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## **Valvoline Instant Oil Change™ wins American Society for Training & Development 2012 BEST and Brandon Hall Gold Awards**

### **Nation's second-largest quick-lube chain recognized for excellent training and talent management**

Lexington, Ky. - Valvoline Instant Oil Change, a part of Ashland Consumer Markets - a commercial unit of Ashland Inc (NYSE: ASH), today announced it has received an American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) 2012 BEST Award and a Brandon Hall Gold Award for Excellence in Talent Management.

Valvoline Instant Oil Change was among 30 organizations from Bahrain, Canada, India, and the United States to receive a 2012 ASTD BEST Award, which is the training industry's most rigorous and coveted recognition. The BEST Awards recognize organizations that demonstrate enterprise-wide success through employee learning and development.

"These 30 companies get it," said Tony Bingham, ASTD President and CEO. "They excel in creating innovative, vibrant learning cultures that clearly align with strategic business goals. The leadership of these organizations values learning and knows that having a knowledgeable and skilled workforce drives success."

"Our people are the foundation of our business," said Tony Puckett, president of Valvoline Instant Oil Change. "We have an integrated talent management function that allows us to hire people with the potential to learn and progress in the company. And our team does an outstanding job of building and implementing a consistent learning program in a fun, interactive manner that engages our employees at all levels. "

Valvoline Instant Oil Change competed against 84 organizations in 13 countries for the 2012 BEST Awards, now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year. Organizations submitted both quantitative and qualitative information about their learning and development practices and programs. Applications were assessed in a blind review by members of the BEST Awards advisory committee, a select group of experts in the learning and development field.

The company was also recognized by the Brandon Hall Group for excellence in Talent Management. Valvoline Instant Oil Change's innovative Bench Planning process received the Brandon Hall Gold Award for excellence in Succession and Career Management.

The Bench Planning process and the associated software system have become a driving force behind Valvoline Instant Oil Change's employee development, which in turn drives the company's success. "Our business model is driven by our ability to successfully hire, develop, protect, and retain great people," Puckett said.

"This year's winners should be very proud of their achievements especially based on the rigorous judging process all submissions underwent," said Mike Cooke, chief executive officer of Brandon Hall Group, Inc. "We are honored to recognize the award winners who exemplify a high standard of performance in their organization and demonstrate clear, measurable business results through these innovative programs."

#### **About Valvoline Instant Oil Change**

Valvoline, a brand of Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH), has been serving American motorists longer than any other motor oil. In addition to commercial and industrial lubricants, the Valvoline family of products includes Eagle One™ appearance products, Car Brite™ car restoration products, Zerex™ antifreeze, SynPower™ performance products, MaxLife™ products create higher-mileage engines, and NextGen™ motor oil created with 50 percent recycled, refined oil. With more than 860 locations throughout the United States, Valvoline Instant Oil Change™ is a leader in serving the quick-lube market.

#### **About ASTD**

ASTD (American Society for Training & Development) is the world's largest professional association dedicated to the training and development field. In more than 100 countries, ASTD's members work in organizations of all sizes, in the private and public sectors, as independent consultants, and as suppliers. Members connect locally in 120 U.S. chapters and with 20 international partners. ASTD started in 1943 and in recent years has widened the profession's focus to align learning and performance to organizational results, and is a sought-after voice on critical public policy issues. For more information, visit [www.astd.org](http://www.astd.org).

#### **About Brandon Hall Group**

Having worked with more than 10,000 clients globally and after 20 years of delivering world-class solutions, Brandon Hall Group

is the preeminent research and analyst organization focused on developing research-driven solutions to drive organizational performance for emerging and large organizations. Brandon Hall Group has an extensive repository of thought leadership, research, data and expertise in Learning and Development, Talent Management, Sales Effectiveness, Marketing Impact, and Executive Management. More information is available at [www.brandonhall.com](http://www.brandonhall.com).

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