Building a Learning Organization

MIT Sloan School of Management
What is a Learning Organization?

A learning organization is an organization skilled at:

- creating, acquiring, interpreting, transferring, and retaining knowledge, and
- purposefully modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights.
The Learning Process

All learning processes, for individuals as well as organizations, involve three stages:

- acquiring information
- interpreting information
- applying information
Acquiring Information

Three forms:
- Search
- Inquiry
- Observation

Successful information gathering requires:
- Collecting data from diverse sources
- Cross-checking findings to ensure validity
- Probing for interpretations and implications
Information Sources

Source

outside

self

inside

Learning from other companies (benchmarking)

Mobil

Learning from other units in your company (knowledge management)

US Army

Learning from self

Learning from own experience

LL Bean

Learning from experimentation

Ludlum Steel

Past

Present

Future

Time