A New Training Strategy: Design the Work Environment for Continuous Learning

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ABSTRACT

In the industrial workplace, few people begin a job fully trained. Even when people have prior work experience, they will still need to learn the many nuances of the new work environment that impact one's ability to perform effectively. Furthermore, with the current high rate of change in organization and technology, nearly everyone needs to acquire new competencies to meet the demands of the work environment. As a consequence, all organizations have to educate and train staff to raise their level of performance. This may be achieved by providing new and relevant knowledge and information, by providing hands on experiences, or by cultivating specific attitudes, values, and motives.

The human performance demands in the industrial process control environment challenge current training strategies and methods. A new paradigm is needed that closely couples training and job activities situated in the everyday work environment.

The purpose of training is to develop task appropriate competencies in form of specific knowledge and skills. Most importantly, when people are interacting with large complex systems like those in the process control industry, the system's structure and behaviors change continuously for a variety of reasons. Consequently, it is important that the competencies of the work force keep abreast of the changing demands of this complex work environment.