

Introduction

Business Education has been an integral part of American education for over a century and, as such, has an active role in educating students at all levels of instruction. Business Education is described by the National Business Education Association as "Education for success in business and in life." It is a fact that New Jersey schools actively share in the legacy of business education instruction and continuously strive for excellence in their efforts.

Like all other disciplines, business education courses and programs have been and are constantly changing to meet the ever-evolving demands of the business community, the technology explosion, and the increased pressures of social and personal participation in a dynamic civic environment.

In order to assist New Jersey schools assess their current status and set goals for their future efforts, the New Jersey Business Education Association (NJBEA) President Carole Holden, with the approval of the NJBEA Executive Board convened the **BUSINESS EDUCATION: STRATEGIES 2000 TASK FORCE**. This task force was challenged to develop an instrument that would:

- Assist business educators in identifying trends of the next millennium
- Pinpoint areas needing improvement in program development
- Encourage institutions to identify strategies for action

The Task Force utilized a variety of sources to formulate the ideas suggested in this paper. The sources include: The New Jersey Department of Education Core Curriculum Content Standards, the National Business Education Standards for Excellence in Business Education, the Policies Commission on Business and Economic Education Statements, publications of professional organizations, and materials researched from current periodicals and the Internet. A comprehensive bibliography supports this research.

This paper is designed for business educators responsible for delivering all related programs and courses – ranging from K-lifelong education. Four sections are highlighted to facilitate its use by business education teachers and administrators. These sections include:

Divergent Dimensions of the Curriculum

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Embracing New Delivery Systems and Technologies

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Taking Advantages of Opportunities for Professional Growth

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Divergent Dimensions of the Curriculum

The nature of work and jobs is changing rapidly. The economy in this country is no longer centered on manufacturing; rather, ours is an information- and service-based economy which the business education curriculum must parallel closely. Global competition has impacted the world of work dramatically, causing long-standing traditional jobs to be lost to developing countries. Students who graduate today will enter a job market that is vastly different from just a decade ago. Their employment needs are therefore, different, and in order to succeed, they must be equipped with new skills, attitudes, and knowledge. (National Standards for Business Education, 1995, p. 5)

Trends

1. **The New Jersey Core Curriculum Content and Cross Content Workplace Readiness Standards are delivered in 56% of the twelve content areas identified as the discipline of business education in the National Standards for Business Education. Additionally, 19% of the elements are delivered in these business education content areas.**

These (NJCCCS & CCWRS) standards are not meant to serve as a statewide curriculum guide. They define the results expected but do not limit district strategies for how to ensure that their students achieve these expectations. (National Standards for Business Education, 1995, p. i)

2. **It is important to link activities within each school district's business education curriculum to support the delivery of the NJCCCS and NJCCWRS.**

See the model curriculum linkage reflecting a sampling of a curriculum framework used by the Moorestown School District. (p. 8)

3. **A variety of curriculum variations meet alternative scheduling.**

Alternative scheduling calls for modified instructional time frames that increase opportunities for students to apply learning, establish relevance, and increase their performance. These plans also provide access to more courses reversing a two-decade emphasis on narrowing the curriculum.

As the number of block courses increases, more opportunities will occur for business teachers to recruit and retain students. This is one of the outstanding benefits blocks offer. On the other hand, increasing the number of available course options will challenge business teachers to do a better job of retaining students in their programs. (Swope, Fritz, and Goins, December, 1998, p. 36)

4. **A survey of school officials identifies business skills needed by all students.**

School officials support the inclusion of business education skills and knowledge for all students in New Jersey's schools.

Business educators should initiate interdisciplinary teaching efforts and provide "leadership" within their districts to demonstrate how business education classes can help students achieve the various "Core Curriculum Content Standards."

There is also strong support for business educators to move ahead in their districts and establish Personal Finance, Careers, Business Technology, and Keyboarding as graduation requirements (McGinnis, 1997-1998).

5. **Ergonomics and safety principles must be applied to the learning environment.**

Developing a positive attitude toward safety starts with the attitude and practices of the teacher—classroom teachers are their students' role models. The actions of teachers speak louder and more powerfully than handouts or lip service. Teachers should consistently include safety instruction in their curriculum. Students

need to learn the general principles of safety as well as specific safety instruction for the equipment they will use. (Stern & Gathergoal, 1987)

6. There are many great reasons for using the National Standards for Business Education.

All students, not just those pursuing careers in business, need a general understanding of how our economy operates and the role business plays in the economic well-being of this country. The National Standards for Business Education provide cutting-edge performance objectives that strive to raise the level of education for all students.

- As a cohesive framework that articulates what students should know and be able to do in business, the Standards make it easier for school administrators, policymakers, and parents to recognize the importance of business education and the role it plays in preparing students to succeed in the workforce.
- The Standards delineate the skills and knowledge expected of students at each educational level.
- Uniform standards mean that students throughout the country will adhere to the same requirements and that, if they move, there will be greater educational continuity.
- The Standards reinforce the position that business education is not an elective, but an essential part of the curriculum, teaching students important academic and life skills.
- By looking to the future and anticipating emerging innovations, the Standards provide a basis for professional development. We can, therefore, more easily identify the skills future and current teachers need to acquire in order to keep up with changes in business practices.
- The Standards serve as an excellent way to measure student progress. Parents can be provided with a clear list of the objectives students have met and need to meet.
- By articulating a clear vision of business education as an integral part of the total educational system, the Standards are an investment in our future. (Editor, December, 1998, p. 26)

7. Integrating Academic and Vocational Education is a necessary goal.

Consider a system of Virtual Learning. Learning takes place neither in the "real world" nor in the artificial environment of the classroom. The distinguishing features of a corporation simulator include:

- Everyone practices continuous quality improvement.
- Facilitators and students teach each other how to learn.
- Students learn in teams practicing cooperative learning skills.
- Facilitators teach in teams (no single-discipline teacher).
- Curriculum is a blend of disciplines.
- Curriculum contains problem-solving activities with real-world relevancy.
- Learning takes place in an environment that mimics the real world.
- Authentic assessment is used to test all measurable learning outcomes. (Penn and Williams, 1996)

8. Technology synergies will expand the delivery of the curriculum beyond the classroom walls.

Technology synergies occur when different technologies are combined and achieve greater impact than the sum of the individual parts. They include individual digital portfolios, personalized systems of learning and learning management, interactive multi-media learning tools, knowledge navigation tools, and text/video customization-on-demand. The use of the Internet and other networks is creating environments where intellectual capacity, information and knowledge bases, methodologies, and other valuables are made available

to learners anywhere, anytime...developing the ability to provide expertise, learning, and knowledge to networked learners will be essential. (Dolence and Norris, 1995)

9. Generation.com learning is here.

Learners need to develop the capacity to search, select, and synthesize vast amounts of information to create knowledge. Some futurists suggest that many Information Age workers will need to spend at least 20 percent of their time (everyday) engaged in learning. Information Age learners will expect to access personal learning diagnostics—tools that enable individuals to diagnose the types of learning best suited to them. (Dolence and Norris, 1995)

We need to prepare our students for their future...not ours. (Thornburg, 1997)

10. Teachers will become the "guide on the side" rather than the "sage on the stage." (McKenzie, 1993)

The very concept of education is changing as we move from the paradigm of teacher as transmitter of information to students learning through discovery and through new media. (Tapscott, 1998)

The sage hands over expertise, ideas that are cultural artifacts. The guide hands over tools and shows students how to wield them in powerful ways. (McKenzie, 1993)

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DIVERGENT DIMENSIONS OF THE CURRICULUM -- TREND 2: MODEL CURRICULUM LINKAGE

Cross Content Workplace Readiness Standards-- All Students will Develop Career Planning and Workplace Readiness Skills

| Standard | Element | Activity | Course(s) | Reference |
|-----------------|---|---|--------------------|---|
| WR 1.1 | Demonstrate employability skills and work habits, such as work ethic, dependability, promptness, and getting along with others, needed to get and keep a job. | Students participate (and receive course credit) in a non-paid work-based learning experience by working in the school store, concession stand, and/or soda fountain. | Entrepreneurship | |
| WR 1.2 | Describe the importance of personal skills and attitudes to job success. | Name That Skill --Students list accomplishments in their lives. They identify skills required for these accomplishments. These skills can be projected into possible careers. | Career Development | Bingham, Mindy & S 1990, Career Choices Innovations, Santa Ba |
| WR 1.3 | Identify career interests, abilities, and skills. | Strong Interest Inventory ¹ --Assessment that identifies interests of students and relationship to future career. Bulls Eye Chart ² --Students identify their unique abilities and use them as a foundation for career planning. | Career Development | ¹ Strong Interest Inve Consulting Psycholog 3803 E. Bayshore Roa CA 94303. ² Bingham, Mindy & S 1990, Career Choices Innovations, Santa Ba |
| WR 1.4 | Develop an individual career plan. | Career Research Project --Students research and conduct informational interviews in three career areas of interest and identify education needed, salary, working conditions, special skills needed and write an in-depth report. | Career Development | |
| WR 1.5 | Identify skills that are transferable from one occupation to another. | Name That Skill --Students list accomplishments in their lives. They identify skills required for these accomplishments. These skills can be projected into possible careers. | Career Development | Bingham, Mindy & S 1990, Career Choices Innovations, Santa Ba |
| WR 1.6 | Select a career major and appropriate accompanying courses. | College Research Project --Students conduct in-depth research on three colleges. Research based on desired major and programs offered in that major. | Career Development | |
| WR 1.7 | Describe the importance of academic and occupational skills to achievement in the work world. | Career Research Project --Students research and conduct informational interviews in three career areas of interest and identify education needed, salary, working conditions, special skills needed and write an in-depth report. College Research Project --Students conduct in-depth research on three colleges. Research based on desired major and programs offered in that major. | Career Development | |
| WR 1.8 | Demonstrate occupational skills | Students participate (and receive course credit) | Career | |

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| | developed through structured learning experiences, such as volunteer, community service, and work-based experiences or part-time employment. | in a non-paid work-based learning experience by working in the school store, concession stand, and/or soda fountain. | Development | |
| WR 1.9 | Identify job openings. | Job Seeking Skills Project --Students learn job seeking skills such as resume writing, interviewing techniques, correspondence, and methods of identifying job openings through actual preparation of resumes and letters, mock interviews, and identifying employment announcements. | Career Development | |
| WR 1.10 | Prepare a resume and complete job applications. | Job Seeking Skills Project --Students learn job seeking skills such as resume writing, interviewing techniques, correspondence, and methods of identifying job openings through actual preparation of resumes and letters, mock interviews, and identifying employment announcements. | Career Development | |
| WR 1.11 | Demonstrate skills and attitudes necessary for a successful job interview. | Job Seeking Skills Project --Students learn job seeking skills such as resume writing, interviewing techniques, correspondence, and methods of identifying job openings through actual preparation of resumes and letters, mock interviews, and identifying employment announcements. | Career Development | |
| WR 1.12 | Demonstrate consumer and other financial skills. | | | |

Divergent Dimensions of the Curriculum

Action plan From Start to Finish

With respect to your program: consider each trend, determine how each trend will impact your program, and then plan a course of action.

| Goals | Priority (+, /, -) |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. NJCCCS and CCWRS | |
| 2. Link Activities | |
| 3. Alternative Schedules | |
| 4. Business Skills for All | |
| 5. Ergonomics and Safety | |
| 6. National Standards for Business Education | |
| 7. Integrating Academics | |
| 8. Technology Synergy | |
| 9. Generation.com Learning | |
| 10. Guide on the Side | |

| Action Steps | Responsibility | Deadline |
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"The most important thing about goals is having one." -- Geoffrey F. Albert

Embracing New Delivery Systems and Technologies

In order to innovate, business educators must embrace new delivery systems and technologies. Actively search out innovative and creative ways to use your ingenuity to reach out to new and different audiences. Propose new programs, collaborate with other disciplines, and/or volunteer to teach a short workshop at your local library. By taking the initiative, you portray yourself "as being part of the cutting wave, not struggling along behind it." (Warner, 1997, p. 16)

Trends

1. **Technology, rather than becoming a new subject, becomes the platform for all learning. (Gates, November 1998)**

"No longer are computers used only by business education teachers to prepare their students for office administration and business careers—now computers are used to teach just about anything and everything to anyone at any time." (Warner, 1997, p. 15) Technology is not a substitute for anything. It's at the very heart of our electronic communities, which according to John Morgridge, Chairman of the Board, Cisco Systems, Inc., are changing the way we work, play and learn.

2. **Refresh your technology base every 3 to 4 years. (Gates, November 1998)**

It is estimated that in the 21st century, an individual will need the equivalent of 30 credit hours of learning every seven years to remain gainfully employed. (Baltzer-Sutton Associates, May 1998, p. 7) School districts, colleges, universities, training firms, professional conferences, workshops, the Internet, and distance learning are avenues for informal and formal instruction. Take control of your learning to stay current with the advances in technology.

3. **The networks and architecture of infrastructure at educational institutions will change. (Baltzer-Sutton Associates, May 1998, p. 11)**

Network computers, Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM), desktop video conferencing, voice over data digital networks, Gigabit Ethernet, remote access demands—all are technology issues facing institutions. Student demands for network access...using notebook computers or palm-tops are escalating on a daily basis. In addition, as instructional applications of technology become increasingly dependent on campus networks and the Internet, faculty and students will expect their networks to function on a 7x24 basis. There are very few...education institutions who can meet this expectation. (Baltzer-Sutton Associates, May 1998, p. 11)

4. **Prepare for the reality of electronic commerce. (Baltzer-Sutton Associates, May 1998, p. 13)**

Electronic commerce tools have revolutionized the ordering, invoicing, and tracking of products. Commercial activity on the Internet is increasing daily and training will be needed on using digital cash, smart cards, online "shopping malls," online customer service and product support. Security, privacy, and access will be major issues for the instructor, student, and consumer.

5. **An institution can now deliver a full range of educational services "virtually" to students at any location on the globe who have access to the supporting technology. (Walker, 1998, p. 157)**

Distance educational delivery offerings are becoming increasingly popular. The richness of content in distance learning courses, the variety of integrated technologies that can be employed, the time flexibility possible with some modes (asynchronous), the greater freedom from location constraints, and the potential for individual learning increase the desirability of this method of course delivery. Delivery formats include interactive television, audio-conferencing, videoconferencing, web-based courses, and virtual field trips.

States are recognizing the need to network all educational institutions. These networks tie together higher education, secondary, and elementary institutions to provide cost-effective, advanced technology training to students. In New Jersey, NJIN (New Jersey Intercampus Network) is finalizing its plans for joining participating colleges in the State via a common interface to more effectively deliver courses, collaborate on

projects, videoconference, and prepare for tomorrow's technology needs. This collaboration among institutions provides a bargaining voice in securing funding demands that technology dictates to education. Distance education consortia have been established in many states that identify specific institutions to deliver online courses in distinct disciplines.

Corporate training has recognized the benefits of online education and training. Utilizing online courses meets the training needs of the corporate sector which include the needs of (1) fast, effective training for global employees, (2) the opportunity to use the best instructors and high-quality courses, (3) a high rate of course completion and knowledge retention, and (4) a reduction in training costs, travel time, and expenses. (Devy, April 1998, p. 14)

6. Lifelong learning remains important in the digital age. We will be adapting to a web lifestyle—one in which we learn, organize, participate, communicate, entertain, purchase, and browse on the Internet.

Use of the Internet doubles every 100 days, and this phenomenon will continue into the 21st century. Virtual colleges, training institutes, community programs, and educational consortia will make retooling and retraining a painless activity. The world population will be able to maintain currency in politics, education, economics, finance, and commerce while sitting at their home computer workstations or even in front of their televisions with the assistance of the new technologies—set-top boxes and cable modems, home ISDN connections, and high-speed modems.

7. The next decade will see more change in the use of technology than was seen in the last 50 years. In the 21st century, knowledge workers' jobs will require use of technology. Through the development of more natural interfaces (handwriting and speech recognition, answer wizards, and internal computer cameras) systems engineers are developing hardware with simplicity in mind.

Technophobia will become an anxiety of the past as the human-computer interface is refined to a more comfortable level. Input peripherals will enable the novice to interact efficiently and effectively with the workstation of tomorrow. Graphics tablets will better recognize handwriting input, and speech recognition software will provide users with voice command capability. Software will become a snap to use with answer wizards helping the new user through unfamiliar territory and activities. Computers equipped with internal cameras will develop pseudo-intelligence and be able to "recognize" the individual with whom they are interacting.

Windows to the digital world will be in virtually every home providing access to even more information through a variety of devices. Techno-change will open opportunities in both the educational and work-world environments. (Ventimiglia, 1996, p. 55)

Work will change significantly—not just the tools we use for work, but the way in which we measure work. We will see the disappearance of the workday and workweek. Work will be measured instead by the "mind's open hours." (Browning & Reiss, May 1998, p. 114) And, for most of us, that is on average 16 hours a day.

8. There will be an increase in the number of business/education partnerships for the administration, delivery, and marketing of courses, programs, and degrees.

Partnering has gained popularity in the past decade and will continue to grow as corporations address the lack of a skilled workforce. Today, over 300,000 information technology positions go unfilled due to the lack of trained applicants. Corporations such as Microsoft Corporation and Cisco Systems, Inc., have developed programs in which they train faculty members to teach the required skills for their corporate workforce needs. A training web has been established in which corporate personnel train faculty who in turn train other faculty in a hierarchical fashion until training academies of several institutions are established. (Morgridge, November, 1998) Rather than looking for degrees, these companies have determined that certification in particular skill sets is the best way to meet their objectives.

Non-profit organizations, too, have recognized the importance of training a skilled workforce. Groups such as Tech Corps partner volunteers from industry with school systems. These volunteers enter the school districts to train faculty and provide other forms of development. They also lend their expertise to the school districts in planning for the future.

In an era when most work is knowledge work enhanced through the use of technology, we must remember that it is the responsibility of both business and education to ensure that graduates have the required skills. (Ventimiglia, 1996, p. 57)

9. Success in the future will depend on underlying technologies.

The underlying technologies are advancing and driving the virtual education environment of the 21st century. Students and faculty will use megaservers, multimedia and/or interactive media, reliable optical scanning character recognition, high-capacity distribution networks (i.e.; Internet II), and standardized document/data language tools to facilitate instruction. Business educators will move beyond providing computer literacy and application programs to planning the inclusion of these underlying technologies and networks into their emerging virtual education environments. (Walker, 1998, p. 176)

10. Student-centered learning will be the new paradigm.

This paradigm shift from teacher-centered learning to student-centered learning is thought to be a revolution in education by some individuals. The learning-centered institution places learning first and creates an environment where the learner is involved in the learning process as a full partner. Learners assume responsibility for their own choices and participate in collaborative learning activities. Educators must recognize that linear, one-way, teacher-led courses may not be what are needed in the next century.

Learners may no longer be looking for a diploma, but for learning that is applicable to what they are doing on the job. (Morgridge, November, 1998) Just-in-time training will increase in importance and much learning will take place at work via company Intranets and educational networks. Learners will determine what they need to know, how they are going to learn it, and when they will find the time to take the training.

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Embracing New Delivery Systems and Technologies

Action plan From Start to Finish

With respect to your program: consider each trend, determine how each trend will impact your program, and then plan a course of action.

| Goals | Priority (+, , -) |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Learning Platform | |
| 2. Technology Base | |
| 3. Changing Infrastructure | |
| 4. Electronic Commerce | |
| 5. Virtual Educational Services | |
| 6. Web Lifestyle | |
| 7. Knowledge Workers | |
| 8. Business/Education Partnerships | |
| 9. Underlying Technologies | |
| 10. Student-centered Learning | |

| Action Steps | Responsibility | Deadline |
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"A journey of a thousand miles begins with but a single step." -- Chinese Proverb

Taking Advantage of Opportunities for Professional Growth

Continuous improvement should be viewed as a professional expectation as well as an obligation. (Sparks and Hirsh, 1997) At the heart of professional development is the renewal of the job-related knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the business educator. Not only are New Jersey business educators required to complete 100 hours of professional development in a 5-year period, but they also have a responsibility to take advantage of the opportunities for professional growth in the new millennium.

Trends

1. **The action-oriented professional takes responsibility for professional growth.**

Self-directed professionals set goals to move forward in business education. Goals are reached when the action-oriented professional is committed, enthusiastic, positive, concerned and energetic. (Neal and Maxwell, 160) The business educator who develops an awareness of current trends in the business world, acquires a curiosity about the future, and makes an action plan will have a better opportunity of achieving stated goals.

2. **Advanced certification maximizes professional growth.**

The process of professional development does not end when a business educator becomes certified to teach. Opportunities abound for continuing professional development that advance subject matter knowledge and address the rapidly changing workplace needs. "Educating students for technological change and the complexities of the workplace, as well as their personal business lives, compels business educators to commit themselves to continuing professional renewal." (NBEA Policy Statement No. 60, NBEAonline)

To demonstrate mastery of certain skills, especially in the ever-changing area of technology, professional development will have to include skill certification. Certification in certain operating systems such as Windows NT or in software packages such as Microsoft Office will make graduates more employable. Instructors for these courses will need to be certified in order to teach these curricula.

3. **Professional organizations open the door to professional opportunities.**

Through your active participation in professional organizations such as NBEA, NJBEA, EBEA, ACTE, DPE and NJEA, you have an opportunity to exchange information with colleagues, learn new strategies, and take advantage of conferences, workshops, journals, and newsletters. Become an active member, work on a committee, become an officer, assist in projects that will benefit the association, or write an article for the association's publication or newsletter. (Neal and Maxwell, 1990, 164) Participate in the Internet resources provided by these professional organizations—e-mail, search engines, listservs, forums, and bulletin boards. "Try to think outside current boundaries, explore how our participation in professional organizations might further open the door to making us a business education cybercommunity." (O'Connor and Bronner, 1998, 129)

4. **Results-driven education requires that teachers and administrators acquire new instructional knowledge and skills and alter their attitudes. (Sparks and Hirsh, 1997)**

Results-driven education is based on "the simple principle that decisions about curriculum and instruction should be driven by the outcomes we'd like children to display at the end of their educational experience." (O'Neil, 1994, p. 6) Results-driven education for students requires results-driven staff development for educators. Staff development programs should note changes in on-the-job behavior or effects on students or the organization as a measure of effectiveness.

When planning instruction, it is important to determine what students need to know and be able to do. From this, business educators should determine knowledge, skills, and attitudes required in order for those outcomes to be realized. "The vision is student focused, and staff development is the vehicle for achieving it." (Sparks and Hirsh, 1997)

5. **Opportunities abound by which to take advantage of professional development programs offered by the State and private enterprise.**

The New Jersey Department of Education sponsors Educational Technology Training Centers in all of its counties. These centers offer a wealth of workshops for educators at no cost. To find your county ETTC, <http://www.state.nj.us/njded/techno/techtran.htm>.

Many of the state and county colleges/universities offer continuing education programs. These credit and non-credit courses and workshops are offered on- and off-campus during the Fall, Spring, and Summer sessions.

Companies such as a Foundation for Free Enterprise and Manpower also offer professional development throughout the state. Don't forget to look into the private sector for opportunities. Public business educators, be sure to ask if these private sector programs will apply to your 100-hour professional development requirement. (N.J.A.C. 6:11-13)

6. Business educators must become system thinkers and take a central role in order to support systematic change. (Sparks and Hirsh, 1997)

All too often educators see themselves working in isolation. System thinkers see how all things are interconnected. The actions that take place in a business education classroom or by a business department can impact others in the educational system. An important aspect of system thinking is to recognize that change within the system is continuous. Recognizing this, "small, well focused actions can sometimes produce significant, enduring improvements." (Senge, 1990)

Robert Fritz further states that individuals and organizations should focus on creation—taking action to have something come into being. This is a proactive approach. He warns that if we focus on problem-solving, which involves taking action to make the problem go away, we can prevent real change from happening.

7. Effective use of the Internet complements professional growth. (O'Connor and Bronner, 1998)

The Internet can alleviate, if not eliminate, some of the barriers that are related to access, timeliness, and usefulness of professional development. By taking advantage of online courses, visiting sites where you can learn new concepts, learning software via the Internet, and accessing lesson plans and teaching materials, business educators can grow professionally right in the comfort of their own homes. Many colleges and universities now sponsor this type of learning. The following internet sites offer distance learning opportunities:

http://www.newhorizons.org/announce_distroundup.html (New Horizons)

<http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/de/index.html> (Rutgers University)

<http://www.outreach.psu.edu/DE> (Penn State University)

The following internet sites offer lesson plans and teaching materials:

<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/bluewebn/#table> (Blue Web'n Learning Sites Learning)

<http://discoveryschool.com/schrockguide/index.htm> (Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators)

<http://www.inet-edu.com/lessons/links/index.html> (The Lesson Plan Place)

8. Teachers should improve their understanding of the teaching/learning practice.

Teachers are engaging in action research (Calhoun, 1994) in which they identify teaching/learning issues of importance, try out new methods, and determine their effect on students' learning. "Research finds that students learn by actively constructing new knowledge. These findings call into question traditional curricula that focus on the transfer of discrete and fragmented knowledge and skills from teachers to students." (Fine, 1994) The National Board of Professional Teaching Standards and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium have developed standards that can be used as a reference for beginning teachers and those who are experienced in the classroom.

9. Professional growth should include multiple forms of job-embedded learning.

Teachers who engage in learning activities such as study groups, action-research, peer coaching, curriculum development and case discussions are participating in the practices that support professional growth. "Through collegial study, dialogue, and joint problem solving, teachers form

professional learning communities that have a direct impact on instructional improvement." (Fine, 1994) McLaughlin & Talbert (1993) have reported that teachers who participate in networks offering sustained and challenging learning opportunities were more successful in addressing the needs of their students.

These types of learning activities offer a wealth of support for teachers. If job-embedded programs do not exist in your school, develop one with your peers. Consider meeting at a member's home. Start informally and start small.

10. Being a proactive professional is an indispensable ingredient in fostering change.

Become your own "change agent" in your school district. Take the initiative and be willing to change with the times. Use yourself as the catalyst who provides the vision of the future and leads your school district into the 21st century.

Become a staff developer. Present computer workshops. Many educators want to know how to operate the computer efficiently and effectively. Business educators are the experts and can take a leadership role in this area. Brown-bag lunches also are a vehicle for providing in-service. There is really no end to the innovative strategies you might try.

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Taking Advantage of Opportunities for Professional Growth

Action plan From Start to Finish

With respect to your program: consider each trend, determine how each trend will impact your program, and then plan a course of action.

| Goals | Priority (+, , -) |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Action-Oriented Professional | |
| 2. Advanced Certification | |
| 3. Professional Organizations | |
| 4. Results-Driven Education | |
| 5. State and Private Enterprise Opportunities | |
| 6. System Thinkers | |
| 7. Internet/Professional Growth | |
| 8. Teaching/Learning Strategies | |
| 9. Job-Embedded Learning | |
| 10. Foster Change | |

| Action Steps | Responsibility | Deadline |
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"People with goals succeed because they know where they are going." -- C. Popplestone

Facing change beyond the year 2000

As the twentieth century concludes and the twenty-first century begins, it is clear that the massive changes in the business world will continue to permeate all infrastructure of local, regional, and global environments. Remember: "If you don't manage change, it will manage you!" (Thomas, 1998)

There is no blueprint for action to how business educators should face change beyond the Year 2000. How each institution goes about transforming itself to meet a new vision is as personal as a fingerprint. The only answer to the question: "Am I ready to change?" must be a resounding: "Yes!" Business educators at all institutional levels, therefore, must chart their own course of action based on their perceptions of how future projections will affect them.

Trends

1. **As business changes, new challenges demand new talents. (Goleman, 1998)**

We are rapidly moving toward a workforce that uses electronic technology to link workers and functions at scattered sites. This change will reshape traditional approaches to decision making, will change recruiting and career development, will redistribute power in the organization and will fuel an informational overload.

Employee tracking over several decades reveals that two abilities that mattered little for success in the 1970s have become crucially important in the 1990s: team building and adapting to change. As a result, two new capabilities are now appearing as required traits: the ability to leverage diversity and the ability to serve as a catalyst of change. As Bill Gates states: "In the new organization, the worker is no longer a cog in the machine." (Gates, 1998)

2. **The most important single factor in distinguishing the skills of star performers in every field—from entry-level jobs to top executive positions—is not IQ, advanced degrees, or technical expertise, it is emotional intelligence. (Goleman, 1998)**

Self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-control; commitment and integrity; the ability to communicate and influence, to initiate and accept change—these are the competencies that are a premium in today's job market. The higher up the leadership ladder you go, the more vital all aspects of emotional intelligence become, often determining who is promoted.

3. **Future workers must be able to demonstrate an understanding of a "process" and/or "systems" approach. (Bridges, 1994)**

Mastering a set of steps is no longer enough; workers must, instead, grasp the workings of a "system." Therefore, student involvement must go beyond task completion to the acknowledgement of how their input contributes to the success of the overall mission of the organization.

The massive transition of the white collar worker has gone from information processing to information distribution and from the computer desktop to global communications systems. The new work setting requires the application of personal qualities in tandem with the application of technologies to support work processes, to manage and execute projects, to manipulate and manage information, to improve employee performance, and to enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the organization in keeping with its business goals and strategies. (Bridges, 1994)

4. **Jobs will become bigger and broader; job descriptions and even job titles will give way to the skill sets possessed by individuals. (Bridges, 1994)**

Careers have to be reconceptualized, and career development has to be reinvented. Organizations are using internal databases to profile employee skills and to find the most qualified candidates within the organization. These changes help employees identify alternative career targets and enable cross-functional teams to get the best possible mix of technical and operational skills.

The work of the future will be project oriented and accomplishment driven; therefore, students must learn to continuously assess the quality and importance of their contributions. Transportable multiple competencies will be the benchmark for future success.

5. **Worker diversity is becoming a critical factor; as a result, many people will have their first experiences with multicultural workgroups and will need to adapt to different work expectations and communication styles. (Barner, 1996)**

With significant ethnic and cultural shifts in the population, workplace and schools, communication ranks first as the most important area of knowledge for securing, adjusting, and advancing in

employment. Speaking, listening, reading, writing, making professional presentations, researching topics, using computer generated data and working in teams are critical communication skills for the next century.

Organizations will value those workers and managers who can operate within diversified employee groups. Sensitivity training will help employees understand the needs and perspectives of different members in work groups. Companies will also work toward becoming more adept at assessing workers' potentials for success within long-term, multicultural, high-risk work assignments. (Fruehling, 1998)

6. **The future workplace will be characterized by "collaborative work in a virtual office setting" (Kemske, 1998)**

Information technology will free workers from a specified location and provide them with creative, flexible work arrangements where specified work hours and schedules will have little importance. The ubiquitous workplace—available 24 hours of the day, worldwide, and 365 days a year—will require workers to be able to jump quickly into new ventures and manage temporary, project-focused teams, as more and more of their work responsibilities will lie outside the traditional "work niche." This new work style supports the need for student exposures to creative thinking, effective use of time and resources, exposures to using the computer as a communication tool, and other creative or out-of-the-box learning opportunities.

7. **"Work teams" will become prevalent and enable workers to become more autonomous in their efforts; therefore, leadership will become as important as management. (Chemise, 1998)**

As more corporations downsize and reorganize, the management and workforce landscape is changing. The traditional management hierarchy is being replaced by a less formal one—decreasing the middle management layer and requiring greater communication between organizational tiers. The new organizational structure places a greater reliance on information technologies and communication in order to handle the same or even an increasing workload by fewer people. (Fruehling, 1998)

More and more in the 21st century, work methods and functions will no longer be permanent, immutable structures, instead, they will consist of dynamic and fluid processes that require workers to adapt continuously. Therefore, performance over the next few years will be based more on improving key work processes than directing work functions per se. In dynamic organizations, managers will be increasingly judged on their ability to identify and implement improvements and to encourage innovative thinking from team members, while professionals will be judged on their ability to adapt quickly to vastly different work environments.

8. **Employees will constantly be called upon to work and learn in a "just-in-time" format. (Kemske, 1998)**

As never before, today's workers need a continuous process for updating their skills and the nimbleness with which they learn will set their value to the organization. This new breed of knowledge worker will constantly be called upon to achieve their highest potential as well as keep abreast of significant technical advancements. Workers will use technologies as training vehicles, acquiring skills and new learning when they need them. Finally, workers will be called upon to take charge of their own learning with an entrepreneurial spirit.

9. **Many new "hot jobs for the 21st century" will be in areas we would never have anticipated twenty, or even ten years ago. Occupations that used to offer solid careers are in decline, while positions once unheard of are now among the fastest growing. In today's dynamic economy, it is extremely important to plan our careers with all the available information about where the jobs are—and where they will be in the future. (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998)**

According to the Occupational Outlook Handbook (1998), computer and data processing services will add over 1.3 million jobs between 1996 and 2006. Additionally, service-producing industries will

account for most new jobs with business, health, and education accounting for the greatest areas of growth.

The business occupations cited among the "Emerging Careers for the 21st Century" include: benefits analyst, computational linguist; computer microprocessor; electronic mail technical; information broker; information center manager; jobs developer; and software club director. With new jobs and new organizational roles constantly changing and emerging, students must be given constant exposures to savvy workplace opportunities as well as requirements and the skill sets needed for success in them.

10. The American workplace is undergoing a revolution that requires learning networks and learning organizations. (Senge, 1999)

Peter Senge calls for systemic thinking, blaming no one else for problems, seeing the long-term and structural problems, and identifying the least obvious leverage points as strategies of a learning organization. He suggests four core disciplines: personal mastery; mental models; shared vision; and team learning through encouraged dialogue, discussion, and practice within the group. It demands a rethinking of oneself and the creation of a new outlook.

At the heart of a learning organization is a shift of mind—from seeing ourselves as separate from the world to connected to the world, from seeing problems caused by someone or something "out there" to seeing how our actions create the problems we experience. A learning organization is a place where people are continually discovering how they create their reality. And how they can change it.

Senge's model has been accepted by corporate America and can be applied to educational institutions with success as well. Institutions that are willing to follow Senge's "learning organization model" will be open to rethinking all aspects of their institutional goals and programs in order to offer a competitive edge to their students as they are required to meet the demands of the 21st century.

Quoting Peter Drucker (1999), "The best way to predict the future is to create it."

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Facing Change Beyond the Year 2000

Action plan

From Start to Finish

With respect to your program: consider each trend, determine how each trend will impact your program, and then plan a course of action.

| Goals | Priority (+, , -) |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. New challenges/new talents | |
| 2. Emotional intelligence | |
| 3. Systems Approach | |
| 4. Skill Sets | |
| 5. Diversity | |
| 6. Virtual Office Setting | |
| 7. Work Teams | |
| 8. Just-in-time Learning | |
| 9. Hot Jobs | |
| 10. The Learning Organization | |

| Action Steps | Responsibility | Deadline |
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"If you don't manage change, it will manage you." -- Joyce Thomas, 1998