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New ASTD/University of Pennsylvania Study Profiles Chief Learning Officers
Study Clarifies the Role of Senior Learning Executives

(Alexandria, VA) February 10, 2006 – A new breed of learning executive has emerged in the past decade to take on the challenge of both running learning like a business and making learning a critical contributor to organizational success. It takes a complex skill set to run an efficient learning function that is strategically aligned with and responsive to the needs of a business.

A survey of 92 chief learning officers (CLOs) in large corporations conducted by the American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) and the University of Pennsylvania identifies the demands of the job and competencies that are critical for success in this position. The results of the study can be found in the article, "Profiling a New Breed of Learning Executive," in the February 2006 issue of *Training + Development (T+D)* magazine published by ASTD.

The study found that CLOs spend most of their time on strategy development and communicating with corporate executives. Their biggest challenges are communicating and measuring the value of learning, and resource constraints. Survey respondents indicate that their greatest accomplishments are expanding the scope and reach of the learning function and gaining the respect of executives and business unit leaders with whom they partner to improve productivity and performance.

Brenda Sugrue, senior director of research for ASTD, and one of the authors of the study, says, "The competencies to which these senior learning executives attribute their success emphasize general business skills (leadership, strategic planning, and relationship management) rather than specific and deep knowledge of the field of workplace learning and performance. Additionally, these CLOs recognize the importance of a deeper understanding of the science, technology, and measurement of learning and performance."

Doug Lynch, vice dean of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania, and co-author of the study, concludes, "The study results confirm that there are many paths to becoming a CLO and the role requires a combination of business savvy and knowledge of key areas of the learning field. Many CLOs are strong in one but not both of those areas, so the Graduate School of Education and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania is preparing to launch a new curriculum that will prepare professionals specifically for this role."

Daniel Blair, director of ASTD's Learning Executives Network (LXN), comments, "The University of Pennsylvania's initiative to create a targeted curriculum and credential for senior learning executives will help current and aspiring CLOs better prepare to be business partners within their organizations."

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More information about the study may be found in the article, "Profiling a New Breed of Learning Executive," in the February 2006 issue of *T+D* magazine.

About ASTD

ASTD (American Society for Training & Development) is the world's largest association dedicated to workplace learning and performance professionals. ASTD's 70,000 members and associates come from more than 100 countries and thousands of organizations - multinational corporations, medium-sized and small businesses, government, academia, consulting firms, and product and service suppliers.

ASTD marks its beginning in 1944 when the organization held its first annual conference. In recent years, ASTD has widened the industry's focus to connect learning and performance to measurable results, and is a sought-after voice on critical public policy issues. For more information, visit www.astd.org.

About the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania

The Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn GSE) ranks as a national leader in preparing education professionals and producing research designed to enhance professional practice and student learning. The School consistently ranks as one of the top graduate schools of education, according to the *U.S. News and World Report* survey.

Penn GSE emphasizes the interaction of research, theory and practice in its scholarship and service and excels in the development of innovative degree and professional development programs. The School has been an innovator in the development of high-quality executive education programs for non-traditional markets, including the Executive Doctorate in Higher Education Management and the Mid-Career Doctorate in Educational Leadership. For more information, visit www.upenn.edu.

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