

DEVELOPING CORE COMPETENCIES: FROM TRAINING FOR FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TO LEARNING OF TACIT KNOWLEDGE

PART I

Gunapala Nanayakkara

ABSTRACT

Traditional perspectives and techniques of skill learning by individuals are challenged by the emerging needs of knowledge-driven organization. One of the basic concerns of the 'learning organization' concept in this context is whether learning at the organization level is the sum total of individual and group learning or an integral part of organizational functioning regardless of whether individuals learn. This paper argues that individual and group learning is the key to developing a learning organization and its essence of core competencies. Drawing from skills research, the author points out that most of the current human resource development approaches and techniques are unsuitable for the task and new paradigmatic thinking is necessary. The paper presents a framework for a newer approach that incorporates the learning of tacit knowledge, and then, based on a few cases of human resource development efforts in Sri Lanka, the author exhibits the need for realigning competency development along the lines envisaged by the conceptual framework.

Key words: Skill-acquisition, learning organization, automatization of skill, multi-functional competencies, perceptual-motor skills, problem solving mental models.