



Performance Architecture

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A Walk on the Human Performance Side – Part IV

Just as building Architects must continue to expand their understanding of how people use their homes, workplaces, and public venues, so too must Performance Architects shape their services to meet the changing needs of their clients. With the increased focus on global issues such as sustainability, environmental stewardship, and making contributions of value to society, today's employers are challenged to evaluate the impact of their work beyond their immediate customers and consider their contribution to the larger community.

When we introduced this series in July of 2011, we did not foresee that organizations would so quickly realize their ability to make a significant and positive difference in the world. We initially presented the three organizational levels in successive columns:

- I – Worker/Individual/Team
- II – Work/Process
- III – Workplace/Organization

Now we add the fourth level: World/Society, in which we explore what employers are doing today to assess the impact of their products and services on the larger community.

Part I Recap: The Worker/Individual/Team Level

In [Part I](#), we investigated the Worker/Individual/Team level and shared the **Performance Map**, a visual and diagnostic model that helps clients focus on performance issues and possible solutions to them, rather than making the almost automatic request for training. We showed the value of involving clients early in the investigative process so that their ownership of the performance issue and selected solutions would carry through the project's implementation and beyond.

We related a success story about being asked to train customer-facing employees in service skills and using the **Performance Map** with our client. The **Map** showed her that solutions other than training were most likely to build the service culture she wanted to create.

Part II Recap: The Work/Process Level

In [Part II](#) we spent time at the Work/Process level and introduced a handy tool, the generic **Time and Motion Workflow** chart. We identified signs that performance issues were getting in the way of optimum performance and then showed how the **Time and Motion Workflow** chart could help the Performance Architect observe and accurately capture details about how tasks are done. With this information, performance obstacles are made visible and can be addressed.

We shared an eye-opening example from a branch office in a large financial institution where relocating the lead teller in front of the vault saved enough time to allow the hiring of an additional salesperson.

Part III Recap: The Workplace/Organization Level

In [Part III](#) we profiled the kinds of large-scale change initiatives typical at this level and emphasized the importance of mapping the organization to better understand the various functions and their inter-dependencies. We offered the **Business Logic Model** as a versatile mapping tool, particularly because it is suitable for both internal and external use. Rather than including a success story, we invited readers to use the model to learn more about their own organizations.

The World/Society Level

At the World/Society level, the focus shifts from internal goals and supporting operations to adding value for external clients and the larger community beyond the organization's doors. This level includes customers and other citizens and is often the level missed when strategic plans are made. At the World level, Performance Architects reference Mega thinking and planning:

“Adding value to our shared society using your organization as the primary vehicle is the purpose and defining characteristic of Mega Thinking and Planning. When we place our shared world—where we live with others—as primary, that is Mega Planning. From this shared societal value-added framework, everything you use, do, produce, and deliver will achieve agreed-on positive organizational as well as societal results.” (Kaufman, page 9).

Corporate Social Responsibility

For a time, the ubiquitous Corporate Social Responsibility department was seen by many as an important box to have on the organizational chart and little more. Today, customers care about the ethics, values, and worldview of the companies they purchase from and let their views be known. Savvy organizations care about what their customers care about. And so, many companies are embedding Mega thinking and planning into their operations. Some, like Visa, are creating new markets in the developing world by closely aligning social causes with their corporate strategies. (Fringe, 2012).

The 3-Legged Stool—Sustainability

As organizations determine how to achieve their goals while also contributing to the larger societal good, they look at sustainability as a key factor in planning and operations. A standard model is the 3-legged stool, in which the economy, society, and the environment support sustainability. For a business to be sustainable, it must follow the principles of sustainable development, meeting “the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (Business Sustainability, 2012).

There is currently spirited talk about sustainability practices in our client organizations. Many have staff or consulting experts who determine how to best exercise good stewardship of the environment while providing products or services that make a profit. Consider for example, Wal-Mart's greening of its supply chain and its effects on the manufacturers and consumers of the goods the giant company sells. What contributions to sustainability, and ultimately society, result from these practices? (Haig and Addison, 2012).

Performance Issues at the World/Society Level

To better understand the kinds of performance issues grappled with at the World level, we find it helpful to look at the United Nations' Eight Millennium Goals. The Goals are the result of a 2010

plan agreed to by all the world's countries and leading development institutions. Extensive efforts are underway toward achieving these goals by the target date of 2015.

The goals:

1. Eradicate Extreme Hunger and Poverty
2. Achieve Universal Primary Education
3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
4. Reduce Child Mortality
5. Improve Maternal Health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases
7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability
8. Develop a Global Partnership For Development

Individual business, non-profit, and educational organizations are contributing to the progress toward these goals. A recent report provides details. (End Poverty, 2012). How does your organization's strategic planning impact these eight goals and what other contributions does it make at the World level? To what extent are the business processes in your organization designed from an outside perspective that considers their impact on the larger environment alongside their internal effectiveness?

Other Level IV Organizational Initiatives

Many of the world's top corporations are making significant commitments to sustainability and the societal values important to their customers. Some examples:

- *FedEx's EarthSmart® Program* – Launched in EMEA, EarthSmart® covers business, culture, and community. With long-term goals to reduce fuel emissions on land and air, create renewable energy sources in its facilities, and a tree planting program among many other plans, FedEx sets the bar high for societal contributions. (EarthSmart, 2011).
- *Johnson Controls* – Do your organization's buildings operate at peak efficiency while making the least possible impact on the environment? Consider improvements to heating, lighting, water use and other basics that are both socially responsible and money saving. (Make Buildings Work, 2011).
- *Lawrence Berkeley Lab* – This month, the Lab hired its first chief sustainability officer. He will oversee energy efficiency and related sustainability practices at this Department of Energy (U.S.A.) site. The Lab's leadership wants to use its own facilities to demonstrate to the world what can be achieved through sustainable practices. (Lawrence Berkeley Lab, p.18).
- *Wells Fargo Bank* – Demonstrating yet another way to practice corporate social responsibility, Wells has established a \$100 million environmental grant program. Through this initiative, the bank will provide funds to encourage sustainable agriculture, forestry, and related land and water conservation programs. (Wells, p. 12).
- *DuPont* – The company's mission is to achieve sustainable growth and energy efficiency. Through its Bold Energy Plan, its largest energy-consuming plant has reduced costs by \$90 million. (DuPont, 2012).

These are just a few examples of the fast-moving trend toward organizational investment in social responsibility and sustainability of the earth and our natural resources. Watch for this trend to escalate.

The Super System - Your Organization at the World/Society Level

We believe that Performance Architects in all areas of specialty have a unique opportunity to raise awareness and take action toward efforts already underway in our client organizations. We can ensure that the business process work we do considers sustainability and societal impact. To help, we offer the Super System:

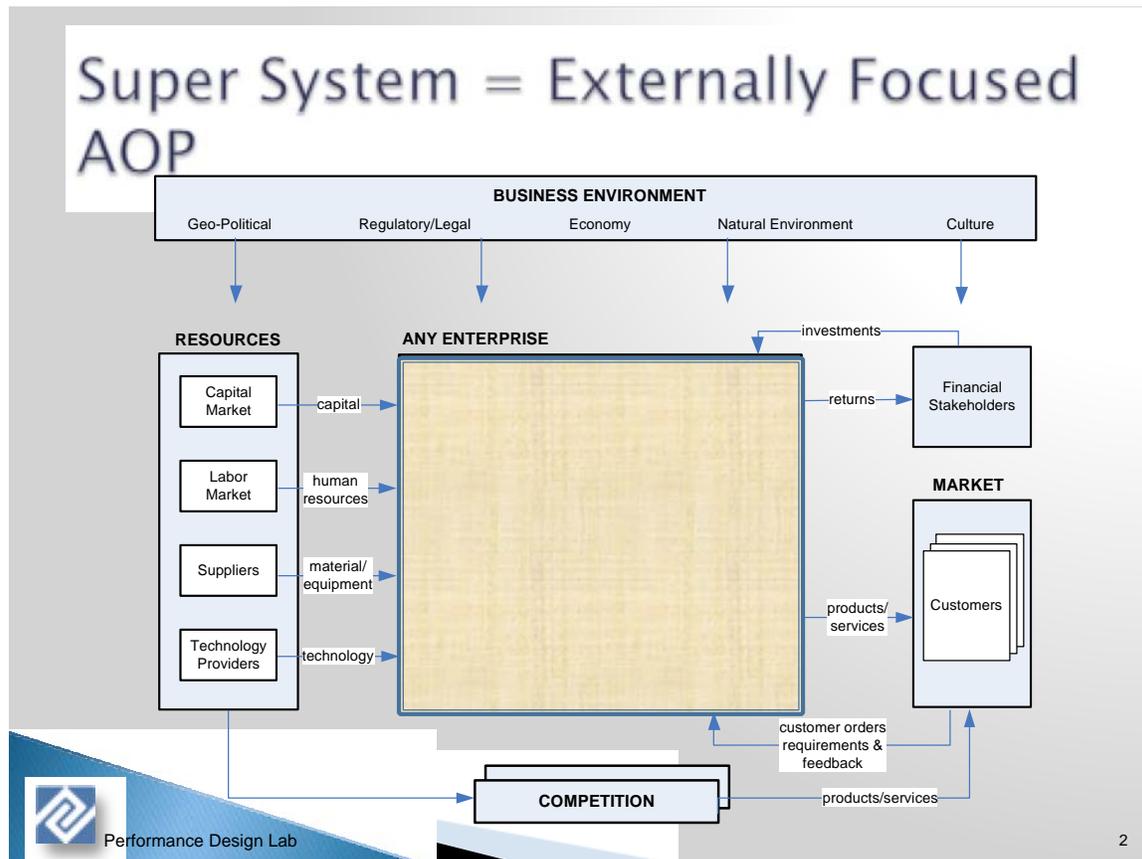


Figure 1. Super System = Externally Focused AOP

Graciously shared by the Performance Design Lab and derived from Geary Rummler's original work, the Super System depicts the systems-within-systems that comprise the World level. Readers familiar with the Anatomy of Performance (AOP) will recognize the core of the Super System. This model shows us that to do work within an organization without including all the related larger systems is to ignore critical information about the impact of that work beyond the organization's walls. (Rummler, Richard, 2012).

It is important for our organizations and their ultimate customers to agree on what value they add to society. Once they articulate a common view, other agreements become possible and the resulting products or services will better serve society.

Tips for Success With the Super System

The Super System has helped Performance Architects and their organizations identify the external variables that could be factors in their performance. It can clarify the context in which the organization exists. Strategic planners can use the Super System to model past, present, or future conditions, as needed.

Users can specify the components that are relevant to their organizations by briefly describing each of these:

- Products and Services produced by the organizations
- Markets, Customers, and Channels
- Financial Stakeholders
- Resources
- Competition
- General Environment
- The Organization itself

At the Society level, we are particularly interested in the components outside the organization. As with the standard components listed above, briefly describing each of the external components in the context of the particular organization identifies known specific needs and calls out the additional information needed:

- Earnings and Value added Results – from Returns
- Value added products and services – from Products/Services
- Making a positive impact on society/the Market – from Market/customers
- Distinguishing your organization – from the Competition
- Using reusable and recyclable resources – from Resources
- Making a difference to the environment and society – from Business Environment

For more about the Super System, see *White Space Revisited*, Rummler, Ramias and Rummler. p. 48.

Summary

Building on organizational levels I, II, and III discussed in previous columns, we add Level IV, World/Society. At this level, Performance Architects and their client organizations strategize to set goals and policies to ensure that their products and services are produced and delivered in responsible, sustainable ways. They partner with their customers to identify shared values, and infuse their operational decisions with methods that contribute to their triple bottom line. The Super System model makes visible the systems and sub-systems that should be included in any Level IV initiative.

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