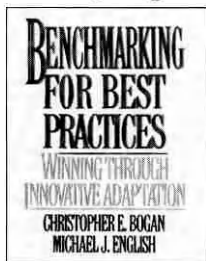


Books

Benchmarking for Best Practices: Winning Through Innovative Adaptation

by Christopher E. Bogan and Michael J. English.



In their book *Benchmarking for Best Practices*, Christopher Bogan and Michael English explain how to implement a best-practices benchmarking

program that produces some meaningful, measurable, and profitable performance improvements.

The authors contend that best-practices benchmarking is a necessity for organizations that want to improve processes, performance, and competitive strategy.

"The pace of change is so rapid today that no single organization can ever control or dominate all effective operating practices and good ideas. To be a marketplace leader, one must look outward—as well as inward—for constant improvement and new ideas. The old school of thought, which held that 'if it ain't invented here, it can't be any good,' is a curse in today's high-velocity markets. Don't reinvent what others have learned to do better. Today's rally cries—borrow shamelessly; adopt, adapt, advance; and imitate creatively—are anthems of business pragmatism."

Using a nine-step benchmarking model and examples of benchmarking efforts by such companies as Johnson & Johnson, General Electric, and Microsoft, Bogan and English describe a process for defining a business's best systems, procedures, and practices. They also explain how to sell benchmarking to skeptical senior executives and how to integrate it with such initiatives as business-process reengi-

neering, time-based competition, and change management.

Finally, the authors show how to disseminate best-practices information throughout the organization, in order to increase organizational learning and to spur innovation.

"The high-performing organization instills the relentless impulse for continuous improvement into all its processes and systems. Consequently, it is also a fast company, making speed, quick response, and time to market the bases for competitive advantage. Fast learning is therefore a defining characteristic and prerequisite for the twenty-first-century enterprise that operates at high velocities without crashing.

"Moreover, best-practice benchmarking is the catalyst that enables the organization to learn and improve quickly. Like a powerful genetic code driving continuous improvement, best-practice benchmarking is deeply ingrained in every process. As a fundamental business skill, it enables the organization to continuously test its capabilities to uncover improvement opportunities, to spur adoption of the best practices, and to press relentlessly toward even greater performance."

Christopher Bogan is founder and CEO of Best Practices Benchmarking and Consulting, located in Lexington, Massachusetts, and Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. Michael English has worked at GTE for 22 years, during which time he has served as director of quality positioning, director of quality measurement, and director of service program management.

Benchmarking for Best Practices: Winning Through Innovative Adaptation, by Christopher E. Bogan and Michael J. English. 312 pp. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill. This book can be purchased through ASTD Press, 703/683-8100. Order code: BOBE.

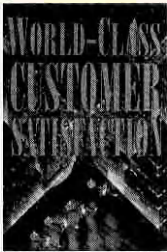
This month's books focus on benchmarking, customer service, technical training, and organizational improvement.

Priority code: FJM. \$23 for ASTD members, \$25 for nonmembers.

Circle 245 on reader service card.

World-Class Customer Satisfaction

by Jonathan D. Barsky.



In his book *World-Class Customer Satisfaction*, Jonathan D. Barsky outlines an eight-step customer-service program that he says any organization can use to increase its customer

satisfaction and its profits.

The program Barsky outlines has been devised from research on European, Asian, and U.S. service organizations known for their innovative approaches to satisfying customers. Their industries are varied, including entertainment, recreation, financial services, and manufacturing. But the author found that their success depends on one key factor: making customer service the number-one priority. He says that other organizations can make customer service their top priority by following these steps:

- ▶ Identify customer-satisfaction priorities.
- ▶ Determine customer-defined quality expectations and preferences.
- ▶ Collect customer and employee input.
- ▶ Benchmark best practices.
- ▶ Redesign existing processes; link to employee programs.
- ▶ Construct a customer-loyalty program.
- ▶ Evaluate technological and international trends.
- ▶ Implement the program and reevaluate priorities.

The author devotes a chapter to each of these steps. In each, he defines a problem, highlights current cases, and demonstrates the most crucial steps for building customer satisfaction. Barsky includes numerous charts, checklists, and diagrams. He concludes by presenting a detailed plan for implementing and delivering a customer-satisfaction strategy that can be tailored to meet an organization's specific needs.

"The purpose of this book is to bring together the ideas and techniques that currently are helping

world-class companies to prosper. Although the size and scope of these approaches vary, common to all of them is the dedication to change.

"World-class companies have broadened and accelerated their efforts toward improvement by making significant advances in product and service quality, employee training, and other customer-treatment areas. [They] understand what satisfies their clientele the most and utilize this information in customer programs and employee training to promote customer loyalty."

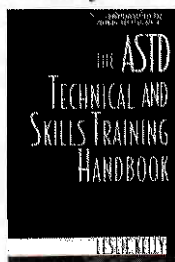
Jonathan Barsky is a customer-satisfaction consultant and a professor of marketing at the University of San Francisco's McLaren School of Business.

World-Class Customer Satisfaction, by Jonathan D. Barsky. 229 pp. Burr Ridge, IL: Irwin Professional Publishing, 800/634-3966, \$25.

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The ASTD Technical and Skills Training Handbook

edited by Leslie Kelly.



Leslie Kelly does a fine job of presenting a thorough overview of the changing nature and importance of technical training in *The ASTD Technical and Skills Training Handbook*. The 23-chapter tome, which ASTD plans to supplement annually, presents the latest technical-training concerns, instructional methodologies, and training techniques. It also profiles some of the best-run technical-training departments in the world.

Introductory chapters cover such topics as the history of and growth in the technical-training profession, the selection and support of technical trainers, and the management and financing of the technical-training function. Among other topics featured are technical-trainer liability; approaches to instructional design, delivery, and assessment; total-quality management; technical-training facilities and equipment; skilled-trades programs; and trends in the field.

Every chapter includes a bibliogra-

phy. Many include additional references, task lists, and charts that trainers can use or adapt for their own purposes.

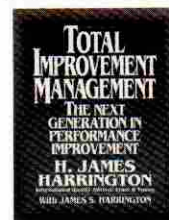
"Rather than hiring individuals who have training backgrounds, corporations recruit their resident experts and turn them into trainers. These people wanted a hands-on reference that would give them A-to-Z advice on how to become good trainers, so that they could share their knowledge with their colleagues. This handbook and its supplements will help technical trainers do their jobs well and keep them up-to-date on the latest technical-training concerns."

Leslie Kelly is president of Kelly and Associates, a human resource development firm based in Indianapolis, Indiana, which specializes in technical training and small-business personnel work.

The ASTD Technical and Skills Training Handbook, edited by Leslie Kelly. 600 pp. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill and the American Society for Training and Development. This book can be purchased through ASTD Press, 703/683-8100. Order code: KETA. Priority code: FJM. \$50 for ASTD members, \$60 for nonmembers.

Total Improvement Management: The Next Generation in Performance Improvement

by H. James Harrington, with James S. Harrington.



The Harringtons believe that there is no current management methodology that will solve all of the problems of today's organizations. But, they say, a combina-

tion of the best aspects of such methodologies as total-quality management, total-productivity management, total-cost management, and resource and technology management can provide a holistic approach to improving and managing performance. They present such a performance-improvement methodology in *Total Improvement Management*.

The Harringtons say their 15-step model, the total-improvement management pyramid, focuses on work-

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ing toward the following objectives:

- ▶ ensuring senior management's commitment to change
- ▶ creating a business plan that gives a sense of purpose to the firm
- ▶ motivating staff by recognizing efforts and rewarding achievements
- ▶ balancing team goals with individual needs to excel.

The pyramid consists of five tiers: direction, basic concepts, delivery processes, organizational impact, and rewards and recognition. It combines continuous-improvement and breakthrough-improvement efforts—efforts the authors say are critical for companies to implement in order to stay competitive.

The authors examine the components of these tiers in detail and offer advice on how to integrate each of the tiers into an organization's structure. In doing so, they present more than 400 improvement tools that companies can use to maximize their return on investment.

Throughout the book, the authors also present cases that show how such companies as Motorola, Dow Chemical, and Federal Express use the model to achieve performance improvements.

"It becomes obvious that the key to profitability and survival is more than just quality. It depends on how we use all of our resources to improve the quality of our outputs and the productivity of our operations, and how we integrate the correct technologies, while making the optimum use of the capital and facilities available to the organization."

H. James Harrington is a principal and an international quality advisor for Ernst & Young. James S. Harrington is a journalist.

Total Improvement Management: The Next Generation in Performance Improvement, by H. James Harrington and James S. Harrington. 488 pp. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 800/262-4729, \$29.95.

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"Books" is compiled and written by **Theresa Minton-Eversole**. Send books for consideration to Books Editor, Training & Development, 1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043.

Additional Reading

The Reengineering Alternative: A Plan for Making Your Current Culture Work, by William E. Schneider. 173 pp. Burr Ridge, IL: Irwin Professional Publishing, 800/634-3966, \$30.

Circle 249 on reader service card.

Workplace Wars and How To End Them: Turning Personal Conflicts Into Productive Teamwork, by Kenneth Kaye. 162 pp. New York, NY: AMA-COM, 800/262-9699, \$19.95.

Circle 250 on reader service card.

High Performance Sales Organizations: Creating Competitive Advantage in the Global Marketplace, by Kevin J. Corcoran, Laura K. Petersen, Daniel B. Baitech, and Mark F. Barrett. 172 pp. Burr Ridge, IL: Irwin Professional Publishing, 800/634-3966; \$25 (U.S.), \$34.95 (Canada).

Circle 251 on reader service card.

Time Tactics of Very Successful People, by B. Eugene Griessman. 233 pp. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 800/262-4729, \$14.95 (paperback).

Circle 252 on reader service card.

Lifeboat Strategies: How To Keep Your Career Above Water During Tough Times—or Any Time, by Robert Barner. 175 pp. New York, NY: AMACOM, 800/262-9699, \$16.95.

Circle 253 on reader service card.

Managing the Mosaic: Addressing Workforce Diversity and Managing Institutional Change in Health Care, by Trisha A. Svehla and Glen C. Crosier. 222 pp. Chicago, IL: American Hospital Publishing, 800/242-2626, \$47.50.

Circle 254 on reader service card.

The New Secrets of a Corporate Headhunter: Strategies for Surviving and Thriving in Today's World of Business, by John Wareham. 188 pp. New York, NY: HarperBusiness, 212/207-7581; \$20 (U.S.), \$26.75 (Canada).

Circle 255 on reader service card.

Managing Stress: Keeping Calm Under Fire, by Barbara J. Braham. 188 pp. Burr Ridge, IL: Irwin Professional Publishing, 800/634-3966, \$17.

Circle 256 on reader service card.

Manager's Official Guide to Team Working, by Jerry Spiegel and Crescencio Torres. 159 pp. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company, 619/578-5900, \$19.95.

Circle 257 on reader service card.

Excellence Is a Habit: How To Avoid Quality Burnout, by Thomas J. Barry. 112 pp. Milwaukee, WI: Quality Press, 800/248-1946, \$15.

Circle 258 on reader service card.

Dealing With People You Can't Stand: How To Bring Out the Best in People at Their Worst, by Rick Brinkman and Rick Kirschner. 199 pp. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 800/262-4729, \$12.95.

Circle 259 on reader service card.

The Versatile Organization: New Ways of Thinking About Your Business, by Ruth Tearle. 138 pp. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company, 800/274-4434; \$14.95 (U.S.), \$18.95 (Canada).

Circle 260 on reader service card.

Real Time Strategic Change: How To Involve an Entire Organization in Fast and Far-Reaching Change, by Robert W. Jacobs. 335 pp. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 415/288-0260, \$27.95.

Circle 261 on reader service card.

Managing Diversity: A Complete Desk Reference and Planning Guide, by Lee Gardenswartz and Anita Rowe. 446 pp. Burr Ridge, IL: Irwin Professional Publishing, 800/634-3966, \$90.

Circle 262 on reader service card.

Get Better or Get Beaten! 31 Leadership Secrets From GE's Jack Welch, by Robert Slater. 155 pp. Burr Ridge, IL: Irwin Professional Publishing, 800/634-3966, \$20.

Circle 263 on reader service card.

Merchants of Vision: People Bringing New Purpose and Values to Business, by James E. Liebig. 242 pp. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 415/288-0260, \$24.95.

Circle 264 on reader service card.