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NEWS

Why Don't We Have a Prison Report Card System?

Research shows correctional crises will not be solved until inmates are taught skills to succeed on the outside

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(CENTERVILLE, Utah) – ‘Lock em’ up and throw away the key.’ That may be a good movie line – but it’s not reality. Some 97 percent of all inmates who are incarcerated do indeed return to society. Unfortunately, two-thirds of them (67%) will find their way back to prison. The question is, what is being done with these men and women while they are behind bars to help insure they won’t return?

Extensive research conducted by the MTC Institute has determined the answer to be, “very little – certainly not enough.” Institute Executive Director Carl Nink hopes to help change that, with release of the research entitled *Measuring Success: Improving the Effectiveness of Correctional Facilities*.

“Clearly there are serious deficiencies in correctional systems across the United States,” Nink said. “How else can we explain why seven out of every ten inmates who serve their time and are released from prison, find their way back in? Our federal, state, county and municipal correctional systems are all failing. Furthermore, these problems are costing taxpayers money that could be better spent on schools and roads.”

Measuring Success makes the argument that all U.S. correctional facilities should be subjected to similar success measurements. The study describes the successful prison through the four dimensions of (1) Safety and Security, (2) Quality of Life, (3) Re-entry Preparation, and (4) Management. Addressing the expansion of the core mission of prisons, the study reads in part:

Many corrections professionals say that their primary mission is to protect the public. However, they have yet to adopt the notion that this mission includes preparing the offender for successful return to society. The successful prison must have programs that prepare the offenders for reentry. The successful prison must be accountable for and manage the scarce taxpayer provided resources to achieve the greatest impact.

Measuring Success is now being distributed to correctional agencies and elected officials nationwide. It is available at <http://www.mtctrains.com/institute/publications/MeasuringSuccess.pdf>. You may also contact the MTC Institute to request a complimentary copy (801-693-2870 or institute@mtctrains.com).

Management & Training Corporation (MTC) is an international corporation dedicated to helping people realize their learning potential. MTC creates nurturing environments in which education is encouraged and recognized.

MTC manages – or partners in the management of – 25 Job Corps centers across the United States, for the U.S. Labor Department, preparing disadvantaged youth for meaningful careers. MTC also operates privatized correctional facilities around the world with approximately 9,700 beds under contract.

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For more information contact: Carl Stuart, MTC Communication Director
801-693-2784 / 801-209-8324 (cell) / cstuart@mtctrains.com

500 North Marketplace Drive, P.O. Box 10 , Centerville, Utah 84014 , (801) 693-2600