

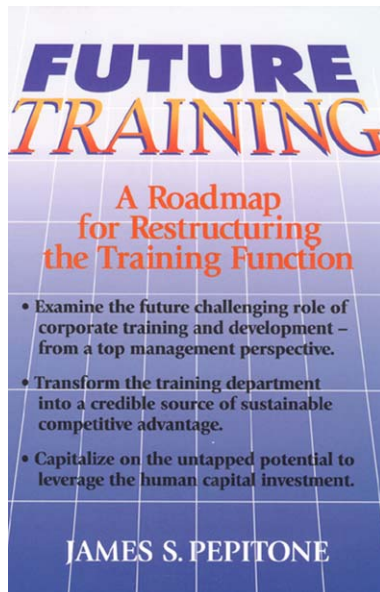
# PROFESSIONAL BOOK SUMMARY

*Here's the business case for  
transforming corporate training . . .*

## Future Training A Roadmap for Restructuring the Training Function

*by James S. Pepitone*

*Our all-time bestseller!*



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### THE BOTTOM LINE

Developing and sustaining organizational advantage may well be the final frontier for business competition. Isn't it the work of organization members that ultimately creates enterprise success?

Traditionally, management has looked to a corporate training function (Training) to standardize employees—to provide them with requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes through planned instructional interventions. Though important in this role, Training characteristically frustrates management by appearing to work from an independent political and social agenda and to persist in the overuse of familiar yet often ineffective and inefficient methods. Management's needs for improved workforce performance and productivity often go unmet.

Compounding management's dilemma, the common practices for managing and developing human performance continue to rely on concepts that are rooted in industrial management—concepts that are less relevant for today's workforce. A fundamental shift in the nature of human work—from making and moving things to knowledge and service work—during the past 50 years has gradually rendered these practices ineffective.

Frederick Taylor first introduced the use of workplace training when work was unique to each company and the worker's challenge was to learn and adapt to a company's means of production. Then, because companies owned the *means of production* and employed workers simply to support it, employees were in effect no

more than interchangeable parts in a company's operation.

Today, 75 percent of the workforce in developed economies is engaged in knowledge and service work, for which *people are the means of production* and a company's contribution, is to provide a supportive environment for this work. For these workers, their effectiveness and productivity are determined not by how well they adapt to company processes and procedures but by *how supportive the company environment is to their work* (e.g., policies, relationships, resources, etc.).

This shift changes everything. To capitalize on its “human assets,” companies will need to learn and change. Management will need to abandon outdated theories and practices of managing and instead embrace concepts and ways of operating that better develop and potentially optimize human performance and productivity.

Resident within current training functions are people and expertise with the potential for a key role in cultivating this potential. To realize this potential, however, Training must “reinvent” itself—shedding its out-of-date focus and methods, aligning its work to management's objectives, updating and enhancing its capabilities, and redeploying its resources to provide services that add substantial value.

Bottom line, corporate training must be reconceived to provide support that can and will in fact improve workforce capability, performance and productivity. These changes are necessary to help management solve performance problems and to tap the potential performance and productivity of today's workforce.

## I. TRAINING LOSES ITS WAY

In 1881, Frederick Taylor, an American engineer, first applied knowledge to the analysis, study and engineering of work. Taylor's approach was to study a task, engineer it for high productivity, and then *teach* it as a step-by-step process to the workers to standardize their work (i.e., control for quality).

Training provided the means to staff factories with unskilled workers and demonstrated that work output could be increased without requiring employees to work harder or work longer hours.

By the late 1920s, Taylor's methods had changed the way work was designed and the way factory workers were selected and prepared for their tasks. All work was standardized, and workers became anonymous interchangeable resources that were *trained* to perform their immediate task in *one right way*. Training (i.e., control through standardization) gained broad acceptance as the way to improve human work performance and ultimately became the default solution for virtually every challenge involving workers.

In the 1930s, training enabled jobless people to work productively on public works projects. Then in the 1940s, training supported the mobilization of a tremendous military and civilian war effort. Following WWII, training prepared the nation to resume civilian life.

Between 1950 and 1990, the role of workplace training shifted away from teaching people how to work productively to holding classes on a myriad of issues that often had little appeal to workers, relevance to their work or impact on performance. It was this focus on training as the single best solution for every employee problem that led to an exploding workload for training practitioners and an endless array of management and employee development programs in the workplace. Staff training functions were established to deal with the growing workload, often reporting to Personnel or Industrial Relations . . . the predecessor to today's HR function.

Training had made its mark on industry, the United States, and the 20th century. In Peter Drucker's words, [In the 20th century,] *Taylor-based training became the one truly effective engine of economic development. The application of knowledge to work explosively increased productivity. Since Taylor began, productivity has increased some fifty-fold in all advanced countries. On this unprecedented expansion rest all the increases in both standard of living and quality of life in the developed countries (Post-Capitalist Society, 1993).*

### Workplace Changes

The late 1940s and early 1950s marked a formative period in the development of management thinking. Management practices had been designed for bureaucratic structures that became dominant during WWII. It was not until the 1970s that managers recognized that appropriate management methods should vary with the nature and goals of an organization.

The *management revolution*, as Drucker refers to the period from 1945 to

## SHIFTING MANAGEMENT PARADIGM

### Old Paradigm [Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century]

- Technology first
- People as machine extension
- People as spare parts
- Narrow tasks, simple skills
- External control: procedure book
- Many levels, autocratic style
- Competitive
- Organization's purpose only
- Alienation: "It's only a job."
- Low risk-taking

### New Paradigm [Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century]

- Social/technical systems optimized together
- People complement machines
- People as scarce resources
- Multiple broad skills
- Self-control: teams and departments
- Flat organization, participative style
- Cooperative
- Individual and social purposes included
- Commitment: "It's my job."
- Innovation

From Weisbord, Marvin R. *Productive Workplaces: Organizing and Managing for Dignity, Meaning and Community*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1987, p. 101. (Adapted from Eric Trist, "Adapting to a Changing World," in *Readings in Quality of Working Life*, George F. Sanderson, ed. Ottawa: Labour Canada, 1978, pp. 10-20.)

1990, witnessed the bureaucracy's machine-like control and predictability become increasingly ill-matched to the growing complexity and agility required in large organizations. Increased structure, procedures and policies that management was accustomed to using to maintain control resulted in widespread employee dissatisfaction and declining productivity. Taylor's *scientific management* principles to improve workforce productivity became increasingly less effective.

Managers were not equipped to resolve these new challenges. Busy competing on the basis of financial strategy and information technology, managers did not recognize that the machine-system principles that had been so successful in increasing productivity in production tasks were *unsuccessful* in increasing the productivity of the growing ranks of knowledge and service workers.

Ultimately, it was new knowledge developed from the pioneering work of scientists like Kurt Lewin, Douglas McGregor, Eric Trist, Ludwig von Bertalanffy and others—insights that had been unavailable to Taylor and others in the early 20th century—that established a new paradigm for management. (See figure.)

*High-performance work systems* was the name most frequently given to this next step in the evolution of management. The new concept was based on the joint optimization of both *technical* (i.e., machine) and *social* (i.e., human) systems. Several hundred installations of this new design had been completed in the United States by the late 1970s, and most of these yielded a substantial profit advantage over equivalent traditionally managed operations.

Rooted in this new paradigm was the philosophy underlying the rebuilding of Japan's industry following WWII. Not until much later did U.S. industry begin to apply these concepts in order to compete with Japan's success. By the mid-1980s, quality-improvement initiatives had finally expanded beyond production-floor engineers to begin changing fundamental management practices.

### Training's Role

In the 1950s and 1960s, Training practitioners, driven both by the demand for their services and their social values, became strong advocates of aspects of the

new management paradigm in the form of "human relations" training. Though management yielded to these repeated recommendations to *train* managers in the new paradigm, this training encountered large-scale passive resistance and ultimately yielded little or no improvement.

These attempts to change fundamental management methods through training alone had very limited impact. The experience of most managers of this day was with the machine-like workplace that had been established as the paradigm for industrial organizations. Training could not challenge effectively what managers perceived as the *one right way* to design and manage organizations.

Then in the 1970s, management passed over Training as the function to provide educational support for quality and reengineering initiatives. According to management, these were the decisive factors in this exclusion of Training:

1. Lack of commitment to performance and productivity enhancement
2. Lack of business acumen and knowledge of broader business issues
3. Lack of support for line management's performance objectives
4. Lack of vision for a value-adding role in the organization

Also during the period between the 1940s and 1970s, instructional technology (i.e., knowledge and methodologies) had advanced substantially based on the developing social sciences. The newest instructional methods held the promise to breathe new effectiveness into Training, yet most practitioners continued to use only familiar rudimentary methods.

It is now obvious that Training leaders must update their focus and methods or risk contributing to the weakness of the organization they are to support. Approached professionally, training has the potential to acclimate people to new organizations and tasks, and to provide knowledge and support for skill development. But training has limits.

Today, the greater challenge for management is to enhance the educative quality of the workplace—to become a *learning organization*—in order to improve the performance and productivity of workers in post-industrial roles. This challenge cannot be met with training alone, yet the solution will draw heavily on

competencies and skills characteristic of many corporate Training practitioners.

### Function Follows Form

Between 1950 and 1980, most companies organized training resources into a staff function—the Training department. This change ultimately led to Training’s leaders losing sight of the function’s purpose in the workplace, and subsequently led to a *loss of capability* to improve performance and increase productivity, and a *loss of credibility* with workers and management. This degeneration seems to have been the result of two principal factors:

1. The dissociation of training from work . . . training became the accepted *cure* for all organizational ills, without regard for its lack of measurable impact on work performance
2. The centralization of training activity into a bureaucratic staff function . . . separating Training from the operational performance objectives and management it was to serve.

Before long, Training advocated its own agenda of training programs to improve organizations. With their centralized role, training practitioners were motivated to promote every conceivable training activity and at the same time to distance themselves from any real concerns of the business and their management clients. Trainers understandably reasoned that increased training would justify more staff and bigger budgets—the principal criteria for increased pay, power and prestige in bureaucratic organizations.

The inevitable impact of so much training activity was to reduce productivity because of the considerable employee work time spent in classrooms. Training leaders responded with measurement schemes that even assigned value to participant reactions alone . . . suggesting that a happily trained employee would be more productive.

Initially, management supported Training’s agenda in search of new answers. In time, however, the lack of effective change and measurable results from Training’s strategy weakened its credibility with management. In management’s final estimation, such investments in training rarely, if ever, produced added value in the form of improved performance or productivity.

### Supporting the New Workforce

Training leadership now finds itself at a critical point. It lacks the business acumen, technology (knowledge, methods, etc.), professional skills and management support that are required to meet the needs of today’s new workforce.

The proportion of the workforce involved in *machine labor* (for which training is most effective) has declined dramatically in the 20th century. This decline has been matched by a proportionate increase in the number of *knowledge* and

*service* workers (whose work is much less machine-like and trainable), who made up 20 percent of the workforce in 1900, 50 percent in 1950, and more than 70 percent in 1990.

The new workforce is made up of specialists who are the *means of production* for their particular kind of work, versus the interchangeable labor of Taylor’s day. Effectiveness, performance and productivity are derived from the knowledgeable and skillful application of special methods, plus appropriate human capabilities and talents and an assortment of natural human competencies like will, desire, concern, trust, pride, intellect, emotion, judgement and so on.

The principles for designing, teaching and managing this work have proven to be very different from Taylor’s principles for factory work. Training (i.e., control through standardization) will be limited in its effectiveness to improve the performance and productivity of these workers . . . limited to teaching them the company’s basic processes and policies. After learning these rudiments, knowledge and service workers will learn and improve at their own pace and direction—both as individuals and as members of groups of specialists—by adapting to challenges and corrective feedback and by exercising the resources available to them.

**Every three years or so, it is important to sit down with every staff unit and ask, “What have you contributed these last three years that makes a real difference to this company?” Staff work’s only justification is the improvement of the performance of operating people and of the entire organization.**

*Peter F. Drucker*

inadequate and inefficient in meeting the needs of today’s new workforce.

### Caught Without Value

Management is justifiably frustrated with the lack of business acumen and strategic initiative that is exhibited by today’s Training leaders. A common management refrain goes something like this: “Why don’t they get it? Why do they wait for me to cut their budget or reduce their staff before they get serious about improving their work and demonstrating results?” Until they get the ax, Training leaders may believe the game will go on forever.

As a result, numerous companies are mandating the radical restructuring of Training to end the perceived waste of resources and unresponsiveness to management’s concerns. CEOs are beginning to appreciate that the performance of their organizations is going to make more and more of a competitive difference in the years ahead. And without effective support to improve human

performance and productivity, their organizations . . . and their strategic plans . . . will be in trouble.

Commonplace scenarios such as this illustrate the reality that the Training function is at a crossroads that will determine its future. Some predict that Training will die and a new support function will be born to focus on workforce performance and productivity. Others see Training already at work to reinvent itself,

yet fear that the changes and results are not sufficiently visible to avert management’s seizure of the situation and launch of a full-scale restructuring.

Will the Training function be the vehicle for meeting today’s organizational challenges, or will the torch be passed to others who can deliver what is needed to support a knowledge and service workforce? Has Training even heard the wake-up call?

## II. PATHS FOR CHANGE

Alignment—allying oneself with one side of a cause or sharing an objective with another person—has become increasingly important to business success. With competitive pressures what they are today, it may be impossible for a business to survive unless every part of its organization is allied and working collaboratively toward the same goal.

For business, a good metaphor for alignment might be a tug-of-war. Alignment is a matter of being on the same end of the rope. And if you are not pulling with management, then essentially you are pulling against it.

No longer can businesses get away with building empires of staff and services that don’t add value. Moreover, internal service functions are competing for resources based on which services add the greatest value.

Staff support services add the greatest value when they are exactly what the circumstances warrant. A service is out of alignment to the extent that it is not 100 percent effective in doing what is needed to support management.

Many Training leaders simply do not recognize that they are operating out of alignment with the management they are charged to serve. And one can be certain that subordinates who experience this misalignment firsthand will not seriously challenge leadership’s misperception. External appraisal and feedback are usually required.

Once Training leadership gets an accurate picture of the function’s misalignment, it generally takes little effort for the staff to commit to change. More often, the staff has simply been waiting for the leaders to acknowledge that Training’s traditional approach is not working.

It frequently happens that proven managers from business operations are assigned to replace unresponsive Training leaders. After a brief period for them to learn about improving human performance, the changes they are able to make are often

dramatic. Because these new leaders naturally focus on what is helpful and value-adding to the business, they are able to break out of the limitations of traditional training methods and to begin working with clients in more meaningful ways.

**Commitment to Change**

Managers ask for training to fix their organizational problems but generally resist the time and expense it requires because training never really seems to work anyway. When asked, managers estimate that 80 to 90 percent of all training produces no observable change in behavior or performance.

So why do managers consistently turn to training to solve people problems? Research indicates that managers continue to ask for “training” because that is what they learned to do . . . from MBA programs, from the way they were treated, and from their experience as managers. Managers have been told in many ways that *training* is the generic solution for human performance problems. They know of few if any alternatives.

This is not so much management’s fault as it is the fault of the supporting functions such as Training and HR, from which management should expect guidance. The self-serving focus of these organizations has made them unwilling or slow to educate their management clients and to integrate post-industrial management knowledge and methods into their support. Furthermore, as long as Training persists in offering its simplistic solutions for human performance problems, this poor counsel virtually obstructs management from accessing accurate knowledge and more effective methods.

Only when the premise is accepted that training is not currently fulfilling its promise to improve human performance and to increase organizational productivity will new alternatives be considered. And the limited impact of training activity will be recognized only when alternatives are known and when Training is held accountable and is challenged for the results it creates.

**Creating Value**

The investment criterion for Training should be *value-added*—holding every dollar of investment in staff support services accountable for generating a greater worth to the organization.

The total value-added becomes the

<p><b>Value-Added Formula:</b></p> $\frac{\text{\$\$\$ Impact on performance}}{\text{\$ Consumption of resources}}$ <p>=</p> $\text{\$\$ Value-added}$ <p><i>Impact on performance</i> – the market value of the measurable difference in results that is facilitated by an improvement intervention.</p> <p><i>Consumption of resources</i> – the resources used to achieve an objective, including resources expended, wasted and destroyed.</p>
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final measure of the function’s work. More sophisticated companies then estimate the value-added for specific interventions in advance, and they expect a five- or ten-

**IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS**

- Competence** (traditional use) – an acquired capability as a reliable performer of a defined task (pl. – *competences*)
- Competency** (McClelland) – an inborn trait or enduring characteristic of personality that is a likely predictor of behavior (pl. – *competencies*)
- Education** – method to transfer knowledge in order to expand a person’s context for making appropriate choices
- Development** – method to facilitate increased personal or professional growth and capability leading to the greater achievement of individual potential
- Intervention** – method to create constructive change in a person, group or entire organization . . . typically a broad-based or “whole-system” initiative
- Learning** (traditional use) – to acquire existing knowledge leading to a change in behavior (indoctrination, standardization, orientation, etc.)
- Learning<sup>2</sup>** (Senge) – to create new knowledge by solving problems, innovating, etc. (discovery, innovation, creation, etc.)
- Performance** – a relative measure of achievement that must be defined to be meaningful . . . accomplishing a set objective
- Productivity** – a comparative measure of human-resource efficiency . . . the total value of product or service outputs divided by direct or total human-resource inputs
- Training** – method to transfer the capability to perform a standardized task . . . a popular method of organizational control

times yield of value-added for every dollar to be invested. Most important, value-added will focus Training leaders and staff on a path to greater impact and credibility.

Some Training practitioners will resist this new level of accountability, preferring to retain older systems of evaluation that are less coupled to business operations. This concern is driven as much by a fear of the measure’s unforgiving nature as it is by a simple lack of knowledge about how to calculate value-added and then use the data in planning work and designing services. In today’s competitive market, however, accountability is no longer an option.

Those that have made the transition to value-added as a measure of impact find that its pursuit is an opportunity more than it is a problem to be solved. It provides a solid management-accepted measure of Training’s contribution and achievement, and a pathway for enhancing Training’s credibility.

Rather than asking, “How do I get management to see the value in training?” Training practitioners need to ask, “How can I value the work and challenges of management and better support them?” Only then will Training practitioners finally come to the realization that companies need a fundamental rethinking of how they utilize training.

**III. IMPROVING PERFORMANCE**

With the publishing of Peter F. Drucker’s *The Practice of Management* in 1954, management finally became a *discipline*—a

formal methodology on the means to obtain economic results. Though initially based on a stable and centralized view of bureaucratic operations made institutional during WWII, this was a powerful first step toward the evolution of a research-based and field-proven science of management.

Since then, there has been a virtual explosion of helpful knowledge and theories regarding almost every feature of enterprise. Among these scientific frontiers, the emergence of organizational knowledge has been fueled in part by the anticipation that human capital would soon prove to be the ultimate source of sustainable competitive advantage.

To date, however, executives and managers have benefited little from the new methods for achieving organizational effectiveness. Among the reasons for this is that most Training and HR functions are substantially under informed regarding this often-complex knowledge, and they persist with self-serving myopia in defending and practicing outdated methods.

True, these staff functions are hampered overall by a lack of sophistication and limited technical support from their trusted professional organizations —often the first place a staff practitioner looks for up-to-date knowledge in the field. These institutions have been ineffective at supporting the real work of their constituents, preferring an agenda filled with self-promotion and entertainment in lieu of the serious development of technical expertise and capability required today.

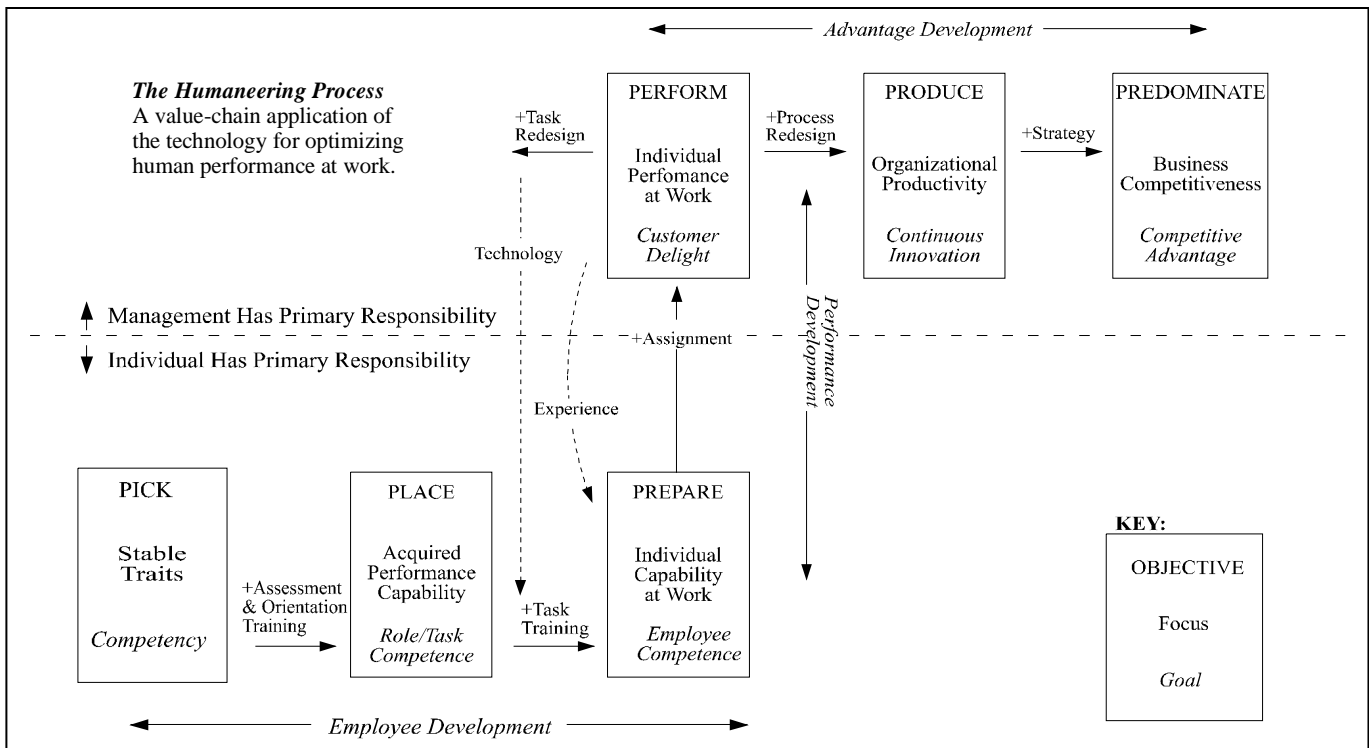
To access this new knowledge and learn what’s possible, managers have had to go outside their organization’s internal resources. In part, this practice explains the accelerated expansion in the number of books written for managers, many of which are written to teach managers the many issues and new methods proven to impact organizational performance.

But what manager has the time to read hundreds of books, much less to integrate their content into a sound strategic approach? Anyway, isn’t that supposed to be the work of the staff functions . . . functions like Training?

For Training (or whatever name you give the function once it is transformed) to provide more effective guidance and intervention services to management, it will need to work with the complete technology (i.e., technical knowledge and methods) for optimizing human work systems. Without it, managers and their firm’s performance will surely suffer from a disconnected handling of related people issues. Experience shows that such decisions easily and often become costly barriers to success somewhere else in the enterprise . . . when it is no longer possible to correct the mistake or to see who is responsible.

Imagine the costly results when well-intentioned staff members . . .

1. Do not understand what kinds of people are best suited to the organization’s work.
2. Do not hire people with the right attitude and general capability or hire people who do not find the work meaningful.
3. Fail to adequately prepare people for the work they will attempt to perform and the organizational environment to which they must adapt.



4. Do not provide people with tasks that are designed and supported for top performance.
5. Do not provide a motivating environment or engineer processes for high productivity.
6. Do not recognize their organization's potential to establish a competitive advantage.

Any one of these omissions will reduce a company's performance, productivity and competitive standing. Furthermore, the compound effect of two or more can be costly, potentially establishing a competitive disadvantage.

### Humaneering's Vital Linkage

*Humaneering*, the new applied science of human work systems, provides the best overview of this knowledge. It demonstrates the interrelationships between the myriad of elements and issues involved, and it integrates this detail into a helpful process algorithm for designing high-performance human work systems. (See figure.)

The humaneering process systematically focuses management on six major parts, or subsystems, of the overall human work system within any enterprise. This *whole-system* perspective helps managers and human-performance professionals to make sense of organizational challenges and the many scientific theories for addressing them. It also guides managers in determining the most appropriate new roles for staff support in order to maximize the human-resource contribution in post-industrial organizations.

These six subsystems also represent six stages in the process for optimizing human work-system performance. Named for their central *objective*—as well as for easy reference—as *Pick*, *Place*, *Prepare*, *Perform*, *Produce* and *Predominate*, each stage has a principal *focus* and *goal* within the process. And though people intuitively

relate to the process flowing from left to right, optimal results are achieved with design and implementation flowing from right to left.

A brief review of the process, though oversimplifying the complexity and challenge involved, clarifies the important linkage and interrelatedness between the stages.

#### Employee Development Phase:

*Pick* – Select the right types of people based on their stable traits.

*Place* – Situate people in appropriate roles they find meaningful.

*Prepare* – Prepare newly placed people to fully meet the performance standards of their assigned roles.

#### Advantage Development Phase:

*Perform* – Fully support workers to provide consistently high-quality work in their roles.

*Produce* – Provide a change-ready environment that supports continuous innovation.

*Predominate* – Make organizational competitive advantage the #1 corporate strategy.

#### Performance Development Phase:

Links the *Prepare* and *Perform* stages to best meet performance objectives.

Research backed by field experience has demonstrated that the humaneering process, and the six stages of which it is comprised, include the variables that account for approximately 96 percent of management's opportunity to impact human work performance.

No doubt even the least-informed managers take *some* of these variables into account in designing and managing their organizations. However, in the typical major corporation (e.g., *Fortune 100*), less than 15 to 25 percent of this opportunity is effectively managed. More often, human work performance is approached with objectives that are unclear, priority that is

insufficient, process that is out of alignment, methodology that is ineffective, and implementation that is too haphazard to be truly effective. The opportunity for performance and productivity improvement is staggering, yet the knowledge to develop this opportunity remains blocked by yesterday's technology and by functions better served by traditional practices.

### Organizational Competitive Advantage

Emerging organizational technology must be sought after in the context of many sciences—economics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, education, medicine and engineering, to name several. Yet the accessibility, format and jargon of academic journals do not well serve executives and managers, who have little time for such reading. Nor does it well serve the functional specialists who must integrate and make this knowledge intelligible for management.

These factors contribute to the importance of the new applied science, humaneering. It holds the promise of clarifying and enhancing a manager's understanding of how to optimize human work systems . . . a process that begins not with the hiring of employees but with the establishment of an objective for organizational competitive advantage (the *Predominate* stage).

Achieving organizational competitive advantage is contingent on this objective becoming a top corporate strategy. Historically, strategic prowess has been ascribed to external characteristics that were inherent in a company's industry or markets. Today, however, the dominant presence of knowledge and service work in companies has made organization members a new source of market advantage.

Research into the financial success of companies in recent years demonstrates that company-specific organizational factors . . .

1. Contribute to profits substantially independent of economic factors (e.g., cost, price, market share, etc.).
2. Contribute to profits at twice the profit rates of economic factors.
3. Are available to firms without limitation for their industry or market.
4. Have superior advantages for sustainability (e.g., difficult to detect and copy).

### Increasing Productivity

Productivity improvement is highly contingent on people . . . it requires human ingenuity, it affects the design of human work, and it depends on the implementation support of organization members. Managers are expected to provide the direction and support for workers so they can increase productivity. However, without an environment of priority and assistance, even the best workers are likely to expend minimum effort to accomplish their work and will have little interest in making changes.

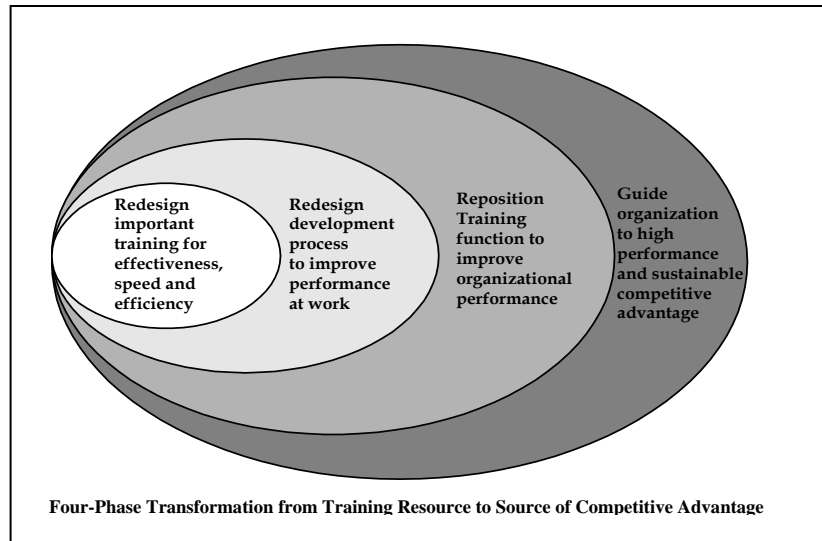
Improving the productivity of knowledge and service workers will be a new and formidable challenge for today's management. Unlike factory labor, whose productivity increased through management's investment in continuous automation of tasks, the new workforce will achieve productivity gains through management's investment in the work environment.

This difference can be attributed to the nature of today's work, with its greater emphasis on professional disciplines, tacit knowledge (i.e., experience), cognitive ability, relationship skills and discretionary effort. Moreover, today's knowledge and service workers own their *means of production*, whereas machine laborers had to look to employers to provide it. It should be no surprise that Taylor's standardization strategies have proven themselves largely ineffective for today's workforce and its more sophisticated, human-dependent work.

Organizations are no longer simply a concern of human relations. For organization members to strive continually for productivity increases, managers will need to acquire a new appreciation for their organizations and for the fact that workers' contributions to productivity are discretionary—based on each worker's concerns, judgement and goodwill. Management will need to learn how to develop more conducive environments to facilitate high performance from knowledge and service workers.

### Working to a Higher Standard

All too often, efforts are made to improve performance without full understanding of (a) the objective, (b) the factors driving and constraining current



results, (c) the constructs for achieving the highest and best performance possible, or (d) an effective process for implementing needed changes. Work performance is not so simple a challenge as to be improved by training alone.

In most companies, the real performance constraint is work design, and no amount of effort by workers or pressure solely from managers will improve worker performance. During a century of machine work, managers have learned to view people as the cause of poor work performance . . . essentially reasoning that the machine (or process, procedure, system, etc.) would perform to specifications just so long as

people didn't screw it up. Ultimately, only changes to the work design will lead to substantial improvement.

Training practitioners will be more effective if they understand the elements involved in improving performance. A systems perspective is an obvious tool to help them understand and appreciate the limited impact of

training on performance. And, if their role is shifted to consulting and problem solving, a systems perspective is essential to understanding humaneering technology and using it to accurately diagnose and effectively solve performance problems.

What becomes clear in considering the humaneering process is that learning, performance and productivity are not synonymous . . . they are not stimulated and supported with the same interventions, they do not occur naturally without directed effort, and they are not achieved simply as a result of training. Though training can play a role in this complex process, it is neither the only nor the principal intervention required. In some cases, training can be detrimental—raising costs, slowing the process, adding difficulty and lowering initial productivity.

### IV. Training Gets to Work

The challenge for the Training function is to support performance-centered development and the development of worker competence. Meeting this challenge may entail diagnosing needs for improvement, constructing performance models, facilitating performance-development contracts, supporting quality improvement and reengineering, or helping management transform the enterprise into a high-performance work system. This is the "new work" of corporate Training.

The potential for Training, when restructured as a Human Performance Improvement function, to contribute to the enterprise and its organization members, has never been greater or more important than it is today. However, to realize this potential, a transformation of the Training function is required so that its work can be conducted in the context of performance improvement. This is Training's opportunity . . . to expand its role and strategic influence.

Management is compelled, if current Training leadership doesn't move first, to launch a major strategic initiative to transform Training from an outdated resource to a potent source of competitive advantage. This transformation will undoubtedly lead to the restructuring of the function—rethinking and redefining its purpose, redesigning and reengineering its processes, and repositioning and redeploying its resources within the organizational structure. This initiative represents extraordinary potential for organizations and a more credible professional role for corporate Training.

Based on more than five years of supporting such transformations, a roadmap for restructuring the Training function has emerged. (See figure above.) Regardless of the path chosen, the future will ask Training practitioners to accept greater responsibility, act with greater accountability and perform with greater proficiency. By recognizing their responsibility and adopting the strategy outlined in *Future Training*, corporate Training practitioners will (a) best serve the needs of the new workforce, (b) earn the respect and trust of executives and line management and (c) secure a function with credibility and value-added.