

Chapter 1

Appreciating Specialization: Nurturing Talent in the Division of Labor

Mambo Mupepi

Grand Valley State University, USA

Francis Boachie-Mensah

University of Cape Coast, Ghana

ABSTRACT

The central precept of this chapter is to leverage the division of labor to create a talented workforce. The divided labor can be appreciated to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to develop the talent useful to progress the job. Specialization arises in many situations such as when the experts share their experience, enabling the novice to constantly learn to improve systems thinking and personal mastery. It can also happen as a result of planned on-the-job training. Innovation can happen when individuals segment their knowledge about the job and increase their skillfulness to champion productivity. Technical know-how too can be described as highly structured skill-sets acquired from years of continuous learning and improvement leading to proficiency. Expertise can also refer to innovative and systems thinking, espousing the development of techniques and methods leading to increased productivity. A case study is deployed to understand how competencies were developed and implemented successfully in an enterprise. Appreciative Inquiry change management savoir-faire was deployed to pin-point at what gave life to the business. This information was used to promote the talent needed to boost output in the value creation system.

INTRODUCTION

The discussion in this chapter is about appreciating knowledge, skills, and technology, in the division of labor to create specialists who can provide answers to the economic question of how to advance productivity. They can enable the divided labor to excel in their jobs and become talented in many aspects of the business. In a free market economy, the best producers are those that are able to supply goods and services valued by the consumers all the time. Adam Smith (1723-1790) envisioned a world of specialists native to the division of labor, who produce goods sold at greater profit margins. The

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-1961-4.ch001

division of labor enables economies of scale that give the producer superiority in the production of the goods in demand. The competitive advantage can be created in many ways. For example, a company can make appropriate-in-technology investment, acquiring the tools, equipment and know-how to advance productivity. It can also invest in its people, allowing them to specialize in all aspects of doing the job. The company can have all the gadgets, tools and equipment, but people will make the difference. The discourse presented indicates that the edge can also be created by the business, using the knowledge and skills of the stakeholder specialists. Wealth can be realized by controlling costs and addressing taxation, all things being equal.

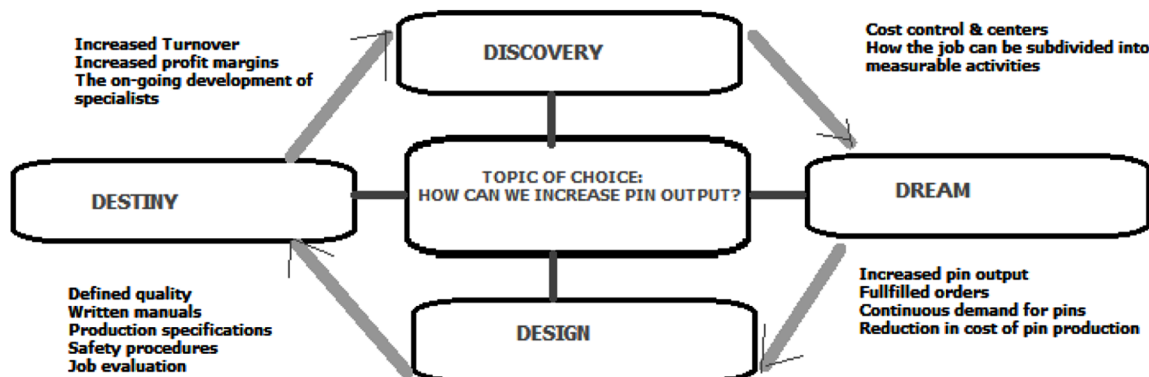
Background

The literature reviewed was limited. However, it provides an overview of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and the Division of Labor to understand how the novice can be developed to become specialists. We realize that the organization during Adam Smith's time is different to the much-sophisticated corporations of 21st century. What remains consistently the same is how specialists can be developed to enable companies to increase productivity and more wealth. The AI Four- Dimension Model (4-D-Model) is a state-of-the-art assessment and evaluation technology, which can be applied to understand how desirable change can be co-constructed as strategy to increase productivity. The technique can also be employed to understand the talent needed to make increased output a reality. An entire company can pin-point desirable change in one large group meeting (see Figure 1). The literature describes some of the terms, methods and technology used in the AI methodology to engage people in organization. The AI techniques are juxtaposed in division of labor to understand what makes the novice become specialists.

What is Appreciative Inquiry?

AI is a change management methodology developed by David Cooperrider of Case Western Reserve University, Ohio. The technique focuses on what is working well in the organization such as the hypothetical divided labor in the Adam Smith Pin-production plant (see Figure 1) (Cooperrider, 1986).

Figure 1. The AI 4-D-Model (Mupepi, 2014)



17 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/appreciating-specialization/176316

Related Content

Optimization of Human Resource Policy and Processes Within a Governmental Institution in the Health Sector, Honduras

Nancy Y. Jaspers, Marcel J. M. H. Boonenand Gerard Brekelmans (2019). *Evidence-Based Initiatives for Organizational Change and Development* (pp. 584-592).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/optimization-of-human-resource-policy-and-processes-within-a-governmental-institution-in-the-health-sector-honduras/225184

External Consulting in Change Processes: Change Management Consulting and Human Resource Management

Sofia Conrero (2016). *Strategic Labor Relations Management in Modern Organizations* (pp. 76-88).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/external-consulting-in-change-processes/150673

Preparing Science Teachers: Developing a Sense of Community Using Technology

André M. Green (2013). *Technology as a Tool for Diversity Leadership: Implementation and Future Implications* (pp. 187-194).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/preparing-science-teachers/74770

From Service to Skilled: A Grounded Theory Exploration of Talent Pipelines for Manufacturing

Katie A. Walkerand Matthew W. Hurtienne (2026). *Contemporary Human Resource Development Issues and Challenges* (pp. 169-200).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/from-service-to-skilled/403605

Studying Human Resource Information Systems Implementation using Adaptive Structuration Theory: The Case of an HRIS Implementation at Dow Chemical Company

Huub Ruël (2009). *Handbook of Research on E-Transformation and Human Resources Management Technologies: Organizational Outcomes and Challenges* (pp. 171-185).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/studying-human-resource-information-systems/20060