STRATEGIES FOR TALENT MANAGEMENT:

Greater Philadelphia Companies in Action

August 2008

Prepared by the CEO Council for Growth in partnership with the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning

Dear Regional Business Leader:

On behalf of Mark S. Schweiker, Chairman of the CEO Council for Growth (CEO Council) – a tri-state, eleven county business leadership group – we are excited to present the following report, entitled "Strategies for Talent Management: Greater Philadelphia Companies in Action." The research provides insights into some of the successful ways organizations are developing their talent and how others can strengthen their current talent management efforts. It focuses on talent management strategies as well as one specific tactic – tuition assistance programs.

Human capital is clearly one of the critical issues that impacts the Greater Philadelphia region's ability to grow and prosper. The CEO Council is committed to ensuring a steady and talented supply of quality workers for this region. While this report is focused on that later part of the talent continuum, we understand that quality early childhood and K-12 education is a key part of the foundation for our region's success.

In June of 2006, the CEO Council's Human Capital Working Group released the final report of its *Human Capital Needs Assessment*. In it you indicated that the following were your two biggest challenges:

1. Hiring highly skilled and experienced mid-level professionals/managers; and

2. Recruiting diverse employees.

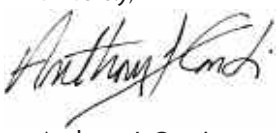
As a natural progression from the survey, the Human Capital Working Group commissioned the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) in partnership with CEO Council staff to complete the research contained in this report. It is our intention to provide this information to help organizations that are seeking to strengthen their current talent management approach. It provides clear reasoning for how these practices support your business's bottom line as well as the continued improvement of Greater Philadelphia's educational attainment levels.

Based on an examination of national tuition assistance exemplary practices and profiles of these practices in action at five regional organizations (AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP, The Boeing Company, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, Reed Smith LLP and UPS) the study identifies several strategies that can improve an organization's talent management practices. The region's businesses and their support for employee learning and education will continue to be an essential component of Greater Philadelphia's success in the race for talent. Professional development and tuition assistance programs are critical tools for overcoming regional business challenges like the retention and development of middle managers and professionals.

Research illustrates how an investment in talent development provides significant returns to the employer through increased retention, gains in productivity and improved employee recruitment and engagement. Several reports clearly demonstrate that placing a priority on an organization's learning and development functions provides financial benefits to an employer. Overall, we believe that the information contained in this report points to a strategic approach to managing an organization's talent that is in direct alignment with the company's overall business goals. Talent management and specifically tuition assistance should be seen as more than a universal benefit; it is a strategy for corporate growth.

The Greater Philadelphia region has a tremendous opportunity to become an economic leader. Our region possesses one of the world's leading collections of colleges and universities and the talent management infrastructure necessary to succeed. *We hope that you will take a few minutes to read the first pages of this report and share it with your Human Resource professionals.* Ask them to review the report and consider being part of the team we pull together to discuss implementation. We plan to work with you and your colleagues to continue the dialogue this report initiates, highlight additional exemplary practices and generate tools to assist with implementation. It is our sincere hope that this research and subsequent work help identify strategies that assist in improving your business as well as Greater Philadelphia's long-term competitiveness. We look forward to working together in doing just that.

Sincerely,



Anthony J. Conti
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Chairman, Human Capital Working Group, CEO Council for Growth

Executive Summary

Human capital is one of the critical issues that impacts the Greater Philadelphia region's ability to grow and prosper. The CEO Council for Growth (CEO Council) is committed to ensuring a steady and talented supply of quality workers for this region.

"Strategies for Talent Management: Greater Philadelphia Companies in Action" provides insights into some of the successful ways organizations are developing and managing their talent and how others can strengthen their efforts. It focuses on talent management strategies and one specific tactic – tuition assistance programs – and provides clear reasoning for how these practices support a business's bottom line as well as the continued improvement of Greater Philadelphia's educational attainment levels.

Greater Philadelphia's businesses and their support for employee learning and education will continue to be an essential component of the region's success in the race for talent. Professional development and tuition assistance programs are critical tools to overcome regional business challenges like the retention and development of middle managers and professionals. Talent management is a grow-your-own strategy that can assist companies in finding and developing those critical employees. In an ever accelerating race for talent, organizations are weighing the difficult "make" versus "buy" decision when it comes to their workforce. Through the use of tuition assistance and other tools, employers can effectively create some of the skills and competencies needed for their organization to thrive.

The information contained in this report points to a strategic approach to managing an organization's talent, and one that directly promotes and is aligned with the company's overall business goals. "HR's ability to align human capital resources with the business strategy and improve workforce skills through strategic training and development is paramount for organizational success."[1] Companies that make a multiyear investment in their people, similar to the investments made in their physical assets, will stay ahead of the competition. While the organizations featured in this report represent different industry sectors, all have strengthened their talent management practices through the strategic use of their tuition assistance programs as well as many other talent management strategies. *At these companies, tuition assistance is more than a benefit; it is a strategy for corporate growth.*

Based on an examination of national tuition assistance exemplary practices and the five profiles of these practices in action in Greater Philadelphia, the report identifies several strategies to consider that can improve an organization's talent management practices, specifically around tuition assistance, and consequently their bottom line.

While the exemplary practices have wide applicability to the region, each company has unique capabilities, talent needs and overall corporate goals. The exemplary practices presented in the report provide a range of suggestions for how a company can use or modify existing tuition assistance programs and other efforts to address key challenges like the development and retention of mid-level talent. While certainly not the only solution, tuition assistance, when used strategically as part of a broader talent management plan, has been shown to have both employee and employer benefits. The recommendations are intended to facilitate the implementation of talent management practices that can increase employee satisfaction, productivity and retention.

The Greater Philadelphia region has a tremendous opportunity to become an economic leader. It possesses one of the world's leading collections of colleges and universities and the talent management infrastructure necessary to succeed and improve Greater Philadelphia's long-term competitiveness.

The report presents the following ideas for your company to consider:

- Offer prepaid tuition to increase the tuition assistance program's usage and diversity of its participants. This can improve the overall quality of the organization's workforce, its education levels, productivity and employee retention;
- Extend tuition benefits to part-time employees to increase the diversity of the program's participants and build a stronger pipeline of future full-time employees;
- Re-evaluate tuition caps to cover graduate coursework that employees need to advance into critical mid-level positions;
- Form partnerships with educational providers that offer custom training and development as well as reduced tuition, to create both cost and time-saving benefits;
- Support job-relevant and essential individual courses, professional certificates and job training in addition to degrees;
- Promote Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) in order to reduce the cost and time for employees to complete a degree;
- Recognize the achievements of employees to assist in improving employee retention and satisfaction;
- Provide educational advising to employees to ensure that you get the most out of your investment in their training and education; and
- Establish metrics and communicate the impact of the organization's talent management efforts to make the case that investments in education have a significant influence on corporate growth.

Figure 1 below outlines each idea above and the featured organizations that demonstrate it in use. More detail on these practices can be found beginning on page 9.

FIGURE 1: EXEMPLARY PRACTICES AND PROFILES SUMMARY

	AstraZeneca	Boeing	UPS	PwC	Reed Smith
Offer prepaid tuition		●	○		
Extend tuition assistance to part-time workers	●	●	●	●	
Re-evaluate tuition caps	●	●		●	
Form partnerships with education providers			●		
Provide support for individual courses as well as degrees	●	●	○		●
Provide support for certificate programs	●	●		○	
Promote Prior Learning Assessment	●			●	
Recognize the achievements of employees in the program					
Provide educational advising to employees				○	
Establish metrics					
Communicate impact					

● = Demonstrates best practice
○ = Partially demonstrates best practice

Background

Most talent management strategies focus on five areas: attracting, selecting, engaging, developing and retaining high-quality employees. According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), talent management is broadly defined as "the implementation of integrated strategies or systems designed to increase workplace productivity by developing improved processes for attracting, developing, retaining and utilizing people with the required skills and aptitude to meet current and future business needs."[2]

Along with the growing challenges of globalization, downsizing and rapidly changing technology, human resource professionals expect three out of every 10 employees to retire in the next 10 years.[3] With 92 colleges and universities in Greater Philadelphia, the region should be well equipped to deal with all of these oncoming challenges.

In addition to these concerns, one of the problems identified by CEO Council member companies in the 2006 *Human Capital Needs Assessment* was the shortage of mid-level talent. Talent management is a "grow-your-own" strategy that can assist companies in finding and developing those critical employees. In an ever accelerating race for talent, organizations are weighing the difficult "make" versus "buy" decision when it comes to their workforce. Through the use of tuition assistance and other tools, employers can effectively create some of the skills and competencies needed for their organization to thrive. Many employers are doing just that.

Research indicates that every year corporate America spends almost $20 billion on tuition assistance programs. According to Michael Echols, author of *ROI on Human Capital Investment*, "Seventy-five percent of U.S. establishments with more than twenty employees and almost all large employers offer some type of reimbursement benefit."[4] Much of the research illustrates how this investment provides significant returns to the employer through increased retention, gains in productivity and improved employee recruitment and engagement. Bradley Kolar, partner with The Aslan Group, articulates this well, "The return of funding people's education doesn't begin after the degree is completed. It begins with the ability to recruit better people. It then continues through increased engagement and satisfaction. Finally, it pays off during and after the program with better performance."[5]

One particular study indicated that taking courses and completing a bachelor's degree reduced turnover in the company examined by 55 percent where salary actions were related to the completion of a degree.[6] This result is consistent with the findings of other retention surveys that list the opportunity to develop and grow as one of the most attractive benefits of a job. According to a 2007 Society for Human Resource Management report, "the ability to use skills in the workplace and the opportunity for career development were rated as very important by both HR and employees."[7] Employees want opportunities to progress and the degree of their satisfaction, engagement and tenure with their employer is directly related to this factor. Stated another way – tying tuition benefits and other talent development strategies to an employee's promotability effectively increases the return on that investment through higher employee retention and satisfaction.

In fact, the research a Stanford graduate student conducted at an unnamed non-profit organization was featured in a May 2007 *Wall Street Journal* article. It found that approximately 33 percent of employees that participated in the non-profit's tuition assistance program left within five years compared to almost 60 percent of employees who did not take advantage of

the program. Additional research by Peter Cappelli of the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School Center for Human Resources indicates that "tuition assistance appears to select better-quality employees who stay on the job longer."[8]

However, beyond employee satisfaction and improved retention scores, what value does an employer yield from making these investments?

Provided below in Figure 2 is a summary of the results of several reports pointing to the financial impact of strategic training and education investments. They clearly illustrate that placing a priority on an organization's learning and development functions provides benefits to the employer's bottom line.

While there is a clearly defined connection between strategic investments in an organization's talent and

FIGURE 2: RESEARCH FINDINGS*

McKinsey and Company: Companies that scored in the top 20 percent of the talent management index in this study, on average, have 22 percentage points higher return to stockholders than their industry peers.
Accenture: This study measured the overall business impact of the learning function in organizations. High learning performance companies produce higher operating results overall.
American Society for Training and Development (ASTD): Average five-year returns in stock market value related to level of company training investment:

Accenture:	
Sales per employee	27% greater
Revenue growth	40% greater
Income growth	50% greater

American Society for Training and Development (ASTD):	
Top 50 firms produced	86% return
Standard & Poors (S&P) firms produced	25% return
Bottom 50 firms produced	19% return

* Adapted from ROI on Human Capital Investment by Michael E. Echols.[9]

the success of any business, Verizon Wireless has taken that logic a step further. Their LearningLINK program is an example of a successful tuition assistance program that also tracks and quantifies its returns. The program offers up to $8,000 per year for tuition and related expenses, $4,000 for part-time employees, online management of tuition payment and the option of either prepaid tuition or reimbursement. As you will see in the regional case studies that follow, this program is not completely unique. What is, however, is that the LearningLINK staff have looked at the program's impact on recruitment, retention, career mobility and job performance. Some key findings are as follows:

- Employees that did not participate in the LearningLINK program were more than twice as likely to leave the company as their LearningLINK participant peers.
- 96 percent of LearningLINK participants surveyed said they intended to stay with Verizon Wireless for at least two years after completion of their degrees.
- 52 percent of respondents noticed a change in job performance and behaviors while employees were engaged in the LearningLINK program;
  - 71 percent reported improved performance on the job; and
  - 73 percent reported improved behaviors on the job.
- Through this tracking, Verizon Wireless has calculated a turnover savings of more than $25 million based on the following data:
  - 10,105 participants in the LearningLINK program;
  - An average company turnover rate of 19 percent;
  - An average LearningLINK turnover rate of 8 percent;
  - An average full-time equivalent (FTE) re-hire cost of $23,000; and
  - $23.5 million in tuition assistance program expenses for 2006.

- Therefore, not accounting for increased productivity of LearningLINK employees, Verizon Wireless believes they have demonstrated that the program pays for itself in retention savings alone.[10]

The benefits of supporting employees' learning are apparent, however, spending more money on these initiatives is not the only solution. For example, some organizations choose to provide paid time-off for their employees to study. There are many ways for companies of all sizes to support the development of their employees including, but not limited to, the following:

- Significant on the job experience;
- Cross divisional projects;
- Job shadowing;
- Stretch assignments;
- Personal development planning; and
- Coaching and active mentoring.

One innovative approach to talent management was featured in March 2006 in an *HR Magazine* article. "Mitretek Systems, a nonprofit science and engineering firm in Falls Church, VA, with about 700 employees, selects four people annually for its scholars program. The award includes unlimited free tuition and fees at a school of their choosing, $300 per semester for books, two hours of paid leave per week per course during the semester, and any applicable transportation costs."[11] It is a competitive process that only a few employees benefit from each year, however they believe clearly that "the highly competitive nature of the program helps attract and retain the best and brightest employees."[12] As Mitretek is a non-profit organization, they have made the decision not to provide tuition assistance as a universal corporate benefit, but they have found a way to create a strategic program by evaluating the applicant's professional accomplishments, potential for success and the value of the education to the company in order to achieve the same outcomes.

Businesses can provide information and connections to other resources to assist their employees in gaining the skills they need to be successful. Connecting employees to complimentary resources like their alumni institutions' career offices which often provide advising services or organizations like Graduate! Philadelphia is yet another way of supporting employee learning. Graduate! Philadelphia can provide free and ongoing support and guidance, both in-person and online, for everything from the college application process through graduation. They offer a turnkey solution for motivating and encouraging

employees to start or complete college degrees. Customized programming, consultations and onsite events are available at no fee and they will assist employees with finding a school or program, identifying additional financial resources, filling out and filing financial aid forms, receiving academic counseling, completing paperwork, and improving study skills. Finally, they can track participants and provide periodic status updates to the employer.

All of the above, along with the information contained in this report, point to a strategic approach to managing an organization's talent that directly promotes and is aligned with the company's overall business goals. "HR's ability to align human capital resources with the business strategy and improve workforce skills through strategic training and development is paramount for organizational success."[13] Companies that make a multiyear investment in their people, similar to the investments made in their physical assets, will stay ahead of the competition.

Greater Philadelphia possesses one of the world's leading collections of colleges and universities and much of the talent management infrastructure necessary to succeed. However, regional businesses and their support for employee learning, professional development and educational attainment, will continue to be an essential component of Greater Philadelphia's success in the race for talent and will ultimately impact our region's long-term competitiveness.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

The CEO Council is committed to exploring and sharing exemplary practices for human capital development in order to foster a strong pool of talent in the Greater Philadelphia region. The exemplary practice recommendations outlined in this report are focused on one talent management strategy – tuition assistance and the ways to integrate it with an organization's overall strategy. When tuition assistance programs are aligned with an organization's talent management strategy and overall business goals, the program is positioned as an investment rather than a check box employee benefit. For this report, exemplary practices are linked to the relevant findings from the CEO Council's 2006 *Human Capital Needs Assessment* as well as applicable practices from regional companies.

By drawing upon the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning's (CAEL) experience in managing corporate tuition programs as well as data from two recent surveys – a 2007 survey by Corporate University Exchange, *Tuition Reimbursement: Changes on the Way* (CUX study) and a survey by CAEL, *The Promise & Practice of Employer Educational Assistance Programs: 2004 State of the Field Strategies & Trends* – the report provides both analysis of the current trends and recommendations. The recent surveys compared goals and outcomes reported by companies with educational assistance programs, as well as the decisions made by these companies to manage this benefit to their greatest advantage. In addition to the survey information, CAEL has incorporated benchmark data from its current client base of 32 companies representing nine industries.

In order to illustrate how companies can incorporate exemplary practices into the management of their own tuition assistance programs, this report also provides profiles of the practices of five companies in the Greater Philadelphia region. AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP (AstraZeneca), The Boeing Company

(Boeing), PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC), Reed Smith LLP (Reed Smith) and UPS have shaped their tuition policies and practices to support their overall talent management strategy.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICES

Outlined below are five issues that many organizations face in managing their talent and tuition assistance programs.

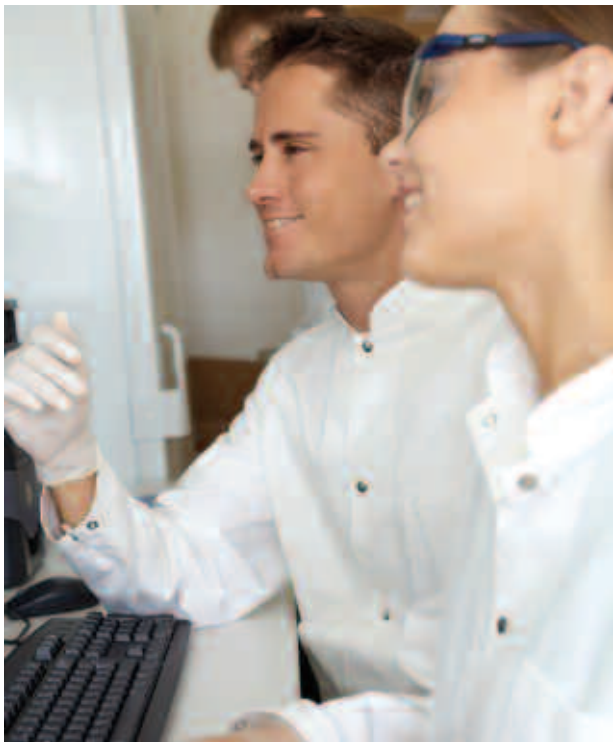
1. Building a pipeline of talent in order to remain competitive;
2. Recruiting mid-level talent;
3. Ensuring that education is relevant to the business and its goals;
4. Making the program more cost-effective; and
5. Measuring the programs' return on investment.

Each issue presented is followed by the exemplary practice and examples of regional companies that illustrate that practice. The full company profiles are included as Appendices A – E. Figure 1 is a summary of the five profiled companies and their offerings.

Issue #1: In the current business climate, it is critical for senior leadership to focus on building a pipeline of talent in order to remain competitive. Companies can explore adopting the following tuition assistance practices to build that pipeline of skilled and committed employees.

Offer Prepaid Tuition

Companies may offer a tuition assistance program but may not see employees taking advantage of it. Companies that are focused on building the skills of their workforce to meet current and future business challenges see a significant return on investment by encouraging more of their workforce to pursue external education. In addition, companies have seen stronger retention rates among tuition program participants when they are compared to the general population of employees. The utilization of a tuition assistance program is closely linked to the manner in which payment for education is handled. Prepaid programs, often called direct bill, allow the student to apply for coursework without laying out money for the courses. The payment is made directly to the school and handled by the company or vendor rather than the employee. Prepaid tuition or immediate reimbursement is an exemplary practice that fosters trust, builds morale, and promotes participation among employees, as well as retention. CAEL has found that, in addition to lower paid employees, employees earning higher salaries find it financially difficult to pay for the cost of a course upfront then wait until they have completed the class and submitted their grades to receive reimbursement. Often, these employees have had to pay for their next course before being reimbursed for the last, which imposes additional financial strain, especially at higher graduate school tuition rates. In CAEL's experience, companies with prepayment programs see utilization rates of 14 percent of eligible employees and those who offer only a reimbursement option (payment is received upon course completion) see utilization rates of 5 percent. Given the return on investment and increased retention correlated with utilization, prepayment can bring great value to companies.



The *Human Capital Needs Assessment* found that only 18 percent of companies surveyed follow this exemplary practice.

Examples:
Boeing offers prepaid, limitless tuition assistance benefits. While UPS does not offer prepaid tuition universally, a deferred billing option is available to eligible part-time workers who attend schools that are part of the Collegiate Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development.

Extend Tuition Assistance to Part-time Workers

CAEL recommends that company policies include pro-rated coverage for part-time employees as exemplary practice in building a pipeline of talent. The 2007 CUX study found that 61 percent of companies provide a tuition benefit to their part-time employees.

Examples:
Part-time workers at Boeing have complete access to the tuition assistance plan. AstraZeneca makes its tuition assistance available to all employees, with pro-rated benefits for part-time employees. The Earn and Learn Program at UPS extends tuition assistance to part-time workers, and PwC's part-time employees who are scheduled for at least 1,000 hours per year are eligible for tuition assistance.

Issue #2: The 2006 *Human Capital Needs Assessment* found that companies have reported difficulty in recruiting mid-level professionals. The tuition policy provisions related to tuition caps can be used as a means to address the needs of this employee group.

Re-evaluate Tuition Caps

CAEL recommends that companies evaluate annual tuition caps against policy goals. The options to consider include straight course number cap per year (regardless of dollar amount) or a higher cap for graduate degrees versus undergraduate degrees. CAEL's 2007 research found that the average cost of tuition (excluding fees and books) for a Master's course is $660 per credit hour or $1,980 for tuition for a three-credit-hour course. The tuition for three courses would amount to $5,940. Many companies set their annual cap at $5,250 per year based on the IRS guideline under Section 127. If companies are interested in increasing the number of employees pursuing graduate degrees in order to develop into successful mid-level managers, they should evaluate tuition caps against actual tuition prices in the region.

Examples:
AstraZeneca's annual tuition reimbursement of $10,000 is designed to pay for the typical sum of one year's school tuition and fees and can be used for any course, certificate program, or degree that is business related. PwC has adjusted its cap to reflect higher costs in some lines of work and geographic locations. Boeing's plan has no cap.

Issue #3: In order to position tuition assistance expenditures as an investment rather than a benefit program, it is important to ensure that education is relevant to the business.

Form Partnerships with Educational Providers

CAEL recommends that companies approach key educational providers to form partnership agreements that could include the inclusion of relevant company case studies in the curriculum and tuition discounts. There are numerous educational providers who are willing to customize their curriculum to meet the needs of corporate clients.

Examples:
UPS has a partnership with the Collegiate Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development, which represents six post-secondary educational institutions in the Greater Philadelphia region. More details on this partnership can be found in Appendix E.

Provide Support for Individual Courses and Degrees

In support of the integrated employee development process, CAEL recommends expanding the program to support employees who want to pursue individual credit-bearing courses in a subject area that is related to the business, as well as individual courses in topics that will develop skill sets relevant to job tasks or business needs. There can be immediate impacts in productivity when an employee follows this path. In addition, this can help employees to realize the level of commitment required to obtain a degree.

Examples:
AstraZeneca, Boeing, and Reed Smith provide support for courses as well as degrees.

Provide Support for Certificate Programs

Due to the large number of professional certifications that are available to, and often expected of, employees in many of the industries represented in the 2006 *Human Capital Needs Assessment*, those companies should explore the possibility of including nationally recognized professional certifications that are aligned with business unit needs as eligible education programs. CAEL's research indicates that 35 percent of companies cover those certifications.

Examples:
AstraZeneca and Boeing provide support for certificate programs. PwC covers some costs related to certification and has incorporated incentives for employees to pursue key certifications early in their careers.

Issue #4: Companies that manage these programs internally and those that outsource are continually looking for ways to make the program more cost-effective.

Promote Prior Learning Assessment

CAEL recommends coverage of a full range of Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) options as they are cost- and time-efficient ways for employees to receive college credit toward an undergraduate degree. PLA involves identifying and documenting college-level learning achieved outside of a college classroom. PLA can include transfer credits, articulation agreements, company training that has been evaluated by American Council on Education (ACE), tests (for example CLEP, ACT-PEP, DANTES, AP or GRE), professional licenses and portfolio assessment.

Examples:
AstraZeneca assists employees in applying for PLA credits. PwC covers the cost of CLEP and DANTES tests.

Recognize the Achievements of Employees in the Program

Employees who pursue education on their own time are making a substantial investment in their future employability. Companies often overlook the significance of the employee's commitment to growth and development and focus on the dollars committed by the company. Many companies include repayment provisions in their policies as an attempt to ensure that an employee does not leave the business after attending school. CAEL has found these provisions to be punitive and administratively burdensome. The CUX study found that 57 percent of companies do not require repayment if the employee leaves the company within a certain period of time. Rather than looking at what to do to recoup tuition funds, CAEL recommends that companies look at how to recognize employees who have obtained degrees and demonstrate the value that it brings to the organization. This requires the involvement of the

manager as well as support from senior leadership within the organization. Some organizations provide incentives for active employees who complete an undergraduate (baccalaureate) or graduate (masters or doctoral) degree while employed with the company. If the bonus is structured to be paid to employees who remain with the company for a year or more after degree completion, this incentive program can be used as a positive alternative to a repayment agreement that penalizes an employee for leaving the company after receiving tuition assistance.

Provide Educational Advising to Employees

Companies have an interest in helping employees make informed decisions around company sponsored education. An educational advisor can provide guidance around distance education, types of degrees that are meaningful for the company and an understanding of what it takes to complete a degree. Advising services help ensure that an organization's workforce understands the benefit of ongoing education and how it can prepare them for career success. Organizations that have provided advising services to employees have experienced increased retention of employees who are able to identify and prepare for new opportunities. In fact, CAEL carried out a national survey in 2006 to assess the usage and impact of career and education advising. Key results of the survey show a direct linkage between career counseling and elements such as employee performance and retention.

When asked why they offer career counseling, companies cited the following reasons:

Improve employee productivity	82%
Aid in employee retention	78%
Improve employee morale	64%
Maintain a culture of lifelong learning	57%
Facilitate succession planning	55%

Examples:
While PwC does not provide a separate educational advising service for employees, the company has integrated career coaching into the corporate culture. Coaching around learning is a critical part of each manager's job description.

Issue #5: In order to position the tuition program as an investment, companies need to develop a strategy for measuring the program's return on investment (ROI).

Establish Metrics

In order to demonstrate the value of a tuition program, companies need to be proactive in setting up key metrics to measure. These metrics should be gathered as part of the administration of the program. As a starting point, CAEL recommends tracking the following data:

- Utilization by business unit and employee type
- Types of degrees pursued
- Graduation rates
- Educational providers
- Expenditures by provider
- Expenditures by degree type

As the data tracking evolves, the company can also use employee and manager surveys to track data around:

- Satisfaction
- Promotability
- Use of new skills

Communicate Impact

The tuition data can also be linked to data in human resources systems to examine:

- Impacts of participation on retention
- Actual rates of promotion

A carefully constructed tuition assistance program will support a company's talent management goals. The exemplary practices highlighted in this report offer some recommendations to consider that will help to ensure that employee development is aligned with the corporate strategy and goals. The profiles found in Appendices A – E illustrate how five regional companies demonstrate these exemplary practices in action.

Recommendations

In 2006, the CEO Council conducted a survey to gauge the assets and needs of the Greater Philadelphia business community. The findings indicated that while a substantial number of area companies offered professional development and tuition assistance, many companies were not using these tools strategically to address the challenges they faced, such as hiring qualified mid-level managers and recruiting diverse employees. Although AstraZeneca, Boeing, PwC, Reed Smith and UPS represent a diverse group of industry sectors, all have strengthened their talent management practices through the strategic use of tuition assistance. In these companies, tuition assistance is more than a benefit; it is a strategy for corporate growth.

This report highlights a number of strategies to consider that can strengthen an organization's talent management practices and specifically position tuition assistance as a strategic tool. The report presents the following recommendations for consideration:

1. Strategically frame the organization's tuition assistance program by considering:
   a. Offering prepaid tuition to increase the program's usage and diversity of its participants. This can improve the overall quality of the organization's workforce, education levels, productivity and employee retention;
   b. Extending tuition benefits to part-time employees to increase the diversity of the program's participants and build a stronger pipeline of future full-time employees; and
   c. Re-evaluating tuition caps to cover graduate course-work that employees need to advance into critical mid-level positions.

2. Ensure that education is both relevant to the organization's goals and cost-effective by considering:
   a. Forming partnerships with educational providers that can provide custom training and development as well as reduced tuition; and
   b. Supporting job-relevant individual courses and professional certificates in addition to degrees.

3. Measure and communicate the impact of the organization's talent management efforts to make the case that investments in education have a significant influence on corporate growth.

Some of these strategies relate directly to the key themes that emerged from the *2006 Human Capital Needs Assessment* and therefore have particularly broad relevance for the Greater Philadelphia business community. For example, companies facing difficulty recruiting mid-level managers may want to re-evaluate their tuition caps to help incumbents get the degrees they need to advance into the vacant mid-level positions. Companies that are struggling to meet their diversity goals may want to consider modifying their tuition assistance plans to build new pipelines through offering prepaid tuition and/or extending coverage to part-time employees.

While the exemplary practices have wide applicability to the region, each company has unique capabilities, talent needs and overall corporate goals. The exemplary practices presented in this report provide a range of suggestions for how a company can use or modify existing tuition assistance programs to address key talent development challenges. While certainly not the only solution, when tuition assistance is used strategically as part of a broader talent management plan it has been demonstrated to have both employee and employer benefits.

The Greater Philadelphia region has a tremendous opportunity to become an economic leader. It possesses one of the world's leading collections of colleges and universities and a talent management infrastructure necessary to succeed, ultimately improving Greater Philadelphia's long-term competitiveness.

APPENDICES A – E: Regional Company Profiles

We would like to thank and acknowledge the representatives from each of the organizations below for their time and willingness to participate in this study. Their leadership establishes a standard for other companies in the Greater Philadelphia region, elevates the region's workforce and improves our community's future competiveness.

APPENDIX A: AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP

AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP (AstraZeneca) is a major international healthcare business engaged in the research, development, manufacturing and marketing of meaningful prescription medicines and supplies for healthcare services. AstraZeneca is one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies with healthcare sales of $29.55 billion and is a leader in gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, neuroscience, respiratory, oncology and infectious disease medicines. In the United States, AstraZeneca is a $13.35 billion healthcare business with 12,200 employees committed to improving people's lives. AstraZeneca is listed in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (Global) as well as the FTSE4Good Index.

The company offers a reimbursement tuition assistance plan with an annual $10,000 cap for any business-related courses or programs. All employees are eligible for the program, with part-time employees eligible for a pro-rated percentage of the normal tuition cap. Managers are responsible for approving employee applications and for verifying that each applicant meets the basic performance requirements. On average, 1,000 employees from all levels of the company actively participate in the tuition assistance program.

Eligibility

AstraZeneca's tuition assistance program is available to any employee whose job performance meets expectations and is designed to support employees who want to actively pursue educational opportunities, regardless of their tenure, position, or level within the company. One interview participant, for example, pursued a bachelor's degree in Information Systems as an administrative assistant and some ten years later, as a Senior Manager, went back to school for an MBA. Employees are informed of the tuition assistance benefit as part of their on-boarding procedure and additional information, including an FAQ, is available via the AstraZeneca intranet.

Applicable Coursework

AstraZeneca requires that coursework be business related but not necessarily related to the candidate's current position. Some managers, for example, encourage employees to pursue education in areas not related to their current role in order to become better rounded and to be able to adapt to new demands and grow with the company. Employees can use the tuition assistance benefit for certificate programs, individual classes, and any individual courses necessary for pursuing a degree. All coursework and degrees are funded 100 percent up to the $10,000 annual cap and employees can apply the tuition assistance benefit to any accredited school. The tuition assistance money can be used for tuition, books, and any required fees. AstraZeneca assists employees with Prior Learning Assistance forms and fees when applicable and possible.

AstraZeneca periodically allows colleges to advertise or hold information meetings on the corporate campus and also occasionally allows colleges and universities to host programs, classes, or lectures on campus. Such arrangements are done intermittently and do not imply a formal relationship or support from AstraZeneca. Because the educational institutions are made aware of AstraZeneca's tuition assistance program

guidelines, colleges tend to offer programs that are likely to be both well attended and covered under the tuition assistance reimbursement policy. One such example is an intensive, 15-month MBA program offered by Wilmington University that is held on the company's campus.

Application Procedure

AstraZeneca has one program administrator who oversees the entire tuition assistance process, a feat made possible by an automated, self-service system. Employees are responsible for initiating the tuition assistance application by completing information about the program and school. The system then verifies the employee and school's eligibility before routing the application to the employee's manager. Managers are responsible for making the final approval or disapproval decision. This process ensures that all the minimum requirements are met using an efficient automated procedure while allowing for individual judgment and flexibility.

Reimbursement

Employees who received a 'C' or better or a pass in a pass/fail class are eligible for a tuition reimbursement. After successfully completing their class, employees are responsible for initiating the request for reimbursement by entering the tuition amounts in the HR website's automated system and for submitting the supporting documents to AstraZeneca's HR Services department for audit. Interviewed participants uniformly praised AstraZeneca's speed and efficiency in processing the forms, noting that the reimbursement is almost always included in their next paycheck. Such promptness minimizes the financial burden on employees. For some employees, the prompt reimbursement allows them to apply the reimbursement funds towards their next semester of classes.

Although prepayment might make pursuing education easier, interviewees were supportive of AstraZeneca's reimbursement policy because they viewed the program as more of a partnership in which the employees and the company each make an investment in the educational process. One participant stated that it was important for tuition assistance participants to "have some skin in the game."

Recruitment and Retention

AstraZeneca advertises its tuition assistance benefit via their recruiters and informs new employees of the benefit as part of the on-boarding procedure. The company feels that, given its industry, employee base, and competitors, providing a tuition assistance benefit is necessary in order to remain competitive in the hiring process. Interviews with AstraZeneca tuition assistance participants confirm that the tuition assistance benefit played an important role in their decision to work with AstraZeneca; one interviewed employee confirmed that AstraZeneca stood out from all her other job offers because of the tuition assistance program.

Tuition assistance also serves as a strong incentive to remain with AstraZeneca. Interview participants indicated that they felt a great deal of gratitude to AstraZeneca for supporting them in their educational pursuits, with one participant explaining that "getting a degree is something I've wanted to do all my life, and AstraZeneca made it possible." Other interview participants reported that being able to pursue advanced education helped prepare them for new positions within AstraZeneca and enabled them to perform better in current positions.

Culture of Education

AstraZeneca has a culture of education in that many employees seek educational opportunities without any official corporate policy to encourage such behavior. As such, AstraZeneca views the tuition assistance program as assistance rather than a company-driven development tool. By offering a $10,000 annual cap and timely reimbursement payments for all tuition, books, and fees, AstraZeneca feels that it is providing a valuable tool to assist employees advance their personal and career interests.

APPENDIX B: The Boeing Company

The Boeing Company (Boeing), an Aerospace and Defense company, has an annual revenue of $66.4 billion and employs 160,000 people companywide and approximately 5,100 people in its Ridley Park, PA facility. The company offers a prepaid tuition assistance benefit that has no cap, is equally available to every employee, and can be applied to any school that is accredited by an organization recognized by the Council of Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Boeing views its generous policy as an integral part of "Attract, Retain, and Develop," one of Boeing's talent management initiatives.

Program and Employee Eligibility

All employees, both full- and part-time status and regardless of level, seniority, or performance, can fully access the tuition benefit upon being hired. Employees may take any degree, certificate program, or individual class provided it is offered by an accredited institution and results in either academic credit or continuing education units. Furthermore, coursework does not need to be job related. The most popular courses are engineering, business, computing, project management, and Six Sigma.

Tuition Payment and Amount

Boeing pays tuition and eligible expenses directly to the schools after the drop/add period. The tuition benefit has no cap. Although Boeing admits that the prepayment method can be administratively difficult, the inconvenience is justified as prepayment drastically increases the rate of participation – especially when combined with the unlimited tuition benefit. Boeing currently has 18,000 participants, or approximately 11 percent of employees, using the tuition benefit.

Program Administration

The program is overseen by the Learning, Training, and Development department within Human Resources and is advertised at new hire orientation, at education fairs, and on the company website. To apply, employees are expected to read the policy to verify their eligibility (manager permission is not required) before enrolling via an internal, online tracking system that includes built-in check points like school approval and employment status. After enrolling on the online tracking system, the employees only need to complete their enrollment at the school, attend classes, and then submit a grade upon course completion. The grade requirement is 'C' or better. Employees report that the website is user friendly and that the application procedure is easy.

Strategic Benefits

The policy, which was designed from principles employed by a similar tuition assistance program used by United Technologies, aims to offer employees choice and broad opportunities. Boeing management views this approach and the generous tuition assistance benefit as an integral and efficient component of the company's efforts to attract and retain top

talent. The tuition benefit program complements the internal training initiatives that the company also offers. Although Boeing would like to benchmark their program against peers more frequently and be able to better quantify the return on investment, especially to its business units, management feels the tuition benefit program is an important component of their human resources talent management strategy. Employees have similarly expressed gratitude and excitement over the program, reinforcing management's view.

APPENDIX C: PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

The Philadelphia Metro Market of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC) includes Greater Philadelphia as well as Greater Harrisburg. Located in Philadelphia, PwC employs approximately 1,200 professionals including 100 partners. The Philadelphia Metro Market's business includes three core components – assurance, tax, and advisory – which together bring in around $233 million in revenue annually.

At PwC, the tuition assistance plan is a component of the firm's talent development strategy. Talent development encompasses a broad range of learning and education, such as coaching, informal learning through projects and from coworkers, classroom-based and e-learning courses, and online learning tools. The PwC Careers Experience provides learning opportunities for all employees from interns through alumni who have retired or moved on to other careers.

PwC's tuition assistance policy illustrates several of the exemplary practices highlighted in this report. Part-time employees are eligible for funds, as long as their schedule totals at least 1,000 hours each year. Eligible expenses are defined broadly to include tuition, required fees and books. The policy also covers the CLEP and DANTES tests, which can help individuals receive college credit for prior learning.

Employee learning is critical to the business strategy, explains Philadelphia Metro Market Human Resources Leader, Kimberlee Washington Barr, because "our main product – what we provide to the marketplace – is our people." For this reason, PwC has tailored its tuition assistance policy to address particular business needs. Because employees who have CPA certification are more valuable to the company, PwC offers a discount on preparation classes for the CPA as well as reimbursing employees for the exam fee. PwC also recently began providing incentives and bonuses to motivate employees to pursue certifications early in their careers.

PwC has evaluated its tuition caps against its strategic goals and has adjusted the policy to account for certain positions and locations. While the general policy covers up to $5,250 per employee per year, employees who work in the tax or advisory departments can be eligible for up to $10,000 for programs that are in line with business needs. To account for high costs of education in certain areas of the country, tax client service staff in those locations can be eligible for up to $14,000 annually, and employees in New York City are eligible to take up to six courses per year regardless of the cost.

While PwC does not provide a separate educational advising service for employees, coaching around learning is a critical part of each manager's job description. HR provides training and tools for managers to learn and sharpen their coaching skills and measures managers' proficiency at coaching as part of the yearly job review process. Some coaching is required, and each employee develops an individual development plan that links aspirations to available learning resources including tuition assistance. In addition to these formal sessions, HR also works with managers to help them incorporate coaching into daily interactions. PwC also has an innovative peer mentorship program in which employees receive a colleague as a partner for discussing career development.

PwC's efforts to institutionalize a culture of learning won the company top honors in Training Magazine's Training Top 125 earlier this year. PwC sees tuition assistance as part of a comprehensive talent development system central to business strategy. "Education is a key business driver," explains Barr.

APPENDIX D: Reed Smith LLP

Reed Smith LLP (Reed Smith) is one of the 15 largest law firms in the world, with more than 1,600 lawyers in 23 offices throughout the United States, Europe, Asia and the Middle East. One hundred and fifty lawyers work in the Philadelphia office. The firm represents businesses in a number of industries, including financial services, life sciences, international trade, real estate and education.

Like most law firms, it employs two primary categories of employees: lawyers and administrative support staff. For a number of years, the firm has offered an enlightened tuition reimbursement program to assist those employees in administrative support positions without college degrees to complete undergraduate degrees. Occasionally, an employee has used the tuition benefit to obtain a graduate degree. Six percent of those who are eligible take advantage of the reimbursement program, which pays up to 80 percent of the cost of tuition for up to three courses per semester if the employee receives a 'B' or better in the courses. Completing the degree is not connected to opportunities at the firm, but the financial support is offered to staff for their individual development.

Since all the lawyers at the firm would need to have not only an undergraduate but also a graduate degree in order to be hired, the tuition reimbursement program has not been a tool for their ongoing development. In fact, for many lawyers, the primary source of development had been attendance at external courses that offer the CLEs required to maintain their license to practice law. However, about four years ago, the number of lawyers having grown as the result of both mergers and internal growth, the firm decided to institute some new talent management practices and to offer development opportunities for lawyers that would enable them to perform their work more effectively. In the process, they also recognized the cost savings they could achieve by offering the CLEs and other learning opportunities internally rather than paying for the lawyers to travel to external third-party providers.

Reed Smith decided to adopt a corporate university model that would allow them to offer the specific types of courses they sought on-site in order to cut costs and save time. In initiating a corporate university, the firm decided to use it as a vehicle to further develop the talent of their lawyers, from the time of their initial hiring as associates through their progression to potential partnership – and throughout their subsequent careers. The goals of the new university were "to distinguish the firm in terms of commitment to professional development and maintain the excellence of our human capital." The firm divided Reed Smith University into five schools: the Schools of Law, Leadership, Business Development, Technology, and Professional Support. While the first three are targeted primarily to the firm's lawyers, the fourth serves everyone in the firm and the fifth, Professional Support, is intended to serve the administrative support staff. The firm pays for all classes so there is no cost to employees.

Instituting the corporate university has been a key component of introducing talent management strategies for the firm's lawyers. Beginning with the hiring of associates recently graduated from law school, the firm undertakes a systematic investment in building skills that they believe will make lawyers more effective in their work. The classes encompass information about specific fields of practice and skill development related to engaging with outside counsel and prospective clients.

According to John F. Smith, Chancellor of Reed Smith University, the courses offered through the corporate university have been a great recruitment

tool both for new hires and for lawyers making lateral moves. He also believes that the firm's attention to talent management through the university has contributed to retention.

APPENDIX E: UPS

Founded in 1907, the United Parcel Service (UPS) is a globally recognized package delivery company with $42.6 billion in annual revenue. The company has five sites in its Metro Philadelphia district, including facilities in Lawnside, NJ and the Philadelphia International Airport. UPS offers a comprehensive tuition assistance benefit for full-time staff as well as for its part-time employees. The Education Assistance Program provides full-time workers with $5,250 per calendar year, a lifetime cap of $25,000, and $400 per term for fees for coursework applied toward a degree program.

The Earn and Learn Program, a tuition assistance program for part-time employees that awards a lifetime maximum of $20,000, is available at 51 UPS facilities nationwide, including all of the Metro Philadelphia locations except for two satellite buildings. As part of the Earn and Learn program, employees receive $250 towards fees per semester and $25 per course for books; part-time hourly workers also receive $3,000 per year, and part-time management employees receive $4,000 per year to complete coursework in a degree program. The tuition benefit for full- and part-time workers is reimbursed with the exception of Earn and Learn partnerships with specific institutions of higher education that may offer deferred payment plans. UPS's Metro Philadelphia district has formed such a partnership with the Collegiate Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development, which is comprised of six regional institutions: Bucks County Community College, Camden County College, Montgomery County Community College, Delaware County Community College, Community College of Philadelphia and Drexel University.

Eligibility and Applicable Coursework

UPS employees are free to pursue the associate's or bachelor's degree program of their choice. Full-time workers must receive at least a 'C' and part-time workers must earn at least a 'D' for each course to be reimbursed. Master degree programs for full-time employees are approved on a case-by-case basis after submission of a written justification or an appeal form, and there are no restrictions concerning

Master's Programs for part-time employees. The tuition benefit begins immediately for part-time workers and at the start of the term or semester for full-time workers. Benefits for students working part-time at UPS are pro-rated based on when their start date falls within the academic semester. Under the conditions of each program, the educational institutions must be accredited and meet Title IV requirements, although there is an online appeal process by which UPS grants exceptions for specific schools, programs or employees in job classes that may not typically be covered by the tuition assistance benefit.

Aside from the degree programs, UPS's tuition benefit covers non-credit courses administered by the Collegiate Consortium schools at the Philadelphia airport facility for Metro Philadelphia employees. Course selection is based on employee interest, and offerings range from job-related courses, such as time management or professional development courses, to personal development courses such as conversational Spanish, MS office, and real estate fundamentals. The airport facility also offers a Leadership Academy that helps identify and prepare employees with the potential to become part-time supervisors.

Recruitment and Retention Tool

Handling and processing packages is an around-the-clock job. Because of the physical nature of the job and the often unconventional work hours, UPS relies heavily on part-time employees who are susceptible to high turnover rates. Last year, UPS decided to expand the Earn and Learn Program to all facilities in the Metro Philadelphia district in an effort to give

the district a uniform benefits package and make the part-time positions more attractive. HR staff attributes much of the district's 50 percent decrease in its turnover rate over the past eight years to the existence of the Earn and Learn Program. To further increase retention, UPS offers an array of support services to its employees. For example, initiatives such as Lawnside's retention committee help younger adult workers achieve a work-school balance, and faculty members who serve as campus coordinators at Collegiate Consortium schools can provide UPS employees with academic advising.

The expansion of the Earn and Learn Program also addresses staffing competition among the district's facilities and with UPS's major competitors. For instance, the Lawnside facility, which did not previously offer the Earn and Learn Program, added the part-time tuition assistance program in part to prevent losing its workforce to a nearby competitor's facility that offered comparable pay as well as a tuition assistance benefit.

Since the standardization of the UPS benefits package among the Philadelphia area facilities, recruiters have been able to streamline their regional recruitment campaigns. The Earn and Learn Program has become a crucial part of UPS's recruitment efforts, which take place online and on-site at regional high schools, colleges and universities. Partnering with the Collegiate Consortium has also provided an opportunity for UPS to have more contact with faculty and students at schools that represent the district's top staffing sources. Each school recognizes UPS as an "employer of choice," allows UPS to post opportunities throughout the campus and arranges on-site visits to UPS facilities.

Through this special arrangement with Collegiate Consortium schools, part-time UPS employees may also benefit from a discounted cost per credit, deferred billing and early registration.

"Our whole philosophy is that we're a 'promote-from-within' company," said Larry Moulder, work-force planning supervisor at UPS. He explained that many of their part-time managers once worked as part-time package handlers. The tuition assistance program helps makes this possible because it allows entry-level employees to stay long enough to advance within the company. In addition to helping retain employees, the tuition assistance program at UPS also helps with recruitment. "I was looking for a job and I saw that [UPS] had that and it made me want to work there," said Nick Christaldi, a loader with the Lawnside facility and a sports management major at Camden County College.

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CEO Council

The CEO Council for Growth (the Board of Select Greater Philadelphia) is a group of key business executives committed to the Greater Philadelphia region's growth and prosperity. Through high-impact initiatives designed to stimulate jobs and new business opportunities the CEO Council pursues a focused, energetic and sustained effort to expand the Greater Philadelphia economy. The CEO Council is an affiliate of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey and the New Castle County Chamber of Commerce.

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