

# Learning to Thrive in a Flat World



**2007 Annual Meeting**  
**“Capitalizing on Global Opportunities”**  
**31 August - 3 September 2007**

**Presented by: Nigel Bristow**

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## Biographical Information for Nigel Bristow

NIGEL BRISTOW is the founder and president of Targeted Learning, a company helping organizations fully engage the talents and energies of their people.

Nigel's international experience, ongoing research interests, and broad organization development expertise make him a highly regarded consultant and speaker. For the past 20 years he has been a consultant and trainer in the fields of career management, coaching, mentoring and performance management. He is also an expert in the day-to-day conversation skills that support the growth and success of individuals and organizations. Nigel is a dynamic speaker who successfully blends the discipline of solid research with the wisdom of experience.



Under Nigel's direction, Targeted Learning has completed three studies of great importance to organizations in the information age.

1. The first study analyzed the performance of over 2,000 knowledge workers and identified the competencies differentiating top performers from average performers. The study also identified the five roles that are essential to knowledge worker success, and the transitions that are essential to life-long career success.
2. The second study gathered data from over 500 employees concerning the day-to-day feedback conversations that drive employee growth and performance. The study identified attitudes and behaviors that determine the success of these vital conversations.
3. This study identified the people management practices that drive organizational performance. This three-year study on competency-based HR systems and employee development involved over 1,000 North American organizations, and represents one of the largest research projects ever done on the connection between people management practices and competitive advantage.

Nigel's corporate clients include companies such as 3M, Boeing, ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil, Fidelity Investments, Monsanto, Sherwin Williams and TEXTRON.

Nigel has authored several articles in his field, as well as four books. These books include:

- *Building Communities of Learning: How to Harness the Collective Genius of the People in Your Organization*
- *Where's the Gift: How to Achieve Phenomenal Success by Discovering the Gift in All Feedback*
- *Flying the Coop: Breaking Free of the Beliefs that Limit Our Potential and Rob Us of Fulfillment*
- *The Beyond Job Satisfaction Fieldbook: Tools and Templates for Maximizing Your Engagement and Vitality at Work.*

Nigel earned a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Natal, South Africa, and an M.S. in Organizational Behavior from the Graduate School of Management, Brigham Young University. He lives in Utah with his wife and their three sons.



# Flat World Darwinism: Change or Your Job Goes Overseas

What feelings or emotions are triggered by all the changes you have to deal with in your organization—now and in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

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## The Ups and Downs of Change

Please review the quotes from both the lists (Reasons to Resist Change and Reasons to Support Change), and select your favorite quote from each list. Be ready to say “why” you chose the two quotes you did.

### Reasons to Resist Change

From the funny to the cynical. From obvious to downright insightful.

1. *Somebody has to do something, and it's just incredibly pathetic that it has to be us.*  
Jerry Garcia of The Grateful Dead
2. *I was going to buy a copy of *The Power of Positive Thinking*, and then I thought: What the hell good would that do?*  
Ronnie Shakes
3. *I've tried relaxing, but—I don't know—I feel more comfortable tense.*  
Caption for Hamilton Cartoon
4. *The trouble with the future is that it usually arrives before we're ready for it.*  
Arnold H. Glasow
5. *I never did give anyone hell. I just told the truth and they thought it was hell.*  
Harry S. Truman
6. *Hard work may pay off in the future, but laziness pays off right now.*  
Despair.com
7. *More than anytime in history mankind faces a crossroads. One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness, the other to total extinction. Let us pray that we have the wisdom to choose correctly.*  
Woody Allen

8. *Our problems are mostly behind us—what we have to do now is fight the solutions.*  
Stults's Situation Report, as quoted in The Chicago Tribune, July 11, 1975
9. *Almost anything is easier to get into than out of.*  
Agnes Allen, American epigrammatist
10. *All change is not growth; as all movement is not forward.*  
Ellen Glasgow
11. *One of the greatest pains to human nature is the pain of a new idea.*  
Walter Bagehot
12. *“Company policy” means there is no understandable reason for this action.*  
Herbert V. Prochnow
13. *I respect faith, but doubt is what gets you an education.*  
Wilson Mizner
14. *Every reform, however necessary, will by weak minds be carried to an excess, that itself will need reforming.*  
Samuel Taylor Coleridge
15. *We're all in this alone.*  
Lilly Tomlin
16. *Faced with the choice between changing one's mind and proving there is no need to do so, almost everybody gets busy on the proof.*  
John Kenneth Galbraith, U.S. economist

## Reasons to Support Change

From the instructive and inspirational to the insightful and unsettling.

1. *No pessimist ever discovered the secrets of the stars, or sailed to an uncharted land, or opened a new heaven to the human spirit.*  
Helen Keller
2. *The foolish and the dead alone never change their opinions.*  
James Russell Lowell
3. *In any moment of decision the best thing that you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing.*  
Theodore Roosevelt
4. *When one door closes, another opens, but we look so long and regretfully upon the closed door, we do not see the ones which open for us.*  
Alexander Graham Bell
5. *There are no secure jobs. Only marketable skills.*  
Unknown
6. *The trouble is, if you don't risk anything, you can risk even more.*  
Erica Jong
7. *Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there.*  
Will Rogers
8. *In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.*  
Albert Einstein
9. *Sweeter than getting the job you've always dreamed of is having the freedom to turn it down.*  
Richard A. Moran
10. *Security is mostly a superstition. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.*  
Helen Keller
11. *The man who views the world at 50 the same as he did at 20 has wasted 30 years of his life.*  
Mohammed Ali
12. *The first problem for all of us, men and women, is not to learn, but to unlearn.*  
Gloria Steinem
13. *The world hates change, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress.*  
Charles F. Kettering
14. *The most effective way to cope with change is to help create it.*  
L.W. Lynett

15. *There is danger in reckless change, but greater danger in blind conservatism.*

Henry George

16. *At the turn of the century, over 80% of the workforce was in agriculture. Now agriculture involves less than 3%. In 1950, over 70% of the U.S. workforce worked in production and manufacturing. Now less than 15% do.*

Bureau of Labor Statistics

17. *It doesn't work to leap a twenty-foot chasm in two ten-foot jumps.*

American proverb

18. *They know enough who know how to learn.*

Henry Adams

19. *The winners of tomorrow will deal proactively with chaos, will look at the chaos per se as the source of market advantage, not as a problem to be got around.*

Tom Peters

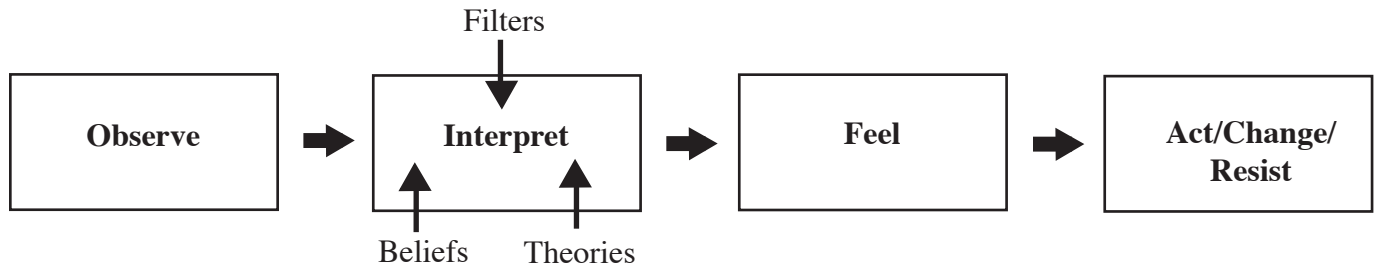
20. *In a fight between you and the world, bet on the world.*

Franz Kafka

# Some Realities About Change

1. We do not resist change per se. We resist anything that we see as detrimental to our self-interests. The key to embracing change, therefore, is to find your self-interest in it.

2. Our behavior is often determined by our beliefs and mindsets.



3. Change happens in different ways. In your own experience, which process best represents how you change?

- a. Change Beliefs → Change Behavior = \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Change Behavior → Change Beliefs = \_\_\_\_\_

4. Our minds are hard to change because, as Einstein observed, “Our theories determine what we see.”

- Evidence that invalidates existing theories is overlooked, discounted or rationalized away.
- Evidence that validates existing theories is immediately recognized.

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# Assessing Our Beliefs:

On average, where do the employees in your organization fall on the continuum from 1 to 5. (Please respond to all 15 of the paired statements.)

Beliefs that Can _____ Your Ability to Change	Beliefs that Can _____ Your Ability to Change
1. Management is the primary cause of all the change going on in the organization.	1 2 3 4 5 The primary cause of all the change is a rapidly changing global economy.
2. This change is unfair to employees who have worked hard and done a good job for the organization.	1 2 3 4 5 This change is challenging and painful for employees who have worked hard and done a good job for the organization.
3. If this organization were better led we wouldn't have to be dealing with these gut wrenching changes.	1 2 3 4 5 Even the best led organizations face gut wrenching changes from time to time.
4. Management don't care about the employees in the organization. (If they did care, they wouldn't be forcing all this change on us.)	1 2 3 4 5 Management do care about employees, and the best way to show it is to make the tough choices that will keep the organization viable.
5. This too shall pass. This change is another of those "flavor of the month" deals.	1 2 3 4 5 The forces driving this change are not going to go away, so we'd better get used to it.
6. There's nothing I can do about all this change. I have no control over what happens.	1 2 3 4 5 I have control over how I choose to respond to this change.
7. When things are uncertain and ambiguous you need to slow down and become more cautious.	1 2 3 4 5 When the ice is thin, the faster you skate the safer you will be.
8. Change is harmful to my career.	1 2 3 4 5 Change is most harmful to those who choose to ignore it.
9. If change is well planned it should go without a hitch.	1 2 3 4 5 Even when change is well planned, it is based on predictions of the future which can never be 100% accurate.
10. My future success depends on me finding opportunities that are consistent with my current skills.	1 2 3 4 5 My future depends on me developing skills that are consistent with future opportunities.

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|---|-----------|---|
| 11. If this change were a good idea, we should expect to see a quick improvement in performance.                    | 1 2 3 4 5 | Change usually results in a short-term drop in productivity and quality.  |
| 12. We need to reduce the pace of change within the organization so people can catch their breaths.                 | 1 2 3 4 5 | Change always takes a toll. If you defer paying it now, you'll have to pay later—with interest.                             |
| 13. If people are to be productive in times of change, management needs to eliminate the uncertainty and ambiguity. | 1 2 3 4 5 | No one can eliminate the uncertainty and ambiguity inherent in change. Each of us need to learn to manage it for ourselves. |
| 14. If people are to be productive in times of change, they must want and welcome the change.                       | 1 2 3 4 5 | Change is like medicine. You don't have to like it for it to do you any good.   |
| 15. To be successful, people must choose the rate of change that works for them.                                    | 1 2 3 4 5 | The marketplace dictates the rate of change. People take their pace from the marketplace if they hope to keep up.           |

How might each of the above 15 beliefs undermine one's ability to change? \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you believe?

- a. Change is not going to go away. It is likely to go faster.
- b. The pace of change is not sustainable. It is likely to slow down.

In the past 12 months, how many of you said to yourselves, "When things .....  
 ....."

**Thriving in a Flat World is a Function of  
Direction x Ability x Motivation.**

**Direction: The DRIVERS of Change in a Flat World**

As you look into the future, what changes do you see in your organization's environment (technology, political, economic etc.)? What will the industry look like in 5-10 years? What will customers expect?

**What is your organization likely to do in order to thrive in this future environment?**

**What new skills and work habits will employees in your organization need in order to thrive in the future?**

What is the relationship between the changes outside your organization and the changes inside your organization? \_\_\_\_\_

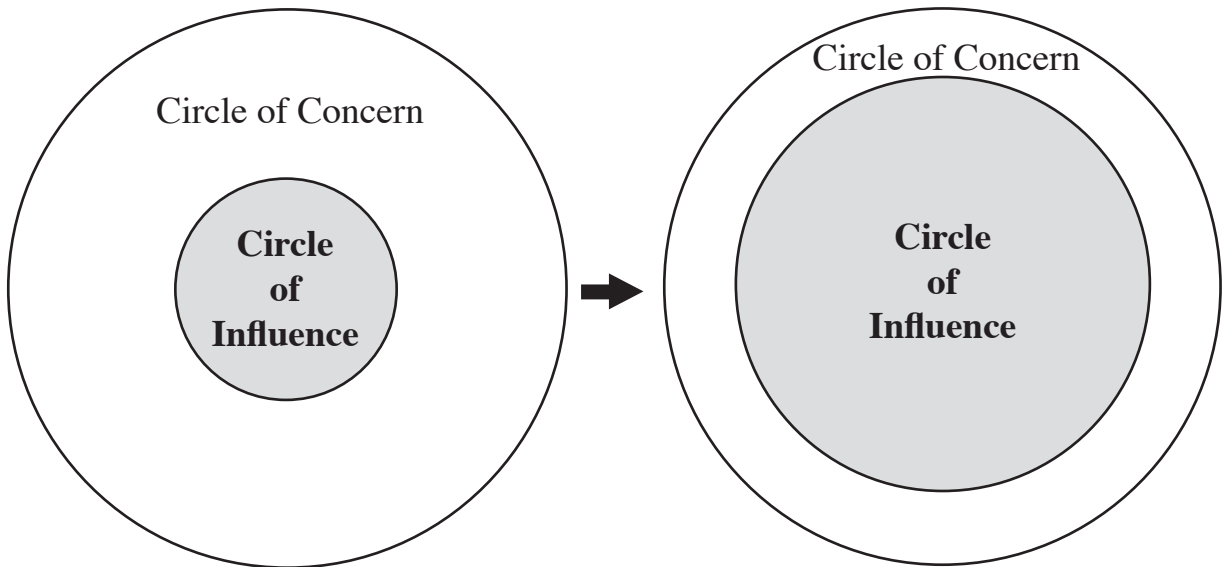
So ultimately, who is responsible for the changes we have to cope with? \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the changes in your organization are most likely to impact you? \_\_\_\_\_

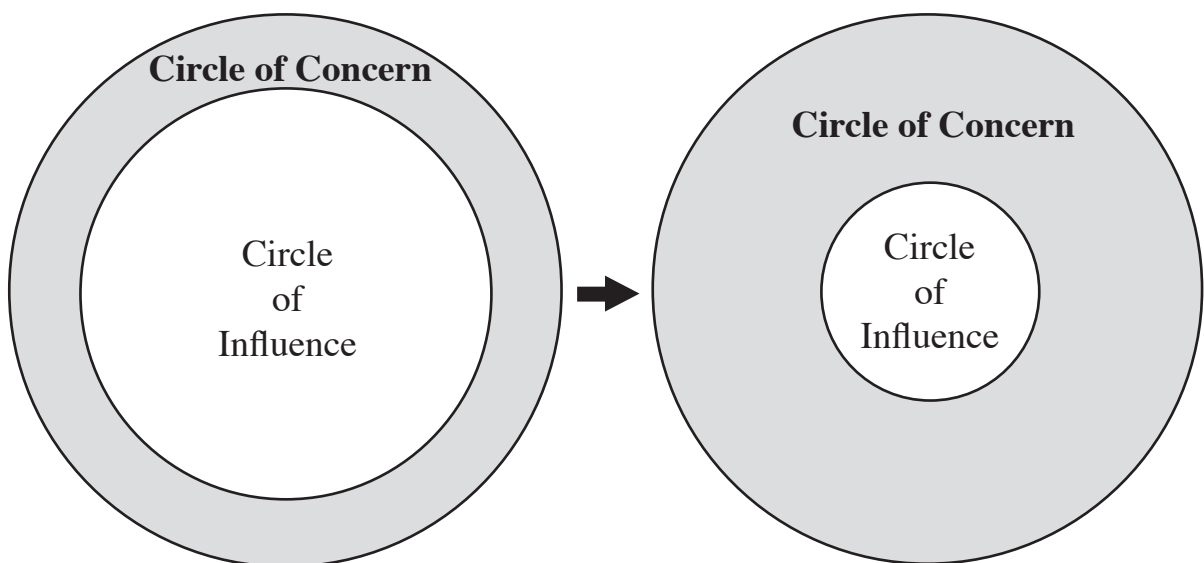
Suggested Reading: "The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century" by Thomas L. Friedman. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2005, 2006.

## Direction: Getting Your Focus Right

**Circles of Influence & Concern: You enlarge the circle you focus on.**



**OR**



What % of your time do you spend talking and thinking about things in:

— the circle of concern? \_\_\_\_\_

— the circle of influence? \_\_\_\_\_

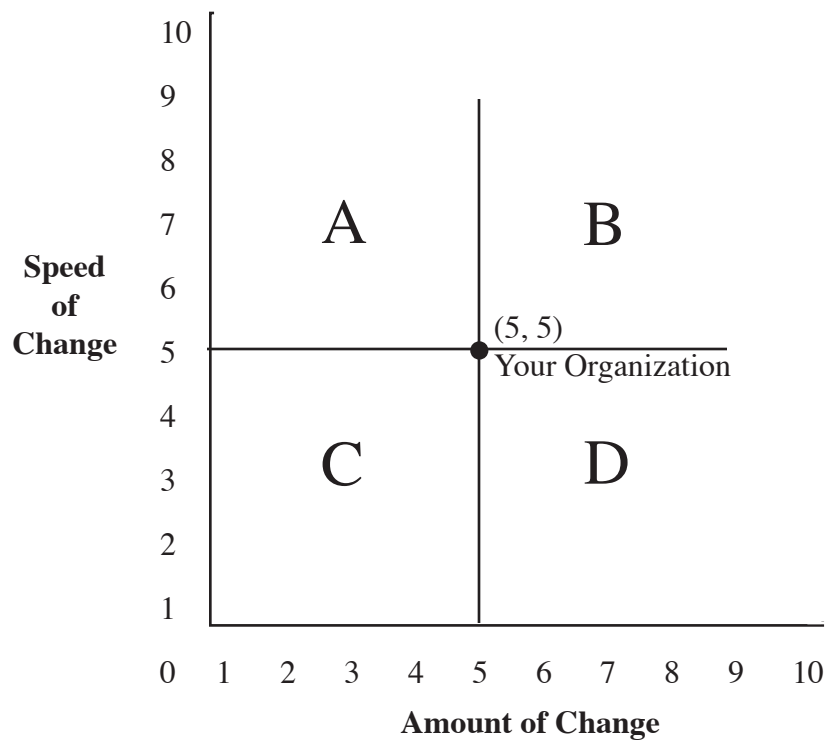
Given the ideas generated on the previous pages, what are the factors in your circle of concern?

Given the ideas generated on page 8, what are the factors in your circle of influence, and what can you do about them?

**Factors in your circle of influence:**

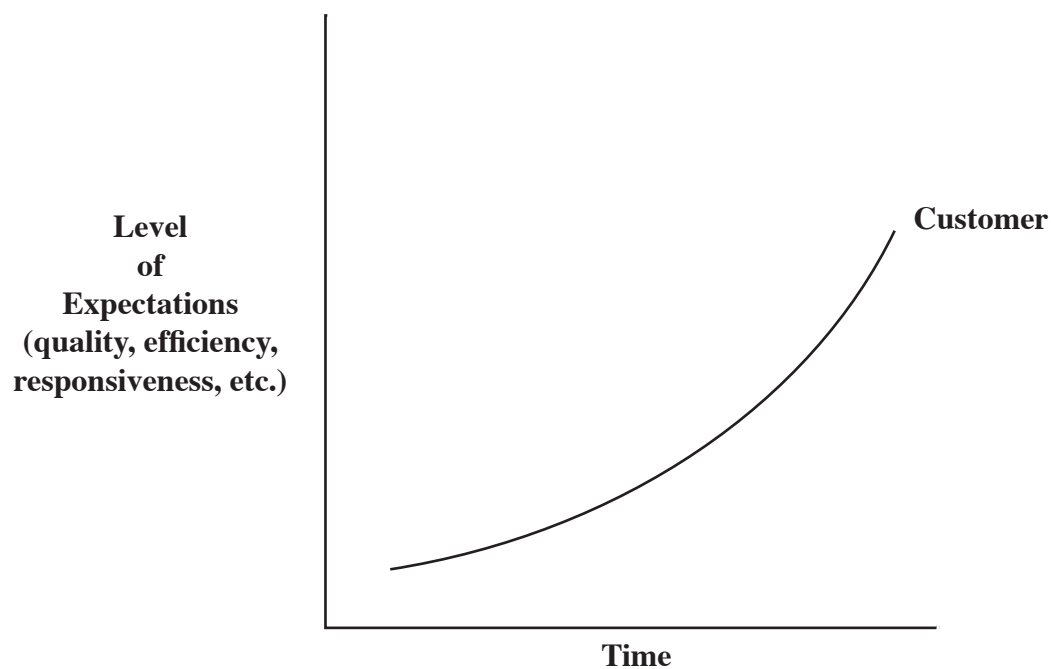
**What we can do about them:**

## Direction: Magnitude of Change



If your organization is at (5,5) in terms of the magnitude of change, where should you be?

## Direction: Matching Customer Expectations



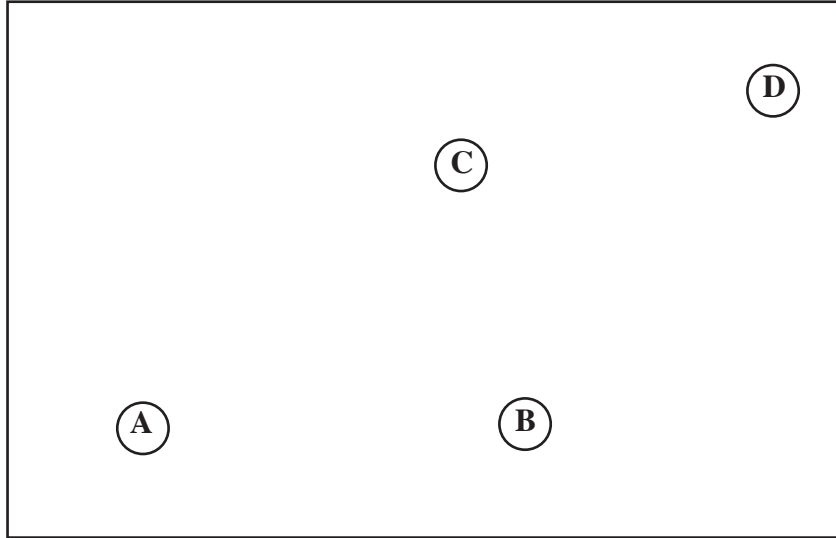
Given customer expectations, where should your organization's expectations curve be?

Given customer and your organization's expectations, where should your expectations curve be?

# Direction: Chasing a Moving Target

## Lessons from Ice Hockey:

Wayne Gretsky: "I don't focus on \_\_\_\_\_, but on where the \_\_\_\_\_."



If you're at A, and your industry and organization are approaching B, where should you be focused on going?

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## Lessons from Racing:

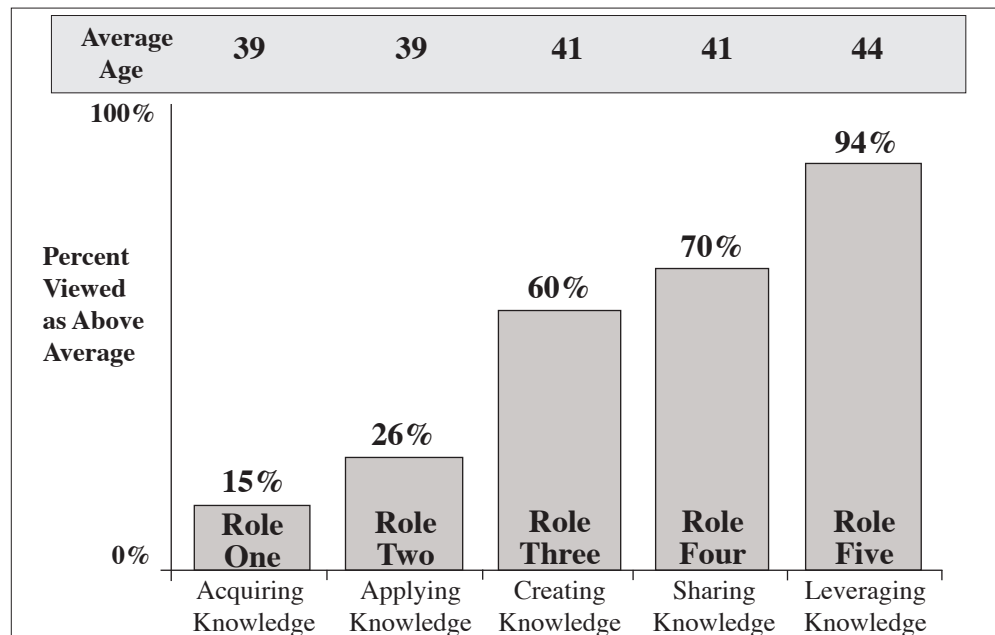
Mario Andretti: "When you feel you are in complete control, it means you are not going fast enough"

# Ability: Identifying the Skills Going Offshore

## Research on the Roles of Contribution

*“Your worth to an organization can be measured by the amount of supervision you require.”*

Jim Casey, 1947  
Founder of UPS



**Study Conclusion:** To be consistently viewed as a high performer, an individual needs to move beyond Role \_\_\_\_\_. Only Role \_\_\_\_\_, Role \_\_\_\_\_ and Role \_\_\_\_\_ consistently deliver competitive advantage for the individual.

## The Five Roles of Contribution

Role One: Acquiring Knowledge	Role Two: Applying Knowledge	Role Three: Creating Knowledge	Role Four: Sharing Knowledge	Role Five: Leveraging Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning from others and from experience.</li> <li>• Moving towards mastery.</li> <li>• Acting under direction from others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completing important tasks independently.</li> <li>• Demonstrating mastery.</li> <li>• Taking initiative within established norms or parameters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questioning the status quo.</li> <li>• Adapting existing knowledge to new uses.</li> <li>• Inventing (but not championing) new methods, products, technologies, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building the ability and confidence of others:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— coaching</li> <li>— teaching</li> <li>— motivating</li> <li>— clarifying</li> <li>— giving feedback</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Building team capacity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutionalizing knowledge (e.g., best practices) and building organization capability.</li> <li>• Championing new systems, products, work processes, etc.</li> <li>• Shaping/making decisions that cross organizational boundaries.</li> </ul>

## Most Critical Competencies by Role

<b>Role One: Acquiring Knowledge</b>	<b>Role Two: Applying Knowledge</b>	<b>Role Three: Creating New Knowledge</b>	<b>Role Four: Sharing Knowledge</b>	<b>Role Five: Leveraging Knowledge</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning from others</li> <li>• Seeking help and direction</li> <li>• Being open to feedback</li> <li>• Attention to details</li> <li>• Working with others</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Admitting mistakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical and analytical skills</li> <li>• Teamwork skills</li> <li>• Initiative and sound judgement</li> <li>• Balancing dependence and independence</li> <li>• Organizational context</li> <li>• Self-motivation</li> <li>• Self-knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical depth</li> <li>• Analytical skills</li> <li>• Risk taking</li> <li>• Creativity and resourcefulness</li> <li>• Balancing competitiveness and collaboration</li> <li>• Technical networking</li> <li>• Dealing with uncertainty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching and interpersonal skills</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Influence, persuasion, and leadership</li> <li>• Organization perspective</li> <li>• Collaboration and “sense of security”</li> <li>• Modeling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity and resourcefulness</li> <li>• Expansive networking</li> <li>• Dealing with ambiguity</li> <li>• Influence, persuasion and leading others</li> <li>• External, industry, and strategic perspective</li> <li>• Negotiation</li> </ul>

1. Which of the five roles are most likely to be outsourced in your organization? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Which of the five roles are most likely to keep you employable in the USA and Western Europe?

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## Ability: Identifying Your Opportunities

Based on your insights from the previous two pages, as well as where your organization, your industry and your customers are heading (i.e., not where they currently are), identify two habits/skills that are most important for you to develop, and identify options for developing them: (At least one of the new competencies should be fully transferrable.)

a. New Competencies: \_\_\_\_\_

Options to Develop: \_\_\_\_\_

b. New Competencies: \_\_\_\_\_

Options to Develop: \_\_\_\_\_

## Finding the Time to Learn: Don't Wait for a Sabbatical

1. Learn in motion: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Register at "Motor U.": \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Make every tomorrow a vacation day: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Motivation:

What will be the :

<b>Possible consequences of not developing those competencies:</b>	<b>Possible rewards for developing those competencies:</b>

## Targeted Learning: Your Partners for Engaging and Retaining Talent

- Our Purpose:**
1. To help organizations achieve world-class performance by fully engaging and retaining the talents and energies of all their people.
  2. To help individuals learn faster, work smarter and achieve more.
  3. To help leaders achieve great things through others.

*“The organization that figures out how to engage the collective genius of its people will blow the competition away.” – Walter Wriston, Former Chairperson of CitiCorp.*

Genius is simply talent and energy that is focused on achieving great things. Targeted Learning has research-based and field-tested resources to help organizations engage the collective genius of their people.



### Workshops from Targeted Learning

- The Seven Conversations of Exceptional Leaders (2 days)
- The Seven Conversations of High-Impact Individuals (2 days)
- Leadership Skills for Technical Professionals (2 days)
- Career Leadership Skills (1 day)
- How to Influence Others When You are Not In Charge (1 day)
- Learning to Thrive on Change (1/2 day)



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