Experience-based training and development (EBTD) or corporate adventure training (CAT) is a form of learning which employs challenging experiences and adventurous activities as vehicles for employees to improve interpersonal and intrapersonal workplace skills. The experiences and activities involve placing individual employees and/or intact work groups in unusual or unfamiliar settings. They are challenged to come up with creative solutions and to make decisions regarding problems or tasks with uncertain outcomes. CAT programs assist employees by providing learning opportunities which are metaphorically transferable back to the business world (Bank, 1985; Gass, Goldman & Priest, 1992). For this reason, CAT is evolving to be one of the most dynamic educational tools available for organizational learning. The growing number of outdoor adventure providers and the increasing number of companies getting involved with this form of management education are two strong indications of its popularity (Latteier, 1989).

Every year American corporations invest billions of dollars in general training and development programs for management (Lawler, 1988). However, very little is known about the effectiveness or success of these general programs attended by managers (Rice, 1979 and 1988). Saari, Johnson, McLaughlin and Zimmerle (1988) have reported that many of the companies sending their managers to training workshops, seminars, or courses rarely attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs. This is especially true of those that use adventure training (Roland, 1985).

Information that does exist in this arena is mostly anecdotal (Long, 1984; Willis, 1985; Gall, 1987; Forester, 1987; Stolzenburg, 1987). Despite rapid growth in the industry of CAT, most human resource professionals have little information regarding its usefulness (Hogg, 1988; and Darby, 1989).

Research is the "pass key" to opening these "locked doors" of CAT program effectiveness. At several recent conferences held by the Association for Experiential Training and Development (AETD) and by the Experience-based Training and Development (EBTD) professional group of the Association for Experiential Education (AEE), presenters have attempted to address the need for further research, but the response by academicians and practitioners is slow in coming.

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Research is a means to establishing much needed professional credibility in this field. In an effort to encourage deeper investigation, and to generate an awareness for the related pitfalls, this article begins by reviewing the activities and benefits associated with corporate adventure training (in other words, the things that researchers examine). It then summarizes those few studies which have been conducted to date on the efficacy of CAT programs, outlines the need for further inquiry, and discusses the barriers to producing meaningful research. Readers interested in conducting
Conclusions and Discussion

Research of their own are directed to past issues of this journal for some excellent treatments of this topic (Rowley, 1987; Braverman, Brenner, Fretz & Desmond, 1990; Flor, 1991; and Kolb, 1991).

Activities

The activities which constitute CAT programming can be arranged in seven general categories: client visitations, classroom sessions, socialization games, group initiatives, ropes courses, outdoor pursuits, and other adventures (see Figure 1). By understanding what activities constitute CAT programming, researchers will be better able to discern appropriate treatments to study. For example, the latter category of “Other Adventures” (simulated and non-traditional) would likely be considered by the majority of CAT providers not to be a part of their programming repertoire. Furthermore, some providers may not involve themselves with the two categories of client visitations or classroom sessions, preferring to utilize an educational mix of pure adventure: socialization games, group initiatives, ropes courses, and outdoor pursuits. The beneficial outcomes obtained have a lot to do with the activities chosen by careful and competent CAT providers. Uninitiated researchers, on the other hand, may lump all these activities together, mistakenly making generalizations about benefits or not adequately distinguishing one activity from another.

Benefits

Corporate adventure training can benefit the individual employee, the management work unit, and the parent organization (Mossman, 1982). Figure 2 depicts a triangle which lists the common areas of application for CAT programs: cultural development, individual development, group development, and the interaction of all three (Ehrhardt, 1991).

Benefits to the individual include developments in self-confidence, leadership style, risk-taking propensity, dealing with fear and stress, decision making, and personal inspiration and commitment (Williams, 1988; Beeby & Rathborn, 1983; Gahin & Chesteen, 1988). The work unit benefits from improvements in goal setting, team building, time management, conflict resolution, group problem solving, collaboration, and cooperation (Creswick & Williams, 1979; Long, 1987; Kadel, 1988). Benefits for the organization may involve an enhancement of systems, structure, values and ethics, vision and mission, corporate climate, and motivational atmosphere, which results in the bottom line of increased productivity, decreased absenteeism and greater profits (Brathay Hall Trust, 1985; and Fleming, 1987). Lastly, an interaction of the other three developmental areas (cultural, personal, and group) can lead to empowerment, trust and integrity, effective communication, environmental safety, judgement based on experience, and coping with change and uncertainty, as these benefits are shared among all aspects of the corporate organization, individuals, and work units (Mossman, 1982). These benefits are the mainstay claims of CAT programming. What evidence exists to substantiate them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENERAL</th>
<th>SPECIFIC</th>
<th>SAMPLES AND EXAMPLES</th>
<th>PRINCIPLE PURPOSES</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Needs assessment &amp; group observation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Action planning</td>
<td>Solo reflection time &amp; open sharing of action plans</td>
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<td>Name Toss, Group Juggling, Two Truths &amp; A Lie</td>
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<td>GROUP INITIATIVES</td>
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<td>ROPE COURSES</td>
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<td>Wilderness-based</td>
<td>Expedition-style Backpacking &amp; Canoe Tripping</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTHER ADVENTURES</td>
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<td>Flying Starship Factory &amp; Gold of the Desert Kings</td>
<td>Able to see the bigger picture &amp; time management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-traditional</td>
<td>Firewalking, Bungee Jumping, Pit Crew/Car Racing</td>
<td>Motivation, commitment &amp; leadership of teams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Chart of EBT/CAT activities arranged by General and Specific Categories.
Previous Research

Very little research has been conducted on the efficacy of CAT programs. A few minor unpublished studies were conducted in the 1980s and are described below. Roland (1981) is credited with one of the earliest studies in this field which attempted to measure the impact of adventure training with 58 middle managers from two companies engaged in a 3-day outdoor program focusing on team building and group problem solving through a ropes course experience. During Roland’s study, three questionnaires measured managerial change in the participants as perceived by themselves, and as perceived by their 68 subordinates and 37 superiors. A fourth questionnaire measured participant learning. Subjects were pre-tested and post-tested with an average of 71 days between tests. Findings indicated that change took place on a number of managerial constructs, including: time, planning, suggestions, human relations, trust, goals, group process, supervision, and feedback. Changes were speculated to have resulted from high levels of participant commitment and emotional involvement.

King and Harmon (1983) evaluated an early adventure course for an aerospace company. The purpose was to analyze personal beliefs, behaviors, and professional attitudes of employees as a result of participating in the program. Graduates of a two-day in-house course called “Managing Personal Growth” (MPG) attended a 4-day Outward Bound (OB) course. Interviews were conducted with 33 employees selected from a stratified random sample of MPG graduates who attended the OB course. The researchers concluded that three major benefits were evident: greater self-confidence, increase in morale, and an enhanced sense of teamwork, friendship, and respect for co-workers in the company. A major finding indicated that those who attended both the MPG and OB courses had lower turnover rates (1.7%) when compared to MPG only turnover rates (6.0%) and company-wide turnover rates (8.4%).

A few years later, Isenhart (1983) administered a 22 item questionnaire to 350 Outward Bound program graduates. Of these, 140 (40%) were returned with findings that revealed that participants felt their personal behavior had changed (76.4%), their work behavior had improved as a result of having participated in their course (78.6%), and they were better able to handle work responsibilities as a result of their participation (88.6%). A more recent survey (Colorado Outward Bound School, 1988) of 274 alumni of the course, contacted to determine the effectiveness of their experience, suggested that a positive impact on professional and personal aspects of the participants was obtained. Responses concluded that the program was valuable in team building (96%), gave new insights into leadership (86%), and participants gained increased closeness to teammates (92%). Personal gains were evidenced in the areas of personal growth (92%), and extension of one’s personal limits (86%). The program also was found to have value in building professional relationships (80%) and providing a fuller understanding of self (80%).

Current Research

Some studies, published in the early 1990s, have looked at specific benefits within the three areas mentioned earlier: personal development of the individual, group development of the work unit (or team), and cultural development of the organization. The following abstracted studies are arranged under these headings.

Personal development of the individual

Galpin (1989) implemented a study to investigate the effects of a 3-day Outward Bound course for managers on a number of self-perceptions, including self-concept, hardness, trust of others, and involvement in...
Attanarian (1992) examined the effects of adventure training on the risk-taking propensity of corporate managers. A total of 57 managers representing service, manufacturing, and retail distributing companies participated in three, 5-day management training courses administered by OB. Subjects completed the “Choice Dilemmas Questionnaire” immediately before participation and 30 days after completion of the training program with 87.6% returned. Data were subjected to product moment correlations in order to examine the relationships between a manager’s age, experience, and risk-taking propensity; and to “Analysis of Covariance” (pre-test as the covariant) to determine outcome differences across gender, management level, company type, and job role. The following were concluded: (a) A manager’s age, years of employment, and risk-taking propensity were not highly correlated; (b) male and female managers did not differ in risk-taking propensity; (c) no differences in risk-taking propensity were evident among any management levels; and (d) no significant differences in risk-taking propensity were observed between the service company, manufacturing concern, and retail organization. Overall, subjects showed greater risk-taking propensity through mean score comparisons; however, differences were not statistically significant at the .05 level of probability.

Group development of the work unit

Baldwin, Wagner, and Roland (1991) conducted an evaluation on the effects of an outdoor challenge training program. The program included a series of group problem solving initiatives common to most adventure-based training programs. Subjects in this study included 458 civilian employees and 13 supervisors from a military base. Two questionnaires were developed to collect relevant data on a variety of group and individual measures. Findings from the study suggested that outdoor challenge training had a moderate effect on group awareness and effectiveness and individual problem solving, as measured three months after the training. No significant changes were observed in trust or self-concept.

Dutkiewicz and Chase (1991) undertook a study of MBA students to empirically measure the changes that participants undergo following participation in an outdoor-based leadership training experience. A control group of 43 students and an experimental group of 41 students participated in the study with the experimental group receiving treatment. Results indicated that the MBA students exhibited change in the domains of trust, confidence in peers, group clarity, group cohesiveness, group awareness, and group homogeneity. Lesser changes were noted in the measures of self-assessment and problem solving.

Bronson, Gibson, Kichar and Priest (1992) compared two intact work groups from an aerospace company. A control group of 11 managers received no treatment, while an experimental group of 17 underwent a three day off-site adventure training program composed mostly of challenge course events and group reflective activities. Both groups completed a survey (designed to measure team development behaviors) about two months before and two months after the three days of training. Statistical analysis of responses to the surveys showed that both groups were reasonably equivalent before the training program began, but were significantly different after. While the control group showed no change over the study period, the experimental group improved on teamwork items related to group goals, genuine concern, effective listening, decision making, respect for diversity, high standards, recognition of ideas, and encouragement for feedback. No improvements were noted for conflict resolution or offering assistance. The comments of the managers supported the conclusion that team development was due to the adventure training program and recommended further study to examine trends in team development which take place over time during a program and research into the effectiveness of transfer in corporate adventure training.

Sixty four middle-level managers from a large hospital completed an impact survey and the “Personal Views Survey.” Data were gathered one month prior to the course, immediately at the start, upon completion, and one month after the course. Analysis of data revealed that participation in the adventure training program had a positive impact on the manager’s self-concept and hardiness, with females impacted to a greater degree than males, and with older managers affected more than younger ones. Changes were maintained during the follow-up month, with females retaining changes to a greater extent than males.

A recent study (Goldman & Priest, 1990) examined the transfer of risk-taking behaviors from adventure training to the workplace for 27 financial managers involved in the 1-day risk-taking exercise of rappelling (the controlled descent of a cliff face by using ropes and rock climbing equipment). The hypothesis being tested was whether a brief, but powerful, adventure training session would alter the work-related perceptions of risk and propensity to take risks for these managers. The results of the study showed that the session did indeed positively affect employees risk-taking behaviors in the business setting. Managers remarked that they felt supported by their peers and more willing to risk as a result of their “belay and backup.” The terms used during the adventure session were being used in the culture of the organization to describe work situations which were metaphoric representations of the adventure.
Cultural development of the organization

A study concerned with changes in the corporate culture and motivational climate of an organization choosing total employee involvement in adventure training was recently completed with an Australian company. Eighty-three out of 100 randomly selected managers responded to several surveys: six months before the training program began, in the middle of the program, and six months after it was completed. The adventure training program was five days in duration and consisted of sequenced events including socialization exercises, group initiative activities, high ropes course, personal reflection and solo time, lectures and action planning. Responses of 83 managers, from all areas and levels of the organization, indicated that this particular company improved its planning utility, structure flexibility, systems functioning, sensible and supportive roles, positive relationships, excessive delays in work flow, reflection time, and mission and goal clarity during the first year. Concern for getting the job done (rather than accounting for time and cost), alignment, marketplace impact, and profit versus growth decreased over the same period, although decreases were not seen as necessarily detrimental in this case, since the company moved through a desired period of much needed readjustment. During the second year, reflection time decreased, but work enjoyment improved, even though workloads increased over both years as a result of necessary readjustments. The experiential training program was attributed by company executives to have positively resulted in these outcomes. Furthermore, the organization became more flexible around rules, more willing to embrace or accept chaos as a valuable catalyst for change, more concerned with the needs or well-being of employees and more relaxed around the concept of empowerment of individuals and teams. To some extent the organization became open around the disclosure of information or opinions and employees became comfortable around the idea of interacting with one another. Overall, managers perceived the company to have undergone dramatic changes, resulting in a new and completely different way of motivating its employees.

In summary, before the training program, this company was characterized as an organization motivated by "control-expert influence" and "control-dependency" orientations. After the one year of corporate adventure training, in which all employees participated, those descriptors had shifted to "achievement-affiliation" and "achievement-extension" orientations. The company was transformed from an autocratic bureaucracy where rules reigned supreme to an empowered and team-oriented environment where people were valued. This was both the desire and intent of the company executives when they undertook the CAT program. Although the entire transformation cannot be attributed solely to the adventure training (change may have been driven by environmental factors and financial necessity), the executives were convinced that the program was a powerful and supportive adjunct to their own efforts at making cultural changes (Priest, 1992).

Need for Further Inquiry

To paraphrase Ewert (1983), CAT programs are like electricity; we're certain that they work, but we really don't know how or why. The challenge for researchers is to determine the how and why of CAT programming. However, before one can claim to know precisely where the future of CAT research should be headed, a map of the opportunities and a full understanding of where the research has already been is necessary. The map is supplied in the form of a pyramid as in Figure 3.

The "Question of Research" pyramid (Priest, 1991) rank orders the type of questions researchers commonly ask in attempting to understand a phenomenon such as CAT. First, they seek to describe the phenomenon: What is IT or what does IT appear to be? Second, they attempt to differentiate the phenomenon: What is IT like, similar to or different from? Third, they try to relate the phenomenon to other variables: What is IT associated with? Fourth, they begin to determine the influence of these associations: What is IT affected by? Fifth, they become interested in discriminating its occurrence: Can IT be predicted? Sixth, they experiment with causality: Can IT be controlled?

To better understand this model, consider the recent appearance of the disease known as AIDS. In the past, doctors described the disease and compared or contrasted it to other maladies. In the present, medical experts explore the conditions associated with AIDS and determine the factors which cause or contribute to AIDS. In the future, health researchers will work on predicting and controlling the occurrence of this modern disease.

However, before they could look for a cure at level six, these researchers had to conduct a great many studies in the five levels below. A basic premise of designing research proposals is that each should be grounded on the results of earlier studies. This disciplined patience, coupled with systematic rigor, is a common hallmark for most researchers; however, it appears to be lacking in many of those who research CAT.

Most work on corporate adventure training has been conducted at level one: description. The vast majority of writings have taken the anecdotal or testimonial approach by describing what the programs are composed of and what they appear to achieve. Very few studies have been conducted at levels two and three: some of the research mentioned earlier are examples of differentiation and association. However,
these studies appear to have been designed with the shotgun approach in mind: ready, fire, and then aim! A clear or coordinated direction is not immediately obvious; hence, outcomes are scattered and relatively ungeneralizable.

Future research needs to be more sequential. For example, the construct of team building seems to be the most common goal of CAT programs. Studies on team building need to initially determine and describe whether team performance does improve as a result of CAT and how the improvement compares with several other forms of training, including a control group with no training. Then, and only then, studies need to identify what components of the CAT program cause or contribute to these improvements (considering type of activity, length of training, residential or not, etc.). Next, studies need to address the concern of whether these key components can be used to predict improvements and control the amount of improvement in team performance during a CAT program.

Once the efficacy of CAT programs has been established, the next issue of concern will be that of transfer: we know it works, but does it last? Three ways exist to provide strong evidence of the transfer from the “artificial” adventure environment to the “real” world of management. The first is qualitative and the other two are quantitative. In a qualitative approach, subjects may be observed in action during the training program and may be interviewed after. Observations and interview questions might focus on what was learned and how it was applied on the job. A report written in descriptive language leaves interpretation of results to the reader. Specific examples and substantiation from coworkers adds to the credibility of qualitative findings.

One of the two quantitative designs requires the use of two groups. One group (experimental) receives the CAT program treatment, while the other does not (control group). Both groups are surveyed or measured on some construct (such as cooperative behavior) before and after the treatment and several months later while back in the office. If the experimental group shows an increase in cooperation from before to after training, and the control group does not, then the increase can likely be attributed to training (other uncontrolled variables may also bring about such changes). If the levels of cooperation remain elevated in the experimental group back at the office, but the control group remains the same, then the training may have transferred effectively. If levels for both groups alter in some way, a closer comparison must be made before such a claim is valid.

If a control group is not available, since matching subjects, structure, or function is simply not possible, then an alternative approach using a time-series design may be an appropriate substitute. With only one experimental group, multiple measurements must be taken before and after the CAT program treatment to establish baseline values. If these prior values are not statistically different from one another, and if the post val-
ues are also not different from one another, then the average before and the average after can be compared for differences with the baselines acting as a sort of self-control. Once again, multiple measurements back at the office help to establish the effectiveness of transfer.

**Barriers to Overcome**

A consensus has existed for some time, among researchers and practitioners alike, to move beyond the anecdotes and testimonies, and to provide data-based evidence (Keslake and Radcliff, 1980). However, several barriers have existed to make this difficult and most still exist today.

First, participation in adventure training is strictly voluntary, since credible providers operate under an ethic of “challenge by choice” (Hunt, 1991) where clients are not forced to participate in an adventure. This means that subjects will volunteer for the most part, as the risk averse and the skeptical likely avoid participation. Hence, quasi-experimentation (without random selection or assignment of subjects) is likely to be the type of research conducted, as opposed to true experimentation (with randomization). This means that the credibility of studies will be slightly compromised to begin with.

Second, because, in order to maximize the experience and optimize the learning, adventure training typically takes place in small groups of eight to twelve participants, sample sizes under study will often be quite small. Small sample size means that the distribution of survey answers will likely not fit within the normal curve. Without normality (usually present on groups of 15 or more) certain statistics known as parametric procedures cannot be used and the less popular nonparametric analyses must be substituted. Since nonparametric statistics are considered in the eyes of most researchers to be less believable than parametric ones, the credibility of studies in CAT will be further compromised.

Third, the sample size problem cannot be easily overcome by combining small groups with similar training programs, since adventure training must be customized to meet the particular needs of each client group and its individual members. If the training program is altered to include by coercion larger groups or identically standardized treatments, it is no longer corporate adventure training by definition; hence, the research is being conducted on some other type of training and the results have limited usefulness. In summary, constancy over all research will prove difficult and any results obtained will therefore have limited generalizability.

Fourth, exerting control over research design is also very difficult. Any control group (selected from within the same company as the experimental group) is going to experience a “spill over” contamination effect as experimental groups return from their treatment training and interact with other employees as part of their daily work. The new enthusiasm and excitement of returning subjects will likely confound the control group, either elevating or depressing the levels of whatever variables are measured in the study, leading to biased results. Selecting a control group from outside the company being studied invalidates the research, since the purpose of the control group is to be influenced by the same environmental variables which effect the experimental group so that any changes can be attributed to the treatment. Choosing a control group from within the company, but outside the normal interaction of the experimental group is most difficult since a good control group is matched in structure and content. Groups with identical function and membership in the same company is highly unlikely.

Fifth, quantitative research in CAT is currently hampered by a lack of good instrumentation to measure the constructs of primary interest such as conflict resolution, goal setting, time management, leadership, problem solving, decision making, and organizational ethics. Although steps are being taken by researchers to remedy this situation, valid and reliable instruments are a long way off. The alternative of using “homemade” surveys gives little guarantee that the data collected will really represent what the study is about. Trustworthy instruments are a necessary component of quantitative research in CAT.

Sixth, these latter concerns point to the possible usefulness of qualitative methods as an alternative or even enhancement to the more accepted quantitative designs. Qualitative inquiries are likely to get around some of these barriers and generate useful findings, provided the interviews and observations are performed in a rigorous and scholarly manner. Unfortunately, a great deal of prejudice exists toward the paradigm or philosophical view under which most qualitative research takes place. Naturalistic inquiry, as it is known, makes some fundamental assumptions about knowledge and reality which many positivistic scientists have trouble understanding let alone agreeing with. Using qualitative methods outside the governing paradigm jeopardizes the effectiveness of the techniques.

Seventh, the gap between producer and consumer of research is a wide one. A few researchers fail to follow established and widely accepted ethical guidelines for conducting studies. Their disclosure of information (such as company names, even with permission), and their claiming greater applications of findings than are possible given the flaws present in all research, give all researchers a bad reputation. As a result some consumers distrust every study; while others, perhaps eager for any “proof,” or ignorant of the subtle nuances of research, gobble up any study and believe it to be the
The greatest concern for the proponents of corporate adventure training lies in substantiating claims that the training is valid and reliable.

Some Hope through Collaboration

Despite these barriers, some hope seems evident through the collaboration of the two associations (AEE and AETD) which represent the industry. The AEE professional group for EBTD has set up a research alliance of approximately 50 CAT providers who will collect team development data on their programs and submit these data to a central clearinghouse for analysis. Since the programs and subjects will likely differ among providers (some drastically), these analyses will have limited generalizability. Nevertheless, a technique known as meta-analysis will be applied to examine the individual studies (rather than subjects). If the outcomes are mostly positive across a majority of programs, then this technique may permit wider application of the team development findings.

The research task force of the Association for Experiential Training and Development (AETD) has begun work on selecting or developing instruments for measuring constructs other than team building, such as communication, interpersonal trust, risk taking, and motivational climate within a corporate culture. These instruments will also be available for use by the research alliance. These two groups are working collaboratively in a win-win situation to address the credibility needs of a very diverse industry.

Conclusion

Corporate adventure training is special for several reasons (Gass, Goldman & Priest, 1992). First, it is experiential: people learn best by doing. Activities utilize perceived risk and yet are quite safe. Second, it is dramatic: the excitement and emotional nature of these activities focus attention and sharpen minds. People remember what they learn. Third, it is novel: because of the unique context and uncertainty of outcome for these activities, no one in the group is considered to be an expert. Adventures tend to equalize people and breakdown the hierarchical barriers and apprehensions which often exist in large companies. Fourth, it is consequential: errors have potential ramifications in adventures (getting wet in a canoe or falling on a rope), unlike in a classroom simulation (where play money is lost). Furthermore, success and failure is supported by those who really matter (co-workers and oneself). Fifth, it is metaphoric: adventures are a microcosm of the requirements needed and changes taking place in the business world. The behaviors demonstrated by individuals and groups during these activities are parallel representations of the way they act and what happens in the office. As such, new learning (skills, coping strategies, and bonding among personnel) can be analogously applied toward future efforts on the job. Finally, it is transferable: testimonials by past participants support the utility of adventure training and limited research studies substantiate that new learning does indeed show up in the workplace. People refer back to their experiences and approach their tasks from a fresh perspective.

Attarian (1992) adds that the unique characteristics of corporate adventure training are the importance placed on the setting or natural environment, the use of experiential-learning methodology, the importance of effective instruction, and debriefing the experience through feedback or reflection. Miner (in press) explains that corporate adventure training is holistic, involving all the senses and accommodating a variety of learning styles, with clear and simple goals providing immediate feedback on performance regardless of success or setback. Unlike simulated games, CAT programs offer concrete experiences which are task oriented, just like work, and are intriguing, so that everyone desires to get involved. The activities are new, fun, and invigorating; they provide opportunities to experiment with new behaviors and skills in a safe environment which encourages risk taking of all kinds.

The whole idea of corporate adventure training may be a hard concept to accept. As a "new" discipline, CAT has had a brief opportunity to grow and demonstrate its effectiveness as a development tool for contemporary companies. As with any new product, technique, or innovation, problems are bound to arise. CAT, with its unique approach, is no exception. The most visible concerns are the lack of adequate and reli-
able research and evaluation (Rice, 1979, 1988; Darby, 1989); a lack of “quality control” coupled with a consequential concern for safety (Garvey, 1989; Miner, 1991); questionable qualifications of instructors (Knecht, 1983); and some skepticism (Zemke, 1988; Falvey, 1988).

The greatest concern for the proponents of corporate adventure training lies in substantiating claims that the training is valid and reliable. Plenty of testimonial and anecdotal evidence can be found in the literature, but in these days of the tighter development dollar, a definite need exists for further research to generate hard data on the utility and efficacy of this training. To ensure the growth and reputation of adventure as a method of management education, these issues (and the other concerns elucidated above) need to be discussed and resolved. It is only then that the high-impact programs of corporate adventure training will become commonly accepted adjuncts and alternatives to more traditional organizational learning schemes. Research is one “pass key” capable of opening these “locked doors” and establishing professional credibility.

References


