

# EXCERPT FROM THE WORKING SMARTER FIELDBOOK

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The Working Smarter Fieldbook aims at helping organizations to work smarter by taking advantage of their collective brainpower.

## Why bother?

Smart companies prosper. Clueless companies die. Brains make the difference.

Organizations that continuously exercise and improve their collective brainpower come out on top. This Fieldbook aims to show you how to increase your organization's intelligence.

Until recently, most of the collaboration and development that fuels the growth of individual and group braininess was haphazard. Our goal is to bring this activity into the sunlight and suggest ways you can take advantage of it.

## Who should read this book?

This is a book for business managers who want to build workforces that improve performance naturally, without prodding. It's a fresh look at how people become competent in their work and fulfilled in their professional lives.

In our mind's eye, we are telling these stories to hands-on managers, people with titles such as sales manager, operations supervisor, project leader, and product manager. People in IT and marketing will also profit from the stories here.

We foresee a convergence of the "people disciplines" in organizations. As the pieces of companies become densely interconnected, the differences between knowledge management, training, collaborative learning, organization development, internal communication, and social networking fade away. Anyone who invests in brainpower to improve organizational performance can benefit from the messages in The Working Smarter Fieldbook.

That said, this book is not directed to doctrinaire training directors or workshop instructors. It's impossible to learn something you think you already know. Besides, they will find our message threatening. Learning is way too important to delegate to the training department.

## What can you achieve with this book?

Boosting brainpower is both a profit strategy and the key to organizational longevity.

Raising corporate IQ reduces time-to-performance, improves customer service, boosts sales, streamlines operations, and increases innovation. Intelligent organizations naturally motivate their workers to give their best. People who know how to learn effectively adapt to changing conditions as they occur.

Pragmatic and grounded in experience, this is a re-think of how upgrading an organization's brains can increase profits, spur innovation, and help businesses prosper.

## A TOOLBOX

Years ago, Stewart Brand published The Whole Earth Catalog to provide "access to tools." It listed all manner of interesting and oddball stuff, from windmill kits to hiking sox to books like Vibration Cooking. The Catalog didn't tell readers how to live their lives; it merely described things that might help them to do their own thing. Feedback and articles submitted by readers made each edition better than its predecessor.

The Working Smarter Fieldbook follows the tradition of The Whole Earth Catalog. Harold, Jane, Clark, Charles, Jon, and Jay provide access to the tips, tricks, frameworks, and resources that we've used to help organizations work smarter. Our goal is to put together an irresistible package of advice.

# AN UNBOOK

This is an unbook. Unbooks are never finished.

Rather than hold things back until they're "ready," unbooks come out while the ink is still wet. You have in your hands the sixth version of Working Smarter. Revisions come out several times a year. An unbook has the freshness of a periodical and the depth of a book. If you choose to subscribe, buy a new copy next year. You can track major changes and additions at [internettime.com](http://internettime.com) to see if it's worth it.

With most books, it's take it or leave it. If you have an issue with a traditional author, you can



send a letter to the black hole

known as a publisher. The world changes, but the book is frozen in time. That's another reason unbooks are in perpetual beta.

Expect some rough edges and redundancy in this version. Join the typo team and email us when you come across errors or confusing passages. Send feedback, large or small, to [jaycross@internettime.com](mailto:jaycross@internettime.com). Better still, become a co-author. Your input is welcome.

Jane Hart, Harold Jarche<sup>1</sup>, Clark Quinn, Charles Jennings, Jon Husband, yours truly, and other friends and colleagues collaborated to write this unbook. Our thoughts are inextricably intertwined. Nobody's so smart that they wouldn't do better with the help of others. In nonfiction, the concept of a single author is a conceit we can do without.

Let's get into it. There's no time to spare. Time is all we have.



***In business, words are words; explanations are explanations, promises are promises, but only performance is reality. Harold Geneen***



## WORKING SMARTER

Our objective is to help your organization work smarter by taking advantage of its collective brainpower.

Working smarter is the key to sustainability and continuous improvement. Knowledge work and learning to work smarter are becoming indistinguishable. The accelerating rate of change in business forces everyone in every organization to make a choice: learn while you work or become obsolete.

The infrastructure for working smarter is called a workscape. It's not a separate function so much as another way of looking at how we organize work. Workscaping helps people grow so that their organizations may prosper. Workscapes are pervasive. They are certainly not lodged in a training department. In fact, they may make the training department obsolete.

Organizations must stop thinking of learning as something separate from work. The further we get into what Dan Pink calls the conceptual era<sup>1</sup>, the greater the convergence of working and learning. In many cases, they are already one and the same.

Workers in a workscape learn by solving problems, coming up with fresh thinking, and collaborating with colleagues. They don't learn about these things; they learn to do them.

The workscape is the aspect of an organization where learning and development become never-ending processes rather than one-time events. A workscape is a learning ecology. The workscaping viewpoint helps knowledge workers become more effective professionally and fulfilled personally. A sound workscape environment empowers workers to be all that they can be.

No, no, no. Learning is the work, not apart from the work.

Workspaces match flows of know-how with workers solving problems and getting things done. They are the aspect of workplace infrastructure that provides multiple means of solving problems, tapping collective wisdom, and collaborating with others.

Workspaces are not a new structure but rather a holistic way of looking at and reformulating existing business infrastructure. They use the same networks and social media as the business itself.

Technology is never the most important part of this. Foremost are people, their motivations, emotions, attitudes, roles, their enthusiasm or lack thereof, and their innate desire to excel. Technology, be it web 2.0 or instructional design, social psychology, marketing, or intelligent systems, only supports what we're helping people to accomplish.

Got the idea? Okay, I'm going to stop putting workscape in italics. Think of workspaces as an inevitable part of every organization.

As business de-emphasizes industrial-era command-and-control systems to make way for agile, sense-and-respond networks, the structure of business adapts to its new environment.



## TERRA NOVA

England's New Forest is called new because it was built in 1079 by that well-known Johnny-Come-Lately, William the Conqueror. William wanted an oak forest for hunting. Timber would be required for building ships centuries later. He was thinking long term; let's follow his example.

Free yourself from day-to-day worries for a few minutes, and join us for a tour of the learning

landscape five years hence, in 2015.

We will call our destination Terra Nova, Latin for "new world." Within five years, the world will have changed so radically, you will not recognize it. It is a new era and it is right around the corner.

Agricultural age: manual labor by individual farmers, 8,000 BCE -  
Industrial age: machine-assisted manual labor in factories, 1760 -  
Information age: white-collar knowledge work in offices, 1949 -  
Terra Nova: creative collaborative innovation in networks, 2012 -

In the industrial age, bosses issued instructions and told workers they were not paid to think. This is the ultimate in push, for people deal with what is pushed upon them.

In the information age, people were encouraged to think, but only "inside the box," that is, complying with narrow sets of procedures and rules. Workers were empowered – within strict bounds. Assignments still drifted down from the top. This is still primarily push.

In Terra Nova, Push and Pull combine to create a dynamic flow of power, authority, know-how, and trust. Change is so fast and furious that work and learning blur into one activity. Workers respond to novel situations as best they see fit, governed by organization values and gut feel.

Terra Nova is holistic, with significant decision-making power delegated to the workers themselves. "Power to the people" could be its rallying cry.

The industrial age was top-down, explicit, and focused on efficiency. By contrast, Terra Nova supplements hierarchy with networks.... (This goes on for another 300 rollicking pages.)

**Buy it.**

**This article was initially published on [Internettime.com](#)**

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*This was a really nice post.*

VOUS AIMEZ



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VOUS N'AIMEZ PAS



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LUI RÉPONDRE

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