

# One sure thing



The strength of a nation resides within the collective talents, skills and knowledge of its people and a highly educated workforce directly contributes to economic growth. One way to position our businesses and our country for success lies in education and training. To this end we must:

**Better train business teams and individuals to compete.**

**Maximize return on investments.**

**Invest in the country's future**

**Acknowledge that our future lies within our people.**

It is critical that we grasp the slipping reins of our incoming workforce through appropriate training and education as a springboard to economic health and continued national security.

Says Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice, "The state of education, K through 12, in our country is a national security issue. It makes me terrified. If we cannot do better in educating our people — and I mean all of our people — then we are not going to be competitive in an economy, a global economy that is very competitive, where the numbers of engineers and scientists in other

countries are outstripping the numbers that we train in the U.S. several, several fold."

The challenge before us crystalizes when presented with sad truths like the U.S. ranking at the bottom of the world's richest countries in the effectiveness of its educational system (UNICEF study). "It is based not on the conventional yardstick of how many students reach what level of education, but on testing what pupils actually know and what they are able to do," UNICEF said.

The study was based on five different tests of 14 and 15 year olds to determine their abilities in reading, math and science.

American students, grades four to 12, exhibit a steady decline in performance compared to students in other countries according to another study, Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study.

"In fourth grade, American kids do above average internationally. By eighth grade, they slip a bit, and by twelfth grade, they've slipped a lot. We're the only country that slides down that much from fourth to twelfth grade," says David Marsh, professor at the USC Rossier School of Education.

Simply throwing money at the issue has not resolved this imbalance. The U.S. tops the list in what it spends on education: \$9,138 per student annually. Yet, we still fare worse in performance and test scores than other countries with even larger class sizes.

### Congress seeks answers

With a focus on strengthening the brain trust of the country and becoming more sure-footed economically, federal policymakers have renewed their determination to improve education, invigorate commitment to research, and to developing and retaining top candidates in order to build America's workforce. Lawmakers have deemed this critical to cultivating a national environment suited for innovation and success.

Westlake Village, Calif.-based CallSource has been observing the softening trend of the country's workforce for some time through its training assessment data and Telephone Performance Analysis. The company has built decades of analysis based on recorded leasing phone calls and has noted an on-going decline in the on-the-job performance of leasing professionals and managers.

Proper training and education can boost individual productivity to achieve unprecedented success throughout entire organizations. "We are focused on reversing the trend of those American workers coming to the table without the training and tools needed to be their most productive selves. It's good business not just for the employee who gains knowledge, but for the company by helping others to shore up its market position," said Jerry Feldman, CEO. "It's the dynamic that America is built on."

CallSource has collected data for more than 15 years on performance trends in the workplace, particularly in multifamily. With these statistics in hand, the company is able to accurately analyze and develop methods to take, train and educate multifamily professionals to the next level, while delivering measurable, sustainable results.

The self-contained, multi-step assessment and training program that they have developed to build high-functioning leasing and business teams has been dubbed "Results." The Results system is ground-breaking in that links together people, processes and systems to provide targeted, individualized feedback and training to reinforce lessons and improve performance.

CallSource functions as a real-time laboratory where performance is evaluated, measured and our training specifically adapted to work in real-world applications. CallSource tests different technologies, methodologies, processes and tools by deploying them within its own company. They then repurpose them for customers to help improve their own productivity adhering to the company's core principals, CallSource creates training that is focused on teaching people and companies to successfully compete on a global scale; essentially, they become lifelong learners with the ability to perform better in their jobs. The training also helps people deal with the

loss of a job by maintaining a repository of retraining courses made available to them.

Participants of the program are provided their own training record to validate their ongoing progress as part of their resume.

Studies have shown that the fastest way for a company to increase profitability is to provide its people with the proper tools, training, motivation and feedback to enhance their performance. This proven methodology, in turn, empowers employees to manage their own performance and opportunities. This translates into training and education that sticks, producing levels of performance that were previously unattainable. The underpinnings of the Results program could redefine how the business world learns and competes in the global arena.

Technology and green initiatives may be a stronghold to help us reclaim our leadership role and serve as a beacon to the nations of the world in demonstrating how the inherent innovation of our people helps us compete.

We must hold firm to our role as a global leader. Only through proper training and education will we compete in a world where only the most prepared thrive.

The consequences of continuing on our current path could undermine the preservation of a lifestyle that once garnered the admiration of the rest of the world. ■

Author Alan Marcus