PREFACE

For more than 30 years, ASTD has created competency models that define standards of excellence and professionalism in the training and development field. From the first study conducted in 1978 to the more recent one in 2004, ASTD's competency studies illuminate the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors that are required for success in the profession.

Your role as a facilitator of learning, business partner, and developer of the world's workforce has never been more critical than it is today. Senior leaders rely on your expertise and entrust you to build the capability of the organization's human capital. They know that having a knowledgeable and skilled workforce will enable the organization to compete and succeed in today's global economy.

To help your organization and those you serve be successful, building your own competencies in the profession should be a critical part of your professional and career development journey. This Study highlights the most critical foundational and business competencies required for professional success, and the Areas of Expertise (AOEs) that are fundamental in this field.

As we unveil the *ASTD Competency Study: The Training & Development Profession Redefined*, we owe deep thanks to our research partners at HumRRO, Mike Hamm for his assistance in the survey research work, Dr. William Rothwell for his continued contributions to the ASTD competency studies, and the team at DDI who set a tremendous foundation in 2004 upon which this new Study was built.

I encourage you to use the results of this Study to identify the major trends in learning. Understand the changes in the foundational competencies and AOEs, determine which ones require more focused attention, and chart your own professional development plan to fill any gaps.

All of us in the profession have an incredible opportunity to help organizations succeed like never before. Very few occupations can say they are poised to have such a dramatic impact on building individual capabilities and contributing to organizational success as the training field can. Please let us know how we can continue to help you thrive and grow in your career.

Thank you for your engagement with ASTD and our global community of training professionals.

Tony Bingham
President and CEO
ASTD

Justin Arneson

Justin Arneson is currently a research scientist with CPP, Inc. His responsibilities include planning, directing, and implementing the research and development plans for assessment products at CPP, Inc. Prior to that he was a senior scientist with the Human Resources Research Organization. He has 10 years of experience in job analysis, competency modeling, and test development. He holds a PhD from the University of Minnesota in industrial/organizational psychology.

William J. Rothwell

William J. Rothwell, PhD, SPHR, is the president of Rothwell & Associates, Inc. (www.rothwellandassociates.com) and professor in the Workforce Education and Development Program at the University Park campus of Penn State University. As a researcher he has been involved with the last five competency studies conducted by ASTD. In 2012 he won ASTD's prestigious Distinguished Contribution to Workplace Learning and Performance Award. He is author of 81 books and 250 articles in the field and had 20 years of experience in the HRD field in government and in business before becoming a college professor in 1993. He received his PhD from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1985. He bears lifetime certification as an SPHR.

Jennifer A. Naughton

Jennifer Naughton is the senior director of Competencies & Credentialing at ASTD. In this capacity she is responsible for providing the vision and direction for the ASTD Competency Model and credentialing initiatives, including the Certified Professional in Learning and Performance (CPLP) certification program. She is a people systems architect with 20 years of experience in the field whose passion is providing competency modeling, assessment development, and human resource strategy expertise to address organizational challenges. She has authored and co-authored numerous articles on human capital related topics. She holds a master's degree in human resource development from The George Washington University and is a Senior Professional of Human Resources (SPHR), as recognized by the HR Certification Institute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2004 *ASTD Competency Study: Mapping the Future* was built on three decades of ASTD competency research, and the model associated with it defined the profession in context of its strategic contribution to organizational performance. The 2013 *ASTD Competency Study: The Training & Development Profession Redefined* follows the research-based professional competencies path blazed by the 2004 publication. Like its predecessor, the 2013 Study identifies key trends and drivers that are expected to have the greatest effect on current and future practice and includes:

- a broad inventory of topics that training and development professionals need to know to be successful in today's rapidly changing business environment

- specific key actions practitioners must *take* and what they must *do* to succeed.

What is different about the 2013 publication is that its recommendations are directly tied to unprecedented global changes, including these four specific factors:

- a once-in-a-generation global economic collapse followed by four years of a recession

- rapidly advancing technologies that have turned smartphones, tablets, and other mobile devices into preferred substitutes for desktop and laptop computers

- major demographic shifts in the workforce

- unrelenting globalization of the business environment.

Key Trends Shaping the Profession

The principal goal of the 2013 Competency Study was to update the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors first identified in the ASTD 2004 Competency Study. To maintain consistency, researchers mirrored the 2004 research methodology. Researchers also drew conclusions based on feedback from multiple stakeholder groups and diverse sets of data.

This work resulted in the identification of eight key trends currently driving change for training and development professionals. A brief discussion of these trends and drivers follows.

Advances in Technology and Internet Capability

Advances in the speed, storage capacity, functionality, and user interfaces of popular electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets, and other mobile devices have made anywhere, anytime, anyplace learning possible. In fact, these devices have become expected training delivery platforms that serve as options for desktop and laptop computers.

Advances in Software Applications

Rapidly developing software applications are expanding the training and development professional's role to more than a deliverer of training. This much more expansive role requires an ability to identify, select, and apply the appropriate software application for a specific learning opportunity. This skill will become a requirement for both initial employment and career advancement. Another notable trend is the increasing use of social software applications for sharing knowledge and information.

Growing Adoption of Mobile Devices for Learning

Clearly, training and development professionals are increasingly designing and delivering training to suit an ever-expanding list of mobile devices, including smartphones, tablets, and e-readers. The 2012 *State of the Industry Report (SOIR)* reported that 28 percent of the respondents noted that their organizations make internal learning content available via mobile devices (ASTD, 48). The *SOIR* further characterized the "ubiquity of mobile devices" and their increasing appropriateness for delivering learning solutions as a key factor in "changing the world and our experience of it."

A Culture of Connectivity and Information Sharing

Constant 24/7 connection, and instant communication and interaction with co-workers, colleagues, friends, and family around the world is now the cultural norm; a reality that the learning functions of organizations cannot ignore. Those charged with training this new generation of connected learners will need updated knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors.

Increased Ability to Use and Collect "Big Data"

Advances in technology also underpin a move by most companies to make decisions based heavily on business intelligence and data analytics, or "big data." Clearly, training and development professionals need to understand what's behind these business metrics and how organizational leaders use them to allocate resources. Moreover, these professionals must be able to select the metrics that have meaning and value to their organization and its leaders.

Shifting Demographics in the Workforce

Training and development professionals face a challenging array of employee demographics. There is the generation of workers who have grown up in a culture of connectivity and social networking who fully *expect* to change jobs many times during their careers. These same workers also insist on being offered appropriate tools and opportunities that facilitate self-improvement and career advancement. In contrast, there are older workers with a different set of priorities and career expectations, many of whom are staying in the workforce due to the lingering effect of the 2008 economic collapse.

Increasing Globalization

A growing interconnected global workforce of more than 3 billion workers represents an opportunity for training and development professionals to demonstrate their value and relevance as a new generation takes the reins of leadership. As noted by ASTD CEO Tony Bingham and co-author Marcia Connor in their book *The New Social Learning*, "the next generation of workers is coming into the workforce with . . . a global-mindedness their elders never would have imagined" (150-151).

Economic Volatility and Uncertainty

Training and development professionals also face added pressure to demonstrate value, relevance, and bottom-line impact even as organizations recover from the 2008 economic meltdown. Most organizations will continue to take a "do more

with less" approach and choose not to replace lost workers despite prospects for a brighter economic future.

Implications for Training and Development Professionals

Depending on their roles, work assignments, and the cultures of the companies that employ them, individual training and development professionals must be prepared to address these drivers and trends head-on in order to be successful. These needed actions include taking steps to:

- connect the strategic needs and priorities of the training function to those of the organization
- find innovative and creative ways to deliver training programs that take advantage of the best and most appropriate technologies
- adapt to changing demographics that include multiple generations in the workforce who have new expectations about learning and work
- design and deliver training programs that are accessible anywhere, anytime
- be adept at analyzing and converting business data into insights and actions for improving training
- scan for existing and emerging technologies and understand if and how they address training and development challenges and opportunities.

The ultimate effect of the specific trends and drivers previously noted will shape the profession for years to come. But perhaps the most important factor to note is that the prevalent use of knowledge-sharing and collaborative technologies—including those geared toward social and informal learning—means a fundamental change in the training and development professional's role. The ability to identify, select, and apply the appropriate learning technology for a specific learning opportunity or challenge will be an expected skill.

Other Critical Implications

Learning management system (LMS) software applications for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, and delivery of training are increasingly important tools for training and development professionals. The key capabilities of LMSs—including support for blended learning approaches that enable self-guided and collaborative learning communities—require that training professionals work with technical experts to implement and administer these systems and keep up with the constant changes in LMS capabilities.

Many organizations now weave employee engagement and learning throughout their talent management process. The practice helps maintain a robust pipeline of coached candidates for key roles, helps develop workforce capability in anticipation of need, and makes knowledge sharing part of succession planning.

Training and development professionals must learn to convert consolidated talent management data that includes all aspects of the performance management cycle into insights and actions for designing and delivering instructional programs.

Finally, training professionals should take the following actions to create a culture of strong learning and business alignment:

- Develop a business case for learning that focuses on the training function's benefits.

- Include business leaders in the strategic planning process to identify their specific needs.

- Develop benchmarks and scorecards to measure goals developed in the strategy-planning phase.

- Continue to evaluate learning events and their return on mission.

- Make alignment a priority and hold those responsible for implementation accountable.

## A New Model Suited for Today and the Future

The principal goal of the 2013 ASTD Competency Study was to update the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors first identified in the 2004 study. The areas of technology, measuring and evaluating, and talent management were found to be outdated (some substantially) and required updating. In addition, the structure of the 2013 Model was changed to reflect a move away from roles and a hierarchal structure in the AOEs. The specifics of these changes are outlined on the following page.

The 2013 ASTD Competency Model

A competency model is a high-level graphic depiction of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors (or competencies) required for success in a particular profession or job—in this case the training and development profession.

The iconic ASTD Competency Model graphic (a pyramid) used in 2004 (see Figure 1) is different from the two-structure graphic model used for the 2013 Competency Model (see Figure 2). The base structure of the 2013 Model contains the Foundational Competencies. The second structure—the pentagon that sits on the base—contains the specific Areas of Expertise (AOEs). The new 2013 graphic eliminates the four roles—learning strategist, business partner, project manager, and professional specialist—depicted in the 2004 Model.

Figure 1: 2004 Model
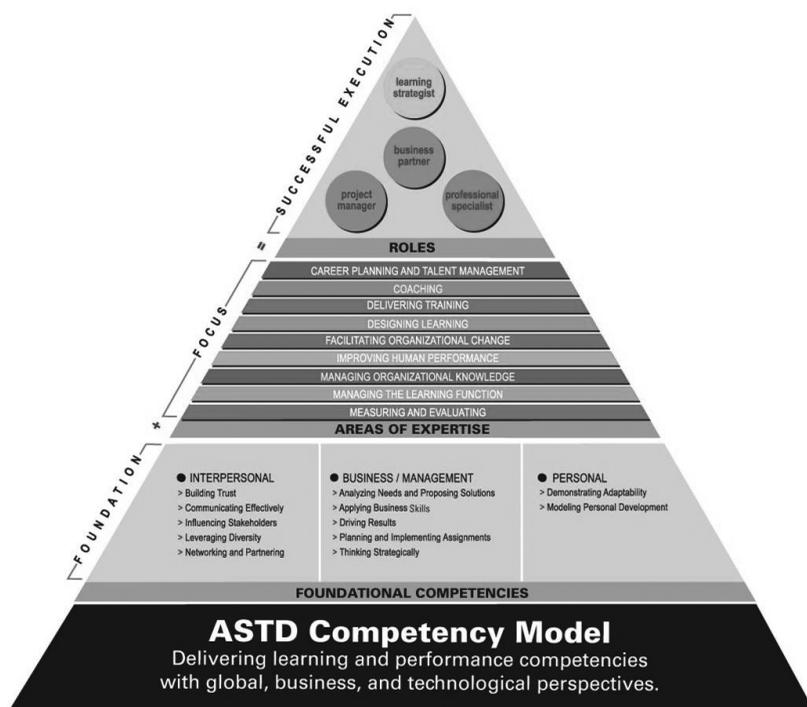
Foundational Competencies are the bedrock competencies used as the foundation to build more specific competencies. These competencies are important regardless of the specific organization, industry, or AOE in which a practitioner practices. The 10 *Areas of Expertise* (or AOEs) in the 2013 Competency Model contain the specialized, functional knowledge and skill sets needed by training and development professionals for success. Detailed definitions and key knowledge and action statements for both the Foundational Competencies and the AOEs accompany the high-level graphic model.

2013 Foundational Competencies

The Foundational Competencies in the 2013 Model now reflect an additional emphasis on the areas of technology literacy, adopting a global mindset, demonstrating emotional intelligence, developing dual industry knowledge, and being innovative. These are characteristics and proficiencies that training and development professionals must demonstrate to be successful in the current business environment.

The six Foundational Competencies in the 2013 Model include: Business Skills, Global Mindset, Industry Knowledge, Interpersonal Skills, Personal Skills, and Technology Literacy. Each of these Foundational Competencies is discussed in the sections that follow.

Figure 2: New Competency Model

ASTD COMPETENCY MODEL
Training & Development Redefined™

ASTD
Competencies
for the Training
& Development
Profession

Change Management · Performance Improvement · Knowledge Management · Instructional Design · Coaching · Training Delivery · Integrated Talent Management · Learning Technologies · Managing Learning Programs · Evaluating Learning Impact

T&D Areas of Expertise

| Business Skills | Global Mindset | Industry Knowledge |
| Interpersonal Skills | Personal Skills | Technology Literacy |

Foundational Competencies

Business Skills

- ***Analyzing Needs and Proposing Solutions***—Identifies and understands business issues and client needs, problems, and opportunities; compares data from different sources to draw conclusions; uses effective approaches for choosing a course of action or developing appropriate solutions; takes action that is consistent with available facts, constraints, and probable consequences.

- ***Applying Business Skills***—Understands the organization's business strategies, key metrics, and financial goals; uses economic, financial, and organizational data to build and document the business case for investing in learning solutions; uses business terminology when communicating with others.

- ***Driving Results***—Identifies opportunities for improvement and sets well-defined goals related to training and development solutions; orchestrates efforts and measures progress; strives to achieve/exceed goals and produces exceptional results.

- ***Planning and Implementing Assignments***—Develops action plans, obtains resources, and completes assignments in a timely manner to ensure that training and development goals are achieved.

- ***Thinking Strategically***—Understands internal and external factors that affect training and development in organizations; keeps abreast of trends and anticipates opportunities to add value to the business; operates from a systems perspective in creating training and development strategies; creates training and development strategies that are in alignment with business goals.

- ***Applying Innovation***—Uses new resources, methods, tools, or content to advance training and development; incorporates or applies new thinking or new techniques into training and development solutions; applies existing techniques in new ways to enhance solutions, including those designed to more fully engage and support the learner.

Global Mindset

- Appreciates and leverages the capabilities, insights, and ideas of all individuals; works effectively with individuals from different generations who have diverse styles, abilities, motivations, and/or backgrounds; works effectively across borders and cultures given the increasingly global workforce.

Industry Knowledge

- Actively scans and assesses information on current and emerging trends in the training and development industry; develops and maintains knowledge of other industries, as appropriate.

Interpersonal Skills

- ***Building Trust***—Interacts with others in a way that gives them confidence in one's intentions and those of the organization.

- ***Communicating Effectively***—Expresses thoughts, feelings, and ideas in a clear, concise, and compelling manner in both individual and group situations; actively listens to others; adjusts style to capture the attention of the audience; develops and deploys targeted communication strategies that inform and build support.

- ***Influencing Stakeholders***—Sells the value of learning or the recommended solution as a way of improving organizational performance; gains commitment to solutions that will improve individual, team, and organizational performance.

- ***Networking and Partnering***—Develops and uses a network of collaborative relationships with internal and external contacts to leverage the training and development strategy in a way that facilitates the accomplishment of business results.

- ***Emotional Intelligence***—Perceives the emotional state of one's own self and others accurately and uses that information to help guide effective decision making and build positive working relationships.

Personal Skills

- ***Demonstrating Adaptability***—Maintains effectiveness when experiencing major changes in work tasks, the work environment, or conditions affecting the organization (for example, economic, political, cultural, or technological); remains open to new people, thoughts, and approaches; adjusts effectively to work within new work structures, processes, requirements, or cultures.

- ***Modeling Personal Development***—Actively identifies new areas for one's own personal learning; regularly creates and takes advantage of learning opportunities; applies newly gained knowledge and skill on the job.

Technology Literacy

- Demonstrates an awareness of or comfort with existing, new, and emerging technologies; demonstrates a practical understanding of technology trends; identifies opportunities to leverage technology in order to accomplish learning tasks and achieve business goals.

Areas of Expertise

The 2013 ASTD Competency Model includes important changes to the AOEs. Specifically, the 2013 Competency Model provides updates to Designing Learning (now Instructional Design) and Delivering Training (now Training Delivery), as well as new content on informal learning methods, social media, and leveraging technology. Measurement and Evaluation (now Evaluating Learning Impact) incorporates learning analytics. Managing Organizational Knowledge (Knowledge Management) no longer includes activities typically carried out by information technology. Career Planning and Talent Management (now Integrated Talent Management) better reflects integrated talent management activities. Finally, Learning Technologies was added as an AOE. The following are the definitions of the 10 AOEs in the 2013 ASTD Competency Model:

- *Performance Improvement*—Applies a systematic process of discovering and analyzing human performance gaps; plans for future improvements in human performance; designs and develops solutions to close performance gaps; partners with the customer when identifying the opportunity and the solution; implements the solution; monitors the change; evaluates the results.

- *Instructional Design*—Designs, creates, and develops informal and formal learning solutions to meet organizational needs; analyzes and selects the most appropriate strategy, methodologies, and technologies to maximize the learning experience and impact.

- *Training Delivery*—Delivers informal and formal learning solutions in a manner that engages the learner and produces desired outcomes; manages and responds to learner needs; ensures that the learning is made available in effective platforms and delivered in a timely and effective manner.

- *Learning Technologies*—Identifies, selects, and applies a variety of learning technologies; adapts learning technologies; matches the appropriate technology to the specific learning opportunity or challenge at hand.

- *Evaluating Learning Impact*—Gathers, organizes, and analyzes information regarding the impact of learning solutions against key business drivers; presents the information in a way that is meaningful to the organization; uses learning metrics and analytics to inform organizational decision making.

- *Managing Learning Programs*—Provides leadership to execute the organization's strategy; plans, monitors, and adjusts training and development projects or activities.

- ***Integrated Talent Management***—Builds an organization's culture, engagement, capability, and capacity through the implementation and integration of talent acquisition, employee development, retention, and deployment processes; ensures that these processes are aligned to organizational goals.

- ***Coaching***—Uses an interactive process to help individuals develop rapidly and produce results; improves others' ability to set goals, take action, make better decisions, and make full use of their natural strengths.

- ***Knowledge Management***—Captures, distributes, and archives intellectual capital in a way that encourages knowledge-sharing and collaboration in the organization.

- ***Change Management***—Applies structured approaches to shift individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to a desired state.
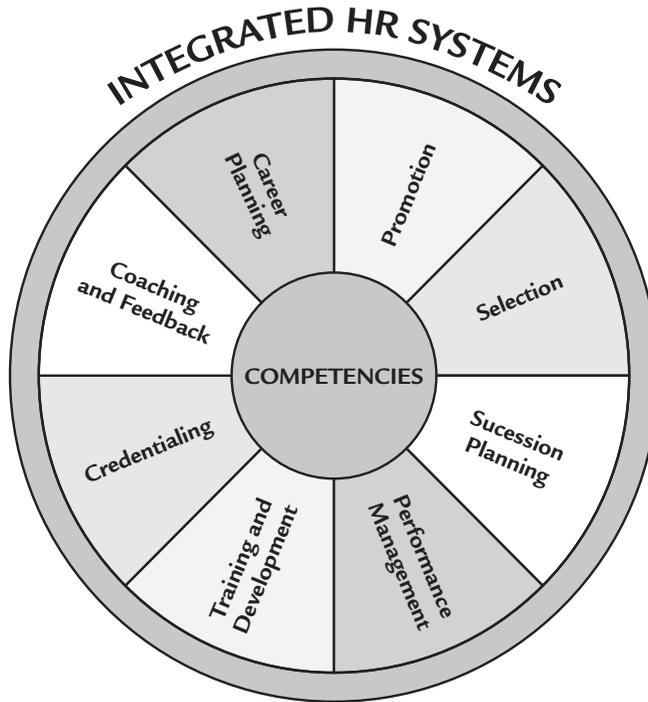
Applying the ASTD Competency Model

While the 2013 Competency Model pinpoints critical knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors for training and development professionals, the real value is in its application.

The various human resources (HR) systems that can be built around the competencies outlined in the report are highlighted in Figure 3. Training and development professionals need to work within their organizations to incorporate both the Foundational Competencies and AOEs into their own HR systems to create one integrated system with a common set of competencies. Because the same competencies and AOEs underpin all of the systems, each part operates more efficiently and ultimately saves training costs.

Other Stakeholder Uses and Benefits

For chief learning officers (CLOs) and other training and development managers, the 2013 ASTD Competency Model can serve as a template for success today and in the future. The Model may be used to determine which competencies and AOEs are appropriate for a unit's training and development professionals and as a way to encourage these professionals to expand and enhance their skills.

Figure 3: Integrated HR Systems

How Organizations Can Use the Model

Organizations can use the ASTD Competency Model to improve performance in a number of ways including:

- Performance management: The ASTD Competency Model provides the foundation and specific language for a comprehensive or upgraded performance management program regardless of the type of assessment being developed.

- Strategy alignment: The Model is an excellent resource to help build a scorecard to ensure that the training and development function meets the strategic and operational needs of the business and that the right skills to accomplish the mission both now and in the future are in place.

- Benchmarking: Learning leaders and managers can use the Model to build a comprehensive benchmarking assessment tool to ensure that resources are used and managed effectively.

- Managing talent: Organizations can use the Model as a road map to develop comprehensive assessment tools for both selection and development purposes. It is also an appropriate tool to help leaders manage the talent in their training function.

Uses for Individual Contributors

The ASTD Competency Model clearly describes what competencies professionals should have today and in the future. As such, it provides training and development professionals a broad overview of the profession and how their job fits into the full range of professional competencies. In addition, the Model can be used to target individual skill development needs or as a basis for career exploration for learning executives, external consultants, and subject matter experts.

Educational Uses

The competency and AOE definitions provided by the ASTD Competency Model are also excellent tools for educators to evaluate current curricula and to take stock of their learners' interests, planning and evaluating new or existing course offerings, guiding student development paths, or as the focal point for prioritizing lifelong learning.

Serving the ASTD Mission

The 2013 ASTD Competency Model redefines training and development competencies in light of profound changes in technology, the economy, and new expectations that organizations have about the contribution of employee training.

ASTD's mission—to empower professionals to develop knowledge and skills successfully—drives our commitment to identifying competencies in the training and development profession. Practitioners and organizations must take advantage of the opportunity before them and invest in development and growth. The benefits of this commitment will result in higher levels of expertise and will drive renewed respect for the training and development profession.