Business Perspectives on Managing World-Class Training

# Training Industry

## Q U A R T E R L Y

Winter 2010

**Departure**

**Arrivals**
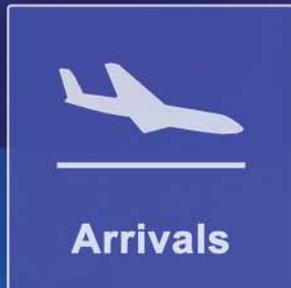
# Training's Role in the
# Human Capital Lifecycle

- **Strategic Alignment:** Connecting Learning & Business
- **The Winning Move:** Engaging with Games and Simulations

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## THOUGHT LEADERS

## TO SOLVE ANY PROBLEM, FOCUS ON THE PEOPLE INVOLVED

# MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ADAPTABILITY

**W**orking with people across levels, industries and countries, I have gained learned that the vast majority of people are not highly adaptable! And this is not understood at the level required to reverse it because most people report themselves to be more adaptable than they are—with the gap widening at increasingly higher levels in the organization's hierarchy. Why is this so important? Because the problems we continue to experience—at all levels (individual, group, organizational, societal, worldwide) will only be solved by those different solutions required, not the same types of attitudes, actions and solutions with a track record ranging from limited success to failure!

The most immediate way to solve any problem is to focus on the people involved. Since we have greatest potential for control of ourselves, then becoming adaptable personally is one quick option. As you've probably already discovered, seeking to change other people, groups, organizations tends to meet with greater resistance unless it provides what they are already motivated to achieve.

You are also probably wondering why people aren't that adaptable. Sometimes it is due to competing beliefs or values, and at other times not knowing what alternatives will work. However, the most widespread reason is that people are creatures of habit. By contrast, highly adaptable people don't think, feel or act like prisoners of their natural behavioral styles. Instead, they consciously make choices to act in more rational, appropriate and effective ways—especially when faced with problems, conflicts and adversity—the exact situations in which most people respond emotionally by a natural fight-or-flight pattern that seldom provides real solutions. These don't often work for one or two reasons: a negative response to others that tends to generate the same from people and/or use of an approach that tends to compete versus complement and build upon the motivations of the other party to gain better results than either could by themselves.

For example, when a naturally controlling Dominant Director discovers that they don't have the power to solve a problem, they may shift to another more appropriate type of practice that does work. In one instance, this may require being a more approachable, engaging Interacting Socializer, inspiring the other parties to work together to solve the problem. In another situation, it may call for more low-keyed, cooperative and supportive actions of a Steady Relater. In still another, the more discrete, analytic approach of a Cautious Thinker is required.

Organizations don't cause or solve problems—people do! More accurately stated, *adaptable* people do!

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