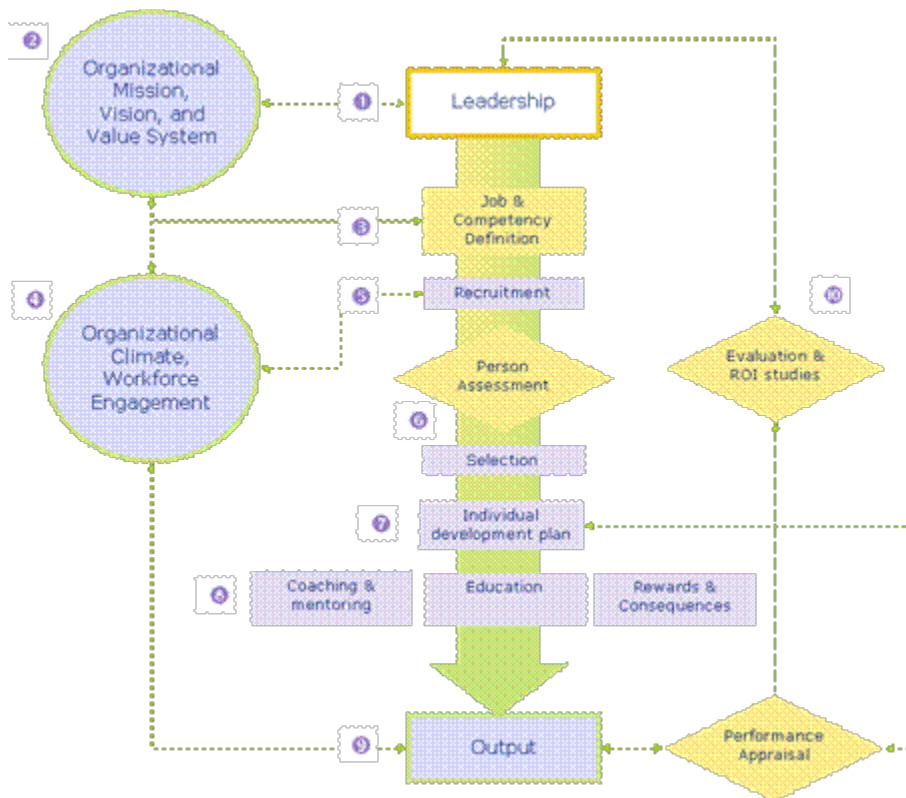


# Integrating Performance

In times of economic downturn, organizations start looking for places to cut costs and increase revenue. There is nothing wrong with that picture – such efforts, after all, either are or should be ongoing in sound businesses. The problem is that oftentimes training departments receive the brunt of costs cuts. Others in our organization fail to see a clear connection between what we do and increased productivity. It’s easy to pay lip service to the importance of training when the company is growing, but much harder to justify training investments during leaner times.

Let’s assume for a moment that training is important and does have a connection to a more engaged and productive workforce. Why isn’t that connection seen by others? Three words: Lack of integration. People don’t see the connection because the connection is often not there. Training efforts must be clearly integrated to all performance management processes. We developed the model below to help practitioners plan this integration.



Here is how this model works.

1. First and foremost, there is **leadership**. Without leadership an integrated process cannot possibly be

operational. Coordination amongst top leaders is vital, and there should be a definite place at the table for the key performance improvement professional.

2. The organization's **mission, vision, and value system**, should be fully integrated to the performance management process – otherwise they become nothing more than the content of nice looking but seldom read plaques on the wall. Mission, vision, and value system impact and are impacted by the organization's leadership and climate.

3. What **competencies** are vital to each of our jobs? A **competency based** job description is the best ally to an integrated performance improvement process. Job descriptions should also be coherent with the organizational mission, vision, and value system. For instance, if diversity is an important organizational value, it should also be a required competency in all jobs.

4 and 5. The **organizational climate** and the **engagement of the workforce** impact and are impacted by mission/vision/value system and organizational output. They also impact the organization's ability to **recruit** the best talent available.

6. Properly **assessing** an organization's key asset – its people – is another essential piece. Turnover is costly and each **selection** failure costs the organization anywhere between twice and four times the employee's yearly salary. It is essential to develop a comprehensive selection strategy that encompasses more than just interviews. Also, be aware that traditionally used selection criteria such as college rank and amount of education are extremely poor predictors of success on the job, with predictive validity levels inferior to 15%.

7 and 8. You may capitalize on the various assessment tools utilized during selection if you use them to help each employee develop an **individual development plan**. Employees should know how their **personality infrastructure, aptitudes, and past experiences** facilitate or hinder their ability to model all competencies included in their job description. Whenever potential weak areas are detected, employees need a detailed plan of improvement. Such plan should go beyond traditional **education** (i.e. training) opportunities and include **coaching, mentoring, and a rewards/consequences system**.

9 and 10. The **evaluation** of output, processes, and individual contributions is key for **continuous improvement**.

Within this model, education does not occur within a vacuum or provide only “good to know” knowledge. On the contrary, education is a vital piece of an employee's development plan and is clearly linked to an organization's mission, vision, value system, and final output. For maximum effectiveness all educational opportunities should be tailored to individual employee needs rather than offered in generic training sessions.

*Cris Wildermuth, M.Ed., is the Co-founder and Executive Partner of The Effectiveness Group. Please contact Cris at [cris@theeffectivenessgroup.com](mailto:cris@theeffectivenessgroup.com) or 419 221 0010 for questions on the integration model and the instruments and tools to implement*

*it.*