



I M P A C T

Your Performance Improvement
Resource from BEI

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to your colleagues and friends as long as its contents are not changed. To subscribe or unsubscribe, see bottom of newsletter.

Performance Perspectives

Beyond Training: The Key to Business Success

The world has definitely embarked upon the knowledge era, and more and more organizations are realizing that people will be their most important resource in this era. Therefore, there is a growing emphasis on human capital as the fundamental determinant of economic growth and productivity. This emerging focus on people as a competitive advantage, combined with a growing dissatisfaction with traditional training processes and results, has many organizations looking for a different approach to improving human performance. A shift in focus from training to performance consulting is emerging as the approach of choice.

A focus on human performance improvement is not yet another fad or a new approach. This focus is grounded in the discipline of *Human Performance Technology* (HPT), which dates back to the 1950s. What is new, however, is the current level of interest in adopting this approach. As organizations learn more about performance consulting, they recognize the benefits of such a proactive approach for addressing contemporary business needs.

Improving human performance involves an analytical and systematic approach to identify the barriers that prevent people from performing at their best and contributing to the success of the organization. Applying HPT, companies can create solutions that quickly and efficiently remove the barriers to great performance so people can achieve their full potential.

Benefits of Performance Consulting

A focus on performance is much different than a focus on training.

Performance consulting requires the application of HPT, a systematic, comprehensive, and analytical approach to solving performance problems in the workplace. HPT is concerned with desired outcomes and measures, and the best solutions for achieving them.

One key benefit of performance consulting is the linkage of performance requirements to business goals and strategies. Focusing on business needs ensures that the performance consultant works in a strategic and proactive manner, rather than in a tactical, reactive manner.

Traditional Training Services

- Identify training needs
- Design and develop training programs and other structured learning experiences
- Deliver training
- Train trainers to assure delivery quality
- Evaluate training at the reaction and learning levels

Performance Consulting Services

- All items in the left column
- Consult/partner with managers on business and performance needs
- Proactively identify performance implications for current business needs and strategic objectives
- Create performance and competency models
- Identify performance gaps
- Determine root causes of performance gaps
- Identify and develop non-training interventions
- Measure the impact of training and non-training actions on performance

Traditionally, senior managers look to trainers to “fix” their people problems. However, because of training’s typical lack of linkage to business and performance needs, it is seldom the answer. When training initiatives are unsuccessful in their efforts to improve human performance or solve business problems, senior management becomes disillusioned, which often accounts for their lack of support for training. From a performance perspective, training alone is seldom the correct solution to a performance problem. In fact, training is the sole solution to a performance problem in only 20% of cases. However, training could be one of the many solutions utilized when building a performance improvement plan.

Performance consulting is concerned with only those solutions that remove the barriers to great performance and allow the organization to achieve its desired business results. Such barriers can include a lack of:

- Environment support, resources, or tools
- Data, information, or feedback
- Consequences, incentives, or rewards
- Skills and knowledge
- Motivation and expectations

Another key benefit of performance consulting is its emphasis on partnerships. The performance consultant works hand in hand with various departments and managers in the organization to define and align business, performance, learning, and work environment needs. This type of partnership facilitates the commitment of senior management to the performance goals being pursued, and results in the performance improvement plan being viewed as an investment rather than a cost.

Making the Performance Transition

Transitioning a traditional training department into a performance consulting department needs to be treated as a major change initiative since it will reflect a change in the way that the organization addresses business and performance problems. Change management principles, methods, and tools should be applied to this initiative in order to minimize resistance and ensure successful alignment, implementation, and use of the new approach.

Applying change management methodology to this transition will:

- Define the business case for transitioning from training to performance consulting.
- Identify potential areas of resistance to the new approach.
- Define who needs to be involved in this initiative and at which stages.
- Describe how this change will fit into the organization's overall business strategy and its current change initiatives.
- Define what the desired state will look like, e.g., the new structure, positions, skills, and competencies that will be required for performance consulting, and the products and services that will be delivered to the organization by the new department.
- Generate the most appropriate transition plan for your organization. Some organizations will have buy in and support, others will not; some organizations will have HPT competencies already in-house, others will not, and some organizations will have the resources to make this change all at one time, others may need to use a phased approach. Your plan should clearly identify what your organization needs to do to make this transition successful.

In addition, using a change management approach will quickly engage those trainers who will become a part of the new approach in a real performance improvement project! Since change management is one of the key competencies of a performance consultant, what better way to learn than by participating?

Moving to performance consulting is not a simple, quick change. It requires a change to mindset and culture as well as approach, and it will require time and resources beyond your training department. Some experts indicate a 3 to 5 year transition time. Make sure that this change is right for your organization and that you have the proper resources established both internally and externally.

How to Benefit from HPT without Making the Transition

If your organization is not in a position to make the transition from training to a performance focus, there are some things you can do to increase your organization's awareness of this new approach and to ensure that you receive some of the benefits of a performance focus. These include:

- When working with external consultants, make sure that they have expertise in HPT. This will ensure that your company benefits from a focus on performance and outcomes rather than just skills and knowledge.
- Prioritize current performance improvement projects based on those that will have the greatest impact on business goals and results. Next, hire a performance consultant to conduct a performance analysis of your most pressing performance problem(s). This performance analysis will determine the performance gap, identify causes (rather than symptoms), and recommend appropriate solutions. Using the results of this performance analysis, you can propose to your senior executives the most relevant and cost-effective solutions for eliminating performance problem. As an added bonus, you will learn about the steps involved in conducting a performance analysis for future projects.
- There are several seminars and workshops on the market that address HPT processes, methods, and tools. However, it is important for organizations to recognize that while

these events can heighten HPT skills and knowledge, as stated earlier it takes much more to transition from a training focus to a performance improvement focus.

Whichever tactic you take to HPT, full-scale transition or integration of concepts and tools over time, performance consulting is a proven approach to leveraging human capital in order to achieve business success. The ultimate benefit is a highly focused, effective workforce moving your organization closer and closer to its vision and goals.

BEI offers consulting, coaching, workshops, and presentations on Human Performance Technology. Contact us at 248.625.8100 to discuss how we can help your company make the transition from training to performance consulting.

Lessons Learned

Topic: Overcoming Resistance to Change

Here are some lessons that we learned from helping clients with major change initiatives:

- Expect resistance, even from where you least expect it!
- Understand and address resistance so that it is minimized or eliminated
- Be sure that any change undertaken is meaningful and not just change for the sake of change
- Strong sponsorship is required at all levels of the organization for the success of a change initiative
- Find ways to include everyone in the change initiative as early on as possible
- Define and communicate the expectations associated with the change
- Sponsors and change agents will have their own “issues” with the change that need to be addressed before they can be effective change leaders
- Address the benefits of the change at all levels of the organization
- Communicate what will happen if the change is not successful—make the case compelling so that there is no doubt that the change is necessary
- Showcase successes no matter how small or insignificant they may seem
- Solicit feedback and suggestions for improving the change process

Marketplace

Individual and Organizational Effectiveness

Creating productive communication and relationships

The foundation of personal and professional success lies in understanding yourself and others, and in realizing the impact of personal behavior on others. For nearly 30 years, organizations have been using the *Personal Profile System* to improve performance in a wide variety of applications.

The *Personal Profile System* is a multilevel instrument that uses the DiSC[®] Dimensions of Behavior learning approach. DiSC[®] provides a nonjudgmental language for exploring behavioral issues and enables people to explore behaviors across four dimensions: Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness. The *Personal Profile System* helps individuals assess how much they use each dimension of behavior in a particular situation. The instrument then provides feedback designed to help people in your organization:

- Discover behavioral strengths
- Build productive teams
- Train a powerful sales force
- Improve customer service
- Ease frustration and conflict

The *Personal Profile System* is available in print and online formats. Contact **BEI** at 248.625.8100 or pdarin@beinc-online.com for more information about this powerful performance improvement tool.

Worthy Web Sites

<http://www.mindtools.com> *Understand and Excel at Essential Job Skills and Techniques.* Whether you want to enhance your present repertoire of job skills or develop better job search skills, this site offers a treasure chest of articles and tools. Find information about mastering complexity, decision-making, controlling stress, time management, creativity and memory improvement and job hunting.

<http://www.epinions.com> *Make Informed Buying Decisions.* A single source for unbiased advice, personalized recommendations, and comparative shopping.

© BEI Consulting. All Rights Reserved. **IMPACT** is a monthly publication from BEI Consulting. Email feedback and comments to info@beinc-online.com.

To Subscribe or Unsubscribe:

<http://www.beinc-online.com/newsletter.html>

Or contact: Paula Darin, Marketing Manager at pdarin@beinc-online.com

To learn more about BEI visit <http://www.beinc-online.com>