. Career Vision<sup>SM</sup> also creates research-based products, workshops and educational resources for parents, schools, organizations, and businesses, which share the belief that informed individuals make better choices.

## INDIVIDUAL POTENTIAL

When individuals take responsibility to determine what they want and why, they are energized to decide how to invest their most valuable resource — themselves. Effective career planning is an ongoing process of discovery and growth, engaging a person's energy and drive and creating momentum for moving toward goals.

Since 1985, Career Vision<sup>SM</sup> has given individuals a significant advantage in setting and achieving satisfying career goals, anchored in a client's natural strengths, or aptitudes. All Career Vision<sup>SM</sup> clients complete the Ball Aptitude Battery<sup>®</sup> (BAB). The results of these aptitude assessments are then integrated with knowledge of their interests, personality and values and the world of work to create an individualized "career vision". Career Vision<sup>SM</sup>'s commitment to aptitudes provides individuals with a detailed picture of the kind of work

**Corporations are social organizations, the theater in which men and women realize or fail to realize purposeful and productive lives.**

— PETER RENA

engaged in tasks and occupations aligned with their pattern of aptitudes are the most successful and satisfied.

Today's employers are dependent on their employees' responsiveness to changing market demands. They need and expect employees to be self-directed, capable of proactively managing their professional development and career paths. Individuals who know themselves well are able to identify where they make their best contributions and which skills they need to build to be prepared for the future.

# STRATEGIC

that they would not only perform well, but also enjoy doing.

Knowledge of self and the workplace, and the ability to achieve a good fit are certainly core elements of effective career management. However, support is also critical to success. The Career Vision<sup>SM</sup> Alumni Network provides objective, consistent, and professional support for clients' ongoing career needs. Clients know that Career Vision<sup>SM</sup> is their

ment with multiple priorities, shifting projects and teams, self-aware employees are able to make informed decisions about where they can best contribute and interact with others. Career Vision<sup>SM</sup>'s assessment and development services provides intelligent support, setting the stage for businesses to efficiently and accurately match people and projects, resulting in improved productivity and satisfied employees.

Employees especially need direction at critical transitions in their careers. Providing employers an accessible, professional resource, Career Vision<sup>SM</sup> helps businesses invest in their human capital by developing the potential of their employees when they need it. Working with the knowledge gained from an employees' work profile, employers and employees have successfully collaborated to modify job responsibilities, keep valued employees engaged, establish professional development goals, prepare employees for promotions, and improve designation of roles and understanding in team projects. In addition, employers have offered career planning support for employee family members as one strategy to retain valued employees.

**“Most of us would argue that we believe in the potential of people and that people are our most important organizational assets. If that is the case, why then do we frequently design organizations to satisfy our need for control and not to maximize the contributions of people?”**

— ABRAHAM MASLOW, KNOWN FOR HIS WORK ON THE HIERARCHY OF HUMAN NEEDS, IN “MASLOW ON MANAGEMENT”

informed resource for career coaching that is based on current research and best practices. This benefit is available throughout their work lives, no matter where they reside.

**BUSINESS POTENTIAL**

Business leaders know that attracting, developing, and retaining their best talent is critical to their company's success. In a work environ-

**ALIGNMENT**



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“To reap the greatest returns, companies need to aggressively develop talent from day one, immediately engage them in meaningful work, and offer them opportunities to grow and experience a significant change in responsibility every two years.”

Robert Gandossy, Ph.D.,  
Hewitt Associates LLC, in “The Talent Edge in the 21st Century”



INTELLIGENT

## NATURAL CHOICE FOR EMPLOYEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mark Turek knows the value of Career Vision<sup>sm</sup>'s services for both his family and his business.

Turek first visited Career Vision<sup>sm</sup> with his two daughters, who were then in high school. Like most parents, he wanted them to be happy in their future work. "Career Vision<sup>sm</sup> gave them the opportunity to see a richer profile of what their real strengths and interests were, more than those identified in school. They used the information to make decisions about what college to attend and what major to select," relates Turek. Having objective information about themselves increased their confidence as they narrowed down possibilities and selected a career direction. Turek reports, "Both daughters are successful and continue to refer to their profile information to guide them in their choices. Investing early to make sure you choose the right college major or find the right job can save you a ton of money down the road."

A few years after Turek brought his daughters to Career Vision<sup>sm</sup>, a management position opened up at his company, a printing business in a western suburb of Chicago. He had already identified the employee for the promotion, but wanted to define the role to fit both the needs of the business and the abilities of the employee. "I thought that this would be an ideal time to help this employee learn more about his strengths and weaknesses as he took on this new responsibility," said Turek. "Since I had firsthand experience with Career Vision<sup>sm</sup>, it was a

natural choice for my company to offer the same program to this employee for his professional development."

Turek was impressed with his employee's willingness to let him sit in on the feedback session. "It's great because now we have a common reference point that came from a third party." The feedback confirmed many things they both knew, but also brought to light new issues. "I wrote the job description with Career Vision<sup>sm</sup>'s recommendations in mind. For instance, a typical manager deals primarily with people, but the assessment results showed that this employee needs hands-on contact with computer programs, machinery, and artwork. That proved very insightful. Not only was I able to create the best job description for our company requirements, but I also was knowledgeable enough to design a good fit, including the work aspects that gave this employee satisfaction," he explained. "A manager who experiences a good fit for himself will keep it in mind when working with his employees. That's a plus."

Turek has observed that the more his employees have a job that fits their abilities, the more productive they are and the more likely they are to stay. "When you have a job that matches abilities and interests, it's an insurance policy for being happy and successful," he reports.

## SUPPORT

These are exciting and challenging times. While historically, individuals received most of their training before entering a profession where they stayed for a lifetime, today's changing work needs and individuals' multifaceted careers require continued, self-directed development.

CareerVision<sup>sm</sup> researchers study the impact of these career trends, particularly those involving individual differences and career transitions

**“Successful careers today are not planned out in advance. They develop when people are prepared for opportunities because they have asked themselves [fundamental] questions, and they have rigorously assessed their unique characteristics.”**

— “HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW” EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR “MANAGING ONESELF” BY PETER DRUCKER

across the lifespan. Working in partnership with clients and in collaboration with other researchers, CareerVision<sup>sm</sup> researchers document and disseminate information about the impact of aptitude-based career assessment, making contributions to the career management and scientific communities, and ensuring that CareerVision<sup>sm</sup> products and services continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of individuals and employers.

## COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

Dr. Fredrick Oswald, Michigan State University  
Research on the BAB<sup>®</sup> and O\*Net

Dr. Barry Goettl, Air Force Research Laboratory  
Study using the BAB<sup>®</sup> and other measures to predict success in cross-training.

Dr. Verlin Hinsz, North Dakota State  
Study on collaborative memory in work teams

## AWARDS

**Award of Excellence and Innovation,  
by the American Association of Career  
Education**

*Getting Started: Talking with Your Child About Career Choices*

**Society for Industrial and Organizational  
Psychology Small Grant Award**

For research that has a clear interest to practitioners, involves a partnership between academics and practitioners, and shows promise of real impact in the field of Industrial and Organizational Psychology

## COLLABORATIVE SERVICE PROJECTS

**Bridge Communities**

Providing services to homeless families in DuPage County

**Partners for Success**

Alternative educational services for high risk youth

P R A C T I C A L

## DREAM JOB DESIGNED USING APTITUDE PROFILE

“I have always loved the touch and feel of fabric,” reports Susan Stackley of Clarendon Hills, IL. “After a 25-year career in the corporate world and as a small business owner, two years ago I wanted to align my business skills with my interests in color, texture and design. The obvious challenge was achieving that goal.”

“After deliberate evaluation and planning, I set the stage when I took a position in the custom window treatment business. After 18 months, I was ready for more challenge, but the next career move was not clear.” Stackley met with the owner of Dream Interiors, a well-respected interior design business in Downers Grove. The initial conversation went well, and she was asked to interview with the owner’s business partners.

“The timing was perfect,” according to Stackley. “I received my Career Vision<sup>sm</sup> assessment results during the days between those two interviews. The comprehensive evaluation and feedback approach gave me critical perspective and new clarity. I had much more confidence in showcasing my skills and talents. I was also given the tools to create a best-case scenario and shown how to evaluate a prospective employer and job opportunity.”

Stackley’s work profile indicated strengths in sales and business development, operations, organization and planning. Armed with this information, she confidently presented her skills and the type of activi-

ties she would enjoy and do well. “I even steered them away from a more design-oriented position that would not have been a good fit for my aptitude profile,” she reports.

Based on her interview, the company created a new position, crafted to make the best use of Stackley’s talents. A job offer was made the next morning, and she promptly accepted it.

Six weeks after starting at Dream Interiors as Sales Manager, Stackley finds herself immersed in learning the retail home furnishings business. “While this time has not been without some anxious moments, it has been positive and very interesting. I am developing a new sales approach and training the staff. The retail floor changes every day, with new pieces arriving and we keep changing displays to present our merchandise in different ways to keep things fresh.”

Stackley underscores the feeling of being the right person in the right work setting as she gives a tour of the store. Cautiously descending a narrow staircase, she enters the workroom on the lower level. Lengths of fabrics hang neatly on hangers along two walls, lampshade frames are set to one side, and paper patterns are pinned to brocade cloth on the large, flat tables. “I just love coming down here,” observes Stackley. “I’m always interested in seeing what things the designers are working on.”

## PERSPECTIVE



“The true success story is the continuing success of the ordinary individual who is responsive to issues, smart with their choices, and conscientious on follow-through — consistently taking action to move forward through life.”

David Crisp, Vice President,  
Human Resources, Hudson's Bay  
Company



CAREER MO

## DISCOVER AND DEVELOP STRENGTHS TO ACHIEVE A GOOD FIT

In 1994, Katey Charles lived and worked as a travel visa consultant in Chicago. “It was the kind of job where you had to be smart to do it well,” she recalls, “but I was completely bored and unfulfilled.” She had a friend whose son was a past Career Vision<sup>sm</sup> client, and he recommended she go in for an assessment.

During her feedback session, Charles learned that the strongest parts of her profile included writing and graphic design. “What struck me was that these were things I used to do in high school – I was the editor of the school paper and a photographer for the yearbook. I really enjoyed them, but somehow I had completely forgotten about them. I thought of them as ‘fun’ courses, not as career options.”

She applied and was accepted into journalism school two months later. “After talking with Career Vision<sup>sm</sup>, I knew I would take a path that somehow involved writing and journalism, but I tried to keep an open mind.” During her first semester, she also took a graphics class. “I remember at first, I was skeptical about my design aptitudes. I thought, ‘Oh, graphic designer, that’s not me. I’m not artistic.’ But once I actually took the course, I realized that I loved it and I was good at it. The tests really encouraged me to explore areas I wouldn’t normally have considered.”

After graduating, she accepted a job in graphic design, but wasn’t completely satisfied. “I went back to my assessment and career recommenda-

tions, and realized that because I was only focusing on graphic design, I wasn’t taking advantage of all my greatest strengths. I was using my design skills, but I was always wanting to edit the copy. I really care about good, solid writing, and I didn’t have any say in that, so I was frustrated.” She moved on and became a communications manager at Mary Engelbreit Studios in St. Louis. “I use my writing, editing, and graphic design skills,” she reports, “and I love my job.” She has also referred back to her results to help her improve her management skills, looking for areas where she might be weak and need some additional training.

“The whole process has given me a huge amount of confidence in what I do, and in who I am,” Charles reflects. “When you’re doing what you’re great at, it gives you a lot of fulfillment, and you feel great about yourself.”

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## F O U N D E R S

G. Carl Ball is past President and Chairman of the Board of Geo. J. Ball, Inc., a horticultural company headquartered in West Chicago, Illinois. He has a longstanding interest in career development and education, having served on boards of the Illinois Institute of Technology, West; the Illinois Math and Science Academy; the Corridor Partnership for Excellence in Education; and the National Academy of Science's Committee on the Federal Role in Education Research.

Vivian Elledge Ball was President of the Foundation and served on its board as well as the board of Geo. J. Ball, Inc. She was named Glen Ellyn, Illinois, "Citizen of the Year" in 1997 and served on the Village Architectural Review Commission for more than 25 years. The Foundation's programs, as well as the hundreds of trees that line Glen Ellyn's downtown parkways, are living legacies of her spirit and commitment.



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