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Quality Improvement in Adult Vocational Education and Training

20 May 2008 14:00 This article first appeared in Training and Coaching Today. **Subscribe online** and save 20%.

Transforming Skills for the Global Economy

Authors: Nick Perry and David Sherlock

From: Kogan Page

Contact: www.koganpage.com

Price: £40

ISBN: [978-0-7494-5103-5](http://www.koganpage.com)

This book comes with an excellent pedigree. David Sherlock retired as chief inspector of Adult Learning (ALI) for England in 2007, and Nicky Perry was director of inspection at the Training Standards Council and at ALI.

Consequently, it is a goldmine of experienced, erudite observations on the state of the nation's skills, its strategies and its mindset.

We are told that skills account for one fifth of the UK's productivity deficit with the world's top leaders. There are some pertinent insights into manufacturing and training throughout the world: in Italy, seven times more money is spent on pupils in technical high schools than on those taking an academic route.

The book is also strong on answers. It includes a method called the Transformational Diamond, which explains how to analyse the quality of existing training and enable good practice. Case studies show how the diamond can work in practice.

My only gripe is that perhaps the book is too nostalgic. Do we really need to know about the mechanics of the in-house newspaper, however good? But this is a minor moan, and the book has much to offer on the perennial arguments of the links between training and productivity. The cover price was a bit of a shock though.

Useful: 4 stars (out of 5)

Well-written: 2 stars

Value for money: 3 stars

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