Managers as Teachers - Zala Fashant

In a recent workshop with managers of auto centers, one participant voiced the need for better workers to employ in the business. "We aren't getting employees like we used to have." I thought about how many times I heard teachers voice the same need. What do you do when students aren't college ready or employees aren't work/career ready? In the past, we had enough students/employees to not worry about it, but with the number of positions that need filling from expanding industries and a retiring workforce, we need to train more workers in ways than we may have needed to in the past. As an elementary teacher, I remember the end of the school year, having 5th graders that were learning like a well-oiled machine. They knew the class expectations and procedures and were producing the work as they mastered the outcomes. It was much different on the first day of school in the following fall when I got a fresh group of recently-graduated 4th graders. My work started all over again.

Managers face the same situation all the time. Losing a good employee due to transfer or retirement leaves a gap. It would be great if all the new employees knew what the former employees knew. You can't always find a new worker that has the skill set of the others in your department. As a manager, you need to lead, in fact, teach, all employees to deliver the outcomes necessary to create a successful business. Most managers don't have a lot of experience in teaching. Planning an orientation and knowing that the new employee is going to need to time to learn the expectations and procedures will help you be a less-frustrated leader. Relying on others to mentor managers to become teachers takes a design plan for succession. Having a design plan in place minimizes manager frustration and provides a process to orienting and engaging all employees. If you aren't getting the type of employees you want, then you may need to teach them to be the type of employees you need. What do you currently do get new employees up to speed? What can you do to take the time to teach new employees to succeed in your organization?