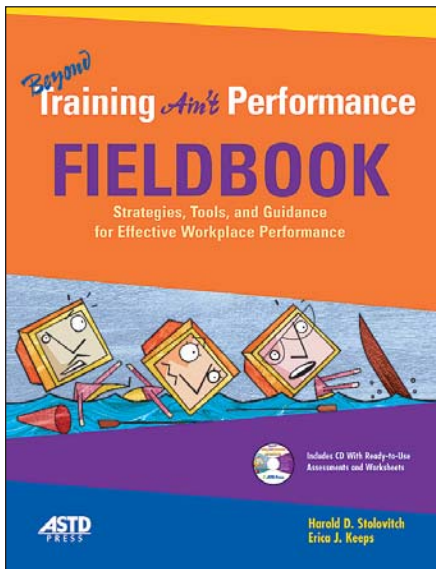


'Ain't' Series Continues



Beyond Training Ain't Performance Fieldbook: Strategies, Tools, and Guidance for Effective Workplace Performance

By Harold D. Stolovitch and Erica J. Keeps
Reviewed by Paul Flynn



HAVE YOU EVER PEELED AN ONION? I don't mean sliced or diced one, but actually peeled it? The layers go on and on. Just when you think you've reached the end of the onion, there's more. That describes what it's like to read Harold Stolovitch and Erica Keeps's 'Ain't' series of books. Not only do they keep appearing, but each one offers more information by the page.

The latest in the series, *Beyond Training Ain't Performance Fieldbook*, is every bit as much of a treat as the preceding volumes. The previously released books help lay the foundation for how to think about human performance technology (HPT), and this one shows you what to do about it. Because the fieldbook is the companion volume to *Training Ain't Performance*, you will need the latter to make sense of it. But if you're out there trying to implement HPT and don't already have a dog-eared copy of *Training Ain't Performance*, you've been driving nails without a hammer.

Designed for workplace learning and performance professionals, this book will lift you up quickly to a new level of professionalism and confidence, giving you the tools and insight you'll need to be successful. It is written specifically for those who are trying to move their organizations toward a more productive performance orientation or establish themselves as credible HPT professionals. In an eminently useful form, the exercises, tools, and practical explanations of in-depth learning and performance theories gel together nicely. And, as usual, the great attraction of the book is its common touch—the elegance lies in its simplicity and usefulness.

Perhaps the hardest thing for many of us struggling to break out of the training mold is to find an effective way to bring our clients onboard. How can we get them to see the HPT horizon as we see it—with all its possibilities and promise for efficiencies and value? Stolovitch and Keeps offer a simple yet powerful modification of an old standby: Gilbert's Behavior Engineering Model. Chapter 4 provides readers with ideas about sharing the model's astonishing impact and institutionalizing the performance improvement mindset within their organizations. In fact, the great thing about this book is that it builds

Books in Bloom

T+D editors examine spring releases that deal with essential workplace leadership and training skills.

Training the Active Way: 8 Strategies to Spark Learning and Change

By Mel Silberman
(Pfeiffer, March 2006, \$35)



If your worst fear is a room full of bored or sleeping participants, then this new book may be an essential tool to help keep your

audience awake.

Written by a faculty member at Temple University, *Training the Active Way* targets a broad audience, and its lessons can be used by any presenter or skills trainer.

In addition to typical conversation icebreakers, Silberman suggests using "learning icebreakers" to ease participants into the material. He also suggests including simple quizzes, such as multiple choice questions, which require participants to think about the subject.

The author emphasizes taking a team-learning approach whereby participants work in teams for significant periods of time. While it may sound like surrendering too much control, Silberman argues that participants can learn more by working in a group than from an individual trainer.

Many of the author's suggestions will be familiar to an experienced presenter who keeps a watchful eye on the interest level of the audience. When closing the session, he advises trainers to make the session memorable by summarizing the session or injecting levity—and not to race through items that weren't covered.

—Michael Laff

The great thing about this book is that it builds bridges from theory to practice. Stolovitch and Keeps give readers tools on how to share the startling lessons that first made them sit up and take notice of HPT with their clients.

bridges from theory to practice. The authors give tools on how to share the startling lessons that first made readers sit up and take notice of HPT with their clients. It's fun to see people's heads snap back in a presentation as they suddenly realize, "Whoa! But this could change everything we do!"

Of course, at the heart of Stolovitch and Keeps's volume is a maze they call "An Organizational Human Performance System." (We are, after all, nothing if not systematic—and systemic.) And even though they warn readers that it's going to be composed of a large number of elements—performers, managers, business objectives, and the like—readers may have to put the book down when they actually see it. (I did.) However, unlike some other models you may have seen, with all its arrows and boxes and circles, you won't have to have to figure out where or if this one ends. Stolovitch and Keeps take readers through the model with neat little checklists along the way to ensure that they understand each aspect. You get little pieces of cheese at each point instead of one big chunk at the end. That helps to keep you going and makes you feel smart—as if you even understand it.

My favorite chapter is "From Training Order-Taker to Performance Consultant." That title says it all right there, doesn't it? This chapter provides lots of tools to do a self-assessment as a budding consultant. And the authors don't overlook the most important details for professionals hoping to confidently present themselves in their initial interview with a potential client. They discuss topics such as how to begin and end the interview, how to dress, how

long to conduct an interview, and the questions you've always wanted to ask someone, but now don't have to. They encourage readers to examine how they have approached a client or a performance issue in the past while they imagine the future. And while you may think it's impossible to look backward and forward at the same time, Stolovitch and Keeps show you how to do it without hurting your neck.

If you've read and appreciated the other "Ain't" books in the series, then you're going to love this one as well. It's practical, readable, and chock full of tools and tips. Don't wait for the movie; buy the book. Personally, I'm looking forward to the action figures.

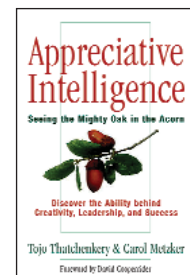
Beyond Training Ain't Performance Fieldbook: Strategies, Tools, and Guidance for Effective Workplace Performance, by Harold D. Stolovitch and Erica J. Keeps. ASTD Press: Alexandria, Virginia. 248 pp. \$38.95

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Send books for possible review to **Books, T+D**, 1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043; books@astd.org.

Appreciative Intelligence: Seeing the Mighty Oak in the Acorn

By Tojo Thatchenkery
and Carol Metzker
(Berrett-Koehler Publishers,
May 2006, \$24.95)



Behind today's most creative and successful people is a secret: They possess an ability to reframe reality to reveal the hidden possibilities within the most un-

promising situation—to "see the mighty oak in the acorn." The authors call this ability "appreciative intelligence," and their book describes what this intelligence is, how it affects our lives, and how it can be used to change the future.

Selected for Harvard Business Review's 2006 Reading List, the book outlines evidence for appreciative intelligence and details its specific characteristics using real-world examples. The authors show how leaders are able to spread appreciative intelligence throughout an organization, while offering tools and exercises that readers can use to increase their own levels of appreciative intelligence to become more creative, resilient, successful, and personally fulfilled.

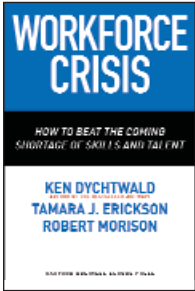
Chapters 1-3 introduce the concepts, components, and qualities of appreciative intelligence, while chapters 4-6 provide details of each component. The remaining five chapters discuss appreciative intelligence at work, identify steps to enhance your appreciative intelligence, and examine the research studies that appreciative intelligence was based on.

Thatchenkery is a professor of organizational learning at George Mason University and Metzker holds a master's degree in organizational learning from GMU.

—Paula Ketter

Workforce Crisis: How to Beat the Coming Shortage of Skills and Talent

By Ken Dychtwald,
Tamara J. Erickson,
and Robert Morison
(Harvard Business School Press,
April 2006, \$29.95)



A recent hot topic is the baby-boomer retirement panic. Throw in fatalistic numbers regarding the lack of qualified replacements to take their place,

and you have the ideal setting for *Workforce Crisis*. Ken Dychtwald (author of *Age Wave*) and his co-authors serve up some real-world examples of the problem and suggest solutions that may not stretch the minds of some organizations but are nevertheless a bit out of the box.

The authors say that learning can help companies mitigate the labor crisis in two ways. First, learning opportunities attract and retain star talent who want to enhance their employability. Second, companies that grow their own expertise safeguard their labor and skill supplies.

What may be most useful in the book are lists of “actions to take” with mid-career workers, young workers, or other groups to keep them on the job, engaged, and happy. And, in this age of book groups, the authors offer their own discussion topics to keep readers engaged and interested in sharing the lessons they learned in this book. Check out the topics under “Enhancing Learning and Development.” Item number 3 resonates with me: “How well—and consistently—do you meet employees’ needs and expectations for learning and development?”

—Rex Davenport