

# ACTION!



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The summer is flying by. Can't believe we're already more than  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the way through. Time to plan for fall. Ali Hamad will be teaching an incredible J2EE class on september 20-24. Our online oracle classes have been getting great reviews! Attend in your pajamas with NO travel costs! So far this year, we've held twice as many red hat classes as in all of 2009. Plan to attend! Call ACT for some GREAT deals!

Have a great August!

Stephen Johnson  
President  
Advanced Concepts Training Corp.



## Sleigh Bells Ring...Are You Listening?

I know what you must be thinking... with record breaking heat making headlines, how can anyone possibly be thinking of holidays littered with images of snow covered tree tops, finely wrapped gifts, ornate decorations and shopping???

Yes, shopping...the race to the finish, "gee, I hope we aren't overextended", "...that costs how much?" adventures that seem to sneak up on you towards the end of the year. But there are things you can do now to alleviate some of the anticipation and be able to enjoy the time with family and friends.

Believe it or not, many stores are already offering options for the eager shopper. Some may even have put up decorations, which may seem strange; but know, where there are decorations, there is usually opportunity. For example, a large toy retailer, Toys R Us, has just launched

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## Investing in Your Employees: an Asset, not a Liability

In the ever-fluctuating, unpredictable economic climate we subsist in, material assets are no longer a sure thing. With the pervasive nature of the internet in modern society, even those items that have solid value are no longer a unique quality, because the competition can acquire said items just as easily. The greatest resource any company can have rests within the knowledge of its employees--regardless of effort, one person's knowledge will never be the same as another's.

Educating your employees does not mean barking information at them, or inundating them with reading material. Not every employee requires the same path of instruction or possesses the same skill set. The first stage in putting your business a step ahead of the competition is evaluating the skill levels of your employees. Figure out where knowledge is lacking (ex. communication, time management, customer service, etc.) and look into training and other instructional options in your area.

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## Sleigh Bells Ring...continued from page 1

a "Christmas Savers Club" (<http://www.toysrus.com/shop/index.jsp?categoryId=3920494>) to help you save for the coming gift buying season.

This program allows you to put money into an account for exclusive shopping at the store, but in return, they will give (that's right- GIVE) you an additional 3% when the funds are released for purchasing. That's a great incentive! Many other retailers, in trying to offer the alternatives for shoppers, have re-instituted layaway programs. These programs, without penalty, allow you to pay for your purchase(s) over time and in time for the holidays. But it's important to pay on time. Stores could have penalties associated with late/missed payments. Be sure to check out the full agreement for each store if considering this as an option.

Other creative options may include:

- Back to school sales- Deep discounts usually proceed the coming school year, and some locations even offer "tax free" shopping for many items. Virginia's Tax-Free Back to School Weekend is August 6-8. Stores will have lots of non-school related items on sale as well.
- Discounted gift cards- Promotions abound in this area with many retailers offering sales. For example, a retailer may offer \$10 back if you buy \$100 of gift cards. That's a 10% discount!
- Homemade crafts- get the kids outside this summer. Create workshops to make gifts for the upcoming season; homemade art pieces, frames, jewelry boxes, birdhouses and more. Better the mess outside than in!

There is much you can do to avoid the rush and anxiety of the season. Start now and take the upcoming holidays to spend time with family and friends.



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## Investing...continued from page 1

Do not expect all your employees to graciously consent to further education for their current position. You will likely find a few that hold the teenage mentality of "knowing what's best" and having "nothing left to learn" about what they do. Be certain you have your facts in order to show them the lacking aspects of the business (ex. customer complaints, financial status, etc.) as a means of enforcing the need for further education.

When evaluating the various skill levels of your employees, take the time to find out what their strong-suits are. Utilize these identified strengths to aid in the growth of those who struggle in the same area. A great way to accomplish this is through the creation of a mentoring/coaching program within your organization. Pair up new employees with veterans; have those with specialized knowledge teach a class; designate a "specialist" in each area of interest that floundering employees can go to for assistance. Fostering interactive learning experiences between coworkers is a fantastic way to boost morale, build a more cohesive team and increase personal interest and commitment to your business/organization. If your employees all seem to be lacking in one particular area, look into training courses (virtual courses online can help in reducing the costs incurred) and seminars that can refocus those aspects of your employees' work habits.

All too often, businesses cut training efforts in the case of a budget shortfall. In actuality, it typically costs more to recruit and train a new employee than it does to retain and train an employee already working for you. There are also many great ways to expand your employees' knowledge and skill base at minimum cost.

Overall, your company cannot grow without expansion of your employees' knowledge. Your company cannot develop if your employees don't develop. It's the fostering of critical thinking and the implementation of new ideas, increased expertise and confidence that will move your business forward. Get the most out of your employees and your investment in their development: don't forget to hire and promote from within!

*For more information regarding employee training/education options, try sites such as:*

<http://www.actisit.com>  
<http://www.nationalseminarstraining.com/>  
<http://www.businessstrainingworks.com/>  
<http://www.bizlibrary.com/>



# Instructor's Corner!

## Oracle -- Languages And Tools

by Terry Stough

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There is often confusion when people start hearing about SQL, PL/SQL and SQL\*Plus / SQL Developer. What each of them do and when do you need them?

SQL is an acronym for Structured Query Language. It is classified as a fourth generation programming tool. What that means is that you don't tell Oracle specifically what to do, you simply tell it what you want. The four most basic components of this language are the following:

- **SELECT:** Generally what specific items you want.
- **FROM:** The table or tables in which those items reside.
- **WHERE:** The criteria to filter the records.
- **ORDER BY:** How you want the output ordered.

For example, in simple English I could say "I need the names of all my employees who earn more than \$5000 a month ordered by their last name." That would turn into a SQL statement that would read something like "SELECT LastName, FirstName FROM Employees WHERE Pay > 5000 ORDER BY LastName".

PL/SQL on the other hand is Oracle's programming language. The purpose of PL/SQL is to work with SQL to do things that SQL alone cannot do. This language features the typical step-by-step methods of programming languages including conditional flow control such as IF statements and repetition structures such as loops. This additional functionality allows

for such tasks as manipulation of files, sending emails and database analysis.

To learn PL/SQL you should first know SQL. PL/SQL allows you to take SQL even further by allowing you to work on one record at a time rather than a set of records.

SQL\*Plus and SQL Developer are tools used to work with SQL and PL/SQL. Their primary purpose is to allow you to connect to the database, enter commands or programs, and then view the results. They also have a command language for working specifically with the tool.

So should I use SQL\*Plus or SQL Developer? SQL\*Plus is a very powerful tool but it is a command line editor. Using SQL Developer is much easier but there are things that only SQL\*Plus can do. So you really need both.

Advanced Concepts training offers numerous classes to help you learn SQL and PL/SQL. Please see our course offerings for details!



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## FUN RANDOM FACTS

A million dollars in 100 dollar bills weighs only 22 pounds!

Harry S. Truman was the last U.S. President to be without a college degree.

For females in Ancient Greece, it was illegal to watch Olympic events. If caught watching even one, the offender faced the death sentence.

The Latin phrase of "libra pondo" was often used in ancient Rome as a means of conveying measure of weight. This is why the abbreviation for "pound" today is "lb."

The curved, northern border of Delaware consists of all points being exactly 12 miles from the old New Castle court house.

When tobacco ads were banned in 1971, TV lost approximately 20 percent of its original ad revenue.

Giraffes are the only animals born with horns on their heads.

The average person loses approximately 40-100 strands of hair each day.

An Albatross can sleep while in flight.

# UPCOMING COURSES/SCHEDULE

Classes in Blue marked with a \* are online.  
Classes in Red are Red Hat offerings.

START DATE    END DATE    PRICE

## AUGUST 2010

*Oracle 10g SQL for Business & Data Analysts	8/2	8/4	\$1,499
*Oracle 11g SQL for Business & Data Analysts	8/2	8/4	\$1,499
Javascript Programming Essentials	8/2	8/6	\$2,199
UNIX/Linux Shell Scripting	8/2	8/6	\$1,849
Oracle 11g PL/SQL Foundations	8/2	8/6	\$2,199
*Oracle 10g Release 2 Discoverer Desktop for End Users	8/5	8/6	\$1,049
Red Hat Rapid Track Course-class only	8/9	8/12	\$2,698
Red Hat Rapid Tack Course and RHCE exam	8/9	8/13	\$2,998
*Oracle 10g Database Administration I	8/9	8/13	\$2,199
Web Services Development using Eclipse	8/9	8/13	\$2,199
Oracle 11g SQL for Business and Data Analysts	8/16	8/18	\$1,499
UNIX Introduction to Commands	8/16	8/19	\$1,849
*Oracle 10g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus	8/16	8/20	\$2,199
*Oracle 11g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus	8/16	8/20	\$2,199
*Oracle 10g PL/SQL Introduction	8/23	8/24	\$1,049
*Oracle 11g PL/SQL Introduction	8/23	8/24	\$1,049
JBoss Enterprise BRMS	8/23	8/26	\$2,498
*Oracle 10g PL/SQL Intermediate	8/25	8/27	\$1,499
*Oracle 11g PL/SQL Intermediate	8/25	8/27	\$1,499
*Oracle 10g Database Administration II	8/30	9/3	\$2,199
Introduction to Java and Enterprise Java using Jbuilder	8/30	9/3	\$2,199
Oracle 11g SQL Express Introduction	8/30	9/1	\$1,499

## SEPTEMBER 2010

Oracle 11g PL/SQL Introduction	9/2	9/3	\$1,049
*Oracle 10g Release 2 Discoverer Desktop for End Users	9/7	9/8	\$1,049
*Oracle 10g Release 2 Discoverer Plus	9/9	9/10	\$1,049
Red Hat Linux Essentials	9/13	9/17	\$2,398
J2EE Development using Spring & Hibernate	9/13	9/17	\$2,199
*Oracle 10g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus	9/13	9/17	\$2,199
*Oracle 11g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus	9/13	9/17	\$2,199
*Oracle 11g Database Administration I	9/20	9/24	\$2,199
Oracle 11g SQL & PL/SQL Express Introduction	9/20	9/24	\$2,199
J2EE Development using Spring and Hibernate	9/20	9/24	\$2,199
*Oracle 10g PL/SQL Introduction	9/27	9/28	\$1,049
*Oracle 11g PL/SQL Introduction	9/27	9/28	\$1,049
Red Hat Linux System Administration-class only	9/27	9/30	\$2,498
WebSphere Portal Development	9/27	10/1	\$2,199
Red Hat Linux System Administration and RHCT Exam	9/27	10/1	\$2,698
*Oracle 10g PL/SQL Intermediate	9/29	10/1	\$1,499
*Oracle 11g PL/SQL Intermediate	9/29	10/1	\$1,499

## OCTOBER 2010

Red Hat RHCT Exam Only	10/1	10/1	\$399
*Oracle 10g SQL for Business & Data Analysts	10/4	10/6	\$1,499
*Oracle 11g SQL for Business & Data Analysts	10/4	10/6	\$1,499
Perl Programming	10/4	10/8	\$2,199
Oracle 11g Database Administration I	10/4	10/8	\$2,199
*Oracle 10g Release 2 Discoverer Desktop for End Users	10/7	10/8	\$1,049
Red Hat Networking & Security Administration	10/11	10/14	\$2,498
*Oracle 11g Database Administration II	10/11	10/15	\$2,199
Oracle 11g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus	10/11	10/15	\$2,199
Enterprise Java Beans 3.0 Development (EJB)	10/11	10/15	\$2,199
UNIX/Linux Shell Scripting	10/12	10/15	\$1,849
RHCE Exam Only	10/15	10/15	\$799
*Oracle 10g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus	10/18	10/22	\$2,199
*Oracle 11g Foundations: SQL & SQL *Plus	10/18	10/22	\$2,199
WebSphere V6 Portal Administration	10/18	10/22	\$2,199
J2EE Development using Spring, Struts, Java Server Faces (JSF)	10/18	10/22	\$2,199
J2EE Development using Spring & Hibernate	10/18	10/22	\$2,199
*Oracle 10g PL/SQL Introduction	10/25	10/26	\$1,049
*Oracle 11g PL/SQL Introduction	10/25	10/26	\$1,049
BEA WebLogic Portal Development	10/25	10/29	\$2,199
WebSphere Business Modeler for Business Process Management	10/25	10/29	\$2,199
WebSphere Application Server V6 Administration	10/25	10/29	\$2,199
*Oracle 10g PL/SQL Intermediate	10/27	10/29	\$1,499
*Oracle 11g PL/SQL Intermediate	10/27	10/29	\$1,499

## Scheduling News

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**Pay full price for ANY class, receive a FREE hotel room for each day of class (1 room per registrant). This includes Red Hat classes! This offer applies to any class completed by Dec. 31, 2010.\***

**\*Registration must be made through ACT. Offer applies to ACT's Richmond Facility.**

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