

Managing Employee Competence: The Global Challenge

TaiwanICDF Human Capital Workshop

**Ronald L. Jacobs, Ph.D.
The Ohio State University**

20 October 2009

One of the most critical societal challenges is to ensure that individuals have the competence necessary to perform what is expected now and in the future. Workforce development programs seek to address this issue through cooperation between schools, organizations, NGOs, and government.

This presentation will make the point that underlying these workforce development initiatives is the need to understand the nature of employee competence in the global economy .

The challenge of understanding employee competence and the ability respond to on-going changes will be discussed during the presentation.

Agenda

Workforce Development – Integrated Perspective

Core Issue – Employee Competence

Future Challenges

The past thirty years . . .

- **Globalization** Unprecedented connections among people and markets (October 11, 1989)
- **Technology** Communications, manufacturing, management (Reliable process to store, deliver, manage)
- **Economy** Free-market capitalism, cost and price pressures, current crisis
- **Political** Redefining government role, social justice
- **Demographics** Baby boomers, Gen X and Gen Y, Global trends

An Integrated Perspective



An Integrated Perspective

- How individuals prepare to enter or re-enter the workforce
- How organizations provide workplace learning opportunities to improve performance
- How organizations and communities respond to changes that affect workforce effectiveness
- How individuals undergo life transitions related to workforce participation

Workforce Development

The process of coordinating societal resources (schools, organizations, NGOs, and government agencies) such that as a collective they enable individuals the opportunity to acquire the workplace competence to realize a sustainable livelihood and organizations to achieve desired financial and non-financial outcomes, consistent with the context.

Jacobs & Hawley (2009)

Some Examples . . .

- Schools delivering education, basic skills, or diploma programs for adults
- Schools delivering vocational education programs for youth
- Labor unions conducting apprenticeship programs
- Governments offering job placement services that connect individuals and training
- NGOs, such as Chambers of Commerce, forecasting trends and emerging markets
- Companies offering internal training and career development programs

Core Issue . . . Employee Competence

- **Human Capital** – The potential to use knowledge and skills in the workplace, acquired through training, education, and experience, which increases the individual's value in the marketplace.
- **Competence** – The relative ability of an individual to perform a specific set of work, ranging from a novice to a master level.

Competence is a specific measure of human capital.

Employee Competence

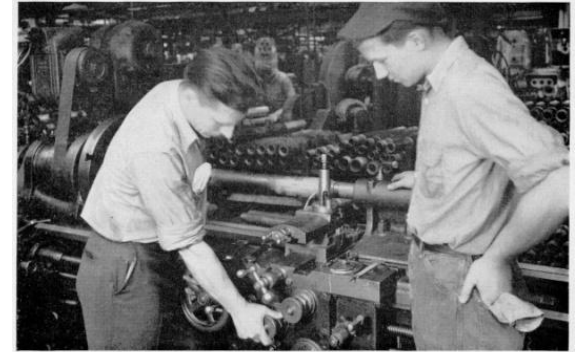
- Experience
- Further study
- Reflection
- Talent

- Training
- Education

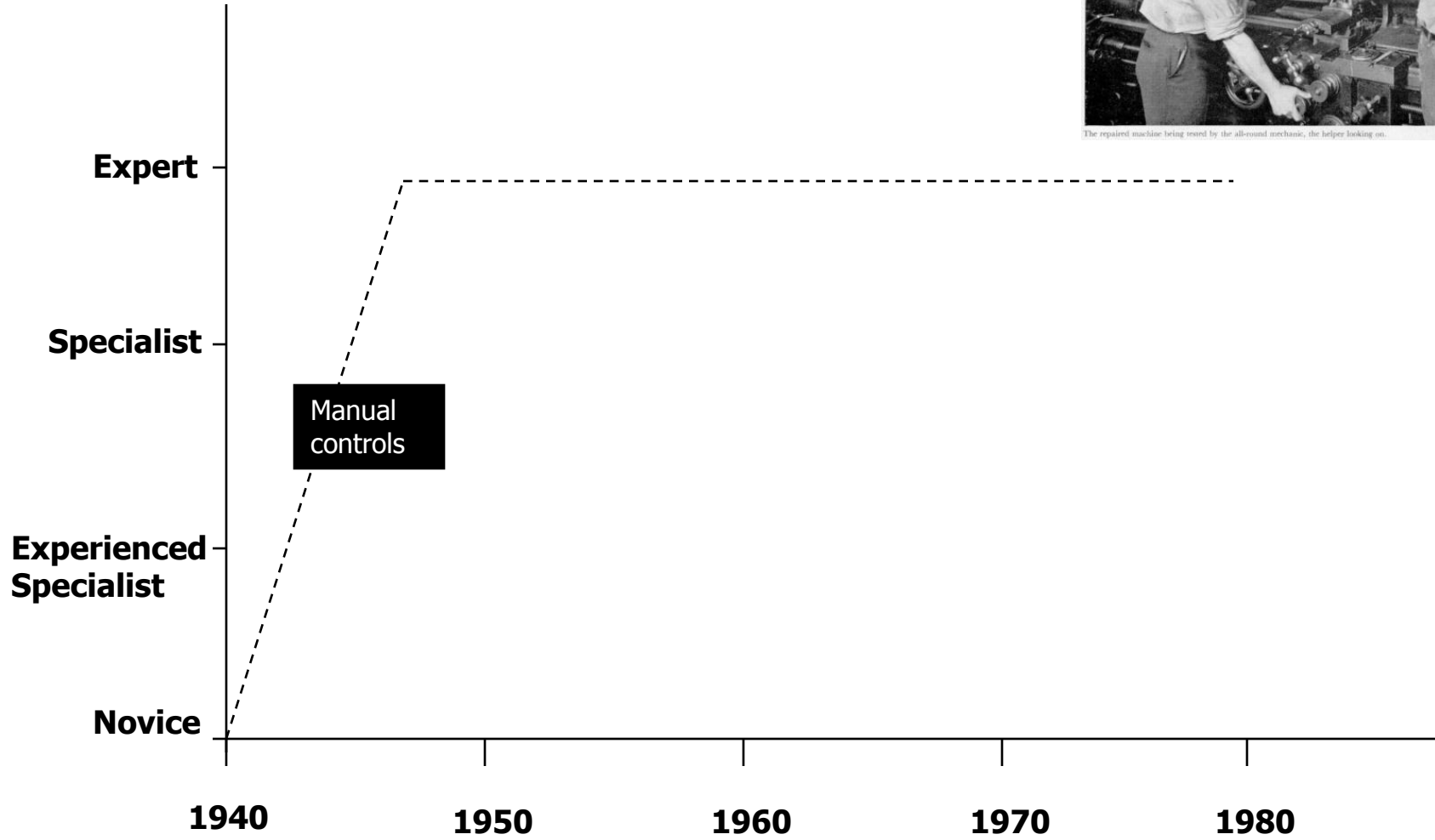
<i>Level</i>	<i>Description</i>
Master	Sets the standards for others, the source of information for others
Expert	Performs both the routine and non-routine cases and generates new knowledge as necessary
Experienced Specialist	Performs the work repeatedly and can do it with ease
Specialist	Performs most work, but the range is limited
Novice	Lacks the ability to meet requirements

Machine Tool Operator

Figure XVIII

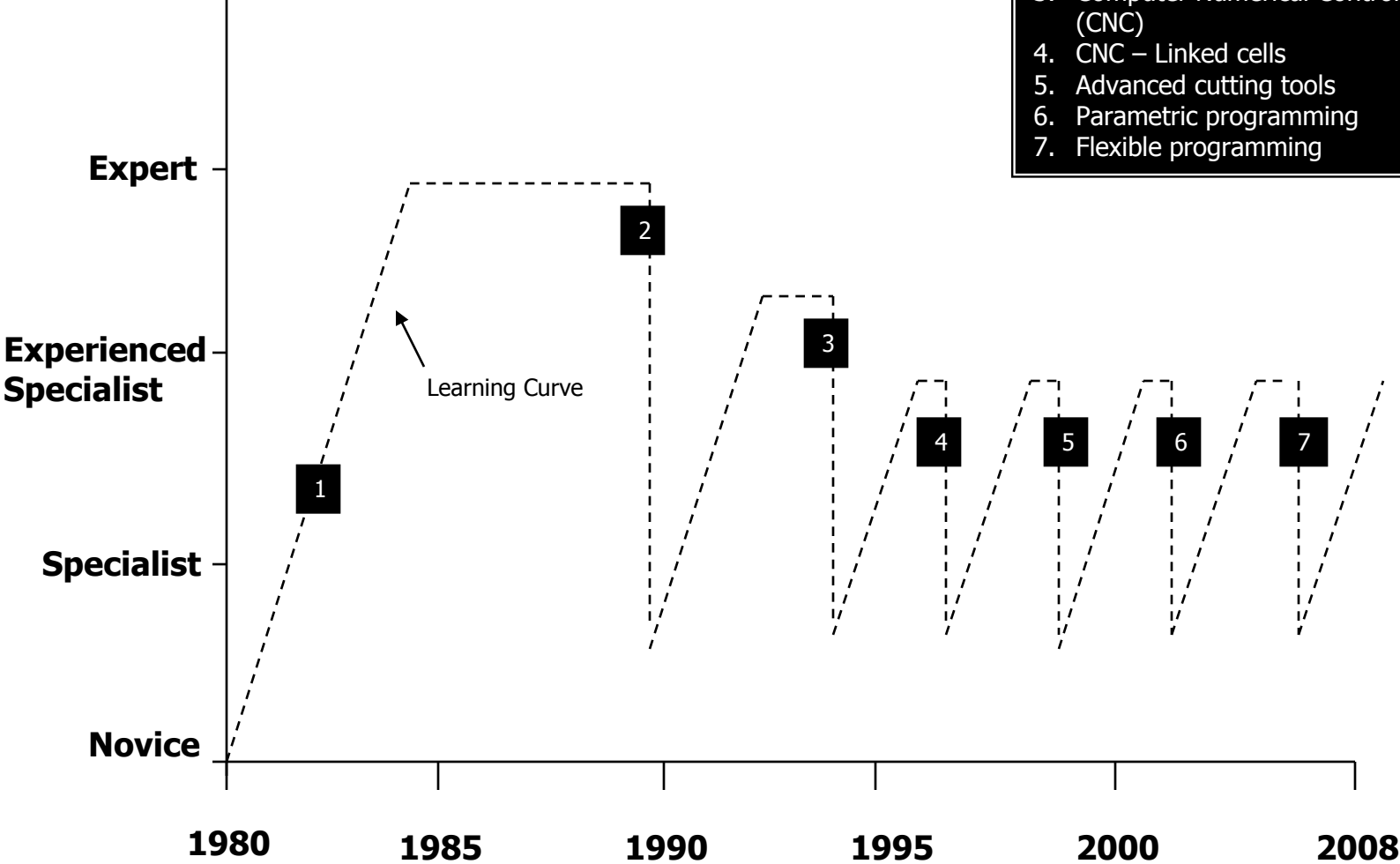


The repaired machine being tested by the all-round mechanic, the helper looking on.

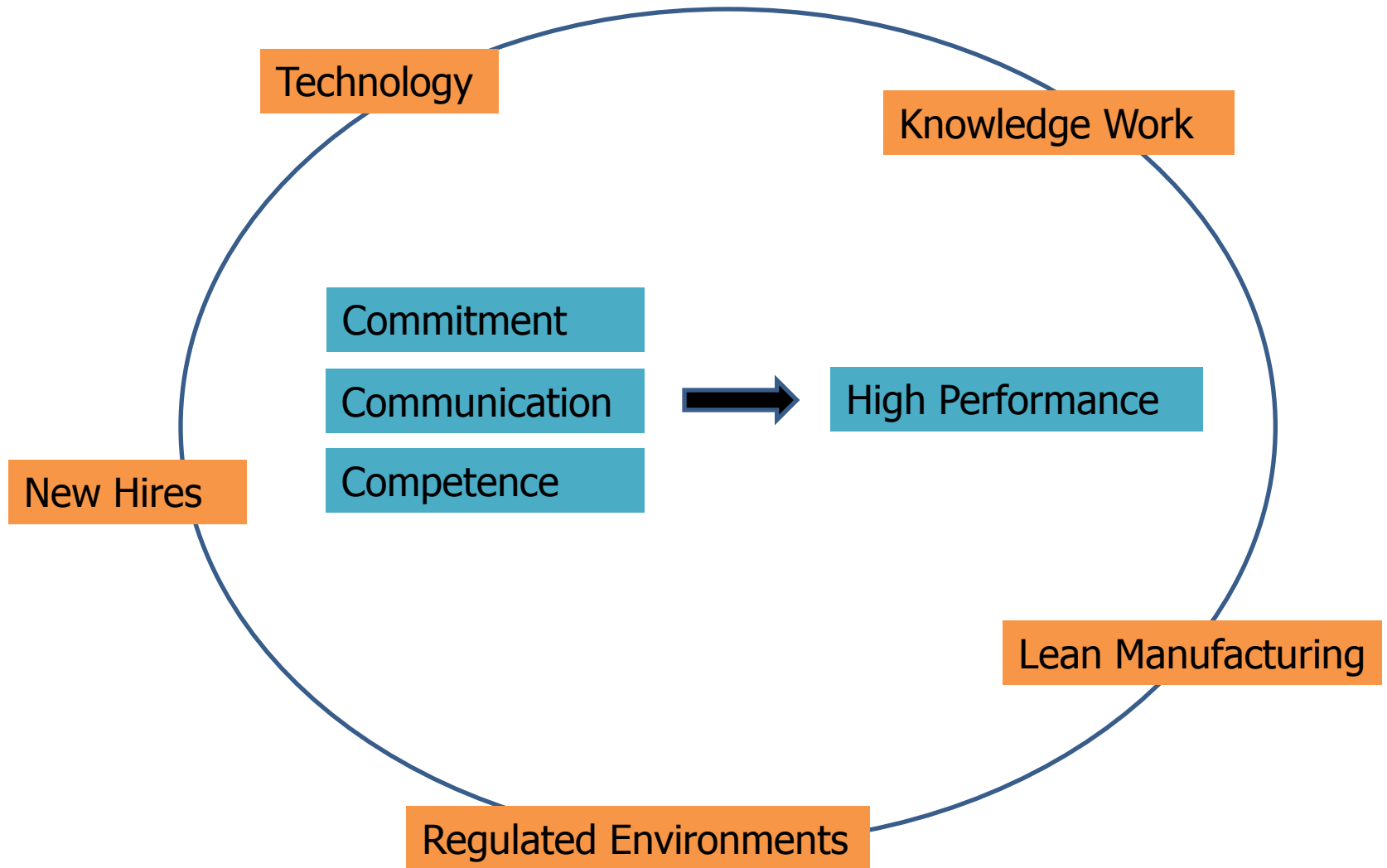


Machine Tool Operator

- 1. Hand controls, hand tools
- 2. Numerical controls, hand tools
- 3. Computer Numerical Control (CNC)
- 4. CNC – Linked cells
- 5. Advanced cutting tools
- 6. Parametric programming
- 7. Flexible programming



Future Challenges



Future Challenges

- How can we accurately forecast the competence needs of our societies, workplaces?
- How can we coordinate the societal resources necessary to address competence needs?
- How can we promote best practices related to programs that support workplace learning?
- How can we encourage research and theory building that reflects the practical needs of our societies – partnership research?
- How can we ensure that workforce development initiatives are accountable for achieving sustainable goals: win, win, win?

Thank You

Ronald L. Jacobs, Ph.D.

Professor, Workforce Development and Education

<http://education.osu.edu/rjacobs/>

Email: rjacobs@ehe.osu.edu

