

**Excerpts from *Developing Human Capital: Using Analytics to Plan and Optimize Your Learning and Development Investments***  
**By Bonnie Beresford, Gene Pease and Lew Walker**

**Excerpt #1**

Happily, the days of learning leaders measuring simply to justify one's budget seem to be fading, and are being replaced by a desire to gain actionable intelligence that can be used for continuously improving the organization's learning and development initiatives. This shift from prove to improve is a significant one for learning leaders. It signifies that, rather than being reactionary at budget time, they are intentionally measuring to proactively ensure that they are delivering value to the business. It represents a shift from defensive (having to prove) to strategic (continuously seeking ways to contribute to the organization's success).

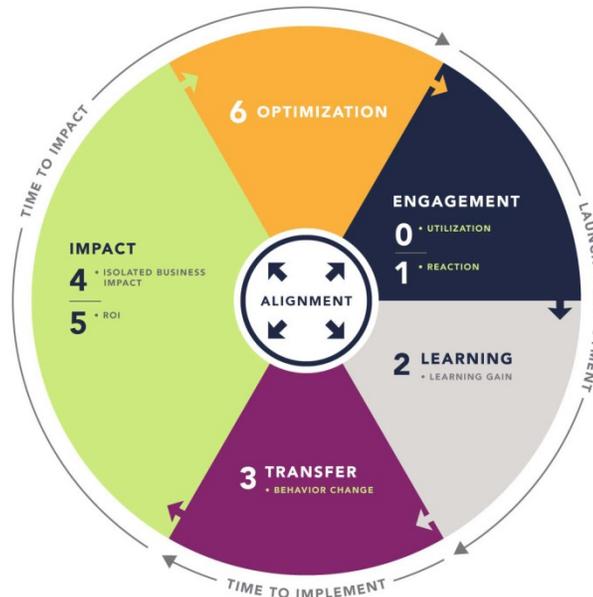
Most learning organizations have a formal learning strategy; however, most do not have an explicit measurement strategy. In fact, some experts believe that less than 5 percent of learning organizations have a true strategy for measurement. Increasingly, learning leaders are acknowledging the importance of measurement, but are often confounded by where to start and what to measure. The heart is there, but the specifics for its development and execution often aren't.

When thinking about designing and implementing a measurement strategy, the image of the messy room of a four-year-old comes to mind. Yes, there is an analogy here. If you ask that four-year-old to tidy up his (or her) room, he may stare at the toys, books, clothes, and crayons, and then simply pull another toy off the shelf and start playing. Why? He has no mental model for how to actually do it. He doesn't know whether to start with the toys or the clothes. Instead, he is paralyzed, and then goes back to what he's good at—playing! As adults, when we face situations that are unfamiliar, we are very much like that four-year-old—lacking confidence to take action, paralyzed by the unknown, so we put it off for another day. This chapter is about creating that mental model—a framework around which we can build the confidence to embark on the measurement journey.

Measurement just doesn't happen. It's a very intentional process, and organizations that get it right create a culture of measurement. They embrace it rather than fear it. And it starts with having that mental model of just what "it" is...

...Based on our own experiences as consultants and as learning leaders, we have seen many variations on the general themes (introduced by seminal thinkers). We

have seen what gets successfully implemented in organizations (yes, often simpler is better, especially when just starting on a measurement journey). We enthusiastically welcome the inclusion of alignment into the up-front process of measurement; without it, measuring true business impact can be a misguided effort. Based on these experiences and building on the groundwork of others, we created the Measurement Framework for Learning (see below), a straightforward framework that integrates the good work described earlier together with our experience of what works in practice.



**Measurement Framework for Learning**

**Excerpt #2**

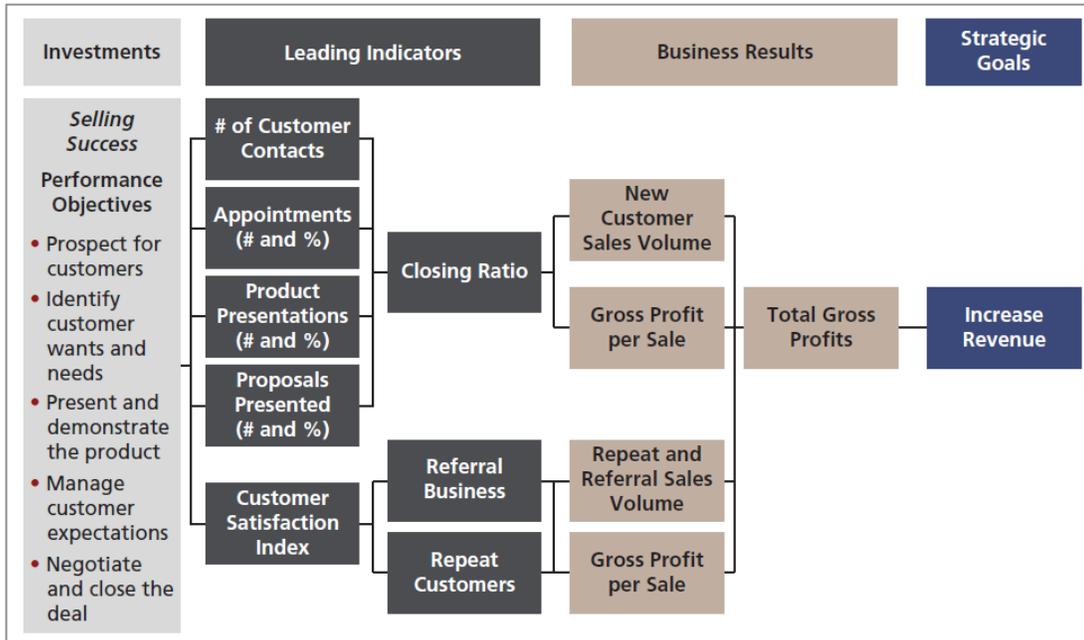
The leadership development initiative of a global consumer products company was under scrutiny at budget time. The CFO wanted to know if it was working, and wanted proof beyond surveys from the learning department. With the initiative’s goal of “Live the Vision,” the learning department struggled to find any evidence beyond anecdotal feedback. No one had ever explicitly defined what “living the vision” would look like in quantifiable, measurable terms. Leadership development felt it was too squishy to try to quantify. But was it? This chapter introduces the Measurement Map, a tool for aligning an initiative to business outcomes using quantifiable measures. We contend that yes, you can measure the squishy stuff.

In the preceding chapter, we talked about curriculum alignment, where a thorough task analysis could be used to identify the behaviors of high-performer as they deliver on business goals. In this chapter, we take alignment to the initiative level, such as a

program, course, or series of courses, to make success operational so you can quantify and measure its impact on business outcomes.

What the consumer products CFO was looking for was a link between the leadership development initiative and its impact in terms of an improvement in business performance. While aligning people strategies with business strategies has become the stated goal of nearly every human resources (HR) and learning practitioner, surveys from the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), the Conference Board, and others point to the sorry state of actually delivering on that goal. Despite good intentions, the line of sight between investments in people and real business outcomes remains disjointed, which makes it difficult to illustrate the value of those investments.

Organizations intentionally invest in their workforces to build capacity—to become more efficient, to innovate, to grow, and to build a sustainable competitive advantage. For any human capital investment to impact the business, how it is expected to contribute needs to be explicitly articulated. Consultants and business leaders are all talking about alignment, but to get beyond the talk and start acting on it, learning leaders need to build the acumen to define the logical relationships between investments in people and the goals of the business. We have found that something called a Measurement Map<sup>®</sup> goes a long way in demonstrating that causal chain of evidence. We have also found that building such maps, while challenging at first, is a skill that most learning and development (L&D) people can develop with a little practice. To understand the power of the Measurement Map, we will first explain the details of such a map. We will then explore how to build one, and discuss how the Measurement Map can be leveraged to identify the specific data you need to actually measure impact.



**Sample: Sales Training Measurement Map (simplified)**

**For more information on *Developing Human Capital: Using Analytics to Plan and Optimize Your Learning and Development Investments* or to order a copy, click [here](#).**