

under the  
BONNET



From  
Training & Development  
to  
Learning & Longevity

The huge change that's gone unnoticed!

**totus consulting services (p) limited**



# for a cause...

## SANKALP

Sankalp is a special needs school with a far-sighted vision of providing a platform to children with special needs so as to enhance their overall development and evolve them into fully independent individuals.

The name Sankalp in Sanskrit has multiple meanings like 'will', 'purpose' and holds true to the motto of the school.

Sankalp had its humble beginning in 1999 under the able guidance of the Sankalp Trust, a non-profit organisation. Started initially with a handful of children with learning disability, with the purpose of providing them remedial help on a part time basis, the school has grown in leaps and bounds over the years.

Sankalp currently caters to the needs of

- 80 full time students (30 children with learning difficulties and 50 children with ADHD and autism) and
- Children with similar special needs, on a part time basis.

These children come from varied socio-economic backgrounds and require different degrees of intervention. This throws up many challenges in terms of mobilising resources and giving extended support to the children and their parents.

Sankalp caters to children with

- Learning Disabilities
- ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder), a hidden handicap affecting about 10% of school going children. This disability causes many children to be low achievers and school dropouts.
- Autism and Aspergers Syndrome, a disorder which affects communication and social skills.

The school provides these children with multiple facilities that are targeted at bringing about a global development in the children. These include cognitive enhancement, educational remediation through varied learning strategies, individual education programmes, multimedia and computer based teaching, art and music therapy, vocational training etc.

The school has in its capacity to provide children with different study options:

- A full time intervention at the school,
- A part time remedial help,
- A pull-out programme, where the child comes from the mainstream school to Sankalp for a minimum period of one year for remedial education and after certification, goes back to the previous school to appear as a private candidate in the Board exam.

Other current activities include:

- Different Strokes, a workshop for mainstream teachers
- Sib Shop, a workshop for siblings of children with special needs
- Regular counselling and treatment based talks for parents by professionals
- Networking with mainstream schools

At Sankalp, there is no compromise when it comes to quality care of the child.

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**For further details:** Call Mrs. Subhasani at 26182588 or contact her at 'Sankalp', Plot No. 1587, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Anna Nagar, Chennai.

Dear Friends

It gives me great pleasure to come back to you with the next issue of Under the Bonnet.

“From Training & Development to Learning & Longevity - The huge change that's gone unnoticed” is the theme of this issue!

Our readers have always appreciated the fact that we have constantly attempted to pick up and examine emergent issues in the field of Human Resources that are of concern to business leaders and HR professionals.

We wrote about Coaching at a time when Coaching was just being recognised as a useful mechanism. Between then and now, we have seen significant action on the ground in this area. We wrote about Employee Loyalty and we are seeing significant public opinion around the changing employee contract and the relevance of loyalty the way we understood it. In fact Employment 2010, our research project validated this.

We wrote about why Employee Relations should live on and we are seeing Business Leaders grappling with fears of white collar activism and unprecedented levels of attrition and therefore realising the value of bringing back an employee relations orientation to Human Resources Management.

This issue makes a similar attempt at leading thought about an issue that is at the core of Organisations - the shift from Training to Learning.

We believe there is urgent need for Organisations to reexamine their current approach to Training & Development against the new business and labour market context. There is need to do more but differently. There is need for rethinking about the fundamentals.

This issue of UTB makes a small contribution to help initiate thinking in this direction.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of UTB and would be delighted to hear from you.

Warm Regards



Ganesh Chella

*Dear CEO,*

Do you have a Training department that is not able to support accomplishment of business results and operational excellence?

Do you believe that there are many areas of learning that remain unaddressed by your current training Organisation?

*Dear Chief Human Resources Officer,*

Is your training manager continuing to struggle with getting nominations for programs and seeking your intervention all the time?

Does the quality of your induction process continue to figure as an area of dissatisfaction?

Are you struggling to secure buy-in for training?

The truth is, there is urgent need to reinvent your approach to training.

Take a hard look at the world around you, the new Organisation realities and challenges and changes that have taken place and you will find our suggestion valid.

You might also do well to spend the next few minutes reading this article - it may hold some insight about what your new learning centre and learning facilitator should look like.

## Symptoms

To help understand this better, it would be useful to go back in time - maybe two decades (in some cases, maybe valid even today).

“Training needs assessment” was usually a favourite summer trainee project - something that the Organisation did quite religiously.

The task took about three months to complete. It required us to go over performance appraisal forms in detail, collate feedback and then group it. Employees were also asked to share their own expectations and wish lists. Managers were also asked to prioritise these.

A detailed report was then prepared and presented to Senior Management. Don't forget, Senior Management

was never part of this - call it selflessness or call it pride. There was very little training planned for Senior Management. Of course, if at all, it had to be overseas to be worthy of his or her seniority.

Calendars would be prepared, trainers identified (in line with today's outsourcing nomenclature, they are now called vendors!) and programs run.

Of course, there were those mandatory training evaluation forms. By rating the program as poor, participants were almost always absolved of learning and the poor trainer was sacked!

In bad times, the training budget was cut. In most satisfaction surveys, employees asked for more training.

Records and metrics in terms of man days of training were almost always well maintained. Certification and assessment depended on it and business leaders needed to look at it.

While a lot has changed, the traditional approach to training has not.

While we seem to recognise a lot of the change taking place within and outside the organisation, the huge shift from Training & Development to Learning & Longevity seems to have gone virtually unnoticed.

## Evidence

Is this just some bold provocative statement or is this indeed the truth? Let's look at some ground realities.

Organisations are finding it increasingly difficult to find training solutions for many of today's workplace challenges. Retail skills and key account selling skills are just two examples. In fact, a recent advertisement from Mercuri calls for Coaches and not trainers.

External training program nominations have been falling in recent years, especially in non-technical areas. Professional members of ISABS (Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Sciences), for instance, have been involved in a lot of reflection to address the issue of static and sometimes falling numbers in their annual events.

Even leading business schools that offer intensive “Management and Leadership Development Programs” are looking at issues of “re-entry” and ways of making bridging and back-home application possible.

The *average* price of an *average* trainer has remained static (at about Rs. 15,000 a day) for a long long time!

The truth is that the organisational context and the labour market context has undergone dramatic changes. These changes have only led to an ever increasing confusion about the role and value of the traditional approach to training and development.

Organisations and their training departments need to be alive to these new realities.

This edition of UTB tries to unravel this change and provide as much clarity as is possible about the subject today.

This issue focuses on two core aspects:

- ◆ Understanding what is driving this change in learning
- ◆ Presenting the new learning paradigm as we see it

We also have a special section aimed at the individual learner. Here we introduce the connection between intelligence and learning, address the issues of assessing learning ability and finally offer some advice on how individuals can learn in a Do-It-Yourself world.

Given the breadth and complexity of the subject, we have tried to give you as wide a perspective as possible on the subject. As always, we have provided our readers with a framework that they can apply to their own workplace situation.

## WHAT'S DRIVING THIS CHANGE IN LEARNING?

Five major reasons come to our mind.

### 1. The New Relationships at Work and the Consequent Labour Market Dynamics

That the traditional relationship between employers and employees has changed is now firmly accepted. Several futurologists have written about it. Charles Handy has been talking about it for a long time now.

Professor Peter Cappelli, George W Taylor Professor of Management and Director of the Centre for Human Resources, The Wharton School has in his book, "The New Deal at Work" dealt with the impact of these changes on training and development.

Simply put, market forces have led Organisations to abandon some of their traditional beliefs about managing people. These beliefs were valid when they could insulate employees from the risks of the enterprise.

Once this insulation was not possible, Organisations have begun to talk about a new deal.

Employees have also responded by redefining their orientation to loyalty, security and skill acquisition (Read our July 2003 issue on Employee Loyalty for more).

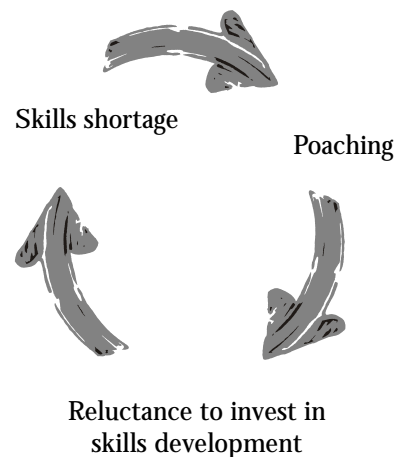
Add to this the increasing demand for talent fuelled by economic activity across the globe and you have a potentially disastrous situation.

Professor Cappelli describes this well.

The skills shortage has led to the "never before" phenomenon of organisations hiring in large numbers laterally (read poaching).

Continued levels of poaching has increased Organisations' reluctance to invest more than the bare minimum in skill development for the fear of losing trained people.

This continuously diminishing investment in skill development is further fueling the skills shortage leading to more poaching ... the game goes on.



In the new arrangement, Organisations have begun to tell the employees that they are responsible for their career development and their learning.

## 2. The Big Divide

For many years now, Organisations have been disillusioned with the returns on their training investments. Many have invested in making the measurement more sophisticated rather than looking at the real issues.

The real issue is that there is an ever-increasing divide between the classroom and workplace realities. The effect is felt most in addressing learning in market facing areas, customer facing areas and employee facing areas.

The challenge of selling products and solutions to customers with ever-changing needs and expectations are hardly captured by most traditional training solutions. The connection is seldom made.

The challenge of managing employees with ever-changing values and beliefs and far more external influences is seldom captured in a traditional classroom setting.

The Organisation building challenges are so unique that a simple program just does not seem to be adequate.

The truth is that learning to manage these challenges needs to go well beyond training solutions that we have used this far.

## 3. Manager Missing

For far too long, we have kept the learner's manager out of the learning process.

Neither is he present when the learner takes off, nor is he present when he reenters. This creates such a huge disconnect that the investment is certain to fail. This is true for a learner learning a simple skill. This is even truer for the learner attending the AMP at Harvard.

Without the Manager's involvement, the learning is not set in context and the learner is not supported in back home application.

## 4. Short Shelf Life

Yet another factor that is driving the change in learning is the faster obsolescence of what is learnt, especially in the area of job skills. This places a huge demand on Organisations and individuals to acquire new skills almost all the time.

## 5. The new values & beliefs influencing Learning

As long as job security came from being employed, Organisations seemed to treat employees like school children when it came to learning.

They needed to be pushed into learning situations, monitored and tested. The fundamental assumption was that it was the Organisation's responsibility to create the climate that would motivate the employee to learn.

The shift from security to employability has had a significant impact on the values & beliefs of employees and employers towards learning.

Employees look at learning & education as their insurance to employability. In fact, employees are even willing to invest their own resources to accomplish this goal.

Organisations on their part are now holding out the "offer for learning" and are leaving it to employees to choose what and when they want to learn.

Another important shift is the fact that learning is no longer seen as a reward. It is seen as a much more egalitarian process with significantly wider access for all employees.

## THE NEW LEARNING PARADIGM

Against this backdrop, we at totus see a bold new paradigm emerging. The paradigm may seem futuristic but has already arrived, in many ways!

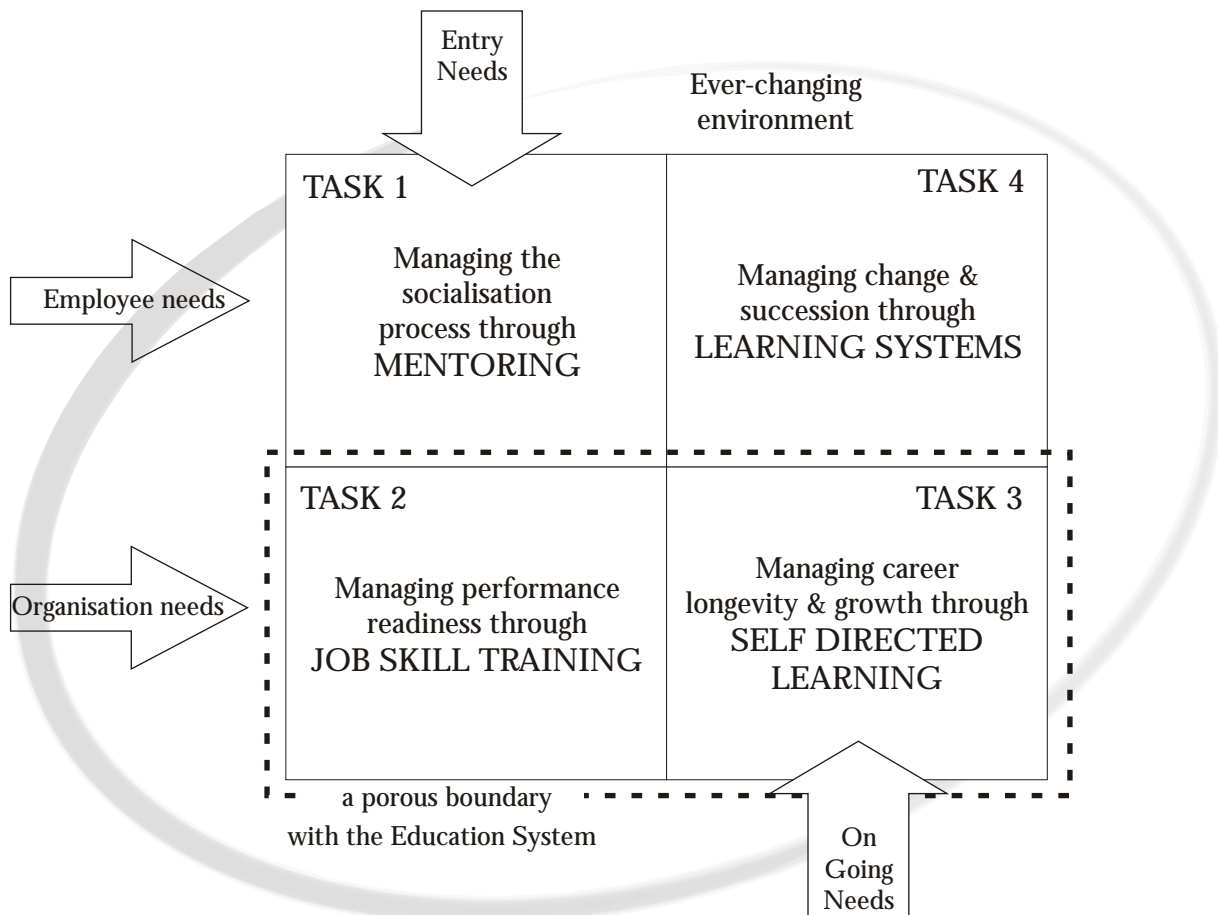
The new paradigm of learning is much more than just training & development. From a single mechanism aimed at solving many needs, 4 clear tasks have now begun to emerge.

The key characteristics are that employee needs & responsibilities are balanced by clear organisational needs and responsibilities.

Similarly, the tasks at the entry stage are clearly delineated from the tasks at later stages.

It must be emphasised here that the employee does not necessarily mean the one employed by the organisation but means the one who works for the organisation!

# THE NEW LEARNING PARADIGM



## ENTRY NEEDS

There are two tasks at the entry stage.

### Task 1: Managing the Socialisation process through Mentoring

For many years now, Organisations have carried the cross for the perceived poor quality of new employee induction. Employees have always blamed the HR function for not inducting them well into the Organisation. Under the all encompassing banner of induction was included the basics like information about the Organisation, its people policies and processes, the more serious issues of socialisation into the human Organisation and finally the support to succeed in one's role.

Given the large numbers in which modern Organisations are hiring and the shorter tenures that these employees are serving, the future will be very different.

The first need for information will almost entirely be met through technology in the form of the intranet and other self-help sources. Given its content intensity and the fast

changes, this seems to be the only way.

The need for support to succeed is a lot more serious and is being dealt with as a separate task.

Let's look at the socialisation process.

More and more Organisations are recognising the power of mentoring in managing this process. Those that understand it well are putting it to good use.

To get the understanding right - Mentoring is not the same as Coaching. Coaching is focused on performance improvement. Mentoring on the other hand is quite often an informal relationship meant to guide, pass on wisdom and give solutions and quite often aimed at deciphering the politics and helping find one's place.

Organisations are emphasizing the use of mentoring especially in providing leadership to young individual contributors in the early days of their Organisational life. Mentoring becomes especially valuable in jobs that are customer facing and where the lack of socialisation can have serious consequences.

Increasingly, existing senior employees will, as a part of their jobs, be required to mentor new employees - this will be a job requirement and not something extra that they may do.

### Task 2: Managing performance readiness through Job Skill Training

This is one area that is seeing the most change.

In many of the traditional businesses, the educational courses provided a fair amount of job skills. Think of an ITI or a DME or a Diploma in Hotel Management. The fit was almost immediate.

This cannot be said of many of the newer businesses. Be it a sewing machine operator, retail sales person, a call centre agent or a sales professional or even a software engineer - job skills are just not provided by the educational institutions.

From a small garment exporter to a large call centre, everyone is investing in training their front line employees to equip him or her with the basic job skills necessary for quality output. Similarly most service businesses provide their employees with training to prepare them to deliver quality and bring about task standardisation. While the quality and effectiveness of such training may still leave much to be desired, Organisations are clearly taking onus for this start-up skilling.

Maybe the gap between what our educational system produces and what industry needs is what is fuelling this effort on the part of Organisations.

Training at this level is also seen as a necessary measure of process maturity in most quality / process assessment systems like CMMI and so on.

On the other hand, training at higher paid entry-level jobs is getting hazier and hazier. Most management trainee programs are increasingly focusing on on-the-job training and do not necessarily include any form of classroom training. Maybe driven by high entry-level pay, most Organisations expect these new entrants to be able to plug and play.

### ON-GOING NEEDS

It is beyond the entry stage that things are becoming hazy and uncertain. While Organisations are investing in building job skills out of customer pressure, they are not doing this a little beyond the entry stage.

In fact, even employees seem to get lost at this stage. Having acquired job skills they are far more marketable now than ever before. They also see the need to keep themselves abreast with whatever is new but they don't have a clear road map of what and how.

This is where the future will be significantly different from the past.

Two tasks will clearly emerge, one initiated by the employee and the other by the Organisation.

Let's start with the one initiated by the employee.

### Task 3: Managing Career longevity & growth through Self-Directed Learning

With the shift from security to employability, employees are clearly looking towards learning as their insurance to increase the life of their careers.

Organisations will increasingly prefer a younger and less expensive workforce, as the pressure of profitability keeps tightening its noose. The ensuing slower growth of jobs for older employees than before would cause them to battle to enhance their career longevity.

On the other hand, the younger workforce will work harder to keep their jobs and also constantly pursue learning.

At this stage, learning will take different forms.

- ❖ At the very basic, employees will keep acquiring new skills, certifications and qualifications, paid by their Organisations or funded by themselves.
- ❖ Employees will also change jobs if they believe that their current jobs are not likely to offer learning opportunities and keep them competent.
- ❖ Employees will seek out internal job changes to give themselves additional exposure.
- ❖ Employees will also become part of a large number of e-groups and forums through which they can stay in touch with what is happening.
- ❖ Many others will actively network with their peers.
- ❖ Employees will also begin to seek out professional career counselling help.

## What ails our engineering education an IT industry perspective

Mr. R Narayanan and Ms. S Neethi, from Corporate Learning & Development, TCS had prepared a white paper on "Creating Human Resources for Information Technology - A Systemic Study". They have identified three critical capabilities that are necessary for the industry but not imparted by the current educational system. Their views are extremely insightful.

### HOLISTIC APPROACH

There is an urgent need to train our students in taking a holistic approach to the problem. This presupposes the ability to identify factors contributing to the complexity of a problem on hand. Dependence on conventional methods of tackling complexity through "Divide and conquer" methods are not adequate. Most of the time the gap lies in interfaces that connect the components of a problem. Problems of today are so complex that a simple reductionist thinking in terms of Cause - Effect will not work. The holistic approach would reveal characteristics of a problem not shared by any individual component or subsystem. Systems Engineering provides the right mindset to dwell on the problem without being biased by implementation details. A mindset is created to recognise the stakeholders who would be affected by the solution, their peculiar needs and constraints. Just as IT is used as an enabler of business, systems thinking ought to become an enabler in the making of the IT professional.

### ABSTRACTION

We need to train our students in practicing abstraction. Abstraction not only generalises the problem but removes unnecessary details in the beginning. We need skills to separate signal from noise and grain from chaff. During the school curriculum this ability is inculcated when students model a variety of problems by means of simultaneous linear equations. Once they are trained in abstraction, they realize that they have not only solved the given problem but a whole class of problems that get reduced to the same set of equations (isomorphic problems, as mathematicians call them). However, during their college life these abilities are not developed further. Instead they get engrossed in glamorous technology aspects. An ability to abstract leads to greater "reuse" at higher levels of deliverables and increases productivity. The practice of reusing code has been in existence for a long time; the Scientific Subroutines Library or the Library of Classes in Object Oriented Programming environments are classic examples. But higher-end deliverables such as specifications, designs and test plans need the ability of abstraction for being reused. Abstraction is an elegant tool to handle variety and it is variety that manifests as complexity. When India becomes a big consumer of IT, we may be forced to devise mechanisms whereby we don't keep reinventing wheels.

### LOGIC AND MATHEMATICS

At this point of time the whole industry is searching for methods and techniques whereby a software product could be built with guarantees on its performance rather than disclaimers as we see today. A consolidated foundation on subjects such as logic and discrete mathematics is essential for today's IT professionals. They should be in a position to capture users' requirements using mathematical or logical constructs and establish behavioural properties even before embarking on design / implementation. The aeronautics industry is known best for its large-scale deployment of mathematical modeling and simulation. Our brilliant students claim that they can do their "best". We want them to first understand WHAT is to be done and THEN do it in the best manner.

*R. Narayanan is Vice President, Corporate Learning & Development, Tata Consultancy Services. Narayanan can be contacted at r.narayanan@tcs.com*

### The increasingly porous boundary between education and industry

What is common between the second stage and the third stage is the fact that both employees and Organisations will seek out a much closer relationship with the education system. In other words, the boundary between education and industry will become more and more porous.

To begin with, employees will start accessing the labour market at a much earlier age for part-time and full-time opportunities.

With a few years of experience, employees will begin to look at adding new skills and qualifications either in line

with their original choice or even in completely new areas.

Organisations are also beginning to leverage this flexibility and coming up with innovative staffing programs that help them catch employees young with the promise of earning and learning and then growing!

For instance, organisations like Wipro and Covansys have programs of this kind in collaboration with educational institutions like BITS, Pilani.

Do we have a US in the making?

It's all fine to feel good about the fact that a large number of students are getting jobs today without going to college. A

plain 10+2 seems fine, but what are the long-term consequences of this?

Will we reach a situation where, fueled by the money people earn, many do not go back to college? A few with foresight believe so. They believe that the future HR challenge would be to get these young employees to go back to college. After all, isn't that what we always prided ourselves with?

In fact, both industry and education need to work actively to keep the boundary porous.

#### Task 4: Managing change and succession through Learning Systems

This is perhaps the most important task and perhaps executed least effectively in most Organisations.

If Organisations are subject to constant change, their only means of managing it lies in the learning ability of the entire Organisation. Learning is the only way of managing change and adapting to new circumstances.

In response to these changes, Organisations may have to hire differently. They may need to expect new behaviour from their leaders. They may need to deal with customers differently. They may need to embrace new approaches. Most importantly, they may need to give up some of their old ways of doing things.

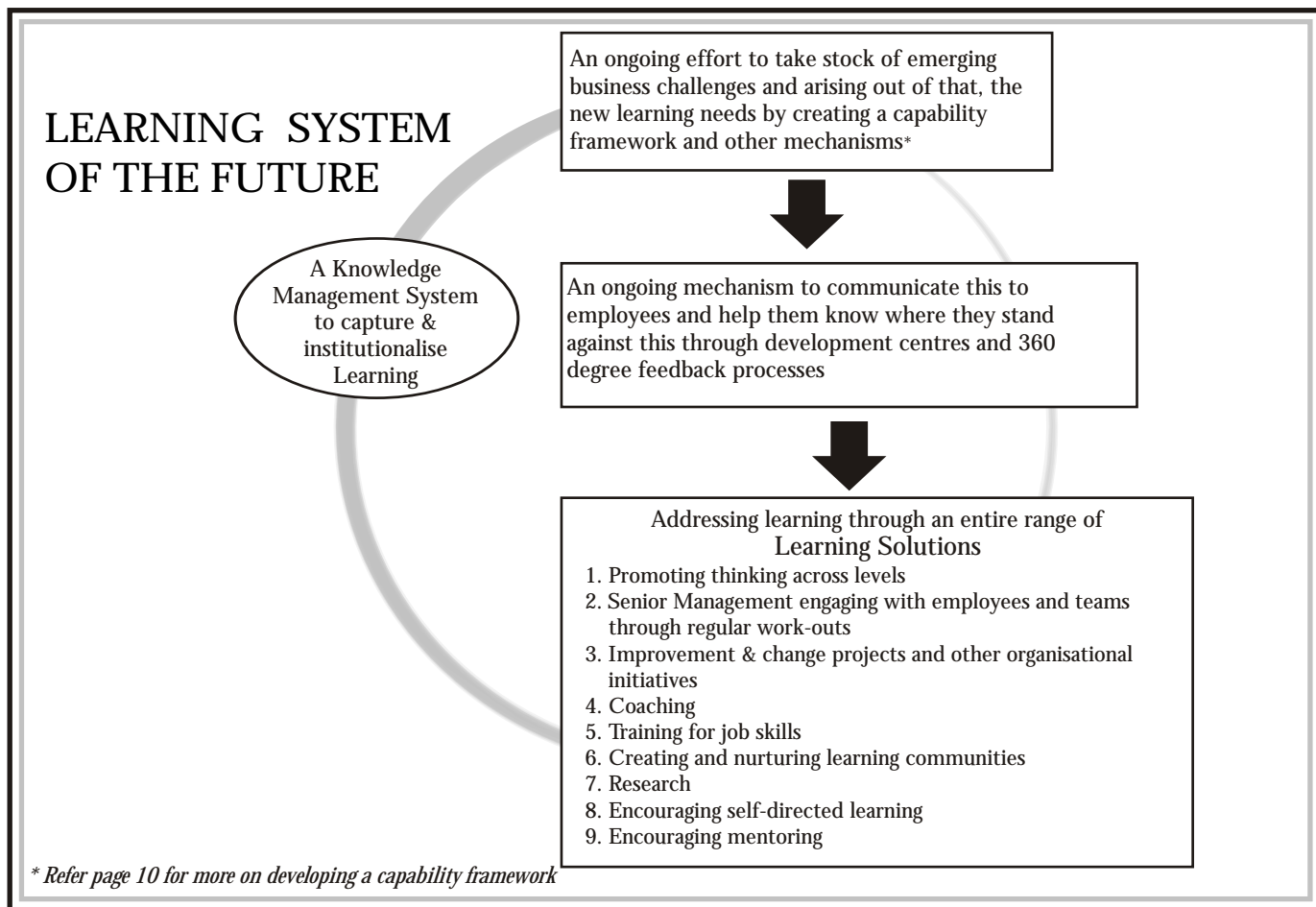
At an individual level, seniors may need to reexamine some of their self-limiting beliefs and mental blocks. They perhaps need to learn the most!

The Organisation may also need to groom its next level for succession, a task executed so poorly in India.

All of this calls for a very comprehensive approach to learning - an approach that goes well beyond simple training.

Organisations will need comprehensive learning systems that start from the business and end with the learner.

The learning system would need to have several components that all work together to deliver results and will look something like this:



It will be very evident from this model that a learning system is much more than mere training. For one, it starts with business needs and priorities. It also engages the whole organisation and is completely integrated with the core organisational processes. It also reminds all Managers of their responsibility towards facilitating learning.

The learning process in the future will be too business critical and strategic to be left in the hands of a single department. It should and will be everybody's business.

Most importantly, it separates the more routine job skill development process from the more strategic effort required to manage change. It also ensures that individual responsibility for learning stays intact.

## Knowledge Management - The New Firepower of Learning

Organisations especially in knowledge intensive businesses have been realising that their most valuable resources not only leave their doors every day but may also not come back the next day!

The fear of losing valuable knowledge that individuals acquire through their work within and outside the Organisation has led many Organisations to invest in knowledge management systems which not only help individuals learn fast but also retain learning and knowledge within itself.

Uma Ganesh of Kalzoom Technologies says that top managements are increasingly focusing on the need to manage their knowledge assets effectively to realise competitive advantage. Intellectual capital being a key knowledge asset, it is being realised that it is not only capturing the explicit and tacit knowledge but nurturing the knowledge and disseminating customised knowledge at the right time to the people concerned that is important to make people effective in their respective functions, she says.

She goes on to share some examples in e-learning. She observes that organisations belonging to both the 'old' and 'new' economy are embracing knowledge management and e-learning with fervour. While WNS, the airlines BPO company based in Mumbai employing over 3000 employees is using e-learning for competence development, the electrical giant Crompton Greaves is using e-learning to train and help over 2,500 of its vendors in Six Sigma so that the organisation can deliver superior quality in the global market.

In her opinion, knowledge management and e-learning have finally arrived in India. The key to their success and integration with organisation processes lies in aligning them with the business objectives of the organisation and facilitating the right culture for nurturing the same. Therefore, the real challenge ahead for the HR professional is to move away from the traditional role of training for 'human development' to being the prime mover for 'business development', she says.

*Uma Ganesh, CEO, Kalzoom Technologies can be contacted at [umaganesh@kalzoom.com](mailto:umaganesh@kalzoom.com)*

## A Capability Framework - the first step in Manager Development

Learning without awareness on what to learn is like navigating a ship without a map ...

Organisations very often run training programs without sensitising people on the overall purpose of the training. Most such learning programs are eminently forgettable with no long-term impact either for the individual or for the organisation.

### People learn best when they are aware of what to learn.

To make learning truly effective, the first and most important step is to create awareness about the *what* and *why* of learning. In fact, in today's organisational context, if employees understand *what* the organisation's learning priorities are and *why* it is so, they can actually design and take ownership for the *how*. On the other hand, giving the *how* without the *why* is a futile effort.

This is where a well-articulated capability framework can make a significant impact. A capability framework is nothing but a comprehensive picture of the knowledge, skills, wisdom, values, behaviour and perspectives that the organisation needs to meet its business challenges.

Most organisations make two classic mistakes in evolving a capability framework:

- ❑ **A Simplistic Approach:** Organisations spend huge amount of effort and end up defining only managerial capabilities which are universal and not necessarily adding value to their competitiveness. Organisations need to transcend this and define the business critical themes that will determine success.
- ❑ **Myth of Permanence:** Most organisations carve their capability framework in stone, while the reality is that organisations are faced with a changing business context. Every capability framework needs constant review.

### Making the framework usable

It's one thing to have a capability framework and it's another to be able to help every manager use it effectively. To make a capability framework usable, the following need to be borne in mind:


**The Levels of Impact in the organisation:** The capability framework needs to recognise the levels of impact within the organisation, and factor in what is applicable where.

**Measurement of Capabilities:** What cannot be measured cannot be improved. Organisations must be clear about how they can measure capabilities before they begin to work with them.

**Communication:** Organisations need to invest a lot of effort in communicating the capability framework and educating employees in working with it.

**Integration with other systems:** Capabilities need to be integrated with other organisational systems, especially staffing and performance management.

# Learning in a Do-It-Yourself World



We live in a D-I-Y (Do It Yourself) world. Modern technology, increasing labour costs and shorter shelf life have all contributed to consumers having to help themselves. Self-service restaurants, ATMs, snap-fit furniture, shrink-wrap software bought on-line, IVR, ready-to-serve meals ... The list goes on.

Given the new organisational context, employees will do well to take greater ownership for their learning too. Learning the D-I-Y way has indeed arrived. To help you get started on this journey, we present some basic concepts about learning, intelligence and learning ability, and simple advice on how to take charge of your learning.

## LEARNING & INTELLIGENCE - TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

When one is asked to consider the question "What makes a person intelligent?", the most common responses will refer to a person's ability to solve problems, utilize logic, and think critically. Our intelligence, therefore, is our ability to act and react in an ever-changing world. In other words, intelligence is our ability to learn.

If intelligence is the ability to learn, then multiple dimensions of intelligence will only add multiple dimensions to our learning!

This is the primary point made by Howard Gardner in his Theory of Multiple Intelligences.

Gardner goes on to say that intelligence is not a single faculty. It is a collective entity of autonomous faculties that can work individually or in concert with other faculties.

People start with strengths in some intelligences, but can very well develop the others as well. They learn most naturally using the intelligences they're strongest in. In this sense, intelligence and learning are two sides of the same coin!

Gardner has identified seven such "intelligences" or autonomous faculties.

1. **BODY / KINESTHETIC:** This intelligence is related to physical movement and the wisdom of the body. Those strong on body/ kinesthetic intelligence can learn best

through physical movement such as sports, dance and physical exercises as well as by the expression of oneself through the body, such as inventing, drama, body language and creative/interpretive dance.

2. **INTERPERSONAL:** This intelligence operates primarily through person-to-person relationships and communication. Interpersonal intelligence is activated by person-to-person encounters in which such things as effective communication, working together with others for a common goal, and noticing distinctions among persons are necessary and important. Sensitivity to other's moods, temperaments, motivations, and feelings, as well as the ability to discern other's underlying intentions and behavior would also be a part of interpersonal intelligence.

3. **INTRA-PERSONAL:** This intelligence relates to inner states of being, self-reflection, metacognition (i.e. thinking about thinking), and awareness of spiritual realities. Intra-personal intelligence is awakened when we are in situations that cause introspection and require knowledge of the internal aspects of the self, such as awareness of our feelings, thinking processes, self-reflection, and spirituality.

4. **LOGICAL / MATHEMATICAL:** Often called "scientific thinking", this intelligence deals with inductive and deductive thinking and reasoning, numbers, recognition of abstract patterns, problem solving, discerning relationships & connections and performing complex calculations.

5. **MUSICAL / RHYTHMIC:** This intelligence is based on the recognition of tonal patterns, including various environmental sounds, and on sensitivity to rhythm and beats. Musical/rhythmic intelligence is turned on by the resonance or vibrational effect of music and rhythm on the brain, including such things as the human voice, sounds from nature, musical instruments, percussion instruments and other humanly produced sounds.

6. **VERBAL / LINGUISTIC:** This intelligence, which is related to words and language both written and spoken, dominates most Western educational systems. Verbal linguistic intelligence is awakened by the spoken word, by reading someone's ideas, thoughts, or poetry, or by writing one's own ideas, thoughts, or poetry, as well as by various

kinds of humor such as "plays on words," jokes, and "twists" of the language. This intelligence involves the capacity to understand the order & meaning of words as well as memory and recall.

7. VISUAL / SPATIAL: This intelligence relies on the sense of sight, the ability to visualize an object and the ability to create internal mental images. Visual/spatial intelligence is triggered by creating unusual, delightful, and colorful designs, patterns and pictures, and engaging in active imagination through such things as visualization guided imagery, and pretending exercises.

Since there are multiple ways to learn, and our optimal ways depend on our strongest intelligences, we need to be aware of which intelligences are our strengths.

Now that we've understood the relationship between intelligence and learning, another important question demands our attention.

#### CAN WE ASSESS AND IMPROVE OUR ABILITY TO LEARN?

Other related questions also confront us.

- What is a learners' maximum performance?
- How can a person learn?
- What is the teaching/training necessary to enable the person to learn to an acceptable level?
- What are the process deficits that underlie previous learning failure and how can they be corrected?

So do we have the answers?

Prof. R. Feuerstein of the International Center for the Enhancement of Learning Potential (ICELP), Jerusalem, Israel propounded the theory of Structural Cognitive Modifiability (SCM) that seeks to answer these questions.

The theory of SCM is based on the fundamental assumption that intelligence is a dynamic state and not a fixed inborn trait. Intelligence according to Prof. Feuerstein is the propensity of the individual to undergo changes ("learn") in the direction of higher levels of adaptability.

SCM describes the unique tendency of individuals to learn and modify their mental functioning to adapt to changing

on his or her active involvement in the process of learning and changing.

PROF. FEUERSTEIN HYPOTHESIZES THAT HUMAN BEINGS ARE CAPABLE OF LEARNING AND CHANGING THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES.

This learning can be enhanced under specified conditions of remediation, provided the quality and quantity of intervention matches the person's need.

From Prof. Feuerstein's Structural Cognitive Modifiability was derived the Learning Propensity Assessment Device (LPAD). The LPAD is a method for assessing the potential for growth in the learning and thinking skills of the individual.

#### What is learning propensity?

Learning propensity refers to the phenomenon that all persons have more capacity for thought and intelligent behavior than is often manifested by them. This concept has two distinct aspects:

1. Thinking skills, though present in the person, may be rarely or inefficiently used
2. There is always capacity to learn and internalize new ways of thinking in response to situational demands

This capacity to learn and change could be made to increase through two types of human-environment interactions.

The first is Direct Exposure Learning. Direct exposure learning happens when learning is the spontaneous immediate consequence of exposure to any stimulation. Eg. touching a hot object.

The second is Mediated Learning Experience. The Mediated Learning Experience (MLE), in contrast to Direct Exposure Learning, requires the intervention of another human mediator. The mediator interposes himself between the stimuli and the learner with the intention of mediating the response and enhancing the learners' awareness, alertness and sensitivity.

The LPAD is based on these two theories of SCM and MLE. The strategy of LPAD is dynamic and consists of three distinct phases:

1. Test: The assessment of learning, perception, thought and problem solving rather than products of prior knowledge.

2. Teach: This is followed by careful structured teaching of cognitive principles that are deficient.

3. Test: Finally, an assessment is made of the extent to which the learner can internalise the principles taught and generalize them efficiently.

This dynamic Test-Teach-Test approach creates two extremely favourable outcomes. Firstly, this approach creates an integration of content and process. Secondly, it also creates a fluid interaction between the learner and the assessor.

Through LPAD, specific goals can be reached. These are:

1. Identifying well developed cognitive skills
2. Identifying fragile, deficient thinking skills
3. Assessing the response to teaching cognitive principles, or in other words, the capacity to learn and apply existing and the newly acquired principles
4. Estimating the kind and amount of investment needed to overcome deficiencies
5. Sensitizing learners to the processes involved in confronting and coping with variety of tasks

Thus, people's ability to learn can not just be assessed, but can be improved!

## 16 WAYS TO LEARN BY YOURSELF

Now that we have understood the basics of learning, here are 16 ways to Do-It-Yourself Learn. Whether you are a manager or an individual contributor, these would be helpful. What is interesting about these 16 ways is that it puts the learner in charge. Many of them do not cost money and are very rich in results!

The basic rule is to focus on learning and not teaching.

What's the difference between the two?

Teaching is what others do to you, once in a while.

Learning is what you do to yourself all the time 24/7.

## 1 Welcome 360-degree feedback

Your organisation might have a 360-degree feedback process or it may not. Develop your own 360-degree process by asking your customers, your colleagues and team members for honest feedback. Obviously, they need to trust you when you tell them that you are serious about receiving feedback without becoming defensive!



## 2 Welcome Performance Reviews

Remember that your boss, like most others, hates doing performance reviews for fear of how you will take feedback and how it will adversely affect your performance after the review session!



You can make it easy for him by welcoming these sessions. You can assure him that you are keen on knowing about yourself. You may not accept what he says, but let him say it honestly.

## 3 Seek a Coach

All of us can learn by partnering with another person who is inspirational, who challenges us and asks us the right questions. A coach can help bring about significant personal change in your life.



## 4 Work with your Manager

If you do not know how to do something, ask your manager to show you how. Even better, ask to observe your manager as he does a task that you are not able to do. It could be making a sales call or preparing for a presentation or chairing a meeting. Contract with your manager and you can learn a lot.



## 5 Work on Projects

Many tasks today are time bound. Managing projects is a very critical skill. Ask to be assigned a project that you can work on. It could be a small improvement project. Use all your skills of conceptualising, planning, scheduling, monitoring and reviewing in this project.



## 6 Work on cross functional assignments

Participate in an assignment that calls for cross-functional interactions. You will learn to empathise, understand how other functions work and also improve your team working skills.



## 7 Seek peer reviews

One sure way of learning is to submit your work for review by your peers. Peers have a good understanding of your work and are in the same wavelength and therefore in a good position to give you honest feedback. Once you develop the comfort, you can use peer reviews even before submitting your work to your manager.



## 8 Build relationships

Building relationships is a very critical capability. Try and develop relationships with at least three people from professions completely different from yours. Try and understand what they do and what they like and dislike. Grappling with diversity is an excellent teacher. It will help you in building business relationships quickly.



## 9 Go on Field Visits

One of the most forgotten ways of learning dates back to what we did in school. Go on field trips! Visiting other facilities, factories or places is a very rich source of learning in addition to being most refreshing.



## 1 0 Write a concept paper

A most crucial (and often missing) ability is the ability to conceptualise. While many are able to jump in and solve a problem, few are able to present their actions in the form of a framework of a generalized occurrence. Far fewer are able to build a theory around what they do. Writing concept papers on seemingly abstract subjects helps in this process.



## 1 1 Undertake research projects

Is there a question that keeps begging you for an answer? Undertake a quick research project - qualitative or quantitative. It need not be something grand and complex but can teach you the skill and the spirit of inquiry.

## 1 2 Teach in a local college or in in-house programs

Teaching is often the best form of learning. Teaching forces you to conceptualise, develop a teachable point of view and also helps you question and reexamine your ideas.



## 1 3 Enroll for an online course or do web research

Learning things online is going to be a skill we all will need in the days to come. More and more content-based learning will be available online. More and more universities are planning to place their content in public domain. Are you ready to make use of it?



## 1 4 Write a journal or diary:

When was the last time you wrote a personal journal or diary? Many did it as children and the habit faded away. A journal is one of the few occasions when you can be honest and candid. In the private world of your journal, you can honestly review what you did, what you said and what you did not. This is an extremely powerful form of learning.



Once you have begun to learn how to learn, the feeling of empowerment is terrific and you will enjoy being in that state.

So, get set to wear the learner's cap. Take charge of your learning and also your life and destiny!

## 1 5 Participate in interviewing prospective candidates:

Most managers tread the chore of having to participate in selection interviewing. Yet, interviewing can be a rich source of learning. You get to meet different people, get to understand what their motives and needs are and also get to check how good your judgment is.



## 1 6 Volunteer for at least one social cause:

Extending ourselves to work for a cause outside our work lives can be truly educative and fulfilling. More importantly, it is a great opportunity to discover that part of ourselves that we most often neglect - our compassion, sensitivity, empathy and sharing.



# Learning@work

## *totus' approach to learning systems*

totus has had extensive experience in designing and implementing comprehensive learning systems in organisations. Run as branded programs, they institutionalise learning and put the organisation and the learner in charge.

Our range of capabilities in this area include:

1. Identifying and defining a capability framework
2. Developing assessment systems
3. Assessing employees using assessment centres
4. Creating personal developmental plans
5. Running 360 degree feedback processes
6. Creating a culture of coaching
7. Creating internal trainers and facilitators
8. Running comprehensive managerial and leadership projects
9. Designing and implementing programs for career transition
10. Designing learning content
11. Assessing impact of learning on the individual & the organisation, for all the above

totus has evolved proprietary tools and methodologies to deliver all the above.

The learning systems that totus designs and executes have three phases - Discovery, Learning & Evaluation.

# totus is now in bangalore

We are proud to announce the opening of our Bangalore operations as of February 9<sup>th</sup> 2004. Our Bangalore operations will be headed by Mr P S Srinivasan (Srini).

Srini, a senior Human Resources professional has joined us from Universitas 21 Global, an online university where he held the position of Vice President - Human Resources based out of Singapore. Prior to this, he was leading Skills, Learning and Talent in IBM - Asia Pacific.

With better reach, new know-how and greater wisdom, totus is excited to partner with you and create value!

We look forward to the times ahead!

## about totus

We are a specialist HR consulting firm that partners with organisations by designing HR solutions that meet their business needs.

Using our expertise in conceptualising, designing and implementing end-to-end HR solutions in a variety of business contexts, we help organisations harness their potential and manage their growth. Thought Leadership and Implementation Excellence are the two pillars on which we build our solutions.

### HR@work

This core end-to-end offering from totus addresses the needs of the following clearly defined customer groups:

- ❖ **Interim support for start-ups:**  
totus has the expertise in providing interim HR support to start-ups of any size and complexity.
- ❖ **Institutionalisation support for SMEs, Professional Entrepreneurs and Family Businesses:**  
totus has been working closely with CEOs of SMEs, entrepreneurs & business owners to provide them strategic and operational solutions meant to help institutionalise their HR and organisation building processes.
- ❖ **Improvement support for all Organisations:**  
totus has been working with the CEOs of a wide variety and size of organisations to assist them in their organisational restructuring, change management and performance improvement efforts.

An HR@work engagement would typically last from three to twelve months depending on the complexity involved and the maturity of existing systems. The scope is highly customized to meet the Organisation's needs and covers a wide spectrum of human resource initiatives including:

- |                             |                              |   |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| ❖ Organisation Design       | ❖ Workforce Management       | ❖ 360-Degree Feedback Systems             |
| ❖ Job Design & Capabilities | ❖ Career Development Systems | ❖ Employee Satisfaction & Sensing Surveys |
| ❖ Performance Management    | ❖ HR Function Development    | ❖ Coaching                                |
| ❖ Compensation & Benefits   | ❖ Change Management          | ❖ Service Quality                         |
| ❖ Staffing                  |                              |   |

### Learning@work

**Learning@work** is totus consulting's learning solution. totus specialises in designing industry specific learning systems to facilitate multi-location distributed learning. Run as branded programs, they institutionalise learning and put the organisation - and the learner - in charge.

The specific Learning@work offerings include:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ❖ Top management workshops for consensus building     | ❖ Change management workshops  |
| ❖ Customized leadership development program           | ❖ Career development programs  |
| ❖ Coaching programs                                   | ❖ Design of training modules   |
| ❖ Training trainers and facilitators                  | ❖ Capability framework development                                   |
| ❖ Developing systems for assessment and certification | ❖ Assessment Centres   |
| ❖ 360 degree feedback systems                         | ❖ Assessment of learning impact on the individual & the organisation |

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