

## A Theoretical Model and Instrument for Selecting Vendor-Supplied Training Programs

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### Abstract

When an organization uses outside sources to meet its training needs, managers must make informed decisions about which training programs will work best in a given situation. But processes and guidelines that can be used to assist people in making such decisions have not been defined well.

This study had three objectives:

- to determine the criteria identified in the literature as important to the process of selecting training programs;
- to create a model to account for the criteria;
- to develop an instrument for evaluating programs against the criteria.

A review of the literature was carried out regarding decision-making processes, vendors' training programs, instructional design and delivery, and organizational influences on training. An instrument consisting of worksheets for each criterion was developed and presented to assist the training-program buyers in evaluating and comparing programs and reaching decisions.

This investigation has considerable implications for the buyer/seller relationship. The author maintains that if the decision-making process could be improved, several results might follow:

- A notable increase in return on investment for training professionals should result.
- Training programs would be bought based on merit, not because of personalities or politics.
- Vendors would have more diffi-

culty providing undocumented results, and flaws in training programs would be much more evident to the buyer earlier in the purchase process.

- There could be a drop in training expenditures and organizations might view the training function in a different light.
- Training decisions could be well documented for later evaluation and consideration.
- Training professionals would be held more accountable for their decisions and the impact their programs have on the organization.

## Revitalization of Japanese Business and Industry: Implications for Training and Organizational Development

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### Abstract

Japan has had phenomenal success at becoming a major world economy. Its global, competitive thrust has forever changed the course of international business strategy. Already the second largest economy in the world, by 1990 Japan will likely be the second largest market in the world, second only to the United States.

This research analyzes recent economic, technological, and sociological trends in Japan and looks at how those trends have had an impact on Japan's approach to the management of human resources. The author presents arguments for and against change within training and development activities of Japanese organizations.

The author concludes that no single force can be identified as responsible for spearheading change in Japan's training and development systems.

Changes in the employment system and the shrinkage of the internal labor market will contribute to the change in Japan's training and development systems, as will the diversification of business and industry and the booming service sector. Business and industry will pressure Japan to make changes, which will be furthered by the sociological changes occurring there. Change will come about because of the breakdown in the traditional management-development system, which has already seen a reverse in corporate decision-making roles.

Finally, the author sees the change as a result of Japan's present transition into a post-industrial and international society.

## Human Resource Practice of Rapid-Growth Companies: the Connection Between People and Profit

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### Abstract

Successful rapid-growth companies generally are acknowledged to have strong entrepreneurial leaders who are able to exploit windows of opportunity in a rapidly changing marketplace. Very little is known, however, about the human resources practices of rapid-growth companies, although the human resources function is a key factor related to organizational excellence in *Fortune* 500 companies. As companies enter the 1990s, such topics as productivity through people, corporate culture, and team building continue to receive substantial attention.

The focus of this article is a study that asks three questions.

- How extensively do rapid-growth companies engage in HR practices?
- What is the relationship between HR practices and profits?
- Are large rapid-growth companies



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with more employees different from small companies, with respect to HR practices?

Organizations selected for the study were those listed by *INC.* magazine as the top 100 rapid-growth companies of 1987. A Human Resources Practices Survey consisting of 12 items was sent to the senior executives with responsibility for the HR function in 91 of the companies. The response rate was 56 percent.

The author concludes that executives of rapid-growth companies must view their human resources as assets requiring careful management. As the companies move along the organizational life cycle, those with well-managed human resources have the potential to outperform their competitors. Based on the results of this study, a clear connection can even be made between the human resources practices and the bottom-line growth in rapid-growth companies.

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