Journal of Business Research Call for Papers on

INCOMPETENCY TRAINING: Theory, Practice, and Remedies

Deadline: 5 September 2012

"Incompetency training" includes formal and informal instruction that consciously (purposively) or unconsciously imparts knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behavior (including procedures) that are useless, inaccurate, misleading, and/or will lower performance outcomes of the trainee versus no training or training using alternative training methods. "Imparts" in the definition refers to exposing a trainee to incompetency training; such exposure is not a guarantee that the training increases the trainee's incompetence. Incompetency training theory includes the proposition that executives and associates in firms, academia, and government organizations consciously as well as unknowingly offer incompetency training in many contexts. Increasing trainees' vigilance and ability to recognize exposure to incompetency-training may help trainees to decrease the effectiveness (impact) of exposures to incompetency training—advancing incompetency training theory and knowledge of incompetency training practice may be necessary conditions for remedying negative outcomes that follow from trainees receiving such training.

Weick's (1997) proposals are helpful for understanding the need to study incompetency training and the effectiveness of counter-incompetency strategies, Weick (1997) calls for dropping preoccupation with efficiency; that is, focusing on successes, simplify assumptions, refining strategies, pouring resources into planning and anticipation, and deferring to authorities at higher levels in the organizational hierarchy. "These ways of acting are thought to produce good decisions; however, they also often allow unexpected events to accumulate unnoticed until those events become so complex that they are tough to deal with and have widespread unintended effects" (Weick, 1997, p. 14).

The U.S. Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission reported its findings in January 2011. The report concludes that "the crisis was avoidable and was caused by widespread failures in financial regulation, including the Federal Reserve's failure to stem the tide of toxic mortgage" (the first cause listed in the report). However, the report fails to consider the training given and received in the Federal

Reserve and the Securities and Exchange Commission that effectively results in incompetency; and thus, fails to consider protocols in counter-incompetency training. From prison Madoff commented on the incompetency of U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) regulators: “I was astonished. They never even looked at my stock records. If investigators had checked with the Depository Trust Company, a central securities depository, it would've been easy for them to see. If you're looking at a Ponzi scheme, it's the first thing you do.” Certainly, such a statement hints at highly effective incompetency training ongoing at the SEC. Simply identify incompetency is only a preliminary step in reducing the chances of its reoccurrence.

Woodside (2011) reviews a series of studies relating to incompetency training including the work of J. Scott Armstrong and colleagues on incompetency training in product portfolio planning in MBA programs; Gerd Gigerenzer and colleagues on testing incompetency training in psychological framing research and imparting of medical test findings to patients; and Roger Schank examinations of incompetency training in education. The CFP seeks papers submissions on topics on incompetency training and counter-incompetency training theory and research. For additional details on theory and research on incompetency training, please refer to the references to this CFP. Please submit your paper in JBR style by the deadline: 5 September 2012 to Arch G. Woodside, Boston College, Department of Marketing, arch.woodside@bc.edu.

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