FOUR STAGES® OF CONTRIBUTION RESEARCH

by Paul Terry, Alan Graden, and Ed Haltrecht
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ABSTRACT

Workforce Comparisons

Today’s businesses compete globally, with employee contribution as the engine that drives organizational performance. For the past four years, as part of our ongoing Four Stages® of Contribution research, Global Novations has collected data from individual contributors and managers on the subject of employee development and contribution. We have examined the data according to age, gender, ethnicity, career stage perception, and now, two world regions.

From 2007 – 2010, managers and direct reports in each of our targeted regions completed behavioral and competency-based assessments. This measurement was not tied in any way to organizational performance management or compensation systems.

In this report, we compare select Western (the United States, Brazil, and the United Kingdom) and Eastern (mainland China, Hong Kong, and Singapore) employee populations, their demographics, and their perceptions of self and direct report contribution levels. We were interested to see what impact these regions’ differences had on development and contribution.

For a complete list of Four Stages Research publications, please visit http://www.globalnovations.com/Research/Four-Stages-Research.
BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Today’s workforce is more global than ever before. Many organizations have sales and operating locations around the world, and many do business globally via the Internet 24/7. Given this geographically diverse workforce and recognizing the vast variety of cultural differences around the globe, it is important for corporate leaders to understand regional perspectives about their employees’ contributions and the extent to which those perspectives are shared by the employees themselves.

In this article we compare such data gathered in several Western countries (the United States, Brazil, and the United Kingdom) with similar data gathered from several Asian locations. Specifically, we wanted to know:

- How managers view their direct reports’ contribution overall
- How the contributions of those with leadership responsibilities are viewed
- How contribution is viewed in relation to age categories (or generation)
- How contribution is viewed in relation to employee gender
- How contribution is perceived in relation to a common set of behaviors in each region

The Research

From 2007 – 2009, Global Novations, a global talent optimization firm, partnered with several leading organizations in the US, Brazil, and the UK to study employee development and contribution in today’s business world. The overall resulting data set includes information on the contribution and development of over 1,500 respondents.

In 2010, in partnership with Right Management, we conducted similar research in Asia and analyzed responses from over 350 individuals in mainland China, Hong Kong, and Singapore. The core survey questions about contribution were the same in all locations.

By completing a behavioral and competency-based survey about each direct report, managers assessed how their direct reports contribute to their organizations. The direct reports were asked to complete the same survey, providing a self-assessment of their contribution. (See Appendix B for a complete listing of survey items.)

The current research is unique in two ways. First, the data was collected purely for the purpose of research and, therefore, was in no way tied to performance appraisals or 360 surveys. Second, because of its ability to provide insight on the behavioral contributions of employees, the Four Stages® of Contribution model was used as the foundation for the current research.

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1 Total responses were 2,708 from the US/Brazil/UK and 412 from China, Hong Kong and Singapore. Complete data was 1,527 and 373 respectively.
The Four Stages® of Contribution Model

The Four Stages of Contribution model is based on the research of Drs. Gene Dalton and Paul Thompson and provides a framework for increasing one’s organizational impact and influence over time. According to Dalton and Thompson’s research, there is a direct correlation between a person’s “career stage” and his/her contribution to the organization. Over the course of their careers, employees can move through as many as four stages, as outlined below (Figure 1), although organizational needs and employee goals can affect movement between and within the stages.

Figure 1: The Four Stages of Contribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Stage 2</th>
<th>Stage 3</th>
<th>Stage 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributing</td>
<td>Contributing</td>
<td>Contributing</td>
<td>Contributing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependently</td>
<td>Independently</td>
<td>Through others</td>
<td>Strategically</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Performance Expectation: Build credibility, Learn
- Primary Role: Helper, learner
- Major Stage Transition Issue: Recognize need for dependence
- Performance Leverage: Support others, build credibility
- Establish and apply expertise
- Coach, mentor, idea leader, internal consultant, project leader
- Accept independence
- Individual capability, subject matter expertise
- Relationships, networks, and technical breadth
- Guide, coordinate, develop others
- Holistic view of business, making tough choices
- Establish organizational priorities, broad impact and influence
- Shape organizational direction
- Sponsor, innovator, business leader

Organizations need employees who are continually learning and willingly accept supervision (Stage 1) as much as they need employees able to mentor and coach (Stage 3). However, behaving in ways associated with latter stages means impacting a larger cross-section of the organization. Therefore, high-performing organizations must ensure that people contributing within each stage are also developing behaviors associated with the next stage. This stretching and growing prepares employees to, over time, have greater influence in the organization. As employees develop their individual capacity, organizations also increase their overall capacity.

Over the years, we’ve learned that title does not always represent how people are actually contributing, and that people may be contributing across multiple stages at any given time. However, an employee’s behavior is usually predominately associated with one stage. As we review the comparisons below, we have used the dominant stage rating as defined by the manager of the employee and some cases as determined by the employee him/herself.

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PART I: CONTRIBUTION RATINGS DISCREPENCIES

Overall Stage of Contribution Comparison

What is striking, but perhaps not surprising, is how similar the overall stage of contribution results are for the Western and Eastern regions. On an overall basis, managers rated their direct reports in the same proportions across the Stages (see Figure 2). Statistically, there is no significant difference in how the managers in the two regions rated the participants.

The percentages for each stage also are very similar to what Dalton and Thompson found in their original research. The majority (about 50%) of workers are seen as contributing independently in their work, and about one quarter are viewed as contributing through others in some fashion, although not always in management roles. About 20% are viewed as contributing dependently or seeking direction from others, and only about 3% are viewed as contributing strategically in their organization.

Figure 2: Percentage of direct reports in each stage according to manager dominant stage ratings

We also collected self-ratings (see Figure 3) to understand how people view their own contribution compared with their manager’s perspective. While the regional differences between the West and Asia are not large (nor significant) for managers and self-raters as a whole, by comparing Figures 3 and 4 we can see there is a discrepancy in how managers and self-raters contribution.

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Figure 3: Percentage of employees in each stage based on self-ratings

![Percentage of employees in each stage based on self-ratings](image)

Figure 4 (following page) shows the actual data for the rating differences. Overall, about 48% of self-raters are aligned with their managers on their stage of contribution, with alignment slightly higher in the West (48.6%) than the East (45.9%) (see Figures 5 and 6).

It is interesting to observe the overall alignment percentage of self-raters by stage:

- **Stage 1**: 38.8%
- **Stage 2**: 61.6%
- **Stage 3**: 41.8%
- **Stage 4**: 10.2%

(Note: regional percentages of alignment by stage are quite similar to the overall results).

Although the actual numbers are small, the alignment of contribution is lowest for Stage 4, Strategic Contribution. Self-raters see themselves as having more organization-wide impact and influence. Managers viewed most of these self-raters as doing work independently, or guiding the work of others on a team or functional basis, rather than influencing the organization overall. The alignment percentage for Stage 1 above indicates that self-raters also see themselves far less dependent in their relationships than do their managers.

We have discussed this ratings gap and potential reasons at length in our *Mind the Gap* article. It is clear from the data that there is more work to do in both regions to help people clarify expectations about what contribution really "looks like" and ensure feedback on one’s current level of contribution is clear, focused, and from multiple sources.

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## Figure 4: Manager/Self-Ratings Alignment (Overall)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manager Rating</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Total Manager Placement by Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td>167</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>26</td>
<td><strong>296</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>200</td>
<td>53</td>
<td><strong>716</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>84</td>
<td><strong>206</strong></td>
<td>52</td>
<td><strong>345</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>37</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Total Self Placement by Stage**: 85 671 492 146 1394
- **Percent of Self-Ratings that Match Manager Ratings**: 38.8% 61.6% 41.8% 10.2% 47.9%

## Figure 5: Manager/Self-Ratings Alignment (Western)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manager Rating</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Total Manager Placement by Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td>122</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16</td>
<td><strong>215</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>36</td>
<td><strong>316</strong></td>
<td>146</td>
<td>37</td>
<td><strong>535</strong></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>59</td>
<td><strong>151</strong></td>
<td>39</td>
<td><strong>252</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Total Self Placement by Stage**: 63 503 361 101 1028
- **Percent of Self-Ratings that Match Manager Ratings**: 38.1% 62.8% 41.8% 8.9% 48.6%

## Figure 6: Manager/Self-Ratings Alignment (Asian)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manager Rating</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Total Manager Placement by Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td><strong>98</strong></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>16</td>
<td><strong>181</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td><strong>55</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td><strong>93</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Total Self Placement by Stage**: 22 168 131 45 366
- **Percent of Self-Ratings that Match Manager Ratings**: 40.9% 58.3% 42% 13.3% 45.9%
PART II: MANAGER STAGE PLACEMENT FINDINGS

Overall Comparison of Stage Placement for Managers

One of the demographic questions we asked was whether the respondent had people management responsibilities. In Figure 7, we see a comparison of respondents who have people manager responsibilities against those who do not have people manager responsibilities (as rated by the respondent’s manager). As might be expected, a higher percentage (85%) of non-people managers were rated in Stage 1 and 2.

However, we also found that 49% of those with people management responsibilities were also rated in Stage 1 and 2. People who have responsibility to manage and guide the work of others need to be influencing, coaching, and working through others (Stage 3). In essence, a manager’s role is to guide, coach and provide direction to a team. The Stage 3 capabilities of managers in both Western and Eastern locations is apparently an issue.

Figure 7: Stage of contribution by role (combined)

Comparing Western and Asian Findings by People Management Responsibility

In comparing the regions (see Figures 8 and 9) we found that Western managers were rated at a higher percentage in Stage 3 (50%) than Eastern managers (40%). Given the relatively strong economies in Asia, and multiple employment opportunities, employee retention is a real challenge. Managers may be behaving more independently (Stage 2) by focusing on more individual responsibilities rather than on providing the direction and support their teams need. They also may not be fully leveraging and engaging their teams’ talents, which can have a negative effect on retention rates and productivity.

In one of the global studies co-conducted by the Singapore Human Resources Institute (SHRI), they found that “Leadership is becoming an even scarcer resource than ever before. Such scarcity may trigger complexities in business and is a cause for concern for employees and employers alike.” The study also revealed that “…companies in Singapore are facing the challenge in improving leadership development. In one of the findings, 62% of the respondents felt that leaders in their organization occasionally or rarely observe employee performance and communicates constructive feedback to their employees.”

5 2008: SHRI Leadership Study: Managing Diversity and Bridging Communication Gaps
In another study by SHRI on employee retention, the average tenure within the majority of responding organizations was between two and five years.

The top five reasons for changing jobs were:

- Unsure of career progress
- Lack of career opportunity
- Achievement not recognized
- Lack of learning opportunity, challenge in the job and expertise not valued
- Dissatisfied with the boss

Many of these issues are symptoms of managing in Stage 2. A manager who has a Stage 2 mindset focuses her time on her own tasks or priorities, and views requests for help from others as an interruption rather than as an opportunity to build capacity in others. Many of the reasons for leaving a job above can be mitigated by a manager who really understands that her role is to coach and develop others, and to provide opportunities for team members to find and connect with challenging, meaningful job assignments in the organization.

Figure 8: Ratings of Western managers and non-managers

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6 2008: Singapore’s Changing Employment Landscape: Employee Turnover and Learning and Development Concerns
Figure 9: Ratings of Asian managers and non-managers
PART III: GENERATION/AGE COMPARISONS

Overall Generational Findings

For purposes of this research, we used the following age brackets to correspond to approximate generational categories. The generational categories below are widely accepted in the US and relate quite well to Asia, even China, where the categorization is based on the decade of birth (e.g. post 1960s or post 1970s).

- Generation X (born 1965 – 1980)
- Baby Boomer (born 1946 – 1964)
- Mature (born 1928 – 1945)

As shown in Figure 10, our Asian sample population is younger than the Western population, with Generation X being about 70% of the Asian workforce sample and Baby-Boomers comprising only about 8% of the sample. This may not be reflective of the overall Asian workforce, and may be due to the sample of participating organizations.

Figure 10: Overall composition of the workforce samples by generation

We then took a look at how each generation was rated by stage of contribution for the overall data sample. The results are shown in Figure 11.
Since Generation Y is relatively new to the workforce, it may not be surprising that a higher percentage (see Figure 11) of this generation is viewed as behaving in a more dependent way (Stage 1). Even so, Gen Y is found in Stage 2 at about the same percentage (50%) as Gen X and Baby Boomers. (It should be noted that the Mature generation was a very small part of the overall sample, and was found only in the Western data).

What may be a potential concern is the percentage of Gen X and Baby Boomers also in Stage 1 (20% and 18% respectively). Given their overall work experience, we would expect a much larger percentage of these generations to be contributing in ways where they are having greater influence and guiding the work of others (Stage 3 and 4).

We wondered what impact tenure may have on the chart above, and the results were interesting. We found that 58% of Gen Y, 33% of Gen X, and 15% of Baby Boomers have two years or less of overall organizational tenure. This data suggests Gen Xer’s are changing jobs at a fairly significant rate, and may help explain why 70% of Gen Xer’s are seen in Stage 1 or 2. It does not explain why 66% of Baby Boomers are seen in Stages 1 and 2, and not at a higher rate in Stage 3 and 4.

Figures 12 and 13 show the same generational information as Figure 11, by region.
In the Western data (Figure 12), we see that about 50% of Gen Y, Gen X and Baby Boomers are in Stage 2. Gen Y is making its presence felt by contributing independently, even though 66% of Gen Y has two years or less of service in their current organization, as compared with 32% of Gen X and 15% of Baby Boomers. Since the tenure is greater for the majority of Gen Xers and Baby Boomers, we would expect that a higher percentage of both generations would be in Stage 3, given their relative work experience overall. A particular concern is that only 28% (vs. 42% in Asia) of Baby Boomers are viewed as behaving in a Stage 3 way—even though this generation is in the latter part of their careers.

What may be a potential concern for Asian companies is the Gen X group, which, even with their additional experience, is rated at 23% in Stage 1, vs. 18% for the Western data (see Figures 13 & 12). It’s possible that this generation is also struggling in mid-career and trying to determine whether to focus on roles that require more influence and leadership, or, to stay closer to their technical roots. Although Baby Boomers were a small part of the overall Asian data sample (about 8%), they are viewed in Stage 3 at a higher rate than their Western counterparts.
Comparing Western and Asian Generational Findings

In an article in *BusinessWeek*\(^7\), Nandani Lynton and Kirsten Høgh Thøgersen noted: “Understanding Gen Yers is important because they make up almost 50% of China’s workforce. As they have moved from school into jobs, organizations have noticed that this generation makes different demands and needs to be motivated in new ways.” Giving Gen Y more challenging assignments earlier in their careers may be essential given their large proportion of the workforce. In fact, in the Eastern data, Gen Yers are seen as behaving in a Stage 3 way at double the rate of Gen Y in the Western data (25% vs. 12%) (see Figures 13 and 12).

In managing Gen Y, Asia may be doing a better job than Western organizations, by fostering more interdependent behavior earlier in Gen Y’s tenure. This development may also be due to the rapid job movement and promotional opportunities available to Gen Yers in Asia. As stated by Nandani Lynton and Kirsten Høgh Thøgersen\(^8\), “The key is to give Gen Y some influence. Companies do well to share information and future strategies with Gen Ys. Brainstorming with these gifted staff members on projects or approaches can generate ideas that managers might never have thought of on their own. Being involved creates a sense of pride and a feeling that they are doing something important.”

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PART IV: GENDER COMPARISONS

In our data sample, the percentage of men and women was 39% and 61% respectively, and consistent across the regions (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Western</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Figure 15 below, we see that women in Asia were rated at a slightly higher percentage in Stage 1 and 2 than their Western counterparts and at a slightly lower percentage in Stage 3 and 4 than their Western counterparts. Managers in both Asia and the US view the majority of men and women in Stage 2. This result would indicate that men and women in both locations are viewed as technically competent and contributing independently in their work.

Figure 15: Overall gender by stage

We also examined the proportion of women in management positions in our data sample, to see how they are faring in this respect. As shown in Figure 16, women are in management roles at a fairly consistent rate with their representation in the overall sample (Figure 14), and more so for Asia than the US (compare Figures 17 and 18).
**Figure 16: Overall percentage of men and women managers (Western and Asian combined)**

![Bar chart showing overall percentage of men and women managers](chart16)

**Figure 17: Male and female managers (Western)**

![Bar chart showing male and female managers](chart17)
While women overall are represented across the stages similar to their male counterparts (see Figures 19 & 20), and even at similar rates in management positions, women still face challenges in the workplace. As Catherine W. Ng and Ann-Sofie Chakrabarty state: “In Hong Kong, there is still a fair amount of gender stereotyping. Roles in the private (home) and public (work) spheres are still gendered. Women, whether or not they are engaged in full-time paid employment, are expected to take care of the household. At the organizational level, there are very few workplaces in Hong Kong that practice women- and- family-friendly policies. Women face barriers to the development of their careers such as discriminatory attitudes about the suitability of women as managers.”

While one of the authors was recently in Singapore, he heard similar concerns from women managers there—some opportunities (such as travel or job assignments to different countries) may not be offered to women due to concerns of male managers about women’s current (or future) family responsibilities.

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**Figure 19: Gender by stage (Western)**

![Western Stage by Gender - Male](image1)

![Western Stage by Gender - Female](image2)

**Figure 20: Gender by stage (Asian)**

![Asian Stage by Gender - Male](image3)

![Asian Stage by Gender - Female](image4)
PART V: ITEM RATINGS

The survey consisted of 20 items and we analyzed the raw data for these items to look for significant differences this analysis excluded demographics.

Item Ratings: by Manager

We analyzed the individual item responses based on the managers’ ratings of their direct reports. There were 20 items of which five had interesting and significant statistical differences between East and West.

The five items are:

1. Manages time and resources effectively
2. Works in a way that supports organizational goals
3. Views work from a “big picture” perspective
4. Develops self and others
5. Effectively persuades others in the organization

We briefly compare these differences on the following pages.
Manages Time and Resources Efficiently

How someone utilizes resources will vary by his/her stage of contribution. We found that Western managers rated their direct reports more in Stages 1 and 2 for this item (48% and 38% respectively), meaning that direct reports were more focused on managing their own individual resources and time and keeping their managers informed of potential resource constraints. Asian managers see their direct reports as less dependent. They see a larger percentage (28% vs. 15%) focused on coaching others in planning or time management techniques or ensuring the organization has the people and resources it needs.

Figure 21: Manages time and resources efficiently
Works in a Way that Supports Organizational Goals

The ability to understand the connection of one’s role in supporting and driving the business strategy is a cornerstone of contribution. Western managers see their direct reports focusing more on *understanding or learning* how their work is contributing to the overall business (40%). Asian managers see their direct reports taking more independent initiative (49%) in *ensuring* their work is aligned with the business goals and strategy. Fairly low percentages (19% to 20%) in both regions are helping others to align their work.

*Figure 22: Works in a way that supports organizational goals*
Works from a “Big Picture” Perspective

The novation, or movement, from one stage to the next requires a continual broadening of perspective—the ability to understand how the different functions of the business connect to drive results and achieve the business strategy. Note that Asian managers see the majority (59%) of their direct reports as mainly learning about their organization’s strategy, compared with 46% of the Western managers. Also, Western managers rate almost one-third (32%) of their people as taking a more integrated and less tactical approach (Stage 3) to their work.

Figure 23: Works from a “big picture” perspective
Develops Self and Others

Developing others is a hallmark of Stage 3 contribution, and developing self is important for all stages, but especially in Stages 1 and 2, as one seeks to gain technical credibility. Neither region rated highly in providing development opportunities for others. Direct reports in the West are focused heavily on self-development, either as directed by others or self-initiated (72%). Asian managers view 59% of their direct reports as doing the same, but also see 25% of their direct reports as champions of organizational initiatives that support the development of all employees.

Figure 24: Develops self and others
Effectively Persuades Others in the Organization

Persuasiveness, highly related to influence, is key to distinguishing overall stage of contribution. Both regions view direct reports as being fairly persuasive with others in getting their own work done (34% West, 29% Asia). However, Western managers believe more of their direct reports (32% vs. 20%) are focused on team goals, and Asian managers believe direct reports are more focused on championing initiative on an organizational level.

Figure 25: Effectively persuades others in the organization

Item Ratings: Self-Ratings

We also analyzed the individual item responses by the direct reports. These were the same 20 items on which the manager responded. Six of these items had interesting and significant statistical differences between East and West.

The six items are:

2. Values and pursues on-the-job learning activities
3. Works within organizational culture
4. Understands and manages sources of power, information, and influence to accomplish work
5. Views work from a “big picture” perspective
6. Utilizes different perspectives
7. Effectively persuades others in the organization

We briefly compare these differences on the following pages.
Values and Pursues On-the-Job Learning Activities

This item focuses on job assignments as a way to grow contribution. It is interesting that a plurality of self-raters placed themselves in either Stage 1 or 3 on this item. The Western data shows that 45% of self-raters said they were willingly accepting assignments from others that provide learning opportunities. Forty-seven percent of the Asian self-raters said they were connecting the value of learning with team objectives and business goals.

*Figure 26: Values and pursues on-the-job learning activities*
**Works with Organizational Culture**

This item addresses behaviors associated with understanding and working within the organizational culture. The largest group (44%) of Western self-raters said they were focusing on their own behavior and acting in accordance with the organization’s cultural rules. A larger number of Asian respondents felt they were influencing the organizational culture in a way that supports business objectives.

*Figure 27: Works with organizational culture*
Understands and Manages Sources of Power, Information, and Influence to Accomplish Work

A large percentage (59%) of Western respondents believe they have an awareness of their organization’s formal and informal decision making channels and use that information to get things done. The Asian self-raters were more evenly split between learning or gaining a basic understanding how things get done and leveraging those channels to get work done.

Figure 28: Understands and manages sources of power, information, and influence to accomplish work
Works from a “Big Picture” Perspective

As stated above, the novation from one stage to the next requires a continual broadening of perspective—the ability to understand how the different functions of the business work together to drive results and achieve the business strategy. Asian self-raters place themselves largely in Stage 1 (45%) or mainly as learning about their organization’s strategy—which is a trend consistent with their managers (see Figure 23).

The majority (53%) of Western self-raters place themselves in Stage 3. They believe they are taking a more strategic (or integrated) and less tactical approach (Stage 3) to their work. This is a large disconnect from their managers who rated 32% in Stage 3.

Figure 29: Views work from a “big picture” perspective
Utilizes Different Perspectives

This item is about valuing and leveraging the diverse perspectives within the organization.

The largest percentage of Asian self-raters (39%) places themselves in Stage 1, which suggests that they are learning and observing how their fellow team members are approaching tasks, while the largest percentage of Western self-raters places themselves in Stage 2 (34%), or believe they are proactively seeking out others perspectives, and applying that input to their work.

Figure 30: Utilizes different perspectives
Effectively Persuades Others in the Organization

Persuasiveness, highly related to influence, is key to distinguishing overall stage of contribution.

Self-raters in both regions view themselves as being persuasive enough to accomplish their own work (31% West, 35% Asia), which is fairly consistent with their managers’ point of view (34% West, 29% Asia respectively)—compare with Figure 25 above. However, 35% of Western raters also place themselves in Stage 3, which is actually quite consistent with how their managers viewed their ability in gaining others’ commitment and support for team goals (32%). Thirty percent of the Asian self-raters felt they were able to champion initiatives that gain support at the organizational level, which was higher than their Western counterparts and their Asian managers (both at 22%; see Figure 25 for manager ratings).

Figure 31: Effectively persuades others in the organization
SUMMARY

The data collected during this research offers a broad view of how professionals at all levels are engaged in contributing to their organizations’ success. This article provides a comparison of Eastern and Western global regions.

Overall, the data show striking similarities in the ways Eastern and Western populations contribute to their organizations. This is true for ratings provided by managers as well as self-scores. Self-scores tended to be higher than manager scores, although about half of employees in both regions agreed with managers about their level of contribution.

Employees with people management responsibilities tended to contribute at a higher level than those without management responsibilities. However, both Eastern and Western regions have significant populations of managers (41% and 33%, respectively) who are viewed as focusing on their own work rather than on the work of their teams. This is an issue that must be addressed for organizations to function optimally.

Looking at the data by respondent generation (or age grouping), we found that while Generation X is the most populous generation for both regions in our sample, it accounted for a much higher percentage of the Eastern sample (71%) than it did the Western (49%). Also of note is that Baby Boomers account for only 8% of the Eastern sample vs. 37% in the Western.

In terms of how the generations contribute, Generation X was proportionally distributed through the stages for both regions. The Eastern sample, however, saw a greater proportion of Baby Boomers and Generation Y in Stage 3 than did the Western sample, indicating some success in Asia in integrating the younger generation and in continuing engagement of the older generation.

Another demographic category, gender, showed that for this sample (61% female, 39% male), women and men had people manager responsibilities nearly in line with the gender proportions in the sample population. The Western sample lagged slightly behind the Eastern sample with only 57% of managers being women.

Viewing the data at the item level and excluding demographics also showed interesting results. For manager ratings, five of the 20 items saw significant differences between East and West samples:

1. Manages time and resources effectively
2. Works in a way that supports organizational goals
3. Views work from a “big picture” perspective
4. Develops self and others
5. Effectively persuades others in the organization

Self-ratings at the item level also showed significant differences for six items:

1. Values and pursues on-the-job learning activities
2. Works within organizational culture
3. Understands and manages sources of power, information, and influence to accomplish work
4. Views work from a “big picture” perspective

5. Utilizes different perspectives

6. Effectively persuades others in the organization

This research serves to validate the work done by Dalton and Thompson, and it provides insights into behavioral differences and similarities between East and West regions as well as across a range of key demographic categories. Later articles will provide deeper views into these categories as they relate to the Four Stages.
APPENDICES

A. Analysis Explanation
B. Four Stages of Contribution Assessment
C. Client Partners
D. Research Partners
APPENDIX A

Analysis Explanation

The purpose of this brief note is to explain the rationale for establishing overall stage ratings for individuals where ratings are available on a group of competency questionnaire items.

In the past, only a single data point was generated by managers establishing an individual’s stage. In their research Dalton and Thompson generally “…explained the four stages…and…we gave the managers a deck of three-by-five cards with the names of each person on a card and asked the manager to place them in four piles representing the four stages.”

On the basis of this technique the Four Stages career model and relationship to perceived performance was established. This same technique of obtaining an overall stage rating for individuals was employed for the 1998 Novations’ revisit of the model.

The current research employed a different technique. Twenty questions based on 10 competencies (two questions per competency) were presented to managers. The managers were asked to describe the stage level that the individual was performing for each question. Managers were not asked for their overall rating—our research model described below was used to establish overall stage of the individual.

On the basis of the Dalton and Thompson research and our work with the Four Stages model over the past 25 years, we recognized that few individuals performed all of their activities within just one of the Four Stages. In other words, a Stage 3 individual may also do some Stage 2 work. A Stage 1 individual may be performing some tasks at a Stage 2 level. The challenge is to numerically establish an overall stage when there is some variance in each individual’s ratings. Indeed, of the 1,980 participants in the current study, only three had no variance in their ratings.

The dataset contained up to 20 stage ratings per individual. (Note: there was some missing data.) The central tendency statistical indices (mode, median, mean) were deemed to be inadequate in categorizing individuals. For example, if an individual received seven Stage 1 ratings and six each in Stages 2 and 3, the mode would categorize this individual as a Stage 1 performer, although a majority of their effort was spend in higher stages. The median and mean, along with the mode, categorized many individuals appropriately—but had too many exceptions where it became obvious that a proper stage rating was not being derived.

We then turned to rationale pattern analysis to establish stage. The following outlines the filtering process followed:

1. If an individual was rated at any stage on two-thirds or more of the 20 items, we deemed the individual to be performing at that stage. On a sensitivity basis, we also considered 50% and 75% criteria.

2. For individuals not categorized in step 1 above, we selected those who were rated at or above 60% at Stages 3 and 4 combined. These individuals were performing at either Stage 3 or 4. The individuals rated as performing greater than 30% of their behaviors at Stage 4 were deemed to be at Stage 4. The rest of this cohort was deemed to be in Stage 3.

3. For those individuals who were not filtered out by the steps outlined above, we selected those who were rated as performing 60% or more of the 20 items at Stages 2, 3, or 4. If more than 30% of their ratings were at Stage 3, they were deemed to be performing at that stage. The remaining individuals from this group were deemed to be at Stage 2.
4. Finally, the remaining individuals performing 60% or more in Stages 1 and 2, and more than 30% in Stage 2, were deemed to be performing in Stage 2. The rest were deemed to be Stage 1 performers.

5. We declared as anomalies individuals with very unusual patterns such as 25% of their ratings in each of the four stages. A total of 55 anomalies were identified.

Although the “cut-off” scores employed were based on rational thought and not selected to achieve a specific stage distribution, the results were extremely close to the distributions found in the original research and 1998 updates. Comparisons between the US and Asian participants were not affected when different “cut-off” scores were tested.
## APPENDIX B

### Four Stages of Contribution Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOUR STAGES OF CONTRIBUTION ASSESSMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Predisposition</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1 | Learns from experience | Shares own learning experiences and facilitates learning from others within the group.  
Demonstrates a learning orientation through asking questions of others.  
Learns from own successes and mistakes.  
Fosters an organizational environment that encourages and rewards learning. |
| 2 | Values and pursues on-the-job learning activities | Willingly accepts assignments that present relevant learning opportunities.  
Reinforces the value of active learning and communicates its organizational impact.  
Connects the value of learning with team objectives and business goals.  
Pursues individual learning opportunities, even if they are outside his/her comfort zone. |
| **Organizational Savvy**                |
| 3 | Works within organizational culture | Ensures that the organizational culture supports business objectives.  
Acts in accordance with written and unwritten cultural norms, rules, etc.  
Helps others understand how to navigate the organizational culture.  
Seeks to understand unwritten rules and work practices. |
| 4 | Understands and manages sources of power, information, and influence to accomplish work | Uses an awareness of formal and informal decision making channels to get things done.  
Advises others on how formal and informal organizational structures affect business decisions.  
Gains a basic understanding of how to get things done in the organization.  
Champions complex organizational initiatives that have strategic value. |
| **Technical/Functional Expertise**      |
| 5 | Demonstrates technical knowledge | Demonstrates a breadth of technical/functional knowledge outside of core specialty.  
Has industry-wide perspective and broad knowledge of the disciplines most important to the organization.  
Applies basic technical/functional knowledge to complete work.  
Demonstrates mastery of the technical/functional skills necessary for performing own job. |
| 6 | Learns/grows in technical areas | Actively seeks additional experience and knowledge in technical/functional areas in order to gain expertise.  
Is considered an expert in his/her field.  
Embraces and encourages the technical competence of others as a way to achieve results.  
Stays abreast of relevant technology advances that can significantly impact organizational performance. |
| **Planning & Organizing**              |
| 7 | Prioritizes | Establishes strategic priorities to help people understand which initiatives are most important.  
Does not waste time on tasks that yield low value.  
Leads to prioritize and work on the most important assignments.  
Helps people in the workgroup to prioritize their work and manage their time effectively. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Manages time and resources efficiently</td>
<td>Uses resources efficiently and accurately estimates time and effort required to accomplish work&lt;br&gt;Ensures that organization has people skills and resources to meet business goals&lt;br&gt;Coaches others in effective planning and time management techniques&lt;br&gt;Keeps manager informed of delays or potential problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Strategic Alignment</td>
<td>Seeks to understand how his/her work contributes to the business&lt;br&gt;Keeps team focused on objectives that drive company performance and competitive advantage&lt;br&gt;Holds others accountable for meeting the needs of the total business rather than those of the local business unit&lt;br&gt;Aligns own work objectives with the organization’s strategic plan or objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Views work from a “big picture” perspective</td>
<td>Ensures that the organization has broad strategies and plans focused on market needs and competitive advantage&lt;br&gt;Thinks beyond the “day-to-day” to take a longer-term view of the business&lt;br&gt;Acts with an understanding of how the marketplace drives the business&lt;br&gt;Learns how team’s work relates to overall business strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Develops Capability</td>
<td>Seeks developmental feedback and focuses on developing relevant capabilities&lt;br&gt;Seeks specific feedback about own work and takes appropriate action&lt;br&gt;Coaches others in order to help improve their contribution&lt;br&gt;Ensures that organizational systems are in place to give every employee feedback and tools to implement development plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Develops self and others</td>
<td>Provides development opportunities to others&lt;br&gt;Develops self as directed by others&lt;br&gt;Focuses on developing self in important ways&lt;br&gt;Champions organizational efforts that support development of all employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Valuing Diversity</td>
<td>Reinforces an organizational culture where different approaches to work are seen as a value-add rather than a need for conformity&lt;br&gt;Gathers and applies input from people with different perspectives when doing non-routine tasks&lt;br&gt;Organizes work teams to include people with varying perspectives or backgrounds&lt;br&gt;Observes and learns from how teammates approach the same tasks in different ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Respects others' differences</td>
<td>Learns to recognize stereotypes and how to avoid using them&lt;br&gt;Enforces a zero-tolerance policy regarding discriminatory behavior&lt;br&gt;Facilitates an environment on the team where people are respected regardless of differences&lt;br&gt;Works effectively with teammates regardless of differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Influencing</td>
<td>Secures others’ commitment to achieve team goals&lt;br&gt;Learns how to persuade others to accept his/her position&lt;br&gt;Champions initiatives in ways that generate organization-wide support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### FOUR STAGES OF CONTRIBUTION ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persuades and enlists others’ support in accomplishing own objectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Builds influence through credibility</strong></td>
<td>Develops effective working relationships with influential others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>频繁“测试”以确定其/她的影响力是否达到预期效果</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>建立可信度，通过在困难情况下展示领导力</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>鼓励组织实现超过预期的可能</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship Building</strong></td>
<td><strong>Networking capabilities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Networking capabilities</strong></td>
<td>维持广泛有效的内部工作关系网络</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>利用技术与业务联系，完成工作职责</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>发展并利用专业关系，有助于获取资源或信息</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>雇员内部的技术和商业联系以建立联系</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Builds trust</strong></td>
<td><strong>Builds trust</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>工作以赢得他人的信任</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>培育一个将信任视为建立长期关系关键因素的组织环境</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>通过与团队成员建立信任和尊重的气氛</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>建立信任，通过始终与团队的价值和期望一致来建立信任</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business Acumen</strong></td>
<td><strong>Understands organization’s value proposition</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understands organization’s value proposition</strong></td>
<td>以组织的价值主张向客户传递组织的价值</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>支持并投资于长期组织价值的机会</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>确保工作团队以一种方式提供服务，使组织的价值和竞争优势得以体现</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>积极尝试了解为什么客户选择这个组织而不是竞争对手</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Keeps up with relevant developments</strong></td>
<td><strong>Keeps up with relevant developments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Keeps up with relevant developments</strong></td>
<td>不断地教育团队熟悉组织内的重要发展</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>学习获取有关新发展和新兴趋势的信息的地方</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>不断监控趋势，竞争对手，等，与自己的工作相关</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>不断分享自己的知识，趋势，竞争对手，等，影响组织</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All items provide a "choose not to respond" option*
## APPENDIX C

### Client Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western:</th>
<th>Asia:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AWB (Brazil)</td>
<td>AmorePacific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Transport Police</td>
<td>Bayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coca – Cola (Brazil)</td>
<td>Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DuPont</td>
<td>Decathlon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Mills</td>
<td>Mary Kay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ING</td>
<td>Novo Nordisk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inverness Medical Innovations (UK)</td>
<td>Right Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inverness Medical / Biosite (US)</td>
<td>SLS Bearings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redecard (Brazil)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WellPoint</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D

Research Partners

About Global Novations

Global Novations (www.globalnovations.com) is an inclusive talent management firm. We enhance organizational performance by creating environments of continuous learning and development for our clients. We provide consulting, training, interactive, and measurement solutions, with expertise in Talent Management, Diversity and Inclusion, and Market Optimization.

Our mission is to build the capacity of individuals and organizations worldwide.

FOUR STAGES OF CONTRIBUTION RESEARCH TEAM

Executive Sponsor: Mike Hyter, President and Managing Partner
Project Leader: Paul Terry, Vice President, Global Partnerships
Project Manager: Simone Solondz
Project Manager: Marji Marcus
Project Technical Lead: Alan Graden
Statistical Analysis: Ed Haltrecht, Ph.D.

About Right Management

Right Management (www.right.com) is the talent and career management expert within Manpower, the global leader in employment services. Right Management helps clients win in the changing world of work by designing and executing workforce solutions that align talent strategy with business strategy.

Our expertise spans Talent Assessment, Leader Development, Organizational Effectiveness, Employee Engagement, and Workforce Transition and Outplacement. With offices in over 50 countries, Right Management partners with companies of all sizes. More than 80% of Fortune 500 and over 70% of the Fortune Global 500 companies are currently working with us to help them grow talent, reduce costs and accelerate performance.

FOUR STAGES OF CONTRIBUTION ASIA RESEARCH TEAM

Project Coordinator: Zulinah Mooksan, Manager, Marketing & Strategic Alliance, Asia Pacific
Executive Sponsor: Ronnie Tan Li Tong, Group Executive Vice President, Asia Pacific
Project Advisor: Robert Lim, Practice Leader, Talent Management
About Leading Indicator Systems (LIS)

Leading Indicator Systems (www.leadingindicator.com) designs, develops and implements state-of-the-art, web-based assessment systems and products. Our innovative solutions are used to measure and track key leading indicators—from employees, customers, suppliers, and markets—that directly impact individual and organizational performance. We partner with organizations to help deliver highly effective assessment solutions in these areas.

Our solutions are used by strategic partners and end-user organizations to globally collect, rapidly analyze, and dynamically present findings in ways previously unattainable, from delivering efficient and automated multi-rater assessment systems to implementing organization-wide assessments and deploying results. The findings we deliver provide a wealth of precise and meaningful information in highly actionable formats. By deploying these solutions, leaders are able to know sooner, act faster, and implement more effectively. And in today’s climate, the rapid transformation of actionable knowledge into tangible results spells richer insight, greater competitive advantage, higher value, and increased performance.

FOUR STAGES OF CONTRIBUTION RESEARCH TEAM

*Project Leader: Dr. Bill Nolen, Vice President Research and Development*

*Project Manager: Scott Maggs*

*Quality Assurance Lead: Pamela Argandoña*