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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From Workplace to Playspace!

A Mind-Set Shift Proven to Increase Employee Engagement and Retention

CHICAGO (March 22, 2010) – With organizations trying to do more with less and still expecting the same level of creativity and innovation, employees are feeling the strain. Over 80 percent of employees feel overworked and under-appreciated¹ and 54 percent of today's employees are ready to jump ship, as soon as the economy improves.² A new book by Pamela Meyer, an instructor of business creativity and organizational change at DePaul University in Chicago, helps organizations find that missing link in improving employee engagement and commitment...especially during these difficult times.

In "From Workplace to Playspace: Innovating, Learning and Changing Through Dynamic Engagement" (Jossey-Bass, 2010), Meyer provides the conceptual framework and the principles to help practitioners find fresh approaches to employee engagement using the power of "play," while directly impacting the bottom line and meeting strategic goals.

This new book goes behind the scenes at world-class organizations such as **Google, Learning Curve International, Chicago Public Schools, Umpqua Bank** and **Threadless** to examine how these high pressure workplaces are being transformed into a "play" space. These provocative case stories bring a new dimension of Meyer's playspace model to life and are grounded in years of organizational research and qualified results.

"Each of these high-engagement organizations have shifted their mind-set from workplace, in which the product is more important than the process, to playspace, where the lively, creative process of innovating, learning and changing invites passionate commitment and enthusiastic participation," said Meyer. "This mind-set shift to 'play' is the link many organizations are missing when trying to build and retain employee engagement."

In addition to the real-life examples, the book includes easy-to-adopt principles that can be implemented in any type of organization, some of which include:

- Making Space for the "We" to Emerge. Employees will collaborate with those whose skills, knowledge and talent they value. They must have the space, systems, and processes that enable them to become aware of, build relationships with, and have access to these people in the organization.

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¹ Herman Trend Alert. "2010 Workforce/Workplace Forecast," December 16, 2009

² Adecco Group North America. "Employment Trend" survey, July 2009

- Look for and Address Signs of Degeneration. As employee engagement numbers in this economy prove, morale is at an all time low. Look for the signs of degeneration in the workplace such as low participation in team meetings, decrease in creative ideas, increase use of paid time off / sick leave benefits or tension and defensiveness between colleagues. Flag this behavior and simply ask for informal feedback from group leaders, facilitators and participants. A simple, “How’s it going?” or even a more pointed, “What’s the current level of engagement and energy?” can often yield valuable feedback.
- Engage the Positive Core. More often than looking for what works, and engaging that energy and wisdom for guidance, we have been trained to focus on what does not work. Workplace leaders and employees can support shared success by focusing on what works. For example, tap into people's best skills and allow them to take ownership of its wisdom and guide future success in this area. Provide respectful feedback to those having a negative impact on the energy of the group and encourage them to find a new perspective. And finally, listen! People who feel passionately about an idea or perspective need to be heard. Such passion is valuable for the organizational system and; gone unheard, it can shift into degenerative energy.

“Pamela’s principles are for everyone in the workplace, from the top-level CEO’s to managers, team leaders or anyone willing to take on new roles and experiment with new perspectives,” said John Lee, former CEO of Learning Curve International. “We have seen a huge increase of energy within our teams that will create lasting and meaningful change within our organization.”

Meyer is hosting a book launch event on Thursday, April 1, 2010 at Catalyst Ranch in Chicago (656 W. Randolph, Suite 3W) from 6-8 p.m. where she will discuss her new book with graphic facilitation by Brandy Agerbeck of Loosetooth.com. She will also be signing copies of "From Workplace to Playspace: Innovating, Learning and Changing Through Dynamic Engagement." For more information on the event, please visit <http://www.catalystranch.com/>.

For more information about the book and Pamela Meyer, please visit <http://www.playspace.biz> and <http://www.meyercreative.com>.

About Pamela Meyer

Pamela Meyer is a consultant, speaker, author and thought-leader in group and organizational dynamics. She came to her passion for playspace through her years working with creative teams in the theater as a director and producer. She now uses the lessons she learned in rehearsal halls performance spaces and research to work with organizations around the world that want to create playspace for innovating, learning, and changing through dynamic engagement.

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In addition to her consulting and speaking practice, Meyer teaches courses in business creativity, organizational change, and adult learning at DePaul University's School for New Learning in Chicago, where she is a faculty fellow at both the Center to Advance Education for Adults and the Center for Creativity and Innovation. She holds a doctorate in human and organizational systems from Fielding Graduate University. Meyer is also the author of ***Quantum Creativity: Nine Principles to Transform the Way You Work.***

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