

备战2009年12月英语六级考前每日一练(34)英语六级考试 PDF
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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/645/2021_2022__E5_A4_87_E6_88_982009_c84_645311.htm tb42"> If sustainable competitive advantage depends on work-force skills., American firms have a problem. Human-resource management is not traditionally seen as central to the competitive survival of the firm in the United States. Skill acquisition. .is considered an individual responsibility. Labor is simply another factor of production to be hired or rented at the lowest possible cost much as one buys raw materials or equipment. The lack of importance attached to human-resource management can be seen in the corporate hierarchy. In an American firm the chief financial officer is almost always second in command. The post of head of human-resource management is usually a specialized job, often at the edge of the corporate hierarchy. The executive who holds it is never consulted on major strategic decisions and has no chance to move up to Chief Executive Officer (CEO). By way of contrast, in Japan the head of human-resource management is central, usually the second most important executive after the CEO, in the firms hierarchy. While American firms often talk about the vast amounts spent on training their work forces, in fact they invest less in the skills of their employees than do either Japanese or German firms. The money they do invest is also more highly concentrated on professional and managerial employees. And the limited investments that are made in training workers are also much more narrowly focused on the specific skills necessary to do the next

job rather than on the basic background skills that make it possible to absorb new technologies. As a result, problems emerge when new breakthrough technologies arrive. If American workers, for example, take much longer to learn how to operate new flexible manufacturing stations than workers in Germany (as they do), the effective cost of those stations is lower in Germany than it is in the United States.

More time is required before equipment is up and running at capacity, and the need for extensive retraining generates costs and creates bottlenecks that limit the speed with which new equipment can be employed. The result is a slower pace of technological change.

And in the end the skills of the bottom half of the population affect the wages of the top half. If the bottom half can't effectively staff the processes that have to be operated, the management and professional jobs that go with these processes will disappear. 57. Which of the

following applies to the management of human resources in American companies? [A] They hire people at the lowest cost regardless of their skills. [B] They only hire skilled workers because of keen competition. [C] They attach more importance to workers than to equipment. [D] They see the gaining of skills as their

employees own business. 58. What is the position of the head of human-resource management in an American firm? [A] He is one of the most important executives in the firm. [B] His post is likely to disappear when new technologies are introduced. [C] He has no say in making important decisions in the firm. [D] He is directly under

the chief financial executive. 59. The money most American firms put in training mainly goes to [A] technological and managerial staff

[B] workers who can operate new equipment [C] workers who lack basic background skills [D] top executives 60. Which of the following best states the central idea of the passage? [A] American firms are different from Japanese and German firms in human-resource management. [B] Extensive retraining is indispensable to effective human-resource management. [C] The human-resource management strategies of American firms affect their competitive capacity. [D] The head of human-resource management must be in the central position in a firms hierarchy. 61. It can be inferred from the passage that the hierarchy in American companies [A] passes for unreasonable [B] makes American firms no less competitive than Japanese companies [C] admits head of human-resource management being a top executive [D] makes head of human-resource management directly responsible for CEO

【结构剖析】议论文。文章首段首句为整篇文章的中心句：美国在以员工IT作技能为基础的可持续竞争力面存在问题。接下来几段分别从两方面对论点进行论证：一、美国人力资源经理在公司等级制度中不受重视；二、美国公司对员工技能的培训不如日本和德国，当新的突破性技术应用时，美国这种培训的问题就暴露出来了。点击进入论坛查看答案gt.

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