

TrendSpotters: DOTMLPF

<http://www.performanceexpress.org/2011/01/trendspotters-dotmlpf/>

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Welcome to January. In keeping with our annual tradition, TrendSpotters has a new focus for 2011. We will continue to feature models and tools you can use, but we will source them from disciplines related to, but not part of, the human performance technology (HPT) community. Some of our 2010 guests fit this profile, and the resulting interviews encouraged us to actively seek out others who are working to improve performance in organizations, who use models and tools that translate well to the work we do, and who may be unfamiliar with HPT.

Meet Our Guest

To help us bring in the New Year, we are delighted to welcome back our own Jim Hill, EdD, and ISPI past president. Jim, jim.hill@proofpoint.net, is the CEO of Proofpoint Systems Inc., www.proofpoint.net, a company that uses web-enabled analysis to help clients solve traditional business problems. Jim is uniquely positioned to assist us as we bridge the divide between HPT practices and performance improvement at the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). Jim contributes the DOD's DOTMLPF model to the **TrendSpotters Open Toolkit (TOT)**.



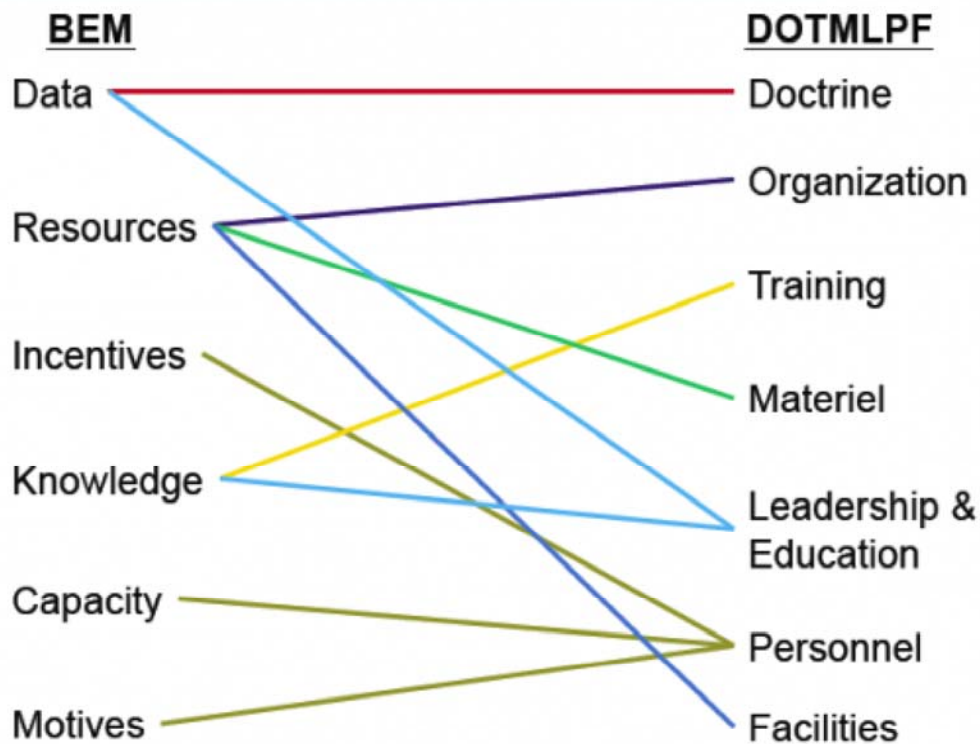
Genesis of DOTMLPF

DOTMLPF is an acronym and mnemonic that is pronounced: “dot-mil-p-f.” Once you say it aloud, it is easier to read and remember. The DOD looks at performance in terms of capabilities. Their gap analysis process is part of the Joint Capabilities Integration Development System (JCIDS). They use DOTMLPF at the front end to assist planners consider a range of solutions when addressing performance improvement issues.

Description of the Model

DOTMLPF stands for Doctrine (e.g., policy and instructions), Organization, Training, Material (e.g., equipment and supplies), Personnel, and Facilities. It relates closely to Gilbert's **Behavior Engineering Model**. Here's how DOTMLPF aligns with the Behavior Engineering Model:

Sample Comparison of Models



How to Use DOTMLPF

DOTMLPF has been modified during more than 20 years of use and can easily be adapted to non-military analyses. When the military faces a capability issue, they conduct an analysis with the goal of identifying the causes and the most effective solutions—the same as we do in performance improvement. If the solutions generated are complex, such as ship, airplane, or new weapon, DOTMLPF helps analysts and planners identify the supporting solutions needed to successfully implement the main one. DOTMLPF also helps users generate other alternatives and expands their views.

Use DOTMLPF as you would the Behavior Engineering Model. Explore each of the model's components as they relate to the performance issue or opportunity to be certain that you identify all relevant information.

Success Story

Recently, Jim's Proofpoint team used DOTMLPF to conduct a global analysis of DOD security cooperation offices in 140 countries. Combined, these offices provide more than \$50 billion in critical support for programs such as defense improvement, military training, humanitarian assistance, HIV/AIDS programs, and human/drug trafficking

prevention. The DOD wanted to determine how many additional people these offices needed to be more effective.

Staffing levels varied greatly in the participating offices. A single U.S. military officer and one or two local nationals typically staff the smallest offices. With 100 to 200 potential projects, from which two or three are actually done each year, observation showed that staffing increases in many of the smaller offices could provide much needed help. However, the Proofpoint analysts thought that other areas of DOTMLPF probably needed attention because adding staff alone does not add efficiency. And, if people were the key to success, adding more would probably require related support from other DOTMLPF areas.

The Proofpoint team used online tools to capture the data and quickly produced analysis results. They received more than 500 detailed observations and recommendations that covered the DOTMLPF spectrum. Just 13% of the issues pointed to personnel-related solutions. Other prominent areas were:

DOTMLPF	% of Issues	Possible Solutions
Leadership and Education	24%	Clear guidance, alignment to goals, and new learning opportunities
Doctrine	22%	Budgeting processes, international agreements, and plans
Organization	19%	Process improvement, job changes, and new procedur

With these DOTMLPF analysis findings, the DOD will be able to make improvements in the security cooperation offices by implementing some solutions that are faster and less costly than the initial analysis goal to add staff. Interestingly, a Pentagon review board approved Proofpoint's personnel-related recommendations. The approval was soon followed by a Pentagon freeze on personnel additions. With the holistic (DOTMLPF) approach used for this analysis, the DOD now has several faster and less costly avenues to pursue to improve performance.

Advice to Users

First, Jim stands behind advice that performance improvement specialists hear all the time: Look at the larger issue beyond the client's immediate request. If the Proofpoint

team had looked only at the personnel component of the DOTMLPF in the example above, the DOD would have fewer data-supported options. Second, Jim encourages the use of web-based electronic tools and resources to speed accurate data collection and reporting and contain costs.

Links to the Performance Technology Landscape

The DOTMLPF supports these principles of performance technology:

- R** Focus on **Results**—the model elements are designed to produce results
- S** Take a **System** view—considers the system because each element of the model is a different entity
- V** Add **Value**—helps you search for information in corners you might otherwise miss
- P** Establish **Partnerships**—brings functional representatives together to collaborate

Application Exercise

DOTMLPF is a scalable model. While it is particularly helpful for large-scale efforts, it can also serve as a useful filter during the analysis phase of a performance improvement project of any size. Now that you know what each model element stands for, try adapting the model to the language used in your organization and using those elements that apply to help you uncover information that other methods may overlook.

How Can Performance Improvement Practitioners Help Your Clients' Results?

DOTMLPF is a model that identifies all the critical functions of a government enterprise. These functions, under slightly different names, translate well to businesses, nonprofits, and academia. In many organizations, the functions are isolated from each other in silos. Performance improvement specialists are uniquely positioned to work across organizations to break down silos and connect functions. Jim encourages us to share models and tools like DOTMLPF to make critical connections and drive projects to success.

A Word of Congratulations

As we write this, TrendSpotters has learned that the Proofpoint has won ISPI's 2011 Outstanding Human Performance Intervention award for their DOD Global Security Cooperation Organizational Review project described here. Congratulations to Jim and the team at Proofpoint!

Find all the models and tools featured in TrendSpotters at
<http://www.ispi.org/archives/perfXpress.htm#trendToolkit>.