

Exploring Human Performance Improvement as a Career

EDCI 6600-Learning Design and Technology

Allison Brinkerhoff
Assignment for Purdue University's MEd

The type of career in learning design and technology that I would like to pursue would be in Human Performance Improvement (HPI). Both instructional design and human performance improvement focus on better results for the learner. While instructional designers focus on building individual knowledge and capability, human performance improvement has to do with building individual capability for the interest of the organization as a whole.

An HPI specialist is essentially a performance consultant. They are responsible for identifying and managing gaps between current performance and the desired result, along with suggesting and implementing potential solutions (Stolovitch & Beresford, 2012). HPI consultants use similar processes as instructional designers, such as identifying outcomes, identifying solution systems (Rossett, 2013).

HPI consultants and instructional designers must also have well-defined and communicated results from the performer/learner before thinking about the supports for supports to be effective (Interviews of instructional designers, 2009).

Careers similar to HPI consultants aim to improve performance to achieve company, shareholder, and employee objectives (Stolovitch & Beresford, 2012).

The following are careers similar to the Human Performance Improvement field:

- Human resource development
- Organizational effectiveness
- Organizational development consultant

An HPI specialist needs to be knowledgeable about different processes, such as Gilbert's Behavior Engineering Model, HPT model of the International Society for Performance Improvement, or Mager and Pipe's model for Analyzing Performance

Problems (Stolovitch & Beresford, 2012). They also need to be well versed in various performance supports such as job aids, electronic performance support software (EPSS), and learning management systems (Stolovitch & Beresford, 2012). Along with knowledge of systemic approaches as potential solutions (Stolovitch & Beresford, 2012).

In addition to areas that HPI specialists need to have expertise, there are also many professional skills they would need to succeed in their career. According to the International Board of Standards for Training, Performance, and Instruction (ibstpi®), there are 15 core competencies for a training manager, which is essentially an HPI specialist. The competencies from ibstpi® Training Managing Competencies are listed below (Training Manager Competencies, 2013):

- Communicate effectively in visual, oral, and written form.
- Comply with established ethical and legal standards.
- Maintain networks to advocate for and support the training and performance function.
- Update and improve professional and business knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
- Demonstrate awareness of the politics of evaluation.
- Develop and monitor a strategic plan.
- Use performance analysis to improve the organization.
- Plan and promote organizational change.
- Ensure the application of instructional design principles.
- Use technology to enhance the training function.
- Evaluate training and performance interventions.
- Apply leadership skills to the training function.
- Apply management skills to the training function.
- Implement knowledge management solutions.
- Apply business skills to the training function.

While some of the competencies imply collaboration skills, they are not explicitly mentioned. Collaboration is critical to company buy-in and sustainability; therefore, it is worth mentioning explicitly. The ability to give meaningful feedback is another competency an HPI specialist should have. Feedback recognizes a learner's work and accomplishments in a way that is beneficial to desired results (Stolovitch & Beresford,

2012). There are various HPI organizations, all of which offer some training and certification in HPI.

Two highly recommended organizations are:

- The International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI) provides support, resources, education, and connections for individuals and businesses to improve their performance. They also provide extra member support (What does ISPI do?, 2016).
- The Association for Talent Development (ATD), previously known as American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) is another private organization that provides similar professional support as ISPI (About ATD, 2017).

References:

About ATD. (2017). Retrieved May 15, 2017, from
<https://www.td.org/About>

Interviews of instructional designers (2009, May 12). *Instructional Design Rules of Thumb - Learning from the Pros - Part 2*. Retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZODZkTb2NA>

Rossett, Allison. (2013, April 3). *Why we need instructional design more than ever: Learning Technologies 2013*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsAGIZuMxmQ>

Stolovitch, H. D., & Beresford, B. (2012). The Development and Evolution of Human Performance Improvement. In *Trends and issues in instructional design and technology* (Third ed., pp. 135-146). Boston, M.A.: Pearson Education.

Training Manager Competencies. (2013). Retrieved from <http://ibstpi.org/training-manager-competencies/>

What does ISPI do?. (2016). Retrieved May 14, 2017, from
https://www.ispi.org/ISPI/About/Our_Purpose/What_Does_ISPI_Do/ISPI/About_ISPI/What_Does_ISPI_Do.aspx?hkey=484f2fcf-c208-4589-936c-f427ba8df7d3