



Performance Technology Landscape

by Dr. Roger M. Addison, CPT

The International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI) has offered Performance Improvement Institutes since 1997. Developers and faculty of these Institutes include some of the leaders in performance technology (PT): Roger Addison, CPT; Anne Apking; Rebecca Birch; Dale Brethower; Roger Chevalier, CPT; Ruth Clark; Peter Dean; Peter-Cornelius Dams; Lori Gillespie; Carol Haig, CPT; Judy Hale, CPT; Roger Kaufman, CPT; Lynn Kearny, CPT; Danny Langdon; Doug Mead; Margo Murray, CPT; James Robinson; Geary Rummler, CPT; Harold Stolovitch, CPT; Deborah

Stone, CPT; Rodger Stotz, CPT; Don Tosti, CPT; Ken Silber, CPT; Charline Wells; and Kathleen Whiteside.

In the institutes we use PT models, tools, and techniques to present the fundamentals of performance improvement. As we look at the various PT approaches it becomes apparent that there are common elements. We have organized these elements into a performance technology landscape (see Figure 1), which includes the following elements:

- the basic principles
- where we work
- how we think
- what we do

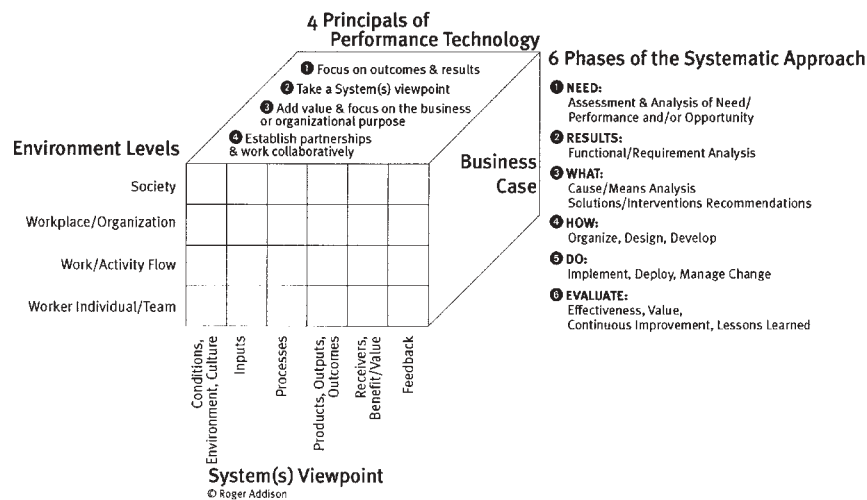


Figure 1. Performance Technology Landscape.

The PT landscape forms the basis of the certified performance technologist (CPT) designation launched by the International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI) in April 2002.

What Is Performance Technology?

The PT landscape helps us define our technology and its practices:

- PT is a systematic process/methodology of linking business, educational, and governmental goals and strategies with workforce responsibilities for achieving goals.
- PT identifies opportunities and analyzes performance problems.
- PT stresses performance results, value-added solutions, and return on investment.
- PT helps organizations design systems that enable people to do their best work to produce results that are valuable to the organization.

PT is a set of principles and applications focused on helping to achieve valued results through human action (see Figure 1). PT can support individuals, teams, organizations, and society in cost-effectively increasing the value of the results they produce. PT methodologies and applications are numerous and varied, but all are founded on the same fundamental principles and all contribute to accomplishing one or more of the following:

- **Identification of Value:** Clarification of the problem, business issue, or opportunity
- **Definition of Outcomes:** Specification of the requirements to create the value or close the gap between existing and desired results
- **Analysis of Performance:** Identification of the factors in the performance system that can influence the production of outcomes to meet requirements
- **Selection of Interventions/Solutions:** Choosing from a range of possible PT applications those that will best meet the requirements, given the information about outcomes and performance
- **Design/Development of Interventions/Solutions:** Preparation for execution including a wide range of decisions about what it will take to cost-effectively implement the solution and match culture requirements
- **Deployment of Interventions/Solutions:** Execution of the design to meet requirements
- **Evaluation of Effectiveness:** Measure intervention processes, outcomes, and results to determine how well they meet the requirements and what might be required to further improve results

How We Work: Four Basic Principles

- Focus on results, start with the end in mind.
- Take a systems viewpoint, think systemically.

- Add value to the client and focus on the business.
- Establish partnerships with experts and clients.

Where We Work (From Micro to Mega)

To be most effective, performance improvement specialists align these systems elements:

- the workers, individuals, and teams
- the work, activity, and flow
- the workplace and organization
- society

How We Think

Rather than defining ourselves by the intervention that we develop or use, we take a comprehensive systems view of performance. We focus on the alignment of the total performance system. This includes the environment, culture, inputs, processes, outputs, feedback, and organizational stakeholders. We apply a systematic approach by determining the need or opportunity; defining the requirements; determining the cause, opportunity, and solution(s); designing/developing solution(s); and implementing them and evaluating results for continuous improvement.

Donald Tosti expands how we think by identifying three types of models we use:

- **System Component Models:** Identify the components and perhaps give their relationships. Used to locate problems in doing diagnosis, for example, Gilbert's performance engineering, Tosti and Jackson's organizational scan, Rummler's organizational sweeps, and so on.
- **Driving Force or Alignment Models:** Specify the factors that must be considered in relation to each other to achieve some specific result, for example, Tosti and Jackson's organizational alignment model, Rummler's four views.
- **Procedure Models:** Specify a particular methodology we can use to take action, for example, instructional systems design, ADDIE, performance engineering, etc.

Conclusion

"What makes performance consulting so powerful," Tosti suggests, "is that its interventions are derived from basic principles and an underlying technology unlike most other forms of organizational managerial consulting which employ solutions based on best practice and constructs" (D.T. Tosti, personal communication, September 17, 2002). During the ISPI-EMEA Conference, Klaus Wittkuhn, CPT, founder of the ISPI chapter in Germany, observed, "Performance is the valued result produced by a system." If you start with the results in mind, then you have begun the PT journey. 🏔️

Related Readings

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