

The Skills Behind the Thinking

Job Skills for Knowledge Workers
Chuck Lanigan, November 13, 2002



Introduction

P Presentation Objective

- ▶ Provide an overview of specific skill sets
- ▶ Identify needs and tasks in your area
- ▶ Provide knowledge to help you recognize and develop these skills in new hires and existing workers



Definitions and Concepts

- P Data versus Information and Knowledge
- P Literacy
- P Knowledge Workers
- P Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills



The Changing Nature of Work

- P** The Industrial Revolution (Changing literacy needs and the advent of public education)
- P** Workplace Automation (Movement from skilled crafts and artisanship to automation, Taylorism, de-skilling)
- P** Information Technology, Data Processing and Automated Records Management



Current Organizational Goals

(Defined per Malcom Baldrige Award Criteria)

- P Improve Customer Service
- P Increase Innovation
- P Enhance Productivity
- P Reduce Errors
- P Promote Collaboration Among Service Partners



Overview of Relevant Skills

P Literacy and Communication Skills

P Problem-Solving Skills

P Global Thinking Skills



Data, Information and Knowledge

- P** Data = Measurements, statistics or telemetry that exist out of context, without necessarily meaning anything
- P** Information = Data read and understood, but not necessarily meaningful or relevant to a task or situation
- P** Knowledge= Information that can be used in performing a task, making a decision.



Knowledge and Knowledge Workers in Action

- P** Knowledge in practice is information internalized and applied to perform a task or make a decision
- P** Knowledge workers interact with, interpret, apply and share information to perform tasks and make decisions



Literacy

P What Relevance Do Literacy and Effective Communication Have to Current Work Environments?

P Types of literacy

- ▶ Basic decoding skills
- ▶ Higher-level skills comprise the ability to:
 - Comprehend
 - Interpret
 - Analyze
 - Relate new information to existing knowledge



Communication

P Verbal

P Written



Problem-Solving

- P Recognize that a problem exists
- P Determine its severity or consequence
- P Identify its nature or type (framing)
- P Generate possible solutions
- P Collaborate and communicate with others in solving



Global Thinking Skills

P Include an Employee's Overall Ability to:

- ▶ Assess weaknesses and strengths in their own skills and improve
- ▶ Apply communication and other skills in an overall fashion in solving problems
- ▶ Take the initiative in learning and being innovative



Conclusion

P Feedback: Your Own Experience and Insights

P Next Steps

