HUMAN
RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT

LEARNING & TRAINING for individuals & organizations

Edited by *John P Wilson*

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Dedication

Charles Handy (1990:63) stated that, 'I am more and more sure that those who are in love with learning are in love with life. For them change is never a problem, never a threat, just another exciting opportunity.' To all those trainers, trainees, delegates, managers, HRD specialists, consultants, advisors, researchers, lecturers and support staff who are involved with learning and change–may you all remain in love with learning and in love with life.

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John P Wilson is a lecturer in Human Resource Management at the University of Sheffield, where he directs the UK MEd in Training and Development. He has worked extensively in the UK and abroad including two years in Sweden, and four years for an oil company in Saudi Arabia.

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Foreword

In the coming years, human capital will play an increasingly significant role in successful organizations and prosperous countries. People who invest time in learning earn more and increase their chances of being in work. Organizations committed to learning are more successful too. Developing a learning society is, therefore, central to our future.

Human resource development professionals help promote learning so that individuals and groups at work can perform to their full potential. I therefore welcome this book as an important contribution to knowledge and understanding in the important field of human resource development. I hope it will provide a platform upon which human resource development professionals can successfully build in their work.

Rt Hon David Blunkett MP
Secretary of State for Education and Employment

Preface

Human Resource Development is a growing and influential discipline which is increasingly critical to the survival and success of all organizations. This is illustrated by the concepts of The Learning Organization and Knowledge Organization, which demonstrate the essential requirement of developing all people within organizations. Furthermore, with the spread of information and world-wide communications, competitive advantage based on technology may only be maintained for short periods of time before competitors catch up. The only source of sustainable competitive advantage is to learn faster and more creatively than other competing organizations, and that will only be achieved through swift and effective HRD strategies.

The core principle of this book is to integrate both theory and practice within a virtuous circle. Theory may be generally viewed as refined best practice, which is then fed back to the operational level and continually tested and evaluated, thereby enhancing the theoretical underpinnings of the discipline. Theory without practice remains just that— theory. It needs to be applied, which is why this book contains a significant number of case studies to illustrate the application of theory to practice. It was John Ruskin, the Victorian philosopher and naturalist who stated that, 'What we think, or what we know, or what we believe is, in the end, of little consequence. The only consequence is what we do.'

The objective of this book is to encourage learning in individuals and organizations through a pragmatic consideration of the underlying theories and their practical application. The book is divided into six sections which are built around the traditional training cycle.

SECTION ONE: THE ROLE OF LEARNING, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS

Chapter One begins by exploring the meaning of terms including training, education, and development thus providing the basis for a consideration of the strategic role of HRD, and a discussion of HRM, with which it is strongly interlinked. Learning is another word for change and Chapters Four and Five investigate the role of HRD in encouraging and supporting organizational development. The final chapter of this section discusses the integration of education and training and how they are used at national levels to encourage economic development.

SECTION TWO: THE IDENTIFICATION OF LEARNING, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

The identification of training needs provides information at individual, occupational and organizational levels for learning interventions. Similarly, performance management may be used as a mechanism for specifying and indicating developmental requirements. It is the identification of training and development needs which often requires people to operate as internal or external consultants and this is discussed in Chapter Nine.

SECTION THREE: THE PLANNING AND DESIGNING OF LEARNING, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

How people learn and how their environment influences the learning process are fundamental considerations in the design and development of programmes for adults. Developing the skills of people to become reflective practitioners in their operational areas has proved to be a successful dimension of professional development. The final chapter in this section investigates the issue of diversity, an area often addressed by training, and one which trainers need to apply to their work.

SECTION FOUR: DELIVERING LEARNING, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The days of chalk and talk are mercifully much rarer than they were. Now with the availability of Information Technology, not to forget the most useful open, distance and flexible learning

Section One:
The Role of Learning, Training and Development in Organizations

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1
Human Resource Development

John P Wilson

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Human Resource Development (HRD) is a title which represents the latest evolutionary stage in the long tradition of training, educating and developing people for the purpose of contributing towards the achievement of individual, organizational and societal objectives. Unfortunately, along with its partner Human Resource Management (HRM), it has attracted a certain amount of criticism for its 'insensitive depiction' of people as replacement parts serving the mechanistic requirements of the organization. For many lay people HRD and HRM are visualized in a similar manner to the way in which Charlie Chaplin was swallowed by the giant cogs in the machine and dehumanized in the 1936 film *Modern Times*.

HRD, as with the title HRM, makes individuals sound rather like the nuts and bolts of an organization that can be interchanged and dispensed with at will. To give it a more human face Drucker suggested the term 'biological HRD' to emphasize the living nature of the people within the organization; however, Webster (1990) suggests that this term gives the unfortunate impression of a washing powder.

This apparently clinical approach to the involvement of people within an organization has developed as a result of numerous factors which we will consider shortly. To contextualize this development we will first investigate some of the component elements which constitute HRD. We will begin first with definitions of training, education, development and learning

and use these as a basis for a definition of HRD. We will then consider how HRD contributes to strategic issues and how the various elements interrelate with HRM. In conclusion, there is a consideration of the roles and practical competencies required of those in HRD.

Having read this chapter you will:
• understand and be able to differentiate between training, education, learning, development and HRD;

• understand the relationship between HRM and HRD;

• know the elements of the Human Resource Compass; and

• be aware of the competencies (USA) and the competences (UK) associated with training and development.

DEFINING THE TERMS: TRAINING, EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT, LEARNING AND HRD

Training

The historical antecedents of training have contributed towards the current perception of training. In many crafts and guilds the purpose of training was to enable indentured apprentices to work for a period of years under the supervision of a master craftsperson. Eventually, the apprentices learned the skills required of that occupation and would produce a complex piece of work, a 'masterpiece', incorporating much of what they had learned. This would then enable them to become members of the specific guild. Hence, today, we have the term 'Master's degree' which illustrates that the person is, or should be, fully conversant with that area.

An often referred source of definitions has been the Manpower Services Commission's (1981:62) *Glossary of Training Terms* which defines training as:

a planned process to modify attitude, knowledge or skill behaviour through learning experience to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities. Its purpose, in the work situation, is to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation.

The term 'learning experience' was used because the compilers of the *Glossary* expressed the view that there was no clear demarcation between education and training and they also wanted to emphasize the integrated nature of the two.

A more recent source of definitions is CEDEFOP's (The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) *Glossarium* of educational and training terms in nine European languages. This glossary was developed to encourage understanding and cooperation between countries. The original intention was to standardize the meaning of terms in Europe, but partly due to linguistic and cultural differences the proposal was not adopted. CEDEFOP (1996:52) defines vocational training as:

Activity or programme of activities designed to teach the skills and knowledge required for particular kinds of work.

Training ... usually takes place at working places, whereas education ... takes place at *educational establishments*. (UK)

Both of the definitions above illustrate the application of training to the requirements of the organization and the fact that this training tends to occur in the workplace. They also indicate a relatively narrow limitation to specific skills and operations. Moreover, training normally has an immediate application and is generally completed in a shorter timescale than education. (Van Wart *et al*, 1993)

Education

From an historical perspective education was closely linked to the church in western countries and the number of people receiving education was very limited, as was the case with the guilds. Much of the emphasis was on classics, ie Latin and Greek, and there was minimal consideration of practical applications. However, the educated person was often more highly regarded and thus oversaw the craftsperson; a trend which may still be seen today and which influences recruitment to some disciplines.

Education is defined as:

activities which aim at developing the knowledge, skills, moral values and understanding required in all aspects of life rather than a knowledge and skill relating to only a limited field of activity. The purpose of education is to provide the conditions essential to young people and adults to develop an understanding of the traditions and ideas influencing the society in which they live and to enable them to make a contribution to it. It involves the study of their own cultures and of the laws of nature, as well as the acquisition of linguistic and other skills which are basic to learning, personal development, creativity and communication. (Manpower Services Commission, 1981:17)

A programme of learning over an extended period with general objectives relating to the personal development of the pupil/student and/or his/her acquisition of knowledge. In addition education refers to the area of public policy concerned with programmes of

learning in a particular jurisdiction taken altogether (e.g. in the context of education expenditure). (Ireland)

Activities aim at developing the knowledge, skills, moral values and understanding required in all aspects of life rather than knowledge and skill relating to only a limited field of activity. The purpose of education is to provide the conditions essential for young persons and adults to develop an understanding of the traditions and ideas influencing the society in which they live and to enable them to make a contribution to it. It involves the study of their own and other cultures and the laws of nature as well as the acquisition of linguistic and other skills which are basic to learning, personal development, creativity and communication. (UK) (CEDEFOP, 1996:48)

Education is considerably broader in scope than training and this is perhaps illustrated by the considerably longer definitions above. It also has a less immediate and less specific application than training and is often perceived as being delivered in educational institutions. Education is regarded as encompassing knowledge, skills and attitudes (Bloom *et al*, 1956).

There is a continuing tension between the needs of industry and commerce with their immediate requirements for specific skills and the educational requirements of the individual and society which need people who can contribute to the quality of life in a multi-faceted way. There is therefore a tension between traditional education and training provision which is illustrated by Dearden (1991:93):

But training can be, and often is, very illiberally conceived, and then it may not merely be uneducational but even anti-educational. As an example of the uneducational, one might mention the recent controversy over whether trainees in the YTS (Youth Training Scheme) should be given any opportunity to consider the social significance of work as part of their 'off-the-job' provision.

Distinguishing between education and training can be quite problematic. One very illustrative example of the difference between education and training would be a young child coming home and saying, 'We had sex training today!' This is in stark contrast to sex education classes that imply a theoretical rather than a practical application of learning!

Development

Development is:

the growth or realisation of a person's ability, through conscious or unconscious learning. Development programmes usually include elements of planned study and experience, and are frequently supported by a coaching or counselling facility. (Manpower Services

Commission, 1981:15)

This definition was subsequently broadened from 'a person's ability' to 'an individual's or a group's ability' (MSC, 1985:9) thus reflecting the growing concept of organizational learning:

Development occurs when a gain in experience is effectively combined with the conceptual understanding that can illuminate it, giving increased confidence both to act and to perceive how such action relates to its context. (Bolton, 1995:15)

It can be seen from the definitions that development indicates movement to an improved situation that for the individual means advancing towards the physical and mental potential we all possess. In many respects development indicates growth and movement by the learner rather than learning itself, which we will consider next.

Learning

Although both learning in general and adult learning are considered in greater depth in Chapters 10 and 11 it is necessary here to provide a definition in order to contribute towards the picture of HRD. Handy (1990:63) considered learning as being a natural response to coping with change and stated that, 'I am more and more sure that those who are in love with learning are in love with life. For them change is never a problem, never a threat, just another exciting opportunity.'

Learning can occur in formal settings such as a university or organizational training centres but it can also occur less formally. Nadler (Nadler and Nadler, 1990) distinguished between what he called 'incidental' learning and 'intentional learning'. Incidental learning is considered to be learning which occurs during the course of doing other things such as reading, talking with others, travelling, etc.

Learning and possessing a knowledge of something is one thing but applying the learning is yet another; thus, learning has limited value unless it is put into practice. Nadler (Nadler and Nadler, 1990:1.5) drew attention to the fact that learning is not guaranteed and that it is only the possibility of learning which may happen. He emphasized that:

HRD cannot and should not promise that as a result of the learning experience performance will change. This might sound like a radical statement until we look at the false promises that some in HRD have made.

Nadler maintained that performance is based on a variety of factors and the majority of these are not the responsibility of those who work in the HRD department. This pragmatic view of the application of learning does not only relate to the recent demands of organizational objectives, it can also apply in a philosophical sense. The Victorian philosopher and naturalist, John Ruskin, remarked that, 'What we know, or what we believe, or what we think, is in the end of little consequence. The only consequence is what

we do.'

Drawing from the preceding discussion learning may be defined as a relatively permanent change of knowledge, attitude or behaviour occurring as a result of formal education or training, or as a result of informal experiences.

One common theme that can be found in many of the definitions of training, education and development is that they contain the word 'learning'. Nadler (Nadler and Nadler, 1990:1.18) gathered these terms together and stated that:

Training = learning related to present job;

Education = learning to prepare the individual but not related to a specific present or future job;

Development = learning for growth of the individual but not related to a specific present or future job.

He maintained that we should not be too concerned about these labels and accepted that the definitions above might be ordered training, development and education.

Garavan (1997:42) also investigated the nature of training, education and development and came to the similar conclusion that they all involved learning. He went on to state that, 'It is therefore logical to suggest that all four (education, training, development, and learning) are seen as complementary components of the same process, ie the enhancement of human potential or talent.'

The debate about the meaning of training, education and development is for many lay people rather an academic one; however, the discussion will continue because it provides an interpretation of a complex subject. For this reason it should not be dismissed as mere academic navel-gazing. Instead it should be recognized that numerous perspectives and valuable insights result which further encourage and direct learning activities both for individuals and organizations. The important thing is for learning to occur and be applied both within organizations and to life as a whole.

As a postscript to the discussion on definitions above, a brief mention of indoctrination should be included since it is rarely covered in training and development literature. Indoctrination can be found in a number of areas such as religious cults, political indoctrination, some military training, company culture and company songs, etc. In some ways it may be regarded as a slightly less intensive form of brainwashing in which individuals or groups are encouraged, persuaded, or forced to adopt a particular mental model or approach to specific areas or even whole lifestyles. Rogers (1986) analyzed the relationship of indoctrination, training, and learning. Indoctrination was described as having very restricted objectives and provided for one way of thinking. Training, while still having

narrow goals, allowed slightly broader thinking, and learning had the least constraints and tolerated diverse ways of thinking.

Human Resource Development

The term 'Human Resource Development' was introduced to the 1969 Miami Conference of the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) by Leonard Nadler and he subsequently provided a definition in 1970. Nadler (Nadler and Nadler, 1990) emphasized that there had been a significant number of people entering the HRD field and, therefore, they deserved to have a definition of the subject. At the same time he maintained that good HRD specialists see an input into most of the operational areas and therefore delimiting the field can also have adverse consequences for the profession.

The recognition that HRD fed into most organizational areas was also noted by Galagan (1986:4) who described it as:

an omnivorous discipline, incorporating over the years almost any theory or practice that would serve the goal of learning in the context of work. Like an amoeba, it has ingested and taken nourishment from whatever it deemed expedient in the social and behavioural sciences, in learning theory and business.

Accurately defining HRD can be problematic particularly if an international perspective is taken because its interpretation and roles tend to vary from one country to another (Hansen and Brooks, 1994). Furthermore, following research among the delegates at an international conference, Jones and Mann (1992:xiv) commented that, 'there was a strong insistence that HRD does not equal training.'

If HRD is about learning and that learning is something which occurs within an individual to cause development then, 'The East, with its grace and wisdom, calls this flux "a becoming" and "an unfolding"; the West, with its systems and structures, names it "human resource development"'. Ortigas (1994:xii)

In observing the debate about HRD, Jacobs (1990:66) drew parallels with other disciplines and stated:

HRD is both an area of professional practice and an emerging interdisciplinary body of knowledge. The inter-relatedness of these two aspects makes HRD similar to most other applied professions, most of which have emerged to meet some important social or organisational need. After practice is established, the need arises to formalise the knowledge gained in practice into some logical structure. Such activity helps legitimise the profession and increases the reliability of practice.

Frank (1988) investigated the theoretical base of HRD in order to distinguish it from other fields and identified three assumptions on which it is based:

1. HRD is based on the research and theories drawn from the field of adult education and is different from the learning that occurs in children. Learning is based on creating the appropriate circumstances in which adults can learn and thereby change behaviour.

2. HRD is concerned with improved performance within the work environment. It is not concerned with improving people's health or their personal relations with their family.

3. HRD utilizes the theories of change and how these relate to the organization. Change affects individuals, groups and the organization and HRD is predominantly concerned with the change of individuals.

There would thus appear to be a professional need to define the territory of HRD, no matter how limited it may be, in order that those involved with it either as deliverers or receivers can have a reasonable understanding of what it encompasses. Below are a number of definitions of HRD:

organised learning experiences in a definite time period to increase the possibility of improving job performance growth. (Nadler and Nadler, 1990:1.3)

Human resource development is the study and practice of increasing the learning capacity of individuals, groups, collectives, and organisations through the development and application of learning-based interventions for the purpose of optimising human and organisational growth and effectiveness. (Chalofsky, 1992:179)

HRD is the integrated use of training and development, career development, and organisation development to improve individual and organisational effectiveness. (McLagan and Suhadolnik, 1989:1)

The field of study and practice responsible for the fostering of a long-term, work-related learning capacity at the individual, group, and organisational level of organisations. (Watkins, 1989:427)

Human resource development encompasses activities and processes which are intended to have impact on organisational and individual learning. (Stewart and McGoldrick, 1996:1)

All the above definitions would appear to have been developed from a theoretical perspective, albeit probably based upon observation and practice. From a more applied point of view Ralphs and Stephan (1986) found, from a study of *Fortune 500* companies, that people placed the following subjects under the umbrella of HRD which scored more than 90 per cent: training and development, organizational development, human resource planning, and career planning.

In spite of all the definitions available, 'there are no universally accepted definitive statements of the meaning either of HRM or of HRD' (McGoldrick and Stewart, 1996:9). HRD is still a young discipline and still in the process of developing and finding a clearer identity for itself. What is clear from the definitions of HRD above and the contributory

areas of

training, education, development and learning, is that HRD refers to learning at the individual, group and organizational levels to enhance the effectiveness of human resources with the purpose of achieving the objectives of the organization.

STRATEGIC HRD

We have analysed the nature of HRD and now we will proceed to consider how it is integrated into the organization. The word *strategy* originates from the Greek word *strategia* meaning 'generalship' and is related to the science and art of warfare. Organizational competition does not fully equate to warfare but when one comes across books with titles such as *The Management Secrets of Genghis Khan*, it would appear that some people take the subject very seriously indeed.

Strategy, according to Johnson and Scholes (1993), is concerned with a number of dimensions:

• the range of an organization's activities;

• the matching of the organization's activities to the environment;

• the matching of the organization's activities to available resources.

Johnson and Scholes (1993:10) state that:

Strategy is the direction and scope of an organisation over the long term: ideally, which matches its resources to the changing environment, and in particular its markets, customers or clients so as to meet stakeholder expectations.

A number of strategic pressures have contributed to the increasing importance and strategic role of HRD (McLagan and Suhadolnik, 1989; Garavan *et al*, 1995) and these include:

• accelerated rate of change;

• focus on quality;

• globalization of business;

• increased flexibility and responsiveness of organizations;

• increased pressure to demonstrate the contribution of human resources;

• new competitive structures;

• new technology.

With all these pressures it is apparent that HRD contributes in a variety of ways and at all organizational levels to provide support. This critical role of HRD is described by Torraco and Swanson (1995:11) who state that:

Yet, today's business environment requires that HRD not only supports the business strategies or organisations, but that it assumes a pivotal role in the shaping of business strategy. ... As a primary means of sustaining an organisation's competitive edge, HRD serves a strategic role by assuring the competence of employees to meet the organisation's present performance demands. Along with meeting present organisational needs, HRD also serves a vital role in shaping strategy and enabling organisations to take full advantage of emergent business strategies.

Similarly, Beer and Spector (1989; in Garavan *et al*, 1995:6) also maintain that:

Strategic HRD can be viewed as a proactive, system-wide intervention, with it linked to strategic planning and cultural change. This contrasts with the traditional view of training and development as consisting of reactive, piecemeal interventions in response to specific problems. HRD can only be strategic if it is incorporated into the overall corporate business strategy. It is in this way that the HRD function attains the status it needs to survive and to have a long term impact on overall business performance and respond to significant competitive and technological pressures.

In the present environment, sources of competitive advantage are quickly overcome by competitors and, thus, the only source of competitive advantage is the ability of an organization to learn more quickly than others. This learning does not occur in an abstract form within the organization but in the minds of individuals and groups. For this reason Drucker (1993) talks about the post-capitalist society and emphasizes the fact that value now resides inside the heads of the employees and much less within the capital assets of the organization.

Building on this understanding of value residing with the employees has been a recognition that, unlike capital assets which can be used up and also depreciate over time, the value of individuals can actually increase. For this reason and from a strategic perspective there is increased emphasis on the investment in human assets through training and development.

Strategic HRD enables:

• the organization to respond to challenges and opportunities through the identification and delivery of HRD interventions;

• individuals, supervisors, line managers and top managers to be informed of their roles and participate in HRD delivery;

• management to have operational guidelines which explain the reasons for investment in HRD;

• information to be disseminated which explains the training, education, development and learning opportunities available for employees;

• a policy statement to explicitly describe the relationship between the objectives of the organization and the HRD function;

• a positive public relations awareness for new and potential employees to know that skills deficiencies will be provided for;

• the continuous assessment of learning and development opportunities for its employees and thereby enabling them to advance their careers and support organizational growth;

• clearly specified objectives and targets that enable the HRD function to be evaluated against strategic requirements;

• policies which relate the HRD function to the other operating functions;

• training, education, development and learning opportunities to have a coordinated role within a systematic process.

Factors discouraging HRD

The business cycle of peaks and troughs tends to have a significant effect on the delivery of training and development because it is sometimes seen as a cost rather than an investment. When there are pressures on budgets, training is often seen as a relatively easy target in that the consequences are not immediately apparent. The value of HRD is that it is more closely aligned to organizational strategy and the achievement of objectives. Therefore, it becomes more difficult to argue that cuts should occur in the training and development budget.

THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT

It is not uncommon to find departments within an organization having a pre-Copernican view about their role; for instance, finance views operating issues through financial lenses and production views matters through production glasses. In like manner, the same accusations can be levelled at Human Resources being predominantly concerned only with the human dimension of the organization.

People, of course, are far and away the most important resource in any company. But they are not more than that. It is very easy to forget when endeavouring to develop people and to care for them, and even to love them, that the needs of the business must come first. Without that, there can be no lasting security. A fool's paradise in which effort is concentrated only on the present well-being of the staff, without regard for the future, will eventually disintegrate and it may well be the staff that suffer most. (Barham *et al*, 1988:28)

The perspectives above are only natural reactions given the responsibility departments hold; however, they can also restrain understanding of the organizational and external

environment. Thus it is important to have a broader perspective, which is illustrated in [Figure 1.1](#).

The organizational environment normally consists of approximately six main departments, namely: distribution, finance, human resources, marketing, production, and research and design. They are all symbiotically related to one another, and although some organizations have outsourced some elements such as distribution eg, News International, and others do not involve themselves with production eg, Nike, these are essential ingredients which are needed to ensure that the customers receive the product or service they require.

At a broader level the organization does not operate in a vacuum but is influenced and affected by the various forces operating in the external environment. These factors include: technology, market and competitive forces, geographical and physical circumstances, political, socio-cultural, legal, demographic and economic factors.

At the organization environment and external environment levels, a department needs to be aware of its role and the forces which affect its operation and success. These are particularly important for the HRD specialist who must have an understanding of operational issues in order to fully contribute throughout the organization. The specific elements

Image

Figure 1.1 The role of the HRD department within the internal and external environment

affecting the competitive strategy of the organization have been summarized by Porter (1980) who identified the following four factors:

1. *Potential entrants.* In general the more organizations competing in a specific market the greater is the competition. The number of competitors operating in the arena is dependent upon the cost of entering the market and to some degree the cost of exiting the market. Thus, for example, it is very expensive to design and manufacture a car and thus there are a limited number of manufacturers. On the other hand, it can be relatively cheap for people to enter the field of training and development because the set-up costs of providing training are relatively low.

2. *Buyers.* The nature of buyers and consumers in a market and their bargaining power also influences the profitability of the organization. If there are many users of training and development and few providers, demand is likely to be high and vice versa.

3. *Suppliers.* If we can only buy a particular resource from one organization then it is probable that the price of this resource will be quite expensive. Conversely, many suppliers will tend to increase competition and thereby reduce the prices. New areas of training and development normally command higher charges from providers because of limited supply.

4. *Substitutes.* The final force influencing competition in the market place is that of substitutes. If the physical cost of labour in delivering training becomes too expensive there are other forms of delivery, for instance, computer-mediated learning which may be more convenient and cheaper and which may challenge the more traditional forms of delivery.

THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMPASS

The field of Human Resources covers a broad spectrum of human activity, as is apparent in the attempts to define the subject. The Human Resource wheel (McLagan and Suhadolnik, 1989) and the wheel of HRM (Harrison, 1997) provide clearer perspectives of the area. Building on these works the Human Resources compass has been developed because the analogy of a compass indicates an overview of the territory and also gives direction to the various elements in the subject and their interrelationship. It is divided into three main sectors: HRD, HRM and HRD, and HRM; see Figure 1.2.

The HRD sector

There are three main areas with which human resource development is involved, namely, individual, occupational, and organizational development. These identify the three major

Figure 1.2 The human resource compass

areas in which training and development requirements occur within an organization. Boydell (1971), in his work on the identification of training needs, maintained that these were the broad categories in which training and development interventions would occur:

1. **Individual development.** This area can be exceptionally broad and addresses such areas as skill development, interpersonal skills, career development, etc.

2. **Occupational and group development.** Training and development needs frequently occur for groups of workers such as the need to integrate cross-functional workers through a teambuilding programme, or for informing and training employees about new products and services. It also applies to specific occupational groups eg, programmes for childcare workers in new procedures or to implement new legislation.

3. **Organizational development (OD).** This category encompasses the whole organization and may involve the introduction of a new culture or ways of operating. Robbins (1993:685) describes OD as, 'A collection of planned change interventions, built on humanistic-democratic values, that seek to improve organizational effectiveness and employee well-being.' Two examples of OD in operation are the introduction of a customer care programme across the organization; and the introduction of total quality management, which requires all individuals and groups to become involved.

The HRM and HRD sector

The following four areas incorporate elements of both HRD and HRM which tend to have significant degrees of overlap:

4. **Organizational design.** The primary purpose of this area is to integrate the human operations, organizational structure and systems for the delivery of products and services in an effective and economic manner. The planning of the organizational structure is a complex process although many organizations evolve according to their purpose. Minzberg (1983) identified five areas of personnel:

a. **The operating core.** These are the employees who undertake the delivery of products or services.

b. **The strategic apex.** This consists of the high-level managers who have organizational responsibility.

c. **The middle line.** These are middle managers who link the strategic apex and the operating core.

d. **The technostructure.** This grouping consists of the analysts who provide specialist advice and standardization.

e. **The support staff.** These people provide indirect support for other elements of the organization.

Each of the five groups of personnel above may require specific forms of training and development. The key role of the HRD specialist is not to design the structure of the organization but to provide advice into the suitability of placing people in certain types of technical systems, and the extent to which people can be trained and developed to operate within that organizational design.

5. **Job design.** Each job should have a clear role within the overall organizational structure. If organizational design is concerned with the macro-factors of integrating different roles

and work tasks, job design is the process of identifying the range and scope of a particular job and the degree of output from that job.

6. **Human resource planning.** The purpose of this area is to assess the human resource requirements of the organization. More specifically it concerns the numbers of employees required and the strategies for achieving appropriate staffing levels.

7. **Performance management.** Assessment of personnel performance feeds into career development, compensation and promotion, movement within the organization, and sometimes even termination of employment. Importantly it links the performance of the individual with the objectives of the organization. Assessment of individual performance through mechanisms such as the appraisal system are normally linked to training and development plans which enable people to improve performance and also develop abilities in new areas.

8. **Recruitment and staffing.** The inflow and outflow of people within an organization is a dynamic process and needs to match the requirements of the organization within its operating environment. Training and development support this process by ensuring that staff involved with recruitment and selection have the necessary skills to enable them to successfully recruit and deploy people throughout the organization.

The HRM sector

This final segment of the Human Resource compass is predominantly concerned with the traditional areas of HRM. Yet even here there is potential for HRD to contribute and receive information and direction. The two areas of HRM and HRD are not mutually exclusive and form a close symbiosis to support organizational objectives.

9. **Reward systems.** The value of a person to an organization will to some extent influence the reward they receive. This can be 'both financial and non-financial rewards and embraces the philosophies, strategies, policies, plans and processes used by organizations to develop and maintain reward systems' (Armstrong, 1996:3). HRD policies can operate concurrently with reward systems through improving productivity as a result of training programmes. Moreover, while there are a number of reservations about the practice, some organizations reward employees with training programmes for successful work performance.

10. **Employee assistance.** With some organizations concern for the employee's well-being can result in additional support services such as counselling services designed to alleviate personal problems which can interfere with work performance. At the other end of the scale it can simply involve support services who arrange shopping, or purchase sandwiches to enable core staff to continue working during lunchtime.

11. **Employee relations.** The main factors involved with this area are the interests of the employers and employees; the agreements and regulations by which they operate; the

conflict-resolving methods which are utilized; and the external factors which influence the interaction between the buyers and sellers of the labour transaction (Farnham, 1997). While this is predominantly a specialist subject of HRM it does require elements of training and development and many employee relations courses, whether for union or employer representatives, including negotiation exercises.

12. **Research and information systems.** Management information systems are an essential tool for the efficient running of an organization. Not only is general information about an employee held but many organizations incorporate information about the training attended and other development activities with which a person may have been involved.

HRD ROLES

Chalofsky (1992) suggested that the core of the HRD profession should reflect what was essentially HRD in order to separate it from other professions. He said that this core should contain the philosophy, mission, theories, concepts, roles and competences. We have considered the philosophy, mission, theories, and concepts, and will now address HRD roles and subsequently HRD competences.

Arising from the research conducted on behalf of the American Society for Training and Development, McLagan and Suhadolnik (1989:20) identified 11 roles that indicate many of the dimensions carried out by HRD professionals. These are:

1. Researcher

2. Marketer

3. Organizational Change Agent

4. Needs Analyst

5. Programme Designer

6. HRD Materials Developer

7. Instructor/Facilitator

8. Individual Career Development Advisor

9. Administrator

10. Evaluator

11. HRD Manager.

Competencies and HRD in the USA

The ASTD research of McLagan and Suhadolnik also identified 35 areas of competence for those involved with HRD:

Technical Competencies

1. Adult Learning Understanding*

2. Career Development Theories and Techniques Understanding

3. Competency Identification Skill*

4. Computer Competence

5. Electronic Systems Skill

6. Facilities Skill

7. Objectives Preparation Skill*

8. Performance Observation Skill

9. Subject Matter Understanding

10. Training and Development Theories and Techniques Understanding

11. Research Skill

Business Competencies

12. Business Understanding*

13. Cost-benefit Analysis Skill

14. Delegation Skill

15. Industry Understanding

16. Organizational Behaviour Understanding*

17. Organizational Development Theories and Techniques Understanding

18. Organization Understanding

19. Project Management Skill

20. Records Management Skill

Interpersonal Competencies

21. Coaching Skill

22. Feedback Skill*

23. Group Process Skill

24. Negotiation Skill

25. Presentation Skill*

26. Questioning Skill*

27. Relationship Building Skill*

28. Writing Skill*

Intellectual Competencies

29. Data Reduction Skill

30. Information Search Skill*

31. Intellectual Versatility*

32. Model Building Skill

33. Observing Skill*

34. Self-knowledge

35. Visioning Skill

*core competency.

Competences in the UK

In Britain the areas of competence for training and development specialists have also been researched, identified, mapped, and linked to National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications. The competences have been structured around the traditional training cycle (Employment National Training Organisation, 2000). The key role of the training and development person is to 'Develop human potential to assist organizations and individuals to achieve their objectives' (Employment NTO, 2000:6). The units and qualifications structure can be seen in Table 1.1.

CONCLUSION

Training and development has had a mixed reception over the years and has frequently had to fight its corner and shout loudly to gain recognition. The acceptance of HRD is altogether much stronger since it has been linked to strategic imperatives and has a much stronger theoretical base in universities which have provided Master's courses to enhance the respect of practitioners.

This progress is clearly apparent in a comparison of the two quotations below. The challenge now is not to become complacent but to build on this appreciation and ensure that HRD continues to contribute to the successful operation of the organization:

The fact remains that training and development personnel are a motley bunch who by and large service low level needs within the organisation. (Sinclair and Collins, 1992, p.21)

During the course of my working life the human resource development (HRD) function in industry has grown from humble 'training officer', a largely peripheral, low status role associated with instructing newcomers in necessary manual skills, to 'human resource development director', a powerful influence in the organisation. (Kilcourse, 1996:3)

Table 1.1 Employment NTO Training and Development Standards (TDS)
COMPARATIVE QUALIFICATIONS STRUCTURE

Unit Title	Unit No	Level 3 Training & Development	Level 4 Training & Development (Learning Development)	Level 4 Training & Development (HRD)	Level 5 Training & Development (Strategy)
		All cores are mandatory: candidate needs 7 core plus any 3 units from options	All cores are mandatory: candidate needs 7 core plus any 5 units from options	All cores are mandatory: candidate needs 7 core plus any 5 units from options	All cores are mandatory: candidate needs 10 core plus any 3 units from options
Identify organisational human resource requirements	Unit A11				Core
Specify the contribution of training and development to organisational development	Unit A12			Image	
Identify organisational training and development needs	Unit A13			Core	
Ensure the strategic position of Human Resource Development within an organisation	Unit A14				Core
Identify individuals' learning aims, needs and styles	Unit A21		Core		
Identify individual learning needs	Unit A22	Core			
Devise human resource development policies and implementation plans	Unit B11				Core
Devise a plan for implementing an organisation's training and development objectives	Unit B12			Core	
Design learning programmes to meet learners' requirements	Unit B21		Core	Image	
Design training and development sessions	Unit B22	Core			

	Unit				
Design, test and modify training and development materials	Unit B31			Image	Image
Design, test and modify information technology (IT) based materials	Unit B32			Image	Image
Prepare and develop resources to support learning	Unit B33	Core	Image		
Co-ordinate the provision of learning opportunities with other contributors to the learning programme	Unit C11		Image	Core	
Implement human resource development plans	Unit C12				Core
Create a climate conducive to learning	Unit C21	Core	Core	Image	
Agree learning programmes with learners	Unit C22	Image	Core	Image	
Facilitate learning in groups through presentations and activities	Unit C23	Core			
Facilitate learning through demonstration and instruction	Unit C24	Image			
Facilitate individual learning through coaching	Unit C25	Image			
Support and advise individual learners	Unit C26		Image	Image	
Facilitate group learning	Unit C27	Image	Image		
Monitor and review progress with learners	Unit D11	Image	Core	Image	
Assess individuals for non-competence based assessment systems	Unit D21	Image	Image	Image	
Design assessment methods to collect evidence of competent performance	Unit D31		Image	Image	
Assess candidate performance	Unit D32	Image	Image	Image	
Assess candidates using differing sources of evidence	Unit D33	Image	Image	Image	
Internally verify the assessment process	Unit D34		Image	Image	

Externally verify the assessment process	Unit D35		
Advise and support candidates to identify prior achievement	Unit D36		

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		All cores are mandatory: candidate needs 7 core plus any 3 units from options	All cores are mandatory: candidate needs 7 core plus any 5 units from options	All cores are mandatory: candidate needs 7 core plus any 5 units from options	All cores are mandatory: candidate needs 10 core plus any 3 units from options
Evaluate the contribution and role of human resource development to an organisation	Unit E11				Core
Introduce improvements to human resource development in an organisation	Unit E12				Core
Evaluate training and development programmes	Unit E21		Core	Core	
Improve training and development programmes	Unit E22		Image	Core	
Evaluate training and development sessions	Unit E23	Core			
Evaluate and develop own practice	Unit E31	Core	Core	Core	Core
Manage relationships with colleagues and customers	Unit E32	Image	Image	Core	
Develop training and development methods	Unit E41		Image		

Develop new approaches to humans resource development	Unit E42				Image
Maintain and improve service and product operations	MCI M1 Unit 1		Image		
Contribute to the planning, monitoring and control of resources	MC1 SM2	Image			
Recommend, monitor and control the use of resources	MCI M1 Unit 3		Image	Image	
Contribute to the provision of personnel	MCI SM3	Image			
Contribute to the recruitment and selection of personnel	MCI M1 Unit 4		Image	Image	
Exchange information to solve problems and make decisions	MCI M1 Unit 9		Image	Image	
Initiate and implement change and improvement in services, products and systems	MCI M2 Unit 1				Image
Monitor, maintain and improve service and product delivery	MCI M2 Unit 2				Image
Monitor and control the use of resources	MCI M2 Unit 3				Core

Secure effective resource allocation for activities and projects	MCI M2 Unit 4	Image
Recruit and select personnel	MCI M2 Unit 5	Image
Create, maintain and enhance effective working relationships	MCI M2 Unit 8	Image
Establish and improve organisational culture and values	Personnel Unit 5A3	Core
Establish effective computerised personnel information systems to support decision making	Personnel Unit 5A4	Image
Establish performance management processes	Personnel Unit 5C2	Image
Comply with professional and ethical requirements	Personnel Unit 5F2	Core
Negotiate and maintain service agreements	AGCP Lead Body B19	Image
Provide support for practitioners in service delivery	AGCP Lead Body B21	Image

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2
Strategy and Training and Development

Sue Balderson

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In an increasingly competitive world, which is the reality for most organizations today, few would disagree with the view that a link should exist between the training and development that the organization undertakes and the business strategy of that organization. Personnel are now widely regarded as 'human resources' with the implication that, like other resources, they are to be valued and carefully managed. The amount of financial resource available for the training and development of employees is not unlimited, necessitating decisions about where to deploy training activity to maximum effect. Such decisions can only be made if those responsible for Human Resource Development (HRD) are clear about the organization's strategy and priorities. An alignment between strategy and training and development is now commonly regarded as good business sense in all corners of the globe (Harrison, 1997; Mabey and Salaman, 1995; Storey, 1991). Despite this there is some evidence from both Europe and the United States (Harrison, 1997; Holden 1992; Salaman, 1992) that, while at an intellectual level this link is recognized, the practice may be considerably different in many countries. Harrison (1997:25) points out that 'research has failed to reveal any significant connection between HRD and business strategy across UK organisations at large'. Beaumont (1992) reports that studies in the United States found that only 22 per cent of companies had high levels of integration of human resource and business strategy.

This chapter sets out to look at some models of strategic management in relation to models of HRD and to consider why, in many cases, the link between strategy and HRD is not as strong as it might be. Some of the problems with strategy itself are highlighted and an approach to aligning HRD activity to business goals, based upon Porter's (1985) value chain, is suggested as a more workable model for the HRD practitioner today.

Having read this chapter you will:
• understand the need to link HRD to organizational strategy;

• understand how to enable HRD to contribute towards all levels of organizational strategy;

• be aware of the limitations of adhering too strictly to a strategic plan;

• know the elements of strategic management; and

• understand the value chain and how to relate it to HRD.

THE CASE FOR STRATEGIC HRD

Training and development has traditionally been a functional division of the personnel department concerned with carrying out the identification of training and development needs, planning and designing training, implementing training and evaluating it, ie the classic 'training cycle' (see Figure 2.1). This notion of a systematic approach to training and development is widely accepted among practitioners.

Although not using the term HRD, Winter (1995:313) talks about 'a systematic approach to developing staff ' which has, as its starting point, the business objectives (or strategy); see Figure 2.2. This differs from the classic training cycle only in as much as the identification of training and development needs is now seen to be based on organizational strategy. This is very much the model for the Investors in People standard adopted throughout the UK and Australia during the 1990s, and symbolizes a more strategic role for training and development.

Image

Figure 2.1 The classic training cycle

Figure 2.2 Business objectives within a training cycle (adapted from Winter, 1995)

Definitions of HRD also emphasize a strategic orientation, for example:

Resourcing is about providing the skills base needed in the organisation. Human resource development (HRD) is about enhancing and widening these skills by training, by helping people to grow within the organisation, and by enabling them to make better use of their skills and abilities. (Armstrong, 1992:152)

Mabey and Salaman (1995:131) set out 'a strategic approach to training' and present a clear model of strategic training and development. In this:

The target represents the vision, mission or 'cause' of the organisation. ... From this starting point there are two flows: one into business strategy ... the other into human resource strategies. ... This latter flow will hopefully inform each lever of HRM policy and procedure, providing continuity between recruitment and selection practices, appraisal and assessment, reward systems and career development processes. Critically, training and development provision needs to be mutually supported by each of these human resource levers.

Armstrong (1992) views HRD as focused training and development for all employees which responds to individual and organizational requirements by improving performance and understanding.

A key feature of strategic HRM and HRD is that they are (or should be) activities of management rather than of functional specialists, and are (or should be) closely linked to the business strategies of organizations. The parentheses are significant as the descriptions of HRM and HRD can be regarded as 'ideals' rather than actualities–a point made by Mabey and Salaman (1995) in relation to HRM.

The key challenge implicit within all of the models and definitions above is to be able clearly to identify what the organization's strategy and goals are in order that the systematic approach to HRD can be followed. The weakness in them all arises where business strategy is not clearly apparent to those responsible for making decisions about HRD, and, consequently, logical deductions about appropriate training and development

interventions are difficult to make. This may be because HRD specialists are not involved adequately at strategic levels of decision-making or because of the dynamic nature of the organization where strategy is constantly on the move. It may be a combination of both of these factors.

STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC HRD

An organization's strategy is all about its future orientation. Johnson and Scholes (1999:10) in their authoritative and comprehensive text *Exploring Corporate Strategy*, define strategy as:

the *direction* and *scope* of an organisation over the *long term:* which achieves *advantage* for the organisation through its configuration of *resources* within a changing *environment*, to meet the needs of *markets* and to fulfil *stakeholder* expectations.

Some key words contained within a number of the definitions of strategy (eg, Andrews, 1994; Ansoff, 1987; Chandler, 1962; Faulkner and Johnson, 1992) are:

1. major objectives, purposes, long-term goals, product-market opportunities, direction, positioning, competitive advantage, long-term perspective, framework;

2. policies, plans, resource allocation/deployment.

It can be seen that these fall into two categories. The first group deals with what Armstrong (1994:16) describes as 'the end'; the second with what he describes as 'the means'. Armstrong suggests that *strategic management* deals with both ends and means:

As an end it describes a vision of what something will look like in a few years' time. As a means, it shows how it is expected that the vision will be realised. Strategic management is therefore visionary management, concerned with creating and conceptualising ideas of where the organisation is going. But it is also empirical management that decides how in practice it is going to get there.

A similar view is suggested by Purcell (1992) who identifies three levels of strategic decision-making and considers how they can interrelate with HRM. These are:

First order: decisions on the long-run goals and the scope of activities.

Second order: decisions on the way the enterprise is structured to achieve its goals.

Third order: functional strategies in the context of levels 1 and 2 (including HRM and HRD

strategies).

These are similar to the three levels suggested by Johnson and Scholes (1999) of corporate strategy, business unit strategy and operational strategies. All levels of strategy are influenced by external environmental factors, many of which will have a direct impact upon HRD issues (eg, technological advances, labour market).

Training and development, if it is to be regarded as a strategic activity aligned to corporate strategy, should as a minimum feature in the second order in the above model whereby it supports the overall strategic direction. Harrison calls this 'business-led HRD'. However there is also a case to be made that in an ideal situation it should play a role in the first order–termed 'strategic HRD' (Harrison, 1997). Unfortunately, in many cases training and development is relegated to an operational activity, disconnected from or only loosely connected to any of the strategic activities of the organization, or responding to the immediately pressing or a current fad.

Johnson and Scholes (1999) suggest three main elements to strategic management: strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategy implementation, which are not linear events but interlinked. There is a role for HRD (and HRM) considerations in each of these elements:

• The purpose of *strategic analysis* is to form a view of the key influences on the present and future well-being of the organization; what opportunities are afforded by the environment (ie, the opportunities and threats); what are the competences (strengths and weaknesses) of the organization. Considerations for HRD here might include analysis of current skill levels available within and external to the organization which might impinge upon current and future business goals; it would consider the core competences of the organization in terms of human capabilities in existence or which might be developed, and how these might be deployed.

• *Strategic choice* is about identifying the choices open to the organization in terms of, for example, products or services, generating strategic options and evaluating and selecting options. Here again, HRD considerations are important; for instance, against each option can staff be recruited and trained to meet its requirements? Do such considerations render an option viable or not viable? Would some of the core competences held by employees suggest certain choices would be more likely to succeed than others?

• *Strategy implementation* is concerned with the structure and systems needed for chosen strategic options (termed 'the strategic architecture'). The HRD considerations here might be about whether to retrain the existing workforce (in knowledge, skills and/or attitudes) or whether to recruit new people. It may require the management of strategic change and the design and delivery of major training and development programmes to support change.

Strategic analysis will include consideration of external factors relevant to the organization and its strategic direction (the environment). However, the internal resources of the

organization (including human resources) are also an important strategic consideration. Here the notion of the 'core competences' is relevant. In considering the strategic direction of the organization, an assessment of the core competences that have been developed over the years may be helpful. These may be associated with particular types of expertise which are special to the organization and differentiate it from others. Some of these core competences may be contained within the systems (eg, the McDonald's fast-food service) for which employees can be readily trained. Others (eg, medical research) may be contained within the people themselves. In considering strategic direction, it is relevant for an organization to identify its core competences and determine how these can best be taken advantage of, given various environmental factors. In training and development terms, this can put the classical training cycle and business planning approach to determining training needs on its head, by suggesting that a starting point might just as well be the existing competences of (certain groups of) employees, and planning the direction of the business around these. This trend is articulated in the emerging literature about knowledge workers (Mayo and Pickard, 1998).

If HRD is, by definition, a strategic activity, it should be possible to assess different strategic scenarios and identify appropriate HRD strategies and policies. Schuler and Jackson (1987) present an interesting model which links strategy to employee role behaviour and HRM policies. For instance, they suggest that in an organization where strategy is primarily to achieve *innovation*, the type of employee behaviour that is desirable is one where creativity can flourish, where people are cooperative and can tolerate unpredictability. Clearly there are implications here for other aspects of human resource strategy such as recruitment and selection. The implication for training and development in this context is that people will need to develop skills that can be used elsewhere in the organization and should be offered broad career paths to reinforce the development of a broad range of skills. By comparison, where an organization's strategy is that of *quality enhancement* the HRD strategy should provide for the extensive and continuous training and development of employees. Where *cost reduction* is a key component of strategy there will be minimal levels of employee training and development targeted to ensure that specialist expertise is maintained.

Practitioners may, at this stage, begin to see some of the pitfalls of *the ideal* of strategic HRD when compared with the reality. Within the UK National Health Service, for example, very often the strategic aims as stated within mission statements highlight all three of these elements of innovation, quality enhancement and cost-reduction as priorities. This can lead to a sort of organizational confusion about which HRM and HRD strategies should be pursued. This may be the opportunity for HRD practitioners to play a role in strategy formulation to bring about greater clarity of vision which will help to determine where scarce development resources should be deployed at any point in time to support multiple, and sometimes conflicting, objectives. It is, indeed, why management development is a vital prerequisite of an HRD approach. If managers are the owners and guardians of

strategic HRM and HRD, the implications for them in terms of their own development are not inconsiderable.

Another type of analysis links the critical human resource activities to different stages in the business life cycle (Kochan and Barocci, 1985). The suggestion is that a new business should be concerned with determining future skill requirements and establishing career ladders. As the business grows, a priority should be the development of managers and management teams to facilitate organizational development. As the business matures, it should be concerned with maintaining flexibility and skills of the 'ageing' workforce. A business in decline would be involved in retraining and career counselling services.

Within the climate of change in which many organizations find themselves, precise identification of the stage in the life-cycle in which the organization resides is not always easy. In large diversified organizations, with mergers, acquisitions and divestments, different parts of the business will be at different stages and may therefore be engaged in all of these activities simultaneously in different divisions. In multinationals, different companies will have different priorities. This raises the question of the extent to which, in such organizations, HRD strategies should be common. Armstrong (1992) draws attention to the problem of achieving a balance between the business unit strategies, tailored to their own circumstances, and the role of the centre in providing policies and a structure which integrate the divisions into a corporate whole.

THE PROBLEM WITH STRATEGY

Models of strategic HRD presuppose, to a large extent, a rational and linear model of strategy formulation and implementation whereby there is a sequence of stages involving objective setting, the analysis of environmental trends and resource capabilities, evaluation of options and ending with careful planning of the strategy's implementation (see Figure 2.3). In such cases the model described in Storey (1991) would apply.

Armstrong and Long (l994) identify a number of problems associated with integrating HRM strategies which stem from the imperfections of the reality of strategic management:

• the diversity of strategic approaches particularly in diversified corporations;

• the complexity of the strategy formulation process which inhibits the flow into functional strategy;

• the evolutionary nature of business strategy which does not fit with the concept of planning and therefore makes it difficult to 'pin down' relevant HRM issues; and

• the absence of articulated business strategies which hinders clarification of strategic issues.

Figure 2.3 Strategy and HRD

Johnson and Scholes (1999) point out that while many organizations do have formal planning systems, this is not universally the case; similarly, strategies are adopted by organizations without coming through these formal systems. They suggest that strategies typically develop by organizations adapting or building on existing strategies, ie they are incremental. They distinguish between such incremental strategy and the need which occasionally arises for transformational strategic change where it is important for there to be a clear and compelling vision or strategic intent. Even where strategies are well planned, they are not always realized; alternatively, strategies may be imposed on an organization through, for example, legislation.

Strategic decisions are characterised by the political hurly-burly of organisational life with a high incidence of bargaining, a trading off of costs and benefits of one interest group against another, all within a notable lack of clarity in terms of environmental influences and objectives. (Johnson, 1987:21)

Some authors (eg, Stacey 1992) suggest that strategy formulation needs to be radically re-thought, given the turbulent and chaotic environment in which many organizations

operate. The suggestion is not that it should be abandoned altogether, but that the myth of the rational planning approach should be replaced with a reality which is about developing organizational structures, processes and styles that enable managers and other employees to draw on their experience, to adopt more questioning approaches, air conflicting ideas and experiment without reproach. This is akin to the *learning organization* concept and will require a significant shift for many organizations still caught up in rituals of strategic and business planning. It requires organizational slack to allow time for managers and other employees to debate and challenge, and a corresponding change in culture and attitude.

This analysis suggests that the *ideal* of HRD may be one where a 'best fit' is sought between the organization's strategic direction and its training and development activities and initiatives. It echoes Hendry's (1995) recommendation that there should be a 'loose coupling' of business and HR strategies. This more pragmatic approach seems sensible given the apparent gap that exists in practice between the ideal and the reality of strategic HRD.

STRATEGY AND HRD—AN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

It is interesting to look at the development of approaches to strategy in a historical context and to align them to thinking about issues of training and development. The model in Table 2.1 attempts to identify key environmental changes, how strategy and orientation have developed correspondingly and how approaches to training and development have rather lagged behind.

This analysis suggests that considerable advancement has occurred in thinking about organizational strategy, with a move away from rational, linear approaches to strategy and planning, and embracing more opportunistic styles. Models of training and development, however, are still often based upon the 'training cycle', and even where 'business objectives' is the starting point, this may be insufficient as the primary tool for developing a strategic approach to HRD in the current environment. This might account for some of the difficulties experienced by organizations attempting to follow an Investors in People type model which demands as the starting point clearly articulated business plans from which HRD priorities will naturally flow.

VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS

An alternative, perhaps more pragmatic approach, to aligning HRD with business strategy is to move away from the rational, linear approach and consider where training and development can contribute in an organization's value chain. Porter (1985) identifies primary

Table 2.1 A historical perspective on strategy and HRD

Date	Environment	Approaches to Strategy	Focus/ Orientation	Approaches to Training and Development
1960s	static	planned incremental	production/ product	classic training cycle
1970s			market development	
1980s		emergent	quality management customer service	
1990s	dynamic	chaos theory/ freewheeling opportunism	globalization	business objectives (IIP) model
2000				

activities (inbound logistics, operations, outbound logistics, marketing and sales and service) which, he suggests, are essential to any organization operating in a competitive situation. He points out that the importance of the various primary activities will vary from organization to organization depending upon its core purpose. It is important for any organization to recognize where it creates value in this chain to ensure that it is putting appropriate effort and resource into each element.

HRD (encompassed within HRM in the model) is one of the key support activities that should facilitate the organization's activities along the value chain. Where resources for training and development are limited it can be argued that they should be placed so that they add most value to primary activities.

An earlier stage in the analysis is to consider, given the overall strategic purpose(s) of an organization, what the *critical success factors* are for the strategy to work. Critical success factors are those factors that are essential to the organization achieving its strategic targets. For example, for a fast-food outlet, the critical success factors are fast production of food, standard quality and quick, courteous customer service. There are many implications given these critical success factors for the systems of production but there are also implications for training. Using the value chain, it can be seen that training effort needs to go into ensuring that managers know procedures for ordering and delivery (inbound logistics). Other staff need to be trained in food handling and preparation and to follow protocols for the quick yet safe production of food (operations). Marketing and sales might be an activity bought with the franchise and not an immediate concern of operations staff other than point-of-sale display and cleanliness. Training and development will need to be

designed to be capable of

being delivered on a just-in-time basis, given the fairly high turnover of staff in this sector. Using critical success factors and the value chain in this way can provide a framework which enables a fairly quick appraisal of the extent to which investment in training and development is adding value, and HRD strategies can be developed to ensure that this occurs.

Value chain analysis also emphasizes the importance of paying attention to *linkages* between primary activities and between support and primary activities to ensure that value is added along the way. Linkages are seen as the potential source of competitive advantage, as primary and support activities can be replicated relatively easily and may be similar in different organizations.

A further illustration of the application of value chain analysis to developing a strategic approach to HRD is the approach adopted by the Unipart Group of Companies (UGC) Ltd (see the case study below). Given its mission to become the world's best lean enterprise, the critical success factors for the company, which deals with the design and manufacture of original equipment components for the automotive industry, are:

• cost-effectiveness in production and distribution, given the highly competitive nature of the market with downward pressure on prices;

• quality of product;

• quality of customer service.

With reference to these critical success factors, the value chain can be used as a framework for identifying where competence needs to be ensured.

VALUE CHAIN FOR THE UNIPART GROUP OF COMPANIES

Inbound logistics   Buying and negotiating supplies of raw materials

Building relationships with suppliers

Just-in-time supply

Operations	Lean production methods
	Team working
	Problem solving
	Change management
Outbound logistics	Just-in-time production
	Lean warehousing and distribution
	Responsiveness to customer needs and wants

	Change management
Marketing and sales	Developing partnerships with customers
	Quality communications
After-sales service	Responsiveness
	Feeding knowledge back into the organization
	Consultancy skills

The linkages are important for a *learning organization* whereby knowledge gained in any primary area is fed through to other parts of the value chain to ensure that the whole system is responsive. It is important for example, that lean production methods give rise to productivity that is in step with customer demand, otherwise warehousing problems will occur. Using this framework, an effective HRD approach might be represented in a linear fashion as shown in Figure 2.4.

In considering the value chain, it is important to note that organizations that interface with one another (whether they be customers, suppliers or other stakeholders) will have their own value chains which may overlap; see Figure 2.5.

The view of the organization as a separate entity which exists by cutting costs at the expense of employees, customers and suppliers is likely to be severely limiting in terms of achieving competitive advantage. If an organization is managing its inbound logistics, that would suggest working in partnership with suppliers to ensure satisfactory long-term arrangements. If the same organization is to satisfy its customers it must link its sales and service activities sensitively to the customer's inbound logistics. This notion of partnership implies that HRD is not restricted to the employees of the organization itself but may be extended to employees of other organizations in the value chain and beyond. Other stake-

Image

Figure 2.4 A strategic HRD approach

Figure 2.5 Value chain boundaries

holders (eg, the local community) may also be brought into the partnership; for example, a skills shortage in a particular area might be alleviated by a pre-employment training scheme.

Using the value chain in this way can assist decision-making about appropriate training and development interventions and where resources are best deployed.

THE UNIPART GROUP OF COMPANIES (UGC) LTD

UGC offers a good example of the application of HRD to the value chain. The Group is primarily engaged in the design and manufacture of original equipment components for the automotive industry, and the marketing, sale and distribution of parts, components and accessories principally within the automotive sector. It employs approximately 4000 staff with a turnover of over £1 billion.

When Unipart became independent in 1987 its production facilities were declining assets. Product quality was poor; productivity was dangerously low and customers were unhappy. The daunting challenge was to catch up with the best manufacturers around the world. In ten years–against all the odds– the manufacturing base has been transformed and Unipart production plants are regularly pinpointed as examples of industrial excellence. Unipart achieved this through abandoning discredited traditional ideas and adapting the working practices of world-class companies such as Honda and Toyota. They visited factories in Japan, the USA and Europe and continually applied new lessons in a process of steady improvement, setting themselves the target of becoming the world's best lean enterprise.

In 1993 UGC opened the Unipart U, their own corporate university with a mission 'to develop, train and inspire people to achieve world-class performance within UGC and amongst our stakeholders'. The company has adopted the Japanese principles and practices of *kaizen* (literally meaning 'change for the better') to deliver continuous improvement. One of its clearly stated critical success factors is to gain competitive advantage through lean thinking, whether in production, distribution or administration. UGC works in partnership with its customers and suppliers to ensure that 'linkages' in the

value chain are as lean as possible. Training and development is extended to include customers and suppliers, and representatives of the 'extended enterprise' are invited to contribute to the training of UGC employees.

All training and development activities are linked precisely to enabling staff to embrace *kaizen* and to eliminate waste along the value chain. As such, this is not just in the technical aspects of working in a lean enterprise; UGC recognizes that learning to live and work in a constantly changing environment and to manage such change at a personal level is as important as learning technical knowledge and skills. Programmes enabling staff to understand the 'transition curve' and 'double-loop learning' are given equal standing with skills-based training. For those leading change within the organisation *(kaizen sensei)* an innovative degree programme has been developed in conjunction with De Montfort University in the UK to provide formal accreditation of work-based learning.

UGC openly acknowledges that its world-class achievements come from the efficiencies generated from the accumulated knowledge and creative energies of its people. It has capitalised on many of the core competences it has developed over the last ten years. For example, in logistic and distribution management the company has established operational methods that have universal merit. Its Demand Chain Management division has developed a unique approach that covers the whole spectrum of parts delivery. It identifies sources of products, processes orders, handles pricing and marketing and manages the transportation of consignments to customers in five continents.

CONCLUSION

Part of the cause of the loose connection of HRD to organizational strategy can probably be attributed to the nature of strategy itself and its emergent and sometimes chaotic nature. Exhortations to base HRD strategy upon an organization's business strategy and clearly articulated business goals may be of little help to the HRD practitioner struggling to get to grips with how best to focus limited resources. Understanding an organization's critical success factors for each of its main operations is a key to engaging in some useful dialogue with strategy makers (in terms they *should* understand) about how the human resource is and could be utilized and developed. The value chain offers further clarification on how competence may need to be developed in primary areas of activity and in support activities. Weak links in the chain can be identified and some informed selection made about developing competence in these areas to add value. Strengths can also be identified and consideration given as to whether core competences embodied within people could be

harnessed to offer new market opportunities for the organization.

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3
Human Resource Management

John Shipton

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In many ways, Human Resource Management (HRM) can be seen as a phenomenon of recent times. Coming to the fore during the 1980s, it has dominated the recent literature on the management of people to the extent that it seems to be accepted without question as an ideal for managements in all contexts. HRM developed around the notion that, in circumstances where the liberalization of world markets makes it less easy for organizations to gain even relatively short-term advantage over competitors in areas such as finance, technology, research, etc, the only source of competitive edge is to recruit, retain and develop talented people. The management of people, therefore, becomes of strategic concern for all organizations and the focus moves from an emphasis on control to developing commitment to release that talent for the organization's benefit.

Having read this chapter you will have an understanding of:
• the origins of HRM;

• the debate about the meaning and significance of HRM;

• the different approaches to the practice of HRM; and

• the key components of HRM.

ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF HRM

Arguably, HRM is not as recent a development as might be supposed. Seeing people as resources for the organization is a central concept for those like Likert (1961) who have campaigned for a more involving approach to management, arguing for a shift in thinking from 'human relations' to 'human resources'. Maslow (1965:262) suggested, 20 years before the popularization of HRM, that treating people as valued resources via what he called 'eupsychian management' provided competitive advantage:

eupsychian or enlightened management is already beginning to become a competitive factor. That is, old-style management is... putting the enterprise in a less and less advantageous position in competition with other enterprises... that are under enlightened management and are therefore turning out better products, better service, etc, etc.

Storey (1995), however, reminds us that the first British text on HRM did not appear until 1989. There had, nevertheless, been a debate in the journals before that about the nature of HRM that resembled in some respects the disputation of mediaeval clerics over how many angels could be positioned on the head of a pin (see, for example, Armstrong, 1987). As Storey points out, this debate was carried on without any real data at all. There was a need for empirical work to establish the credentials of HRM and this was provided, among others, by an extensive piece of research from Storey (1992) into long-standing 'standard moderns' which, by definition, were not subject to the special circumstances of ownership and greenfield status of the relatively small number of organizations that seemed to be quoted endlessly in the early literature to support the contention that HRM was all around us.

What emerges is evidence that change has, indeed, taken place. In another survey of 560 organizations covered by Leicestershire Training and Enterprise Council, Storey (1995) noted that no less than three-quarters of the organizations studied had adopted a set of management practices associated with HRM within the previous five years. It is customary to explain the change as a shift from old-style personnel management to new-style HRM, although there is some doubt about the clarity, smoothness and universality of the change which tends to be glossed over by the more normative literature. Various prescriptions of what HRM is (or should be) exist. They differ in detail but tend to have a number of aspects in common:

• Employees provide the organization's principal possibilities for competitive advantage.

• The way in which employees are managed becomes a strategic concern for senior management and involves line managers taking responsibility both for the operation and development of HR policy.

• Competitive advantage will not be realized unless the employees' commitment to organizational goals can be established.

• That commitment is only possible if there exist policies and practices that are designed specifically to promote that end.

• In particular, selection, performance management, training and development, and rewards represent the main areas for attention in creating high commitment strategies.

• An emphasis on communication and the development of a strong culture are necessary to provide the environment in which high commitment initiatives can flourish.

The emergence of HRM is unlikely to be just the result of managers seeing the light. A range of organizational changes has contributed to providing circumstances making the development of HRM both pertinent and possible. The emphasis on customers and the provision of quality service every time mean that organizations must have employees on whose commitment they can rely. Flexible organizations cannot operate without the willing participation of those providing, particularly, functional flexibility. Wide spans of control associated with slimmer and flatter structures require that older ways of (closely) managing can no longer operate. An increasing knowledge content in work together with the need for teamworking and a more educated workforce have produced demands from employees for different styles of supervision. Structural changes in industry and consequently in the make-up of the workforce, together with lasting high levels of unemployment, have brought about a less confrontational industrial relations atmosphere. The development of HRM has been against this background of considerable change.

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS PERFORMANCE
The resources within an organization are limited and therefore it is important that their use is prioritized in order to produce the maximum effect on performance. However, the difficulty for managers is knowing which of the many factors have the most effect.

To answer this question research was conducted on economic performance data gathered over a longitudinal period from 1991 to 2001 for the Sheffield Effectiveness Programme, by the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics and the Institute of Work Psychology at the University of Sheffield. Every two years senior managers in more than 100 UK manufacturing companies were interviewed about areas such as: competitive strategies, human resource management, just-in-time practices, production technology, quality emphasis, market environment, organizational structure, research and development, and work design.

In addition, employee attitude and organizational culture questionnaires were distributed to a large sample of staff in more than half of the companies. These questionnaires focused

on: company functioning, concern for employee welfare, employee job satisfaction, innovation, performance pressure and formalization, and training.

The findings are significant and are quoted at length:

When we examine change in profitability after controlling for prior profitability, the results reveal that human resource management (HRM) practices taken together explain 19 per cent of the variation between companies in change in profitability. Job design (flexibility and responsibility of shopfloor jobs) and acquisition and development of skills (selection, induction, training and appraisal) explain a significant amount of the variation. This demonstrates the importance of HRM practices.

In relation to productivity, HRM practices taken together account for 18 per cent of the variation between companies in change in productivity. Job design and acquisition and development of skills explain a significant proportion of the variation.

This is the most convincing demonstration of which we are aware in the research literature of the link between the management of people and the performance of companies. (Patterson *et al*, 1997:x)

If our findings are dramatic, our recommendations are straightforward. They are that:

1. Senior managers should regularly review objectives, strategies and processes associated with people management practices in their organisations and make changes or introduce innovations accordingly.

2. Senior managers should monitor the satisfaction and commitment of employees on a regular basis using standardized surveys.

3. Senior managers need to monitor employee perceptions of the culture in their organizations, examining areas which contribute towards a people-oriented culture (eg the extent to which employees are enabled, supported and equipped to do their work).

4. Organizational changes are made, as necessary, to promote job satisfaction and employee commitment.

5. HRM practices are reviewed across the organization in the following areas:

- recruitment and selection

- appraisal

- training

- reward systems

- design of jobs (richness, responsibility and control)

- communication

6. Senior managers need to receive adequate training and support to provide effective vision and direction for the organization's 'people management' strategies.

7. The central element of each organization's philosophy and mission should be a commitment to the skill development, well-being and effectiveness of all employees.

(Patterson *et al*, 1997:22)

HRM: THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

While there seems to be agreement that the dominant approach to the management of people at work has changed, identifying the nature of that change is complicated by the problems associated with seeing personnel management and HRM as single entities. We speak of the two as though they are uniform in all their manifestations–'personnel management does this, HRM believes that'. (This is an issue closely akin to the tendency we have to reify organizations by treating them as though they are things, or, more likely, persons, and that they can behave like people. 'Bloggs plc values quality, provides a caring atmosphere for its employees, strives for market dominance, etc.' In fact, Bloggs plc cannot **do** anything: only people within Bloggs can, and their behaviour will vary for a range of reasons, from mood to calculated political advantage.) Similarly, personnel management and HRM will vary in practice, maybe considerably, and there will be those who see themselves as personnel managers who practise aspects of what is considered HRM, and HR managers whose behaviour looks indistinguishable from so-called, old-style personnel management. Perhaps the safest way to look at this is to think of a continuum from personnel management at one end to HRM at the other (envisaged as 'ideal types') with most organizational practice strewn out between, rather than an either/or division.

However, so long as we remember that reality is messier than the models in the literature, it is useful to explore the field in simpler terms to enable us to gain some feel for the nature of the personnel management/HRM shift in practice. The characteristics of the two 'ideal types' appear to be those shown in Table 3.1.

WHERE IS HRM 'COMING FROM'?

Throughout his analyses, Storey (1992, 1995) emphasizes that the differences between personnel management and HRM are partly to do with assumptions that underlie their practice. A key area of assumption, as indicated above, is the nature of *perceived* organizational reality–the degree to which organizations are seen as unities (eg, viewed as teams/families) or pluralities (eg, coalitions of conflicting interests). This is not a question of whether organizations *are* one or the other, but rather what the stakeholders in employment (and particularly managers) *believe* them to be.

Those who adhere to the unitary frame argue that organizations are, naturally, like teams or families where what is good for the leaders of those organizations is also good for their members. The emphasis is on shared goals, all pulling in one direction. This, it is argued, is not just a desired way of arranging the work relationship–it is also the natural way of things. Problems arising between manager and managed in the unitary organization are explained as being caused by either ineffective communication or the work of agitators

Table 3.1 'Ideal types' of personnel management and HRM

Personnel Management	HRM
Emphasis on system and order. Clarity of rules and procedures.	Emphasis on business needs. 'Just do it' approaches to work. Beg forgiveness rather than seek permission.
Consistency: 'Don't make fish of one and fowl of the other'.	Flexibility: 'Do what is necessary to get the task done even if a few feathers are ruffled and noses put out of joint on the way'.
Control/monitor.	Develop/grow.
Some conflict at work seen as inevitable; need is to develop arrangements to manage it.	Conflict not seen as inevitable; play down or even ignore differences.
Pluralist framework.	Unitary framework.
Collective bargaining: equity across and between groups.	Individual contracts: equity preferable but not first concern.
Communicate as necessary via 'proper' channels.	Communicate often and directly.
Not of concern to business planners.	Integrated with business plans.
Performed by personnel specialists.	Enacted by, and policies developed by, line managers.

(often seen as the malevolent influence of trade unions). Winning hearts and minds becomes a major goal of selection, development and reward policies. 'Is she or he one of us?' emerges as the critical organizational question.

Pluralists, on the other hand, see organizations as a coming together of people with different backgrounds, experiences and expectations who, legitimately, will not view organizational purpose in the same way. The interests of the managed will not, naturally, be the same as those of managers. Indeed, the interests of different managers will not even converge, and we should not expect them to. As Marchington (1995:60) suggests, 'While first-line managers and supervisors regard themselves as in some sense superior to the people they manage, they still remain estranged from the predominant goals and values of senior management.' The primary managerial activity, therefore, should be to recognize this reality and create mechanisms that will allow differences to be negotiated to achieve enough of a consensus for the organization to function.

(A third view, the radical framework, sees organizations as subsystems of society as a whole; in particular, as a reflection of the power relationships that determine that owners will always have the capacity, under capitalism, to exploit workers. Unitarism is, therefore, a way of whitewashing a system of domination, and pluralism presents an enticing but

ultimately false picture of an even playing-field on which differences are settled on equal terms. Radicalists would argue that seeing the personnel management/HRM debate in terms of pluralism vs unitarism misses the central point of organizations as systems of power.)

HARD AND SOFT HRM

Legge (in Storey, 1995) distinguishes between *hard* and *soft* versions of HRM. The hard version places emphasis on the link between HRM and business strategy to the extent that HRM is sometimes called 'strategic HRM'. If, from the characteristics listed above, HRM is of direct concern to senior management, then it follows that it needs to have a strategic effect. As Torrington and Hall (1995) point out, it is not enough to identify the need for such a link. The relationship might take any one of four forms:

• The first is where the business strategy is developed and then the HR strategy is designed to be a close fit to it. The business strategy dictates the nature of the HR strategy: arguably, the business strategy causes the HR strategy to be what it is.

• In the second case, the relationship is as above but involves feedback from the HR strategy to the business strategy. HR follows overall, predetermined organizational purposes but provides HR data that might lead to modification of the business strategy. The HR strategy is still subservient to business strategy but the possibility of debate/influence exists.

• A third approach envisages business strategy and HR strategy being developed together, each influencing the other on broadly equal terms. This reflects an organizational realization of the centrality of people to organizational success.

• If, as CEOs are oft given to claim, 'People are the organization's most important assets', the fourth approach provides the ultimate model. Here the HR strategy is developed first and the business strategy is designed to fit, with opportunity for feedback along the lines of the second approach above. In this version, HR policies drive the business strategy. Typically, strategists are asking: 'What are the HR strengths which set us apart from our competitors and how can we design our business strategy to capitalize on those strengths?'

Torrington and Hall, perhaps pessimistically, outline a fifth version where no link between HR and business strategy exists. Work by Marginson *et al* (1993:71) indicates that such pessimism may be well placed. They suggest that: 'if one of the defining characteristics of human resource management is the explicit link with business strategies, then this survey has failed to find it for the majority of large companies in the UK'.

This might, however, have more to do with assumptions about the rationality of the strategy-formulation process than about the link itself. Rather than see strategy as a rational, top-down planning activity, it may be more realistic to view it as a more gradual, messy, emergent process. (Butler *et al*, 1991, for instance, see strategy emerging from a combination of intended and unintended actions.) The grand plan approach to strategy is rejected in favour of strategy being discovered as it emerges from the interaction of a

whole

range of stakeholders in an often very political arena. In this context, it may be unrealistic to search for the links in the form suggested by a rational view of strategy formulation.

Hard HRM, associated as it is with business planning, has given new life to human resource planning. Making sure that the staffing of the organization mirrors organizational need and that the right number of people with the right capabilities are in the right place at the right time sits comfortably with 'hard' conceptions of HRM. 'Right', of course, means that it is not just enough to make sure that sufficient employees are in position but also that not too many are there. This has led to the development of flexible staffing policies and, while there is some doubt as to whether flexibility has been thought through in the majority of organizations in anything like a strategic way, Guest (1989) has argued that flexibility is one of the main distinguishing features of HRM. It has become customary, following Atkinson's (1984) pioneering work, to distinguish between two types of flexibility:

• **Functional flexibility** encompasses the capacity of employees to become multi-skilled and move between functions as business demands dictate. While potentially a characteristic of all employees, this form of flexibility is linked by Atkinson with the organization's core workforce: those who possess organization-specific skills which, by definition, are difficult to buy in from outside.

• **Numerical flexibility** is about managing the headcount to make sure that numbers rise and fall with the exigencies of the business. This is more easily done where the staff concerned have generic skills which can be dispensed with in the knowledge that they can, if necessary, be found in the wider labour market and brought back into the organization with little delay. This is the peripheral workforce, made up largely, but not exclusively, of routine production and administrative staff. The use of contractors, temporaries and the self-employed provides further numerical flexibility (and, maybe, functional flexibility) without the perceived problems of a contract of employment.

Arguably, both functional and numerical flexibilities are ways of achieving financial flexibility. What is being sought is a method of managing more effectively and more efficiently. Further strategies available, particularly with the peripheral workforce, include temporal flexibility where contractual hours of work are varied (including annual hours arrangements and nil hours contracts) to suit business requirements. Building flexibility into HR policies generally, but particularly in the area of remuneration with, for instance, rewards linked to performance or profit, is also a way of increasing the degree of variability in costs associated with employment.

Hard HRM smacks of tight control and, particularly, of an integration of HR policies with business strategy, as discussed above. The emphasis is on a systematic, rational approach. As far as is possible, the human resource is to be managed in the same way as other organi-

zational resources and it is, perhaps, best understood using a production/manufacturing metaphor.

Soft HRM is also framed by business objectives but the emphasis is on those aspects that make employees a unique resource, one that is capable of providing competitive advantage. Stress is, therefore, placed on development, on maximizing human potential: resourceful humans rather than human resources. The metaphor here is agricultural: growing rather than making. However, this valued resource is of little use unless prepared to apply its talent on behalf of the organization. Consequently, soft HRM specifies treating employees as valued contributors to the organization, paying attention to motivation, developing trust, providing development opportunities, keeping them informed so that the commitment necessary for the release of organizationally useful behaviours is developed.

Recent work on the psychological contract is relevant here. Guest (1996) suggests that a positive psychological contract relates to employee perceptions of fairness, trust and delivery of 'the deal'. It is potentially affected by organizational culture, employee expectations/experience and the degree to which employees have any alternative but to grin and bear it. However, Guest found that, although culture and expectations had some effect, it was the presence or absence of high commitment HR practices that had by far the greatest influence on the nature of the psychological contract. In particular, the organization's attempts to:

• keep employees informed about business issues and performance;

• fill vacancies from within;

• make jobs as interesting and variable as possible;

• deliberately avoid compulsory redundancies and lay-offs;

had the strongest links with a positive psychological contract. Making the effort, then, is not just about being nice to people. There is, potentially, a sound commercial pay-off. Hiltrop (1996) supports this view when she argues that employees actively wish to:

• know more about what is happening in their organizations;

• understand why their managers make the decisions they do (see also TUC initiatives on the 'good boss');

• contribute ideas and participate in decision-making;

• have autonomy and 'meaningful work experiences'; and

• generally feel valued and personally recognized.

HR policies, therefore, need to be aimed at meeting these needs and it is the soft version of HRM that is likely to supply the necessary framework.

While it is important to recognize the different strands in HRM that are the hard and soft approaches, it does not mean that they are incompatible. Organizations can, and do,

demonstrate both. The discussion of flexibility above, for example, provides a setting in which this might be illustrated. Core employees are likely to be the knowledge workers of the organization and the potential source of competitive advantage. Soft HRM, with its stress on surfacing competence and developing the necessary organizational commitment, would seem most appropriate as an emphasis in this case. Peripheral workers, on the other hand, are not usually the carriers of organization-specific expertise and the need here is to tightly manage the headcount to keep control of costs via hard HRM techniques. Managing this duality is not, of course, without its problems. It may seem very much like elitism and lead to suspicion that messages of unitarism such as '(all) our employees are our greatest assets' ring hollow. Marchington (1995:62–3) points out that:

The short-termism which is inherent across much of management in Britain is nowhere more apparent than in the way employees are treated, and it is hardly surprising that new initiatives are greeted with scepticism by employees who have 'seen it all before'.

Pascale (1995) sees the process of demands for employee loyalty, without much evidence of reciprocation by employers to date, as 'the sound of one hand clapping'.

'MANAGING PEOPLE' TRAINING FOR OIL INDUSTRY ENGINEERS IN EAST ASIA/AUSTRALIA
A large Anglo-Dutch oil company underwent significant expansion in its Australasia region and recruited a large number of young engineers. Many of these engineers tended to be very logical and 'left-brain'-aligned; they were task-oriented, and they focused on the bottom-line production outputs. The expansion created promotion opportunities within the organization hierarchy. However, the supervisory roles required a different set of competences, ie the focus was to manage people rather than the 'nuts and bolts' of machines and operating procedures.

Arising from the promotions, a number of managerial and interpersonal problems were noted. These occurred as a result of the engineers directly applying their personal work habits and technical knowledge to the managing of people. These young engineers, apart from their technical training, had never been exposed to management development training, eg 'people' skills. The higher in the organization hierarchy, the less the demand for 'technical' expertise and the focus shifts towards 'human' and 'conceptual thinking'.

To address the situation a 'Managing People' training programme was developed and delivered to more than 1500 middle managers from various subsidiary companies in Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Australia and New

Zealand. This programme emphasized that in order to accomplish a project efficiently and effectively, it is important to strike a balance between focusing on the 'people' and 'process' aspects of working together as a team.

'Thomas' attended the programme and came back with a change in his leadership style in handling his subordinates. In addition, a Team Building workshop was organized which Thomas and his entire team attended. In the workshop, team objectives were thoroughly discussed, debated and consensually agreed, with the participants working towards a single common goal. Ample opportunities were given to individual members to contribute their ideas in coming up with a new set of ground rules for the work norms. Thomas was much more sensitive in attending to his team members' feelings and suggestions. He did not assert his way any more but rather collaborated with the team's efforts to inculcate the members' ownership and commitment.

Learning gains from the Managing People programme included:

• the role of a manager in striking a balance in the three areas of task, people and process;

• a shift from micro-managing 'technicalities' to 'human' and 'conceptual thinking' skills;

• the art of team leadership and the importance of team building, ie the ability to engage the members' participation, involvement and ownership in the planning and decision-making process; thereby inculcating commitment and accountability (like a flock of geese flying in a V-formation in the same direction).

With acknowledgement to Peter Voon, Training Manager, East Asia/Australia Regional Training, Anglo-Dutch Oil.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION

What does all this mean in practice? The whole gamut of activities associated with the management of people at work, of course, potentially falls within the scope of HRM. However, a few aspects seem to be critical. They are:

• The process of bringing people into the organization—making very sure that new entrants have the potential and willingness to contribute to organizational success.

• The management of performance—making very sure that what employees do is geared to

the achievement of relevant goals and that the resources are available to make this happen.

• The reward of performance—on the basis of 'what gets rewarded, gets done', making very sure that rewards are managed rather than merely administered.

• The development of talent–creating the environment in which learning is seen as a way of organizational life.

• The management of culture–developing and communicating a particular vision of what working for this organization means.

All of the above have been the subject of research and comment recently and the following sections will consider each in turn.

Selection

An apparent contradiction of recent years has been the increase in attention paid to selection against the background of relatively large-scale unemployment. Even apparently routine shopfloor jobs have been the subject of lengthy selection procedures. Perhaps the most significant pressure producing an interest in selection has been the slimming down of most organizations, which means that it is much less possible to throw people at a problem. It is much more important now to get selection right each time, and if Cook (1990) is right in saying that good employees are twice as valuable in terms of contribution as poor employees, then putting time and resources into selection becomes crucial.

There has been a growing realization that reliance on the interview, as typically performed, is no longer satisfactory. Various meta-analyses of research data have given the traditional interview a poor press. League tables of the effectiveness of selection techniques place the interview towards the bottom–in one case (Smith, 1986) showing little more utility than astrology and chance prediction. The interview remains a popular device and it is difficult to see how some form of face-to-face selection could ever be left out of most selection decisions, particularly at the later stages. However, all is not lost for the interview. Considerable improvement can be made in its effectiveness if three features are emphasized:

1. Typical interviews are relatively unstructured. Using a *structured* approach, in which each candidate faces the same key questions, improves the performance of the interview. To be effective, any selection device needs to be both reliable and valid. Reliability relates to the degree to which the device produces the same results when applied (even by different users) to the same candidates, over and over again. Validity is concerned with the degree to which the selection device does the job (basically, predicts job performance) it purports to do. Because the typical interview is unstructured, it fails the reliability test in that each application tends to be different and, therefore, produces different results from the same candidates when repeatedly applied. If a device is unreliable, it cannot be valid. Structuring the interview goes some way to overcoming this

failing and has the added advantage of being demonstrably fairer and, therefore, less likely to be challenged on the grounds of unfair discrimination.

2. Interviews need to include questions that are *situationally based* which reflect job circumstances known to differentiate between good performers and poor performers. If organizations cannot reliably distinguish between good and poor performers (and this is not as straightforward as some managers believe) then it may be difficult to identify the situations which could form the basis of situational questions. Careful job analysis, which may be outside the resources of some organizations, is also a prerequisite of the approach.

3. Interviewers need to be *trained.* Most interviewers have received little or no training but believe that they are effective selectors. As the introduction to one of the earlier training videos on selection suggested: 'Most people in this country believe that they are good drivers, good lovers and good interviewers.' One of the principal findings of a study on selection interviewing was that performance improved with training (Mayfield and Carlson, 1966).

Three selection tools that have seen significant growth in recent years are assessment centres, ability tests and personality questionnaires. The use of all three by the larger UK organizations doubled from 1985 to 1995, although for assessment centres (because of cost) and ability tests (because of fears of adverse impact) there is evidence of a plateauing in take-up. The use of personality questionnaires, however, has shown a steady increase over the decade, with over 70 per cent of large organizations now using them for a variety of assessment purposes. All three are an indication of the increased seriousness with which selection is being taken in that they are likely to be more costly to stage than the interview.

Performance management

A persistent theme of HRM is integration, both internally, in that different HR policies and practices need to send a similar overall message, and in the sense of links with business strategy as discussed above. Perhaps above all other aspects of HR, performance management emphasizes the need for what individual employees do to be directly relevant to specific objectives of the business. This critical aspect of HRM is considered in detail in Chapter 8.

Reward management

The title of this section signifies the change that has affected the administration of reward systems during the last decade. The HRM message is that rewards need to be seen as an

important part of the way in which competitive advantage is developed and sustained; in that sense, they are managed rather than administered. Lawler (1990) sees this as so critical that he has identified a need for what he calls 'new pay'. Other commentators have followed Lawler and the new orthodoxy seems to be characterized by the trends shown in Table 3.2.

Armstrong (1996:17) believes that, 'New pay [is] more a philosophy than a set of practices [and] too much significance should not be attached to the concept... except as a way of thinking about reward.'

Perhaps the issue of 'new pay' is best illustrated by the phenomenon of performance-related pay (PRP). Certainly in its individualized form, there is mounting evidence that PRP does not work. Kohn (1993) goes so far as to argue that all forms of incentive are detrimental in that they undermine interest in work itself, encourage employees to play it safe, punish those who do not receive, and disrupt (particularly team) relationships. This may be an extreme view, but it is difficult to find hard data in support of PRP. About the best that can be said is that PRP schemes have no affect on performance one way or the other. What gets rewarded may, in fact, not get done–or, at least, may not get done because of the reward on offer. Why then are they so popular? Probably it is because of the cultural message that they send about what is important to the organization, a reinforcement of how the organization's priorities have changed. Hence its importance lies in its value as a way of thinking, as Armstrong suggests, rather than as a technique.

Table 3.2 Trends in reward management

From	To
An emphasis on system and order–tightly administered to control drift.	Business needs driven–a tool of organizational change which delivers a cultural message.
Collectivism: seeing the natural pay constituency in terms of groups of employees.	Individualism: to the extent of developing individually 'negotiated' contracts of employment at all levels.
Pay structures determined by job evaluation–narrow bands.	Paying what is necessary; what the external market requires with less concern for structures as such–broad bands.
Rewards for being there–rate for the job.	Rewards geared to contribution and/or capability with value added as the key criterion–variable pay.
A fair day's pay for a fair day's work.	Economic democracy–a share in the prosperity (or otherwise) of the organization.
Control	Opportunity

Training and development

This book is centrally concerned with training and development and, consequently, many of the features associated with this aspect of HRM are reviewed in other chapters. The persistent message contained in the HRM literature is the need to develop an organizational environment in which learning and the desire to learn are second nature to all employees. If competitive advantage lies in the talents of employees, then it is necessary to create the circumstances in which those talents can blossom. The learning organization model is seen as the blueprint and is discussed in [Chapter 5](#).

Culture

Arguably, concern about selection, performance management, reward, and training and development have characterized the literature on management for decades. HRM places a specific gloss on these subjects, but they have been of long-standing interest. The need to develop a strong culture, however, is a relatively recent thought. Underpinning this prescription is a belief that organizations *have* cultures (in the sense that people might have measles) and that it is possible to change cultures, that strong cultures are unifying and motivating, that they can affect business performance and that it is a key responsibility of senior managers to bring about cultural change.

The evidence seems to be that culture change programmes are much more difficult and take longer to complete than the corporate-culture school would lead us to expect. This may be because of a fundamental misdiagnosis of the nature of culture. Could it be, for instance, that culture is not so much something that organizations have but rather something that organizations are (Smircich and Calas, 1987)? This view of culture sees it as much more deep-seated and, therefore, less easily changed than is suggested. Mabey and Salaman (1995) also criticize the corporate-culture school (what they describe as 'this prevalent view') because it implies that an organization has a single culture, ignoring the reality of conflicts of interest and power and the effects of inherent organizational inequalities. It seems, therefore, that cultural change will remain difficult and the examples of organizations that appear to have developed the required strong culture will be over-represented by those that are small or have experienced a recent, significant increase in employees and/or are located on green-field sites.

CONCLUSION

Where does this necessarily brief review of HRM leave us? HRM is not universally accepted as a phenomenon with a lasting message for organizational excellence. At its worst, HRM is

seen as a confidence trick–perpetrated to whitewash systems of employee exploitation and, particularly, to isolate trade unions–hopefully meeting the requirement for a better story to convince an increasingly knowledgeable workforce, but a story that will eventually be seen through. Another view is that HRM is an 'honest' attempt to bring together the needs of both business and employees but is founded on false assumptions of the nature of organizational reality–ie that organizations are naturally harmonic so long as nefarious elements can be removed and we communicate better. The more optimistic scenario is that HRM represents the only way we have of releasing the latent talents of our workforces and, in the face of increasing global competition, this is the only way of surviving, both organizationally and nationally. As well as this clear business imperative, HRM offers the best opportunity for some time, maybe ever, to manage organizations in a participative way with empowered employees making major contributions in jobs redesigned both to stretch employee capability and interest and to meet Maslow's earlier vision of better products and better service.

Perhaps the way forward is a partnership which, at first sight, looks unlikely in terms of the HRM model. Analysis of the third Workplace Industrial Relations survey indicates that HRM practices are more likely to be found in unionized firms than in non-unionized (Millward, 1993). Far from providing the opportunity for HRM to grow and develop, the absence of trade unions seems to mean that there is a strong possibility that nothing will develop: Guest's (1995) 'black hole–no HRM and no industrial relations.' In 1997, trade unions in the UK launched a campaign to promote a model of the 'good boss'–an example of a shift in traditional union activity to a broader agenda in the 1990s concerned with promoting so-called 'good' managerial practice. Trade union encouragement of the introduction and entrenchment of HRM is likely to mean that criticisms of it being forced down people's throats are less likely and its survival more probable.

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4
Organizational Change

Bland Tomkinson

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

If you read the works of whichever management guru takes your fancy, you are likely to find a recipe for prosperity beyond your wildest dreams. 'If you reorganize your enterprise in the way that I tell you,' goes the hype, 'then success is just around the corner.' Seldom does the guru tell you that getting to this management nirvana is a fraught and tricky operation that can lead to bankruptcy, industrial unrest, or, more likely, an 'early bath' for the one who was foolish enough to embark upon such a scheme! Likewise, scan through the contents of most standard texts on Human Resource Management (HRM) and try to find a chapter on 'change'. Try in vain: in many cases you will not even find it in the index! Even texts on Human Resource Development (HRD) may give the subject a miss, yet development is surely the process of moving from one position to another; a process that we would normally count as 'change'.

'Organizational change' has many guises and for some commentators this is limited to the internal restructuring of an organization. In this chapter, however, I shall be using the term to look at any form of change that affects the organization or sections of it, taking it in contradistinction to changes that are individual and personal.

For the HRD professional organizational change provides challenges and chances beyond those faced by the average member of staff. The effects on the developers are

picked up before the conclusion of this chapter but, before that, it is important to set down something about the nature of change and also about the theories of how to handle it.

Having read this chapter you will:
• understand the paradoxical nature of change;

• be able to describe several methods of implementing change;

• be aware of what can go wrong in the change process; and

• understand the roles of the change agent.

THE PARADOX OF CHANGE

Change is full of paradox, including the notion, voiced above, that HRD is itself a change process. But before looking at some of these paradoxes, we need to look at the paradoxical nature of change itself. As an illustration, let us look at a car travelling at a constant speed of 70 mph (or 110 kph, if you prefer) down the outside lane of a motorway. On a straight and level road this is relatively easy to accomplish with a fair degree of accuracy. On the face of it, this could be considered as unchanging. Yet in positional terms the location of the car is constantly changing. Let's take one more step, this time on the brake. Harder to measure perhaps, but let us assume that we brake from 70 mph to a halt at a steady rate. In this case the acceleration (or deceleration if you view it that way) is unchanging but both speed and location are changing.

This leads to the first two paradoxes: change is omnipresent and stopping change is in itself a change!

Taking the first of these, imagine lying on your back on a sunny beach with no one around and your eyes closed. You open your eyes; nothing has changed. But the tide has encroached that little bit further, you have grown a little bit older, the clouds in that otherwise clear blue sky have scudded away. The important thing is the significance of the changes–these small changes have hardly impacted on you so you discount them; but, change is always with us.

Moving on to the second paradox, consider a small stationery shop that principally sells greetings cards, gift-wrapping and similar accoutrements. The business is very seasonal–Christmas cards and tree decorations in September, Easter cards and fluffy chicks in January, birthday cards, anniversary cards, Mother's and Father's Day cards at other times of the year. As proprietor you have to keep up with these seasonal changes, changing your displays and updating your stock. Suppose now that you decide to change the store to one

that sells Christmas items the whole year round; you have eliminated the constant

seasonal change of stock but introduced a major disjunction in the business. Which is then more significant: the routine seasonal changes or the change of operation to eliminate them?

The Change Integration Team from Price Waterhouse (now PricewaterhouseCoopers) (Dauphinais *et al,* 1996) has identified other paradoxes relating to the process of change. These are grouped under five *paradox principles:*

1. Positive change requires significant stability. This is predicated on the assumption that individuals can cope with *change*–what they find difficult is *uncertainty.*

2. To build an enterprise, focus on the individual. This paradox focuses on the need to carry all members of staff along with a change decision.

3. Focus directly on culture, indirectly. This emphasizes the role of institutional culture in attitudes to change and the need to tackle culture change circumspectly.

4. True empowerment requires forceful leadership. This paradox emphasizes that empowering workers requires courage at the highest levels.

5. In order to build, you must tear down. Its final paradox principle looks at the disadvantages of disjointed incrementalism as a means of change.

Many of the ideas underlying these principles will be picked up later in this chapter.

THE NATURE OF CHANGE

In looking at the paradox of change we have already begun to look at the nature of organizational change. The first element of change is the locus of the imperative; in some cases this is internal to the organization but often change is a response to changes in the external environment within which the organization operates. A gloss on the internal location is whether the change is top-down or bottom-up (or, as is often the case, from the middle out!).

Second is the degree of compulsion for the change; government regulations may impose change on an organization whether it wishes it or not, but many other changes are taken in response to, for example, perceived market pressures. These latter may be more, or less, voluntary and the outworking of the change within the organization may itself be by mutual consent or by management decree.

The third element is a dichotomy that Burnes (1992) describes as either *radical* or

incremental. Radical change relates to substantial reworking of an organization's culture and processes over a short period of time; throwing out the old ways and bringing in new. Incremental change is much more subtle and small scale; it can still mean overturning the old ways of doing things but perhaps in only a piecemeal or localized fashion and with a gradual introduction over a lengthy period of time.

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Fourth comes the domain or domains of change; a new procedure may be perceived as purely a technical matter or a restructuring as a purely organizational one but in practice these domains will inevitably impact upon one another. In the early 1960s Woodward (1965) pointed to the interrelationship between technology and organization, which echoed similar research at the Tavistock Institute (Trist *et al,* 1963). Homans (1951) took a slightly broader view, embracing the interaction of the cultural, physical and technological environments of the organization. An example of a physical change would be a move to a new building; there may be no intention to change the hierarchy of the organization or its social structures, there may be no attempt to introduce new technology, but the physical change would have considerable impact.

Peters and Waterman (1982) suggest a seven-S framework: Strategy; Structure; Systems; Staff; Style; Shared values; and Skills. All of these domains interact and a change in any one of them is a potential for change in all the others. Handy (1993) suggests that changes are easier in the first three of these domains (the hard Ss) but that the changes may be illusory if no cognisance is taken of the effects in the other four domains (the soft Ss).

METHODS TO MAKE THE TRANSITION

A number of different ways have been put forward to tackle the process of change within an organization and the approach taken may vary very much with the nature of the change and the reasons for it.

Lewin

One of the methods advocated is the use of 'Field Theory' (sometimes called 'Field Force Theory'). This emanates from the ideas of Kurt Lewin who brings an analogy of vector mechanics to the psychosocial arena. In the simple form usually adopted by change practitioners this can involve looking at the factors for and against a particular change, listing them and setting out some sort of weighting. Such an approach can have value in, for example, deciding which of two competing technologies to use eg, staying with WordPerfect, for use as a word-processing package, or moving to AmiPro.

Lewin postulated a three-step model of change:

1. unfreezing;

2. moving;

3. re-freezing.

This is dependent on the concepts that the old behaviour has to be discarded (unfrozen) before moving to the new, and that the new behaviour has to be accepted as the norm otherwise there will be a regression to old patterns. Compare this with the fifth of the Price Waterhouse paradoxes. Note, however, that in organizational terms regression would often be difficult to accomplish.

Unfreezing requires analysis and confrontation of the reasons for change and a developmental process to disseminate the need for change. Moving requires the identification of alternative courses of action, evaluation of these and choice of an appropriate route. Refreezing seeks to rebuild an equilibrium state and may be supported by institutional rewards and benefits or by an educational process, or both.

However, change is usually much more complex than this–as is vector mechanics.

Lupton

A less simplistic view put forward by Tom Lupton (1971) comes as a series of injunctions to managers:

• Set up systematically and in detail the organization alternatives open.

• Map out the present organization as a social system, not forgetting its external links.

• List the groups affected by each organization alternative.

• Examine the issues likely to be raised in each group from the adoption of each alternative.

• Assess likely reactions on each issue and score for acceptability.

• Test economic feasibility against social acceptability and adopt the course that offers the most adaptive and least costly balance.

• Examine the problems this course raises and ask whether existing means of redress of grievance are adequate to cope. If not, take appropriate steps to create such machinery as seems to be required.

This approach broadens the way in which the change is looked at but is still predicated upon the general idea of listing and choosing. Again, this approach has its value in some straightforward cases but a more general model is required if we are to cope with the variety of change that we have so far discussed.

Handy

Charles Handy's (1993) schema for organizational change is:

• Create an awareness of the need for change.

• Select an appropriate initiating person or group.

• Be prepared to allow the recipients to adapt the final strategy.

• Accept the fact that the successful doctor gets no credit but must let the patient boast of his or her sound condition.

• Be prepared to accept a less than optimum strategy in the interests of achieving something rather than nothing.

Handy sees this from the manager's perspective, but sometimes change has to be initiated from the grassroots and the above schema can still hold good in such cases.

Burnes

A more developed version of this schema is the nine-element model developed by Bernard Burnes (1992):

1. *Create a vision.* Why change? The answer must lie in the need to attain some farther goal or realize a distant vision. The first stage, argues Burnes, is to construct this vision. In looking at this process, he suggests four aspects:

• *mission*–a statement of the organization's strategic purpose;

• *valued outcomes*–specific performance and human outcomes that the organization would like to achieve;

• *valued conditions*–what the organization should look like to achieve the valued outcomes;

• *mid-point goals*–intermediate objectives between the current state and the desired future state, usually capable of being more clearly stated than the long-term ambitions.

2. *Develop strategies.* Having shaped a future vision, the organization needs to look at the ways of realizing that vision and this is done through a series of strategies. The strategies will relate particularly to those mid-point goals and may be shaped by reference to particular domains–for example finance, human resources or information systems–or particular geographical regions. Such strategies are destined to change with time and experience even when the vision remains constant.

3. *Create the conditions for successful change.* In order to create the right conditions for change it is first necessary to create a readiness for change. Burnes suggests three steps to be taken to create this state of readiness:

• *make people aware of the pressures for change*–the organization not only needs to describe its vision but also to share the vision with its employees. By this means members of the organization come to share common goals and to understand the place of change in safeguarding their future;

• *give regular feedback*–feedback is essential not only on the performance of the individual within the organization but also of the organization itself. This means that employees become aware of deviations from the strategy and hence are prepared for change;

• *publicize successful change*–making people aware of successful programmes of change, either within the organization or outside, helps employees see the benefits of the change process. This can also be an important learning tool.

Burnes further suggests that other steps need to be taken to deal with causes of resistance:

• *understand people's fears and concerns*–employees' fears may well be groundless but to the individuals concerned they are real and important. Change creates uncertainty and failure to get to grips with perceived threats is a major problem in introducing change;

• *encourage communication*–regular open and effective communication is a basic way in which to promote change and to address uncertainty. Transmission of detail helps to overcome the potential for rumour taking hold;

• *involve those affected*–not only does involvement create understanding but it can also alert the change-makers to unforeseen difficulties when those concerned with implementing the change are involved in the detail.

4. *Create the right culture.* Change that is inconsistent with the culture of the organization is doomed to fail, but changing the culture is even more problematic. (Compare this with the third Price Waterhouse paradox.) Desirably, the culture of the organization should foster flexibility and encourage reflection. Encouragement of what Chris Argyris terms 'double-loop learning'–where underlying paradigms are challenged and changed as well as strategies and assumptions–should provide a fertile seed bed for change. He suggests that 'Model II' theory-in-use is the underlying model for fostering this: his 'theory-in-use' is the implicit values exposed by what people actually do as opposed to their 'espoused' theories which describe what they think they do. Senge suggests that the gap between espoused theory and theory-in-use can present a challenge to the shared vision.

5. *Assess the need for, and type of, change.* Appropriateness of response is also seen as key to the change process–appropriateness not only in the particular change to be undertaken but also in whether to undergo a process of change at all. Burnes suggests a four-phase approach to the assessment:

a. *The trigger*–organizations should only investigate change for one of the following reasons:

• one of the organization's strategies highlights the need for change;

- performance in attainment of the organization's goals appears seriously impaired;

- opportunities are offered which appear to achieve significant improvement.

b. *The remit*–a clear remit must be provided for assessing the process of change. This should include the reasons for carrying out the assessment and should cover all relevant domains.

c. *The assessment team*–the team should be led by a senior manager, preferably one who will go on to champion whatever change is necessary, and should include all relevant disciplines. The first task of the team is to clarify its objectives, reviewing the trigger, the remit and the composition of the team itself.

d. *The assessment*–again, Burnes advocates a four-step approach:

• first, the problem or opportunity should be clarified or redefined;

• second, alternative proposals should be drawn up and tested against criteria founded on the redefined problem specification;

• third, the proposals meeting the criteria, together with the problem or opportunity statement, should be shared with a wider constituency;

• fourth, recommendations for action should be drawn up, including type of change advocated, timetable for implementation and resource implications, and presented to senior management for decision.

6. *Plan and implement change.* Having gone through the assessment process, management needs to commit to the change and to prepare a detailed plan. This should be based on the work of the assessment team but may be implemented by a different, though equally multidisciplinary, team. This team, or sub-groups for a major project, will need to undertake a number of activities:

• *activity planning*–constructing a detailed list of all the tasks to be undertaken, their sequence and the critical path through them;

• *commitment planning*–identifying key people and groups whose commitment to the project is essential to success;

• *management structures*–the team or teams managing the process of change may need new reporting structures with rapid access to top management and to the champions of change;

• *training*–the obvious aspect of training is the acquisition of new technical skills, but a wider view needs to be taken to ensure that training underpins all aspects of change and

targets the appropriate individuals and groups, including middle and senior management;

• *review*–Burnes calls this 'post audit'. After the changes have taken place the effects should be audited to see how successful the changes have been in meeting their objectives and to learn how the change process can be improved.

7. *Involve everyone.* Maintaining the commitment, particularly over a long timescale (remember that even the simplest information technology projects can take years to design, build and implement) requires continuing involvement of all parties.

(Compare this to the second Price Waterhouse paradox.) Burnes suggests three facets to this:

a. *Information*–letting everyone involved know what is happening right from the beginning and reporting honestly on progress, or lack of it, is the key.

b. *Communication*–providing information is only the start. Communication has to be two-way with employees' responses gathered and listened to.

c. *Actual involvement*–responsibility for detailed aspects of change need to be given to those directly affected; this requires the correct identification of those responsible.

8. *Sustain the momentum.* Particularly in long-term projects, a failure to maintain the momentum of change can lead to regression on the part of those participating and potentially fatal delay. To bolster the momentum, organizations can:

• *provide resources for change*–even where a project is looking for down-sizing, the actual pursuit of change is likely to consume resources (note how finance departments expand during periods of retrenchment) and appropriate resources should be allocated from the beginning of the project;

• *give support to the change agents*–often the change management team is having to boost morale and motivate others. They, in their turn, need support and encouragement lest they become demoralized and pass on their demotivation to others;

• *develop new competences and skills*–training has already been mentioned but the momentum has to be borne on a tide of new styles and approaches. This can involve leadership and teamworking training as well as individual counselling and encouragement;

• *reinforce desired behaviour*–behaviours that are consistent with the change can be reinforced not only in financial ways (for example using suggestion schemes or bonuses) but also symbolically (using praise, changing a job title, or awarding prizes).

9. *Commit to continuous improvement.* Real success should see change as an ongoing process, not a once-and-for-all activity. The prospect of continuing improvement should be built into the project from the outset and a culture of quality enhancement engendered.

Burnes' method arises from his study of what went well (and badly; two-thirds of the changes he surveyed were unsuccessful) in major reorganizations in substantial firms. However, much of what he has to offer is applicable on a smaller scale. His is one of the more comprehensive approaches to the management of change.

WHAT CAN GO WRONG?

Attempts at introducing change can often founder. Some commentators (see above) believe that the majority of major changes fail in substantial ways. But, we can learn from others' experience in trying to facilitate change. Success may be incomplete for a variety of reasons:

• *Unintended consequences.* Unintended consequences are of two types. First there is the under- or over-estimation of the effects of change; typical here is the construction of a new motorway producing more traffic than predicted by the highway engineers. The second type is where there are unexpected consequences, usually in a domain that had not been considered. An example of this is where one section of a department is moved out of a building to a more remote site and social and communication problems arise within the department because people are no longer in informal daily contact.

• *Self-fulfilling fear of failure.* This reflects on the fourth Price Waterhouse paradox–that true empowerment needs a forceful leader. Sometimes change requires a bold leap forward and a half-hearted attempt will lead to a fall into the chasm of failure.

• *Lack of preparation.* The process of change needs to be supported by appropriate human resource development efforts at all stages. Often training and development needs are recognized as an afterthought so that new technology, for example, may be introduced without operators being given any grounding. More subtly, the less tangible areas of support may be neglected, for example training in leadership or teamwork.

• *Ill-conceived change process.* Considerable forethought is one of the keys to successful change. Causes of failure can include inadequate attention to any of the stages in the change management process but particularly with regard to inappropriate timescales–going for the quick fix–or to a lack of clear dissemination of ideas and processes.

• *Inadequate consultation.* Nothing can sink a project faster than poorly motivated staff (except, perhaps, a catastrophic computer failure!). An imposed change will only attain grudging acceptance and adherence to the letter rather than the spirit of the transformation. Equally a pragmatic shopfloor change of practice can induce alarm and antagonism in management if they have not been consulted. Perhaps a special case of this is the:

• *'Not invented here' syndrome.* Sometimes the strongest resistance to change is shown as a response to what is seen as importing the ideas of an alien culture. In university circles we often find this voiced as 'It might work in industry but it's different in a university', or 'The American (Australian, Dutch, Scandinavian, whatever) system is not the same as ours, it would never work here', or even 'Well, that's Mechanical Engineering; in Maths we have to do everything on the blackboard!'

TRAINING AND CHANGE IN AN IRISH PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY

SIFA Ltd, located on the Shannon Industrial Estate, Shannon, Co. Clare, Ireland, is engaged in the manufacture of fine chemicals and pharmaceutical products and is part of the Schwarz Pharma Corporation. The company was established in 1976 as a small bulk chemical manufacturing plant with 10 employees. As demand for products increased employment has expanded to the present level of 150 employees.

In 1996 two key factors initiated the need for change in the organization:

1. the construction of a pharmaceutical manufacturing facility on the SIFA site; and

2. a forecasted need to increase the production of the main product (5-ISM) from the 1995 level of 31 tonnes pa to 55 tonnes pa by 1998.

In 1996 SIFA Ltd embarked on a major organizational change initiative. Key education/training interventions were provided for under SIFA's Adapt Project (1996/97) which facilitated new and innovative approaches to HRD in the company. Adapt is a Human Resources Community Initiative supported by the European Union through the European Social Fund (ESF).

The following factors were identified as major barriers to change:

• low levels of motivation and high levels of frustration;

• dissatisfaction and disconnection voiced by many employees;

• high levels of suspicion and low levels of trust;

• over-departmentalization with less than ideal inter-departmental cooperation and understanding;

• too many levels in the organization hierarchy with the accompanying difficulties in communication.

Changes required included:

• the introduction of new technology and new manufacturing processes;

• more efficient and effective organization structures;

• new work ethics including teamworking, flexibility and increased employee involvement.

A Company Development Plan was formulated with the following objectives:

1. transform SIFA into a continual improvement organization;

2. release individual initiative and leadership for the continuous improvement in all processes and practices in the organization;

3. build an educational system that would provide new knowledge and skills regarding systems and processes as well as technical skills;

4. support leaders to lead effectively through a new culture of teamworking and cooperation.

The three key pillars to support this plan were:

1. Education/training initiatives;

2. Organization restructuring and self-directed teamworking;

3. Continuous improvement project teams.

Key areas of learning

1. The role of education/training in facilitating change in SMEs;

2. Training initiatives to support ongoing organizational development and continuous improvement in an SME.

The Adapt Project's role in the overall organizational development plan

SIFA's Adapt Project supported the training and development needs of operations personnel to adapt to new pharmaceutical technology and the development of a new work organization based on self-directed teamworking. As such the project facilitated initiatives for major organizational change.

Participants

The project participants were plant operatives and a small number of support/ managerial staff. The operatives were of mixed profile: some were long-serving, experienced operators with a basic education level while others were younger new recruits with second and third level educational qualifications.

Main project activities

Project activities included many new approaches to training in the organization. Prior to the Adapt Project employees had only experienced classroom type, lecture style training. The Adapt Project introduced training workshops, experiential learning, research of training and learning needs, group facilitation, mentoring, project teams, work process simulations, video and computer-based training and new work organization competency requirements analysis.

Challenges and learning

The challenges met in progressing the project were those associated with resistance to change and low trust levels in the organization. These challenges are common in relation to many change processes. What we learned in carrying out the project was the enormous positive effect that an empowering and participative training approach can have in facilitating major change.

Benefits of the project for the wider HRD arena

This project produced progressive training modules and methods useful for a pharmaceutical manufacturing environment. More significantly, however, it produced an important case study and evaluation of the role of training and development interventions in effecting and facilitating change to a more progressive competitive work organization in a SME. The project also produced a self-management competency profile for industrial workers which potentially breaks new ground in the development of a high-performance empowered workforce.

Implications for public and private training providers

The outcomes and products of this project have the potential to inform and significantly influence training approaches and content of training programmes aimed at preparing trainees to take their place in the modern organization where a culture of continuous improvement, continuous employee development, devolved control of workplace activities and decisions are key strategies for maintaining advanced levels of competitiveness.
With acknowledgements to John Driver, SIFA Ltd, Ireland.

THE ROLE OF HRD IN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

By now you should have realized the importance of involving everyone in the change process, but there are those who believe that the human resource developer is the only one fitted to lead organizational change. McCalman and Paton (1992) suggest, however, that change is a multidisciplinary activity; this reflects upon the point made earlier about the domains in which the change is to take place. It would be absurd for a human resource developer to take sole responsibility for a change to a new accounting system; this clearly needs the involvement of those with knowledge of accounting and of information systems. On the other hand, training and development activities can themselves take a long time to design and implement and it is important for the developer to be getting to grips with the training issues in time to design the programmes for implementation. But neither should the design process be seen as beyond the remit of the developer; support for the process itself may be key to success or failure and often the human resource developer will possess appropriate skills to facilitate the process.

Human resource professionals may be employed either as external consultants or 'change agents' or as specialists within their own organization. The role of the developer can embrace both the process of change as well as the associated tasks.

Process roles

Acting as a consultant or change agent is often perceived as a high prestige role but the success of a projected change depends critically upon a number of underpinning aspects, many of which can be ignored by external 'experts'. There is a forceful argument for the developer taking an active role in the change assessment team, and team building and facilitation skills may be needed at the earliest stages. 'Awaydays' or 'Blue Sky weekends' can be the source of ideas for change and the professional developer should be well equipped to facilitate these. Training may need to be given in problem-solving and analysis to help both assessment and implementation teams in the technical aspects of their tasks. Also, interpersonal skills and sensitivity training may need to be developed to handle the 'people' side of the process. Understanding change and educating staff in its processes can also serve to maintain morale. In many cases the developer will be the repository for the learning about how change processes have worked in the organization in the past and will be ideally placed to feed this into new ideas for change.

Task roles

Detailed task roles will vary according to the nature of the change–training in handling new equipment or new software are commonplace consequences as is dealing with new methods of operation–but changes in structure and organization may demand other skills.

The trainer will need to familiarize himself or herself thoroughly with the equipment or procedures well before implementation. Individual career, or even outplacement, counselling may be important in some circumstances, particularly where individuals find it difficult to retrain to new ways of working, and changes such as moving from line to group-based working will demand training in the new perspectives. In many cases cascade models of training will be used and the developer will need to ensure that supervisors and shopfloor mentors are appropriately prepared for the task. Above all, if a quality enhancement culture is to be engendered, then considerable effort will need to be devoted not only to communicating the essentials of quality methods but also to group ownership of quality.

CONCLUSION

• Change is a complex and often paradoxical process.

• Even simple technical changes can have social and organizational implications–whatever the expected domain of the change, all domains must be looked at.

• Organizational change needs to be tackled in a systematic way.

• Change is often doomed to failure. It is important to know the causes of failure, to build on previous mistakes and to learn to avoid the principal pitfalls.

• Whatever the change, it has human consequences. It is important for the human resource developer to be involved from the beginning.

• The role of the human resource developer in developing the change process is as important as his or her role in training individuals in new skills–if not more so.

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5
The Learning Organization: A Critical Evaluation

Rob Poell

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this chapter the concept of the learning organization is described and critically evaluated. It was one of the most popular concepts in the management literature throughout the 1990s, but also one of the most ill-defined and all-encompassing ones. The intention is to show how core authors have viewed the learning organization and to list the major criticisms it has come to face. It is argued that the traditional emphasis on the development of shared vision encourages a rather one-dimensional view of the learning organization concept. The critical approach, used here, advocates a more multifaceted perspective. Two case studies from the Netherlands are presented to illustrate how the concept of the learning organization can be developed in practice.

Having read this chapter you will:

• understand the nature and characteristics of the learning organization;

• know Senge's five disciplines for learning organizations;

• be able to describe the main elements of a learning organization; and

• know questions to ask which identify elements of a learning organization.

DEFINITION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LEARNING ORGANIZATION

Background of the concept

The concept of the learning organization has been a popular one for quite some time now. According to Garratt (1995), the key ideas about the learning organization were already developed immediately after World War II. It has taken much longer, however, before they were actually applied. The concept came of age under the impact of a rapidly developing world of work and organization. Pedler *et al* (1991) trace back the history of the concept (and a related one–total quality management) as stemming from earlier approaches such as organization development, individual self-development, action learning, and the excellence movement of the 1970s and 1980s; all of which in turn followed post-war concern for systematic training.

The European Commission's (1996*) White Paper on Education and Training* highlights the impact of the information society on work and organization, the impact of internationalization on the need for competitiveness, and the impact of scientific and technological knowledge on industry. Growing competition, technological changes, new work methods, financial constraints, globalization, reorganizations, mergers and the like, gave rise to a need for organizations to learn and adapt more quickly to changing circumstances. In the words of McCarthy (1997), 'these processes necessitated continuous improvement both in people and in organizations'. This is a central, if fairly general, feature of the learning organization.

Definitions of the learning organization

There are many more specific definitions of the concept, most of which include notions about continuous learning, innovation, responsiveness, commitment, collaboration, shared vision, openness in communication, shared values, dialogue, the use of IT, empowerment, and so forth. Some of these definitions are of a descriptive nature, others are more normatively orientated.

Let us start by looking at how three core thinkers about the concept, Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell (1989:2), define it. They describe the learning organization as 'an organization which facilitates the learning of all its members and continuously transforms itself '. As indicated above, this definition contains an individual and an organizational change element. Individual learning is necessary but not sufficient for organizations to learn. Interestingly, in a more recent publication the same authors define the concept as 'an organization that facilitates the learning of all its members and consciously transforms itself *and its context'*

(Pedler *et al,* 1996:3). Apparently, organizations now need to be able to impact upon their environment as well as adapt to the changes taking place, a concern that had already been raised much earlier by Mintzberg (1979). In fact, Mintzberg showed how (particularly larger) organizations succeed in affecting the circumstances in which they have to operate (for example, their clients, local and government policies, and so forth).

Individual and organizational learning

Whereas Pedler *et al* stress the importance of organizational learning, Mumford (1995) finds the learning organization literature focuses too much on the structural element. In his opinion, individuals (and teams) must learn before there can be anything like organizational learning. Another core thinker about the learning organization, Senge (1990:3), tries to integrate these two approaches. His definition, however, is quite a normative one:

An organization where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together.

He presents his five disciplines for learning organizations:

1. personal mastery, ensuring individual motivation to learn;

2. mental models, creating an openness to misconceptions;

3. shared vision, building long-term commitment in people;

4. team learning, developing group skills like cooperation, communication and so forth;

5. systems thinking, which constitutes 'the most important discipline' (p. 12), integrating the other four.

All the disciplines are to be practised alongside each other and they have an impact on one another as well. As Hodgkinson (1998) describes, the learning organization is a process rather than a state, something that all members of an organization have to work on all the time, yet can never be fully realized. Pedler and Aspinwall (1996:182), too, stress that the learning company must remain a particular vision, to be realized in the context of a unique organization. Even though this may be the case, they consider it possible to generalize about organizational learning. People in companies learn from the problems, dilemmas and difficulties they encounter, together with their attempts to overcome them. Companies have much to learn from each other, too, but this can only be achieved if the contrasts are raised and the differences between them made explicit. In other words, there is no such thing as *the* learning organization, but a variety of learning organizations that can benefit from each

other's experiences.

Knowledge management

Watkins and Marsick (1993) emphasize that systems to capture and share individual learning must be put in place before organizations can learn. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) describe such a system of knowledge creation in companies. They distinguish four types of knowledge conversion among people, which can be combined to form processes in time:

1. *Socialization:* tacit knowledge reproduced as tacit knowledge. People learn from each other by sharing experiences, imitation, trial and error, and so forth.

2. *Externalization:* tacit knowledge made explicit. People learn by systematizing and codifying their implicit knowledge, making visible what is hidden inside them.

3. *Combination:* explicit knowledge reproduced as explicit knowledge. People learn by using materials and other resources specifically aimed at teaching people.

4. *Internalization:* explicit knowledge made tacit. People learn by practising skills, automatizing procedures, acquainting themselves with tasks by doing them.

Nonaka and Takeuchi speak about a hypertext organization rather than a learning organization. According to their ideas, this type of company succeeds in combining the efficiency of a bureaucratic organization with the innovativity of an adhocratic organization (Mintzberg, 1979). This is achieved by involving all layers of the organization in the right kinds of knowledge conversion at the right time, through codification and commodification of individual tacit knowledge (Grey, 1998). Every member in the company thus contributes to the creation, management and proliferation of collective knowledge throughout the organization.

Recurring themes

In a literature review, Poell *et al* (1997) concluded that, although there are many definitions of the concept of a learning organization, a number of issues keep recurring. The definitions describe the elements in a learning system that make for an efficient, flexible and viable company:

1. continuous learning on the individual, group and system level;

2. single- and double-loop learning processes. Swieringa and Wierdsma (1992) even conceive of triple-loop learning: not just doing things well, not just doing things better, but also doing better things;

3. creation and distribution of information and knowledge, cf. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995);

4. inquiry and dialogue in groups (sharing learning experiences);

5. increasing the learning capacity of members (learning to learn) cf. Senge (1990);

6. integration of work and learning (informal learning, learning on the job);

7. shared vision (theory of action) cf. Senge (1990);

8. empowerment of individual learners. According to the *White Paper on Education and Training* (European Commission, 1996:40):

Vocational training in enterprises is increasingly taking place on the basis of a training plan which the workers themselves and their representatives have been involved in preparing. In the most progressive and most efficient companies, this training is organized less and less around the acquisition of skills for a specific task or even a clearly-defined job.

9. coaching by the manager;

10. transformation and innovation;

11. learning tied to business objectives but also for personal development.

Poell and Tijmensen (1996) had already concluded that the literature on learning organizations implicitly proposes a redefinition of the organization of work into team-based structures, so as to allow for an integration of learning and work. Every work activity can also become a learning activity. Work is performed in multifunctional teams, thinking and doing are integrated into jobs, and workers are empowered to participate in team decision-making processes (Tjepkema, 1993).

Before going on to highlight some criticisms of the learning organization concept, two actual examples of the way in which a learning company operates may help illustrate the ideas presented here. Two real-life case studies, one from a large Dutch electronics firm and one from a Dutch night school for adults, are described.

IMPROVEMENT TEAMS IN A DUTCH ELECTRONICS COMPANY

A large international Dutch electronics firm wants to become a learning organization by introducing an internal competition among so-called improvement teams. Multifunctional work groups are formed across the company to investigate problems they want to try and solve. Each of these improvement teams receives guidance from their personal process facilitator, whose task it is to help the team devise a structured problem-solving approach. Each group has a team leader who manages activities on a day-to-day basis. There are several different written guidelines for the groups to follow. Each team has the responsibility to divide tasks among the members, to present their plans and progress to their 'clients' in the organization, to get and use feedback from them, and to formally present the outcomes

of their improvement efforts to the management. Let us take a closer look at how two of these groups have operated.

The first group consists of eight operators representing the five shifts in which they work. The management has given the group an assignment to work on the problem of extensive waste of materials, and they meet for two hours every week to discuss and investigate it. Their initial analysis is that opaque work processes are at the core of the waste problem. The group administers a questionnaire to all operators, listing elements of the problem. The results enable them to create an initial action plan. The team visits a plant similar to their own to see how they have dealt with the problem and also invite a number of experts to talk about the problem and possible solutions. The first small changes to be introduced are in the way the shifts work. The group members have day-to-day contact with the operators to monitor progress. Also, a regular newsletter and meeting minutes are distributed among the operators. Because the improvement teams consist of operators, feedback from the shifts is immediate, which brings about further incremental changes. The improvement team organizes several instruction sessions for the operators. Sub-teams take on special tasks to try out possible improvements, which are then discussed with the whole team. After about six months the work flow has significantly improved and waste levels are down by a half.

The second group is made up of nine developers, process engineers, product engineers and process technicians. The assignment given to them by the management is to reduce running time for experimental work processes. The team has representatives from every department concerned with the problem, who meet once every fortnight and use a general model for structured problem-solving. They initially decide to broaden their assignment to fit what they perceive to be the real problem, namely the communication between the development and production departments. They ask a sub-team to create an ideal picture of operations that they can work towards. Actions for improvement are then derived from this ideal image, tried out by sub-teams and evaluated in the plenary team sessions.

There is a constant flow of feedback between the improvement team and their respective departments. Gradually, uniform procedures for running experimental work processes are put into place. Checklists are developed accordingly. The two departments together also create contingency plans to handle experimental situations. In regular work meetings, progress is reported and possible sources of resistance are identified at an early stage. When there is sufficient support from both departments, internal trainers are called upon to organize instruction sessions for the operators. After about eight months, the experimental work processes take

about the same running time as the standard work processes, which allows new products to be on the market a fair deal earlier.

The members of both improvement teams report having gained more insight into the production process as a whole and into the problems experienced by other departments,

and being better able to cooperate with colleagues, to delegate tasks to others, and to communicate with them. The atmosphere has improved and people feel their ideas for improvement have been taken seriously. The organization has benefited from solving longstanding problems and from learning to deal with them in a structured approach.

WORK-BASED LEARNING PROJECTS IN A NIGHT SCHOOL

A Dutch night school for adults wants to become a learning organization by gaining experience with work-related learning projects of teacher groups. The school management wants teachers to work in teams rather than as separate individuals, in order to be able to better serve an increasingly diversified student population. Surveys have shown that teachers express a need for additional training, so there is some common ground to start from. Two experimental project groups are created to gain some initial experiences with team-based learning and work.

The first group consists of teachers of Dutch as a second language (for adult immigrant students). The two coordinators of this group invite an external subject-matter expert to run a number of training sessions about Dutch as a second language. This consultant starts the project with a one-day seminar for all teachers, which is well-received. Teachers bring lots of questions to the fore, which are addressed in the remainder of the training sessions. Not all teachers participate in the following sessions, but it is agreed that those who do will inform their colleagues during regular work meetings. Also, the coordinators take minutes of the training sessions, which are given to people who cannot attend. Although individual teachers report having learned a lot of new knowledge and skills within their discipline, they have not benefited much from this group in terms of learning about self-directed project learning. The team has handed over responsibility for the learning process to the external consultant and has not really learnt to organize its own learning group.

This is different in the second group, which is made up of liberal arts teachers who want to investigate possibilities for self-directed work with students. They, too, invoke help from an external consultant, but he is asked to monitor the group learning process rather than transfer any subject-matter knowledge. Two participants present the experiences they already have with self-directed student work, one by offering materials from another school and one by discussing a video-taped classroom exercise. The group collects information about self-directed work and individual participants start experimenting in their own classrooms and in

the open-learning centre. Sometimes colleagues visit each other's classes for benchmarking and peer-review purposes. They discuss their experiences in the group as a whole and list the consequences of such an approach for school policies. A newly introduced didactic method is adapted to fit the insights gained about self-directed student work. The participants are very enthusiastic about the support they receive from their fellow team members and about the improvements they have implemented in their own classroom practice.

The school management evaluates both projects, which are clearly quite different in terms of self-directed learning by the teams of teachers. Interestingly, the comparison between the two projects teaches them a lot about how (not) to proceed towards becoming a learning organization. These experiences are used in setting up two new learning groups of teachers. Gradually, more and more teachers become enthusiastic about participating in the learning groups. On the one hand, they feel they can benefit individually and professionally; on the other, they see that the school management is seriously committed to learning from their experiences.

CRITICISM OF THE CONCEPT OF THE LEARNING ORGANIZATION

Neglect of power issues

Various criticisms of the concept have been raised in the learning organization literature. Grey (1998:7) claims that while the learning organization may replace bureaucratic or single-loop learning, in itself it is just as narrowly defined. It is no more than just another form of (self) control, 'part of the sustained assault on bureaucracy that typifies recent managerial discourse.' What is more, its goals are still primarily tied to business outcomes. The apparently emancipatory ideas about empowerment are more rhetoric than reality. By the same token, Örtenblad (1998) contends that the learning organization is just another way for a company to become independent of any individual member. According to him, practices like work rotation and information sharing as well as ideas about shared vision are primarily aimed at that objective. These issues of power and control are not often addressed in the literature about the learning organization.

A restricted view of learning and work

Poell *et al* (1997) express three concerns about the learning organization concept. First, its notion of learning is fairly limited, in that it seems to equal discussion and reflection aimed

at shared values. Secondly, it is unclear exactly how the work is organized in a learning organization. Implicitly, the work type to which most literature refers seems to be team-based group work. Again, this is a fairly restricted view of work organization. Thirdly, the perspective of a learning organization is appealing, but it remains quite unclear how the concept can be implemented satisfactorily. Poell and Tijmensen (1996) express two more criticisms. For one thing, although workers get more room to organize their own learning, this can also have a negative impact. Not all workers are able or willing to find their own learning route, especially if it means the everyday learning activities they undertake by themselves are ignored or undervalued. The learning organization asks a lot from its workers:

1. the willingness to learn continuously;

2. the need to be innovative and engaged in double-loop learning on a permanent basis;

3. the responsibility for their own development;

4. the ability to learn together with colleagues.

The last point of criticism refers to the highly internal orientation of the concept of the learning organization. It is all about the workers, the managers and the training consultants. The external orientation is restricted to market developments and clients. External influences such as government policies, union pressure or advances in the professional field are hardly taken into consideration, even though they have considerable impact on learning issues.

AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW OF THE LEARNING ORGANIZATION

Poell *et al* (1997) present an alternative concept of the learning organization in response to the criticisms they have raised. It focuses on multifaceted learning and work arrangements (not only group learning in multifunctional teams) and enabling people to handle tensions they encounter in everyday work life (not only developing shared values). Tensions arise because there are always several actors within and outside the organization who want to impact on the way learning and work are organized. In order to create learning and work arrangements in which all of them can participate effectively, it is important to:

1. deal with the autonomy and empowerment of individual employees;

2. provide a clear policy and direction;

3. allow participation and learning in groups, emphasizing shared understanding and reflection;

4. take into account the professional field where new methods and insights are developed.

A learning organization should explicitly address the relationship between learning and work and provide people with possibilities to connect the two in multiple ways. Although the two case studies offer some examples of how this could be achieved, the organizations involved did not really pay much attention to explicitly relating learning to work. There is still significant room for progress in this area.

CONCLUSION

Although there are many definitions of the learning organization concept in the literature, most of them emphasize notions like shared vision, shared values, collective learning, continuous improvement, making tacit knowledge explicit, and entering into dialogue. Issues like conflict, power or interests are less often addressed, even though they should be at the heart of a discussion about learning organizations (Van der Krogt, 1998). The reason why those elements are neglected seems to stem from the managerial perspective that is generally applied. When managers want their company to become a learning organization, it is assumed every member in the organization can be convinced this is needed. But workers can have very different ideas about how to improve their situation, and training consultants may not necessarily agree with the strategy set out by the management. Besides, stressing the idea of a learning organization ignores the wealth of learning that is usually already going on, albeit unrecognized, when people are at work on the job (Poell, 1998).

A model of an organization as an arena in which different actors strive to pursue individual as well as collective interests informs an alternative image of the learning organization. The focus is not on developing shared values, but rather on equipping people to cope with the tensions they experience in everyday organizational life. Tensions and conflicts arise from legitimate differences in interests and power between managers, workers, training consultants and other (also external) actors. People need direction and guidance, but they also need the right amount of autonomy and independence. They need to learn how to cooperate with their colleagues, but they also need to keep up with professional developments. They have their own ideas of what they should learn and how they should learn it, but other people will probably think differently about these issues. These are the tensions people face on a regular basis. A learning organization allows them to resolve these issues satisfactorily.

The following questions can be asked when reasoning from this alternative view of the learning organization. They may help to identify already existing elements of a learning organization on which to base further initiatives:

• What learning is already going on? For instance, how do people solve problems they encounter in their work? Or, which individual or private learning efforts may have an organizational spin-off?

• Who organizes learning? Besides trainers and consultants, what learning initiatives have managers and workers already taken? Are there any outside influences on the corporate learning system (eg, from government bodies, trade unions, professional associations, and so forth)?

• How do people cope with tensions in organizing learning? How are conflicts resolved? Who is a dominant influence on what learning goes on? How do other organizational members exert their influence?

If organizational learning starts from individual learning, and with most authors I believe it does, all individuals in an organization have a right to be taken seriously in what they learn and how they go about learning it. An awareness of the current situation in the corporate learning system is a starting point from which a true learning organization can arise. Like the two case studies, a learning organization cannot be implemented, it can only grow incrementally out of investigation, experiment and evaluation.

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6
National Economic Development and Human Resource Development

John P Wilson

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Since the 1980s, there has been a growing interest at national and international levels in the area of Human Resource Development (HRD) and its impact on economic performance. This interest and concern has been predominantly driven by globalization and the increase in international trade; unemployment levels; national budget deficits; international comparisons of levels of education and training; and the development of new technologies.

Whether a country is in the early stages of development, newly industrialized, or fully industrialized, the strategies adopted to bring about further development, in its broadest sense, tend to be of a portfolio nature with a variety of objectives targeted within the political, economic, social and technological areas. These areas are closely interwoven with one another and thus HRD needs to be considered within this broader framework. This chapter will consider the arguments for encouraging education and training at national levels for the purposes of increasing economic output. It will then illustrate some of the various strategies adopted by countries, at various stages of development, to enhance their economic well-being.

Having read this chapter you will:
• understand the economic imperative for compulsory education;
• understand the economic imperative for training and developing the workforce;
• be aware of the need for a flexible labour force; and
• understand the role of education in promoting peaceful co-existence and democracy.

DEVELOPING THE HUMAN RESOURCES OF A NATION

There has long been a recognition that education of the individual has been a source of personal advancement and growth, and this rationale has been expanded to apply to the intellectual resources of a nation. In 1776, Adam Smith wrote *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* in which he observed that while people of high status and income had the opportunity to receive an education, the same opportunities were not available for less well-off people who had to begin work in very early childhood. He also maintained that not only would education provide a civilizing effect for the whole population but it would also enable people who had even a rudimentary education to be more productive:

But though the common people cannot, in any civilized society, be so well instructed as people of some rank and fortune, the most essential parts of education, however, to read, write, and account, can be acquired at so early a period of life that, the greater part even of those who are to be bred to the lowest occupations, have time to acquire them before they can be employed in those occupations. For a very small expence the public can facilitate, can encourage, and can even impose upon almost the whole body of people, the necessity of acquiring those most essential parts of education. (Adam Smith, in Heilbroner, 1986:304)

The education of a country's population has not always been regarded as beneficial; there were believed to be some negative consequences of educating the population. In Britain, during the early 19th century, concerns were expressed that universal education might cause dangers such as subversion, insubordination, and people leaving menial tasks for other jobs. From a national point of view it was felt that education might threaten freedom of thought, and increase the chance of tyranny and the greater control of the populace. Moreover, some people believed it might decrease personal initiative and lead to inefficiency; discourage voluntary charitable schooling; and encourage fecklessness among parents who would not appreciate the benefits if they did not have to pay for education.

Observation of educational practices in other countries alleviated many of the doubts and led Britain to recognize the benefits of universal education. In an ironical twist even some of those against state education were encouraged to support it because 'educated

workmen, being able to understand the economic doctrines then current, would appreciate the futility of agitating for better pay and conditions' (Murphy, 1972:9).

During the middle part of the 19th century the pressure for all children to be educated increased in many parts of society. At the same time as the demand for child labour was decreasing an increasing number of parents were recognizing the benefits of sending their children to school. At a national level there was also a growing appreciation that education was necessary to ensure that the economy remained competitive:

With every year that passed during the 1860s it became more obvious that, however the obstacles were to be overcome, Britain could not long remain without a truly national system of elementary education. Competition from abroad in commerce and industry was becoming ever more keen, yet there did not exist in England and Wales a basis for producing a generally literate labour force, or a foundation on which to erect a comprehensive system of secondary, technical and commercial education. (Murphy, 1972:28–9)

With the passing years the pressure for education increased and there was increasing provision of education through church schools, Sunday schools and private provision. In Britain, the term 'public school' did not, and still does not, mean free state education as it does in many other parts of the world. In Britain, a public school is generally open to the public on the condition that they have the financial resources to pay for the education. The general provision of education is commonly termed 'state education'.

The Education Act of 1871 provided for the education of all children and set the scene over the succeeding years for increased provision. In a number of European Union countries there is compulsory education until the age of 16, with Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Austria and Portugal ending this compulsion at 15. In general, full-time compulsory education lasts nine or ten years, with Portugal requiring eight years; Luxembourg and Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) 11 years; and the Netherlands and Northern Ireland 12 years (European Commission, 1997a).

There has been a form of inflation in educational qualifications in many countries. The economic success of Japan following the end of World War II, with its large numbers of graduates, has been seen as a model for other countries to increase the volume of people in higher education.

Access and participation in education vary across the world. More than 1 billion young people are receiving formal education now compared with around 300 million in 1953 when the first survey was conducted by UNESCO. Girls are less likely to be enrolled in schools and this imbalance has resulted in different literacy rates for the world's women, at 71.2 per cent against 83.6 per cent for men, although the gap is slowly reducing (UNESCO, 1995).

Compulsory and further and higher education can be considered a long-term investment in the intellectual capital of a country. In some countries more is seen as being

better; however, quality assurance and other factors are beginning to challenge open-ended commitments to fully funded publicly provided education. A number of these arguments will be considered later in this chapter.

Demographic factors

In many countries there has been a progressive movement of people from working on the land to living and working in urban areas. This flight from rural areas arose from forces of demand and supply. There was a growing productivity in agriculture reducing demand for labour, but more particularly there were the pulling forces of regular and higher-paid work in the factories, and improved living conditions in the urban areas.

This movement of people into the secondary industries of textiles, engineering, etc also encouraged an increase in the number of people occupied in tertiary industries, who provided the services required to support these developments, for example, legal and accounting services, distribution and retail. Progressively more and more people have become employed in the tertiary sector as the use of technology with its greater efficiency has resulted in fewer people being employed in secondary occupations. In many earlier industrialized countries more people are now employed in tertiary industries than in secondary ones.

Demographic factors also influence the state of the labour market and the nature of the economic success at micro levels of organizations and macro levels of national economic performance. The baby boom in the 1950s following World War II resulted in a large increase in the supply of labour for the job market some two decades later. It was fortunate that this increase coincided with considerable economic activity and growth that was able to soak up the supply of human resources.

The 1950s and 1960s were a period of low unemployment and such were the shortages being experienced in many countries that large numbers of immigrant workers were encouraged to migrate to the booming economies. The USA and Canada encouraged large-scale immigration during these periods, while Oceania, Australia and New Zealand were also encouraging immigration in order to maintain economic growth levels. Britain and France encouraged large numbers of Commonwealth and former territories people to emigrate and work in the lower-paid sectors, such as public transport and hospitals, which were proving to be unattractive to the incumbent population. In Germany a large number of immigrant workers, particularly from Turkey, were invited to come and were called *'gastarbeiters'* or guest workers. In the Far East, Japan too was encouraging guest workers. In other countries such as the former Soviet Union, large-scale movements of people were encouraged together with inducements and awards for high birth rates.

The growth period of the 'baby boom' years has changed to one of 'baby bust' in some

countries, which has resulted in a significant decline in the availability of young people to

take up jobs. To some extent this was compensated by the increase in unemployment due to higher productivity and lower levels of economic growth. At a more micro level skills shortages have been addressed by internal training within organizations, and sometimes by local or government initiatives to encourage and develop people within a particular sector.

BAHRAIN MODEL FOR BOOSTING TRAINING AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Bahrain's income, like that of other Arabian Gulf Cooperation Council states, depends on oil sales. Before 1973 the oil price was $5 per barrel and then increased dramatically to reach $34 per barrel by 1978. This rapid increase in oil prices created an economic boom and the government started to establish the modern infrastructure of the nation. The people also started to build houses, buy cars and purchase more household appliances, which led to the establishment of many service and construction companies.

The workforce available in the market at that time was not able to cope with the demand by the new companies, so the government authorized companies to import foreign workers. This imported workforce became an important element for many companies because it was cheap, controllable and easy to repatriate.

The downside of a cheap imported workforce was that Bahraini national job seekers faced difficulties. Moreover, employers claimed that Bahrainis lacked the skills and expertise to fulfil their work requirements. In spite of these obstacles many Bahraini workers/job seekers proved, after proper training, that they were able to perform to the job requirements of the labour market.

The main concern, however, was that the foreign workers suited the employers' intentions more than the locals for the reasons explained above. Therefore, when it was discovered in 1975 that most companies were neither willing to train workers nor to employ local job seekers, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs took responsibility for the provision of training services for both company workers and job seekers for those companies that could not provide such services. The High Council for Vocational Training was formed in 1975 to execute this policy and was funded from a levy paid by companies at the rate of 4 per cent of the total wages for the non-Bahraini workers and 2 per cent of the wages of Bahrainis. Companies providing training services were exempted from this levy. Although this levy system encouraged many companies to train their workers through utilizing the levy money, many companies continued importing workers and regarded the money paid as a form of taxation to be forgotten.

Much money was also spent on training for the purpose of localization (replacing expatriate workers with indigenous workers). In 1994 over US$57 million was

spent on training

but the localization progress was negligible compared with what had been spent. For that reason, in 1995, the Ministry started to take extra measures to monitor the localization process. In addition to intensifying training efforts and adopting modern training systems as a means to better localization, it started to apply a new procedure by asking companies to increase their Bahraini workforce by 5 per cent yearly to reach 50 per cent Bahrainization. Failure to achieve this level meant that work permits for foreign workers would not be issued. Although these procedures were not easy to implement they nevertheless achieved the desired results.

The Ministry of Labour currently motivates companies to undertake localization efforts by providing special treatment or ranking priorities for companies that achieve a higher percentage of localization. For example, the Ministry pays the salaries of the newly recruited employees or part of the salaries for a certain period of time for specific occupations under certain conditions.

Among the efforts to intensify training activities is the development of the Bahrain Training Institute (BTI) that operates under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The BTI is equipped for vocational and technical training and is recognized within and outside Bahrain. It conducts programmes up to Higher National Diploma (HND) level and follows numerous training approaches including the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) framework.

Bahrain is also adopting a strategy to be a regional centre for training and human resources by encouraging international training providers to establish training institutes. Continuous and intensive efforts by the Bahrain Government in developing training activities and human resources have significantly increased the level of services provided for most aspects of life. Arising from these efforts the 1998 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) identified Bahrain as first in the Arab region for developing human resources.

With acknowledgement to Majid Al Binali, The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Bahrain.

National economic competition

We are going to win and the industrialized West is going to lose out. There is nothing you can do about it because the reasons for your failure are within yourselves. With your bosses doing the thinking while the workers wield the screwdrivers, you are convinced deep down that this is the right way to do business. For you the essence of management is getting the ideas out of the heads of the bosses and into the hands of labour. ... For us the core of management is the art of mobilising and putting together the intellectual resources of all

employees in the service of the firm. (Konoke Matsushita in conversation with an American businessman, in Abbott, 1994:10)

With the increase in international trade there has been a corresponding growth in competition between nations, as the quotation above indicates. This Darwinian struggle for economic supremacy has become ever more intense and has led to ever greater searches for competitive advantage.

The current concerns in many countries about their standards of training and education are not new. In Britain it would appear that at regular periods there have been major crises about the standards of education and training. Even in the 19th century there was concern, with Lyon Playfair giving a lecture in 1852 on 'Industrial instruction on the Continent' and warning that technical education was necessary in order to maintain superiority over foreign competitors. The Devonshire Commission (1872–5) investigated university provision of scientific and technical education and argued that there were insufficient scientists and engineers, and that this would have a serious impact on the well-being of the country.

People have always tended to look beyond their own particular back yard to find comparisons, and this was demonstrated by the economist Alfred Marshal in 1890 (in Prais, 1995:104) when he stated that:

On the whole we may say that at present England is very much behind hand as regards the provision for the commercial as well as the technical education of the proprietors and principal managers of industrial works.

He also stated that Germany had developed people 'who are better fitted to do the work required of the middle ranks of industry than any the world has ever seen'.

In many countries it was observed that their share of world production and world trade was progressively decreasing and that competition was increasing. The impact of education on economic competitiveness has already been discussed, and similarly the impact of work-related training was also increasingly being recognized. In the USA the Council on Competitiveness (1987) identified that industry training programmes were inadequate and this translated into low productivity. Short-term policies were seen to have resulted in low investment in developing human resources and had led to longer-term economic problems.

During the 1980s the pre-eminence of the USA's economic production was overhauled by Japan, which became the world's leading industrial nation. As a result of this, the competitiveness of the US economy was investigated by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT, 1989), which identified five key factors necessary for the nation to regain competitiveness. Significantly, the first step identified as a key regenerator of economic success was to invest in human capital.

At a broader international level the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development conducted research into economic development and argued that technological

advancements would not result in satisfactory economic output without investment

elsewhere in the economy (OECD, 1989b). In particular, there needed to be both prior and concurrent institutional and social changes especially in the areas of education and training. The OECD (1990) identified a number of factors that demonstrate the developments that are occurring:

• With new technology there is the potential for new forms of organizational structure and methods of operation.

• There is an increased integration of various technologies which have resulted in the decline and obsolescence of traditional organizations and work structures.

• There is an increasing interest and growth in the recognition that human resources provide a competitive dimension.

• Increased quality, just-in-time practices, and the decreasing lifecycles of services and products have focused attention on the need for integrated planning policies that link technology, work practices and skills more closely together. The traditional Tayloristic approach to work organization has proved to be too inflexible to accommodate rapidly changing markets, and organizational issues of increased local responsibility, flatter organizations, teamwork and decentralization.

• The number of low-skilled and unskilled jobs has decreased dramatically while the areas of job growth require more high-level and broader skills as a result of multi-skilling.

The dilemma facing countries is the degree of financial investment to make in the education and training of their populations. The economic educational and training spiral (see Figure 6.1) illustrates how a virtuous circle of investment in education and training can result in increased production and wealth for a country, thus leading to increased resources for further investment. Conversely, a reduction in education and training investment can feed through into reduced output that reduces wealth and leads to a lower capacity to spend on education and training, further exacerbating the crisis.

Many countries are now attempting to position themselves as knowledge-intensive societies. This is illustrated by the situation facing the UK:

If the national economy is to break out of the prevailing low skills–low quality equilibrium and become the knowledge-based, high technology, highly skilled, high value-added economy purveyed in the political rhetoric it is essential that those factors which are continuing to sustain the low skills equilibrium are addressed. (Esland, 1991:xi)

National strategies

The desire to encourage policies which promote economic growth is central to the work of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and for this reason a

Figure 6.1 The education, training and development economic spiral

Convention was signed in 1960 by Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the UK and the USA. A number of other countries have since joined the OECD. Its main purpose is enshrined within Article 1, which states:

• to achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment and a rising standard of living in Member countries, while maintaining financial stability, and thus contribute to the development of the world economy;

• to contribute to sound economic expansion in Member as well as non-Member countries in the process of economic development; and

• to contribute to the expansion of world trade on a multilateral, non-discriminatory basis in accordance with international obligations. (CERI, 1996: introduction)

There has been a growing recognition that allowing the market forces of companies, public organizations and individuals to determine their own level of skills is an inefficient mechanism for encouraging the development of the overall national economy. For this reason, an increased level of involvement by governmental agencies has been directed at the coordination of strategies and the improvement of standards.

An interventionist or laissez-faire approach to education and training is to some extent a reflection of the prevailing philosophy of the country. In the USA market forces are seen to be the main influence in making it such a strong economic power. To challenge this philosophy has been seen almost as heresy; however, there has been an increasing recog

nition that the economic advantages it has enjoyed in the past are slowly being eroded. This threat from other nations was deeply felt during the 1980s when Japanese economic output exceeded that of the USA.

Being overtaken in the world economic hierarchy caused much public debate and soul-searching in the USA. This reflection and searching for suitable answers can also be seen in many other countries as their economic performance declines in comparison to other countries. In the USA proponents of market forces maintained there should be little or no intervention while others argued for systematic involvement in training and development.

A middle ground was identified which is illustrated by Porter (1980) who had originally conducted research into the competitive advantages experienced by companies. He transferred this approach to the economic performance of countries in his book, *The Competitive Advantage of Nations.* Porter (1990:620) maintained that, 'Government's most powerful roles are indirect rather than direct ones.' He added that, 'Government's policies that succeed are those that create an environment in which firms can gain competitive advantage.'

The integration of various labour market factors and the awareness of international differences can be seen in the remarks made by Robert Reich, US Labor Secretary, at the 1994 Group of Seven Economic Conference in Detroit. He stated there was a need:

to combine the kind of investments in education and training and apprenticeship that we find in Europe with the dynamic labour mobility and flexibility we find in the US, all encased within macro-economic policies which encourage growth and jobs. (Graham, 1994:4)

At a broader level Sun (1997:383) analysed the United Nations Development Programme's findings for 173 countries and concluded that government intervention would appear to be significantly related to human development; however, he could not state the ideal level of intervention. He suggested that chaos and restricted levels of goods and services resulted from too little government; while too much government would result in restricted freedom and a stifling of initiative and stagnation. To support his claim he referred to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the market experiments of China. He therefore suggested that, 'a proper degree of government intervention–a *"golden mean"* between central planning and market mechanism–may best promote human development'. Sun (1997:390) concluded that:

for most countries of the world, further human development and fulfilment require more government intervention. The provisions of public goods and services–infrastructure, investment in human capital (education and health), law and order, as well as a certain degree of income redistribution providing an economic safety net–are necessary for continuous human development. Yet, so many Third World countries have not been able to

achieve political stability or build consensus for the mobilisation of all the necessary resources so as to render the government a constructive role to play. The realisation that a mean value between central planning and market mechanism may contribute most to human development can certainly help in building the needed consensus and stability.

Integrating education and training

The responsibility for education and training has not always been closely coordinated in terms of governmental departments despite their numerous common objectives. In Britain, the Department of Education and Science was responsible for education in schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities, while the Department of Employment was responsible for vocational training. In order to encourage schooling which was related to the needs of work the Department of Employment provided large levels of financial support through the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI). This separation of common purpose has been resolved through an amalgamation of the two departments into the Department for Education and Employment, and a similar formulation can be found in a number of other countries.

During the 1980s there was an increase in the provision of education and training which was especially noticeable in the area of enterprise training. In addition, many bodies started to provide a variety of programmes designed to ameliorate unemployment. Because of the large number of education and training programmes there was a need for a more coordinated series of measures, which resulted in increased collaboration both within and between training providers, government agencies and employers.

While the approaches to education and training vary according to the labour market conditions that operate within a country, three main strategies have been identified from the CERI research (Frank Press, 1990).

A human resources intensive strategy

This operates where the people entering the job market have received a sound education, up to the ages of 16–19, which allows them to benefit from intensive on-the-job education and training. If the organization has a flexible form of operation then it is possible to encourage job rotation.

The polarization strategy

Some countries do not possess a strong vocational education and training system and this deficiency may sometimes be combined with a high level of failure or drop-out from secondary education. Furthermore, there may well be a relatively inflexible labour market due to the lack of skills and education and low levels of training investment.

In these circumstances organizations tend to adopt a policy of investing in the training of core workers whom they try to retain through various inducements and training contracts. Beyond this group there also exists another group of employees who receive less training and investment and who are more susceptible to the boom and bust of the business cycle.

There is thus a polarization of investment and skills, with some being more supported than others.

The mobility strategy

Organizations tend to employ people who have a high level of education, often from universities. Formal education and training is not particularly common; instead learning is very strongly linked with the work in which they are occupied. Mobility between organizations is high and the countries have technologically advanced workforces with a strong service sector. Often the main focus of human resource development within organizations is on effective selection and recruitment and encouraging continuous learning in the work environment.

In order to encourage a closer relationship between education, training and the labour market the OECD (1994) has identified three main factors that encourage integration:

1. initial education and its quality;

2. a smooth transition between initial education and work;

3. investment in adult lifelong learning.

With the development of learning societies and lifelong learning the artificial segregation of education and training has diminished. The two are now closely integrated through a variety of means:

The barriers between vocational and general education are starting to break down, with the growing recognition that young people need to develop the capacity to learn continuously rather than simply learning a specific set of job-related skills. (CERI, 1996:52)

Demand and supply in the labour market

In many OECD countries there would appear to be a developing skills gap between the labour demand arising from information-based technology and the requirements of knowledge-based industries, and the supply of suitable people within organizations and from educational institutions. The degree of labour shortages in occupational sectors is to a large extent dependent on the country and the differing market conditions and skill levels that exist.

Advances in technology have reduced the demand for and jobs available to unskilled and semi-skilled workers. In particular this is affecting unskilled males with low or non-existent educational qualifications who also lack the interpersonal skills that are more commonly found among females. Findings by CERI (1997:20) demonstrate that, 'Higher levels of educational attainment are closely associated, for individuals, with higher earnings, a lower chance of unemployment and more skills that yield social advantage'.

Flexibility in the workplace

Various strategies have been developed by governments to encourage or discourage the availability of labour. For instance, in Britain, the retirement age for women has been increased to 65 in line with that of men, and there is also the option for people to continue working until the age of 70 without compulsory retirement.

Training at apprenticeship levels needs to be flexible and responsive to changing requirements. In some countries apprenticeships have continued for considerable periods after the relevant jobs have largely disappeared. The German apprenticeship system changed to a significant extent during the 1980s and 1990s. In the USA vocational and technical education is focused on the school and there are fewer workplace apprenticeships. In the UK more attention is being given to changing the system.

Bengtsson (1991) identified three main strands emerging from his study into the changes affecting demand and supply in the labour market:

1. Demand changes occur much more swiftly than those on the supply side. The scientific approach of Taylor (1911) seems to be being replaced by a system which is evolving and which incorporates technology, organizations, skills formation, flexibility and human resources.

2. The institutions that deliver formal education and training tend to be less responsive to changes than informal providers and private institutions. These latter organizations would now appear to be developing into a market of their own.

3. The influence of the educational institutions and labour market of a country can be a critical influence on the ability of key organizations to move from a Tayloristic approach to developing more effective strategies. For this reason governmental interventions can have a major impact on the supply of appropriate labour.

It is recognized that the barriers to ensuring an educated and trained workforce are quite considerable. They consist of economic barriers, a blurring of responsibilities between private and public provision, and psychological barriers with regard to the sharing of responsibility and partnership.

Bengtsson (1991) suggests a number of policy considerations that might influence the demand side:

• Tax systems and inducements should be investigated in order to encourage organizations to provide internal training.

• Small and medium-sized enterprises should be encouraged to educate and train their workforce where appropriate through the use of alternative delivery methods including information technology.

• New structures and industrial relations processes and collective bargaining, which move away from Tayloristic methods, should be encouraged.

• The promotion of strategies that encourage active education and training policies which relate to actual needs, rather than passive subsidy programmes.

Smooth market responses to differences between the demand and supply of labour in the various sectors are rare. There is usually a time lag between the recognition of a labour requirement and the supply of people with the necessary knowledge and skills. Labour market research is increasingly focused on predicting likely future demand so that educators and trainers can plan accordingly.

Benchmarking national performance

We have seen that countries have for centuries been observing the education, training and economic well-being of their competitors in order to benchmark their own performance. This has resulted in regular periods of national anxiety as economic results decline, with criticism being levelled at lack of investment; poor teaching; low levels of skills; ineffectual government, etc.

The figures used to benchmark performance in the area of training and development were for a long time imprecise and often unobtainable. However, as the importance of both has increased there have been greater efforts to provide valid and reliable indicators of outputs and standards. This has often proved to be a very difficult operation and as a result many of the studies tended to be observational and only used crude indicators. Comparisons proved to be of limited value due to the large differences in the educational systems of the various countries. There has been pressure for more transparent data that would allow more direct comparisons, and while the figures which are now available still tend to have limitations, they at least provide indicators as to the impact certain policies have in relation to other countries.

There are two new challenges faced by OECD countries and beyond. The first is to ensure that advanced learning is provided not just to a small elite but to larger numbers. The second is to encourage lifelong learning and not just learning opportunities during the years of formal education. At a meeting in Paris in 1996 Education Ministers' commitment was made to 'lifelong learning for all':

If IBM were producing results comparable to those of many American schools–that is, if 25% of their computers were falling off the assembly line before they reached the end, and 90% of the completed ones didn't work properly for 80% of the time–the last thing in the world the company would do would be to run that same old assembly line an additional hour each day for an extra month each year. Instead, IBM would re-think the entire

system. (Jack Bowsher, former Director of Education, IBM, in Abbott, 1994:44)

One use of internationally comparable figures is to help assess the extent to which the expansion of education has resulted in increased economic performance. Having students sitting in classrooms for longer and longer periods may not necessarily translate into superior performance. The difficulty is finding clear and irrefutable evidence that this is or is not the case. For this reason CERI argued for the need for clearer indicators and a significant sum of money in order to identify and compare more accurately one country with another. It was recognized that, 'Readers. . . should bear in mind that the science of understanding and interpreting international indicators is still in its infancy' (CERI 1996:9–10).

The picture is to some extent becoming further complicated with the increase in lifelong learning: figures are not fully available for other forms of continuing education and training. One thing is certain: Treasury Departments in the member states will not allow high levels of spending on education, training and development without careful thought to the value for money which is spent. For example, identifying the number of teachers/trainers in initial vocational training has proved problematical and a CEDEFOP (1995a:7) survey explained that 'the production was not easy'. Because the figures were unavailable it was not possible to make comparisons of trainer/trainee ratios.

Figures indicate that educational spending between 1975 and 1993 stagnated, with 5.8 per cent of gross domestic product being spent publicly on education. Private expenditure on education was generally less than 1 per cent, although in Germany, Japan, Spain and the USA it was more than 1 but less that 2 per cent (CERI, 1996:18).

The increased use of international comparisons has made benchmarking of specific skills useful indicators of numeracy. The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement has carried out a number of international comparisons of the achievement levels of school children. The first, which was carried out in 1963–4, assessed the mathematical abilities of children in 12 countries (Husen, 1967).

'Basic skills' are very necessary because:

Literacy is a key foundation skill on which the development of other adult competences crucially depends. A well-educated and literate workforce yields national comparative advantage and harnesses forces to counteract polarization and social exclusion. Today, adults need a high level of literacy to function well: society has become more complex and low-skill jobs are disappearing. Therefore, inadequate levels of literacy and numeracy among a broad section of the population potentially threaten the strength of economies and the social cohesion of nations. Yet policy makers in most countries have hitherto lacked any empirical knowledge about the distribution of generic skills such as literacy in the population. (CERI, 1996:31)

It was noted that continuous training and development of the workforce and the upgrading of their skills will benefit those with literacy and numeracy skills and as a result the gap between them and those without such skills will increase.

The complexity of comparing standards is illustrated by the fact that the German employers association (BDA) objected to the comparison of the German appreticeship with that of a Level 3 National Vocational Qualification in Britain on the grounds of the short period of study and doubts about the levels of qualification.

Numerous forces have affected the competitiveness of nations and the very fact that it is difficult to identify and measure them has resulted in various responses, some more effective than others. Some of the factors affecting the labour market in the USA have been downsizing and the discredited 'business process re-engineering' where large swathes of the workforce have been removed. This has sometimes resulted in acute labour shortages, particularly in areas that require a long period of education and training such as engineering and other technological areas.

Enforcement or encouragement of HRD

Most nations adopt a 'carrot and stick' approach to the development of their human resources. Some countries have introduced mandatory levies, such as France which initially began with 2 per cent of the payroll, but has since reduced it to 1.2 per cent of the total wage bill. This levy, which is a 'national obligation', is strictly devoted to vocational training. People who have been employed for more than approximately two years, and with a minimum of at least six months with their current employer, have the opportunity to receive training to upgrade skills or take a qualification. This can be done under their own initiative (*conge individuel de formation*) or within the employer's training provision (*plan de formation d'enterprise*). During the training these employees will receive at least 80 per cent and sometimes more of their normal salary.

Greece levies 0.45 per cent of the wage bill, which is collected through the social insurance system, and the sum collected is jointly managed by employers and trades unions.

In Belgium there is legislation called the '0.18 rule', in which 0.18 per cent of the wages bill is levied in order to provide training and employment of at-risk groups found among job seekers. This is a cooperative venture between government and industry in an attempt to reduce the levels of long-term unemployment. It is designed to resolve three main problems in the labour market:

1. demand versus supply in the labour market where there is considerable unemployment;

2. low skill levels or lack of qualifications among the unemployed; and

3. the underprivilege experienced by those unemployed for a long period. (Pollet, 1992)

However, although the levies are collected they do not necessarily result in training and

development. There is some evidence that some small and medium-sized organizations in

France do not send their employees on courses because they are time-consuming and keep them away from their work. Germany does not have mandatory levies but has a tradition of training that has proved very successful and has encouraged a number of countries to imitate the 'dual system'.

For European Union countries training has increasing importance. The European Social Charter states that, 'every EC worker must be able to have access to vocational training throughout their working life'.

National HRD comparisons and systems

The provision of education, training and development in specific countries has been detailed in a number of places. For instance, descriptions of all the European countries, the USA and Japan can be found in European Commission (1997a). Additionally, Incomes Data Services (1997) provides information about national training and development systems.

Extensive information about vocational training systems in the European Union countries has been produced by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP, 1995a, 1995b, 1997, 1998). Details about Eastern European countries have been collated by the European Training Foundation, for example the Czech Republic (European Training Foundation, 1997).

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Education and training for peace

The economic and competitive pressures for the development of a national system of education were quite persuasive, but there have also been other factors that supported this trend. In particular, there were many arguments that an educated society would be more civilized, there would be a reduction in crime, and that democracy would be strengthened. This point is strongly endorsed by Prais (1995:2) who maintained that:

education has much wider objectives than merely preparing citizens to become more effective 'cogs in the industrial-economic machine'; the history of the horrors of the twentieth century and its totalitarian states should be sufficient warning against that narrow view of the purposes of education.

Education was also viewed as a mechanism for preventing the circumstances in which war might begin. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization constitution was adopted in 1945 following the end of World War II and stated that:

the Governments of the States Parties to this Constitution on behalf of their peoples declare: That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed. That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind. (UNESCO, 1995:16)

As part of this humanitarian movement, the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that education 'shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms'. Thus, in addition to economic reasons for the education of the population, there are also very strong democratic and peaceful ones.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL NGOs IN MALI, WEST AFRICA

Mali, one of the world's poorest countries, covers an area of 1,240,192 sq. km and has a population of almost 10 million people. It is predominantly agricultural with the southern third being dependent on the flooding of the Niger to provide irrigation for crops. The northern third is the arid Sahara desert.

The process of democracy and decentralization in Mali started in 1991 and since that time nearly 1000 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been created. Many of these NGOs contribute significantly to the development of Malian society by means of human resources, activities and goods. These NGOs are active in both rural and urban areas and in all kinds of sectors, for example, healthcare, education, agriculture, and sanitation.

Despite their enthusiasm and motivation, most of the NGOs are rather inexperienced at institutional and organizational levels. Although their personnel are often technically well trained, there is an enormous need for reinforcement of policy development, planning and internal organization of the NGOs. This lack of experience and the need for support and training was not only observed by international organizations, but also by many of the Malian NGOs themselves. In order to improve their managerial and operational performance and be more effective with their target client groups they approached SNV (Dutch Development Agency) for training.

After two years of experimental training and support, SNV has developed several learning experiences linked to a flexible training programme. The

differentiated programme provides common training for staff members of NGOs (theory and instruction),

together with specific coaching and reflection (practice and exercises) on the same topic at each head office. Moreover, mutual assistance and the exchange of information among these NGOs has been encouraged and supported.

The differentiation also takes place at the level of the trainer. The design and execution of the programme has not been limited to the senior adviser in charge of the programme, but other SNV personnel with a variety of competences. The advice and involvement of external Malian experts in the programme is actively sought. Moreover, SNV contacted other foreign and international development organizations in Mali about their experiences with local NGOs. This has resulted in regular meetings among a group of development organizations from the Netherlands, Canada, Germany, the USA, the UK and the World Bank. The objective is to improve the exchange of information and experiences and to encourage mutual collaboration. A specific example of this is the training, by SNV, of the personnel of other organizations in applying methods for the institutional analysis of NGOs. Financial donor organizations from the Netherlands are also regularly involved in the policy development of Malian NGOs.

This successful intervention has been extended on a regional basis to encourage the various SNV programmes in West Africa to collaborate in supporting the development, training and sharing of information among African NGOs.

With acknowledgement to Hub Gielissen, Senior Adviser, SNV, NGO Programme, Mali.

In focusing on the links between economic performance and training and development it is possible to overlook the human requirements of individuals and society to have not just a quantity of goods and services but also a quality of life. Personal issues such as inner growth and development are highly valued and, indeed, the US Constitution includes the 'pursuit of happiness' as an objective.

Human development has also been considered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1996). The Human Development Index is based on a number of factors including gross domestic product per person, educational achievement, life expectancy, and level of literacy. Both Canada and Japan have regularly appeared at the top of this index, indicating a quality of life to which other countries aspire.

This perspective on life is endorsed by the UNDP in a report that also contains a warning based on the experience of human conflict:

Human development is the end–economic growth a means. So, the purpose of growth should be to enrich people's lives. But far too often it does not. The recent decades show all too clearly that there is no automatic link between growth and human development. And even when links are established, they may be gradually eroded–unless regularly fortified by skilful and intelligent policy management. (UNDP, 1996:1)

In 1976 the World Employment Conference adopted a resolution concerning basic needs and their provision in less developed countries:

Strategies and national development plans and policies should include explicitly as a priority objective the promotion of employment and the satisfaction of the basic needs of each country's population. ... Basic needs include two elements. First they include certain minimum requirements of a family for private consumption: adequate food, shelter and clothing, as well as certain household equipment and furniture. Second, they include essential services provided by and for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport and health, educational and cultural facilities. (ILO, 1977)

While recognizing that investments must occur in agricultural developments, Singh (1979:600–601) concludes that:

To meet the basic needs of the poor in the Third World in a sustainable way it is essential to raise the rate of economic growth in these countries. This will require a more than proportional expansion of their manufacturing sectors, and therefore an accelerated development of modern industry, including the establishment of appropriate capital goods industries.

The UNDP has emphasized the reciprocal links between human development and economic development:

Economic growth and human development thus exhibit a degree of independence, especially in the short term. But there are longer-term links–human development helping economic growth, and economic growth helping human development. Contrary to earlier theories, new theories and evidence suggest that growth and equity need not be contradictory goals. Nor do growth and participation. And there is strong historical evidence from East Asia that heavy national investment in human development–spreading skills and meeting basic social needs–has been a springboard for sustained economic growth over decades. (UNDP, 1996:iii)

In general, most governments provide for human resource development through focusing on specific skills, on more general educational and training policies which can be more broadly targeted, and finally through development issues such as health, education, housing and defence.

Developing countries adopt a number of strategies to encourage economic advancement, one of which is technology transfer that not only includes concrete factors such as plant and equipment but also human resources and the skills and expertise needed to operate the new technology. This can be a very swift and effective means with which to introduce and develop a country's capabilities. However, there can also be a downside in that it can

inhibit development unless the local workforce is integrated with the new development. The importation of expatriate labour is insufficient in the long term to provide a satisfactory model (Williams, 1996).

DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIA
Malaysia has experienced enviable economic growth and has made a clear exposition of its future objectives linking educational, economic, technological and social objectives. In 1991, the Prime Minister Dato' Seri Dr Mahathir Mohammed (1991: 1–2) announced the nine central strategic challenges of Vision 2020 which described Malaysia's intention to be a fully developed industrialized country by the year 2020:
1. to establish a united Malaysian nation with a sense of common and shared destiny;
2. to create a psychologically liberated, secure and developed Malaysian society with faith and confidence in itself;
3. to foster and develop a mature democratic society;
4. to establish a fully moral and ethical society;
5. to establish a mature, liberal and tolerant society;
6. to establish a scientific and progressive society, a society that is innovative and forward-looking, one that is not only a consumer of technology but also a contributor to the scientific and technological civilization of the future;
7. to establish a fully caring society and a caring culture;
8. to ensure an economically just society;
9. to establish a prosperous society, with an economy that is fully competitive, dynamic, robust and resilient.
The implementation under the 7th Malaysia Plan (1996–2000) (1996: 321–2) of Malaysia's integrated education and training programmes to meet the national human resource requirements displays the following objectives:
• to increase participation in education at all levels through expansion of capacity and distance learning;
• to encourage more private sector investment in education and training to complement public sector efforts;
• to increase the capacity of existing institutions and to establish new institutions, particularly in science, engineering and technological fields;
• to improve the quality of education by providing qualified teachers and making better use of computers and information technology;
• to strengthen research and development capacity within existing higher education institutions in collaboration with local and foreign organizations engaged in research and development;

- to develop and exploit commercially the large pool of untapped research funding in public sector research agencies and universities;
- to increase the number of those with scientific and technical skills, especially those working in research and development;
- to provide incentives to increase student enrolment in the science streams;
- to strengthen the use of Bahasa Malaysia as the medium of instruction in all schools and institutions while increasing competency in the English language;
- to improve the management and administration of education and training programmes by improving the performance of managers and the introduction of better monitoring and evaluation systems;
- to improve the financial management of tertiary educational institutions through corporatization and other means;
- to improve the performance of pupils from the rural areas and reduce the dropout rate by improving educational facilities in rural areas;
- to amalgamate small schools in rural and remote areas with fewer than 150 pupil in order to maximize the use of resources, provide a better education and improve hostel facilities for students;
- to improve teacher morale and performance through training, recognition, incentives, awards and better welfare;
- to re-employ retired teachers to make up the shortages in critical subjects;
- to encourage positive values, innovation, communication and analytical skills amongst students.

While human resource development continued to be a major thrust in Malaysia's development plans, the human resource policy directions under the 7th Malaysia Plan (1996: 125) include:

- encouraging greater capital intensity of production in order to save on the use of labour;
- increasing the use of local labour and female labour (including greater utilization of handicapped persons);
- setting up a National Labour Institute to enhance the skill and level of professionalism;
- improving the education and skill delivery system as well as expanding facilities;
- increasing the supply of R&D personnel, including scientists and technologists;
- promoting greater participation of the private sector in human resource development;
- promoting performance-related wage mechanisms that link wages to productivity;
- removing bottlenecks in the labour market through an improved information system;
- reviewing labour laws and legislation that are not consistent with the dynamic changes in the labour market;

- inculcating discipline and other universal positive values among the workforce; and
- re-orienting societal and individual preferences towards skilled and other technical occupations.

With acknowledgement to Mohammed Nassir Abu Hassan, Malaysia.

CONCLUSION

There is considerable evidence linking the provision of education and training to the economic well-being of a country. However, there are a number of commentators who are cautious. Ashton and Green (1996:2) state that, 'despite an increasing effort on the part of empirical researchers, there remain enormous gaps in the knowledge of the magnitude of any links between skill formation and economic performance'. This view is supported by Keep and Meyhew (1991:198) who, while accepting that these links are reasonable, state that there is a 'paucity of hard, detailed evidence of direct casual links'.

It is evident that factors such as weak infrastructure, poor design and short-term requirements of returns on the investment of capital by the financial markets can have significant effects on the success or otherwise of an economy. It is clearly not just a question of putting the responsibility on the educational institutions and the training provided by organizations.

In spite of the lack of clear and irrefutable evidence of the positive links between education and training and national performance it would appear that few, if any, governments are prepared to go against perceived wisdom. From a competitive perspective Porter (1990:628) deserves the last word:

Education and training constitute perhaps the single greatest long-term leverage point available to all levels of government in upgrading industry.

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Section Two:
The Identification of Learning, Training and Development Needs

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7
The Identification of Organizational and Individual Training and Development Needs

Richard Palmer

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The third millennium offers fresh challenges to the training professional arising from the dynamic, chaotic, fiercely competitive marketplace which has replaced the relative organizational calm of 25 years ago. Moreover, not only does the de-layered organization of today consist of far fewer employees but also the expectations placed upon these individuals in terms of their effectiveness are much higher. This tighter focus upon individual contribution means that the identification of training and development needs has become a far more critical element in determining the organization's success.

It was Mark Twain (in *Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar*) who stated that, 'Training is everything. The peach was once a bitter almond; cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education.' There is no doubt that training is important; the question is, what training and to what level of detail? The answer to this question lies in the critical role that training needs analysis (TNA) plays. In this chapter we shall examine how an organization can identify those training needs which will ensure its continued existence, growth and development through the people it employs.

Having read this chapter you will:

• be able to apply TNA procedures at organizational, departmental, occupational, and individual levels;

• be able to apply various criteria in order to prioritize training and development needs;

• be able to conduct a SWOT analysis; and

• be aware of the application of job analysis techniques to training needs analysis.

DEFINING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

First, we need to define what we mean by training and development. The two terms are often used synonymously. Pepper (1984:9–11) defines training as 'that organized process concerned with the acquisition of capability, or the maintenance of capability'. He goes on to distinguish the meaning of development:

Where the objective is to acquire a set of capabilities which will equip a person to do a job some time in the predictable future, which is not within his [sic] present ability, that person is often said to undergo a process of development. Of course, straightforward job instruction, or rather job learning, is by this definition a development, but the term has become associated with longer-term and more complex arrangements for learning, often with job moves included in the plan.

For the purposes of this chapter, we shall not be far wrong to consider training as needs against present requirements. Development can be construed as relating to future requirements. For example, this could be preparation for a promotion, or for an organizational development such as the introduction of teamworking. TNA is assumed to include development issues also.

The cultural context

It is important to be discerning and take into account the culture of the organization within which TNA will be used. A horticultural analogy may be useful here. Consider the nature of the employees you are tending and growing. The organization may resemble a field of wheat. It has a large number of semi-skilled employees with a limited range of skill requirements. Alternatively, it may be a mature garden with different arrangements of planting, all requiring special and different attention to be at their best. Conversely, it may be a small, chaotic, developing garden where certain plants are emerging to give a structure.

The culture and environment will therefore dictate whether there needs to be more emphasis on the training or on the development aspects, which of the tools are most appropriate, and where the predominant emphases should be laid.

Learning needs and training needs

Before considering the identification of needs, it is important to make the distinction between learning and training needs. The Cabinet Office (1988: 4) defines a learning need as arising, 'when an individual or a group are required to do things differently, or to do different things'. These events arise all the time throughout any working environment and can be met informally as a part of the daily round. A training need only arises:

when a learning need cannot be met within the normal day-to-day processes or when meeting a learning need in this way will take too long, involve too high a risk/cost, not result in the required standard of performance, and when training is the most cost-effective way of meeting the need. (Cabinet Office, 1988:4)

UNDERTAKING A TNA

It is critical that the training professional, or whoever is carrying out the analysis, has access to the most accurate and relevant information available on the organization's present performance, problems and future plans. As Kenney and Reid (1986:69) point out, 'The quality of the training can be no better than the quality of the analysis permits.' Some sources of data are shown in the subsequent section. Data collection can also take the form of questionnaires, interviews, discussions, brainstorming groups and observation.

For the purposes of this chapter, we shall consider undertaking a TNA throughout a whole organization. The prime difficulty ahead of us is the size and complexity of the task. We therefore need to break the process down into bite-size manageable chunks.

Boydell (1983) has identified three levels of training needs within organizations:

1. organizational;

2. occupational; and

3. individual level.

We shall use these three broad areas as a starting point to break down the process. A fourth area, needs at departmental level, is a also a useful consideration when analysing training needs in larger organizations and is included here.

BROADENING THE SCOPE OF TNAs IN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN MALI

Activities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are playing an important role in the development processes of Mali. These NGOs are often young local organizations without much experience and with small numbers of professionally trained personnel. Many of the NGOs are member organizations of so-called umbrella organizations, eg CCA-ONG has 110 member NGOs. One of its principal objectives is to improve the competency of its member NGOs by training.

There was a progressive feeling of dissatisfaction among member NGOs and the umbrella organization's staff about the results and services of the training department. The general opinion was that training only partly met needs and it was decided that an evaluation of TNAs would be conducted by an external consultant in order to improve the training services.

Research was done among representatives of the most important stakeholders of the organization, ie the member NGOs, financial donor organizations, national administrative organizations and partner organizations. The research revealed that the evaluation and improvement of the TNAs was insufficient to improve and adapt the training services to the needs of the member NGOs. Another urgently felt problem was that most of the stake-holders did not believe that the umbrella organization's training policy reflected their own views, ideas and wishes. These opinions were based on a broader analysis of the general context of the Malian social, political and economic situation. TNAs, as executed by the umbrella organization, did not analyse these important factors.

Malian NGOs are operating in a fast developing social, political and economic context and, consequently, their role in the development process is also swiftly changing. Furthermore, the expectations of professionalism by international partners and donors were increasingly experienced as difficult to meet. Therefore, it was recommended that preceding, and supplementary to, a TNA, the development process and the stakeholders' role should be analysed regularly with all stakeholders and the umbrella organization. This analysis should be followed by a definition of the tasks of the umbrella organization including its role in training. Only after these steps are taken can a regularly executed TNA among member NGOs and other stakeholders be effective.

Research in CCA-ONG has revealed that focusing on the improvement of TNAs without considering external factors is unlikely to resolve the organization's problems, because external developments considerably influence the role of NGOs in the development process. The changing environment has an important impact on training needs. Thus, a regularly performed evaluation of the external circumstances (the development process)

and of the different roles of each stakeholder in this process should be executed next to and supplementary to TNAs. These actions should be taken in close consultation with all stakeholders.

With acknowledgement to Anita Nijsten, SNV, Mali.

NEEDS AT THE ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL

Business objectives

The starting point for a TNA has to be the corporate plan. Every organization has a plan. This may be bound in a general strategic statement; couched in precise business objectives; or in broad policy guidelines. In some organizations, it may not be in written form, but to survive and move forward, there is somewhere a plan, even if it is only in the head of the Managing Director. This is the starting point for examining training needs.

Most well-run organizations will have a well-defined set of business objectives. Where these exist, they will normally cascade down the organization so that departments, sections and individual managers will have sub-objectives that dovetail into the corporate plan. These are the prime source of information in developing the TNA at this level, for here are the specific, measurable targets that the organization is committed to pursue.

For example, an organization plans to increase sales of Product A by 10 per cent over the next year. To facilitate this, a further Sales Manager is being recruited; telesales effort is being redirected to promote this particular product; and manufacturing is gearing up for the anticipated rise in demand. Furthermore, assemblers from a production cell that makes a product with falling demand are to be transferred to Product A cell, and marketing support are preparing new corporate brochures and materials for all field sales personnel. As a part of this, a PC diskette is being prepared as a mailshot.

The planned increase in sales has already thrown up a myriad of training implications. These include: induction for the new Sales Manager; training implications for telesales; cross-training of assemblers; briefing of marketing support in the objectives of new promotional materials; and training in the production of PC-based materials. There may also be other training implications to consider; for example, the team leaders of the two affected manufacturing departments may require new skills, and there may be further implications for other areas of the organization. Note that this organizational-level objective is causing training needs at an organizational, departmental, occupational and individual level.

Organizational-level objectives may contain very large training implications. For example, the redirection of a corporate culture to new beginnings, take-over, or merger, will

require careful consideration with regard to the associated training needs. These will normally require a detailed analysis and a substantial commitment of training resource before they can be implemented.

As an example, consider an organization that has committed itself to move to a culture of total quality or continuous improvement. A comprehensive strategy is needed, with a phased implementation plan. Such a strategy will typically include improved communications systems, restructuring of job responsibilities, job redesign for supervisors, empowerment issues, improvements to inter-group interfaces, new alliances with suppliers, and development of group and teamworking capability. Such a major programme will generate a whole suite of training courses that may embrace every employee.

These are complex interventions that will call for an organizational development approach. They will possibly stretch over a number of years and require external consultancy expertise. As such, this scale of programme is an ongoing needs analysis in its own right.

New implementations

Another associated way of considering the objectives of the organization is to consider everything new that is proposed in the foreseeable future. Anything that is new will generally have a training implication. The following is a list of considerations:

• new product;

• new process or method;

• new technology;

• new piece of equipment;

• new legislation;

• new/transferred employee;

• new procedures/standards;

• new customer/market.

All new developments involve change and the facility for mistakes or lost opportunities. The smarter organization will be reviewing the training implications before rather than during the implementation of anything new. Having said that, the line manager may not always

think this way. It is here that the training professional, in keeping an eye open for new implementations, can make a valuable input to ensure the training need is considered at the right time.

Performance measures

The organization will be measuring itself, not only in terms of traditional financial performance indicators, but also increasingly in other areas. Corporate and departmental measures such as accident rates, customer complaints, warranty costs and quality costs all give leads to where things are going wrong. Training professionals should ensure they are privy to these measures.

There is a need to look beyond the simple figures. Something going wrong does not necessarily indicate a training need. For instance, a shortfall in production in a department may have a training implication. On the other hand, it may simply be down to poor performance of a sub-supplier. In this respect some caution is necessary. A training needs analysis is perhaps better termed a 'needs analysis'. *The needs of the organization are not necessarily training needs.* Very often, there may be process, systems or procedural issues that need addressing.

Problem-solving groups

Many organizations have embraced continuous improvement or total quality philosophies that use quality groups to address operational problems and devise and implement solutions. Such groups can occur at any level within the hierarchy. Such groups can be cross-functional or discreet within a function or department.

These groups are working on critical incidents or failures within the organizational system. As such, they are valuable sources of information on where training needs may be occurring. Very often, these groups are coordinated in their activity via a steering committee, facilitator, or a quality function. The machinery of the continuous improvement methodology is therefore doing some of the training professional's work in identifying where things are failing within the organization.

TNA AND COMPETENCES IN THE PRISON SERVICE
The Prison Service is an Executive Agency of the Home Office, with an annual budget of £1.3 billion and 36,000 directly employed staff. There are 135 prison establishments in England and Wales, holding 65,000 prisoners. The role of the Service is captured in its Statement of Purpose:
Her Majesty's Prison Service serves the public by keeping in custody those committed by the courts. Our duty is to look after them with humanity and help them lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release.

The Prison Service is in a period of enormous change. It is expanding rapidly as it faces unprecedented growth in the prison population at the same time as being required to become more effective, both in custodial and rehabilitative work, and more efficient through a demanding cost-reduction programme. An average prison will, for example, have a budget of £20 million and will employ upwards of 500 staff.

The major impact of developments has been on the Governor of each prison. Running prisons is becoming an increasingly complex and demanding managerial task. The progressive devolution of responsibility for delivery of services, and the management of resources (money, staff, buildings and plant) to deliver those services, has increased significantly the role of the Governor as general manager, in addition to traditional duties.

In light of these changes, a number of high profile prisoner escapes, the White Paper, *Development and Training for Civil Servants*, and a desire to adopt a strategic approach, the Prisons Board commissioned reviews of what competences Governors require and what training and development framework would provide those competences.

The Prison Service, like other Executive Agencies, developed a core competency framework (CCF) in 1996. The CCF was intended to inform the recruitment, selection and development processes of staff. Unlike the Home Office, the Prison Service CCF does not have competences identified for each managerial level but rather is a framework of 12 competences applicable to all staff in the Service. Each of the 12 competences has three overarching sentences attached to describe it, and a number of performance indicators.

Using the CCF a 360-degree (line manager, peer, subordinate, self) profiling of the Governor's job was undertaken in order to create a model, or benchmark, against which Governors could be assessed for promotion, selection and appraisal, and to identify training and development needs. In addition to the behavioural competences, a TNA was undertaken to identify the present and future training and development needs of Governors. This involved questionnaires to all Governors and a number of semi-structured interviews.

What emerged from the TNA was that Governors required both formal and informal development opportunities. Formal elements included training in: general management; prison operational management; incident command and public sector management. The demand was for classroom-based work, together with distance learning material, thematic seminars, project work and secondments. The informal elements consisted of coaching/mentoring, learning sets, broader development opportunities and personal study.

The Prison Service has, as a result, made a major investment in the training and development of Governors. Contracts have been signed with external providers for a Certificate and Diploma in Management, and for a Master's degree in Applied Criminology and Management. A coaching/mentoring scheme has been introduced and thematic seminars have taken place. A Senior Command course has been developed for senior staff, which

they attend prior to becoming a Governor. The Civil Service College is providing the public sector/civil service modules.

A project is underway to assess the organizational impact of the major investment in training and development for Governors. At an individual level, the end-of-training questionnaires indicate that the objectives set have been met, and follow-up questionnaires suggest that people perceive themselves to be more effective having undertaken the activity. Evaluating the impact on the organization continues to be problematic. Directly attributing the improvement in the Prison Service's Key Performance Indicators (such as number of escapes, time out of cell) to the investment in training and development is too simplistic to be defensible. However, the investment in training and development has helped to create a perception that the Prison Service values its senior staff and that in itself is of benefit.

With acknowledgement to Shane Bryans, Head of Management and Specialist Training, HM Prison Service.

Human resource planning

The organization may have a well developed plan, giving detailed projections on the skill levels required over the next few years. Where such a plan is not available, a lot of valuable information can be garnered from personnel statistics and records. A simple analysis of age profiles, qualification levels and labour turnover will start to give shape to the sorts of people and skills that the organization requires in the foreseeable future and hence their training needs.

Some form of succession plan is also required. This can be in a rough-cut format. Detailed plans are very often difficult to produce, owing to the high degree of future uncertainty. However, some format is needed to highlight those within the organization worthy of development. (See also the section on individual needs, below).

NEEDS AT THE DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL

In anything but smaller organizations, a detailed TNA becomes too complex and difficult to be generated centrally. This is where the use of TNAs on a departmental basis can be invaluable. It is doubly valuable as it delegates the responsibility for detailed day-to-day training analysis down to where it should be, with the line manager.

The departmental analysis is performed in exactly the same way as the analysis at organizational level. For instance, reviewing the categories above, the business objectives

should have been cascaded down to a departmental level. In the example given above, the manager of Product A cell is already considering the step-up in production. The manager already has more detailed personal objectives relating to the phased increase in production over the next year. He knows the transferees coming into his department and is already planning the reassignment of duties and who will train the transferees.

Likewise, the consideration of anything new can be effective at departmental level. The arrival of a new piece of equipment in the department has a training need. It is not necessarily a need that could or would be identified or met by a central training facility's analysis of corporate needs.

The department may also have its own set of performance measures. Output, accident rates and absenteeism may all be measured locally and have local training implications. Similarly, there is value in local human resource planning. The manager will know what retirements are forthcoming, absences for maternity or pre-planned medical leave, new entrants, etc.

Departmental problem-solving groups

Where these exist, they can be a useful source of information for training needs at the departmental level. They can provide information on two levels:

1. They will be searching for solutions to departmental problems. Some of these solutions will have training needs.

2. These teams can be directed specifically towards training and people-related issues to identify needs.

An organization may already have trained teams in specific problem-solving techniques. These could brainstorming, Pareto analysis, fishbone diagrams, forcefield analysis, SWOT analysis, or other widely available problem-solving models. These are traditionally considered as useful for the solution of operational problems but there is no reason why the majority cannot be applied to training or human resource-related issues and they are particularly valid at departmental level.

An easily applied tool is the SWOT analysis, which asks the team to consider strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relating to a specific situation. The finishing and packing department of a manufacturing organization has asked its problem-solving team to look at the training implications within the department as a starting point for consideration of next year's training needs. The team has come up with an analysis, shown in Table 7.1.

Such a SWOT analysis provides some useful information to the department. One great

value of a SWOT analysis is that it is more than just a snapshot. It is forward-looking in the

Table 7.1 Finishing and Packaging Department–Human Resources SWOT

Strengths	Opportunities
New department manager Stable department workforce Start of multiskilling Good morale	Increase in forecast sales Access to PC-based training New packaging machine next year 'Return to learning' scheme available next year
Weaknesses	**Threats**
Stock shortages causing too much firefighting Two trainees recruited Problem-solving team not fully effective	Team leader retires next year Competition establishing factory nearby Wage rates uncompetitive

two right-hand quadrants as well as considering the present situation in the two left-hand quadrants, and it examines both positive and negative aspects of a situation.

The above example raises a number of training issues. The new departmental manager faces a number of changes within his department–likely increase in throughput, new machinery and some staff changes. It is also evident that there are a number of issues relating to the spread of skills within the department that will need to be addressed.

He must also consider the motivation and retention of his staff in the immediate future, since there is likely to be increased competition locally for skills. A further issue, relating to stock shortages, does not necessarily have a training implication but is impacting on the people issues within the department and must be taken into consideration. The SWOT analysis therefore gives some useful raw data that can be further refined to analyse the precise needs of the area.

Much of this departmental activity is too detailed to be identified at a corporate level but can be identified locally, formulated into a departmental plan, then integrated into the corporate training plan.

Using analysis at departmental level does in fact provide an alternative method for organization-wide analysis. The role of the training professional in this method is to coordinate and collate all departmental needs, thereby extracting and meeting any common needs that occur.

The skills matrix

A useful instrument that incorporates much of this information locally is a skills or training matrix. This gives the department a snapshot of the current skills status within the department and, by its very nature, shows where training needs exist. An example of a very simple matrix, showing broad competence areas, is given in Table 7.2.

For instance, knowing that a skilled operative, Dal Patel, retires in six months' time, the manager is presently training up a number of operatives in the skills that will be lost. The

Table 7.2 Skills matrix,
Product A cell

	Assembly	Drilling	Bending	Fork Lift	Spray	Test	Ship
John Briggs	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Dal Patel	C	C	C	C	C		C
Jean Phipps	C	C	C	C		C	
Jan Libich	C	C			T	C	
Tony Blitz	C	C	C			T	T
Nadya Smith	C	T					
Ellie Johns	C				C		T

C–Competent; T–Undergoing training

matrix can be enhanced to give more qualitative information on the level of competences using a categorization such as:

1. Can do job only by reference to job instructions or supervisor.

2. Can do job without reference to instructions/supervisor, but not always to agreed output and quality.

3. Can do job to prescribed output and quality levels.

4. Can do all the above and can train others.

The skills matrix provides an invaluable instant picture of where skills are distributed in a department and provides an excellent visual management tool. The matrices can also be integrated centrally to provide a skills inventory.

NEEDS AT OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS

At this level, training needs are expressed as the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are needed to carry out specific duties within a job. They are normally defined through the process of job analysis. Gael (1988:xv) discusses more than 40 different approaches to job analysis. He stated that it:

may be viewed as the hub of virtually all human resources administration and management activities necessary for the successful functioning of organizations. Hardly a program of interest to human resource specialists and other practitioners whose work pertains to organizational personnel does not depend on or cannot benefit from job analysis results. The importance of precise and accurate job information cannot be overemphasized, considering the impact that decisions based upon job information have on individual job

applicants and employees and organizations.

Pearn and Kandola (1988) discuss 18 methods of job analysis. These range considerably in their levels of sophistication and the resources required. The spectrum starts with the apparently simple, yet time-consuming technique of observing the job-holder.

Other ways of collecting data are to get the job-holder to record via diaries, logs or selfdescriptions the work carried out, or to undertake a job analysis interview with the job-holder. There are also more sophisticated techniques, including the critical incident technique. This method collects information on incidents that are critical or very important in the performance of the job. The range continues through the use of repertory grids, to detailed checklists, inventories, etc. There are, therefore, many techniques available to carry out a job analysis. This chapter does not have the space to discuss all the differing techniques; however, we can review the general principles involved in the process:

• Some common sources of information for a job analysis are the job description, which will list major responsibilities and tasks, and the job specification, which will give indicators on the knowledge, skills and attitudes required by the job.

• The analysis involves breaking down the job into component tasks. The relevant skill and knowledge required to perform each of these tasks are then listed. Attitudes are a difficult area and these are more rarely measured. Analysis will therefore tend to concentrate on knowledge and skills.

• There is now a comprehensive listing of all the skills and knowledge that are required to perform the whole job. Next, the level of competence for the knowledge and skills needs to be defined. This is important, since not all tasks contained within the job will be performed with the same regularity, nor be of equal importance.

• From here the necessary training programmes can be developed to train the job-holder against the required standards. The technique is particularly relevant in defining training needs where new jobs or ranges of jobs are being created. For example, a new factory on a green-field site may find the technique appropriate.

Job analysis is, however, a detailed technique. It therefore lends itself particularly to situations where larger numbers of homogenous jobs exist. To perform a detailed analysis on one-off jobs is a time-consuming process. Indeed, Wellens (1970) points out that job analysis as a means of determining training needs is at its most effective at the lower end of the organization. The discretionary and ever-changing nature of supervisory and managerial jobs means that they cannot be predetermined or prescribed accurately.

Wilson (1997:75) summarizes the debate on the effectiveness of a macro or micro approach to job analysis:

In order to conduct job analysis, there is the danger of concentrating on the individual elements and details of the job and consequently failing to observe the overall picture i.e. failing to see the wood for the trees. Alternatively, viewing the job as an entity or as purely an outcome may result in a failure to recognize important details.

Job analysis, however, remains a very valid technique for the identification of the skills and knowledge required at the occupational or job level.

NEEDS AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Spoon feeding in the long run teaches us nothing but the shape of the spoon. (E M Forster, 1951)

At this level, the organization is seeking to identify any shortfall in the individual's knowledge, skills and attitudes required to perform his or her job. The difference between the desired level of performance and the current level of performance is *the training gap.*

The analysis of needs at this level has two prerequisites. The first is that the performance parameters of the job have been defined. This can be against a job analysis as defined above. Alternatively there may be individual performance measures identified, particularly at management level, where a manager is measured against personal objectives. However, failure to meet a personal objective does not necessarily indicate a training need; for example, the failure of a Production Manager to meet output targets where this is a result of serious plant breakdowns.

The second prerequisite is that some form of review takes place against the performance parameters. This is traditionally the performance appraisal or review. Other techniques include self-assessment, assessment centres, 360-degree feedback, etc. Whatever the technique employed, some form of performance measure is required.

Without these two elements–the required and the actual performance–an analysis cannot take place. Where these are in place, there are still difficulties in evaluating individual training needs. For example, a new receptionist is receiving a six-monthly appraisal. The manager has identified a satisfactory match with the functional skills required to perform the job. These include completion of the visitors' book, issuing security passes, answering incoming calls and routing to the relevant extension, notification of visitors to the relevant recipient, etc.

Here the receptionist is utilizing both the required functional skills and required knowledge to perform the job role. No training gap is perceived. The manager is, however, dissatisfied with the job-holder's attitude towards visitors. It appears cold and does not reflect the company's preferred welcoming style. This leads towards a difficult area of definition. Are the manager's expectations about the receptionist's attitude fair and how can they be measured? And what is a possible training solution? It could be that the job-holder does not possess the warmth the manager expects and the error has been made at the recruitment phase.

ALL I REALLY NEED TO KNOW about how to live and what to do and how to be I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate school mountain, but there in the sandpile at Sunday School. These are the things I learned:

Share everything.

Play fair.

Don't hit people.

Put things back where you found them.

Clean up your own mess.

Don't take things that aren't yours.

Say sorry when you hurt somebody.

Wash your hands before you eat.

Flush.

Warm cookies and milk are good for you.

Live a balanced life—learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon.

When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.

Be aware of wonder. (Robert Fulghum, 1989:6)

At the individual level, we also need to review development opportunities. Many appraisal and review systems do build in a forward-looking aspect in which employee and manager can together discuss both the individual's and the organization's view of their future. Other sources of information will be succession plans and human resource plans, where these exist.

Development of individual employees is vital to future organizational growth. Bennis (1989:47) states:

Our educational system is really better at training than educating. And that's unfortunate. Training is good for dogs because we require obedience from them. In people, all it does is orient them toward the bottom line.

The valid point here is that it is quite feasible for an organization to place too much emphasis on training to meet current performance and business objectives, meeting the short-term bottom line results, at the expense of developing people for the future.

The degree of development activity will depend upon organizational culture and training policy. Some organizations will invest in the bare minimum of training, perhaps as a result of health and safety legislation. Other organizations encourage learning for its own sake and have well-established personal development programmes. Ford's EDAP is a prime example that enables employees to develop themselves.

**FORD MOTOR COMPANY'S EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT
AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME**

The UK's Ford Motor Company's EDAP was introduced in 1987 as a part of its national pay negotiations with the trade unions. It is run on a tripartite basis with representatives from hourly and salaried unions and management, both at national and at plant level.

The programme offers sponsorship for voluntary activity or study undertaken outside of working hours and all of Ford's 30,000 UK employees are eligible to apply for assistance.

EDAP offers employees a wide range of opportunities for personal and career development. These can include education, training, retraining or other development activities as well as a variety of services to encourage healthier lifestyles. The programme is not intended to replace the company's job-related training.

The aims of EDAP are:

• to enhance the personal development and well-being of all employees;

• to provide personal educational and training opportunities;

• to provide resources to encourage a healthier lifestyle.

During the first five years of the programme, 100,000 applications were processed, and Ford contributed over £10 million. The range of courses available is very broad, encompassing: Master's degrees, Open University courses, other academic courses such as BTEC and GCSE qualifications, computer literacy, languages, basic literacy and numeracy programmes, crafts such as plumbing and decorating, music, art, cookery, fitness/health programmes, etc.

Many local committees have developed their own on-site facilities such as classrooms, fitness centres and computer rooms. This offers the flexibility to enable shiftworkers to attend programmes.

The concepts of the Ford EDAP have been copied by many organizations, large and small, since its inception. It is difficult to assign measurable bottom-line benefits to such programmes. But they can have strong motivational aspects and positive employee relations implications as well as the obvious benefits of bringing many employees back into the main body of the church of learning.

Programmes such as EDAP allow many employees back into the learning arena and develop their learning skills and enhance their confidence levels. These philosophies also fit well with continuous improvement programmes whereby organizations seek to enhance all employees' contributions to the business, so that untapped and unseen potential can be harnessed. These programmes, whether they be learning a language at a

local college, improving computer skills, or taking a Master's degree, are risky investments. They may have no immediate impact upon company performance nor fulfil any immediate training need. However, issues of leadership, innovation and creativity are becoming more critical to organizational success. Thus, it is these sorts of investments in individual potential which become more valid and sensible.

There is always the danger of assessing training needs solely from the perspective of the organization. Many individual employees rightly have their own agendas and plans concerning their educational and developmental needs. And there are sound business and motivational reasons for organizations to assist employees to fulfil these self-development needs.

As human beings, we all have our own personal struggle to find ourselves and our role in life. There are very few that live solely to work, but because work occupies the lion's share of our waking life, each individual usually seeks to gain fulfilment and satisfaction within the working environment. That self-awareness and self-development are, by definition, broader than the pursuit of organizational objectives. As Handy (1997:90) has said:

We have today the opportunity, which is also the challenge, to shape ourselves, even to reinvent ourselves. Our lives are not completely foreordained, either by science or by our souls. We can make of our lives a masterpiece if we so wish. It is an opportunity that ought to be available to all humans. It could be. It is the fortunate combination of liberal democracy and free market capitalism that gives us this opportunity, as long as we make these two our servants, not our masters.

Developmental training can be more structured, particularly where this is linked into career development programmes. Where succession planning is present, plans may exist for managers to gain experience, for example through secondment to a new function and to develop themselves educationally. These training needs are identified and budgeted for in agreed development plans.

Development needs, specifically those that are initiated by the individual employee, are hard to quantify in terms of cost benefit to the organization. They therefore become harder to justify and to support as a priority need (see below). For this reason, they should be embedded within a corporate policy, as a percentage figure or money/time investment. Otherwise, they are easily trimmed out as an unquantifiable expenditure.

DEFINING THE TRAINING PRIORITIES

Having undertaken an organization-wide TNA, it is likely that the number of training needs identified are much larger than can be met through current resources. It is therefore

imperative to prioritize the needs into some order of importance. The priorities may be selfevident but where this is not the case, the following technique can be applied. It is useful to do this as a group exercise, such as in a training committee:

1. Certain training needs will already be defined through company policy or strategy. For instance, the organization has committed to train three designated managers on an MBA programme. All PC users are to be trained in the new suite of software by the third quarter. Such strategic and policy training decisions are already pre-ordained.

2. A distinction must be made between training needs and training wants, that is, between the essential and the desirable. Where needs are identified against organizational objectives, then the arising needs should be essential to the achievement of those objectives. However, it is probable that in the course of undertaking a TNA, general requests for training will emerge. These may include wants rather than needs. For instance, the Financial Controller considers that line managers have a poor understanding of the financial measures used in the organization. This may be true. While a properly designed course in Finance for Non-Financial Managers may address this issue, will it actually improve the organization's performance? It is a desirable but it is not essential.

3. Pareto analysis can be employed as a technique to define the highest priority training needs among the remaining needs. A cost saving resulting from the proposed training is calculated (estimated savings minus estimated training costs). The cost savings are compared and the best savings become the priority needs. Considering the Pareto principle: 20 per cent of the training input is likely to yield 80 per cent of the savings.

For instance, an organization is having broken merchandise returned due to faulty packing. It emerges that staff in the packing department have not been fully trained in the correct packaging methods for a new product range. Returns are costing the organization £3000 per month. If left unresolved, a substantial cost will accrue. Such a piece of training becomes a high priority against other costed training needs.

Costing of training in softer skills can be trickier. But all that is being attempted here is some rough measure to enable some comparisons to be drawn. Avoid getting drawn into detailed and complex calculations; a rough yardstick is all that may be required.

The three-stage process for prioritizing training needs is summarized below:

1. Include training needs predetermined at policy level.

2. Divide remaining needs into essential and desirable.

3. Cost the essential needs and prioritize via Pareto.

CONCLUSION

We have now reviewed a number of methods for identifying training needs at four levels throughout the organization and seen that:

• The relevance of the various TNA techniques will depend upon the culture and size of the organization.

• Most literature on the subject infers that the identification of training needs is the preserve of the training professional, or at least looks at it from this perspective.

• Trends over the last decade have led to the devolution of responsibility into smaller autonomous units within organizations. Smaller business units, self-directed work teams, teamworking, more local empowerment, all lead to the conclusion that TNA must move closer to the coal face.

• As training becomes more highly recognized as a legitimate business investment, the volume of training is likely to rise accordingly.

• With the devolution of responsibility and the rise in the amount of training, training and the identification of training needs have to become more and more a part of the line manager's and supervisor's people-management responsibility. If they are not, they will become distanced and less relevant to local operating needs.

• The devolution of responsibility for the identification of training needs raises its own training need. Have we, as HRD professionals, shown our managers and supervisors how it is done?

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8
Performance Management and Human Resource Development

Alan Cattell

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Globalization and the need for companies to gain sustainable competitive advantage require new and different approaches to recruiting, training, developing and retaining employees with key skills. Thus, the need for *integrated* methods of performance management has never been greater when downsizing, de-layering and mergers have become the norm worldwide. Within this competitive and rapidly changing environment, people and people management are seen by a growing number of commentators as being the key to business success. Bassi *et al* (1996:28) observe:

Sustainable competitive advantage is no longer based on technology or machinery. Corporate leaders are saying, 'People are our most important advantage.' Even so, corporate America has undergone massive downsizing, restructuring and reorganization.

Similar findings from two major research projects studying leading multinational companies are reported in the UK by Gratton (1997:25):

The sources of sustained competitive advantage have shifted from financial resources to technological resources and now to human capital. This change has a number of profound implications. It requires a fundamental change in organisational timescales from short term

to long term and is predicated by integration and coherence rather than ad-hoc thinking and incoherence. It also means that we must take into account people's aspirations and values and not allow people management to be dominated by tools and techniques.

HR professionals and practitioners have not been exempt from this changing environment. Thus, this chapter provides the opportunity for those involved with HRD to appraise their role within and outside their organizations, and consider their own training and development needs for the future.

Having read this chapter you will:

• understand the role of performance management linked to organizational strategy;

• be able to link appropriate elements of performance management to HRD;

• be aware of some of the approaches to performance management;

• understand the role of trust and the psychological contract; and

• understand the integrated role of appraisal and training.

WHAT IS PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT?

McBeath (1990:199) suggests that the word 'appraisal' is emotive. Perhaps the phrase 'performance management' is even more emotive, meaning different things to different people, and dependent on which level in the organization they occupy.

Performance management is a broader term than appraisal and, as a concept or philosophy, should ideally be a systematic approach that encompasses:

• motivation of employees to perform;

• vision by employers as to what performance standards they expect of employees;

• ownership of management of performance at a variety of levels within organizations; and

• monitoring and measurement of the performance achieved by employees.

Performance appraisal and derivation of training and development needs at organizational, team and individual levels are an integral part of the performance management process,

but there is the potential for conflicting messages as to who plays which part and at what stage.

Edis (1995:1), identifying approaches within the British National Health Service, captures elements of this conflict when he refers to 'a confusing circus display of pay scale acrobatics, trial and error introductions of new performance management systems, and resuscitation of appraisals'.

While there is no single, simple definition of what performance management is, or should be, I will offer a number of 'statements' from which general conclusions can be drawn:

the practices through which work is defined and reviewed; through which capabilities are developed and through which rewards are distributed in an organization. Performance management may involve goal setting, employee selection and placement, compensation, performance appraisals, training and development and career management. (Mohrman and Mohrman, 1995:2)

Performance management is the essential bridge between the strategic goals of the organisation and the day-to-day priorities of teams and individuals. It is also the way in which an organisation can gear its people development strategy to the needs of the business–defining the skills and competencies required for excellent performance and then creating PDPs for individuals. (IPD, 1997a:7)

Performance management is a systematic approach to improving individual and team performance in order to achieve organisational goals. (Hendry *et al*, 1997:20)

Performance management is the process of trying to bring the rewards which *individuals* desire into line with those required by the *organisation*. (Edis, 1995:10)

Performance management is creating a shared vision of the purpose and aims of the organisation, helping each individual employee to understand and recognise their part in contributing to them and thereby managing and enhancing the performance of both individuals and the organisation. (Fletcher, 1997:36)

The common elements linking all these statements are:

• the need for well communicated and commonly understood **strategic goals** within organizations which reflect the needs of the external business and market environment;

• a **shared vision** of the part which each function, team and individual within organizations will play and the benefits to be achieved by doing so;

• a **systematic approach** to performance management which requires a holistic and integrated approach business-wide, rather than one based on functionally driven, shortterm and ad hoc 'initiatives'.

Strategic goals: gaining competitive advantage

During the 1980s as a result of long-term scenario planning, Motorola anticipated significant

growth in the economy of China during the 1990s. In the absence at the time of a cadre

of highly trained Chinese managers, Motorola devised an East Asian human resources strategy for the region. This included establishing links with Chinese universities, developing the Motorola University in Beijing and providing coaching and mentoring throughout the company, aimed at developing young Chinese managers.

By 1996, the company through its development investment had gained competitive advantage over many other western businesses which were finding it difficult to attract, recruit and retain young Chinese talent (Gratton, 1997:26).

In similar vein, during 1986, Royal Dutch Shell (one of the first widely recognized learning organizations) pioneered the use of scenario planning two years before the oil crisis of 1988. By doing so they anticipated the worldwide drop in oil prices and gained competitive advantage over other oil companies. By using learning-based strategic planning they developed the capacity as an organization to respond to sudden changes in their market environment (Gephart and Boje, 1996:45).

Shared vision

Gratton (1997), reporting on a study of a division of Hewlett Packard, observes links between the highly focused performance management process used by the company, which successfully aligns strategic to individual objectives together with a set of values ('the HP Way'). Among the main features identified by employees surveyed were commitment, pride and trust in the integrity of the company.

A study by the Singapore Institute of Management and Development Dimensions International (1994:61) reports the experiences of five high-performing companies which have won the Singapore National Productivity Award. These companies displayed a number of similarities in their approach to:

• introducing management practices designed to develop self-motivated workers who took pride in their work;

• transferring authority for both tasks and responsibility down the hierarchy to give a sense of ownership;

• regular discussion between managers and employees about performance growth and development.

Included in the benefits highlighted by the companies were lower-than-average turnover rates and employees with strong work values.

Systematic approaches

Within this chapter it is not the intention to examine in detail the myriad performance management approaches. Suffice it to say that there are a profusion (some might say a confusion) of elements that can make up a performance management system. These may include:

• business strategies;

• total-quality management strategies;

• human resources strategies;

• organization development strategies;

• reward strategies;

• communications strategies.

Aligned to these there may be a variety of further elements:

• competence-based recruitment;

• skill mix analysis;

• benchmarking;

• job design;

• job evaluation;

• job restructuring;

• performance-related pay;

• competence-based/related pay;

• group/team-related pay;

• merit-based pay;

- gainsharing;

- individual competences and objectives;

- team competences and objectives;

- ongoing performance review–team and individual;

- performance appraisal/feedback;

- team development plans;

- personal development plans;

- continuing professional development;

- succession plans;

- career development plans.

In essence, performance management owes its origins to management by objectives (MBO) first proposed by Drucker (1954). Fowler (1990) suggests as much by the title of his article 'Performance management–the MBO of the 1990s'. While MBO emphasized the linking of

individual and managerial objectives to organizational goals through an appraisal process, it was perhaps viewed as an HR-driven exercise and therefore lacked ownership by managers.

Performance management differs in the respect that at its best it should link the strategic elements of a business with key managerial tasks including managing people. As will be outlined in later sections of this chapter, *managerial* responsibility for coaching and support and *individual* ownership of performance improvement are at the heart of performance management. A model of a performance management system is shown in Figure 8.1.

However, put simply there is no one best way. Much depends on the present culture (the way we do things round here) or envisaged future culture of the organization and the type of business which it is in. As Hendry *et al* (1997:20) observe, 'We believe that the approach you take should depend on your organisation, its culture, its relationship with employees and the type of jobs they do.'

In terms of culture, what works in the public sector may not work in the private sector. What works in the UK or the USA might not necessarily work in Asia or Eastern Europe. This is particularly worth bearing in mind in our new 'globalized' marketplace. Trompenaars (1995) notes that much of the management literature and practice has been developed and preached by individuals from the Anglo-Saxon world and is potentially laden with cultural assumptions. As such many purportedly 'universal' ideas, approaches and solutions put forward may have little relevance to a large part of the globe.

Of particular relevance to performance management is Trompenaars (1995:25–6) statement that:

In developing pay for performance systems globally, for example, we quickly run into major cultural differences in whether we should recognise and reward individual or group contributions. Individualistic cultures, such as those of the US and Britain, choose the individual and pay the price of impaired teamwork and the tendency to push for personal objectives even when they damage the team as a whole. Collective cultures, such as that of the Japanese, choose the group and often pay the price in a submerging of individual initiative and creativity.

Image

Figure 8.1 A simple model of a performance management system

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

In opening this chapter I intentionally used the word 'integrated' as a preface to performance management. Any performance management system is only as good as its fit with other key business systems and strategies. It is not something that is *done* to employees but *with* them. At its best it should *add value* (see also Chapter 2) to the business and to relationships within the business. However, in many cases it does not because of its lack of focus or ownership by key stakeholders at a variety of levels.

Added value

There are two dimensions to added value: that of adding value to the business and that of engaging employees in a way that motivates them to perform to standards where they give added value.

For the organization, added value means establishing performance criteria related to key strategic and business objectives and monitoring its own and its employees' success in performing against these. At managerial level it means alignment to both strategic and business objectives and operationally carrying these out while using time and resources (financial and human) to maximum effect. At team and individual level it means using and developing the skills necessary to secure, retain or enhance employability at an equitable rate of remuneration.

Integrated systems–making the links

In engaging key stakeholders at organizational, managerial, team or individual levels, it could be contended that we have similar objectives but approach them from different directions. The common denominator is based on the profitability of relationships, not the cost of them. This depends on establishing a mutuality of interest.

In terms of establishing direction for our businesses at one level and for ourselves at another, we use a number of similar tools and techniques. As organizations we may use scenario planning or SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) to establish future direction. At managerial and individual levels we may use situational analysis to examine:

• Where are we now?

• Where are we going?

• How do we get there?

- How do we know when we've got there?

As trainers and developers we may use Kolb *et al*'s learning cycle (1978) as a framework to plan, develop, implement and review training interventions. In essence they are founded on the same principles but used by different people to different timescales and based on different perceptions of the notion of profit and added value.

Hence the need for integrated systems of managing the business, of which performance managementisapart. Hence the need for performance management of which performance appraisal is a part. Hence the need for performance appraisal of which training and development needs analysis is a part. Hence the need for individual selfappraisal of which motivation, ownership and self-reflection should be a part.

If such a system of integration is to be achieved, then how do organizations approach the realignment of often disparate parts of the system into a whole? In the article 'A clear path to peak performance', Egan (1995:35) reviews the elements that make up a comprehensive performance management and appraisal system. He suggests that it is made up of three parts:

1. performance improvement involving: objective setting, agreement of delegation parameters, work planning, initial training, managerial facilitation and support, feedback, tracking of progress against key objectives, recognition of accomplishment, and development;

2. performance appraisal;

3. discussion of the compensation consequences of the appraisal.

While a chapter cannot detail the full content or implications of Egan's article there are several points of note:

• Responsibility for performance improvement lies with the line manager in the role of supporting employees to give their best on the assumption that this is what most employees would want to do. The majority of the manager's time should be devoted to the performance improvement stage and if this is done to full effect it requires less time at the appraisal stage.

• If the workings of the day-to-day performance improvement process are good, then the employee being appraised can play a leading and proactive role at the appraisal stage. This is because there are likely to be no new messages and the appraisal therefore becomes a platform for summarizing the messages already heard and building on them. Egan (1995) states, 'Employees who can lead the process should be the rule rather than the exception.' This sentiment was proposed as early as 1954 by McGregor who, in suggesting that conventional approaches to appraisal were outdated proposed that, 'A sounder approach

places the responsibility on the subordinate for establishing performance goals and appraising progress towards them.'

• The performance management system should be presented as an added value management system and not a Human Resources system. It is a business system

because it focuses on improved performance and business results. As such it is something that can be used by all managers together with their team members to improve both individual, team and unit productivity.

Motivation

It is one thing to have a systematic approach to managing and evaluating performance in order to achieve organizational performance expectations. It is another to have a congruent process that is capable of motivating people to perform to the standards which may be expected of them. This raises the question, whose expectations?

Exploration of the variety of theories of motivation is likely to reveal a mirror of the economic circumstances pertaining at the time at which the theory was first proposed. For the reader seeking more information, Handy's (1985) text *Understanding Organizations* is a useful guide to tracing the evolution and development of motivational theory.

Perhaps the two concepts that have most relevance to modern performance management are expectancy theory and the notion of the psychological contract.

Expectancy theory

Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1965) maintains that people will make an effort to achieve a standard of performance if they perceive that it will be rewarded by a desirable outcome.

Desirable outcome is essentially a product of individual circumstances and perceptions and is therefore subject to change. At one time, lifelong employment and security of tenure at an equitable level of remuneration may have been the driving force for many employees. Those who have suffered the effects of downsizing and redundancy are now likely to view the world in a different manner, where jobs offering short-term and reasonably remunerated employment prospects are more attractive than no job at all. Similarly, those in employment and those seeking employment are likely to have a positive view of work offering the prospect of development of differentiated and transferable skills, as an investment in their future employability. The consultative document, *Opportunity through People* (Institute of Personnel and Development, 1997c:4) states:

Outsourcing, downsizing, delayering and the casualisation of jobs are all fashionable. These trends affect employees' explicit or implicit relationships with their employer. Similarly, reduced career opportunities, shorter tenure, the need for transferable skills to assist employability and increased use of fixed term contracts weaken the traditional ties of loyalty to their company's destiny–psychologically as well as formally.

The psychological contract

There are two sets of contracts between employer and employee. The first is the legal contractual relationship which defines who is expected to give what, to whom, and for what. The second, or psychological contract (Schein, 1964) is an unwritten and unstated set of expectations of each other. Within this the organization has expectations of the individual related to results or rewards it will award if outcomes are met. The individual similarly has a vision of the results or rewards expected from the organization which will satisfy his or her needs and in return for which he or she will expend energy at an appropriate level.

Much therefore is unwritten or unspoken and is a perception of the employer on one part and the employee on the other. If there is a mismatch in perceptions this may lead to feelings of lack of cooperation and involvement by one party or exploitation by the other. Handy (1985:43–6) proposes that it is possible to categorize organizations according to the type of psychological contract which predominates. These are summarized as follows:

1. *The coercive contract* typified by:

• the contract is not entered into on a voluntary basis by the individual;

• organizational philosophy is command and control;

• power is likely to be in the hands of a small group;

• the task of the individual is to comply and conform;

• blame culture–fear of getting it wrong and being punished;

• stifling of risk-taking, innovation and creativity.

2. *The calculative contract* typified by:

• the contract is voluntary and is prevalent in many organizations;

• there is a commonly understood exchange of goods/money given by the organization for services rendered;

• power to reward is in the control of management and is expressed mainly through management's ability to give desired things in return for a high level of performance;

• desired things can include money, promotion, training and development opportunities or work itself;

• the contract is based on the organization's ability to pay. If it cannot do so and seeks more for less, employees will view it as a coercive contract and adjust their side of the contract accordingly.

3. *The cooperative contract* typified by:

• the individual's tendency to identify with organizational goals and become proactive in the pursuit of those goals;

• as well as receiving rewards, individuals are encouraged to voice opinions in selecting goals and given choice on methods of achieving them;

• management relinquishes much day-to-day operational control but retains overall control through its ability to allocate financial resources and to select people.

The cooperative contract may seem to offer a mutually attractive way forward to organizations and individuals. However, what might seem to be an attractive proposition to some employees may not be as attractive to others. This type of contract assumes that individuals will *want* to take shared responsibility for goals and decisions. It also assumes that employees will be committed to the achievement of organizational goals which, while being attractive to managers, mean little or nothing to the lower levels of the organization.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT OPERATES IN BOTH DIRECTIONS

Working as a training manager in the engineering sector in the early 1980s I was asked by my CEO to facilitate the setting up of quality circles based on the shop floor. Senior management expressed commitment to the idea, which they observed had proved successful in Japan and had also been introduced successfully by Jaguar in the UK. Shop floor employees took readily to the idea and invested their lunch hour periods and time after normal working hours. The circles themselves identified a number of production issues that could be improved and suggested solutions to these. Management, however, having first suggested the setting up of quality circles, showed less commitment than the workforce and attended circle meetings on an infrequent basis. This was taken by employees to show a lack of interest. Additionally, when management realized that some of the ideas that showed merit would cost money in the short-term despite long-term savings and improvement, interest in the concept of quality circles dropped dramatically. Commitment and motivation are, after all, a two-way process.

Control or empowerment?

The Egan (1995) model of performance management discussed earlier in this chapter suggests an appropriate framework for empowerment. It requires managers to assume greater responsibility for the softer side of people management as part and parcel of their daily management activity (without relinquishing control). It also requires employees to become more actively involved in the process of performance appraisal, based on a notion

of performance improvement related to development outcomes from which they can benefit and are involved in determining.

Such a process also has direct implications for the HRD practitioner at two levels:

1. in helping to create a climate and structure where managers and individuals take ownership of areas for which they have not traditionally regarded themselves as being responsible;

2. in providing appropriate support and training to assist managers in developing facilitation, coaching and feedback skills and to help individuals in developing appraisee skills.

HR is not about policing the performance management or appraisal system. It is about *enabling* the process to gain maximum potential for organization and employee, whatever level they work at.

Similarly, identification of training needs and personal development plans does not begin with outputs from the appraisal process. It begins with the identification of the inputs, needs and means by which all the parties involved will gain maximum benefit from the process itself.

Pay and rewards

There has been a long-standing debate over whether discussion of pay and rewards should form part of appraisal discussions. Whether part of the discussion or not, the nature of human psychology is that there is an expectation of reward or benefit by one party wherever there is an expectation of improved or enhanced performance by the other. There may also be different interpretations of what actually constitutes a reward.

Pay in itself does not have to be included within a performance management system but more often than not it is. Common elements of motivation theory would suggest two main types of reward in relation to performance management systems:

1. **Rewards-based systems:** offering incentive/explicit reward. Here the assumption is that individuals work harder if given specific rewards for good performance. Rewards are only provided if desired performance and behaviour are attained.

2. **Development-based systems:** involving implicit/intrinsic reward. Here the assumption is that people work best when given a worthwhile job and are allowed to get on with it. Reward will come from the satisfaction derived from the job itself and the opportunity to develop individual abilities through the encouragement of learning.

In a survey carried out by the IPD in the UK, Armstrong (1996:1) reports two notable

trends. The majority of responding companies had introduced performance development plans for their staff which were intended to assist employees in identifying the skills needed for their future careers as well as their current jobs. The survey also showed that companies were emphasizing staff development more than performance-related pay.

Armstrong observes that these trends recognize the need for individuals to develop their future employability and ensure that the workforce has the necessary skills to keep the business competitive as well as helping companies retain valuable staff.

The survey, however, showed staff to be less enthusiastic about the performance management process and its effectiveness, with a number considering it to be time-consuming and bureaucratic. The survey highlights the importance of the need to show individuals how the process will benefit them:

Companies may not be able to offer people jobs for life or dramatic promotional prospects as incentives to perform better. But by focusing on staff skills and development, both employer and employee can get something out of the process. (Armstrong, 1996:1)

Either/or (or an amalgam of both)

One could argue that discussion of pay/compensation/rewards has little relevance within a book on HRD. Within the context of explicit or implicit reward, it cannot be ignored. Nor can it be assumed that it is a simple choice between either option. There is growing evidence that companies are using a combination of both to reward not only individuals but also teams. The bottom line is that if you do not have adequate means of assessing or appraising performance, how can you reward it?

The decision as to what performance rewards are applicable is still in many organizations either directly or indirectly related to appraisal of performance and essentially shapes the form of appraisal which is carried out.

Table 8.1 shows a variety of approaches to the determination of reward. The contents of the table are intended to be a pointer towards approaches, not an exhaustive list.

Even countries and companies renowned for their high performance practices are having to rethink their approach to performance and reward. Summarizing a report from Arthur Anderson (written by Robert Hodkinson) Walsh (1997:16) cites the example of Japanese companies based in the UK which, despite having previously gained competitive advantage through pioneering practices such as TQM and continuous improvement, are finding that this may no longer be sufficient to beat off competition.

The report identifies that Japanese firms are now having to focus on developing and

retaining new employees, moving from seniority-based pay to performance-related and locally set pay, and implementing more effective appraisal and communication systems.

But what of other approaches? Where does the notion of competence/competency fit in?

Table 8.1 Approaches to the determination of reward

Type	Features	Advantages	Disadvantages
Merit Pay (Also referred to as who perform well will gain the of the comparative ratingscale Performance Related Pay)	• Overall pay level is determined by some form of job evaluation • Pay increases are variable and directly related linked to individual performance ratings • Generally uses some form of comparative performance rating scale • Rating uses either a fixed formula or in some cases is left to local management discretion based on identified targets and a fixed budget	• Based on a premise that those who perform well will gain the greater benefits • Allows the organization to target rewards towards those who are the most effective performers	• Depends on the effectiveness of the comparative rating scale • Depends on the ability of managers across the organization to equitably apply the rating scale • Needs a highly effective performance measurement and appraisal process to make it work
Incremental Pay	• Job evaluation determines the salary range • Links with performance appraisal determine how quickly the individual progresses through the salary range • Increment is paid automatically on an annual basis if the	• Individual performance is expected to improve over a period of time • Is easily understood by all • Is perceived as being equitable	• Difficult to recognize significant differences between poor, average and excellent performers • If the increment is automatic it may be seen as being inequitable because poor performers are rewarded on the same basis as more

	individual is judged to have performed satisfactorily		capable individuals
Gainsharing	• Employees and organization share in bonus pool created by added value contribution by employees	• Encourages collective problem solving performance improvement	• Difficulties in establishing integrated means of assessing where added value has been contributed
Group/Team Reward	• Based on the achievement of team targets and critical success factors • Reward is collective–group, team or department • Bonuses or pay increases are linked to group, team or departmental performance or team and individual performance	• Reflects the interdependency of collective contribution • Acts as a lever for organizational change • Encourages flexible working and multi-skilling • Helps focus priorities on key areas such as customer service, quality, innovation and cooperative work	• Can diminish self-worth • Can compel individuals to conform to oppressive group norms • Can cause difficulties in developing performance measures which are fair • Needs management to effectively audit and monitor costs

Competence and competence-related pay

Competence and competency approaches allied to competence-based assessment and related pay are being used by a growing number of companies. Utilization includes applying national frameworks, such as the Management Charter Initiative in the UK, or internally generated organizational core competences, generic and role-specific competences and behaviourally anchored competences.

An important consideration is where the application of competences fits within the performance management process. Roberts (1997) links competences to the initial stages of the recruitment and selection process, which he contends should be ruthlessly streamlined if it is to be effective. Among suggested approaches he includes:

• Definition of key competencies–personal attributes, knowledge, experience, skills and values–to meet the organization's long-term needs.

• Combining a range of selection techniques and methods to obtain reliable data on all core competences.

• Feeding the information gained into the induction, appraisal and development of employees.

Roberts (1997:1) maintains that, 'Neither praise nor pay can motivate people to perform beyond their means, and the best training programme cannot make a silk purse of a sow's ear.' This reminds me of my experience as a young first-time training officer in the late 1970s. My manager introduced me to a model of what he considered HRM and HRD to be all about, and which is still with me today; it is shown in Figure 8.2.

In recruiting, if you are going to invest money in salaries and on-costs you need to get the recruitment decision right. If having recruited the right person you then spend money on training/retraining and developing the individual, the bottom line must surely be in retaining the skills and abilities you have invested in. If not, then you have not realized the full potential of your investment. A statement of the obvious perhaps and a simplistic view, but one which could suggest that performance management is a matter of common sense.

Figure 8.2 Combining HRM and HRD

In their pursuit of integrated performance management systems, are organizations perhaps over-concentrating effort on current employees and their performance, rather than concentrating effort also on a vision of recruiting future employees to identified and understood performance standards?

Extending Roberts 'competence approach to recruitment, does the competence approach lend itself to a competence-based model of performance management? Such a model is shown in Figure 8.3.

Honey (1997:33) identifies the pros and cons of such an approach:

Provided that competencies are specific, unambiguous and written down, they are useful in helping everyone know what is expected of their performance. Competencies also have the potential to aid learning and development, *but only if they are integrated into other key processes such as recruitment and selection, feedback and appraisal, coaching and mentoring and (the most contentious) pay. Without this integration there is a real danger that competencies are related to meaningless lists of words with no real impact.*

Competence-based/related pay

Competence-based or related pay is another area of continuing debate. A report by Towers Perrin looking at European reward systems (1996), identifies that interest in competence-related pay is rising. Brown and Armstrong (1997) examined a number of approaches used by firms in the UK, including Glaxo Wellcome, Bass, Volkswagen UK, Guinness, ICL, Thomas Cook, Portsmouth Housing Trust, Triplex Safety Glass, Abbey Life, Scottish Equitable, Derby City General Hospital NHS Trust, The Woolwich, and the Royal Bank of Scotland. Brown and Armstrong conclude that on the basis of their experience, competence-related pay is most appropriate when:

Figure 8.3 Competence-based model of performance management

- competence is the key to competitive advantage;

- competence frameworks align with core business requirements;

- there are effective performance management processes;

- it covers knowledge workers for whom conventional performance-related schemes are often ineffective;

- the organization is flat and emphasis is on continuous and lateral development;

- a broadband pay structure is used.

Brown and Armstrong (1997) also point out that, 'An increasing number of organizations are relating salary increases to competence whilst rewarding exceptional achievements with bonuses.' Perhaps *contribution-related* pay would recognize both competence and performance better than either competence- or performance-related pay.

So, the debate continues. Perhaps the only area of agreement by commentators and within organizations is that pay and rewards should ideally be a separate discussion to that of the appraisal discussion itself.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

The purpose of appraisal

The purpose of performance planning, review and appraisal needs to be clearly articulated if individuals at all levels of the organization are going to play an active and productive part in the process.

Research carried out by the UK Institute of Personnel Management (now the Institute of Personnel and Development) identified a number of key purposes commonly used by organizations (Long, 1986):

- set performance objectives;

- review past performance;

- improve current performance;

- identify training and development needs;

• assist career-planning decisions;

• assess future potential and promotion;

• assess increases/new salary levels.

It is unlikely that the vast majority of organizations will include the full range of purposes within a single appraisal process. The trend would appear to be towards:

• initial planning and agreement of performance objectives;

• interim review of achievement against these (including necessary realignment to take account of changing circumstances);

• full review and appraisal identifying successes and areas of improvement arising from retrospective discussion of performance against objectives;

• planning, discussion and agreement of new objectives;

• identification, discussion and agreement of the support, training and development which will assist performance improvement.

Fletcher (1997:20) suggests that this *results-driven* approach is an extension of the notion of MBO. He also suggests that a growing number of organizations are putting together *results-oriented appraisal* with *competency-based* appraisal. Fletcher (1997:33) states:

This *is* a combination that can work well. It allows the more immediate and legitimate concern for achieving performance targets to co-exist with a focus on developing the appraisee–which in turn is related to the future performance of the organization. It combines the two most motivational elements of appraisal, namely goal setting and personal development. To maximize motivation and performance improvement, this would be the most promising way forward.

It is not the intention of this chapter to explore the aspects of promotion and career development or their relationship to appraisal. Suffice it to say that with the changes in organizations over the past few years and the subsequent de-layering and downsizing, promotion, succession planning and career planning have become much more difficult to predict. For the reader wanting to explore other approaches, Fletcher (1997), Herriot (1992) and Hirsch and Jackson (1995) offer a number of relevant and useful approaches.

APPRAISAL AND TRAINING IN A PRIVATE HOSPITAL

The annual performance appraisal is widely regarded as the platform for identifying training and development needs at the individual level. These needs, once identified, should then be actioned within the forthcoming year and preferably before the next appraisal.

The appraisal system of a medium-sized independent hospital, which is part of a large healthcare group, had been in place for six years and was thought to be functioning well by the management team. However, as a result of feedback from some of the staff, research was undertaken into the effectiveness of the appraisal process. There were five areas that gave rise to doubts about the actioning of training and development plans; these were:

1. The same training and development was identified for individuals for more than three years in succession.
2. Many plans were unrealistic and unachievable.
3. Enthusiasm often waned after the appraisal.
4. The training and development plans were not reviewed once written.
5. Training and development plans bore no relation to the departmental business plans and objectives.

A variety of research methods were used including questionnaire, interviews and a review of training records. The findings were then triangulated to corroborate the conclusions and action was introduced to address the following points:

• Preparation was an issue: only half the responders prepared for the appraisal. This preparation should include reflecting on previous years' work and training, reviewing the previous appraisal notes and preparing bullet point notes to take into the appraisal interview (see Figures 8.4 and 8.5).

• The staff, in some cases, were not given adequate notice of the appraisal date and time. In some instances there was no notice at all. This could affect preparation of both appraiser and appraisee and the formulation of realistic training and development plans.

• The department business plan was ignored, in a lot of cases, when training and development was being identified. The staff were often ignorant of the business goals and there was a lot of opposition to the concept of business planning and its effectiveness in the workplace.

• Training and development interventions were imposed on a significant number of staff. Agreement on any plan formulated between the appraiser and the appraisee is of paramount importance if the appraisee is to be motivated into completing his or her individual plan.

• In most cases the training and development identified was job-related with very little scope for personal development. Personal development is important in a learning environment and often leads to greater willingness to undertake further development.

• Reviews of the plans were very infrequent and lack of time was a major contributor to this issue. Apathy of both appraiser and appraisee was another important reason why the reviews were infrequent.

• The lack of time to perform adequate appraisals and formulate workable and productive training and development plans was seen to be the greatest barrier to achieving a good system. This was noted by both appraisers and appraisees.

• An understanding of business planning and some method of ensuring that all the staff were familiar with the contents of their business plans would greatly improve the situation.

- Lastly, a more participative style of management would certainly solve some of the problems found in the research.

With acknowledgement to Steven R Western, Training Manager, Independent Hospital.

Figure 8.4 Appraiser preparation (from a model originally used by the former Bradford and Airedale College of Health–now the University of Bradford School of Health Studies)

Figure 8.5 Appraisee preparation

Different forms of appraisal

Although different forms of review and appraisal have existed for a number of years, the move towards flexibility, cross-organizational working and self-managed teams has meant that many organizations now use a range of appraisal methods. Traditionally, appraisal has been viewed as a management prerogative in the majority of companies. Additionally, line manager appraisal, rather than being solely manager-led, may also include elements of self-appraisal and upward appraisal by the appraisee. The position of team leader has also been increasingly introduced, whereby a member of the team rather than a manager assumes responsibility for the performance of the team.

There is also increasing evidence of the use of 360-degree feedback to combine aspects of line manager, peer, team, upward and self assessment. Competence review is also increasingly being built into appraisal processes.

Saville and Holdsworth (1997:10), reporting on a survey seeking the views of UK HR professionals, highlight the following points:

• The HR area regarded as most likely to impact on appraisals was corporate culture, with competences becoming a popular method of translating culture into individual performance.

• Even though teamworking was regarded as the second most important initiative impacting on appraisal, less than 40 per cent of responding organizations appeared to set team performance objectives.

• One of the methods regarded as being most useful within performance appraisal was a self-score able360-degree question naire providing information on a manager 's performance management style.

There are of course a growing range of personality questionnaires and diagnostic instruments that can be used by organizations and individuals to assess personality for self-reflection, assessment and development purposes. Assessment centres and development centres are being used by many organizations for selection and career development purposes. However, this section of the chapter will concentrate on identifying the range of forms of appraisal only.

Appraisal can be carried out in both *formal* and *informal* settings. Neither should be exclusive of the other. Good practice would seem to suggest that regular informal and formal reviews of performance, for example as part of a manager's normal duties, can mean that the formal yearly appraisal becomes less of a chore and more an extension of an ongoing discussion with the appraisee. Table 8.2 details the range of appraisal methods and identifies the features, advantages and disadvantages of each.

Who owns appraisal?

In all its forms, appraisal should be owned by both appraisers and appraisees as part of the psychological contract. Perhaps this is an ideal, but one that in the context of performance management needs to be addressed. HRD professionals have a major part to play in influencing this process and in changing negative perceptions into positive contexts for appraisal. Assisting appraisers in developing feedback skills is an end, not a beginning.

A useful starting point in changing perceptions is the following model of active performance management and appraisal which is focused on:

Table 8.2 Appraisal methods and features

Type	Features	Advantages	Disadvantages
Line Manager Appraisal	• Mechanism to link individual goals and strategic direction	• Clarity about what is expected of the individual and the manager	• Needs the commitment of both manager and subordinate to spend appropriate time on the process
	• Focus on objectives and targets	• Identification of performance priorities and agreed actions	• Insufficient preparation by either manager or employee
	• Can combine regular informalreview of performance with formal appraisal to agreed timescales	• Forum for better understanding between manager and employee	• Failure to follow up on actions agreed
	• May include rating scales for comparison purposes	• Potential to promote better understanding of shared objectives	• Misuse of comparative rating scales
		• Can establish appraisal as a two-way process	• Lack of support and feedback skills by managers
Self-appraisal	• Often used as preparation for the line manager/ subordinate appraisal	• Best if individuals compare themselves against their own individual standards rather than others	• Lack of objectivity on the part of the individual
	• Individuals take the lead in reviewing their own performance	• Works best when geared towards motivation and development	• Can be prone to either excessive or lenient self-assessment
	• Encourages individuals to think about their performance and development needs in a focused	• Individuals are most aware of their own	• Individuals may think that they are going to be told about their performance by their manager, so why should they

way

• The combination of involvement and responsibility generates commitment to personally taking action

performance and are generally critically honest

• Less subject to halo effect and is consequently more discriminating

bother

Peer Appraisal	• Individuals nominate their own appraiser • Allows choice of peers who are respected for relevant knowledge or professional specialization • Relevant in a situation where there may be no immediate manager in a position to appraise	• Peers are likely to be members of the same professional specialization or group • Appraiser authority comes from expert power not position power • Peers are knowledgeable about specialist field and the contribution of the individual	• Needs careful control • Appraisee may choose a peer appraiser on the grounds of friendship or as a soft touch
Team Review and Appraisal	• Establishing team success and areas for improvement • Aids the team-building and objective-setting process • Encourages open and constructive comment among the team • Encourages cooperation among the team	• Complementary to individual performance appraisal • Gives opportunity for the team to discuss issues which may not have been previously debated by boss and subordinate • Establishes commitment from the individual towards team not just individual objectives	• Needs the willingness of all team members to participate • Team may be good at giving positive feedback but less so in giving negative constructive feedback • Team members may be apprehensive about appraising colleagues

Competency-based Appraisal	• Setting targets for the roles as specific objectives or other measurable objectives	• Developmentally oriented	• The nature and quality of the competence statements and their fit with other organizational initiatives
	• Behavioural descriptions of the standards expected in fulfilling the role	• Directs attention towards improvement of skills	
		• Does not deal with results achievement	• Team members may be apprehensive about appraising colleagues
	• A development plan specifying training, development and support towards achieving targets and competences	• Concentrates on the medium to long term rather than the short term	• The nature and quality of the competence statements and their fit with other organizational initiatives
	• A system of periodic review leading to annual appraisal of performance against targets and achievement of competences		• The expectations of employees and the relationship between competence achievement and pay and rewards

360-Degree Feedback	• The focus is on development of skills and competences which will improve organizational performance	• Gives a comprehensive indication of the totality of the individuals performance and relationships	• Depends on the design of the questionnaire and how it fits with other organizational performance criteria
	• Appraisees may include either direct or other managers, subordinates, peers or customers	• Has the potential to overcome the bias of a traditional one person top-down review or appraisal	• Depends on the interpretation and skills of the person giving the final feedback
	• Feedback is collected systematically through formally constructed questionnaires	• Peers and subordinates can have an input to the process and can view it as a process which empowers them	• Depends on the accuracy and quality of the ratings provided by all contributors
	• Can include self-assessment for comparison with the views of others	• Can be incorporated into other appraisal processes	• Depends on the criteria for choosing contributors. Is the choice free or forced?
	• May allow individual to choose who contributes	• Seems to suit organizations where they need flexibility and teamwork within a less hierarchical structure	• Concerns over whether feedback is used exclusively for development or is part of the normal appraisal process and if so whether it is linked to pay and rewards
	• Is essentially based on ratings which more often than not are aggregated to represent an average score		

• feedback on *behaviour* instead of *personality;*

• concentration on the *future* instead of the *past;*

• an ethos of *improvement* instead of *punishment;*

• feedback based on *precision* instead of *generalities;*

• comment based on *information* instead of *belief;*

• securing of *commitment* instead of *compliance;*

• active *support* instead of *directive;*

• appraisal that is *person-centred* instead of *form-centred;*

• a process owned by *everyone* instead of *administered by Personnel;*

• a philosophy of *how can we* benefit instead of *what can I* get from you.

Trust

An overriding consideration for any organization is that it can establish *mutual trust.* The model of active performance management and performance appraisal relies on an open, constructive and trusting relationship between all parties concerned.

I am reminded of a presentation given at the American Society for Training and Development Conference and Exposition in 1996 by Stephen Covey. He argued that if you do not first establish 360-degree trust, then how can you expect to achieve meaningful 360 degree appraisal?

Returning to the theme of the psychological contract, if one party such as the organization is implying that innovation, creativity and risk-taking are the key to organizational success, but then punishing employees for taking risks and making mistakes, trust by employees in their employer has been betrayed. Where downsizing and de-layering have become the rule rather than the exception, trust in their employers by the current or potential workforce has got to be re-established as a key element of business strategy.

Open expression of trust can, however, be espoused by organizations, not by corporate rhetoric but by actions taken and by active and honest communication of business circumstances, whether they be good or bad.

Handy (1997:189–94) examines trust from both perspectives, and makes an interesting comment in relation to organizational trust when he states:

We manage our young on a loose rein, but the rein is always there, getting looser and looser as we trust them more. It is no different in organisations. By trust, organisations really mean confidence, a confidence in someone's competence and their commitment to meet a goal. Define that goal and the trusted individual or team can be left to get on with it. Control is then exercised after the event by assessing the results, rather than before the event, by granting permission.

This brief quote captures the essence of what good performance management is all about: *confidence; commitment; competence; definition of goals; trust; individual and team effort; support; and finally appraisal or assessment of results.*

Then the cycle starts again based on:

• What did we do well?

• What would we do differently next time?

• What are our areas for improvement?

• How are we going to address these?

• How are we going to evaluate our actions?

It sounds like the classic appraisal and feedback format doesn't it? It is, but it is placed in the context of organizational learning, performance improvement and progress. So what are the implications for the key stakeholders in the process?

CONCLUSION

Implications for organizations, managers and individuals

The clear message arising from research for this chapter is that successful organizations will be the ones which:

1. Explore their current and future markets in a truly strategic sense in order to anticipate trends and prepare for them before they actually happen.

2. Translate the needs of the external business environment into the actualities of the internal organizational environment by sharing and communicating strategic vision and goals. This includes sharing both the good and bad news with employees.

3. Take a systems approach to linking each of their key business strategies together. If long-term strategic planning has taken place, then *strategic systems planning* also needs to take place.

4. Consider the cultural aspects of globalization if they are competing in a worldwide marketplace. The national norms and values of the parent company are not necessarily those of employees in other parts of the world.

5. Consider the effects that ongoing change and reconfiguration will have on the work-force and plan to communicate the rationale behind change to employees rather than impose it on them.

6. Create or at least understand the type of organizational culture/s that will support both the business and its employees.

7. Evaluate their current performance management system on a regular basis and take action to identify gaps and address them.

The common element in each of the above seven points is people and their relationship with and potential to the business. A ten-year longitudinal study (1991 to 2000) entitled 'Impact of people management practices on business performance' (IPD, 1997b:16) reports:

The results reveal that acquisition and development of skills (selection, induction, training and appraisal) and job design (job variety and responsibility, skill flexibility and teamworking) are significant predictors of both change in productivity and change in profitability.

The ideal scenario, suggested by Bassi *et al* (1996:41) includes:

• performance management systems that encourage development, that are highly motivating and that are equitable;

• compensation (pay) systems that reward the best performers appropriately and motivate behaviours critical to business success;

• training and development systems that provide employees with the skills and behaviours for their current and future jobs in the organization.

Implications for HRD professionals and practitioners

There are no easy or simple solutions in the application of performance management, whichever function or discipline within an organization we may belong to. What is evident is that traditional roles and practices are in many cases no longer relevant to the world of today. The reality of the lean organization requires the breaking down of traditional boundaries and barriers.

Modern business requires employees at all levels to be flexible and adaptable. The ability of employees to work across professional disciplines within high performance teams is an oft-quoted example in competence statements and management texts. As Holbeche (1997) states, 'Lean organizations depend on their ability to create and dissolve teams and to enable teamwork uncluttered by functional boundaries or inflexibility.'

If, for example, we extrapolate this into the changing role of the HRD professional, what might this mean? Traditional training officers/managers might consider that the main elements of their role are to identify training needs, design and deliver appropriate training and development courses and initiatives and evaluate them. To do so might involve dialogue with others outside the function but often at an operational level. What will be

required of HRD professionals in the future in relation both to performance management and our roles in general, is, where appropriate:

• *To become actively involved at a strategic level within organizations.* Wills (1997:20) highlights the fact that if a cross-section of business leaders were to be asked what they understood performance management to be it would result in extremely shallow comment. He states:

We also lack common understanding of what we mean by integrated performance management. It is unclear as to whether anyone has achieved this. For example, do companies see performance management as part of strategic planning and strategy implementation? The three parties in these processes–HR, finance and strategic planning–do not collaborate at all in the development of their various processes. There is a need to bring these into sync. *One of the things HR professionals can do is to become part and parcel of the strategic planning process at the earliest stage.*

• *To act as change agents and internal consultants in identifying and supporting approaches that are key to the success of the business and which will attract the support and commitment of senior management.*

• *To work in and with project teams across the organization to facilitate the process of change and learning.*

What I am also suggesting is that we cannot expect others to assume new responsibilities or reappraise their roles if we are not modelling the process ourselves. What is evident is that there would appear to be three levels of HRD practice:

1. *Strategic:* influencing, negotiating, planning, organizational development.

2. *Operational*: internal consultant, project team member/leader, facilitator, identifier of training and development interventions, and generalist.

3. *Specialist:* designer, deliverer, subject expert, technician.

We may feel *comfortable* working at one of or across the range of levels. We may however be *required* to work across all three as a result of the downsizing of the HR function in many organizations.

A case in point. My contract over the last eight years has been a continuous one but has involved working for three different 'employers' in five different locations.

Some might call it occupational schizophrenia. I call it survival, but survival with benefits. I entered HRD as a trainer, but after 20 years in the profession I would now regard myself as an educator, trainer and developer. Yes, I receive encouragement and support from my employers, but essentially I see myself as being responsible for my own performance

improvement and, to a great extent, my own performance management.

Perhaps that is what performance management is really all about. Integrated systems have a part to play in it but it's about *people* and *mutuality.* Mutual survival through mutual support and progress.

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9
Making the Most of Consultancy:
Perspectives on Partnership

David Sawdon

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The literature on the use of consultancy, whether internal or external, to enhance individual and/or organizational effectiveness is comparatively sparse. We can, nevertheless, begin to detect different themes, strands and emphases to guide us through the territory. There is, for example, a clear theme of *evolution* and *transition* from trainer to consultant in various guises (Holdaway and Saunders, 1996; Phillips and Shaw, 1996), which recognizes the need for letting go of *performing* as a trainer and acknowledges transferable competences into consultancy. Alternatively, others are more concerned with how organizations might *select* and *use* consultants and become more competent in obtaining value from the endeavour (Bailey and Sproston, 1993; Kubr, 1986, 1993). Each contributor necessarily reflects on *purpose, principles, roles* and *process,* providing comparable three, four, or five stage models, which are often analysed in terms of critical steps, eg Margerison (1995). Some choose to focus on the *interpersonal skills* and *dynamics* which facilitate the intervention (Heron, 1991; Honey, 1994; Margerison, 1995) and the creation of an 'equal partnership with clients' (Phillips and Shaw, 1996). Others suggest key approaches variously highlighting 'the dynamics of creativity and innovation' (Sonesh-Kedor and Geirland, 1995) or the value of 'dialogue' in promoting organizational learning (Blantern 1997; Senge, 1990).

At this point, depending upon your perspective and need for information, the boundaries of the territory being explored can either expand considerably or, conversely, contract. They can expand in the sense that the literature on central issues to consultancy like managing change, organizational development and interpersonal skills is extensive and, wherever you choose to look, at random or with purpose, you are likely to find some little nugget of value. Alternatively, notions of transferability, core processes, frameworks and skills tend to emerge, whose universality requires discrete application according to context and need. The skills of consultancy may well be perceived as mirroring those of a therapeutic counsellor, for example, and thus we might choose to narrow our focus of study; see, for example, Brown (1984) and Pont (1995). One challenge, therefore, might be to refine and enhance those core skills in the interests of individual and organizational effectiveness, rather than to allow the organizational context to dictate and potentially restrict what is brought into play. A second complementary challenge for the potential traveller is to resist the need to reinvent the wheel. We can acknowledge our available experience, yet still be open in a reflective manner to learning from alternative disciplinary perspectives and how these might be adapted to suit our specific individual and organizational context.

Having taken an initial glance at the terrain, my intention is to give some order or structure to the journey while acknowledging that most journeys of this type have their own elements of unpredictability. A starting point would seem to be to explore *purpose and meaning;* and, bearing in mind the differing contexts where consultancy can have relevance, to take this further into different *perspectives and needs.* Thirdly, analyses of *process* and the *power* issues involved will aim to draw out the roles, characteristics, skills and dynamics. And finally, the culture of the times requires us to examine the notion of *partnership* models, issues and possibilities as a desirable, if not essential, condition for effective outcomes. The use of the alliterative *'p'* is meant to be purposeful, though not excluding, and the reader may well wish to add or amend his or her own terms to accommodate diverse perceptions and problems.

Having read this chapter you will:

• know the four criteria for selecting a consultant;

• be aware of the various roles a consultant can adopt;

• understand the steps involved in a consultancy intervention.

PURPOSE AND MEANING

Steinberg (1989:1) discussing consultation in the context of health and social care practice, cites 85 alternative words to describe the activity. His point is that, 'an essentially friendly

and user-orientated enterprise' has tended to be hijacked or usurped to meet various specialized purposes. Within his context, it entails one person (the consultant) helping another (the consultee) to do his or her work, 'without taking it over; the consultee retains control of work in hand, the methods used and responsibility for it too'. This unre-markable definition, with its primary emphasis on facilitation or enabling within individualized relationships, may lack weight or direction for some. Equally, the notion that, 'consultants are very much in the business of trying to meet the expectations of their clients' (Holdaway and Saunders, 1996:26) may for others only be seen as stating the obvious. At this point, therefore, caution is required in case we fall into the common negative stereotyping of the consultant as being someone who tells you something you already know. Both the definitions offered above are deceptive; their weight lies within their respective implications.

Margerison (1995:12) might be considered more direct. Consultation, he argues, has always implied giving advice: 'some people having special knowledge which, when required, can be dispensed at a cost to others'. The concept is, however, changing rapidly into: 'a set of activities designed to improve things'. In this sense, consultancy might be applied to a wide range of relationships within an organization just as much as it involves relationships between client organizations and consultants. The role is multi-faceted.

What clearly emerges for Kubr (1993) is that the term 'consultant' is generic and can be applied to any person or organization that provides advice to decision-makers: 'Anyone who feels like it can call himself a consultant–if he finds people willing to listen to him.' The risks in such a situation are considerable. Kubr (1993:10–11) thus cites the International Labour Organization's four guiding criteria for selecting a consultant to offer us another insight into the purpose and meaning of consultation:

1. The consultant *offers and provides something that the client is lacking* but wishes to acquire in various areas of business and management knowledge, expertise, experience or know-how (technical competence).

2. The consultant is someone who *knows how to work with clients in helping to identify and solve their problems* (consulting know-how).

3. The consultant is an *independent and objective adviser* (independence).

4. The consultant is someone who has chosen to abide by a *professional code of ethics and conduct* (professional integrity).

If there is any coherence to be obtained from these various attempts at defining purpose, it is that consultancy will be about change, not necessarily from bad to good, but in the interests of improving things. Further, the growing references to the importance of the relationship imply that a sense of partnership can be productive. Some will want a

facilitator, others a healer, yet others will want to be authoritatively advised. In reality, we may want and expect a combined package and more, based on trust and absolute honesty, to serve

our interests. What transpires will depend considerably on our respective abilities to clarify assumptions, perceptions and needs.

PERCEPTIONS AND NEEDS

Advice is seldom welcome and those who want (or need) it most always like it least. (Earl of Chesterfield, 1774)

It has been suggested that organizational decisions to contract with consultants may often be based on the 'management by rain-dance syndrome' where problems or needs must be seen to be addressed. Cleverley (1971), for example, likens the consultant to a primitive witch doctor called in to perform:

• *exorcism* (diagnosing the causes of the problem and eliminating them);

• *placating demons* (internal morale building by identifying external or structural dysfunction);

• *soothsaying* (forecasting or prescribing the future).

The emphasis is on impact and some cathartic expression of emotional pressures. The efficacy of the consultant's intervention is not subject to rational, empirical test. If recommendations work, then he or she accrues high credibility and power. If they do not work, then the organization has failed to carry out the directives satisfactorily. 'The thought that failure might be due to a flaw in the medicine itself is unacceptable.'

Such a perception of the role and functions of a consultant and the needs to be addressed may indeed be a realistic metaphor in some situations, and not without significant consequences.

CONSULTING IN A HEALTH CARE ENVIRONMENT
A large multidisciplinary health care organization in the UK contracted with external consultants to provide training and consultancy for one of its specialist units in the area of equal opportunities. The expressed objectives were about raising awareness, improving practice, liaison between disciplines and improved service delivery. In effect, the real problem, not articulated, was that some staff were resistant to change and were managing to block structural and procedural development proposals so that an impasse had been reached.

In the course of their intervention, the consultants initially placated the demons by facilitating full expression of emotional pressures about the dysfunctional nature of the situation and, in the process, diagnosed the causes of the problem. Predictions were that, if certain practices did not change, exorcism or elimination of some staff would be inevitable. Although the intervention provided considerable emotional impact, practice did not change in any discernible way and the predicted exorcism took place. In one sense, it could be argued that the consultants were used to manipulate a required change and the only issue was how they helped to achieve it. Alternatively, it was apparent that everyone was stuck and some external force was needed to give the momentum towards change.

Whether or not internal consultants have similar powers is open to debate. Phillips and Shaw (1996:74–5) offer us solid lists of advantages and disadvantages in the internal versus external consultancy discussion, while Margerison (1995) offers a quadrant model highlighting the advisory and the executive role of the consultant; see Figure 9.1.

The potential tensions for the internal consultant lie between having the inside familiarity with the issues and personnel, and yet being insufficiently detached from them to provide freshness and distance. These appear to mirror the tensions for the external consultant, who will need time to discover the internal issues while being seen to be outside the politics of the organization. Thus the tentative conclusions reached by Phillips and Shaw (1996:76) are worth noting:

• Internal and external consultants working together have the potential to be a highly effective partnership if they make conscious use of the benefits of each other's position and help each other to overcome drawbacks.

• Internal consultants are likely to be more effective if, as far as possible, they manage themselves and their client relationships as though they are external.

Figure 9.1 The four roles of a consultant, after Margerison (1995: 5)

It can, therefore, be more helpful to recognize the connections than to exploit the differences. Such positive perceptions allow the possibility of charting the valid transition from trainer to consultant (Holdaway and Saunders, 1996; Phillips and Shaw, 1996) and to acknowledge the 'shamrock organization' described by Handy (1985). Common negative perceptions of the consultant as a failed or redundant practitioner can be re-framed as purposeful career development. Thus, Phillips and Shaw (1996:18) are able to trace three broad developmental paths for trainers:

a. from training to consulting;

b. from training to learning;

c. from individual change to organizational change;

and to arrive at four approaches to training and consultancy:

1 trainer;

2. training consultant;

3. learning consultant;

4. organization change consultant.

These kinds of analyses can give greater clarity to the key questions around the type of consultant being sought or available; what the focus of their work might be; and their likely impact on organizational effectiveness. They also suggest a continuity and valuing of the developing experience of training professionals within and without their employing organization. This raises inevitable questions about credibility, influence and power within organizational development.

PROCESS AND POWER

One of the key underlying themes in the discussion so far has been concerned with how power is exercised by the different parties or stakeholders and, in particular, by consultants. How will change take place and who will decide–the consultant alone, the consultant and clients together, or the clients alone, having consulted? Heron (1991) defines these states as the three political modes of facilitation or the politics of learning:

• *the hierarchical mode*–facilitator/consultant directs the process, takes primary responsibility for diagnosis, proposals for change, exercising authoritative power in the

relationship;

• *the cooperative mode*–facilitator/consultant shares his or her power in collaborating, nudging, guiding clients towards greater self-direction through negotiation;

• *the autonomous mode*–facilitator/consultant respects the ability of clients to find their own way and helps to create the conditions whereby full self-determination can operate.

The effective consultant facilitator is someone who can use all of these three modes within the different stages of a consultancy intervention according to the needs and abilities of the parties involved. This construct, and Heron develops this further, has the merit of transcending most situations whether individual, group or organizational and can be applied in therapeutic, advisory and business/management interactions. It also illustrates that consulting is an art where the consultant needs to be able to exercise skill and judgement within each unique assignment, rather than slavishly following a technicist formula.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AND BANK RAIDS
An interesting example of consulting can be found in the field of disaster management. A bank wants to ensure that staff can process the trauma of an armed attack in any of its public outlets. It recognizes that post-traumatic stress can lead to sickness/absenteeism, poor work performance, and potential decline in the quality of customer service. It also acknowledges that some form of counselling/debriefing may have individual and organizational benefits.
During the first stages of negotiation/entry/contracting, it is likely that the expertise of the consultant in this specific area of disaster management will give them power to propose ways in which matters should be addressed to produce positive outcomes. He or she can take primary responsibility for diagnosis, and exercise authoritative power in the relationship. The bank, whose primary focus is not counselling nor debriefing, may well want some measurable outcome indicators, eg, how soon can they expect 'normal service' to be resumed, but it is unlikely to be able to challenge process and methodology. At the point of delivery of a service (following an incident) traumatized employees may well need the consultant(s) to take charge, to hold the process of debriefing, to provide insights and reassurance. Thus the consultant's capacity to operate in the hierarchical mode comes with the territory, and is expected.
The skilled facilitator in this context, however, will recognize that each individual can present his or her own response to the alleged trauma, and ultimately will need to find his or her own solution. Thus a collaborative approach can acknowledge a gradual shift from potential dependency on the expert through guidance towards greater self-direction. Some may reject any suggestion that they are suffering trauma as a result of the incident. The skilled facilitator consultant respects the ability of each participant to find his or her own way of dealing with what has happened, and helps to create the conditions whereby he or she can exercise that autonomy.

Dilemmas may arise if the healing process takes longer than hoped for in the bank's terms, and is compromised by commercial/organizational considerations. Finding a formula that meets the concerns of each stakeholder will challenge all parties in their exercise of power.

While artistry is, by definition, fluid, subjective and idiosyncratic there would seem to be a large measure of objective agreement among contributors about the requisite stages or cycles of intervention (see Table 9.1).

There are clear differences in language and style and the detail with which each stage is broken down into steps. Moreover, as Margerison (1995) warns, 'Although they are presented in a sequential order, real life consulting projects do not always easily fall into such a pattern.' We can and should expect, however, some coherence in terms of a beginning, middle and end to the process, and be able to explain where we have got to at any point in time.

The artistry and the critical differences will tend to be evident in the way any given consultant exercises power, his or her style and models of intervention. Heron (1991:21) would argue that there are good and bad methods of facilitation, 'but there is no one right and proper method. There are innumerable valid approaches, each bearing the signature of different idiosyncratic facilitators.' Perhaps the most provocative attempt to categorize these alleged idiosyncrasies is that by Margerison (1995), who proposes four role models of consultancy by analogy with four well-known professions. These are:

1. *The Doctor*–client has illness/disease which needs diagnosis and cure.

2. *The Detective*–something is wrong; need to find who is responsible and deal with it or them.

3. *The Salesperson* - has a product to sell which will solve the problem.

4. *The Travel Agent*–finding the best route for where the client wants to go.

Maister (1989) offers a similar quadrant model but refines the medical analogy by comparing the consultancy approach to the following four models:

1. *Psychotherapy/Family Doctor*–interactive skill process.

2. *Nursing*–familiar routine problem, assistance needed.

3. *Surgery*–complex problem, high risk, technical expertise needed.

4. *Pharmacy*–straightforward, routine problem; speedy response at low cost.

Margerison clearly favours the travel agent model, with the consultant using his or her power in a cooperative mode through providing information about potential 'vehicles' and

Table 9.1 Stages or cycles of intervention

Margerison (1995)	Burke (1982)	Phillips and Shaw (1996)	Holdaway and Saunders (1996)	Heron (1991)
Appraisal (4 steps)	Entry	Gaining entry	Making and securing contact	Planning
Assessment (4 steps)	Contracting Diagnosis	Agreeing a working contract	Data collection	Meaning Confronting
Application (4 steps)	Feedback Planning Change	Data collection, analysis and diagnosis	Identifying problems and agreeing the contract	Feeling Structuring Valuing
	Intervention Evaluation	Formulating proposals	Project management	
		Feedback to clients and decision to act	Learning design and implementing change	
		Implementation		
		Follow up	Disengagement and continuation	

'maps' to reach negotiated 'destinations' chosen by the client. One has a sense that the client's autonomy is respected and the consultancy service is about generating and selecting preferred options in partnership.

It is not particularly difficult to propose a list of core and specialist consultancy skills relevant to the stages, roles and approaches described. Such lists, however, often run the danger of describing a paragon and most readers will now be familiar with competency models that can fill huge volumes. Within the space of a brief chapter, my own view tends to reflect the earlier proposal, that consultancy skills will often mirror those of a therapeutic counsellor, coach or mentor (see for example, Carkhuff, 1983; Egan, 1962; Pont, 1995:143). Thus, the active listening skills or behaviours–attending, clarifying, reflecting back data, paraphrasing, summarizing, probing, giving feedback, recognizing and expressing feelings–will have core relevance as underpinning each of the phases of gaining entry, diagnosis, action-planning, implementation and termination (Kubr, 1993). They are also consistent with the 'Five lessons for internal OD consultants' proposed by Geirland and ManikerLeiter (1996:295):

1. establish your authority;

2. bring added value to the organization;

3. create rapport;

4. avoid misunderstandings; and

5. show courage.

Authority, added value, rapport, avoiding misunderstandings and courage are elements that imply and attract powerful emotions and opinion. They are often less tangible, less measurable than many would like but they tend to constitute the oil that lubricates the consultancy relationship. Any consultant, whether working with an individual in a mentoring context, or with a group of clients with an organizational brief, ignores the feelings and dynamics at his or her peril.

PARTNERSHIP

A collaborative approach involves an attitude of mind and some explicitly negotiated agreements. (Phillips and Shaw, 1996:58)

Partnership, like community, is a term much open to abuse in the sense that it can be attached or sprayed like graffiti on to any issue or situation with a view to making it palatable. That is to say, partnership or collaboration are assumed to be good things. As

Ross (1982) has pointed out, however, it depends. Collaboration, in his view, is only one

style of managing conflict whereby both parties manage to secure what they want. The necessary conditions are time, energy and a willingness to assert one's own needs while seeking to cooperate or enable the other person(s) to do the same.

Not all conflict situations, however, are best resolved by collaboration alone and access to other styles such as competing, compromising, accommodating and avoiding will enhance our management of such occurrences. A consultant may set out to work in partnership, but along the way may need to question whether a requested shift or new direction, or cut in budget from others outside the original plan represents an unacceptable compromise in relation to key principles and values, for example, or can be accommodated. The next review meeting may reveal that there is minimal choice, or power, to compete with the announced request. The remaining options may be avoidance by pretending nothing has changed–a dangerous course–or to withdraw from the project. Margerison (1995:112–4) paints some graphic pictures of the implications for the external consultant in rejecting assignments; alternatively, Phillips and Shaw (1996:87) encourage the internal consultant to acquire skills in 'the redefinition and re-framing of problems instead of rushing straight into solutions'.

The basic message would again appear to be that effective consultancy requires a certain artistry in the flexible employment of different styles and approaches according to the demands of the situation. Partnership will not necessarily be synonymous with feeling comfortable, nor cosy, but demands hard work on both sides to deliver the agreed objectives, when circumstances conspire to derail the best of intentions. Deadlines, competing stakeholder interests, overwhelming complexities, apathy and general turbulence make uneasy sleeping partners.

Most of us faced with such potential complexity and chaos reach for the security of a unifying theme, which in reality is likely to be an 'attitude of mind', a vision or dream towards which we can strive with varying degrees of success. A core unifying theme figures powerfully in the literature on organizational learning (eg, Argyris and Schon, 1978; Dixon, 1994; Drucker, 1992) and the now familiar concept of the learning company (Harrison, 1995; Pedler et al, 1997; Senge, 1990). The focus on learning allows us to embrace some of the core principles of adult education and transformative learning (Mezirow, 1990) and recognizes with Bennis (1993) that 'in complex systems and turbulent times, no one individual or group possesses enough knowledge to do the jobs of everyone else in the organization.' Similarly, Senge (1990:241), quoting Bohm, maintains that through dialogue:

People are no longer primarily in opposition, nor can they be said to be interacting, rather they are participating in this pool of common meaning, which is capable of constant development and change.

It follows, therefore, that a primary focus on enquiry, learning and understanding means

working together with others, based on mutual trust, respect and mutual recognition of the

different contributions. The 'explicitly negotiated agreements' with consultants are most likely to be formulated in a working contract. Kubr (1993:141–51) offers us an 'international contract outline', while Phillips and Shaw (1996:54) suggest that, 'There is no single way of writing a contract–it may be informal or formal, a lengthy document, a letter or just a set of points.' Bailey and Sproston (1993) provide us with a range of checklists to inform the process, inviting us to think about day-to-day management, equipping the consultant, managing the information, involving others, managing the finance, time and the unexpected, and ensuring good value. Geirland and Maniker-Leiter (1996) propose six key areas for discussion and defining the contract, 'to avoid misunderstandings'.

Gaining access to this evocative and elusive 'pool of common meaning' will present different challenges to the internal and external consultant. Contracts, promises and agreements are frequently broken without redress, so partnership or collaboration cannot rely on them in isolation. Many of the checklists and outlines offered above often tread a fine line between wanting to control the deviant consultant and giving him or her unlimited power and access to influence the organization.

Let us draw this journey towards some kind of resting place, therefore, with a final reference to what Senge (1990:276–86) describes as 'participative openness' and 'reflective openness'. Although many managers, trainers, consultants and counsellors pride themselves on being 'open', experience suggests that this is frequently restricted or tainted by game-playing. The freedom to speak one's mind (participative openness) within an organization or relationship needs to be complemented by the skills of critical reflection and enquiry (reflective openness). 'It involves not just examining our own ideas but mutually examining others' thinking.' Such skills, however, take time and persistence to develop and many will choose to avoid the task or be ignorant of their existence. They are, however, crucial to making consultancy work.

Given 'the planet wide shift from authoritarian power to collaborative power' (Bourget, 1996), consultants require strong role clarity, a sense of comfort with their own power, and a willingness to 'let go' (Bourget, 1996) in enabling the client autonomy proposed by Heron (1991). Given the comparative absence of 'reflective openness' skills across the different levels of most organizations, human resource professionals, internal and external, would appear to be key figures. They can both demonstrate by personal example and facilitate others in learning the power of Senge's vision to enhance individual and organizational development.

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Section Three:
The Planning and Designing of Learning, Training and Development

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10
Fundamentals of Adult Learning

Chris Wiltsher

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Almost all of those with whom we are involved in human resource training and development are adults. If our programmes are to be successful in helping people to learn, we must understand something of how adults learn.

In this chapter we shall look at some of the features of adult learning and discuss briefly some of the theories that have been developed to help us understand how adults learn.

Since much of the material in this chapter can seem rather abstract, you might find it helpful to ground the material by relating it to your own learning. You might like to pause for a few moments and write down the outlines of two of your own experiences of learning as an adult, one good and one bad. If you keep these outlines close at hand as you read the chapter, you will be able to compare what is being suggested about adult learning with your own experience.

Having read this chapter you should understand:

• the processes of learning;

• some of the features of adulthood relevant to adult learning;

• some of the characteristics of adult learning in particular; and

• the chief features of the main theories of learning.

LEARNING

We are all learning all the time. From day to day, even from minute to minute, we find ourselves faced with the need to adapt in order to survive in different circumstances. We adapt our behaviour and our ways of thinking about the world and interacting with it in order to cope and continue to live. For most of the time the changes required of us are small and hardly noticed; at the other extreme, there are occasions when we have to make major changes very quickly. In between are those occasions when we realize that we have changed, adapted, and now behave differently or see the world differently, or even understand ourselves differently. We realize that we have learnt something.

Learning is difficult to define. It is part of the process of change and adaptation to different circumstances. It enables us to draw on the past in order to cope better with the future. It is to do with change.

But what kind of change? Through learning people may change their view of the world, or their understanding of themselves, or their behaviour, or something else. The change may not always be immediately obvious to others, or even to the learner. However, learning eventually produces some observable effect.

What has been said so far implies that learning is a process. There is not one event, but a series of elements that go to make up learning. As with any process, learning is difficult to observe when it is happening; but as with any process, learning can be helped or hindered by many factors which are not themselves part of the process.

It is useful at this point to make a distinction between formal and informal learning:

• *Formal learning* is learning that takes place in a structured and intentional way. Typically formal learning takes place when we attend some kind of course, often in a particular setting. A good example of formal learning is the learning that takes place in school classrooms or training rooms.

• *Informal learning* is not structured, though it may occur in a structured setting. Informal learning takes place when we learn something new without intending to. It is the kind of learning that occurs when we pick up tips on doing something from watching an expert at work, or discover a new piece of information through a casual conversation. Much of our learning is informal.

THE LEARNING PROCESS

The process of learning can usefully be split into several stages. To learn we must:

- receive new information or data;

- take the information in;

• assimilate the information;

• store the information;

• use the information.

Exactly how we perform these tasks, by what physical processes they happen, is a matter of great discussion and controversy. For our present purposes, the details are not significant; those interested should refer to books such as Hill (1997), Pinker (1997) and Thompson (1993). However, we must say a little about each stage of learning.

Receiving

We note first that for the purpose of learning we are interested in the new information we receive. Much of the information we receive, especially as we get older and have the benefit of more experience, is not new. We do not ignore it, but it is not part of our learning.

However, we should note that new information is not just pieces of data about the world. New information may include ideas that help us make new connections between pieces of data already stored away in our memories.

Information comes in many forms. Our senses offer us information all the time. We filter the information, selecting what is relevant at the moment, that is, what is significant for the task in hand. Sometimes we make mistakes, and ignore something important; sometimes one piece of information is so overpowering that it blots out everything else. Thus when my sense of touch tells me that I am very cold, this information can blot out everything else, including the words of wisdom of a teacher. This is one reason why the efficiency of our learning is affected by the circumstances in which the learning takes place.

Taking in

Having received information and selected what we wish to take notice of, we have to take the information in. How we do this is not very well understood, but it is clear that human beings vary considerably in their ability to take in information. There are great variations in what we can see, hear, feel and so on. Many of these variations have to do with physical capability, and are affected by circumstances. For example, I see less well in dim light, and hear less distinctly if there is a lot of background noise. Our physical capabilities also change with age. Most people notice a deterioration in their sight and hearing as they grow older, though the speed of change varies enormously.

The effect of all this is that our physical capabilities affect our ability to learn. We learn from what we take in, and it seems that we take in only a fraction of the information we

receive through our senses. For our learning to be efficient and productive, we need to maximize the amount of information we take in.

In practical terms this means making sure that we have the best possible chance of taking in as much as possible. The physical setting of our learning is therefore important, as is our own physical state. We can also add to the efficiency of learning by providing more than one means of taking in the same information. Not only do our senses provide information, each can reinforce the other. The old saying, a picture is worth a thousand words reminds us that what we see has as great an impact as what we hear. For this reason, mind-mapping, developed by Buzan (1995) has become a very effective tool of some people. So too does what we touch, and the combination of sight, sound and touch in doing something is very powerful–which is why we often learn most quickly and easily through doing things.

Assimilating

In order to learn something, we must connect what we have taken in through our senses with information we already have stored away. This helps us first to make sense of the information we have received. Until we can connect the new information in some way with our existing framework of thought and experience, we cannot decide whether the information is significant or worth retaining.

How the processes of assimilation work is again not well understood, but the details do not matter for our present purposes. What is important is the role played by existing frameworks of thought. The more easily we can assimilate information to our existing frameworks, the quicker and more efficient will be our learning. Hence those offering learning must find ways of helping learners to connect new information to old. This is partly expressed in the idea familiar to trainers and teachers, that you must start 'where the students are'.

With adults, starting where they are can be very difficult: in any group of adults there is a variety of experience and a variety of starting points. Even where the group is coming to a task unfamiliar to all of them, the frameworks into which the new information must be assimilated are very varied.

An important aspect of assimilation is the resolution of conflicts between the information we already have and the new information. Generally this is not too difficult, especially if information is presented in units which allow time for the recognition and resolution of conflicts. However, sometimes the conflict is great, for example when a cherished and familiar working practice is described as inefficient or bad practice; then the resolution of the conflict may require a change in the framework of thought as well as the assimilation of new information. Changes in frameworks of thought are difficult, and may have considerable implications–which is why they are often resisted. Sometimes, it has been

suggested, the changes are simply rejected. We shall look briefly later at one famous discussion of responses to new information, by Piaget, which suggests this.

Storing

Once information has been assimilated, it must be stored for re-use, if we are to be able to say we have learnt it. The processes of memory have been closely studied for many years, but are still a subject of considerable debate and research (see, for example, Shanks, 1997). However, it is now generally agreed that we store things in short- or long-term memory, at least. Many of the items stored in short-term memory will be lost after a period, sometimes of minutes, sometimes of days. Information stored in long-term memory may be there indefinitely, though we may also have difficulty accessing it.

It is often said that memory declines as you grow older. Recent work suggests that it is *use* of memory that declines, rather than memory itself. Other work suggests that older people find it easier to remember some things, because they can assimilate them: what older people may find more difficult is assimilating information that requires changes or extensions in frameworks of thought. Think for example of the difficulties of learning a new language as you get older! A good summary of recent work in this area can be found in the chapter by Boulton-Lewis in Sutherland (1997). See also Chapter 13 on diversity and the dangers of stereotyping certain groups.

One implication of our present understanding of memory is that trainers and teachers have to think about the kind of information being given and what learners are expected to remember. If we want information stored in long-term memory then we must give the learner help in storing.

Using

We cannot say we have learnt something until we are able to use it and, usually, use it in contexts different from the context in which we gained it. This implies that we cannot claim to have learnt something until we have tried to use it. So learning opportunities should carry with them the opportunity to use what has been learnt. This may be as simple as trying to show someone else a skill you have acquired, or explaining to someone else a new idea you have learnt.

For the provider of learning, this stage of learning is relevant to assessing learning. In order to know whether students have learnt, and what they have learnt, we need some form of evaluation. The nature and form of evaluation or assessment will vary according to what is supposed to be learnt. For good assessment it is necessary that learners are given the opportunity to show that they can use the information they have gained in different ways. For example, in assessing whether or not someone has learnt to use a word-processor, we might need to ask them to produce more than one document, to show that they have learnt the skills rather than just a recipe.

LEVELS OF COMPETENCE

One of the problems of organizing our learning is that we do not know what we don't know! In other words we are unconsciously incompetent. Through placing ourselves in learning situations or sometimes through serendipity we find ourselves discovering something new but in which we have no ability–conscious incompetence. The next stage of learning and assimilating knowledge and skills is conscious competence, which might be when we are driving a car but have to think about what we are doing. Lastly, there is unconscious competence, which is where we might be thinking about work as we drive home and can't even remember doing the driving, nor the journey home! These levels of competence are shown in Figure 10.1.

Next, we must notice three features of learning implicit in what we have discussed so far: learning takes time; learning is an interactive process; and learning is an iterative process.

Learning takes time

It is important to notice that the stages we have described take time. We may receive, take in and partially assimilate information in a very short period, but it may take hours or days for us to assimilate the information completely. Learning opportunities must provide time for the necessary reflection to take place.

Learning is an interactive process

Receiving, taking in and using information require us to respond in some way to the world in which we live. Our interaction may be with other people, with objects, or with

Figure 10.1 Levels of competence

both: but unless there is interaction, we shall not learn. The interaction may be small, as in so-called 'passive learning', in which we receive information and process it without response (for example, in the traditional lecture to a large audience). However, there is much discussion and some evidence to suggest that the greater our interaction, the quicker and more efficient is our learning: see, for example Brookfield (1991) and Kidd (1983).

Learning is an iterative process

Learning is a process that is never complete. This is partly because neither human beings nor the world we inhabit are static. Changes are always taking place, in us and around us. At any stage of our lives we may find ourselves acquiring new information which makes us change some of the connections we have made, perhaps even discarding old information.

We acknowledge this as the need to revise views and practices. Having learnt something, we use it, and we find that it works tolerably well. But we can do better, so we revise our ways of thinking and doing, and try again, and then revise again and so on. A useful way of visualizing this process is given in Kolb's experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984), presented in Figure 10.2.

What Kolb's cycle emphasizes is that learning is a process which involves both noticing things and reflecting on what we have noticed. It is iterative and interactive. Not only does new experience or information become a spur to reflection and action, reflection can lead to testing ideas through experience.

Kolb's cycle is simplified. Just a little thought about our own learning should show that we need to also take account of choices, deliberate decisions to accept or reject particular ways of reflecting, goals and so on. However, the simple picture is sufficient for our present purposes, emphasizing as it does that learning is a process that feeds on itself.

Figure 10.2 Kolb's experiential learning cycle

ADULTS AND ADULTHOOD

Having looked very briefly at the processes of learning, we turn to the second part of our task and consider adults and adulthood. Much of our thinking about learning is based on studies of children learning. However, there are significant differences between children and adults, and some of the differences affect learning. This is emphasized by some writers using the distinction between pedagogy and andragogy. Pedagogy is claimed to be a form of teaching and learning appropriate to children in formal settings, which sees them as recipients of instruction; andragogy in contrast is seen as a process of teaching and learning in which the learners are participants. This distinction will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

What is an adult?

There are many ways in which we normally pick out adults from children, for example, age, size, or occupation. Thus we usually say that someone aged 14 is not an adult; someone aged 41 is an adult. Someone six feet tall is likely to be an adult, someone three feet tall is likely to be a child. Someone in full-time employment is likely to be an adult, someone in full-time compulsory schooling is more likely to be a child.

But already doubts should be creeping in. There are short people who are adults and tall people who are not adults. Whether or not someone in employment or schooling is described as an adult may depend on the laws of the country concerned relating to employment and school attendance. Sometimes we describe people of adult age as behaving like children, and some children are described as behaving like adults. So there are areas of doubt.

The law does not help us either. In many countries there are clear legal rules about when a person may serve in the armed forces, take on debts, vote, marry and so on. All these are taken to be signs of being an adult, yet the variation in age across the world for these significant events is enormous, and in some cases affected by gender.

Clearly then for our purposes none of these ways of characterizing adults is sufficient. Wherever the boundary is drawn there will be people who do not fall into the category of adult but who are nevertheless of interest to us because they are among our adult learners.

Adulthood

It may be more helpful to distinguish between being an adult and adulthood. To be an adult is to fulfil a set of criteria, usually based on age, size, legal status and similar features. Adulthood is a state that is related to age, but not determined by any of the features we have noted so far.

What are the characteristics of adulthood? We can begin to explore these by recalling a remark made above: sometimes we describe people of adult age as behaving like children, and some children are described as behaving like adults. This suggests that we might identify some of the characteristics of adulthood by considering what we expect of adults, for example in their behaviour.

A short list might include words like maturity, experience, responsibility and independence. We expect adults to show maturity in their behaviour for example; we do not, expect adults to fly into a rage just because they cannot have exactly what they want immediately. We expect adults to have experience of life, and to draw on that experience in making decisions. We expect adults to take responsibility for their decisions. We expect adults to show independence, making their own decisions.

This does not mean that all adults fulfil these expectations all the time. However, if someone has reached adulthood, we expect him or her to show more of these characteristics rather than less. It is important to recognize that adulthood is a state that is incomplete. Adults are changing and developing all the time, just as children are. But in adults the changes are less dramatic, usually.

We should now note another word of caution: words like maturity and independence are slippery. What counts as maturity in one context will not necessarily count in another, and the same is true of words like independence and responsibility.

Clearly defining adulthood is hard. We can see that adulthood involves a range of attributes, of which we have noted some. Our judgement about whether or not someone has achieved adulthood will involve assessing the extent to which they display appropriate attributes.

The immediate significance of this for adult learning is this: we cannot assume that all adults are the same. They differ markedly, and those differences affect the way they learn. To see this we shall look further at some of the characteristics of adulthood which are of significance for learning.

Adult learners are mature

We have already noted that it is hard to define maturity, but we can recognize it. Among other things, to say that someone is mature is to say that they have a framework of ideas and experience into which everything new must be fitted in order to make sense. The framework has been formed through reflection on a variety of experiences, and may be more or less fixed. Mature people may find it easy to recognize challenges to their frameworks of thought, but hard to adapt those frameworks.

Adult learners are experienced

They have lived through a number of years and a range of experiences, from many of which they have learnt. Some of the experiences have been good and positive, others have

been bad and negative. Positive or negative, they are part of the baggage brought by adults to learning opportunities and colour the way in which people are able to respond to learning opportunities.

Adult learners are capable of making informed choices

We expect adults to make decisions and choose between courses of action, so it is natural that we should expect them to do so in relation to learning. This means not just that we can expect adults to make choices about courses or whether or not to take up particular learning opportunities; we should also expect adults to make decisions about what they want to learn and how they want to learn. Sometimes it is hard to get adults to make decisions about their own learning, because of their past experience of learning. Sometimes they make decisions which seem wrong, and that raises questions about who controls adult learning, and how.

Adult learners are capable of taking responsibility

This follows on from the last point. We expect adults to take responsibility for their actions, and we should expect adult learners to take responsibility for their own learning. To encourage this to happen, adults need to become actively involved in the design of learning opportunities.

The last two characteristics are very important for the consideration of motivation. It is clear that nobody will learn unless they are motivated to do so. This can be seen in children in school. It is also true of adults. We need to understand something of what motivates those who undertake learning: why they are doing it, what they hope to gain from it, what impediments to learning they carry with them.

This is particularly important in many training programmes. Many of those involved in training and development programmes will be there because they must be there–it is a requirement of the management–and they may not be well-motivated to learn.

One further aspect of adulthood should be noted. Adults are people who have developed an identity, a sense of who they are and how they relate to others. Their identity has many components, but one important element is related to their own particular combination of experience and ideas. In some learning situations new ideas will be presented which require significant changes in their ways of thinking and acting, and those changes may threaten a person's identity. Threats to our identity are always hard to handle, as they have implications for every aspect of life. This aspect of adulthood alone makes the task of offering learning to adults challenging.

STYLES OF ADULT LEARNING

In this section we look at how to engage people in the processes of learning. As we have seen, we need to pay attention to why people want to learn, what they want to learn, and how they want to learn. In practice we shall then need to compromise between the learners' needs and desires and what it is possible to deliver through particular learning opportunities.

Why people want to learn

Usually adult learners will have a mixture of reasons for wanting to learn, and their reasons may change over the course of a learning programme. We can never assume that we know exactly why people have opted to become adult learners. However, it is useful to group the main reasons for learning in ways that relate to the main psychological theories about adult learning. We do not have space for a detailed discussion of these theories, especially as there are many variants within each of the main streams. Books such as Atkinson *et al* (1993) and Hill (1997) provide more detail, and the psychology section of any good library or bookshop will provide a range of detailed discussion for those interested. Here we shall indicate only founding figures and broad strands relevant to our particular concerns.

Behaviourist theories of learning

Some of our learning comes about as a response to a stimulus. We react to something outside ourselves. If the result is good for us, we learn to react in similar fashion in a similar situation, while if the result is bad, we learn not to do that again. This is the basic idea of the behaviourist school of thought, which can be traced back to the work of Pavlov (1927) who taught dogs to salivate at the sound of a bell; and Skinner (1974) who taught pigeons to play table tennis through operant conditioning.

Behaviourists concentrate on modifying behaviour by reinforcement. Behaviour that is seen as positive or good is reinforced by rewards (your car insurance is reduced if you do not make a claim), while unwanted behaviour is treated to negative reinforcement (you are fined if you are caught speeding).

Most people have experienced both positive and negative reinforcement at school, and we can see that behaviourist learning theories have their strengths. At very least they remind us of the importance of the reactions of a teacher to the work of learners. However, this approach to learning has been criticized as mechanistic and tending to focus only on certain behaviour. There is no idea of the exploration of alternatives, and there is evidence to suggest that reinforcement may need constant topping-up to remain effective.

Cognitivist theories of learning

If some of our learning is reactive, some learning can also be described as proactive. That is, we seek out information and try to make sense of it in order to understand better our world and our place in it. This is the basis of cognitivist theories of learning, which make use of the work of researchers such as Kohler (1925) and Piaget (1950). Kohler worked with apes and Piaget concentrated on child development, but their results have been applied more widely.

For the cognitivist, the key feature of human beings for learning is that we are intelligent seekers. According to cognitivist theories, we constantly find that our experience of the world does not quite fit the way we see the world, and we try to do something about the misfit. We seek new information, we adjust our view of the world, we may create a new way of seeing the world. There are clear connections here with some of the elements we noted earlier in the different stages of the learning process.

As we noted earlier, we do not always adjust our view of the world easily; sometimes we resist change. Piaget (1950) claimed that sometimes we reject change. He developed a three-fold classification of responses to new information, suggesting that we may:

• *assimilate*–the new information poses no great challenge to our existing framework of thought and is absorbed;

• *accommodate*–the new information does not fit easily into existing frameworks, but can be taken in with some changes;

• *reject*–the new information is so different from anything we have already that we cannot take it in without great changes in our framework of thinking, and we are not willing to make the changes.

It is questionable whether Piaget's model, developed from work with children, can be applied directly to adults, who have very complex frameworks of thought and considerable experience of accommodation. Nevertheless, we should note that in a cognitivist view, a person's desire to learn may conflict with a reluctance to change established frameworks. I may want to learn information technology skills, but if I am convinced that I cannot cope with 'clever machines', I will struggle.

Cognitivists, we said, see us as intelligent. To some critics, that should read: cognitivists see us as rational. That is, some critics claim that cognitivist theories are biased towards that learning which involves intentional rational thought, in which we are consciously trying to make logical sense of our ideas and bring order to the world as we see it. However, the world is not very orderly, nor are human beings totally rational. Consequently there are

aspects of our learning which do not fit the patterns of cognitivist theory.

A development of cognitivist approaches is personal construct theory, due to Kelly (1955). Kelly suggested that we each create our own model of the world and of other people

in it, and our relationship to them. Our constructed picture, he suggested, is shaped as much by feelings, beliefs and values, as by our experience. As a result, we all also create our own, individual, way of learning, which is closely related to our beliefs and values.

Humanist theories of learning

Some of our learning is a response to outside stimulus, some of our learning is an attempt to make sense of our world. Some of our learning is the outcome of a natural potential for learning: we learn because in the right circumstances we cannot help it. This is the key idea of the humanist school of thought, exemplified by the work of Rogers (1974). His perspectives on learning are also mirrored by Galileo who stated that, 'You cannot teach anyone anything. You can only help them discover it for themselves.'

This approach recognizes that humans generally respond to warmth, care and understanding. It claims that all human beings are born with a potential for learning. All human beings can learn, and potentially can learn almost anything. What prevents human beings from learning is a combination of external factors and internal fears, associated with a lack of warmth, care and understanding.

The importance of this approach is that it leads to the idea of learner-centred learning, in which the 'teacher' is seen as a facilitator. Responsibility for learning rests mainly with the learner, while the teacher provides resources and encouragement. In learner-centred learning, the learner sets the pace of learning, and the learner's existing knowledge and skills are recognized and used positively.

This approach to learning is very affirmative of learners, especially those who come with very low expectations of themselves. The problem the approach presents is that in many learning situations it is not possible to allow individuals to go at their own pace. Nor, generally, can learners be allowed to determine the content of learning: they do not have the knowledge or experience to do so, and there are frequently constraints imposed by demands for specific outcomes of a learning programme. Finally this approach can leave learners blaming themselves, or being blamed by others, for their failure to learn.

We can summarize this section by saying that people want to learn because:

• they are responding to a stimulus (which may be the need to upgrade skills in order to keep a job);

• because they want to improve the fit between their perception of the world and their experience (perhaps they need to understand the organization better to make career progress); and

• because they are encouraged to develop their potential (having left compulsory education at the first opportunity, they realize that they are capable of learning a great deal more).

All these reasons for learning can be found expressed in a variety of ways. For those concerned with adult learning, it is important to be aware that behind the many different stated reasons for wanting to learn there lie these different views of human beings and their learning capacities and behaviour. Providers of training and development need to draw on all these theories in order to understand the task before them.

What people want to learn

We engage in learning to acquire skills and knowledge. However, there are several kinds of skills and several forms of knowledge, and the ways in which we learn skills and knowledge reflect this variety.

It is useful first to make a broad distinction between generic knowledge or skills and domain-specific knowledge or skills. Generic knowledge and skills can be used in a variety of situations. The ability to manipulate things with your fingers is a generic skill with applications in feeding and dressing as well as using tools or turning the pages of a book. Knowing that some materials are impervious to water is generic knowledge that has applications in house building and drainage as well as choosing your waterproofs for the rainy season.

Domain-specific knowledge and skills relate to particular areas or domains of our experience. The ability to drive a car is a skill specific to road transport: someone who can drive a car may also be able to drive a bus or truck, but will not automatically be able to steer a boat or fly an aeroplane. Knowledge of the attributes of the particles that make up an atom is domain-specific: it is unlikely to be of use outside specialized fields of particle physics or chemistry.

The significance of this distinction for our purposes lies in the part of the learning process that we called assimilation. Someone who is already knowledgeable or skilful in a specific domain is likely to find it easier to assimilate further knowledge or skills within the same domain, simply because there is already a framework of thought to which to relate the new information. On the other hand, someone who is new to a specific domain may struggle to learn until a suitable framework is established. It is worth noting that expertise in one domain does not guarantee expertise in another, nor does expertise in one domain assure us that learning in a new domain will be quick or easy.

With generic skills and knowledge, we usually find that we learn them once and can then apply them again and again. We may, however, be able to refine our generic knowledge and skills by reflection on our use of them (recall Kolb's learning cycle).

As well as the distinction between generic and domain-specific knowledge and skills, it is worth noting the differences in the types of skills and knowledge we acquire. The best

known way of listing these types is Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom *et al,* 1956). Bloom classified skills under three domains: cognitive, psychomotor and affective. His taxonomy is represented in [Figure 10.3](#).

Figure 10.3 Bloom *et al*'s taxonomy of learning

• 'Cognitive' covers knowledge-related skills, knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in ascending order of complexity.

• 'Psychomotor' covers motor skills in the form of abilities, techniques and competences.

• 'Affective' covers feelings and attitudes and activities such as responding, valuing and judging. Krathwold *et al* (1964) identified these as: receiving, responding, valuing, organization and characterization by a value or value complex.

This taxonomy, and other ways of differentiating the skills we learn, are important because they remind us that different skills may be most efficiently learnt in different ways. If we wish to develop psychomotor skills, say the skill of knocking a nail in straight, we may learn best by following the example of an expert and practising until we can do it. If we wish to learn about the political system of a particular country, we may do so most efficiently by reading a book written by an expert.

There are other ways of classifying learning skills and knowledge, such as those of Gagn© (1967), and Gardner (1984) who proposed seven forms of intelligence:

1. linguistic;

2. logical/mathematical/scientific;

3. visual/spatial;

4. musical;

5. bodily/physical/kinaesthetic;

6. interpersonal;

7. intra-personal.

No one classification is universally accepted. Whichever classification appeals most to us, we should always remember that they are guides only, and that no classification, however complex, can take account of all the differences we find in adults.

How people want to learn

Bloom's taxonomy leads us on to consider how people want to learn. We have noticed that different forms of skill or knowledge may be most efficiently learnt in different ways. However, our concern is with adults learning, and research suggests that adults have their own preferred learning styles, which cut across some of the distinctions made above.

A classification of learning strategies is offered by Honey and Mumford (1986) which is based on the work of Kolb. They isolated four styles of learning:

• *activist*–the style of those who learn by doing things, intentionally or unintentionally;

• *pragmatist*–the style of those who learn by deliberate experimentation;

• *theorist*–the style of those who learn by analysing information and developing models to help them understand;

• *reflector*–the style of those who try to stand back and view events from several angles.

You might like to spend a few moments relating these styles to Kolb's learning cycle, and noting how closely they correspond. This shows how discussion of learning can be a self-reflective process (see Chapter 12). In a work setting have you noticed how you sometimes become frustrated by the fact that some people seem to take a long time before acting; or alternatively act too fast without thinking? Perhaps they are only exhibiting their learning style which is different to yours and which thus creates organizational friction!

It is important to note that most of us use more than one style, without realizing that we are doing so. However, it is claimed that everyone has one or two preferred styles, and it is in using those preferred styles that we learn most efficiently. This is partly because in using our own preferred styles we are doing something with which we feel comfortable; and partly because constant use of one or two styles helps to make us both more comfortable with them and more expert in applying them, thus increasing our potential for learning in these ways.

WHY, WHAT, HOW AND PRACTICE

Our discussion of why people want to learn, what they want to learn and how they want to learn has been very sketchy. Its purpose is to remind us that adults who take up programmes of training or development come with their own ideas about learning, based on past experience, and those ideas have a significant effect on the efficiency with which they learn.

Some of the ideas people have act as barriers to learning, making learning not just inefficient but difficult, perhaps even almost impossible. The next chapter will look in more

detail at barriers to learning and overcoming them as the theoretical ideas of this chapter are put into practice.

NEGOTIATION TRAINING FOR AN NHS TRUST
A large NHS Trust in London had found itself increasingly challenged by the contracting aspects of the internal market, which had been introduced into the NHS in 1991. The Trust faced severe competition from nearby hospitals as well as numerous private hospitals and clinics. Traditionally, the hospital's referral area encompassed GPs in all London and Home Counties district health authorities (DHAs). Although the hospital had a well deserved reputation for its clinical excellence, it was also regarded as expensive and insufficiently responsive to the new market environment.

Each year the number of individual healthcare contracts to be negotiated and secured rose significantly. By 1994 there were over 50 contracts with a value range of £5000 to £30 million. The task also increased in complexity as the market became more sophisticated and competitive. Contracts were negotiated by multi-disciplinary teams from three Directorates lead by the Contracting Director or a Contract Manager.

Relationships and trust between personnel from the different directorates were difficult and fragile, roles and responsibilities were unclear, and there were different behavioural and negotiating style preferences among team members. Some DHA negotiating teams had been able to exploit these difficulties to the detriment of the hospital.

All relevant staff attended a one-day workshop which had been designed to:
• achieve further development of negotiating skills;
• improve trust and understanding;
• enable teams to be configured so that skills and styles were complementary, rather than conflicting.

The workshop was designed and run by a highly experienced facilitator who had previously met each participant. Preparatory work included completing a team styles inventory and the Kiersey Temperament Sorter questionnaire. The pre-workshop one-to-one meetings with the facilitator were particularly valuable. They provided him with knowledge and the opportunity to establish initial trust and confidence.

The workshop was action-learning-based and included:
• negotiation strategies, planning, processes and style preferences;
• personality and behaviour recognition and their implications;
• advanced negotiating skills.

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Results were excellent. The next contracting round achieved better outcomes for both sides and was much less arduous:
• the configuration of some teams was changed to ensure a best fit of skills and styles;
• there was improved process planning and preparation with better account taken of DHA interests and negotiating preferences;
• increased understanding and knowledge led to improved trust and relationships that were sustained afterwards. A major contributor to this was the sharing of the outcomes of the various inventories.
With acknowledgement to Carole Hall, Training Consultant, ETC.

CONCLUSION

We have looked very briefly at some of the fundamentals of adult learning. Adult learning emerges from our discussion as a complex process, affected by many factors and discussed in many ways from a variety of perspectives. The provider of training and development for adults is faced with a bewildering array of elements to take into account in constructing learning opportunities. It might be helpful and encouraging to end with some cautionary notes.

First, it is clear that there are many different theories of adult learning, not all of which are totally compatible. We have touched briefly on major strands, but the research work goes on and the discussions grow steadily. No one theory covers everything. We need to be aware of the different ideas, but we also need to recognize that these are ideas. They are ways of helping us to draw in a systematic fashion on the experience of others. They are not prescriptions.

Secondly, we need to recognize that we cannot do everything. We can be aware of the different styles of learning and of the enormous differences between people on any given training programme or event. But we cannot take account of everything. It is therefore vital to consider what is appropriate and possible in any particular learning situation.

Finally, providers must not be worried by failure. The perfect training event has never happened and probably never will, human beings being what they are. Those professionally involved in training and development can only do their best–and learn from their experiences.

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11
The Adult Learner: Theory into Practice

Janet Parr

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The whole topic of adult learning has been in the arena for discussion for a number of years, with the current emphasis on both sides of the Atlantic being on lifelong learning. With this increasing awareness, and the emphasis on a changing and flexible workforce, it is important, both for organizations and individuals, not only to encourage adults back into education and training, but to provide a learning environment which ensures that maximum benefit is gained from their return to learning (Longworth and Davies, 1996; Thijssen, 1992).

Adult learners bring with them a range of educational experiences and motivations. They come from a variety of educational backgrounds and a diversity of social experiences, which can be both bonus and impediment. This chapter builds on the previous chapter by revisiting and developing some of the theories outlined therein. It then moves on to examine some of the issues and difficulties which mature students face when they return to education and training. In writing this chapter I have used, in illustration, verbatim material from my recent research into mature students returning to learning on a range of courses, from motor mechanics to Master of Education degrees. Their names have been changed to protect their identity, but their words add depth and reality to the discussion.

Having read this chapter you will:

• know Gagné's five domains of learning;

• understand the distinction between pedagogy and andragogy;

• understand the nature of the learning cycle and learning spiral;

• understand some of the barriers which hinder adult learning; and

• understand how theory can inform practice.

ADULT LEARNING

Learning can be interpreted in three ways:

• To get to know: for example, I learnt last week that certain government White Papers are now published on the Internet.

• To learn as in to memorize or learn by heart, as those of us who are old enough learnt our multiplication tables at school.

• Learning as change, which can be either reinforcement or alteration of certain ideas or behaviour.

It is this last meaning which is what is usually meant by learning in the sense of education or training and which is the focus of the theories of learning developed and discussed in this chapter.

Learning can be either active or passive. The traditional approach to learning was, by and large, based on passive learning, where the teacher is seen as the expert and fount of all knowledge and the pupil is seen as the recipient of that expertise–what Bowles and Gintis (1976), in a different setting, call the 'mug and jug' theory. The student is the mug–an empty vessel, receiving the knowledge from the teacher–the jugful of knowledge, which is given to the student to fill the deficit.

Many recent theorists of learning though, and particularly those of the humanist school, suggest that people cannot learn simply by being given information–the old saying of 'You can take a horse to water but you cannot make it drink' is central to this argument. The student must have active involvement in the process, either mentally or physically or both, and a desire for knowledge, for learning to occur. To return to the horse metaphor–if the

horse is thirsty it will drink, and if it drinks, its thirst will be quenched. The water alone cannot do the job.

One of the long-standing distinctions has of course been between practical skills and knowledge, though obviously the division is not as clear-cut as this dichotomy would imply. Certainly, in a modern society, few practical skills do not engage knowledge and

understanding in their learning. Gagné (1972) suggested five types (or domains) of learning and Rogers (1996:79) has built on this, making clear links between knowledge and skills:

1. We may learn new *knowledge* as we collect information that is largely memorized.

2. Such knowledge may be held uncomprehendingly. We thus need to learn to relate our new material in ways that lead to new *understanding,* that process of organizing and reorganizing knowledge to create new patterns of relationships.

3. We may learn new *skills* or develop existing skills further; not just physical skills, our ability to do certain things, but also skills of thinking and of learning, skills of coping and solving problems and survival strategies.

4. Further, since we can learn new knowledge, new understanding and new skills without necessarily changing our attitudes, the learning of *attitudes* is a distinct sphere of learning.

5. Finally, it is possible for learning changes to be brought about in all four of these areas without accompanying alterations in our way of life, our pattern of behaviour. It is therefore necessary to learn to apply our newly learned material to what we do and how we live, to carry out our new learning into changed ways of *behaving:* what some people would call to learn 'wisdom', in short.

MOTIVATION AND LEARNING

It is generally supposed that adult learners come voluntarily into learning situations and because of this, they will be well motivated. This is not always the case of course, particularly in organizational training situations where there may be an element of compulsion. Motivation then can be both internal and external. Internal motivation comes from the drive within the individual to gain knowledge or a skill. One must remember of course that this internal drive may well have been influenced by external factors. In my recent research on mature women returners to education (Parr, 1991, 1996) the data revealed a determination by the students to develop new areas of identity which they had some control in shaping. This was influenced greatly by external factors, such as childhood abuse, restrictive and controlling parents, abusive partners, painful divorce and so on. For example, Gerry told me that she had been sexually abused when she was a child and this had had a considerable affect on her self-image. Her intrinsic motivation in returning to education was very much influenced by external factors:

Gerry: My sister and my brother have both got degrees but I hadn't got that kind of qualification and I think probably in the back of my mind I was feeling that I had to prove myself, not just to them but to myself ... that spurred me on–perhaps this was a way I could prove

to myself, more to myself than anybody else that I wasn't a failure. Even if I didn't actually succeed it was something that I actually got the courage to go and try and have a go at. . . with everything that happened I felt almost like a failure, well I failed at this; I failed at that.

Grace's internal motivation came from the label which her ex-husband had attached to her:

Grace: Now I know that I've got ability to do things, I'm not an idiot ... I'm not a dumb blonde. ... nobody can take off me what I've learnt. ...
I've found out I can do things that I didn't know I could do before.
I think I've got more confidence now than what I've ever had really.
My ex-husband said, 'Oh you'll never survive on your own'. I thought, 'Well, I'll show him'.

External factors are those which may put pressure on us, but may not necessarily be converted into internal, or psychological pressure. Better pay, promotion, a better job or the potential loss of employment may be issues here. When I interviewed Annabel, she was studying part-time to gain her National Vocational Qualification in Motor Mechanics:

Annabel: I need the qualification really. ... I did think I'd learn something as well. Now I'm just here for the qualification. I wanted the practical and the learning, so I have more confidence to go out for jobs.

There are of course situations in which adults participate in education and training unwillingly. This could be the case with employees whose attendance on courses is compulsory rather than voluntary. The external motivator here may well be loss of employment if there is a refusal to attend a course and gain the required updating of necessary skills. Harrison (1993: Ch.12) discusses the issues extensively and argues the importance of involving individuals in determining their training/education requirements, recognizing that there may be a tension between organizational and individual needs. It behoves the trainer/teacher to remember this and to create a learning environment which recognizes the diversity of motivations and backgrounds from which the participants come.

This necessity to take on board the different needs and learning styles of adults has contributed since the 1950s to the creation of a theory of adult learning termed 'andragogy'. (You may like to refer to Brookfield, 1991, for a discussion of this development.)

ANDRAGOGY

Knowles (1996) maintains that most of what we know about learning has come from studying children and animals. This has been termed 'pedagogy', which literally translated means 'leading the child', but has come to mean the art and science of teaching the child.

This approach, he maintains, ignores the wealth of experience which adults bring to their learning. He built on and took forward the thinking on 'andragogy'–the art and science of teaching adults, since he felt that our approach to teaching adults should be substantially different from that of teaching children. Adults, he maintains, bring substantially more experience to the learning arena than children:

These differences in experience between children and adults have at least three consequences for learning:

1. Adults have more to contribute to the learning of others; for most kinds of learning, they are themselves a rich resource for learning.

2. Adults have a richer foundation of experience to which to relate new experiences (and new learnings tend to take on meaning as we are able to relate them to our past experience).

3. Adults have acquired a larger number of fixed habits and patterns of thought, and therefore tend to be less open-minded. (Knowles, 1996:89–90)

Andragogy is a distinct shift away from 'teaching' to participatory learning in groups, drawing on adult experiences as a resource. This again has implications for the teacher/ trainer in that it is necessary to create an environment in which the adult feels safe to perform. It is also necessary for those of us who work with adults to recognize adults' insecurity in being expected to contribute and participate, rather than being told 'the right answer'. There are also issues here for the learners who may have to 'unlearn' some learned behaviour from childhood when experiences may have been negative.

Adult needs from training and education are also different in that there is more immediacy and perceived (or expected) relevance to their everyday lives than there is with children, whether this is voluntary participation or that enforced by a training programme at work. The centrality of the learners, and the recognition of the personal agenda they bring to the learning arena, which is a central tenet of andragogy, clearly has some of its roots in humanist theories of learning, which also focus on the learner rather than on the teacher/ trainer.

HUMANIST THEORIES

Humanist theories developed on the one hand as a resistance to the structured, objective and scientific approach of positivism, which assumes stability, the general applicability of scientific laws and universally acceptable values. On the other hand, but clearly linked, there was the emergence of a changing world, with instability, complexity, uncertainty and a range and variety of values. In this more fluid situation,

where rapid change was occurring, it was no longer adequate to assume that the teacher was the sole source of learning. Humanist theories thus resisted the passive focus of learning and stressed the active nature of the learner. Carl Rogers (1969)–a leading writer in the humanist school–developed his approach to learning from his concept of client-centred counselling, which is based on the premise that people can generally draw on their own resources to deal with their problems, given a supportive and encouraging environment in which to do so. This led Rogers to the belief that people have a natural desire to learn and the teacher role should be one of encouraging and supporting the learner to learn, rather than the mug-and-jug idea which we discussed earlier. Not only do humanist theories stress the centrality of the learner in the learning process, they also focus on the environment in which learning takes place. As Alan Rogers (1996:99) writes:

Motivation for learning comes from within; and the material on which the learning drive fastens is the whole of life, the cultural and interpersonal relationships that form the social context.

So, according to humanists, there are both motivational and environmental factors brought to bear in the learning process. We have already discussed the fact that there are both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. Extrinsic factors are those incentives that are external to the individual, such as retention of a job, promotion, a new direction, a completely new skill and so on. Intrinsic factors are those which come from within a learner, although they may well have been influenced by extrinsic factors as I suggested above.

Maslow (1968) and Carl Rogers (1974) have put forward strong cases for arguing that motivation comes from within to meet certain needs. Maslow developed a hierarchy of needs that range from biological to psychological (see Figure 11.1). Although attempts to scientifically replicate this have not proved very successful, it is often quoted, and as the examples which follow show, it can contribute to our understanding of factors which influence learning.

The needs at one level must become at least partially satisfied before the individual can move up to the next level. For example, when food and drink become difficult to obtain, the satisfaction of these needs will take priority over all other needs, and only when this need is satisfied, will the individual move on to address other needs. The model also posits an interesting link between the individual and environmental factors. We can relate this directly to learning.

If we move up the hierarchical structure, it is easy to see that the motivational factors in any student can be many and varied. It may be sufficient for some students to be accepted as part of a group and to achieve competency in one small area, whereas others may have an expressed need to know and understand. In addition, threats to lower-order needs may

Figure 11.1 Maslow's hierarchy of needs

PERSONAL FACTORS AND LEARNING
Jane arrived late for a residential weekend which was part of her course. She was very distressed and left soon after the start, saying she was very tired, had too much to do and couldn't cope with the work. When I asked her some weeks later whether she was feeling any better, she told me that she had had some negative results from a screening test, and also had problems in a close relationship. She could not over-ride these to concentrate on her work. Within a few months, these were both resolved and she was again able to focus on her course.

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well explain why students become withdrawn and focus on issues other than the immediate learning situation. For the teacher/trainer of adults, these are important points to take on board. We need to recognize that students may have factors that are influencing their decisions, which they may be unwilling or unable to discuss with us at the time. The following case study provides an example.

When I spoke to Della as part of my research, she clearly illustrated the conflicts between some of her needs. She had returned to learning after separation and subsequent divorce from a very violent relationship. She had taken on a voluntary post in the college which gave her a positive status:

Della: I'm going to do this year ... doing what I do now and doing what I did last year I feel safe ... I want to do a BEd in Special Needs. ... Now I'm scared of nothing, but sometimes I am ... in HE there's not going to be that personal support like I've had here ... I'm not ready ... until I've dealt with everything I need to deal with within me then I don't think I can go. ...

The emphasis with both Rogers and Maslow is that motivation is intrinsic, but there are those who suggests that motivation may well be goal-centred with motivation changing according to the nearness of the goal. For those learners with long-term goals, the motivation to keep going can decline, and it is important for the tutor/trainer to ensure that both long- and short-term goals are given and achievable. Of course students may well have both long- and short-term goals which are linked. Deidre was a student enrolled on a European Union-funded 'Women into Management and Technology' course at a local college, and was part of my research. Her short-term goals were clear, though her long-term ones were more tentative:

Deidre: I can't decide whether I want to go into further, higher education, or just go for employment. It really depends on how well I do on this course. I wanted to know how well I'd done up to Christmas before I applied. From what I can gather, I'm not doing too bad really.

A supportive learning situation was vital for Deidre, as it was for other students I interviewed. It was important both for Deidre and for Della that their tutors recognized *their* short-term goals, and gave them encouragement to achieve those, even though their long-term goals may well have been the completion of the course in preparation for higher education. What we need to remember as trainers and educators is that just as with the learning styles discussed in the last chapter, the 'right learning environment' may well vary from one person to another.

What is clear from both Deidre and Della, and the other students with whom I spoke, is that environmental factors have a central influence on learning/training achievements.

Experiential learning and the learning cycle

For many theorists, and particularly those of the humanist school, the basis of all learning is rooted in experience: the active involvement of the learner in the search for knowledge and meaning is central to the whole activity. Pivotal to the search for meaning is that learners critically reflect on, that is, they critically analyse, their experience. As we have seen in the previous chapter, this has been presented in the form of a cycle (see Figure 11.2).

The learning cycle starts with an experience–this can be something seen, heard, felt, read and so on. This is then reflected on, which leads to action, which then becomes the concrete experience for further reflection, and so on. Action is seen as central to the learning process, rather than as a result of it.

However, I feel that this is rather a simple approach for a very complex process. Reflection is not as simple and straightforward as this implies. If we refer back to the discussion of cognitive theories in the previous chapter, new knowledge (or experience) is set into a prior framework of knowledge which is informed by our own and others' experiences. We draw on this framework to make sense of our experiences. If we cannot, then we may seek further information before taking action.

As has already been discussed, Kolb (1984) argues that in some cases, reflection will lead to generalizations (or in his terms, 'abstract conceptualizations')–identifying a range of possible answers, which then leads to active testing in new situations. The result of this then becomes the new experience (see Figure 10.2, in the previous chapter).

Carl Rogers (1969) however, argues that this cycle does not account for goals, choice and decision-making, which he maintains must occur after reflecting and before generalizing. I would argue also that the cycle does not fully account for extrinsic and environmental influences on those decisions, nor the constraints on the action, which can be taken. The process is therefore much more complex than it would appear to be. For some simple learning, the cycle will stop, and will indeed be a cycle. For more complex learning, the cycle should really be termed a learning 'spiral', as in a coiled spring, which implies forward movement and development; this is shown in Figure 11.3. This spiral may get tighter as a particular topic gets more focused, or may get bigger as the learner seeks to include broader factors into the learning cycle. Other spirals may also be created, as peripheral decisions impinge upon the central focus.

Figure 11.2 Critically analysing experience

Figure 11.3 The learning spiral

Let's take for example a lone parent who has the opportunity to take up a training programme, which involves being away from his home and children for a number of weekends out of the year. In making the decision, one of the factors he will have to take into account is the welfare of his children. This will set him off on a 'sub-spiral' in which he will need to consider all the alternatives, and take account of the factors shown in the spiral which will impinge on his decision. He may also have to consider when he does his course-work, which sets him off on another 'sub-spiral'. If we also put into the equation his motivation for doing the course, then we begin to realize that the spiral is complex indeed.

At every decision-making point, extrinsic factors will impact on the decision. Individuals will search for explanations within their existing framework, which has been influenced by the culture and socialization processes experienced thus far. The search for new information will involve engagement with others, either directly or indirectly. This will then inform the conceptualization/generalization stage, where a hypothesis or hypotheses may be formed, or 'vague ideas' may begin to take shape. The choice of action will be informed by a range of external issues, such as past experience, the intended goal, other responsibilities such as domestic, caring and work commitments, environmental factors such as access to resources and so on. These external influences should not be underplayed, since they

may have a considerable influence on learning, particularly for adults, and create barriers that will have to be negotiated.

BARRIERS TO LEARNING

Adults may also bring with them considerable personal baggage into the learning setting which may act as barriers to and constraints on their learning. There is a considerable literature that indicates that some adults do meet these barriers to learning, whether that learning is full-time or part-time, vocational or non-vocational, academic or practical, for a wide variety of reasons. See ACACE (1982); *Adults Learning* (special editions in January 1990 and December 1989); Britton and Baxter (1994); Browning (1990); Hughes *et al* (1989); McGivney (1995, 1993); Parr (1996, 1991); Pye (1991); Woodley *et al* (1987); Schutze *et al* (1987).

Both recent and current research in which I am involved indicates that many of these issues exist for students who have returned to learning after a number of years out of the system, regardless of the course they are taking and whether they are full-time or part-time. These barriers may be grouped under five broad headings: psychological, practical, economic, institutional and relationship issues.

Psychological issues

These include the feeling of being too old to learn; of not being bright enough, or as Chris mentioned, the re-emergence of negative feelings from compulsory schooling. Chris left school pregnant with no qualifications at 15, and told me:

If the classes had been held in a school, I wouldn't have gone, I don't think I could have coped with it.

Dilys talked of the courage it took for her to return to learning:

When I came on the first day I was nervous as hell and I thought, 'God, what am I doing this for?' I was so scared, and I kept thinking, 'You're going to show yourself up, they're going to ask you all these things, they're going to talk about all these words that you don't know what they're talking about, and they're going to be all these posh people ...' but when I got talking to them, I felt like they're only like me. ...It's made a big difference in me, it's given me a lot more confidence, it's shown me what opportunities there are out there.

The following comments are from two students on a Master's course, which indicate that whatever the level, lack of confidence may still be present:

Studying at this level is demanding and initially I doubted my ability. I still do at times, but feel that the tutorials and residentials help.

Academically I'm still not sure what standards are required.

Practical issues

Concerns mentioned by the respondents in my research included travel and domestic and caring responsibilities. Frances was enrolled on a European-funded training course close to home:

It's nearer to come here, you know, when I've took Mark to school, better than actually having to travel—'cos I haven't got a car or anything and if I went to college ... well, I do everything ... he (her partner) don't do nothing, except go fishing, so I take Mark, then I come here.

Another student gave his reason for choosing a distance learning course:

eliminates the problem of transport, travel costs and time wasted travelling.

By far the greatest practical difficulties concerned the juggling of domestic and learning responsibilities, particularly for women. Edwards (1993) talk of the 'two greedy institutions' of home and education and the constant juggling which partnered women with families have to do to satisfy the needs of both. For working women, I have argued that there are 'three greedy institutions'—home, work and education or training. The following vignettes from women are fairly representative of the whole:

Well, I've got a child and a husband—but it's me mum really, she's the hardest 'cos she's, sort of ill, really, and she's more of a commitment.

Having a young son (nearly 3) and a household of husband, dog, etc, it is often 9pm before I can settle down to do any work for this course.

When work and family pressures mount, study becomes of low priority.

And from two male students:

Neglecting my wife.

Defending the time to undertake the studying (with) two teenage children and a demanding training role. ...

Institutional barriers

Institutional barriers are those concerned with timetabling, choice of courses, availability of information and so on. Timetabling of both training and education is an important issue for many people. The students with whom I spoke often chose courses that fitted in with other commitments. This was particularly so for those with school-aged children:

Wanda: I would have done psychology, but I ended up doing social history instead and although I had to come in five days, I could leave after the children and arrived at the latest about quarter past four which of course is the time they arrive.

For students on the distance learning Master's degree, the flexibility of the timetable was emphasized, particularly as they were in employment.

Flexibility of being able to choose when to study.

I can study when I can fit it in without committing myself to several hours in the same day/evening which in my job would be difficult.

Because of illness, I have been able to continue my studies whereas if I had been required to attend regular classes/tutorials I would not have.

Financial concerns

The extent to which finance was a problem varied according to the social circumstances and the age of the student. This was dealt with in a variety of ways including choice of course, grants, claiming state benefits and both part-time and full-time work.

One would expect finance to be less of a problem for those students who were working full time. However, while some organizations paid for training and education as part of their staff development programme and gave extra help with travel, books and so on, others did not, and some of the students on the distance learning Master's course had to pay their own fees and meet their own expenses, thus creating a considerable inequity. There is need for serious consideration here when planning and delivering both education and training courses in which all students are assessed using the same criteria.

Personal and social factors

Personal and social influences include relationships with partners, children, relatives and friends. These varied according to the demands of the programme undertaken and the

number and type of other commitments. The stresses on relationships with family and friends are implicit in the discussion above on domestic and caring responsibilities. Here, the focus is on partners, albeit briefly.

Some students had partners who were extremely supportive:

Heather: He agreed I should do something I enjoyed doing, so yeah, he backed me up ... but doesn't do anything practically to help.

Rhona: He's been very, very supportive, all the time I've been up there ... he's also done a great deal to build up my confidence, teach me how capable I am.

Where partners are not supportive, the situation can be very difficult and can lead to undue stress at the least and course drop-out at the worst.

Bryony: He can't see the point in what I'm doing; he thinks it's just a waste of time. He can't understand why I just don't want to go and get any job ... so I go home, cook the meals, doing the ironing at the same time, as you do ... then I do my homework at night. I get very tired–he says it's my own fault.

Two students put the general situation succinctly:

Little time for social life/family.

Practically speaking, my hobbies and friends have taken second place to study.

Barriers? What barriers?

So where does this leave us? These extracts and issues have been drawn mainly from research into students returning to education, though some are from more practical training programmes in the post-compulsory sector. I have only touched on some of the issues here, but clearly adults' motivation to learn is influenced considerably by extrinsic social and environmental factors. It is interesting that none of the people with whom I spoke used the term 'barrier' and the fact that they are enrolled on education and training programmes means that they are the success story. This is not, however, to underplay the issues, nor the resources which may have had to be used to negotiate the hurdles. Bryant (1995:270) describes the situation for adult returners to formal education, but this can equally apply to training in the workplace:

For many adult students the return to further or higher education represents an obstacle course of Grand National proportions. Self-confidence has to be developed, writing skills

polished up or acquired, academic language demystified and personal and family relations re-ordered.

Clearly, as trainers/educators, we need not only to take on board the learning needs of the adults with whom we are working, we also need to acknowledge the social and environmental factors which impact on their learning.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has ranged across a variety of issues, but the central focus has been on adult learners and the intrinsic and extrinsic influences that impact on their motivation to learn. It has taken some of the learning theories outlined in the previous chapter and expanded and illustrated them with verbatim researched material, moving on to look at some of the issues that adults bring into the learning arena.

What is important to remember for those of us who work with adult learners is that they bring considerable experience, both positive and negative, into the learning arena. These experiences can be both motivators and barriers to adult learning. It is incumbent upon the teacher/trainer to provide a learning environment that maximizes the learning value from those experiences. As Knowles (1996:95–6) says:

The central dynamic of the learning process is thus perceived to be the experience of the learner, experience being defined as the interaction between an individual and his (sic) environment. ... The critical function of the teacher, therefore, is to create a rich environment from which students can extract learning and then guide their interaction with it so as to maximize their learning from it.

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12
Reflective Practice

Cheryl Hunt

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The real magic of discovery lies not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes. (Marcel Proust, 1899)

The term 'reflection' is evocative of a number of images: mirrors, tranquil scenes in still waters, thinking idly about times past, and forms of meditation come immediately to mind. In the context of education and training, though, the term is often used specifically to signify an important stage in the learning cycle where a complex and deliberate process of thinking about and interpreting an experience is undertaken in order to arrive at a new understanding of events and our part in them (Boud *et al*, 1985; Kolb, 1984). I have heard the process jokingly described as, 'What enables someone to have 20 years' experience instead of one year's experience 20 times over'!

The important thing to note about reflection in this context is that it is a conscious act, deliberately engaged in, with the intention of finding out more about our own learning processes and how they affect our professional practice and working relationships. In the final part of this chapter I shall describe how this kind of reflection can be enhanced through writing, and I shall indicate several texts that can be consulted for suggestions and outlines of various reflective techniques and case studies.

First, I shall introduce some of the 'theory' behind the concepts of reflection and reflective practice. Although it is not necessary to know this before trying out the techniques that can enhance reflection, or applying what is learned in this way to professional practice, my own view is that it usually helps to know something about the territory you are going to enter. I should tell you at this point that I read guidebooks in order to find out what I can about local customs and traditions before I visit a country with which I am unfamiliar. I have also worked in a university environment for many years where 'theoretical knowledge' is often privileged over 'practical knowledge' (Schön had something to say about this as we shall see in a moment). Let me explain why I have mentioned these two things about myself.

Part of my own attempt to become a reflective practitioner has been to try to recognize behaviour patterns that I have developed in response to particular situations and to determine where they spill over into other, seemingly unconnected, things that I do, and with what effect. I try, too, to look at how what I do is influenced by the organizational context in which I do it: that way I can begin to identify what I have the power to change, what is a real constraint of my job, and what is merely an habitual response. I believe that an important element in reflective practice is to be able to take ownership of my actions and say, 'This is how it is for me now; and these seem to be some of the reasons that have led me to think/feel/act as I do.' In attempting to facilitate the process for others, I also believe it is essential to try to model it.

I am not sure that I can do that successfully here, but the purpose of alluding to my own background is to indicate how the structure and style of this chapter are essentially the product of my particular experience, of 'baggage' from my past that constantly entwines with pressures in the present to shape how I think and what I do. How you read the chapter–whether you do so from beginning to end, turn to the last part first, look for headings or bullet points, or skip it altogether–and whether you feel comfortable or exasperated with it will similarly be the product of your experience.

So, too, will be your reasons for consulting the chapter: you may be unfamiliar with the term 'reflective practice'; you may be experienced in the practice but wonder if I have anything to add to what you already know; or you may be charged by your employers with doing and/or facilitating reflective practice and want some practical tips. How you approach the task of reading the chapter, as with any other task, will, in turn, affect what you get out of it and what you do afterwards.

The main reason for consciously and systematically engaging with the process of reflection is to learn how to identify, articulate, take ownership of, and begin to control that which constitutes the 'baggage'–habits, ideas, assumptions, preferences, needs and so on–that would itself otherwise control our thoughts and actions; and to consider to what extent, and with what effect, the influences from our past interact with the requirements of the environment in which we now live and work. To be a 'reflective practitioner' is to apply the

understanding thus obtained to professional practice so that this can be simultaneously informed by and freed from what we have learnt so far.

Though Aristotle spoke of the need for reflection in developing moral action, Dewey (1933) is generally acknowledged as the first modern educationist to write about the function of reflective thought in learning from experience. However, the notion of the 'reflective practitioner' emanates directly from the work of Schön (1983).

In the next section I shall draw attention to key aspects of this work, to the intellectual and social background against which it was developed, and to some of the major critiques of Schön's ideas.

In keeping with what I believe to be the spirit of reflective practice, I shall continue to use the conversational 'I/you' style where appropriate. This enables me both to indicate and reflect on how I, as writer, am located within the chapter. It also invites you, as reader, not simply to view these pages from 'outside' but to place yourself in the chapter too in order to observe and reflect on the thoughts and feelings that arise during your reading.

Having read this chapter you will:
• understand the nature of reflective practice;

• be able to 'reflect' on thoughts, attitudes and behaviour;

• understand single and double loop learning; and

• understand the role of reflection in professional practice.

THE REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER: DONALD SCHÖN

Schön wrote his seminal text on the subject of 'the reflective practitioner' because he wanted professionals to recognize the importance of being able to articulate what it is they do. Writing in the early 1980s when, in the USA and the UK in particular, changing political and social attitudes were bringing the purpose and function of the professions increasingly into question, Schön (1983) argued that the lack of clarity about what professionals actually did was one consequence of a widening rift between both research and practice, and thought and action.

Underpinning this was a familiar piece of dualistic 'either-or' thinking in which the 'hard', 'theoretical' knowledge traditionally associated with the universities was seen as separate and different from what Schön (1983:vii) called the 'mystique of practical competence' which allowed professionals to claim that their 'art' could be neither adequately described nor subjected to analysis.

(Interestingly, such thinking seems almost to have come full circle in recent debates about the feasibility of incorporating reflection within the framework of National Vocational Qualifications without divorcing values from techniques. See Ecclestone, 1996,

for an examination of this issue in the context of continuing professional development for lecturers in post-compulsory education.)

At the root of Schön's work is an attempt to develop an 'inquiry into the epistemology of practice' (a formal study of the source, nature and limitations of the knowledge which underpins practice) which asks questions like:

What is the kind of knowing in which competent practitioners engage? How is professional knowing like and unlike the kinds of knowledge presented in academic textbooks, scientific papers, and learned journals? (Schön, 1983:viii)

It is based on the view that the development of a taken-for-granted 'theory of action' in professional practice is an inevitable consequence of the impossibility of developing a new response to every new situation by working through from first principles but that, when asked to articulate their practice, professionals generally do so in terms of 'espoused theories'–usually the 'textbook' theories they were taught as part of their initial professional training. In other words, they fail to address the underlying assumptions they have learned through experience–what, in earlier collaborative work, Argyris and Schön (1974:8) referred to as 'theories-in-use'. Pivotal to the inquiry is the concept of 'reflection-inaction' (Schön, 1983:54–9).

We shall return to this in a moment. It may be useful first to note two other key terms and concepts which were developed during Schön's collaboration with Argyris since they clearly informed his subsequent thinking.

MODELS AND LOOPS

Behaviour patterns: Model I and Model II

Working on extensive case-study material, Argyris and Schön (1974) identified two distinct patterns of behaviour based on the kinds of goals people strive to achieve in their social interactions, especially at work. For the most part, they argued, these goals, or 'governing variables', seem to be built on unquestioned assumptions about the social world and expectations about the behaviour of others. What they called 'Model I' behaviour is governed by the following imperatives:

• *Define and achieve goals*. (People exhibiting this behaviour rarely try to develop a mutual definition of purpose with others, especially subordinates or clients; and they do not seem open to others' perceptions of the task in hand.)

• *Maximize winning, minimize losing.*

• *Minimize generating or expressing negative feelings*. (Because, it is usually felt, this demonstrates incompetence; permitting or helping others to express feelings is regarded as poor strategy.)

• *Be rational*. (ie, objective, intellectual, unemotional.)

Argyris and Schön (1974:83) point out that such behaviour almost inevitably results in 'competitiveness, withholding help from others, conformity, covert antagonism, and mistrust while de-emphasizing cooperation, helping others, individuality and trust.' Nevertheless, most people tend to remain unaware of how such a climate is generated and, especially, of their own contribution to it; it becomes 'self-sealing'.

As Argyris and Schön (1974:86–95) go on to demonstrate, the most significant property of Model II behaviour is its ability not to be 'self-sealing' because it encourages the testing of underpinning assumptions. The governing variables that drive Model II behaviour are:

• *Maximize valid information*. This involves providing others with directly observable data and correct reports about one's thoughts and feelings.

• *Maximize free and informed choice*. A choice is free to the extent that individuals can define their own objectives and how to achieve them, and that they have the capacity to achieve these objectives and relate them to personal needs.

• *Maximize internal commitment to decisions made*. Individuals need to feel that they are responsible for their own choices: to be committed to action because it is intrinsically satisfying, not because someone else is rewarding or penalizing the action (as in Model I).

Where Model II behaviour becomes the norm, Argyris and Schön contend that people are more likely to test publicly their 'theories-in-use'–to examine openly and honestly the assumptions which underpin their actions. Such behaviour is also likely to set learning cycles in motion whereby the climate of trust which such behaviour tends to generate leads to more detailed examination of assumptions, the sharing of more valid information, and the mutual facilitation of learning. (See Radford, 1995, especially pages 196–8 for a practical example of the use of these ideas in creating a learning organization and the responsibilities of the human resource or personnel manager in this context.)

Learning loops

Argyris and Schön also identified two distinct learning patterns. What they termed 'single-loop learning' (see Figure 12.1) helps people to design and select actions which satisfy their governing variables so it is exhibited by people using both Model I and Model II behaviour patterns. It is a form of 'means-ends', task-oriented, non-reflective, thinking: it looks, for

example, for more effective methods of suppressing conflict.

Figure 12.1 Single-loop learning

'Double-loop learning', by contrast, involves reflection and is likely to result in the questioning of, and possible changes in, one's predominant governing variables and underpinning assumptions (see Figure 12.2). Generally associated with Model II behaviour, it asks not only the single-loop question 'Am I doing things right, and if not what can I do to correct my/others' actions?' but also, 'Am I doing the right things, and if not how can I change what I do and/or encourage others to change what they do?' It looks, for example, for ways to articulate and bring conflict to the surface and to resolve, rather than suppress it.

Significantly, as Argyris and Schön (1974:19) point out, 'Double-loop learning does not supersede single-loop learning.' The latter enables us to cope in predictable situations. The former, however, can cause 'ripples of change to fan out over one's whole system of

Figure 12.2 Double-loop learning

theories-in-use' (ibid.). 'Double-loop learning' therefore lies at the heart of reflective practice. Let us now return to Schön's later work in that area, and the concept of reflection-in-action.

REFLECTION-IN-ACTION

Tacit knowledge

The concept of reflection-in-action derives from the idea that, in exhibiting skilful action, people often appear to be drawing on information that they are subsequently unable to put into words. It owes much to the work of Polanyi (1967) on 'tacit knowing', an example of which is how people recognize faces. (Just try to explain how you recognize a face that you know!) Another example is of using a stick or tool to feel the way (simply to walk, or in a craft like sculpting). During this process, which is an essential part of all physical skill acquisition, the nature of the contact between tool and object provides data which are literally 'sensed' in the hand and internalized as tacit (unspoken) knowledge.

The belief that people do know more than they can verbalize probably gave rise to one of the earliest forms of training. Commonly known in the UK as 'sitting next to Nellie', this required a newcomer to sit next to, observe and subsequently try to emulate a skilled operator. In a newer, more sophisticated form, it emerges in the modelling techniques of neuro-linguistic-programming (NLP) and, in sports psychology, in 'playing the inner game' where the sportsperson literally reflects on his or her previous winning performances and mentally 'plays through' the feelings and techniques that will be required in the next race or match. (See Garratt, 1997, for a practical guide to using NLP in training, pages 39–44 in particular for discussion of modelling techniques. Gallwey, 1996, discusses 'inner-game' work.)

The last example is obviously of reflection-on-action with the clear intention of internalizing certain actions for future use. Reflection-in-action occurs when internalized knowledge arises in, and informs, current action. Schön (1983:55), who was an accomplished musician himself, suggests that this is what happens when good jazz musicians improvise together: in the action of playing they 'feel' where the music is going by drawing on past experience and a collective knowledge of musical 'rules'. In essence, they make new sense of what is happening in each moment and adjust their individual performances accordingly.

Points to note

Several aspects of reflection-in-action are important to note from the examples given so far:

• Lacking past experience and being new to the rules of the particular game, novices are usually unable to improvise as well as experienced practitioners (literally, like the jazz musicians, or in complex or emergency situations).

• It is unlikely that the musicians (or other skilled practitioners in other situations) reflect in action through the medium of words.

• So, if asked what they are doing/have just done, skilled practitioners usually find it difficult or impossible to give a detailed verbal analysis (try to describe exactly what you do when riding a bike in traffic–or what the ingredients are that really make a training session buzz). Finally:

• Most of the time, most practitioners do not question what they do.

Some practitioners are understandably wary about the concept of reflection, either in or on action, because they feel that putting what they do into words will either 'break the magic' of what they do well and/or take time that could be better spent actually getting on with their job. To some extent they are right. If you think about how you are doing something as natural as breathing, for example, it will sometimes change the rhythm! And, of course, if every professional stopped to question every decision or event, it would soon bring the wheels of society to a grinding halt

Nevertheless, there are two key issues here. The first is that when our usual performance yields nothing particularly new or unpredictable, it simply reinforces the behaviours/ attitudes/values which underpin the performance but which may no longer be appropriate and/or as effective as they might be. The second is that, if professionals are unable to 'speak their own practice' there is a danger that others will do it for them–defining and bounding what is required from a political, academic or managerial perspective.

The new requirements laid on teachers, doctors and others in the UK during the years of the so-called 'Thatcher project' when social relationships were drastically redefined are a case in point. Teachers' professional standing and judgement, for example, were called increasingly into question as politicians first defined how teachers should be trained (with more 'practice' in schools and less 'theory' in the universities), how children should be tested, and what the relationship should be between parents and teachers and between the worlds of education and of business–and then set financial and other controlling mechanisms in place to support their own ideas, leaving little room for debate or manoeuvre.

Although Schön's primary impetus came from what he saw as a crisis of confidence in professional knowledge, this crisis was itself part of a more general, and radical, shift in thinking about the nature of knowledge, where it comes from, and what status is attached

to different kinds of knowledge. I shall draw attention in a later section to other authors whose ideas you may like to explore further in order to locate Schön's work, the concept of reflective practice, and subsequent developments in the field within this broader context.

Before that I want to do two things: provide a pause for you to reflect on questions that may have emerged from what you have read so far, and draw attention to some of the critiques of Schön's work and its influence.

Several questions are implicit in the foregoing discussion. If you define yourself as an educator or trainer those listed below may be particularly pertinent to your professional practice. However, they probably cannot be answered fully without venturing into the minefield of what constitutes the difference between 'education' and 'training'. (You will find comment on this in Chapters 1 and 2. An interesting perspective is also provided by Clark, 1992:120.)

Here are some questions to reflect on:

• If in 'doing' reflective practice yourself, you begin to expose taken-for-granted assumptions and beliefs in your everyday practices which receive tacit endorsement by your employers but which, when you articulate them fully, suggest a conflict of values between what you thought your job was about and what you are actually required to do, what might you do about it?

• Is reflection only for professionals to incorporate within their practice, or should other 'workers' be encouraged to reflect on what they do, and why and how they do it? (This, of course, leads into another minefield surrounding the concept of 'profession'. Carr, 1995:67–72, includes a useful analysis.) It seems, incidentally, to be a little-reported element of engaging in reflective practice that it will always open up increasingly bigger questions! Does that bother you or not? You may like to set your answer in the context of what you know of your preferred learning style (see Chapter 10).

• What responsibility does the reflective educator or trainer have for encouraging students/trainees to reflect on their own work (and/or learning processes)?

• If you encourage/facilitate reflective practice for others, what is the extent of your responsibility to them?

Critiques

Although the concept of 'reflective practice' is now commonplace and, in some professions, most notably nurse and teacher education, a systematic approach has been taken to its incorporation into all levels of training, it should be noted that neither Schön's original text nor the practices to which it has given rise are unproblematic. The following authors have provided extensive critiques of both.

Atkins and Murphy (1993) and *Greenwood* (1993) look at reflection in the specific context of nursing where reflective practice has become a statutory requirement. Atkins and Murphy provide a selective review of the literature, focusing in particular on the skills required for reflection but also demonstrating the lack of clarity in definitions and studies of reflection

and reflective practice. Greenwood looks specifically at the collaborative work of Argyris and Schön and suggests that there are important inconsistencies between their theorizing and the pedagogical interventions they implemented/recommended.

Gilroy (1993) takes issue with Schön's epistemological stance. His argument is set in the context of teacher education and is a deeply philosophical one based on Plato's *Meno* paradox: 'How will you look for something when you don't in the least know what it is?' In a later work, Schön (1987) refers to, and feels he has successfully resolved, the paradox but Gilroy refutes this and also argues that it was unnecessary for Schön to seek a new epistemology of practice in the first place since one already existed within Wittgenstein's 'Descriptivism'.

Eraut (1995) assesses Schön's contribution to thinking about professional knowledge and expertise. He argues that Schön does not properly demonstrate the difference between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, and that none of his examples relates to crowded settings (like a seminar room). He proposes a re-evaluation of Schön's ideas taking into account reflection outside the action, the time dimension involved in different kinds of reflection, and the difference between decision-making and problem-solving processes.

Bright (1996) cautions that although reflective practice has been adopted so rapidly and on such a broad scale by many professional groups, adoption and implementation should not be confused with understanding what it is, the processes and skills it involves, or its implications for practice. He provides a detailed analysis of what seems to constitute reflective practice and its theoretical underpinnings, including among the latter the earlier collaborative work by Argyris and Schön (1974). In Bright's (1996:183) opinion, the present widespread professional acceptance of reflective practice seems 'relatively superficial, and/ or is in need of reformulation and review. In other words, we may need to "reflect" on "'reflective practice"'.

SOCIAL CONTEXT

Though the naming and popularizing of reflective practice is largely attributable to Schön, the intellectual and social environment in which the concept took root had inevitably been shaped by other ideas and traditions, most notably those emanating from the Enlightenment and from the critical thinking which underpinned the emergence of the social sciences. This section looks briefly at this broader context and at the way Schön's work has itself become a strand within subsequent developments.

Legacy of the Enlightenment: John Dewey and C Wright Mills

In Western democracies, thinking has long been shaped by the key theme of the Enlightenment period. This holds that, as individuals or as members of social groups,

human beings have the capacity to reflect rationally upon their own actions and to use the understanding thus derived as a basis for the personal change which is an important element in social change. Dewey's work in education was very much a part of this tradition. Dewey (1933:137) argued that all productive thinking and learning has its origins in 'problematic situations' which cannot be resolved simply by the use of prior solutions and, foreshadowing an important technique in reflective practice, noted:

To grasp the meaning of a thing, an event or a situation is to see it in relation to other 'things', to note how it operates, or functions, what consequences follow from it, what causes it, what uses it can 'be put to'.

Dewey (1939:131) later questioned whether it was any longer enough to hold 'the simple faith of the Enlightenment', that rational thought would automatically precipitate change, especially in society at large. C Wright Mills (Mills, 1967:4–6) subsequently took a similar line, arguing that people could no longer rely on reason alone to sustain them in a society where 'information often dominates their attention and overwhelms their capacities to assimilate it'. What people now needed to develop, according to Mills, was a 'sociological imagination' which would enable them to 'grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society.' Mills (1967:8) maintained that:

Perhaps the most fruitful distinction with which the sociological imagination works is between 'the personal troubles of milieu' and 'the public issues of social structure.' This distinction is an essential tool of the sociological imagination and a feature of all classic work in social science.

In Mills' terms, 'troubles' are private matters, usually precipitated by a threat to an individual's values occurring within his or her immediate social setting: it is up to the individual to resolve or deal with them. 'Issues', on the other hand, are of public concern: they include things like unemployment and war which, though they have drastic implications for the individual, can only be resolved at a political/societal level.

In undertaking reflective practice, a useful exercise is to identify the 'level' of a problem in just this way, perhaps also including institutional/organizational levels of management and control: it saves wasting energy and 'worry time' on things that are beyond one's own immediate control! (That does not mean, of course, that managerial or societal 'issues' should be ignored, merely that it is important to locate problems where solutions can most appropriately be found.)

Critical social science: Jurgen Habermas

Writing in the 1970s, Habermas expressed some of the same concerns as Mills about the 'limits of reason'. He argued that the very success of reason, as expressed through

advances

in the natural sciences, had led to an uncritical acceptance of 'the scientific method' which had subsequently clouded thinking about the social world.

Where Mills had highlighted the distinction between the personal and the political and put forward the sociological imagination as a different way of thinking, and of taking forward the newly-developing social sciences, Habermas sought to demonstrate that there are several legitimate forms of scientific inquiry, each geared towards the satisfaction of different human interests/needs and grounded in a different kind of knowledge. His ideas have been extremely influential, particularly in relation to the concept of 'emancipatory knowledge' which empowers people to re-view what they know within a broader social/ political framework which they may subsequently choose to challenge in order to try to effect change in it.

Although Habermas's ideas have given impetus to those of many other people, his own writings do not make easy reading. Carr (1995:114–17) provides a very useful short summary in the context of educational theory; Giddens (1994) gives a general overview and also recommends further reading.

Critical reflective practice: beyond Schön

Though Schön's concern seems primarily to have been with the individual's ability to reflect on, in order to articulate, his or her own practice, the perspective provided by Habermas's work has subsequently led other writers to suggest that reflective practice in Schön's terms is too limited. Brookfield (1995:217) claims, for example, that 'Reflection in and of itself is not enough; it must always be linked to how the world can be changed.' Indeed, Brookfield (1995) argues a case for what he calls critical reflective practice that specifically requires the practitioner to take account of, and, where possible, direct action in response to, broader social issues.

Just as earlier intellectual traditions can be identified in Schön's work, so this has itself become a strand in subsequent developments. Brookfield (ibid.) sees it as one of three that inform the processes of critical reflective practice. Another strand is that of 'critical pedagogy'.

Critical pedagogy is closely associated with the ideas of Habermas and others linked to the so-called Frankfurt School of thought (such as Adorno, 1973, and Horkheimer, 1947) but can be traced back to the writings of Hegel and Marx. The central theme is of the teacher as 'penetrator of false consciousness', as a facilitator who will help his or her students to identify and challenge oppressive ways of thinking and acting which have been imposed by dominant groups and cultures and often sustained by force of habit. The intention is to create change that will result in more democratic and harmonious forms of living and thinking in which people understand and honour their own and others' experiences.

The concept of critical pedagogy is also influenced by the writings of, among others, Gramsci (1978) on hegemony, Friere (1994) on liberation theology and its application in education, and Giroux (1992) on 'oppositional pedagogy', all of which have served to emphasize the political nature of the processes of both teaching and reflection.

Research and theory in and of adult learning constitutes the third strand in Brookfield's view of critical reflective practice. At the base of adult learning theory is the belief that, because adults think and learn in the context of extensive prior experience, the nature of adult learning is qualitatively different from that which characterizes childhood and adolescence.

It would require a separate chapter to discuss in detail the many ideas and investigations that have sought to explain the relationship between experience, reflection and learning. However, the following list indicates some of the authors whose work has been influential in this field and which you may wish to explore further via the bibliography at the end of this chapter.

• Mezirow: One of the most influential theorists. Openly acknowledges influence of Habermas, particularly in relation to 'perspective transformation'. Like Schön, viewed own work as a reaction to forces of 'scientism and technicism' and found support in Polanyi's ideas. Builds on Kelly's (1955) work on personal constructs. Emphasizes the central role of critical reflectivity in adult learning and development as a means by which people can recognize how they are caught in their own history and constantly relive it (see Mezirow 1981). Mezirow (1990) includes advice on how to learn critical reflection and encourage it in others. (NB: Usher and Bryant (1989) also provide useful discussion of critical reflection.)

• Kolb: Identification and acknowledgement of reflection as key stage in the 'learning cycle' helped put reflection on the learning map. Work contemporary with, but independent of, Schön and Mezirow.

• Boyd and Fales: Acknowledge influence of Mezirow (1978) and Kolb et al (1974). Work in context of humanistic psychology on concept of reflective learning: 'the process of internally examining and exploring an issue of concern, triggered by an experience, which creates and clarifies meaning in terms of self, and which results in a changed conceptual perspective' (1983:100). (NB: This continues to be one of the most useful and succinct descriptions of the underpinning process of reflective practice. Reviewing the literature on reflection, Atkins and Murphy, 1993:1191, conclude that involvement of 'self ' in the reflective process and acquisition of a 'changed perspective' are the 'crucial aspects which distinguish reflection from analysis'.)

• Boud: Notes influence of personal growth movement on his thinking (Boud and Miller, 1996:198–201). Focuses on experiential learning in adulthood. Work conceptualizes reflection and the part it plays in making sense of experience (see Boud et al, 1985, 1993).

Builds explicitly on Kolb's work.

• Revans: More usually associated with development of management techniques than reflective practice but his work on action learning acted as direct prompt for Kolb and is echoed in Argyris and Schön. Provides a useful bridge between reflection as a tool for self-development and as an essential element of organizational learning. (NB: see McGill and Beaty, 1992, for a guide to action learning as a continuous process of learning.)

PUTTING REFLECTION INTO PRACTICE

Problems and approaches

So, what of practice? How do professionals act on the legacy of traditions and theories and 'do' reflective practice? What do they do? And how can the process best be facilitated for individuals and for the benefit of the organization?

It will probably have become apparent that 'reflective practice' is not one 'thing'. Though the term undoubtedly belongs to Schön, the concept is multifaceted. It incorporates elements of processes and ways of knowing which have been variously referred to as 'tacit knowledge', 'critical thought', 'perspective transformation', 'reflective learning', 'experiential learning' and 'action learning'. Thus, there are no easy answers to the questions above, or to those I posed earlier. The processes of reflection are such that individuals must necessarily arrive at their own answers and preferred techniques, in the light of their own history, values, needs and inclinations.

Wellington and Austin (1996) illustrate this clearly in a useful discussion of 'orientations to reflective practice'. Drawing on work by Van Manen (1977) and Grimmett *et al* (1990) they postulate five different, mutually exclusive, orientations, each of which is closely associated with specific social science paradigms and educational beliefs and values. Orientations are determined by requiring practitioners to follow a decision path based on three questions:

Does the practitioner engage in reflective practice or not? Does the practitioner believe that education ought to be domesticating or liberating? Is the practitioner systems-orientated or people-orientated? (Wellington and Austin, 1996:313)

It is perhaps because of the apparently fundamental differences between approaches to professional practice and to the place of reflection within it that it is so difficult to determine any 'universals' in reflective practice. Johnston and Badley (1996) have made an attempt to discover 'working definitions, main objectives, processes of reflective practice, perceived difficulties and the main competences needed' but conclude:

reflective practice at its best is neither just a set of operational techniques nor only a clearly identifiable group of academic skills, but is rather a critical stance. Good reflective practice takes practitioners beyond mere competence towards a willingness and a desire to subject their own taken for granteds and their own activities to serious scrutiny. Competence is not enough. The reflective practitioner has to become, if not an agent provocateur, an educational critic who is willing to pursue self and peer appraisal almost to their limits. (Johnston and Badley, 1996:10)

Given the semantic and operational difficulties with the concept and the nature of individual practice, it is inevitable that there should also be difficulties in pursuing reflective practice with peers, in facilitating it for others and, of course, in assessing it. Hunt (1997, 1998), Hunt *et al* (1994), Knights and Sampson (1995) and Sumison and Fleet (1996) address some of these issues.

Despite the difficulties there are, nevertheless, some tried and trusted techniques to facilitate reflection. The following references will take you to some of them:

• *Critical Incident Technique* (based on Flanagan, 1954). See Pearn and Kandola (1990:25–30) for a description of the technique and of how it can be used specifically in job analysis. Brookfield (1995: Ch. 6) describes a variation on the technique. Benner (1984:299–302) provides guidelines for recording critical incidents.

• *Good Practices Audit* (Brookfield, 1995: Ch. 8).

• *Reflective Writing and Journal Keeping* (Holly, 1989; Morrison, 1996).

In addition, Schön (1991) contains some interesting case studies that indicate how various approaches worked in practice.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

My own preferred form of reflective practice is through a two-stage process of writing and discussion. The writing may be either structured or unstructured but the crucial thing is that it is for my eyes only–I ignore the niceties of grammar, punctuation, spelling, even of being polite about people! The purpose is to help me to capture and sort out some of the whirling and unfocused thoughts that have occurred throughout the working day and which would otherwise disappear. Once the thoughts have been captured I can then choose from them which ones to share with a 'critical friend' who, as I then do in return for her, provides me with a different perspective and asks questions which help me to explore my thoughts and feelings in ways that I might not have considered had I worked on them on my own.

The importance of writing as opposed to merely 'thinking about' my practice is

encapsulated for me in the phrase 'How do I know what I think until I see what I say?' The process

of writing helps me not only to see what I say to myself about aspects of my professional practice but also to 'unpack' why I have said it. It helps me, in other words, to find out more about how my mind works. Holly (1989:76) puts it like this:

Describing how the mind works will help to clarify why journal writing works as a means for reflection: 'Instead of a single intellectual entity that can judge many different kinds of events equally, the mind is diverse and complex. It contains a changeable conglomeration of different kinds of "small minds"–fixed reactions, talents, flexible thinking and these different entities are temporarily employed–wheeled into consciousness–then usually discarded, returned to their place, after use' (Ornstein, 1987:25). Which of the many small minds gets wheeled in depends on many factors, some within our control, others not.

And:

Writing 'works' because it enables us to come to know ourselves through the multiple voices our experiences take, to describe our contexts and histories as they shape the many minds and selves who define us and others. Through writing we intentionally focus our attention and in so doing assert and affirm both our ideas and the mind itself. (Holly, 1989:78)

Sometimes I take a 'stream of consciousness' approach to what I write. It is not always easy to start writing because, like many educators, I have been 'conditioned' to worry about order and structure. Before I write, therefore, I often find myself dithering over whether I should say A before B and whereabouts C should come–and my brain refuses to release any words at all! By just plunging in–even if the first words I write are, 'I really don't know what I want to say here but ...'–I find that thoughts begin to flow, often so fast that my writing hand cannot keep up.

Sometimes I focus on a particular incident which could be:

• a particularly positive experience;

• an occasion when my intervention seemed to have made a real difference to someone's learning;

• a negative experience where things seemed to go badly wrong;

• an experience I found hard to handle;

• something trivial but which made me think, 'What's going on here?'

I then follow the procedure described below.

Structured writing about a practice incident

Process

1. Describe what happened. Be objective. Ask questions like: What did I learn? How did I learn it? In what ways was the experience similar to/different from others I have had?

2. Make judgements. Capture what was good/bad about the experience; its best/worst features; what went well/badly; how did I contribute to all of that?

3. Analyse. Focus on questions like, How did that happen? How can I make sense of that? How can that be explained?

Personalize

Instead of settling for a general statement like, 'It was good/bad', use personal statements like:

• What I understood/enjoyed was ...

• What I felt uncertain/uncomfortable/irritable about was ...

• What I did well/not so well was ...

• What I could have done differently was ...

Probe

Instead of settling for a personal statement like, 'What I felt annoyed about was the way X hogged the discussion', use probing questions like:

• Why did it annoy me so much?

• Why didn't I do anything about it?

Make a note of other similar situations; identify any recurring themes eg, particular people, situations, questions that regularly cause you to have the same emotional/behavioural response. Ask:

• Why?

• What can I do?

• Do I want to?

Plan
Out of the above, begin to identify your favoured learning methods, 'hang-ups', responses, etc and make plans for the future, particularly about what you want to change. Focus on one thing at a time, eg:
• personal values;
• working relationships;
• gaining a better understanding of ...;
• your role within the organization.

I know from personal experience that trying to understand what reflective practice is can be mind-boggling. 'Doing' reflective practice in any of its many forms can sometimes feel overwhelming, and attempting to facilitate it can be frighteningly complex. However, to return to the quotation with which I began this chapter, there is also some magic to be found in seriously exploring reflective practice—with or without a guidebook! By helping us to discover new meanings and perspectives in ourselves and what we do, it can transform the familiar landscape of professional practice so that we do, indeed, begin to see it through new eyes.

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13
Workplace Diversity and Training–More Than Fine Words

Joan E Keogh

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This chapter could have been fashionably titled 'Managing the Mosaic'; earlier it would have been more prosaically an obligatory chapter on equal opportunities; and before that it would have been a discussion on discrimination in the workplace.

Such concerns are still a live issue for organizations, however progressive, but there is more and more emphasis on management's need to recognize and develop the potential of *all* individuals in their workforce. Some writers argue that people differ in more ways than disability, ethnicity or gender; they regard organizational culture, overall, as the most important element for effective management, with diversity seen more as added value. However, there has been a slow but recognizable change of attitude over the past two decades in general acknowledgement that '*people matter*' at the workplace, regardless of their differences.

> Having read this chapter you will:
> • understand the nature of diversity;
> • understand the business imperative for diversity in the workplace;
> • know the UK legislation which relates to diversity; and
> • understand some of the training and development responses that apply to diversity.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND MANAGING DIVERSITY–WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

Basically the main differences between the two are as follows (IPD, 1996):

Equal opportunities

• concentration on discrimination/unfairness;

• perceived as an issue for women and ethnic minorities and people with disabilities;

• focuses on boosting proportion of minority groups in employment;

• strategy has to be 'mainstreamed';

• emphasis on positive action rather than corporate vision.

Managing diversity

• aims to ensure that all employees maximize their potential and contribution to the organization;

• concentrates on movement within an organization, its culture and the meeting of business objectives;

• concerns all staff and especially managers;

• does not rely on positive action and provides a vision.

Diversity defined

One of the problems with words is that they can subtly change in meaning as they become applied to management theories. For example in Handy's (1993:256 et seq) seminal work, *Understanding Organizations*, the term 'diversity' occurs more than once in relation to organizational design and 'management of diversity' is all about distribution of organizational power, match of culture, and structure.

Discussing the wider aspects of organizational culture, Handy (1993:188) suggests that diversity in the organization inclines towards what he categorizes as a 'task culture', with influence based on expert power. Handy describes this as a team culture where 'getting the job done' tends to wipe out 'most status and style differences'. Although it might be unwise

to take this parallel too far along the road of organizational theory, in terms of a diverse workforce it points towards a training ethos which encourages mixed group/team learning as a way forward from the more formalized instruction type sessions.

But workplace diversity has now taken on a whole new meaning and Donaldson (1994:5–6) quotes Dr Judy Rosener from the University of California and author of *Workforce America: Managing Employee Diversity as a Vital Resource* as saying:

We do not mean just race and gender. We have looked at dimensions of diversity as things that make people different from one another ... Everyone has different dimensions. There are things you cannot change such as age, race, sex and sexual orientation ... and others such as marital status, religious beliefs.

Rosener avers that there are 'three steps to diversity–recruiting a diverse workforce, valuing them so that they are not token and managing them (and) you have to have all three.'

From the UK there is Kandola and Fullerton's (1994:8) widely accepted concept of work-place diversity:

The basic concept of managing diversity accepts that the workforce consists of a diverse population of people. The diversity consists of visible and non-visible differences which will include factors such as sex, age, background, race, disability, personality, work style. It is founded on the premise that harnessing these differences will create a productive environment in which everyone feels valued, where their talents are being fully utilized and in which organizational goals are being met.

In the IPD position paper (1996:1) Bett sees diversity as an evolutionary step in equal opportunities and suggests that:

The diversity concept expands our horizons beyond equality issues covered by the law and builds on recognized approaches to equal opportunities. It adds new impetus to the development of equal opportunities and the creation of an environment in which enhanced contributions from all employees will work to the advantage of the business, people themselves and society more generally.

Rosener's dimensions are expanded to include a considerably wider range of personal differences alongside the more generally acknowledged ethnic origin, gender, physical and mental abilities, such as:

academic or vocational qualification, accent, age, caring responsibilities, learning difficulties, marital status, political affiliation, religion, sexual orientation, spent or irrelevant conviction, trade union or non-trade union membership.

A simple model of good practice is provided by La Fasto (1992) from an American case study (The Baxter Healthcare Corporation), and is shown in Figure 13.1. This is a different sequence from Rosener above, who puts 'valuing' *before* 'managing'.

More a kaleidoscope than a mosaic?

Rather than a 'mosaic' the IPD illustrates diversity with its own multicolour design in the form of a snowflake, each snowflake representing a unique form made up of many different but equal parts to symbolize diversity and equality.

Figure 13.1 The diversity progression

As yet another analogy, the concept of diversity points to every single member of the organization as being a unique shape, as in a jigsaw, everyone together making up the picture that is the whole, and which is not complete if even one of the pieces is left out. But both the concepts of a mosaic and the human jigsaw suggest an immutable and static whole, coloured and original as the total image may be. And snowflakes melt!

My own flight of fancy leads me more to the kaleidoscope with its innumerable permutations of patterns depending on the way the shapes and colours re-form again and again. For those of us concerned with training and development perhaps we should envisage diversity more within the kaleidoscope's vibrant and changing patterns, different pictures each time it is shaken up but always combining from the same source—and that is the challenge!

THE BUSINESS CASE

Worman (1996:8) points to the 'voluntary self-interest of adopting a diverse workforce'. Her model (1998) demonstrates the *external* as well as the *internal* pressures forcing action by employers (see Figure 13.2).

It is useful to take general lessons from the experience of the more progressive companies whose successes in managing diversity are reported worldwide. These include such US 'giants' as Proctor and Gamble, Du Pont and Macdonald's, as reported by Labich (1996), and Thomas's (1996) studies of Bell South Corporation, Hallmark Cards, Goodyear Tire and Rubber, and General Motors, among others.

In the UK, Smith Kline Beecham and Rank Xerox are two of the many examples singled out by Ford (1996) as publicly demonstrating commitment to equal opportunity and diversity in ways that suit their particular culture and operational objectives. For example, Smith Kline Beecham conducted a company-wide survey of some 8000 employees and among the gaps identified by the respondents were training opportunities, career guidance, and communication.

The advantages of relating more to diverse customers has been highlighted by Donaldson (1994:6) who cites the BBC World Service as one of the early pioneers in

Figure 13.2 Managing diversity: pressures forcing action by employers

management of diversity training which is said to have 'helped achieve a workforce which more closely reflects the service's worldwide audience'. Among a number of other UK employers similarly relating to external community patterns are Birmingham City Council and Littlewoods.

Organizations writing in support of the IPD position (op cit.) have been wide-ranging and include Rolls Royce Military Aero-Engines Limited, Scottish Hydro Electric, NSK-RHP Europe Ltd, and Royal Mail South Wales. Grand Met (IPD, 1996:7) sums up the business case succinctly:

Customers are increasingly looking through the front door of companies they buy from. If they do not like what they see in terms of social response, they will not go in.

TRECARE NHS TRUST: MANAGING DIVERSITY

Introduction

Trecare NHS Trust values people as individuals not only for moral and social reasons, but also because it makes sense for our organization and services. The Trust has recognized the complementary link between equal opportunities and diversity and how this can take equal opportunities forward in the organization. The Trust believes that it has sound and fair employment and service policies and procedures in place and management who are trained to ensure such policies become active. In fact one of the first steps in the Trust's management of diversity approach (in 1996) was to hold seminars for those individuals who have responsibilities for recruitment, training and staff management.

Action plan

The Trust's Special Interest Group for Equal Opportunities and Opportunity 2000 agreed a comprehensive action plan in April 1997. The action plan was based upon the positive feedback obtained from workshops held during the seminars. The Special Interest Group has a monitoring role for charting progress and updating the plan on a quarterly basis. Members of the Special Interest Group include the Chief Executive, a Royal College of Nursing (RCN) Regional Officer and a UNISON lay representative.

Aim

The Trust's aim is to mainstream equality into its business at all levels, particularly in the formulation and review of employment policies and practices and the way services are provided to clients.

Key principles

The Trust's vision of diversity-focused culture includes:

value setting

• recognizing the ways people are different from each other is an asset;

• the need to develop an open culture with good communication and feedback channels with open dialogue;

• making equality an issue for everyone;
• setting and communicating standards of behaviour based upon treating people with respect and dignity;
• continually looking for ways of addressing and improving the diverse needs of clients and their carers.

Policy agenda

The main thrust of the managing diversity initiative is to simulate, develop and promulgate the ideas and principles of equality throughout the work of the Trust. This includes:
• progressively implementing the managing diversity action plan;
• keeping people informed about developments in the equality field through team briefing;
• linking management of diversity to business strategy and quality initiatives such as the King Fund Audit, Chartermark, and Investors in People;
• building diversity concepts and practices into training, education, team building and induction programmes;
• ensuring that merit, competence and potential are the basis for recruitment, employment and development decisions;
• non-tolerance of harassment, bullying and intimidating behaviour;
• support for development training to help people reach levels of competence which let them release their true potential.

Monitoring

The Special Interest Group have responsibility for coordinating and evaluating the Trust's progress and for assessing business benefits from equality initiatives. Reports are sent to the Trust Board on action taken and recommendations on future priorities.

With acknowledgement to Trecare NHS Trust.

Ethics

More directly of concern for those responsible for training and development might be to remind ourselves of the ethical arguments supporting the notion of diversity. It has been said that fear, ignorance and the preservation of selfish interests are at the root of most discriminatory practices. With the third millennium imminent there is a groundswell of opinion that businesses have an ethical obligation to widen their horizon and must cast aside the non-acceptance of divisions within our society. A model diversity programme is no substitute for evidence of commitment from senior management and only proactive efforts will translate the rhetoric of equal opportunities for everyone into workplace reality.

Levi-Strauss & Co provide an example of focusing on workplace diversity as part of its company values. Their 'Aspirations Statement' (Glasenk, 1997:10) describes the kind of leadership required to value diversity:

Leadership that values a diverse workforce (age, sex, ethnic group, etc) at all levels of the organization, (and values) diversity in experience, and a diversity in perspectives.

And continues:

We have committed to taking full advantage of the rich backgrounds and abilities of all our people and to promote a greater diversity in positions of influence.

TRAINING FOR DIVERSITY

Although, as yet, most published information has tended to highlight individual organizations, in a UK survey on successful managing diversity initiatives the 285 who responded represented a mix of small, medium and large organizations with some 60 per cent in the private sector (Kandola and Fullerton, 1994). From the responses, fair selection training for recruiters was said to be one of the 10 most successful initiatives, together with training trainers in equal opportunities. Introducing awareness training to staff, although taking place, appeared less likely to be evaluated for effectiveness, perhaps because it was more difficult to establish criteria. Training in awareness and communication was seen by nearly half the organizations as a priority area for future action although these two terms are too general for practical application, unless defined in terms of identified needs within a particular organization and for a specific group.

It is one thing to advocate more focused training in general and another to consider in practice what is the best fit. For as long as I can remember, communication(s) training has remained high on the list of managers' training needs–a subject which continues to be universally delivered by trainers in various forms, and still with a number of different organizational

objectives. As for awareness training, this usually includes a necessary appreciation of the relevant employment legislation as well as a mix of behavioural studies. Training programmes may include case studies, role-play and simulation. Enhancing management ability to carry out appraisals in a fair and equitable manner; an appreciation of recruitment and selection processes without unfairly discriminating; even-handed grievance and disciplinary practices–these are all likely to be viewed just as extensions to what might have become standardized equal opportunities programmes planned around statutory obligations. Small wonder, then, that training for workplace diversity has received little direct reporting. Attention has focused more on new initiatives that tend to be as much about mission statements and objectives as specific practical examples.

The way forward

Certainly training for diversity is likely to be influenced by senior management's perception of what is appropriate as well as their public and private commitment to valuing people as individuals. Progressive organizations accept workplace diversity as covering diverse styles of working, thinking and communicating with others from a rich 'mix' of different people, and as a positive advantage. They no longer expect everyone should end up conforming to some central and long-established standard 'norm'. Outmoded preconceptions of the 'norm' have been suggested by Ousely (1994) such as 'an able bodied Caucasian male', to which could be added 'working full-time with no domestic responsibilities'. Certainly a stereotype from the past!

So far we have considered the training function in the light of winning the hearts and minds of those predisposed to question the value of a diverse workforce. As well, today's emphasis is on the importance of all employees having an equal chance to develop their full potential, at the same time making a positive contribution to the undertaking. Such development programmes will call more and more for ways of mutually exchanging the values and knowledge of culturally and socially diverse individuals with a mutual recognition of similarities as well as differences.

Collin (1994:283–4) suggests that women and disabled people, together with cultural and social minorities, who suffer from negative stereotyping tend to reinforce this themselves by correspondingly low expectations and aspirations. Although this blanket assumption can be challenged by success stories from within these groups, in many organizations, trainers should still be wary of judging learning abilities solely on the dominant culture standards and action learning might be an appropriate solution.

So how, as trainers, do we attempt to aid people at all levels in the organization to unblock their particular mindsets and to recognize what they really see and believe about different people? Perhaps the first step is to confront our own. We all carry baggage that holds our beliefs and prejudices–our view of the world that has built up from childhood.

And as Handy (1993:76 et seq) reminds us, it is only if we know someone very well that we accept them as the kind of person they are, with whatever differences. When dealing with others we are likely to make assumptions about how they will behave, etc and from these assumptions most of us then tend to categorize and predict. For example 'older workers do not adapt easily to new ideas'–in other words, stereotyping with expectation of certain characteristics.

Torrington and Hall (1994) quote Ellis and Sonnenfield (1993) as being concerned that training for diversity carries some risk of reinforcing stereotypes and in my own experience, amateur role-play, for example, holds such underlying dangers of caricature performances.

Awareness programmes are seen as 'sensitizing workers and managers to the needs of a culturally diverse workforce' albeit realistically linking it to 'maximizing potential productivity'. Cooper and White (1995) reinforce Kandola and Fullerton's suggestion that all employees in an enterprise should feel reliant on one another for overall success and this team spirit directs attention away from individual differences and towards similarities.

On the other hand, more than one writer has emphasized the inherent danger of targets or positive action, that is, singling out a particular group for special training and thus suggesting they are different. This could be either way, for example, men only for outdoor activity training, women only for assertiveness training (or the reverse). Although such segregation is occasionally appropriate, it is fast becoming less likely and trainers are starting to reassess their programme content to suit heterogeneous groups. A mix of people with common workplace interests such as their team or their section can build on cultural and gender differences within a spread of age groups which may also include people with different characteristics or physical abilities, for example, female paraplegic, older Asian male, young female ex-offender, male carer, and many other permutations. The challenge for training is to focus on the unique contribution from each individual, rather than an over-emphasis on stereotypical differences and social category.

It could be said that even to differentiate between management 'development' and employee 'training' in itself has a discriminatory shade of meaning. Certainly, though, trainers should be looking at:

• flexibility of venue–access for the handicapped; accessible location for carers with home responsibilities; and with some sensitivity towards dietary restrictions and customs;

• timing of training events–so as not to exclude those on part-time, shift or flexible working, and with due regard to religious observances such as fast days and prayer time.

IS THE EDUCATIONAL APPROACH ENOUGH?

Removing the main barriers to the cultivation of what amounts to a paradigm shift of attitude within an organization calls for more than what has been described as the *educational* approach; that is to say, information giving and examples of best practice, necessary as this remains. It is perhaps worthwhile to repeat what all experienced equal opportunities trainers already endorse. Within the wider context of diversity, instead of addressing single issues separately and thus reinforcing the 'difference' (and some trainers go into auto pilot on just three–gender, race and disability), effective diversity training is emphatically not only about instruction or information giving; it is to do with the generation of particular experiences, and reflection, rather than exhortation to conform.

One of the means of achieving a wider consideration of diversity might be discussion on values, perception and attitudes through focus groups, with minority views on how they themselves perceive their position–a proactive role for training within the organization. Hunt's Chapter 12 on reflective practice could usefully be revisited, while appropriate delivery methods are addressed in Chapters 15 and 16. I am also indebted to Robertson (1994) for the following views, originally to cover training on racial awareness and which have been expanded here into good counsel for diversity awareness programmes:

• we are all members of the same species;

• differences exist between cultures–we learn and acquire them;

• no one is superior or inferior to any human culture; they do, however, differ, especially in their strengths and richness;

• mental, physical and cultural differences do not cause sexism, racism, ageism and the like but they are often used to justify and maintain the existence of discrimination.

And as Holmes (1987:50) points out:

Nature confers different abilities on different people but a development approach for individual fulfilment comes from the premise that each person's growth centres upon the realization of whatever potential he or she might have.

TRAINING CHECKLIST FOR DIVERSITY
The following checklist has been adapted for diversity training from NACRO's (1987) original document, which illustrates good practice in equal opportunities training.
Trainer's attitudes
• Inform yourself about workplace diversity–read, discuss, undertake training.
• Check feedback mechanisms regarding your training work–are they working?–how do you know?
Training content and materials
• Have all audio-visual materials and handouts been checked for offending images and language?
• Can diversity be built into case studies/exercises? How effective is role-play? Ensure you are not illustrating people in stereotypical ways.
Access and participation
• Are those distributing information for you ensuring it is seen by all?
• Do you need to consider other channels for circulating information?
• What information do you ask for–disabled access? Dietary requirements?
• Can you ever provide childcare ?
• Is the make up of your training events predominantly white male/female? Or segregated special groups? Check through the planning process and ask yourself, why?
Tutors and training providers
• Are the people you use for training aware of your organization's diversity policy?
• Who do you usually use for training–are they all white, predominantly male?
• Does any trainer's approach to diversity give you cause for concern. Have you challenged him or her? How will you do it?
With acknowledgement to National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, original document (1987).

THE LAW

Evidence indicates that discrimination still exists and there continue to be inequalities of opportunity and treatment of whatever minority group. Indeed there is a suggestion in some quarters that the growing emphasis on diversity and its link with organizational efficiency serves to mask the realities of discrimination. The continued need for statutory protection is recognized, despite what has been called 'the sophistication of equal opportunities' and the current emphasis on a holistic approach. This need is manifest in the extension of statutory rights for people with disabilities, a growing lobby for legal redress against ageism, and implementation of the European Social Chapter, which covers things such as paternity leave and holiday entitlement.

Employers committed to the management of diversity accept that some form of legal framework will always be necessary. Particularly when considering management training, it will always be useful to present what the law says as a backcloth to positive discussion on voluntarism versus legal penalties. It also helps to remove misconceptions (the 'I know for a fact ...' statements), while a judicious use of case studies will serve to demonstrate what the courts are saying about what is not good practice.

In the UK, the very first breakthrough, statutorily, for individual equal rights at work was with the Equal Pay Act in 1970, although of course the Disabled Persons Act and its quota requirements had been brought in at the end of World War II (1944). In 1974 legislation founded on the principles of equal treatment for sex and race was later followed by Codes of Practice with the aim of promoting voluntary improvements in, for instance, selection and promotion. The legislation does not provide for group action. Some positive action related to training is permissible by law but in general 'quotas' and other proportional representation at the workplace have not been seen as the best way forward. Instead employers have been encouraged to analyse the composition of their workforce and take steps to redress imbalances and to make positive and public commitment to equality of treatment and opportunity.

There have been a number of government backed initiatives such as Opportunity 2000 (women), the Employers' Forum on Disability, and Race for Opportunity to provide a platform for promoting such commitment. The present climate suggests an increasing number of international and other large UK organizations, particularly those with European connections, are positively moving towards consolidation or expansion of their existing equal opportunities policies if only for demographic reasons, while supporting the Equal Opportunities Commission's call for the existing legislation to be overhauled and substantially updated.

In the USA it is often said that the legislation on equal rights came about as a result of the original 1960s campaign for civil rights, and specifically racial equality. Federal laws provide

for positive selection of candidates from minority groups and women, associated with an obligation to meet statistical targets from workplace 'profiles'. This long-standing

positive action policy has more recently been argued in some States as effectively demeaning women and minority groups due to growing suggestions that, in order to fulfil the legal obligations, it is not always the most qualified person who is selected for the job or promotion.

In Europe different countries have differing legislation but those in the European Union (EU), including the UK, were signatories to the Treaty of Amsterdam, 1997. Legislation adopted under the Social Chapter, only requiring a majority vote, will include equal treatment. The law still has a place in that statutory provisions underpin the ideology with a framework of rules that also provide safeguards against discriminatory practices, more particularly related to gender, race and disability.

An overview of the main UK legislation relating to equal opportunities is appended to this chapter, although it is not intended to be a detailed account of all the relevant statutes.

TOWARDS A LEARNING ORGANIZATION?

We have seen that the drive towards organizational effectiveness and business success has led to the UK embracing an originally transatlantic notion of diversity that emphasizes the contribution each individual employee can make to the overall impact of their organization, whether in profit-making or social terms. The leaders in industry and commerce are already coming forward to champion the cause publicly. The training function has a crucial role in reinforcing this increasingly wider view of equal opportunities and in seeking the most appropriate ways that 'awareness' can be engendered and nurtured through appropriate learning opportunities for everyone. If the concept of diversity does indeed result in the paradigm shift envisaged, 'trainers' will find themselves entering even further into the role of change agents within the truly learning organization defined by Pedler *et al* (1989:2): 'one which facilitates the learning of all its members and continually transforms itself '.

CONCLUSION

There is a compelling business case for encouraging a rich diversity within the workforce. World-wide, we all tend to identify with others similar to ourselves in organizations with which we come into contact, as customers, clients or associates.

There is also an ethical argument and this message has been adopted by leaders in the field of equal opportunities, as can be seen from the case studies and other examples. In spite of the advances which have occurred over the past thirty years or so, there remain a number of areas still to be addressed. For many of these, training and development is in the forefront, holding the key to further understanding of investing in people.

BT AND DIVERSITY

Then (1988)

In 1988 British Telecom issued a 'Guide for Managers and Supervisors'–*Equality of Opportunity in Practice*. The basics covered at that time relating to 'training and education' are well worth reproducing for the purpose of today's management training as they still go to the heart of the matter, in simple terms.

Training and education

General

Make sure all your staff are told of training and education opportunities for which they are eligible to apply or which could meet their developments needs. Do not assume that any particular group will not be interested or suitable.

Residential courses

Give as much notice as possible of residential courses so that those with young children or other dependants can make arrangements for their care.

Consider the use of alternatives to residential courses where domestic responsibilities make it impossible for staff to be away from home overnight; in some cases, distance learning might provide an answer.

Industrial language training

If communication difficulties are acting as a barrier to an individual's advancement, affecting efficiency or working relationships, industrial language training provided by, eg local authority units, may be able to help.

Special training schemes

From time to time BT offers special training schemes for groups that have been underrepresented in particular areas of work, eg engineering training for women. If you feel that locally organized training would benefit members of your staff from under-represented groups, discuss it with the Equal Opportunity Adviser.

Now
As a leading player in global telecommunications, BT believe it is critical to harness the talents, skills and capabilities of all its people to gain and retain competitive advantage.
In doing so BT aims to create opportunities for everyone in the company to achieve their best in the interests of themselves and the company as a whole.
In BT, managing diversity embraces a range of key programmes from measuring employee attitudes and expectations, auditing behaviours and practices, to engaging in initiatives to raise the profile of individuals in minority groups.
Examples include:
• *a Steering Group of senior operational managers* advising on high level strategy and policy for the management of diversity;
• *a Women's Development* Portfolio providing opportunities for personal and professional development for women of all grades;
• *an Ethnic Minority Network* which is the voice of BT's ethnic minority employees. Amongst other functions it acts as a sounding board for senior BT management to test ideas for new policies;
• *the Disability* Programme includes forums at which disabled employees meet with senior managers to discuss BT's approach to disability issues and their work requirements.
With acknowledgement to BT Equal Opportunities Policy Unit.

Conclusion

There is a compelling business case for encouraging a rich diversity within the workforce. World-wide, we all tend to identify with others similar to ourselves in organizations with which we come into contact, as customers, clients or associates.

There is also an ethical argument and this message has been adopted by leaders in the field of equal opportunities, as can be seen from the case studies and other examples. In spite of the advances which have occurred over the past thirty years or so, there remains a number of areas still to be addressed. For many of these, training and development is in the forefront, holding the key to further understanding of investing in people.

Appendix

Equal Pay Act, 1970 (EPA)

Amended by the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975 and the Equal Pay(Amendment) Regulations 1983.

The purpose of the Equal Pay legislation is to eliminate discrimination between men and women in pay and other terms of their contract of employment. It gives a woman the right to equality in terms of her contract when she is employed:

• on like work: that is, work of the same or broadly similar to that of a man;

• on work rated as equivalent: that is, in a job which a job evaluation study has shown to have equal value to that of a man;

• on work of equal value: that is, in a job which is equal to that of a man in terms of the demands made on her under such headings as skill, effort and decision making.

The Act applies to men and women although the term 'woman' is used throughout.

Sex Discrimination Acts, 1984 and 1986 (SDA)

Sex Discrimination in employment–main points:

• employers cannot lawfully discriminate in the arrangements made for recruitment, selection, training, promotion or transfer;

• it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate in the benefits, facilities or services provided to employees;

• discrimination is unlawful in dismissals or other favourable treatment of employees;

• it is unlawful to discriminate against a woman as regards age of retirement;

• exceptions are made where gender is a genuine occupational qualification for the job;

• it is not unlawful to give different treatment to men and women in respect of pregnancy and childbirth.

See also Code of Practice.

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) continues to press for the above two Acts to be brought under a single statute to remove anomalies in the domestic legislation which have built up over some 20 years as a result of the European Court's rulings.

Race Relations Act, 1975 (RRA)

Racial Discrimination in Employment–main points:

• it is unlawful for employers to discriminate in the way arrangements are made for recruitment, selection, training, promotion or transfer;

• exceptions are made where race is a genuine occupational qualification.

See also Code of Practice.

Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 (DDA)

Prohibited discrimination–employment:

• employers cannot lawfully discriminate against disabled workers in the arrangement made for recruitment, selection, training, promotion or transfer;

• it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled workers in relation to terms and conditions of employment;

• it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled workers in relation to employment benefits;

• it is unlawful to dismiss a person solely on the grounds of his or her disability. Definition of 'a disability':

Generally speaking a 'disability' is a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day to day activities (Section 1[1]).

This section is amplified in Schedule 1 and includes 'progressive conditions'.

See also Code of Practice.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974 (ROA)

The Act sets out to make life easier for many people who have been convicted of a criminal offence in civilian life, or in the Services, in Great Britain or abroad, and who have since lived on the right side of the law.

Anyone who has been convicted of a criminal offence and received a sentence of not more than two and a half years in prison, benefits as a result of the Act if she or he has not been convicted again during a specified period (the rehabilitation period).

If someone who can benefit under the Act is not convicted again during his or her rehabilitation period, he or she becomes what the Act calls a 'rehabilitated person' and the conviction becomes spent. The rehabilitation period depends on the sentence for the original offence.

(Source: Home Office)

Ageism

Rather than go ahead with legislation on ageism, the government has decided to introduce a Voluntary Code of Practice to encourage organizational policies against ageism.

The Employment Service's Job Centres have set a good example by no longer accepting vacancies that feature upper age limits.

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Section Four:
Delivering Learning, Training and Development

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14
Open, Distance and Flexible Learning

Geoff Chivers

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this chapter we will consider the opportunities for formalized learning which have opened up in modern times through a wide variety of approaches aimed at minimizing the time teachers and trainers need to spend in direct classroom contact with learners (Rowntree, 1992).

Attempts to sum up all the approaches in one term have not really succeeded, and a widely used compromise is to refer to open, distance and flexible learning (ODFL). A major task of this chapter is to closely consider the terms open learning, distance learning and flexible learning, which are sometimes used in very specific ways and sometimes in very generalized, even vague ways, giving rise to confusion.

The chapter will clarify the strengths and limitations of conventional classroom-based teaching and learning, and demonstrate how newer approaches to formalized learning can complement these strengths and overcome some of the weaknesses.

The chapter moves on to consider the general issues which arise in developing systems not dependent on classroom interaction between teachers and learners as the main method of achieving effective learning. Managing ODFL systems is demanding, and a further key aim is to outline issues to be faced by managers of such systems.

The wide range of ODFL approaches now available through newer information technologies will be reviewed briefly, but are taken up in much greater depth in the following

two chapters. Here we will simply consider their main strengths and limitations in the context of effectively supporting learning in the affective, cognitive and skills domains.

Having read this chapter you will:

• understand the nature of open, distance and flexible learning;

• know the advantages and disadvantages of open and distance learning;

• understand the locus of control in the learning process between the tutor and student; and

• be familiar with the requirements of a corporate learning centre.

FROM TEACHING TO LEARNING

The development of ODFL is not just a story of technological interventions in teaching and learning, but also a story of changing relationships between teachers and learners. One of the most striking aspects of ODFL is its widespread utilization in adult education and training, but limited spread into the compulsory schooling system thus far. A fundamental aspect of formalized education and training is that historically it has been set in the context of a power relationship between teachers and learners. This reality is expressed as much by the use of the term 'discipline' to mean subject area of study (eg, physics, history, or French), as by the cane that was once wielded by most secondary school teachers in Britain.

The conventional approaches to formal teaching and learning have been set in a context with many important associated values, whether overt or covert. Through their lives adults learn a great deal by informal methods. However, this learning, mainly gained from life experience, but also from general reading, watching television, etc is not regarded as carrying much status (except perhaps in pub quizzes or when helping somebody to change a wheel on their car).

Learning which takes place in a classroom and institutional setting, and under the control of a teacher has come to be regarded as the highest status, most important and most worthwhile type of learning.

There are many reasons for this. The teachers are clearly more expert than the learners in the area of learning in question, and this confers status. The whole process is highly visible, and we can accrue evidence of successful learning taking place by teacher-designed assessment procedures. Indeed, valued qualifications are awarded to successful learners following extended periods of learning and assessment. Formalized teaching taken forward in institutions by recognized teachers leads to both employment opportunities and the

growth of professions (teacher, educational administrator, school secretary, and so

on). All those employed by the formal education and training organizations have had a strong vested interest in promoting face-to-face teaching as the most important way to achieve learning.

However, because of the sheer variety of ways in which learning can occur, it has never been possible for the formalized teaching bodies to monopolize learning, and certainly not adult learning.

In Western society, the Christian Church controlled most of the formalized learning opportunities until the 15th century, when the introduction of the printing press opened the door to the possibility of encouraging learning outside the control of the Church. Indeed, the book has for hundreds of years been the forerunner of all that we now consider important in terms of learner control of learning.

As we go on to consider ODFL systems, we could do well to keep the book in mind as an example of a learning system covering all of these approaches. The benefits that we see in books in aiding learning alongside or instead of classroom lessons are much the same benefits which we can recognize in ODFL systems. The limitations of books in aiding learning can also exist in these more purposeful learning support systems, but much effort has gone into reducing the disadvantages and increasing the benefits.

Many limitations exist in a learning system based wholly on classroom teaching. Often we think of the poor quality of teaching offered, and we have all had bad experiences of this that we can readily quote. Even more fundamental than this as a disadvantage, however, is the requirement that the learner has to be in the classroom in time for the lesson, and must stay in the room and concentrate wholly on the lesson for its full duration.

We will all have had experiences of wishing ourselves to be almost anywhere than in the class, and this is hardly a good basis for learning. One of the fundamental advantages of ODFL systems is the opportunity for the learner to control the place and time of learning. These are vital concerns of adult learners, who are constrained in both respects by their personal circumstances (paid employment, caring responsibilities, etc).

The whole rationale for distance learning courses is to enable those who live and work at considerable distance from the learning providers to nevertheless take forward their studies without having to travel, with the cost and time implications. It is no surprise that correspondence courses established themselves soon after national and international postal systems were established, to meet the needs of learners spread out across North America and the British Empire for example.

Of course there are still many people who are constrained from any travelling to classes because of physical infirmity or disadvantage, because they are in prison, or because they

work abroad (or at sea). Again, it is no surprise that ODFL approaches were introduced at an early stage for adults constrained from travelling to institutions for their studies.

Time constraints are often equally as difficult for adults to grapple with, in terms of regular classroom attendance. My own life is not only hectic, but has no regular pattern in terms of working hours and places, so that regular weekly class attendance is out of the

question, and finding two or three consecutive days to attend an intensive course almost as difficult.

For many potential adult learners disadvantage is placed on disadvantage such that it is simply impossible for them to ever undertake formal study by attendance at conventional courses. This is one reason why so many adults go for years without undertaking any formal study. Even for those in employment, opportunities to undertake classroom-based study organized by their employer are limited by schedules and the number of course places available at any one time. Many workers are specialists in their field and therefore have to look outside their organization for training, or work for small firms that cannot organize training for them. One of the most important areas of growth within ODFL in recent years has been the provision of opportunities to learn in this way by larger employers. This is a topic taken up later in this chapter.

Let us move on to consider some definitions concerning ODFL, starting with distance learning.

DISTANCE LEARNING

Distance learning systems in their 'purest' form require no face-to-face interaction between the learner and those organizing and offering the learning. In principle, this means that not only does the learner have no face-to-face involvement with any teachers, but also that the learner can be registered to undertake the learning, begin and take forward the learning, complete the learning, be assessed on this learning, and, if appropriate, awarded a qualification, without ever being in the same building as anyone associated with the organization offering the learning. This has been, and is still in some cases, the situation with distance learning undertaken with correspondence colleges, or via the purchase of language learning packages for that matter.

Generally such distance learning systems involve registration for the course, or receipt of the learning package by post, followed by receipt of learning materials by post and submission of course work for assessment also by post. Communication also takes place by telephone in most cases, while the advent of fax and e-mail is opening up the possibility of transferring significant volumes of text by electronic means. The newer technologies offer communication at a distance from tutor to learner and learner to learner by a whole variety of approaches, from e-mail to video conferencing. These possibilities will be considered in the next chapters.

Any system of learning that aims to operate without any face-to-face contact with those organizing the system will probably have to be well thought out and structured if it is to succeed. Many matters related to the organization of the learning system, which may be little considered, or ignored, in a face-to-face learning system, will need to be explained

clearly in

writing in a purely distance learning system, where the learners do not have an opportunity to ask questions easily and quickly of the learning programme designers and deliverers.

Similarly, the learning material will have to be well-designed and presented in a situation where learners are not in dialogue with teachers. It is also very important to note that the material will be open to general public scrutiny, while classroom processes are still a much more 'private'; affair.

There are many advantages for the learner arising from a text-based distance learning system. At once all time constraints are relaxed, since the learning can in principle take place at any time, day or night, seven days a week. For sighted adult learners at least, textbased materials are familiar learning tools since all those who can read will have learnt at some stage from books, course handouts, manuals, etc. Text-based materials are generally produced in sections, with each section being convenient to lift and carry about. In this way study can be undertaken almost anywhere which is lit, including doctors' waiting rooms, public transport, or the works canteen.

Distance learning systems may still impose time and place constraints on learners. For example some distance learning courses require a certain amount of material to be delivered each week or each month, and may be 'paced' by delivering a package of materials weekly or monthly, with course work based on the study of the materials to be delivered at set intervals. On the other hand, the use of a package of distance learning materials, where the learning is not assessed in any way, may not involve any pacing of this type.

Many more modern distance learning systems go beyond the use of text-based materials, and may reintroduce time constraints. For example introducing radio or television broadcasts in support of text-based material, as the UK Open University did at its opening in 1970, required learners to set aside time to receive such broadcasts, unless recording equipment is set up to allow 'time shifting'. Equipment will be needed to receive the broadcasts, and even more to record them.

TELEVISION AND TRAINING—BIG CHANGES FOR SMALL FIRMS

The introduction of digital broadcasting opens new possibilities for education and training on television. With the expansion of broadcasting airtime specialist channels become feasible, while the convergence of broadcasting and information technologies presents new and innovative opportunities for delivering training to companies and to individuals. At present training-related programmes have a very limited presence on TV. Sir John Harvey-Jones' 'Troubleshooter' series for the BBC showed how the expertise of an experienced manager could be disseminated to a general audience in an informative and entertaining way. Yet this example is very much television programmes as product, crafted to

meet the interests of a general audience rather than to realize specific in-company training objectives.

Another approach is to integrate the production of television programmes into a training process which relates to issues such as managing change. A recent project initiated by the media production company AV Edge Ltd and funded in part through the EU programme Adapt, presents an interesting example of how the process of making programmes for television can be incorporated into a larger change management intervention. This project will result in a multimedia training package for use by SMEs. It includes six TV programmes, which document the experiences of a core group of SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises) as they review their experiences and devise and implement strategies for change management. The participating companies are largely owner-managed or family-owned companies operating mainly in the service industry. All are successful at their present level but are aware that the uncertain nature of the environment means that they need to innovate if they are to continue this success in a rapidly changing marketplace.

The AV Edge team has devised a strategy that involves the key managers in these companies in an experiential training programme. The more formal elements of this process involve meetings and discussions among the various managers at which they exchange their views and experiences. These activities are documented on video and the material will be used in the TV programmes. The managers are also interviewed on site to elaborate on the issues facing the companies and to provide a visual context for the discussions.

While these production strategies are similar to those used in conventional television production, AV Edge has also included a more innovative approach which involves the use of digital video cameras by the managers. These cameras are provided on request and are used by the managers to capture significant points in the development of the company as it meets new challenges and faces significant decisions. The managers use the video cameras as a means of capturing the reality that they are experiencing.

Later, by examining, reflecting and discussing the video presentation of their perceptions of this reality, they gain greater control over the situation and the issues that emerge. Even though the initial intention in the use of video cameras was to record material for a television programme it has become clear that video, as a medium, has a powerful potential as a means of examining the dynamics and processes within a company. By involving the managers and staff of a company in the production of video reports it is possible to generate a process of preparing and planning for change. With the advent of digital broadcasting and the introduction of specialist channels for education and training, video material generated in this way can be brought to a wide public.

With acknowledgement to John MacMahon, Editor of Educational Programmes, Television, at Radio Telefís Éireann, Dublin.

Newer technologies may introduce further constraints on time and place, for example video conferencing, while others such as computer conferencing may allow complex interactions between learners (and tutors) over considerable time periods on a very flexible basis. If these are the advantages of 'pure' distance learning, what are its limitations? To answer this question, perhaps we should come back to the issue of classroom-based learning. Despite my earlier strictures, this approach has been used by all kinds of societies over all of recorded history, so the approach must have something in its favour. Leaving aside for a moment the issue of cost-effectiveness in learning delivery, we must recognize that for learning to go forward there must be motivation to learn. Here the classroom-based approach to teaching and learning has much to offer.

The teacher can increase motivation in many ways through direct interaction with the learner. Teachers can be a source of inspiration, encouragement, friendly advice, positive criticism, and comradeship. For many learners fear of 'letting down' the teacher can be of itself a major source of motivation to learn, especially in difficult fields. While teachers and trainers can do their best to offer such support at a distance, by phone or text-based messages, it is much more difficult to do so than in a face-to-face situation (Evans, 1994).

While some of us may like to settle down with a good book from time to time, we are social animals and prefer to spend much of our time with others. This is especially so when faced with challenges we find stressful and worrying, which can often be the case for adult learners. The stress is less and the fun of learning greater, in general, when we meet and learn with others.

At its worst the distance learning system can isolate learners, create seemingly impenetrable barriers to learning part way through learning programmes, with no immediate help in sight, and become an inhuman, inflexible, bureaucratic and dreary form of learning provision. This has doubtless been a major reason for the high dropout rate from earlier correspondence courses, 70–80 per cent being regarded as tolerable in some cases.

For this reason, even where a range of methods of contracting learners at a distance is available, very few purely distance learning courses have been introduced in modern times. For example, even the UK Open University, which is seen as an outstandingly successful distance learning university, in fact includes significant elements of face-to-face contact with tutors and fellow learners in most of the courses. Despite the excellence of the learning materials developed by the Open University, many educationalists believe that its successful retention of students and higher pass rates relative to earlier correspondence courses lies with its very sensible retention of many of the benefits of face-to-face tuition, including the allocation of specific local tutors to particular groups of students over extended periods of learning (Bell, 1993).

The decision to include face-to-face learning sessions within a distance learning course, especially where these are obligatory, should not be taken lightly. We have already discussed the problems that arise for many adult learners when they are required to travel for classes. In many mixed-mode learning programmes, which strongly feature distance

learning but include some face-to-face components, the bulk of the learning is delivered in distance learning form. The face-to-face sessions are used to motivate learners, and focus on learning which is difficult to achieve at a distance (for example the development of teamwork, or some practical skills). This is a matter to which we will return in the context of flexible learning developments. Birchall (1990) introduces the idea of third generation distance learning, where video conferencing, e-mail, and voice mail reduce the need for face-to-face contact still further.

OPEN LEARNING

Open learning is by no means as easy to define as distance learning. Indeed, there are very many definitions of open learning, and it is often used as an umbrella term for any learning system that is not significantly based on face-to-face tuition.

Part of the confusion arises from the use of the word 'open' to mean entry onto a study programme without prior academic qualifications. The dominance of the Open University in the UK has not been helpful, since it does have open entry in this sense, but delivers its courses by distance learning methods.

Alternatively, 'open' can be used to imply a learning approach which is open to negotiation, which is not always tutor-led, and which offers possibilities for changes to course objectives, content and methods of learning and assessment, if relevant. The public library stands as one of the ultimate examples of an open learning institution in this sense, and many a working woman or man has gained her or his 'education' by public library membership. As the entry cost into the world of the Internet reduces, the scope for access to information by this route is increasing.

Although access to information of itself does not provide an education, or even support learning in any depth, any system which empowers the learner is moving in the direction of an open learning system in my view. This takes us back to my own earlier comments about power relationships in learning, which are further explored by Edwards (1991).

From a power viewpoint, any learning system can be seen as sitting somewhere along a continuum, with the conventional institutional system at one end and completely independent learning at the other, as illustrated in Figure 14.1.

At the left-hand end of the spectrum the institutional teachers and managers control virtually everything:

• what courses to offer;

• who can come on them;

- what the courses will cover;

- how they will be structured and taught;

Figure 14.1 The teaching–learning system continuum

• how they will be assessed;

• how decisions will be made on successful course completion.

Learners can only influence the situation by not taking the course, dropping out, or criticizing the course (normally after completion of studies). In general adults seek at least some control of the system under which they are expected to learn. Enlightened adult educators and trainers make every effort to empower learners within the constraints under which they have to work.

Learning programmes leading to qualifications are subject to many institutional or awarding body constraints, but even here increased flexibility around the delivery of learning programmes is possible. Many qualification courses can be taken with little classroom attendance, and are often referred to as 'open learning courses'.

Where does distance learning fit into this continuum? Many distance learning courses do offer 'open' features, as the learner controls the time and place of study. However, many distance learning courses are very much controlled by the delivering institutions, the UK Open University being a case in point, and in this case fall towards the left-hand end of the continuum. This is not necessarily a criticism, since all institutions in effect set up contracts with their adult learners and attempt to act in their best interests. A completely 'open' system may sound ideal, but the fully independent learner is open to failure to learn, indeed often to not even engage in learning at all (Fox 1991).

I believe that it is very important for educators to keep the issues of power and control to the front of their minds when developing learning programmes. Too much tutor control and learners can become antagonistic and drop out of learning programmes; too little and they can become apathetic!

Learners vary greatly in their capability to learn autonomously, which adds to the challenge of determining where to place a learning programme along the continuum. Older

adults whose formative learning experiences were gained in traditional schools may not consider themselves able to cope with significant levels of self-direction in learning. Indeed they often regard themselves as short-changed when tutors refuse to teach, or offer only limited availability even to discuss their course work.

Many teachers and trainers are also threatened by being required to operate towards the right-hand end of the spectrum, where they are not able to fully demonstrate their undoubted classroom teaching skills or subject expertise. The loss of power to control the teaching and learning process may also be keenly felt, especially where the trainer is being held responsible for the achievement of specific learning by the learners.

Harper (1993) summarizes the case for open learning from the learner's perspective as follows; open learning:

• dispels the learner's common notion that classroom attendance is equivalent to effort and achievement;

• recognizes that different students learn at different speeds and in different ways;

• helps learners to learn how to learn;

• helps learners to accept responsibility for their own learning;

• encourages learners to be more active in their learning; and

• generates motivation and commitment and stimulates a sense of self-management.

While all this can be the case, poorly prepared open learning materials, poorly supported by uncommitted trainers, can lead to loss of confidence in learners and failure to learn. It is vital therefore to take forward the best interests of learners and trainers.

OFFSHORE OPEN LEARNING
A North Sea oil company needed to conduct training on safety for visitors to exploration and production platforms in the North Sea. There was particular concern that contractors should be aware of the hazards, the control measures in place, and the expected safe working practices.
There was also a need to train company staff on technical issues related to risk control. Each platform had a safety officer who could undertake some training. There was concern to standardize the training to meet both needs, and to ensure that day-to-day work did not stand in the way of everyone receiving training.

The answer was seen to lie with an open learning approach, especially given that workers could undertake open learning work in the time they had free from operational duties. The need was for self-paced learning, which would be highly interactive and draw in the learners

to increase their motivation. The safety training field benefits from visual inputs, and requires checks that learning is taking place fully and effectively.

An interactive video approach was therefore considered most appropriate in both cases. Video material was shot on the oilrigs in line with the storyboards generated by experts in relevant aspects of risk management. Commentaries were added to give full video material. This was then edited to generate a high level of multiple-choice interactivity.

Feedback and evaluation records were built into each programme. The two programmes have been used extensively and have proved very effective in terms of learner acceptance and learner effectiveness.

FLEXIBLE LEARNING

The ambiguity about the meaning of open learning, and the move towards very flexible methods of accessing information and contacting members of the learning community have encouraged the wider use of the term 'flexible learning'. While flexible learning may be used in connection with both open and distance learning, it could well incorporate faceto-face tuition, tutor-less learning groups, indeed any appropriate continuation of learning methods where the learner's real needs and possibilities are to the fore.

The concept of flexible learning has been defined by the Further Education Unit of the UK Department for Education and Employment as:

the adaptation of available learning opportunities to meet the needs of the learner in a way which optimises the autonomy of the learner as well as the effectiveness of the process of learning. (FEU, 1983:11)

As with open learning, the term 'flexible learning' is used by different people in different ways in different countries. Malone (1997:5) states that:

This is not merely the result of different languages and cultures, but rather the outcome of different educational, training and vocational training systems and alternative applications of new technology.

As with open learning there are degrees of flexibility available to suit particular learning needs, but also the culture and customs of particular organizations providing learning opportunities (Waterhouse, 1990). A university will not expect its students to learn mainly in classrooms, and much encouragement is given to learning in the library, by study at home or in the hall of residence, from other students, and from practical experience. In contrast a secondary school will hold its students in classrooms for most of each school day,

with school teachers controlling much of the learning process. Similarly, work organizations will vary greatly in the extent to which they allow or encourage flexibility in learning provision. Clearly young craft apprentices cannot be left to find out for themselves how to operate powerful and fast-moving machinery in the apprentice training school, or on the shop floor; nor can newly recruited soldiers be left to teach themselves from a manual how to fire a rifle.

In contrast many experienced workers are operating at the frontiers of knowledge and skill in their specialist fields. Within their work organizations such workers may not be able to turn to the training department to advise them on how to take their learning forward, let alone organize this for them (Johnston, 1993).

The mind shift from regarding learning as an activity largely directed by teachers and trainers within a classroom environment, to seeing it as an activity primarily of concern to learners, where they will be offered as much flexibility as possible to determine their best ways to learn, is difficult (Bailey, 1992). Once it has been made, there are many exciting options that open up. These retain an important place for face-to-face learning directed by teachers and trainers, and for learning in groups, but do not see these as an automatic requirement, nor as necessarily a major part of a learning programme.

Decisions about how to take learning forward rest substantially with the learners, and in this case some flexibly delivered programme will generally result. Unless geography makes it impossible, learners will generally favour undertaking demanding and longer study programmes that include some face-to-face teaching and some group learning. However, the onward march of learning technologies continues to open up ways to learn autonomously which were just not possible in the past.

ISSUES FOR THE LEARNER IN ODFL

Much of the current literature on ODFL considers the changed situation from the viewpoint of the providers of learning programmes and/or the companies for which the learners are working. This is because the developers of new technology-based learning programmes are selling to training providers in the first instance, and because companies see ODFL as a lever to achieve organizational change. However, it is the learner who has to achieve the learning, and many ODFL schemes have failed because the real needs and circumstances of the learners were not properly considered.

Learners will vary greatly in terms of their initial motivation to learn autonomously, or to plan their learning autonomously. They will also vary greatly in their ability to learn autonomously, either at all or by particular learning methods. Learning providers with experience in dealing with very heterogeneous groups of learners and a commitment to ODFL will tend to offer a range of face-to-face learning opportunities, but not insist that

these are all taken up. They will also provide plentiful opportunities for potential learners to discuss their learning hopes and ideas with experienced learning guidance professionals. The UK Open University is a good example of this approach. From the outset some learners will not attend many classes and will not seek much contact with their tutors otherwise. In contrast some learners will seek a great deal of advice on learning options, attend every class which is organized, and contact their tutors frequently.

Many learners will seek more or less general guidance and specific learning support from professionals, depending on how well their studies are going and how relevant they seem to future personal scenarios. In general, as time goes by and learners become more confident in their ability to learn by ODFL, so they will see less and less need for class contact and tutor support. The Open University takes account of this trend by offering many more classroom sessions for its foundation courses than for its more advanced courses which follow on from these.

It may well be argued that a major purpose of adult education is to develop learners' selfconfidence in 'owning' their own learning, and the ability to take learning forward on a self-help basis. Malone (1997:14) argues that:

Open learning is an ideal means of developing the necessary skills and attitudes of selfreliance and initiative precisely because they are exactly those that are acquired when doing open learning.

Differences in learning styles are also an important consideration in regard to learner options in the ODFL context. Text-based open and distance learning materials with limited scope for interaction with the text via problem-solving exercises, or exercises that encourage creativity, are likely to be more suitable for those who learn best by starting from reflection and theory, rather than those who learn best from an action-oriented start. This relates to Honey and Mumford's (1992) learning styles (see Chapter 10).

However, today an enormous range of open learning materials is available to suit a wide variety of learning styles as well as learning topics and levels. Computer-based training (CBT) programmes, which encourage experimentation and a trial-and-error approach to learning are available. Indeed the most sophisticated CBT packages will allow learners a variety of options in the way in which they learn from the package, according to their own preferred style. Research is in progress to develop CBT systems that will not only diagnose from learner interaction what each learner does or does not know, but also how the learner prefers to learn, and adjust the delivery of learning accordingly.

ODFL has been taken up substantially in the corporate world in recent years, for a whole variety of reasons which we will consider in the next section. Many errors have been made in this process, for many reasons. Fundamentally, however, these reasons come down to

not taking sufficient account of the needs and circumstances of the learners. There is little point in setting up an open learning centre in the workplace if the packages available are of

no relevance to the workforce, or if the level of learning involved is too high or too low. Nor will workers be able to benefit from the open learning centre if their work and general life demands never give them time to get access to it to do some studying. In some companies supervisors have been reluctant to allow workers to attend open learning centres during working hours. While there may be good reasons for this reluctance, there has to be accord across a work organization about how an open learning centre is supposed to work for it to be successful. If learners perceive discord at management level they will be very reluctant to involve themselves in ODFL at work, however much money is spent on centres, learning equipment and packages.

Worker motivation to learn needs to be very carefully considered if open learning centres are to be cost-effective, otherwise they may remain empty rooms, or worse, rooms full of workers gossiping for long periods during working hours. Stephenson (1992) found that the presence of a tutor improves performance. At the very least workers will want their learning achievements to be recognized, and known about by their superiors and peers. It is all too easy for this to be overlooked when ODFL methods are employed. The increasing trend towards assessment and accreditation of learning is a very real benefit here, since much ODFL has explicit learning objectives which are readily accessible. It is unsurprising that ODFL programmes leading to well-regarded qualifications are especially popular with workers, and learners generally (Thorpe, 1993).

ISSUES FOR ODFL PROVIDERS

Broadly considered there are three types of ODFL providers: those that sell services directly to learners; those that incorporate ODFL approaches into learning programmes offered in the public sector institutions; and those that offer ODFL opportunities within the context of work organizations. Consideration of the issues affecting those operating businesses based on offering ODFL, directly to learners or to organizations where learners are based, is beyond the scope of this chapter. The development and production of ODFL programmes and materials for open sale in this way is now a huge and expanding industry. The content and forms of ODFL involved depend primarily on marketing considerations. There are mass markets for packages on subjects as varied as foreign languages, great paintings or learning the guitar. Many employers base their ODFL provision largely or entirely on such 'off-the shelf' materials and equipment, with an increasing trend towards multimedia packages. Universities and colleges have tended to develop their own ODFL packages which are most commonly incorporated within more conventional courses, or offered on a stand-alone basis for qualifications.

It is the issues faced by organizations which have already been providers of conventional learning programmes in switching some of their provision to ODFL that I wish to focus upon now. The first question should always be, why change towards ODFL anyway? This

change will cause upheavals of various kinds, and the benefits need to be clearly identified if the costs involved are to be justified:

• Are there potential learners that we can reach more readily by ODFL methods whom we would like to support?

• Do we have existing learners who could learn more readily through access to ODFL methods?

• Are there training needs that we cannot currently meet properly or at all by conventional methods?

• To what extent do we know that the ODFL approach will lead to more and better learning on a cost-effective basis, and that this learning will benefit the medium-term profitability of the organization?

While it may not be possible to fully answer these questions before going forward, by asking them across the organization a whole range of issues can be clarified. Once there is clarity on why a change toward ODFL is justified then it is easier to persuade teachers, trainers, line managers and learners alike that the effort to change their practices will pay off. All too often particular ODFL methods have been hurriedly introduced in organizations as varied as universities and international companies with no real justification beyond their trendiness in the eyes of one or two senior managers or trainers. The concerns of lower-level staff have been overridden and very substantial expenditure has been incurred, with no lasting benefit to the organization. Meanwhile the learners involved have been damaged, and the overall standing of ODFL diminished.

While there can be no recipe for success, long experience would suggest that for most organizations it is better to start small, and to grow ODFL systems gradually, learning by experience, rather than go for a blockbuster approach. While the introduction of top-down comprehensive change can look exciting, and theoretically efficient in time and money, in fact this approach has failed sufficiently, even in progressive organizations, for us to question its wisdom.

Where a training department exists in a company it is very undesirable to initiate an ODFL centre or ODFL course without involving the trainers located there. Even though these trainers may be informed that their existing work is valued, and that they will be just as busy as with face-to-face courses, the open learning centre or course will immediately be seen as a threat. While not all trainers will be willing to change role and learn new skills, there will usually be one or more who will consider doing so. These trainers should be identified and empowered to move into the ODFL field, undertaking whatever training is needed for their new roles. As far as possible these staff should be retained inside the

training department and encouraged to take forward some of their pre-existing conventional training work. In this way ODFL is demystified, and no barriers are built up between dedicated ODFL staff and the other trainers.

Once the work grows to involve several ODFL programmes there will be a need to designate a manager for this work. At this stage, it may be worth considering an external appointment to bring in higher-level and novel expertise. However, any such appointment needs to be made carefully so that the ODFL manager is able to fit into the culture of the training function and the culture of the company overall. Otherwise there is a danger of the ODFL function becoming sidelined, and eventually being seen as a costly and unnecessary adjunct to the HRD function rather than a key driver of it.

Alternatively, a sympathetic and experienced company trainer could move into the ODFL management function. Nobody should be appointed who does not have experience of ODFL work, however. In this case new appointments could be considered to work under this manager, perhaps trainers with expertise in ODFL technologies that the company has identified as valuable.

The choice of which learning programmes to offer in ODFL format must be based on careful consideration of learner needs and company functional needs, not on the glamour of the new technologies involved. Ideally, the early choices should be of programmes which are clearly relevant to the learners and the company, are of high quality, and proven success in other places. Seeing is believing, and nothing succeeds like success.

So often the first ODFL programmes introduced into companies (or offered by colleges to their students) are based on normal and unproven technological platforms, delivering study programmes which have only just been developed, in new fields, and offered to learners with no previous ODFL experience, by untrained trainers and teachers who also have no previous experience. It is no wonder that failure results, especially where the learners see no particular reason for the use of an ODFL approach in the first place.

Learners need to learn how to benefit from ODFL in general, and from particular approaches for each learning need. Considerable attention needs to be given to how this is achieved, since the first experience of learning, or trying to learn, by ODFL is strongly formative in regard to attitudes towards the concepts involved. There is much sense in conducting face-to-face sessions initially to introduce the approach, and to take learners through issues around self-directed learning.

If following this stage well-proven delivery systems are used to support quality learning programmes on topics of real interest to learners, which are relevant to their needs, then success is most likely. The potential advantages and disadvantages of open and distance learning from the learner's viewpoint are summarized in Table 14.1.

THE CORPORATE OPEN LEARNING CENTRE

Corporate learning centres have grown rapidly in the past decade. Marx (1995) reports that

8 per cent of the 'Fortune 500' companies in the USA are using interactive media learning

Table 14.1 Potential advantages and disadvantages of open and distance learning from the learner's viewpoint

Potential Advantages	Potential Disadvantages
Access to learning materials and programmes may be easier.	There may be less guidance on the level, relevance and appropriateness of learning materials and programmes.
Learning may be achieved on a flexible basis in terms of time.	Lack of timetabled classes may lead to learning being neglected.
Learning can be carried out at a pace to suit the learner.	Lack of a clear timetable may lead to learning taking place too slowly, and ultimately petering out.
Learning may be achieved on a flexible basis in terms of place.	No suitable place for learning may be identifiable.
Learning can be carried out in one's own time.	No designated time is allowed (eg by employers for work-related learning).
Learning programmes may be tailored to individual's needs.	Employer's needs may be inadequately covered without this being recognized by learners.
Cognitive learning at one's own pace may be very effective.	Learning in the affective and skills domains may be difficult to achieve.
ODL encourages autonomy in learning.	Lack of tutor support may lead to loss of motivation and failure to overcome learning blocks.
The absence of 'lessons' can make ODL less 'intimidatory'.	Lack of 'lessons' may lead to lack of discipline in study.
There is less chance of interpersonal conflict with tutors.	Informal mentoring relationships are unlikely to develop.
Lack of face-to-face involvement with tutors and learners may be helpful to introverts.	Lack of opportunity for comradeship, and peer learning may be demotivating.
Learning programmes and materials may be better structured and of high quality in terms of content and presentation.	Programmes and materials may be expensive, not tailored, out-of-date or even of poor quality. They may be over-dependent on one form of presentation.
Learning via new technologies can be exciting and motivating.	New technologies may involve high equipment or software costs, and can be daunting to learners.
Virtual reality systems can helpfully stimulate environments for learning which are difficult to achieve otherwise.	Such systems may be used as cheaper and poorer substitutes for experiential learning in real environments.

Assessment methods may be better thought out and more clearly explained.

Learners may still have difficulty determining what is required in assessments and less opportunity to negotiate these.

programmes. Kay (1995) reports that Target Stores uses computer-based training to ensure consistency in corporate training across its 600 stores. The UK is said to be the leader in computer-based training (Littlefield, 1994). The Rover Group (part of BMW) has spent £2 million setting up its own learning enterprise, Rover Learning Business, to support specialized learning inside and outside the car industry.

Other UK companies which have set up corporate open learning centres include Lucas, British Steel, British Telecom and Norwich Union (Malone, 1997). This task is not necessarily without its challenges, as my own learners have reported in dissertations based on studies in organizations as varied as ones in the aerospace industry and the Singapore Armed Forces. Reasons for slow progress or outright failure include lack of senior management support, lack of consultation with learners, or a fixation on inappropriate technologies. The greatest success is usually achieved when the real needs of the learners, in line with company objectives, are fully considered.

COMPUTER-BASED TRAINING IN ACCOUNTANCY

In October 1998 accountancy staff of the National Audit Office began studying Business Planning Techniques, a non-core subject in the syllabus of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales (ICAEW), via computer-based training (Rogers, 1998). In doing so they made history as the first students to study the ICAEW syllabus by an open learning method, outside a classroom structure.

The course was created by EQL International following a policy decision by the ICAEW that its non-core subjects could be studied via open learning materials produced by other organizations, subject to ICAEW accreditation. EQL International plans to produce CDROMs covering the other four non-core subjects: professional practice, business and company law, economics, and management and marketing. The company has approximately 4500 students taking one or more non-core subjects via these CD-ROMs in the 1998–99 academic year.

The accountancy firm Mazors Neville Russell has 140 students taking the ICAEW syllabus, and estimates that the cost per subject per student at £40 makes the CD-ROM approach much cheaper than traditional methods, as well as offering flexibility in study.

A review of the outcomes at the National Audit Office revealed that students found the computer package easy to use and were impressed by the amount of interaction. They were able to work through the course at their own pace, and could repeat elements they were less confident about prior to the assessment. While training colleges have quoted one week as the time required to cover a subject, the CBT package enabled students to complete their studies and take the assessment in two and a half days.

It is further reported that 90 per cent of universities are using CBT packages on their accountancy courses, with banks also quoted as major users. The breakthrough into ICAEW syllabus usage is seen as very significant in the context of professional institutions' support for open learning.

Physical centres for company open learning

There is no need to set up a formal open learning centre before ODFL is introduced into a company. However, as the utilization of ODFL approaches increases, there is sense in considering whether a formal centre for open learning should be designated (Davies, 1989). Generally the setting aside of a room or rooms for this purpose, followed by equipping them with technological aids to open learning and open learning packages, points to the designation of one or more dedicated staff. Failure to take this step frequently leads to misuse of the centre, even to its despoilation. Further than this, the facility needs to be properly looked after by somebody who can support learners in using equipment and provide some basic guidance on what is available and its appropriateness for specific learning purposes.

There is a strong case for proper records to be kept on the utilization levels of the centre: which staff have visited, when, how long for and what learning programmes they have undertaken. While this may seem somewhat intrusive, this data would be automatically available for attendance on any in-company training course. Such records are valuable in defending the work of the open learning centre if it is proving attractive, or at least alerting management to problems if it is being poorly utilized. Knowing when staff prefer to attend, what topics are of most interest, and which open learning packages are proving most valuable is very important in terms of managing the centre, and its growth, on a costeffective basis (Dorrell, 1993).

Record-keeping is also valuable for staff utilizing the centre, in terms of proving that they are not wasting company time, and in terms of maintaining a central record of their learning achievement. As ODFL grows in work organizations the open learning centre may become a main source of in-company learning, which justifies locating learning guidance services, learning support services and learning assessment work within the centre. If such centres are to achieve their full potential they must be planned in the context of company and staff learning needs overall, and not in isolation from the face-to-face training provision and attendance on external courses.

Tailor-made programmes

As ODFL moves centre stage in an organization it is likely that there will be an increasing need for tailor-made ODFL programmes rather than only off-the-shelf packages. These can be commissioned from external vendors, or designed and developed by in-company staff. The issue of cost-effectiveness looms large here. Again there has been a tendency to commission very expensive high technology-based ODFL packages which have proved of limited value in use, merely because of their exciting 'bells and whistles'. The golden rule is to employ the lowest level of technology which will fully meet the learning needs, and to ensure that these needs are fully evaluated, involving potential learners as far as possible.

Reputable vendors of tailor-made ODFL programmes will never seek to offer packages based on technologies and costs beyond the needs of the learners and the best interest of the company. Package specification should be a matter of negotiation between the vendor and the company representatives and follow a full training needs analysis.

Moving to development of in-company expertise in the preparation of ODFL programmes often increases the involvement and motivation of everyone involved. Quality is a real concern and considerable staff training may be needed, followed by much practice and piloting of materials. However, quality improvement is then possible in-house, and by a process of iteration very good quality, relevant and effective ODFL programmes can be produced. Once internal staff have moved up to the level of producing strong ODFL materials, it may prove cost-effective to produce a great deal of such materials in-house. However, it is rarely cost-effective to reinvent the wheel, and the external providers of offthe-shelf materials should always be kept in focus, especially if their materials can be modified to meet learner needs more closely.

It is also essential to ensure that a fixation on ODFL, and especially particular approaches, is not allowed to override common sense. A short learning programme required for a small number of learners on a one-off basis is probably still best delivered by a face-to-face approach, both in terms of effectiveness and cost.

CONCLUSION

The most powerful learning programmes are often those which involve a careful mix of face-to-face classes, study of open learning materials, practice of skills and application of knowledge, followed by reflection, free-choice study of literature of personal interest and relevance, and assessment of learning by appropriate methods.

The most successful trainers and teachers of adults will be those who are confident in using a wide range of approaches to learning, who network with trainers offering complementary

knowledge and skills, and who can tailor ODFL programmes to meet learning needs closely on a cost-effective basis.

The following chapters take us into consideration of the choices of specific ODFL systems and their strengths and limitations. To encourage the reader to consider these seriously, let me close with some reports concerning the sheer cost-effectiveness of ODFL programmes in larger companies:

• Fuller and Saunders (1990) report that British Telecom estimated that it would cost £40 million to train its 20,000 operators to use computerized telephone exchanges. However, instead of going down the face-to-face training route, BT bought a computer-based training system for £4 million to achieve the same learning outcome and saved £36 million.

• Littlefield (1994) reports that Rank Xerox claims to have saved millions of dollars as a result of heavy investment in interactive video and CD-ROM in the training of service engineers, where otherwise real and expensive equipment would have to be taken out of service for practice sessions.

• Forlenza (1995) reports that the average initial cost of implementing a computer-based training system, including hardware, is $8 per employee per hour of training, compared to an average of $50 for the same amount of conventional classroom training.

• Johnston (1993) refers to estimates by the Learning Methods Branch of the Employment Department that the cost advantages of open and flexible learning over conventional methods ranged from 12 to 90 per cent in the training context.

Such comparisons should properly consider the nature and added value of the training, but nevertheless offer much food for thought to all involved in adult learning provision.

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15
Design and Use of Group-based Training Methods

Colin Beard and Maggie McPherson

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this chapter we will focus on the design, selection and use of group-based participative training methods that could be used in the *delivery* of traditional group-based training courses. The chapter will examine the definition of the frequently used term 'training methods' and explain the contextual setting of training methods with regard to their fit with learning objectives and teaching strategies. We will also examine the use of particular training techniques and the creative use of materials.

By *method* we simply mean *a known approach or procedure; an acknowledged practice by trainers as a way of teaching or promoting learning*. The term 'method' represents the basic level of the 'how to' of training as sub-components of the learning objectives; method in turn embraces the use of certain *techniques* and *materials* (see Table 15.1). For example, a case study is often described as a training 'method', but within such a method, as trainers we can also use 'techniques ' such as energizers, or hooks. While there is no hard and fast dividing line it is useful to recognize the sequencing as shown from left to right in Table 15.1.

Having read this chapter you will:
• understand the principles upon which to select training methods;

• understand the necessity for sequencing and pacing training;

• be able to use an 11-point checklist for considering selection and design of training methods; and

• be aware of the stages of group development.

Table 15.1 Methods as a basic teaching process

1. Examine learning objectives	2. Consider learning styles and strategies	3. Select methods	4. Design techniques	5. Prepare materials
or Performance criteria	Trainer centred	Case study	Icebreakers	Envelopes
or learning outcomes	Learner centred	Buzz groups	Energizers	Masking tape
	Consider planned and emergent learners	Syndicate	Dice games	Washable cards
	Consider need of activist, pragmatist reflector and theorist	Lecture	Attitude scales	Layered flipcharts
		Fish bowl Action maze	Role hats Deconstructing skills	Coloured pins Video cases
		Outdoor management development	Closers	Post-it labels
			Road show Market place Card games Score cards	

GROUP TRAINING METHODS

Underpinning trainer attitudes, knowledge and skills

The trainer role can be conducted by a manager, supervisor, specialist trainer or developer and by 'role' we mean the part they play. This important role can involve the writing of training strategies and policy, design and production, delivery, and evaluation of learning programmes. For the purpose of this chapter we are going to concentrate on the delivery role.

One of the secrets to good training delivery lies with the tools the trainer uses–*the training methods*. Poor trainers can be patronizing and performance becomes an exaggerated ego trip; others can be clock-watchers, bored with doing the job. Rae (1995:xxv) refers to trainer types and trainer roles and offers a trainer grid using the three axes of teaching skills, concern and competence. This results in a complete range of trainer types from professional trainer, humble expert to endearing bumbler and arrogant charlatan! But good trainers cannot only communicate and impart knowledge; they can motivate, help people to learn, spark innovation and creativity and promote a hunger to learn. They should be open-minded and in touch with their own emotions, while letting participants explore, analyse and question. Most importantly trainers should be good questioners, careful listeners and observationally astute.

The choice and appropriate use of any training method will clearly be influenced and underpinned by the knowledge and skill of the trainer. Understanding many of the underlying concepts will help with the selection, design and use of training methods, for example:

• balancing participant challenge and support (Raw, 1991)

• learning cycle (Kolb, 1984)

• learning styles (Honey and Mumford, 1982)

• planned or emergent learning (Megginson, 1994)

• neuro-linguistic programming (Bandler and Grinder, 1975)

• reality (Binstead and Stuart, 1979)

• scheduling, sequencing and group dynamics (Randall and Southgate, 1980)

• serialists and holists (Phillips and Pugh, 1994)

• tutor dependency (Adler, 1975)

• understanding the role of emotion in learning (Fineman, 1997).

Challenging ideas can be found in this book and elsewhere about how training specialists can facilitate and support learning rather than just teaching it. These ideas have led to a fundamental questioning of some training, particularly that which is based on participant passivity, tutor dependency and over-simplified ideas of how humans behave at work.

Controversial statements made back in the 1950s by Rogers (1993:302–3) often continue to stimulate us to challenge our own assumptions:

It seems to me that anything that can be taught to another is relatively inconsequential and has little or no significant influence on behaviour. ... I find that one of the best but most difficult ways for me to learn is to drop my own defensiveness, at least temporarily, and to try to understand the way in which this experience seems and feels to the other person. ... I find that another way of learning for me is to state my own uncertainties, to try to clarify my puzzlement, and thus get closer to the meaning that my experience actually seems to have.

All trainers have their own teaching style that is underpinned by their own attitudes, values and beliefs about learning. But whatever the trainer style or role, it is the knowledge and understanding of the needs, wishes and experiences of the learners that is perhaps most central to the art of good training.

Many trainers use methods with which they are familiar, but in this chapter we aim to encourage you to try out your own new and original methods that will effectively support the transfer of knowledge, skills and attitudes to participants. This is often more satisfactory than relying on 'pre-packaged' activities; any one 'method' should not be seen as a quickfix 'solution' to a particular training 'problem'. Flexibility is required in training and development. Those participants who arrive for their 'injection of solutions' are also not taking sufficient responsibility for their development. Designing stimulating and effective programmes, often under constraints of time, money or resources, is not easy. It is important for you as a trainer to be clear about the limits of your skills: some techniques do demand a high level of competence if they are to be used effectively and safely. It is for this reason that some techniques should perhaps carry a 'training health warning'. The IPD (1998:1) for example has produced a 'Guide to Outdoor Training' because of concerns that if this 'method is not used carefully the results can be damaging to some employees–and hence their employers–with the accompanying risk of litigation'. This chapter aims to help trainers to become aware of the diverse range of training methods that currently exist, or that can be created by careful design.

SELECTING METHODS

Many textbooks on training methods have a section on choice and selection but rarely offer any real advice. There are actually few good guiding rules and so any advice usually discusses the basic variables that influence choice such as levels of understanding, objectives, time available and so on. The 'best fit' is likely to be chosen in the light of these factors, but the flow or sequence of the whole event is also a very important guide to selection.

The programme or course has a beginning, a middle and an end. The scene-setting often determines the relationship of the trainer and the participants, and thus influences what people will and will be willing to do later on. The gradual building up of energy and inquisitiveness is a essential group process that influences method selection. The dynamics of individual and group development will need to be understood by trainers; for instance, Tuckman's (1977) stages of group development: forming, storming, norming and performing. Understanding the learner dynamic is a key skill in trainer development. Balancing the control of what is learnt, how it is learnt, when, and where it is done can be subtly shifted so that greater control is given to the learner towards the middle or end of courses or programmes by the careful selection of the methods.

The characteristics of the training population will clearly influence the design process, and there are a number of basic matters that need to be considered early on. Getting hold of any training needs analysis (TNA) information is very important, and will inform the writing of the programme aims and objectives. It is essential to ensure, early on in the process, that a 'training solution' is appropriate. Learning outcomes, training objectives and performance criteria all have to be discussed and agreed by key stakeholders. They not only provide direction and focus for the training but they also set standards. In turn the objectives, learning outcomes or performance criteria will influence the choice of methods. Aims and objectives should be clearly defined and understood. It is really a joint process with the training designers and those requesting or purchasing the course or programme. The time available for the course or programme will also influence method selection. There is rarely enough time to cover everything that trainers want or need to cover, but it is very important not to over- or underestimate the amount of material that can be covered in the time slot.

Some methods will require the availability of more tutors, and tutor ratios and gender mix are generally important considerations in the delivery of training. Teams of tutors need to plan the mix of female-male where possible unless circumstances dictate otherwise. A ratio of one tutor to four trainees is recommended in the excellent *Training Skills for Women* produced by the Commonwealth Secretariat in 1984. In our experience numbers as high as 12 can be easily accommodated in some courses but discussion in such situations needs very skilled trainers to sense many of the needs of participants. Another rule of thumb is that often a minimum of one day of design and planning is needed for each day of training. Some trainers suggest there should be a ratio of 5:1 preparation time versus delivery time.

When delivering training programmes to groups of people the layout of the room and the vertical and horizontal closeness of the trainer in relation to the participants are vital factors in group dynamics. Standing up in front of the seated group means the trainer is positioned higher and apart, thus horizontally and vertically 'distanced'. This can be counter-productive if in-depth group discussion is needed.

The group culture should also be considered. In our travels around the world we have found that in parts of Asia there is a reluctance to be critical, while people in Prague told us

that the older generations have been used to suppressing their emotions. The increasing internationalization of training programmes means that we all need to consider our audience very carefully. Trainers and developers can use international assignments to help to understand the broad range of cultural issues that will influence design and the selection of methods. Some people also suggest that senior managers, for example, do not want too much of 'that participative stuff '. However, when such sessions are carefully planned managers are easily encouraged to participate in productive process work. On one occasion, we remember well-dressed, very senior people willingly falling to their hands and knees to reorganize our masking tape version of their organizational management matrix which had been designed on the carpet! Age, experience, group homogeneity, and many other factors are clearly going to influence the selection and design of methods.

In these days of pressure to demonstrate good returns on training investment we must be very careful about our choice of resources. Buying in expensive materials as we shall see later is not always an effective way to proceed. It is also important to avoid over-concern with your available 'resources' too early in the design or selection of training methods. In the past some outdoor providers have provided management activities based on the recreational skills of their instructors and the materials and resources available, such as canoes, ropes and rafts. Many trainers admit to cobbling together a programme using a combination of challenging tasks and activities, using existing resources in exciting locations, and these, mixed with good facilitation skills, can often produce memorable development events. However, sometimes this is by luck rather than design and with repetition these can become less fulfilling–when this happens it is the time to take a fresh look at method design. The essential ingredients that give rise to successful courses or programmes should be a matter of great research interest to any good trainer.

Some methods will be more appropriate for the development of skill formation; knowledge acquisition; the changing of individual attitudes; and the broader company culture (psychomotor, cognitive or affective learning domains–Bloom, 1956). Lecture methods can quickly convey information as well as concepts and models. It is clear that teaching our children to swim is best carried out in a swimming pool: watching a video can have limitations. But leaving our children to their own devices, allowing learning of swimming through exploration and discovery would not be a good idea. The teaching of trampolining is now carefully designed so that individual moves are broken down into their basic constituent parts or building blocks, so that they can be tried before building the whole move. This idea of *deconstructing* basic skills or knowledge can help with the design and selection of methods, an idea that is further explored in the examples below.

'Experiential' learning could be said to be using the old adage 'I hear, I forget; I see, I remember; I do, I understand' which is a simple version of Dewey's concept of experiential learning (Dewey, 1938). But in the process of designing 'doing' methods we can move through different levels of reality and simulation. It may not always be feasible to use the

'real thing'. Van Matre (1979) has for many years helped children to understand photosynthesis by

getting them inside a leaf-shaped tent, with ping-pong balls as cells so that they can manufacture sugars. The principles are easy to grasp and the experience often memorable.

'I do, I understand' should be considered with caution, for example in the training of tree-felling–it is dangerous for both the tutor and the trainee. This *can* be taught indoors first, using methods to gain basic narrow skills and to test understanding before trying the real thing with gradually increased levels of risk. Flying aeroplanes and coping with emergencies, for example, are taught using 'simulation'. How else would you teach people such as fire-fighters to perform their duties in large-scale disasters?

There are also times when participation is not the best method, such as when the information to be learned is highly technical or when information has to be put across very quickly. Much of the computer skills training that takes place today is available on the computer itself in step-by-step, on-screen programmes. Sequences and offering feedback at intervals are crucial. The reading of the manual in this case is no longer an easy and efficient way to learn.

The design checklist can be used to get started and to set the selection of methods within the broader context. The following is an 11-point checklist for consideration in the selection and design of training methods:

1. Consider carefully all the information from any assessment of training needs.

2. Examine in detail the aims and objectives–break them down into their constituent parts.

3. Decide on specific content–and themes.

4. Consider any constraints and opportunities and make it *in keeping* with the group.

5. Consider the creation a of good learning atmosphere–the physical and psychological setting.

6. Choose, modify or create learning methods.

7. Organize and check the sequence of all the methods.

8. Consider all the things that might go wrong or not work and plan for contingencies.

9. Consider methods that help the programme review, and support the transfer of learning.

10. Evaluate everything–make notes on your laptop about training methods improvements

while they are fresh in your mind.

11. Feedback into future course design.

There are a whole range of learning methods and techniques based on the basic learning process of trial and error, observation, thinking, conceptualizing and imitation. These might include lectures, demonstrations, instruction, tutor-guided experience, case studies, role-play, simulations, guided experiment, problem-solving exercises and learner-directed enquiry. Table 15.1 at the beginning of this chapter illustrates a range of training methods and techniques. If possible, consider taking a degree of risk and break out of your own

comfort zone and design new methods to meet the very specific needs of the people you are working with, thus avoiding the over-use of set materials taken off-the-shelf. While a disciplined approach, using well-known underlying principles, is essential in the delivery of training, the introduction of elements of creativity and originality to the design of training methods can produce events that will maximize participant learning; and they can create opportunities to help people unlearn old habits too! Some flexibility is needed: an ability to vary delivery according to people's needs and the ability to change methods as and when required allow trainers to be sensitive, thus responding to participant signals.

Sequencing and pacing

A useful framework to use in the analysis of the sequence of methods chosen is a modified version of an outdoor management development evaluation framework offered by Dainty and Lucas (1992). On the vertical axis in Figure 15.1, the task structure is 'tight' when the skill is very specific such as rope or knot work or abseiling, and it is 'loose' when the task is broad and less structured, such as a rescue exercise. Low process intensity occurs when there is a low personal focus, where self-reflection and feedback remain low. The opposite end of the lower axis involves methods where the opposite is the case and considerable self or group reflection and discussion take place.

Image

Figure 15.1 Design and sequencing of training methods

The framework thus suggests that appropriate methods are needed for each quadrant: also that the methods, in many courses, actually move through the sequence from quadrants one to four. For example, in a negotiating course the trainer might use relaxing exercises to start such as icebreakers, followed by focused skills analysis such as listening, paraphrasing or questioning, followed by tactics such as opening and closing, eventually aggregating these skills and proceeding on to broad negotiation skills. The course might then continue to look at the personal development aspects of the learning that has taken place, focusing more deeply on process work, and so on. The case study on negotiating public access to the countryside below illustrates one example of how to use this sequencing model.

The following is an activity design checklist that can help trainers to achieve correct sequencing. Decide when to choose methods that:

• set the scene and establish climate;

• start from participant levels of skill, knowledge and attitudes;

• introduce subsidiary essential skills and knowledge;

• allow regular practice after input;

• allow student-directed enquiry and study;

• regularly review the key learning or principles;

• introduce composite/complex skills and knowledge;

• relate/apply the learning to other situations and focus on transfer.

Sequencing and pacing are also considered in Tracey (1992), and Cornell's 'flow learning' (1989) allows training methods to build up group energy:

1. *Awaken participant enthusiasm*–use activities that induce playfulness and alertness.

2. *Focus participant attention*–use activities that focus the enthusiasm developed in stage 1 in ways that help prepare for the experience, absorption and exploration in stage 3.

3. *Direct participant experience*–use activities that allow opportunities for absorption and personal discovery.

4. *Share participant inspiration*– use activities that reinforce and congratulate new

awareness and learning, and inspire further action.

Other patterns to consider are those of participant energy levels that are often familiar to experienced trainers. Waves of activity and participation energy are often interspersed with lulls; understanding these can be helpful for both the learner and the trainer. No one can operate at full speed all the time. After lunch, for example, is a time when the lecture method is unlikely to be productive. Trainers also learn to predict the ebb and flow of participants over, say, a week-long event, and some even have explicit 'temperature charts' for people to fill in during the course of the week to write notes on personal or group energy levels. It can then be considered acceptable to have low and high points. Mortlock

talks of *Adventure Waves* (Mortlock, 1987) where adventurous periods are followed by a time for reviewing and briefing before the next wave. This same pattern can equally be applied to intellectual stimulation, practical work and group energy levels; thus trainers need to be able to read the group energy levels and create or influence the course rhythm. Pace-changing methods are therefore very important. Good trainers will try to get everyone to catch a wave! Rodwell (1994) outlines a range of 'icebreakers' 'energizers' and 'closers'.

Another dimension which trainers should consider when selecting and sequencing training methods is the degree to which reality is introduced into the training methods. The sequencing of simulation or real scenarios is a skill to develop. Some 20 years ago Binstead and Stuart (1979) explored the role and use of 'reality' strategies in learning. They suggest that if the participants see learning as having a high degree of reality to them or their work it will be approached more positively than low reality methods. But low reality strategies can be useful, allowing risk or experimentation by participants, as the scenarios are not perceived as real and thus are not threatening. Raising elements of reality towards the end of training sessions can also facilitate higher transfer of behaviours to the workplace environment. There are three elements of reality that Binstead and Stuart consider:

1. the *environment* in which the learning is located;

2. the extent of the reality of the *tasks* that have been designed; and

3. the extent to which the *processing* is real.

The case study on negotiating access shows a practical example of how participant skills and knowledge can be gradually developed as the methods embrace greater elements of reality over time. The case study on negotiating not only illustrates some of these principles, but it also demonstrates how the level of reality can be altered at the sub-ingredient level, such as the people involved, the equipment used, the information, the rewards offered and the feedback techniques used. Binstead and Stuart did not consider these factors in their research.

> NEGOTIATING PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE UK
> COUNTRYSIDE: SKILLS PRACTICE SECTION OF A THREE-DAY TRAINING
> COURSE
> The early part of the course uses a 'narrow skills' practice (see the Dainty and Lucas framework). Here we deconstructed 'negotiating' into its many sub-skills such as influencing, questioning, persuasion, listening, tactics, entry, developing rapport, closing and so on. The latter part of the course used broad skills practice, but with varying levels of reality or simulation.

From low content reality ...
Exercise A: Redecorating the office
The material was taken from a standard loose-leaf package on negotiating. It is a paper exercise. There is no incentive. It concerns a contract price to decorate an office suite. Content reality is low. The written case material on decorating contains a review sheet that looks at the forces in use in negotiating and the approaches that can be used by the two sides. People are asked to identify opening gambits and write their answers on paper.

Exercise B: Driving a bargain

A written exercise about cars–people are told that this is a warm-up for a real car exercise when people can pit their wits against real negotiators! This adds to the incentive to concentrate on all exercises. Here the content reality is again low–these people do not negotiate car prices in their jobs.

Exercise C: Buying a new car
Real cars are used. Real log-books are used. Real car prices are offered. Car book prices are available. Cars can be inspected and faults found, both inside and outside, as they are located in the car park. The keys are made available. One vehicle is an uncleaned 4-wheel drive and the other is a nicely valeted VW Polo. The brief informs people that 'You have moved to the National Park and need a 4-wheel drive for bad weather and to tow your new caravan'. False money is used but a prize is offered. The people that the participants negotiate with are real, trained negotiators and they are located in an office where the deals will take place. Final agreements are written in sealed envelopes so that the winners can be decided later. Content reality is again low, process reality is high.

... to high content reality
Exercise D: Negotiating access to UK land on behalf of the public
Here we use high content reality and high process reality. Real negotiators are again present. Real information, eg facts and figures on sheep headage payments, ranger support offered, wall damage payments, litter arrangements, is provided. Real participants are

access officers or public rights-of-way officers. They are observed on video by the rest of the group. The incentive is to try to do a good job in front of their peers, to try to put all the skills and knowledge acquired on the course into practice and try to meet their own pre-set prices and subsidy targets decided in their negotiating plans. They argue their case with real negotiators and are debriefed afterwards. The video is then replayed with self and peer assessment taking place.

EMOTION AND LEARNING

The gradual shift to increase the elements of reality requires careful attention. Over the last few years fire-fighters and other rescue services have had the benefit of using computer simulations, intelligent systems and virtual reality, which create emergency scenarios that are very close to reality thus enabling very exacting and demanding training to take place (see for example www.coltvr.com/vector).

Some training methods use drama therapy or theatrical style role-plays that also enable the balance of reality and simulation to be altered. One example is described in the UK IPD journal, *People Management*, where the hypothetical and the actual became accidentally blurred for the Hereford Hospital Trust training programme (Merrick, 1998). Complex training programmes have also been recently designed to use methods of role-play and simulation to help the police and social workers deal more effectively with child abuse; but for some people the simulations can come too close to their own life experiences. Professional actors have often been brought in to ensure that their skilled abilities enhance the simulation while reducing the emotional risk to course participants. The design of training methods in emotionally laden areas or in the field of emergency service work is exacting and requires considerable trainer skill. Here we recommend a cautious approach.

Fascinating articles have appeared in journals (eg, Fineman, 1997) addressing such areas as the role of emotion and risk in learning. Method selection sometimes needs to ensure that people are more in touch with their emotions so that they may learn more effectively. What and how learning takes place is clearly inextricably connected to participant motivations and emotions. Alongside the dangers outlined above we now consider the role of fun, play, risk and emotion in the choice and design of learning methods.

Trainers do need to know when to encourage learners to 'let go' of their obsession with success, performance or grades, and when to enable learners to relax and make greater connections with their emotions and feelings. How many times have we failed in an interview because we were nervous, or not performed well in a sport because we were too tense, or not delivered a very good speech because we were not relaxed? How then do trainers connect participants to these feelings? It is certainly crucial for trainers to be in touch with their own emotions and feelings, and those of the people they are working

with, whether it be anger, humour, anxiety and so on. Carefully designed methods can help to tune into these feelings when it is required or appropriate to do so.

Humour in learner-tutor correspondence on distance learning programmes also gives us ideas about how people are able to gently expose some of their true feelings about their work. The following extracts are interesting:

This presentation is a vast improvement on your first assignment from which my optic nerves are still recovering. (Said my tutor on reading my second attempt, as a mature student, at using a draft standard dot-matrix printer some years ago.)

Positively my last fling! You asked for 'lots of comments'–and I have surpassed myself and I am now off to immerse myself in an extremely large gin and tonic. Not to drown my sorrows but merely to recuperate. (Said my tutor on reading the last edition of my 'draft' dissertation!)

Some student humour during the stressful last leg in the period of doing a research dissertation in training and development:

Would it be better to lump the data together? What do you think? Does it make sense? (Sounds like a song!) The razor blades are in a safe place (but I can't help noticing that length of rope in the garage!!!!) I will phone you soon for some quality psychotherapy. Regards ...

P.S. someone told me you can buy these (dissertations) on the world-wide web?' (Extracts from a letter to me as a tutor, from a senior training and development officer at a major UK hospital studying for a Master's degree.)

Well, it's now 12.30 in the morning and I think I should go to bed. This has been a useful exercise for me, even if tedious for you. I look forward to any pearls of wisdom you may wish to cast in my direction. Goodnight! (A senior training manager, London Underground.)

Dear Colin, I have added to my draft in the past two weeks but still feel frustrated by a lack of real headway, combined with a growing feeling that I'm not really sure what I'm doing!! (Training Manager, Magistrates Courts.)

It can be important for participants to be in touch with these emotional responses and to pass on these stories and tales, and myths and legends to other students to set a positive agenda and culture for future groups. What role does emotion play in the development of innovation and risk-taking in learning for example? Raab (1997:161) from Melbourne University examines the anxiety problems that occur when the trainer avoids becoming the expert. In her article,'Becoming an expert in not knowing–reframing teacher as a

consultant', she begins with a story that:

alerts us to the terrible anxiety experienced by both clients and consultants (students and teachers) when forced to stay in the present and face their unknowingness. Traditional models of teaching operate without acknowledging the extent of this anxiety.

Difficult subjects

In the IPD's *People Management,* Pickard (1996**:** 28) noted that, 'Innovation is experiencing a renaissance.' The article went on to comment that the UK Department of Trade and Industry has an Innovation Unit; there are now MBAs in innovation; two-thirds of secondary schools in Singapore teach 'constructive thinking'; and in New Zealand children as young as two are being taught to think creatively. Trainers can of course use training methods to create a climate of creativity, fun or play, thus generating risk-taking or innovation. The following are practical examples that highlight the use of creative training methods to teach difficult subjects.

> CREATIVE TRAINING DESIGN: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY TRAINING
> This method uses popular images or fictional characters to help participants
> to understand the complex world of 'research methodology'. Careful selection
> of popular images that are well known to most of the participants can be
> helpful: the use of Shakespearean quotations can sometimes be risky! Many
> learners have found that when embarking on a piece of research, research
> methodology is difficult to understand. Thorpe and Moscarola (1991:127) in
> an article that inspired this experiment, comment that: 'they see research as
> following elaborate rules and procedures and see it as something that is both
> complex and difficult'.
> I first tested out my new method with overseas students in Singapore. I was
> charged with delivering a session to Master's students who were human
> resource managers operating in Singapore, Malaysia and China. Methodology
> was full of academic, unknown language–deduction, validity, reliability,
> triangulation, ontology, epistemology, hermeneutics, ethnography–all very
> confusing.
> *Stage 1: Start with the known and the simple–and make it fun*
> The approach I have now developed involves starting from notions of four
> consulting role models–detective, doctor, travel agent and salesperson. The
> 'consulting styles' are described in Margerison (1988) who said that: 'We all
> have an approach to giving advice

based upon a consulting model. It may not be written down, but it reflects itself in the way in which we consult and give advice.'

Having read about the four roles the key words associated with each are written out by participants on washable cards and then examined and discussed. Students describe how such people conduct their work as follows:

The medical analogy: the doctor

• client/organizational illness to be cured;
• looking for good/normal health, or unhealthy organization;
• symptoms;
• diagnosis;
• medicine is prescribed;
• operation–cut out unhealthy bit.

The travel agent

• assumes client is on a journey;
• go through their objectives and work out best way to destination;
• question-based–how much money are you going to spend?
• client-focused;
• suggest other destinations.

Stage 2: Engagement

Students then examine the four consulting styles and discuss their *own* consulting styles.

Stage 3: Take a step closer to the unknown–using popular fiction

Students then move on to focus on the art of detecting or *investigation*–investigation is essentially what research is about. They examine five detectives, described in Thorpe and Moscorola (1991): Hercule Poirot, Sherlock Holmes, Maigret, Columbo and Dirty Harry. All five detectives have their different approaches and the students relate well to 'research as detection'. This approach is, however, being supplemented as all the characters are male. Overseas students know a great deal about famous global detectives–for me the risk paid off. A profile is provided for each detective and key words are extracted based on their reading small profiles and their own knowledge:

- science and microscopes (Sherlock Holmes);
- proven fact;
- listens and tries to understand;
- prods and pushes (Dirty Harry);
- unconventional;
- deductive reasoning;
- chemical testing;
- facial observations (Columbo);
- intuition.

The creator of Sherlock Holmes was Sir Arthur Conan Doyle who studied medicine at Edinburgh University, where the methods of diagnosis of one of the professors are said to have provided the ideas for the methods of 'deduction' used by Holmes. Medicine and detectives had common links. All of these words associated with detecting can, with care, relate to recognized research perspectives. Research is a form of investigation.

Stage 4: Slowly move into the unknown: research perspectives and language
The participants then move on to consider two fictitious dissertations and the appropriate methods of investigation:

1. The effect of height on performance in high-rise towers in Singapore.
2. Myths and legends in training and development.

Participants compare the research approach for the two investigations. One clearly lends itself to quantitative studies, perhaps using scientific approaches, focusing on statistics, proof, evidence; has some degree of neutrality towards the research objects ... and so on. The other study is qualitative in nature, uses people's perception, attempts to describe and understand meaningful social action; is subjective, and where no group values are wrong ... many other key words are present on plastic cards and the group sort the words and allocate them to one or the other type of investigation.

Moving on from polarized dichotomies, students consider the complex mosaic of research perspectives. The methodology debate unfolds in front of the students without them realizing they have acquired some of the language of methodology. They argue and discuss the meaning of truth and the nature of what can be known or what is real.

Stage 5: Developing a kit
Eventually this was designed as a whole 'kit' involving a plastic briefcase, a video containing Dirty Harry and Poirot film extracts, pre-prepared instructions, washable cards–some blank and some with key words printed on them. Empty old video cases were used to house the sets of cards per kit. Labels were designed and printed on A4 paper to insert into the video cases. The principal journal articles were also included in the black plastic portfolio case.

Storytelling

Considerable skill is called for to develop good psychological settings for training and development programmes. Stories can be a good way to relax participants on a programme, and they can be told for many reasons, sometimes just for light relief. They can also re-engage people after lunch, for example. They are as important to adults as they are to children. I often like to tell stories when the mood is right; of the day I missed the helicopter for an interview on the Scilly Islands; the time when my frog died on me in my zoology exams and my subsequent failure to resuscitate it!

Storytelling has revived in popularity and many people have recently experienced the wonderful stories told by North American indigenous people now living in Britain. Stories and metaphors can also be used by trainers with a message to get across, and Parkin (1998) in her book on storytelling for trainers tells how they can be powerful training tools. Gathering groups of learners to tell stories and to find meaning in them is becoming an important tool in personal and organizational learning.

PLAY AND FUN

A story-telling approach to the *evaluation and review* of training methods is very easy to construct and has many applications. It consists of a booklet of strips of paper, cut from an A4 sheet that has typed statements on it. The strips are then stapled together to form a booklet. In pairs each partner reads out and finishes off the sentence with a personal comment and then passes it back to the other partner. It can be used for process work, and is good for personal development programmes. The statements could include:

The session I *enjoyed* most on this development programme was ...

The things that *stimulated me to learn more* were ...

The most *productive* ...

The positive part of *working as a team* on this assignment was when ...

The contribution *I valued most from you* as a group member was when ... Something *I learned about myself* was ...

Good learner-centred reviewing techniques allow people to:

express themselves and their experiences, examine issues and concerns, explore new ideas and thoughts, gain emotional understanding and enjoy themselves. (Greenaway, 1993:17)

> PLAY AND FUN: COFFEE AND SUNDAY PAPERS–
> 'PLAYING WITH THE LITERATURE'
> At a weekend at the residential training centre of the Department for Employment in the UK in April 1997, 30 mature students (who were training managers studying for a Master's degree in Education, Training and Development) were part of a very simple experiment. I decided to offer a session that was designed to allow students to *play* with their ideas and concepts following a period of quiet reading and sharing of thoughts over early morning coffee and biscuits. We used the idea of lounging about reading the Sunday papers ─ but used journal material from a range of well-known sources: *People Management, Management Learning, Management Education and Development, People and Organizations, Training and Development, Industrial and Commercial Training, Sloan Management Review, Harvard Business Review*, and many others. Included in the material were articles that encouraged students to be aware of themselves as learners or their uncritical reception of 'material', such as the article by Tony Watson (1996) on 'Motivation: that's Maslow, isn't it?' We were encouraging students to become more relaxed about the 'literature' associated with their subject, to encourage them to share, become fascinated, get copies of lots of material and communicate their findings to each other.
> As a tutor I acted merely as a scribe and facilitator–letting go of my concerns about my expertise and as a result the sessions produced much debate. The evaluation of the session subsequently showed that students wanted more time in future to repeat such an exploration of a broad range of literature and to play with concepts and ideas in this way. This is of interest as participative techniques are often said to be very time-consuming and lack depth of content. This perhaps is a short-term view–depth and content have to be considered in relation to medium and long-term student learning.

A funny video tape for 7-year-olds from the international children's store, the Early Learning Centre, was designed to improve counting skills. Children do the voices with wonderful effect. It is called *Cecil was a caterpillar.* Cecil grew and grew by two centimetres every time he ate a fellow caterpillar. He became enormous. But then he shrunk to two centimetres–'What have you done,' cried a girl friend. 'I've been sick!' exclaimed Cecil. It seemed a really good medium to introduce feeding and trophic levels, biomass and energy waste to undergraduates. Trivial? It is extremely funny and seems to get the lecture off to a good start, and the concentration levels continue to be high. But why? Is it fun, play, relaxation? Why does a simple tape of just three or four minutes extend student concentration levels well beyond the 15–20 minutes norm? Does this act as a 'hook' to engage the majority of people at the start of the session?

Garratt (1987) refers to the fact that intellectual property is a key tradable commodity; and that nurturing, harnessing and capturing this will be the key to future success. Participants can of course be useful in the design of training methods and materials. One database was collected over many years by simply designing training programmes to find out what the audience knowledge levels were. They collected facts by researching preprepared material that was presented in large envelopes with specially designed covers. The information that participants researched was written up on cards and these were all collected up each year and new information was continually added to a computer database. The latest result, 15 years on, is a book of facts and figures about the environment in the UK for a period of some 300 years. This method uses the notion 'participant intellectual property development' (PIPD) as a vital tool in the development of training materials. In training in the use of feedback and criticism, trainers can collect live anonymous material such as letters of complaint to and from firms, letters of apology, or memos collected from within the workplace. In delivering sessions on evaluation, trainers can collect real samples from all over the world over many years, and participants can gauge which are best and why, and form a spectrum of good and not-so-good evaluation methods and forms.

VISUALIZATION, REALITY AND SIMULATION IN LEARNING
–TREE-FELLING INDOORS!
One participant on a training-the-trainer course decided not to do a training session on day three of a five-day programme. After some discussion it transpired that he lacked the confidence to 'stand up front and deliver a session'. His session, however, turned out to be very creative and it resulted in the best peer review. He took tree-felling and safety as his preferred theme–difficult, but he knew lots about it and felt he could pass on a lot of knowledge, and because the outdoors was where he felt comfortable. I explained that he

could not really have time to conduct a real session in the outdoors in 20 minutes. So he brought the woodland indoors!

The session used paper and card, together with other real props, rolled up flipchart paper and masking tape. Real saws were used to demonstrate ideas and most of the techniques were taught by participants imagining what they would do next. They were encouraged to look up into the imaginary tree and think about and comment on the wind direction, the places where the heavier branches were, etc and to try to work out the direction the tree would be best felled. Tape was used to show the direction of fall, the safety zones, the danger zones and so on. Most of the group came out to the front (the middle of the floor space) to have a go at something.

USING MATERIALS CREATIVELY

The effectiveness of training methods can often be considerably enhanced by using support materials in a creative way. Masking tape and pre-prepared cards can be used to help participants recreate conceptual models, or design organizational charts or company reporting structures. We have already looked at the use of popular images, recycled video boxes and washable cards. Television programmes and advertising footage contain a wealth of material that can easily be put on video. Paper booklets can easily be created; flipcharts can be cut to form layers with pre-prepared information on each layer; instructions for participants can be placed in specially designed envelopes or plastic cases; trainers can put pencil outlines on flipcharts as reminders–no one can see them in the audience and coloured sticky markers are useful to mark flipchart sheets so that trainers are not fumbling to find the right sheet.

Training methods can also incorporate card games, eg in communication exercises, allocated cards can allow participants so many slots to speak. Dice exercises, score cards, 'behavioural hats' (see for example de Bono's 'hats' in Rodwell, 1994:136–9) or road shows can also be incorporated. The possibilities are endless, and trainers can develop a whole toolkit of materials and resources that can be ready to support the delivery of their training methods and create a more professional approach. David Leigh (1996) suggests a basic survival kit list for trainers to carry, as well as lists of tips for trainers.

CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF TRAINING METHODS

The world is changing and, in his crystal ball gazing, Megginson (1994) was supposed to look into the future. He anticipated tree of knowledge briefcases (TOK cases), cyborg technology, learning techneurology and other virtual and fictitious ideas. However, within four

years of writing the article, many of his deliberately controversial ideas had already materialized! While the company induction brain chip implant is not yet available–thank goodness–the video/TV/telephone wristwatch is here, and companies now offer 'greater learning through relaxation'. Lifetools, for example, offer special effects of hypnotic light and sound pulses to help people to relax, or to energize, and visualize. Arthur C Clarke is said to have predicted in 1945 that orbital satellites would revolutionize communications, but his ideas were regarded as too far-fetched and not worthy of consideration! The future is going to be exciting for trainers and developers.

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16
The Selection, Design and Use of Individualized Training Methods

Maggie McPherson and Colin Beard

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In the last chapter, the authors concentrated on methods of training suitable for situations where it is possible to get a number of people together for group training. However, as organizations move into an era where staff need continual updating of skills, it is not always possible or viable to arrange group training sessions. Nowadays there are not only new opportunities for providing alternative learning environments, but different and stimulating relationships can be developed between the tutors and learners. Moreover, technological developments have opened up the possibility of minimizing the need for direct classroom contact between trainers and learners.

Nevertheless, some delivery methods are more suited to one situation than another, and the method of delivery must enhance the learning process as far as possible. It is important that trainers and educationalists are not seduced by smart technological solutions if their learning aims and objectives cannot be achieved by this means. They need to recognize that they are not obliged to adopt a particular learning strategy simply because it is possible to do so.

When individuals are required to study independently, their learning frequently takes place in the form of private study. In addition, the location in which the learning is carried out can be totally remote from the teacher or trainer. This type of study is often described as

'open, distance and flexible learning' (ODFL) (see Chapter 14). In an open learning environment, learners have, to some extent, freedom to determine the content of their study, how they carry out their study, and at what pace they study.

The versatility of ODFL can enable the learner to decide what materials to use and how to use them. In turn, this allows individuals to take responsibility for their own learning and personal development. To this end, the learner is sometimes offered the facility of a 'open learning resource centre' which they can visit at times which suit them. Some specific advantages of providing opportunities for ODFL could be summarized as follows:

• Individuals can take more responsibility for their own learning and personal development and make use of their own experiences in learning process.

• Learners can have more choice over content and take a self-directing approach.

• Learning can be organized to include relevant individual practical experiences.

• Part of the learner 's study programme can be set up to either include or exclude assessment and examination as desirable.

• Individualized learning can be more cost-effective where provision is being made to learners who are remote from the learning centre.

• Technology can be used to assist the learning process.

We intend to provide some examples of the above and hope that by the conclusion of this chapter, you will feel able to assess some of the opportunities that exists for a wide variety of individualized training and/or educational materials and delivery methods.

Having read this chapter you will:

• be aware of how to use multimedia for training;

• understand the term 'just-in-time training';

• understand the nature of multimedia conferencing; and

• be familiar with a range of training methods.

MULTIMEDIA FOR EDUCATION

Education, as we know it, is undergoing some revolutionary changes and is becoming a lifelong process. The key skill in this process is learning to learn. It is anticipated that 'lifelong learning' will become much more widely available, will take place everywhere, and will be tailored to individuals using multimedia technology.

Over the past decade the growth of multimedia programmes has been spectacular and it is extremely difficult to undertake a complete enumeration of all multimedia projects in the market place. The range of academic multimedia products already available is simply stag

gering, and many of these may only be discovered 'accidentally' because their authors use them for only a tiny proportion of the course they are conducting.

One of the difficulties in trying to classify the materials is the sheer diversity of intended use of multimedia. In a number of instances, the work is not published in academic journals, because developments of such types are not universally recognized as 'legitimate research'.

There are many small-scale developments undertaken in universities around the world, intended for illustration of specific points of theory or practice in an academic subject. Equally, many good examples may be found for teaching specific techniques, in medicine, dentistry, engineering, speech therapy, legal studies, etc.

> UNIVERSITY LIBRARY–HARTLIB PAPERS HYPERMEDIA
> DEMONSTRATOR PROJECT
> The University of Sheffield Library houses the Hartlib Papers, a 17th century collection of archives amounting to more than 25,000 pages and more than 20 million words, including manuscripts, letters, memoranda and diaries. It also includes works by Descartes, Milton, Pym, Pascal, and many others.
> This collection is so rich as to be potentially overwhelming, because of the sheer volume of information and the fragility of some parts of it. Using hypermedia access methods, the joint project between the university and the Employment Department has unlocked some of the riches from the collection. It allows remarkably wide access to a range of subjects: science, history, religion, politics and literature, spread over some 150 documents.
> The demonstrator project (the subject area was bees and bee-keeping) found that hyper-media cannot easily provide access to large amounts of *unstructured* materials, but is well able to cope with *structured* information, and the methodology is potentially transferable to other large-scale information stores.

Applications of multimedia in education include improved access to resources through the development of relational databases of multimedia materials. Traditional relational database vendors have been enhancing their products to allow multimedia elements. In addition, there are new object databases that have been specifically designed for this purpose, offering significant usability advantages.

LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

In conjunction with Liverpool Women's Hospital and Interactive Designs Ltd, Liverpool John Moores University developed an extremely powerful yet remarkably user-friendly multimedia database (mediabase) categorization, organization and presentation 'engine' named THESEUS. This allowed massive multimedia databases, consisting of high-quality graphic images, video clips, photomicrographs and QuickTime movies to be organized and accessed in a variety of ways corresponding broadly to different learning models.

For example, academics could prepare 'multimedia tutorials' in their discipline for students to follow interactively, but according to some predetermined educational objective. The materials could be organized in a broadly 'linear' form, or according to a more eclectic view of the learning process. Students following the courses which used THESEUS could create multimedia 'essays' (for submission and evaluation by tutors) by collection of multimedia objects from a massive mediabase, organizing and annotating these for their own use and for assessment purposes, and a range of other different modes of use.

Initially, the most effort was put into the area of cervical cytology, designed to assist in the first year training of cervical screening lab assistants, responsible for examining cervical smears for incidence of abnormalities, possible cancerous tissue and other conditions that might require medical treatment. This particular THESEUS package contained over 3500 microscopic images, video clips and interactive exercises for cytology technologists, in its own mediabase which is hyperlinked by over 200 instructional lessons.

A later product, CytoVision was an interactive videodisk containing high-quality images and video sequences, driven from a Macintosh computer. There were plans to put the materials onto CD-ROM and possibly to port it to other hardware platforms. The Cytology Project was in essence a proof of concept, the intention being to provide a wide range of specialized study units and educational activities in a new learning resources centre, equipped for full multimedia learning. Future course developments, such as the university's wider adoption of the THESEUS approach, were to be coordinated via the Open Learning Unit. Some evaluation was conducted in the use of multimedia approaches in learning cell biology, from which the results gave some cause for optimism in the use of this way of interactive learning.

MULTIMEDIA FOR TRAINING

Another major market area for multimedia technologies and delivery systems is that of training for business and industry. In the commercial environment, it is again more often than not the case that the materials developed are for in-house use only, particularly where the multimedia title has been created to support staff training and development.

In many cases, these materials will have a clear and direct link with the organization's own market aspirations, and may well have been tailored to address specific business improvement issues. This type of training is likely to be delivered close to the time when the individual will apply it and is sometimes described as 'just-in-time training'. For instance 'just-in-time training' may include some of the following:

• new product training;

• new market opportunities;

• product development;

• market development;

• product diversification;

• market diversification;

• customer service development;

• total quality management (TQM) focus;

• aspects of business process re-engineering (BPR);

• new employee induction.

The format of the traditional short course (two days with a torrent of information) could be replaced by, say, a three-month, on-line course, with regular tutorial and seminar video-conferencing sessions at your own desk or office, supported by web access and multipoint data conferencing.

This new training model could mean a reduced disruption to working hours, as training could be fitted in as convenient, with an increase in the application of the information imparted due to it being made available over a longer time span. Additionally, the back-up

provided by the technological developments of multimedia communications services makes support and reinforcement very much easier today than it has been in the past.

ESCOM CBT

The Employment Service is committed to using its network systems to enhance and facilitate good working practices and to increase the economic efficiency of its day-to-day operations. Based in Sheffield the ESCOM team has been responsible for commissioning and supervising the installation and introduction of an electronic documentation system. Documentation is a big issue for the Employment Service; with 1100 local offices required to satisfy national legislation, initiatives and guidance it is vital that information is up-to-date and accurate.

Previously, all information has been distributed in paper form and this has required extensive storage and cataloguing in local offices, particularly in managing new versions of information. In addition, printing costs have been high for the Service.

The new electronic library of information (ESCOM) is being made available on the majority of networked PCs in local offices. Updated centrally, and allowing local variations to be entered, it is intended that ESCOM will ensure consistency and currency while reducing costs and increasing efficiency.

The training requirement

Though some information continues to be made available in printed form it is intended that this will be reduced as far as possible. The scope of information held by ESCOM–from internal telephone directories to current eligibility guidelines for benefit claimants–requires all staff in the Employment Service to be fluent in its use. Those joining the Service in the future will be required to develop these skills before they can become fully operational. There are a large number of people requiring training and they are distributed across the country in local offices.

No recorded assessment of students' progress and achievement was required as performance on the job can easily be measured in this instance.

A modular structure was required to allow students to study reasonably sized 'chunks' at their own pace and to study successively more sophisticated uses of the ESCOM system as and when required. (As much of the ESCOM system as possible is based on fundamental Windows concepts. As staff, particularly when joining the service, may have only limited knowledge of, or skills in using Windows, an additional optional module was required to introduce these concepts, eg, an application window containing multiple document windows; maximizing and minimizing windows; the active window.)

The solution

The distribution of users, the requirement for training to be available at any time, and the electronic form of the target skills made CBT the obvious solution to the training need. Additionally, the Employment Service already uses CBT and other electronic forms of support and is committed to using its network resources to make training available to employees.

The specification of the PCs used to deliver the training to staff varies considerably and it was agreed that the CBT should run at a display resolution of 800*600 and 256 colours. The authoring system, IconAuthor, was specified by the Employment Service to comply with their internal standards.

Students are also supported during the CBT and their actual use of the ESCOM library by a pocket-sized card that summarizes the toolbars, icons, etc. All staff have access to support from their local office systems administrator.

The CBT totals approximately two hours in eight modules, plus an additional module on Windows concepts. The development of the CBT commenced in April 1997 and the completed modules were delivered in September 1997.

The CBT

The CBT was designed to be highly interactive, using simulations of the library system as its main learning mechanism. Concepts and techniques are introduced using text, graphics and animations and the student is then guided through a simulated use of ESCOM using the concepts and techniques. Test exercises at the end of modules offer students a chance to practise their skills without guidance. Outcomes of the test exercises are assessed and the student is given appropriate feedback, including suggestions for remedial action where necessary. Modules and tests may be used in any order and can be repeated. Students can use the exercises as pre-tests to determine whether they need to study a module.

The necessity to simulate the ESCOM system on the majority of screens, coupled with the constraints of the delivery resolution, led to the development of a 'floating panel' approach to controls and guidance. These were distinctively coloured and are also used to give a corporate 'look and feel' to the CBT.

As far as possible, keyboard input has been kept to a minimum throughout the CBT, with most interaction using the mouse. This had the benefit of allowing students to concentrate on using the ESCOM library rather than on correctly entering text; it also reduced the text parsing elements of answer checking to a minimum and allowed feedback to concentrate on the student's skills with the essential elements of the library. Simple devices such as 'hands on' and 'timed answer' icons are used to cue the student throughout the CBT.

Planned benefits
The benefits of using CBT in this project are those which are commonly used to justify CBT and include:
• Training is available on demand.
• Consistency is ensured.
• Training can be self-paced, with later modules only being studied when the techniques being tackled are required.
• The geographical distribution of students does not affect the availability of training.
• Introduction of the ESCOM library system can be speeded up.
• Initial user tests of the CBT showed a good outcome and the ESCOM system has been introduced. Further analysis of acceptance and success are to commence shortly.
With acknowledgement to Sarah Wilkinson of Dean Associates.

MULTIMEDIA CONFERENCING

Multimedia conferencing can be defined as two or more users simultaneously exchanging information (voice, data, image, and/or video) in an interactive fashion. Typically, this takes the form of videoconferencing with data conferencing as an adjunct. It may take place with or without the help of an external agent, such as a host or switch, eg, Multipoint Control Unit.

The conferencing services that are evolving may be classified into the following categories:

1. videoconferencing;

2. image conferencing (graphics);

3. data conferencing;

4. multimedia conferencing (combination).

These conferences could take place either at a common facility on the premises, or eventually at the user's desktop. The common element of all these modes of conferencing is the fact that they will all evolve as desktop-based personal services as opposed to common-location shared facility services.

Some of the requirements, as we have seen, include the evolution to:

• standard conferencing protocols;

- viable premise access facilities;

- suitable and affordable workstations;

- intelligent signalling and switching networks;

• very low transmission cost;

• sufficient user applications.

However, while having mixed (or even 'multi') media types available through a common interface is of major user benefit, this does create new challenges for the developer and several technological, economic and standards-related problems must be solved before these services do manage to find their way to the desktop.

Capturing a still image, or page of text, is quite different from a clip of moving video and despite advances in technological development, continues to present some difficulties. Displaying a still image is a singular event, and whereas a document may have several pages or chapters, a sound clip takes a finite time to play, as does a video clip, and when a number of these objects result from the same search, a playback/viewing/listening framework is essential. Combined text/image pages pose special problems, and multiple capture methods can be required. 'Thumbnail' images are frequently used to speed operation, with the full quality images only displayed from selected thumbnails. In some cases it may be more appropriate to only order the full quality image, for subsequent delivery after printing.

Now let's look a bit closer at some of the real applications of multimedia videoconferencing technology in use today. These can generally be partitioned into three broad categories, depending on the number of sites and the presence or absence of interaction, and there is overlap in some cases:

• *multiparty interactive*–multimedia conferencing, corporate training, business meetings, collaborative computing;

• *two-way interactive*–kiosks, expert systems, multimedia data sharing, multimedia databases;

• *one-way passive viewing*–television broadcasts, corporate announcements, hypermedia.

Multipoint (party) conferencing is the most demanding in terms of real-time criticality and the amount of bandwidth required. Many view this is as *the* IT application that will drive the computing industry forward over the next five years, much as spreadsheets kindled the sale of personal computers in the early 1980s. However, it should be recognized that video-conferencing is not so much an application as an application-enabler.

One of the initial catalysts for broadband networks has been the medical community. X-rays, CAT (computerized axial tomography) scans, and MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) all require high resolution images for accurate diagnosis. Multimedia systems are

appropriate in this sector for a number of reasons:

• imaging plays a significant role in medical diagnosis;

• multimedia networks can distribute x-ray images, enabling scans to be distributed to the community of specialists for expert interpretation and analysis wherever the specialist may be located;

• multimedia systems have an immediate role in reducing the cost of health care, meaning that more patients are treated and greater use is made of limited specialist resources.

A number of regional trials have been set up linking hospitals, and the medical field has been involved in other applications of multimedia communications, such as the case of the Royal College of Surgeons.

TELEMEDICINE: THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS
The Royal College of Surgeons (RCS) implemented a videoconferencing network for the teaching of minimal access therapy (MAT) techniques– otherwise known as keyhole surgery–for which it has been developing a series of training standards. Keyhole surgery facilitates faster recovery times and hospital beds are occupied for less time, thus reducing costs for the health services.
Funded by the Department of Health and the Wolfson Foundation, the training programme was designed to deliver high standards of training for surgeons who practise laparoscopic surgery, and is centred on the need to demonstrate the surgery in practice. Training sites are located at the RCS, with partners at the Royal Surrey County Hospital and the Royal London Hospital.
Because the development team wanted the network to provide duplex communications, enabling the surgeons to ask questions and receive instant replies, they finally opted for an ISDN-based system. This uses pictures in picture displays allowing the students to see both the operating theatre and the images of the surgery that is taking place inside the patient's body. Sessions can be recorded onto videotape for editing and subsequent use in training programmes.

VIRTUAL REALITY TRAINING

Virtual reality (VR), which has long been the preserve of the amusement arcade and flight simulators, has finally come of age as an affordable business tool and is now being used in business training. It involves the use of computers and (sometimes) 3D headsets allowing a user to visualize and interact with a simulated (virtual) environment.

The increase in PC processing power has enabled real-time 3D interactive environments to be delivered straight to the desktop. Now, VR software packages such as SuperScape VRT, WorldToolKit and Realimation require very little advanced programming expertise and allow users to create and explore virtual environments. They can be operated from the

desktop, be wired to immersive technology (the headsets or goggles), linked to a projector for audience presentations, or distributed over the Internet.

The widespread adoption of other forms of computer based training (CBT) has enabled organizations to see the benefits of VR training applications, making the training sector the fastest growing area for VR.

> THE VOLKSWAGEN GROUP–VIRTUAL REALITY TRAINING
> Prior to adopting VR-based training for its 300 dealer staff, VAG had used multimedia as a training tool over an 18 month period, to develop 22 training packages. The dealers felt so comfortable with multimedia training that 'they had become blasé about multimedia'.
> VAG decided that it needed to create a multimedia library of documentation and vehicle manuals and a technical electrical assessment test, and wishing to make the dry subject stimulating, resolved to opt for VR training.
> They created (with a multimedia design company) a control interface that allowed the trainee to select tools, choose replacement parts, perform project management and change views. A virtual viewing area allowed navigation around the vehicle, viewing of detailed (virtual) photographs, manipulation of test probes and positioning of replacement parts.
> The programme featured a virtual electrical test card on which the user must try and verify the fault and then fix it by selecting the correct circuit diagram, going to the relevant area to reveal detailed wiring and choose the correct tools for the job. The whole process is logged for future retrieval and review. One of the aspects that VAG was most pleased about was the VR 'audit trail' which accounted for thought processes, such as picking up and viewing a piece of equipment from a particular angle–in effect replicating the physical environment. VAG considered that VR training had been an economic success, since waste could be reduced by being able see the exact fault before parts are ordered.

THE A–Z OF TRAINING METHODS

In this final section we will attempt to provide an overview of a number of the alternatives available to you so that you can decide the most appropriate delivery method to use for particular learning needs. Table 16.1 outlines a number of training methods and techniques that can be used in both group-based and individual training. It is based on a similar outline provided in the MA IT Management distance learning programme offered by the

Department of Information Studies, University of Sheffield. Please note that the list has been arranged alphabetically, not in order of importance.

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Table 16.1 The A–Z of training methods

Training/system methods	Trainer's perspective	End user's perspective
Action Learning Sets		
Action Learning sets involve a group of people convening to bring to the set real work problems. They act as comrades in adversity, supporting and challenging each other. Each participant works on their problem between set meetings and brings new information and solutions back to the group.	Degree of interdependence of group members Trainer can help to establish learning set or act as learning set adviser.Adviser can offer support or help line and guide process if needed.	Typically, the group meets once a month for half a day over a period of six to nine months. Learning through questioning is very powerful.
Action Maze		
Similar to a case study, but uses printed instructions to guide a group through to a predetermined conclusion. It is called a maze because choices and options are offered at certain stages–rather like a pathway. Set situations will result from the choice of option. Discovery of preferred paths is the main outcome of this exercise.	Can be useful for problem-solving or decision-making. Requires careful design. Allows participant interdependence.	Incorrect decision-making can result in high levels of learning– learning from mistakes is good!
Brainstorming		

Creative ideas from participants.Group is allowed to submit ideas or suggestions and none are rejected. No discussion and no value judgements are made at this stage. Subsequently all ideas can be sorted and assessed in any way. Exploration can produce exciting results!

Allows trainer to quickly gather information as to the levels of knowledge of the participants. Allows the generation of a lot of ideas in a short space of time and creates a climate of creativity.

Good fun and very creative allowing a lot of participant input with no discussion. Most people can contribute without much effort. Participants feel a sense of ownership of the ideas.

Business Game Simulations

Dynamic exercises or case studies–usually involving 'coming to terms' with a situation, then managing it via a set of imposed decisions. Computerized models offer complex data and often decisions that interact.

Interactive element generates enthusiasm, notably when teams are in simulated competition. Can be linked with team development. Model can be challenged as unrealistic.

Offers practice in management– observation, analysis, judgement, decision-making, etc. Can instil confidence.

Buzz Groups

Small groups, often formed after an input session, answer a set question or complete a set task and report back to the trainer or the rest of the group.

Avoid one group giving all the answers and leaving nothing for the other group to offer. Very participative and a larger number of contributions can be offered in a short space of time.

Helps rapid knowledge gain and starts trainee thought processes. Good group support engendered.

Case Study

Examination of events or situation (often real-life) usually aimed at learning by analysing the detailed material, or posing and defining solutions for problems.

Especially useful for analysis of existing/ proposed systems. Can incorporate exercises. Simple cases may be unrealistic. Difficult to reproduce an exact duplicate of the working environment.

Opportunities exist for both exchange of views on 'what matters' and problem solving.

CD ROM

Compact DiskRead Only Memory

Offers a mean delivery for CBT programs. Each disk offers high capacity optical data storage, which becomes a reference source equal to many books (and even more computer packages). Special hardware needed. Limited to retrieval of stored data. CD writers are now much more readily available, allowing training providers to press their own CDs.

Use of keyboard seems to help motivation for many. Use of images can offer a variety of learning techniques in the learning process. Retrieval can be in text, picture and sound form making for an interactive and varied form of learning that seems to be self-motivating.

Computer Based Training (CBT)

Learner-managed coverage of programmed material, usually involving keyboard and screen. (Learner uses keyboard in line with screen instructions, calling forth information and responding to questions.) Moves to introduce Artificial Intelligence (AI) with the prospect of 'talking with the machine', ie , using the machine as a tutor and

Many varied uses. Equipment may be expensive. Present levels of technology make logic-based programs most reliable. Care should be taken to ensure the material is appropriate (ie, extensive evaluation before use). Screen material can be complex and include

CBT can offer workplace simulations, and can link with videotape to provide still or moving pictures. Can offer the learner an insight to applications in practice. Addition of artificial intelligence (CBT-AI) allows 'dialogue' with learner; learner responds to computer question, computer

managing one's own learning process are not yet commercially available but may develop.	animation.Good for presenting technical data. Compatible hardware and software needed.Tutorial help should be provided.	interprets response and adjusts its own program– hence offering flexible learning process.
Computer Conferencing Newsgroups		
These provide specialist information on specific topics.	Exchange of ideas can be carried out using this medium. Connection to the Internet is required and the same associated costs should be considered.	Newsgroup contributors tend to act as tutors and answer questions posted to the newsgroup quickly. One question posted can be responded to by many other people, providing a great variety of styles that a user can apply to specific situations.

Discovery Learning

Learning without a teacher but usually in a controlled (ie, pre-designed) set-up, and under supervision.

Considerable design work needed. Safety paramount–may need special adjustments, and so may be unrealistic. Best suited to tasks involving dismantling, checking, adjusting, rebuilding.

Offers challenges and builds confidence as learner masters new skills. Helps understanding of principles. Time constraints do not affect learning process as with many other processes.

Discussion

Free exchange of information, opinions, etc. A 'controlled' discussion may follow a planned path, the leader controlling the agenda: an 'open' discussion may mirror members' priorities.

May be time-consuming–especially if discussion wanders or 'process problems' emerge. Attitudes may harden rather than adjust. Especially suitable for development or adjustment of attitudes and opinions.

Individual participation may be affected by group composition. Also offers feedback to trainer on learning achievement. Promotes group cohesion.

Exercise

Carrying out a particular task along prescribed lines. Often a test of knowledge earlier communicated.

Exercise must relate to the working environment, with attainable objectives. Some form of assessment can give an idea of how much has been learnt by the end user.

Highly active form of learning; satisfies needs for practice to apply knowledge or develop skill. Testing gives confidence.

Experiential Exercises

Client-centred approach to individual, group and organizational learning that engages the learner using the elements of action, reflection, transfer and support.

The trainer's role is to act as a facilitator to enable the construction of knowledge, skill, attitude and value from the direct experience.

It is a learner-centred focus that draws upon personal experience as the vehicle to access knowledge, skills and attitudes and provide for planned and emergent learning.

Filims and Videos

'Visual lectures'–but often presented in dramatized form.

Useful as a precursor to discussion; can be 'stopped' at key points for discussion. Tailor-made products are expensive. Care needed to ensure material (not just title) is relevant. Most items in this category cover additional topics. Off-the-shelf products (eg, OU or other mass produced videos) are relatively cheap and are of high quality.

As 'lectures'–but addition of moving images and drama can significantly aid motivation. Possible to relate to relevant situation.

Fish Bowl Exercises

Inner circle of people doing task being observed by outer circle– hence the term 'fish bowl'. Outer circle take no part in the actual activity but merely observe and analyse inner and outer circle swap. Often used in behavioural analysis.

Particularly useful in behavioural exercises. Can be set up to allow one group to demonstrate or to allow practice to occur while others look on and learn through observation. Useful to allow trainer to focus on a small group while others observe. More effective when the inner group are unaware of what the outer group are looking for.

Allow observational skills to develop. Good to sit out for a while–can feel under pressure if in inner circle.

Instruction

Formula-based 'teaching' session:

1. Tell–how to do

2. Show–how to do

3. Do (supervised practice)

4. Review process and results.

For introducing skills, usually in line with a planned breakdown of small sequential practice stages. Skill may be best addressed as a whole, rather than in parts, but lengthy stages 1 and 2 yield memory problems. Typically, follows some other form of training, the skills to be learnt being those of application.

Design/balance of session important. Confidence is built by mastery and link-up of stages. Provides a vehicle for feedback to instructor. Time constraints can be eliminated with reference to the learning process.

In-tray Methods

Often used in time management training. Can use a simulated in-tray with many tasks and the participant has to order the tasks and allocate times, explaining the reasoning behind decisions. Can also be used to simulate a bigger exercise using a set of tasks where participant has to decide priorities, make decisions, read items, decide which to delegate, interpret and carry out sets of instructions, all with interruptions and other distractions. After such exercises the results are analysed and discussed.

Requires very careful planning and thought. Appraisal can be time-consuming. Can be complex or simple, low theoretical base and very practical.

Very participant-centred. High levels of transfer.

Language Laboratory

Individual booths equipped with audio programmes and linked to a central tutor.

Allows learner-paced language tuition and practice, without 'speaking in public'. Machine management seems to promote motivation.

Good for early stages but cannot replace eventual need to practise in public. Gives confidence to individual learners as the embarrassment factor is less apparent.

Lecture

Structured, planned talk. Usually accompanied by visual aids, eg, slides, OHPs, flipchart.

Suitable for large audiences where participation is not needed. Content and timing can be planned in detail. Structure needs to be planned carefully and should be lively or audience will lose attention. However, audience input should be considered in the form of seminars.

Lively style needed. Communication of material may be limited if no provision of feedback to lecturer.

Multimedia and Video Conferencing

This allows contact of distributed sites where distance makes travel time and cost prohibitive.

CBT and video can be combined in multimedia programmes, which can offer both (a) information, and (b) practice in using the information to specific ends, eg, problem solving. Hardware and software can be expensive.

Allows two-way interactive communication sessions between people who are not able to meet in the same location.

Open Forum

Panel of experts. More balanced answers are forthcoming if the questions are seen beforehand.

Allows a team of expert people to support the learning. Allows a degree of free-flow of questioning. A momentum can be built up with questions focusing on themes. Can build up a list of questions over a period of time in the training sessions to put to an invited panel.

Allows participants access to outside experts as well as trainers' and colleagues' expertise. Can deflect difficult questions away from trainers and facilitators.

Outdoor Development Programmes

Dynamic open-air exercises, usually carried out in teams. Traditionally composed of recreation pursuits, now markets are demanding new approaches such as real community or environmental projects as opposed to planks and drums.

Offers practice in management, in challenging circumstances. Also used to develop teamwork, communication and leadership, as well as self-analysis.

Physical challenge may be deselecting if tough. Some learners may not accept relevance of physical environment. Importance of teamwork often learnt in such programmes.

Project

| 'Large-scale exercise', but leaving most of the process within learner discretion. Frequently involves collecting and reporting data, then offering conclusions and recommendations for improvement. | Like exercises, needs realism and attainability. If 'real life', must have support of those responsible for reality. Ideally will be 'actioned'. | Like exercises offers practice and simultaneously 'tests'. Stimulates analysis and creativity as well as reporting skills. |

Prompt List

| List of 'questions to which a person should have answers'. | Can highlight interpersonal differences in terms of values–and hence stimulate debate. Can be used in conjunction with 'Exercise' category in form of assessment. | Good as a form of non-directed learning. Can give a good idea of how much the end-user has learnt when used with some form of assessment. |

Radio and TV Broadcasts

| Often linked with national courses and qualifications (eg, Open University). | Large potential audiences permit costly programmes. Satellite TV is likely to offer new and wider subjects. | Viewing times often unsociable but use of video equipment can overcome this. Can be linked to tutorial assistance by phone. |

Role-play

| Enactment of role(s) in protected environment. Asked to suspend self-reality and adopt other roles. | Mainly used to practise face-to-face skills (eg, selling) combined with review critiques from trainers and/or other learners. | Unless disciplined, can cause embarrassment. Degree of reality of design is an important factor for participants. Can be good for video feedback. |

Role-reversal

| Enactment of reversed roles by two or more learners in simulated situation. | Mainly used to help those who operate in face-to-face situations to appreciate their contacts' needs and feelings. | As with role-play, needs discipline and realism. |

Self-managed Learning/Reading

Learner-paced coverage of printed material, with or without basic learning plan.

Knowledge retention can be good if learner motivation is high. Learning packages are often augmented by audio- and/or videotapes.

Motivation often declines if reading is difficult/'dull'. Tutorial help can be important.

Simulations

Any large simulation exercise, that attempts to represent a high degree of reality, often also termed business or management 'games'. Games often have rules, players and are competitive.

Need to be careful about possible unexpected outcomes due to the levels of reality in the simulation. Can be good to allow a high degree of participant interdependence. High levels of planning and preparation needed. Useful as an exercise towards the end of a programme to consolidate practice of previous narrow skills thus developing complex skills. See case study on negotiating.

Allow more complex scenarios to develop that are close to real life yet allow practice and mistakes to occur in a safe environment.

Study Groups

Task-briefed groups that also practise process review, aided by a process consultant, who does not operate outside this role.

Offer appreciation of need for both task and process management; also group learning processes.

Some learners dislike lack of structure. May generate stress.

Syndicates

Larger tasks and exercises involving planning and preparation. Dividing the main group into smaller groups with separate rooms. Asked to discuss tasks and solve or identify a specific problem. Followed by a review.

Allow group sharing, exchange and support. Opportunity for more in-depth work than buzz groups. More opportunity for quieter members to contribute over time.

Allow group to develop its strength and identity due to larger complex project.

T-group Training

A form of process sensitivity training. No tasks are set and the group is required to examine and discuss the ongoing process within itself.

Virtual Reality Training

Enables creation of a simulated environment for training purposes.

This is not an easy option! Requires trainers to face anxiety of not knowing or offering expertise or to be the expert.

Technological advances and reduced costs of processing power have allowed VR developments to become more cost-effective.

Can be frustrating but is worth working through–very rewarding.

Users can learn by experience and 'explore' the environment they are trying to learn about without risk to health or safety but feel reassured that making mistakes will not be costly.

Web-based Learning

Learning via The Internet and the World Wide Web (WWW)– ever increasing as an available resource. Extensive research should be carried out to find appropriate web sites.

Both hardware and software can be expensive and connection fees should be considered along with associated running fees (monthly fee to service provider and phone bill). Care should be taken so that end-users do not use the Internet as a toy or download inappropriate information. Evaluation against learning objectives should also be carried out.

Allows users to learn at their own pace and in their own time. Exciting way to learn as the resources are extensive and tend to present information in a clear manner. However, information provided on the Internet is not always attributable and sources should be verified before use. Most web sites allow users to e-mail site provider and gain further information.

17
Multilingual and Multicultural HRD

A Ibarz

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

For most professionals words like 'globalization' or 'multinationalism' have ceased to be buzz words and have become inescapable realities. This is not only because motorways and Concorde have shortened travel or because capital can often ignore national boundaries, but also because technological developments have penetrated the world of work and our homes. Often when buying off the screen via satellite, cable or Internet, the place that provides the goods or the service may not be in our own country. Purchasing requests no longer have to be supplied from the country in which they were initiated. Data processing centres located in parts of the world where the costs are low can compete with more established centres. Similarly, when phoning companies like airlines, particularly out of hours, it is quite normal to hear an unusual accent at the other end of the line. In most cases it is not possible to know if the person who has satisfied our enquiry was a foreign national working in our country or if we have been transferred to a distant part of the world.

In today's market place competition comes from every corner of the globe and is forcing businesses to look at new ways of cutting costs. Successful trading nations have to go beyond simply exporting their products: they are also expected to establish their support services wherever they are engaged in economic activity. As a result of the trend towards internationalizing business and services, increasing numbers of people are working in multilingual and multicultural settings.

The literature on this subject points out that traders and business people have always been pioneers in establishing links and communicating with people from other nations. There are many historical examples of trade-sponsored initiatives leading to social and cultural change. Columbus is one such example, the main aim of his sponsors being to open cheaper trade routes to the East. What is new about the global economy, according to Seelye and Seelye-James (1995:xvii), is its scale. Everyone everywhere is affected, not just professional people. There have been large movements of people in search of opportunities for work and social improvements, within and between countries. As a result there is no need to link multiculturalism or multilingualism exclusively to international managers or to those who have access to the new technologies. They point out that: 'More than 100 languages are spoken in schools in New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, etc.' They conclude by emphasizing the need to adapt to the new working and social environment: 'Dealing across cultures has gone from being a take-it-or-leave-it proposition to being a prerequisite for survival–your survival.'

Having read this chapter you will:

• be aware of the importance of linguistic understanding in international contexts;

• be able to operate successfully in cross-cultural situations;

• know some of the key factors in language learning;

• be able to relate some of the approaches to language learning to those of general training and development; and

• be able to use some of the key principles of cross-cultural training.

MULTILINGUAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Monolingual and multilingual societies

The previous section contained statements that pointed to the need to acquire new skills and values as a result of relatively recent social and technical changes. However, this may be misleading, or at least before going into further considerations, the opportunity for reflection about the issues raised should not be missed. When discussing these issues, there is a danger of adopting a view of modern society which for want of a better term can be called 'Western', prevalent mainly in English-speaking developed countries, where the assumption is that monolingualism is the norm and where there is a single dominant culture and tradition.

In addition, we have often been led to believe that this situation has been stationary for many years or even centuries. But this is far from the truth. Even today there are around 5000 languages in the world and there are approximately 200 countries. It follows, therefore, that bilingualism and multilingualism, to a greater or lesser degree, are much more the norm in most countries. If this is the case, it could be argued that the ability to live and work in multilingual/multicultural communities is not as new as we think and that perhaps, in Western societies, we should consider language learning as yet another human ability that has faded as societies have become more 'civilized'. As with many abilities, such as dancing, we now have to undertake sophisticated training programmes to regain what was once natural to most human beings.

The need for foreign language training

The intention of the reflection contained in the previous paragraph is to give perspective to the issues that will be discussed below. The reality for most organizations is that in order to maximize their market effectiveness they have to operate in multilingual and multicultural contexts. There are advantages for individual employees, for the enterprise, and for the customers. Many writers in the field confirm this view. Bloch (1995:15) states, 'High-level personnel with language skills are becoming more and more necessary to corporate efficiency and success in the global environment.' Others go further. Buorgoin (in Bloch, 1995:16) argues that, 'During the next ten years a foreign language may be more helpful than a college degree, given the rapidly rising internationalization of business.' But we can again look into the past to understand the present reason why foreign languages are given such prominence in some organizations. As early as the 16th century a commonly heard statement was, 'The best language is always the customer's'. Moreover, Willy Brandt, the former German Chancellor stated, 'If I sell to you I will speak English, but if you want to sell to me *dann mussen Sie Deutsch sprechen.*'

Here is a list indicating what employers look for when recruiting graduates:

• adaptability and flexibility;

• foreign languages;

• practical experience in industry;

• the quality of the programme studied;

• IT skills;

• academic marks gained;

• having lived and worked in foreign countries;

• the university at which the degree was taken;

• having a PhD;

• qualifications gained at foreign universities.

Source: *Deutsche Bundesamt–Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft* (in Bloch, 1995:16)

It is clear from the above that the Germans are aware of the importance of foreign languages. It would be interesting to ask employers in other countries whether they would establish a similar set of priorities. Also, it would be useful to think about what most employers mean when they refer to 'foreign languages'. It is likely that they do not refer to the language studies undertaken by 'pure linguists' (students from humanities degrees) but to those undertaken by students who combine linguistic skills with marketable training like accounting, engineering, etc.

LANGUAGE IN THE COMMUNICATION AGE

We have considered the need for foreign language training, although the adjective 'foreign' that has just been used may not always be appropriate. For example, is Spanish a 'foreign' language in the USA? It may be more desirable to use the term 'modern language training' instead, but this also could be too restrictive. What we are dealing with in this chapter is how to encourage effective communication in multicultural organizations and international markets and, therefore, a wider term that incorporates more than just speech may be more appropriate.

Language training should work at several levels of complexity, and this leads some authors to indicate that they feel the term 'training' is inappropriate. 'Training implies that there is a beginning and end to the process, while learning never ends–and this is certainly true of languages' (Little, 1994:15). Language is central to very complex developmental processes and, although training can develop the abilities of the individual and satisfy the needs of an organization at a given moment, it is often an important ingredient in an individual's lifelong education.

The preferred term is simply language learning (LL), because language often incorporates non-verbal signals such as gestures, facial expression, tone of voice, social etiquette, etc. To avoid possible confusion caused by using such a generic term, in the cases where there is a need to establish a clear difference between a first language or mother tongue, and a language learnt (usually later in life) or second language, the abbreviations used will be L1 for the former and L2 for the latter.

The next few paragraphs offer further considerations on the place of language within the larger context of communication. The aim is to encourage thought about an aspect of our lives which, as Crystal (1997:2) says, 'belongs to everyone'. We all communicate using at least one language and we can all claim that we have some experience of LL. In practice, however, we are more or less competent communicators without giving much thought to the processes involved.

The media often remind us that we live in the 'communication age'. Communication is a term that can be interpreted in different ways and is often used to establish clearly the

context in which an account or an argument is to unfold. Fiske (1990:1) describes the challenge presented to anyone attempting a definition: 'Communication is talking to one another, it is television, it is spreading information, it is our hair style, it is literary criticism: the list is endless.' Fortunately, he soon reaches a definition that is adequate for the purposes of this chapter: communication is 'social interaction through messages'.

Factors that influence effective communication

Figure 17.1 shows the multiplicity of factors influencing the process of communication. The upper part of the figure depicts the communicator deciding on a particular message, encoding this in a particular language and then emitting this as speech, written communication or body language. This is then received, decoded and interpreted by the receiver. A message from the communicator to the receiver is one-way communication (radio or television broadcasts, letters, e-mail, railway station announcements, etc). When a response is made, ie, the feedback loop, this then becomes two-way communication (discussions, negotiations, etc.). Two-way communication is generally more effective and more likely to ensure that both parties agree about the meaning of the interaction.

Figure 17.2 highlights the additional factors that play an important part in communication between speakers who do not share their first language. The assumption in this case is that they are both communicating in the same language and one of them is an L1 speaker and the other an L2 speaker. If the dialogue is flowing all these elements are combined in a process of message encoding and decoding that takes place at considerable speed. One or both speakers may have to resort to a range of strategies that may include gestures, pointing, drawing, the use of a third language, etc.

Image

Figure 17.1 The communication process

Figure 17.2 Factors that contribute to effective interaction between L1 and L2 speakers

LANGUAGE TRAINING IN HRD

It is clear that language learning is a complex but potentially rewarding experience and that it is a way of gaining access to other cultures. This last point should not be overlooked: the language learner develops cross-cultural empathy which may be put to good use in any multicultural environment and not just in relation to the one language studied. There are, as has already been indicated, clear benefits for the individual and there are also benefits for organizations. In this section the aim will be to focus very much on practical aspects of LL and on the potential impact it may have on the individual in terms of personal development.

Very recently I received a brochure from a very well established recruitment consultancy agency which specializes in accountancy and from which I have taken the following paragraph:

Thus we are seeing the rise of the multinational accountant, the UK-version of which, it seems, is let down only by his or her lack of second or third language skills. It's proving to be a big handicap in some cases, and while language studies require a rather different learning approach compared to technical accounting, it is worth persevering if full advantage is to be taken of the best international career moves. Simply believing that 'English is the business language of the world' could severely limit your options.

This text is very appropriate to provoke thought around the more practical issues involved in LL. First of all, it comes from the 'real world'; it is not published for an academic audience. Secondly, it goes to the point by highlighting the potential 'handicap' of being a native English speaker. Thirdly, it reinforces some of the points made earlier in relation to the nature of language learning: 'language studies require a rather different learning approach'.

How long does it take to learn a language?

Because there are many misconceptions of how long it takes to learn a language to an advanced level, it may be useful to consider the case below of Mike who was successfully trained to speak German. He is only one example; each success story differs and it would be wrong to assume that his is the only way.

A SUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNING EXPERIENCE
Mike describes his intensive course:
I learnt German in the USA, at the Defense Language Institute. The course was 46 weeks. I believe other courses such as Russian and Mandarin were longer than a year. Our class of 13 had two primary instructors (one Austrian and one American). Classes ran approximately six hours per day (8:30–3:30, one hour for lunch), five days a week. We had roughly one to two hours of homework per night, but some studied much less and some much more. We had classes with other instructors each day, usually for two or three class periods. The overwhelming majority–at least 90 per cent–of the faculty were native German speakers and were fluent in both German and English.
The first few weeks were spent learning phrases (listening and speaking) and developing an ear and tongue for the language. After the first few weeks, we began studying the grammar and vocabulary structures of the language for one or two periods per day. We had a language lab once per day in which we listened to radio broadcasts, news broadcasts, and radio serial programmes. We also studied the culture a significant amount. We occasionally watched newscasts, movies and television programmes. Near the end of the programme we began writing and delivering short speeches about controversial topics and then discussed them in class, and we were not able to speak in English.
We were required to speak only German during some class periods (even in the beginning), but in others, such as grammar lessons we could speak English if needed.
(I had been asking Mike questions via e-mail. My last question was about the impact of the course on his personal and professional life.)
As for your last question, I don't use my language skills very often in my work, though I have used both German and Spanish on a few legal matters I worked on. I think of it more as a personal achievement, and I use my languages more conversationally with friends than anything else. I do believe that studying foreign languages has increased my overall language and communication skills.

I should mention that I have been contacted on several occasions by headhunters trying to fill legal positions in Germany and Austria based on my language skills, so I suppose that it has provided opportunities that otherwise would not have been available.
Cheers,
Mike

ENGLISH AS THE LINGUA FRANCA

From the point of view of LL, a division between the English-speaking countries and the rest may help to throw further light on some of the issues hinted at above, when the word 'handicap' was used. A more extreme version of this view appeared on a sticker distributed by an association of language teachers: 'Monolingualism is a curable disease.' Because English is fast becoming the lingua franca of the modern world, above all in such influential sectors as the new technologies, business, tourism and entertainment; and because geographically many English speakers are isolated from contact with other languages, those who are brought up and live in English-speaking countries tend to be less motivated to learn another language.

By contrast, speakers of most other languages are often, from an early age, encouraged to learn a second and third language for political, commercial or cultural reasons. The strong term 'disease' would be justified not just by the loss of professional opportunities at an individual level and the negative impact on exports and international relations, but also by the loss in terms of personal development (as Mike indicates in his answer to my last question) caused by the lack of exposure to a new mental discipline in terms of transferable skills, and to the missed opportunity of becoming more 'multiculturally' aware by having been in contact with at least one alternative culture in the course of the foreign language learning experience.

The global dominance of English encourages many speakers of other languages to gain at least a working use of the language in many fields. Browsing through sites on the use of the Internet in education, I came across a paper in which a Spanish schoolteacher from a poor district of Madrid reported that his students in a geology class had become avid followers of NASA sites developed for schools in the USA. 'They are in English, of course, but the youngsters have come to terms with the fact that English is the lingua franca, and they use it with more familiarity than their teachers, which is an added advantage from a pedagogical point of view.'

We see therefore that the division between English speakers and the rest is useful in order to highlight the fact that motivation and the sociocultural context in which a learner engages in a process of LL are fundamental considerations. There is, however, another

reason for spending time making this distinction. The result of this linguistic imbalance is that the teaching of English is a large industry with a very wide range of up-to-date teaching materials, while the learners of many other languages have to make do with very limited, outdated resources. In addition, most language teaching methods, methodologies and theories have been led by research based on learners of EFL (English as a foreign language) and then applied to or incorporated into the teaching of other languages.

THEORIES OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

The framework on which current thinking on L2 training is based requires a few theoretical considerations. In this section we consider issues related to language itself and to the fascinating and unique capacity for language learning that human beings have. Most of us find the way a child learns a language a total mystery, and the excitement that the parents express at every step of a child's linguistic development is witness to this amazing feat. There are several theories about how children learn their mother tongue. Below four of the main ones are very briefly explained:

1. *Imitation or behaviourist:* Children learn simply by imitation and habit formation. They receive positive reinforcement and continue to imitate and practise until they form habits of correct language use.

2. *Cognitive:* Based on Piaget's (1950) theories, language develops as concepts are formed. Linguistic structure will emerge only when there is an established cognitive foundation. For example, before children can use structures of comparison they need to have developed the conceptual ability to make judgements of size.

3. *Innatist:* Chomsky (1959) claimed that children are biologically programmed for language learning and that language develops in the same way as other biological functions.

4. *Interactionist:* A child makes linguistic progress according to biological ability and linguistic environment. The type of language used by adults, and their ability to adapt and simplify it to give the child a maximum opportunity to interact and learn, play a crucial part.

Most authors agree that it is possible to see several of the above theories and others as complementary, and useful to explain different aspects of a child's linguistic development, rather than seeing them as opposed and contradictory. Crystal (1997:237) in his informative *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* reflects such a view: 'Doubtless imitative skills, a general language-learning mechanism, cognitive awareness, and structured input all play their part in guiding the course of language acquisition.' Research in these areas is difficult and

far from conclusive. Not surprisingly, theories of foreign or second language acquisition resonate with similar statements, although it is important not to carry any parallels too far, above all in the case of adult learners. The key differences for adults learning an L2 are as follows:

On the one hand adults:

• already have a language and this reduces their motivation to learn another;

• already have a language which 'interferes' with the learning of an L2;

• are more self-conscious of errors in pronunciation and grammar;

• are less able to assimilate cultural differences;

• are in most cases much less exposed to the L2 than a child to its mother tongue;

• usually learn or study in a context which is not authentic (the need to speak the L2 in a classroom situation is usually contrived);

• may choose to remain silent during a lesson.

On the other, adults:

• already have a language which may 'help' with the learning of an L2;

• can read and write;

• often have sophisticated learning strategies that can simplify the learning of some aspects of the L2;

• can respond more effectively to feedback.

These key differences have an important impact on the theories detailed above. Close parallels exist between language learning and learning in general (see Chapters 10 and 11); and research into language learning has informed our understanding of how we learn (see Pinker, 1995). Therefore when consideration is given to the main theories in L2 learning, we find that they are basically the same theories but that they have undergone important modifications:

1. *Behaviourist:* Learning by habit formation, the same as in the acquisition of L1 (mother

tongue or first language). The difference here is that the learner confronts the learning of L2 with the habits learnt in L1, which, depending on the languages involved, may be a greater or lesser obstacle.

2. *Cognitive:* Learners use their already developed cognitive abilities in a creative way to produce hypotheses about the structure of L2. They construct rules, put them into practice, and alter them if they do not produce the expected result. At each stage learners have developed a language system to cope with communicating in the foreign language, which Selinker (1972) called an 'interlanguage', an ever evolving and dynamic system which shares elements of the L1 and L2.

3. *Innatist or 'the monitor model':* Similar to some of Chomsky's ideas on L1 learning and proposed by Krashen (1982). L2 follows a pre-set sequence of learning stages. The learner makes progress by taking part in communicative acts during which he or she is guided mainly by intuition much as a child would be. The process is 'monitored' by the formal learning of rules and information about the workings of the language. This is an influential theory in the development of the so-called communicative methods.

4. *Interactionist:* An adult makes linguistic progress when exposed to comprehensible input. The type of language used by teachers and interlocutors, and their ability to adapt and simplify it to give the learner a maximum opportunity to interact and learn, play a crucial part.

Theories are important because they are the foundation of the many methods that exist for language learning and because they help trainers and learners to make informed choices and take control of their training or learning programmes.

TEACHING AND TRAINING METHODS

The many different methods in existence are based on a particular view of language learning and usually recommend the use of a particular set of techniques and teaching materials. They all have advantages and disadvantages and some are better at achieving certain outcomes than others. Some authors claim that they all work provided motivation, perseverance and adequate support are present. These days most good courses tend to be flexible in their approach and are eclectic, instead of adhering to only one method. They will adopt the method appropriate to the needs of the learner and the circumstances in which the learning is taking place. The objectives of the course and often the individual objectives of the learner play a determining part in deciding on methods at each stage of the learning curve. The tendency is towards the tutor as adviser or facilitator and towards learner-centredness. Some of the most influential methods are described below.

The academic or grammar translation method

This is based on detailed analysis of the written language and includes translation exercises, the learning of grammar and the memorization of vocabulary as the main activities. After being the main method for many decades, if not centuries, it was almost universally rejected (outside literature-based university courses) in the 1960s and 1970s. However, in the last few years, some teachers have argued that some aspects of translation can play a part in reinforcing other skills.

The audiolingual method

The emphasis is on teaching the spoken language through dialogues and drills. A typical lesson starts with a controlled dialogue that introduces only a few new vocabulary items and includes examples of one or two new structures. The students listen to an audio-tape or CD, and repeat the sentences. They then do some drills connected with the dialogue. Finally they are allowed to incorporate the vocabulary and structures into more open activities. The homework is usually to go to the language laboratory to practise more dialogues and drills. Language is divided into the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, which have to be taught in that order. This method in its pure form is hardly ever found in today's classroom but was once very influential. Above all we find that its emphasis on the spoken language, the division into four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and the step-by-step approach are still in widespread use.

The direct method

This shares elements with the previous one. The aim is to involve the learner in speaking and listening to the L2 in realistic everyday situations. No use is made of the L1. Tutors often use drama techniques and simplified language in their presentations, and follow them by questions which the students have to answer in the L2. Learners are encouraged to think in the target language. The language is introduced via listening and learners often spend weeks without seeing the written form of the language. Formal grammatical rules are avoided. Pair and group work are often introduced. This is a very influential method, with many variations, and has been used especially in EFL teaching.

Communicative teaching

Also linked to the previous one but influenced by the theory of interlanguage. Learners are encouraged to communicate in their transitional language. The important thing is to get the message across regardless of accuracy. The tutor becomes a facilitator in creating situations in which the learners exchange messages. The main activities are information gap situations and guided role-plays. The courses are organized in terms of the meaning ('notions') required in order to communicate in particular functional contexts.

The last three methods share the criticism that they neglect the teaching of grammar and deprive students of the principles and rules that will allow them to generate new language, which is as error-free as can be expected from an L2 speaker. And in spite of the claims made to support the success of such methods, they are not universally accepted. Some see the

success of classroom-based language teaching as limited and contrast it with the relative ease with which people in contact with a language in a real situation come to terms with the new language. They search for methods that can get closer to the natural experience of language learning and for ways of making learners more aware of their potential and their limitations, and more responsible for their own learning.

Some of the alternative approaches proposed represent very radical departures from the established methods. They tend to place more emphasis on individual than group learning, and several of them are often referred to as the 'humanistic approaches':

• *Suggestopedia*– based on the unused potential of the brain that can be released by reaching a state of total relaxation while being exposed to hearing the foreign language.

• *The Silent Way* - a method that avoids, as much as possible, tutor participation. A few very simple elements are introduced, usually with colours and pictures, and learners make up their own sentences whenever they want. The L1 is not used and the tutor remains as 'silent' as possible.

• *Community Language Learning*–uses the methods of counselling therapy. The tutor/ counsellor develops strong personal links with the learners who speak in their L1 and are given L2 translations by the tutor. The learner then repeats what the tutor has said. The aim is not so much to learn the language as to allow the learner to come to terms with their emotions through the use of the L2. What is interesting about this method is that it is based on the type of messages, which are at the opposite end of the spectrum of the messages usually exchanged in most L2 classrooms, where the great majority are of no real interest to the person voicing them. This is often seen as reducing personal involvement and contributing to low motivation.

These three examples underscore the constant search for ways of improving the process of L2 acquisition and reinforce the point that there is a wide choice of methods. It should also follow that companies entering the field need to seek professional advice if they want to avoid making expensive mistakes and wasting precious resources.

As a form of summary of this section some of the buzz words and expressions are listed below. They may appear in most publicity and information related to good, up-to-date, LL courses. They are:

• teaching *in* rather than *about* the target language;

• interactive use of the language;

• focus mainly on listening and speaking during contact sessions;

- emphasis on *use* of the language as much as possible for real communication;

- manageable tasks;

- pair and group work;

- use of role-plays and simulations.

THE MANAGEMENT OF LANGUAGE TRAINING

Being aware of the complexities involved in the strong relationship between cross-cultural awareness and foreign language skills and some degree of familiarity with the theories of language acquisition are only a first step in the direction of creating or recognizing a high quality programme in L2 training. It is, however, an important first step that should give some understanding of the issues involved.

One of the characteristics of any effective HRD strategy is having realistic aims. Because of the many existing misunderstandings that surround L2 training, professionals in the field often tell anecdotes about companies that approach them with formidable requests such as: 'Our sales manager (with no previous experience of L2 learning) has to chair a meeting in Italy in four weeks time, it is very important that she conducts the meeting in Italian ...'; 'We are going to visit our partners in Russia in the summer and would like to be able to communicate in Russian, unfortunately we are very busy at present and can only spare one hour a week ...'. Once the realistic aims have been established, a key factor is a systematic approach to the management of the programme.

Britain is a good test bed for study of LL programme management. On the one hand, it is a country with a long tradition in the fields of both training and management. On the other, as indicated earlier, it has a very poor record in the learning of modern languages, with a population that lacks experience and motivation in this area. Many of its European counterparts give such programmes a very high priority and invest very large sums in them. By contrast a large number of British companies involved in export do not even have a LL strategy and simply respond to situations on an ad hoc basis. An additional challenge is that while most other countries focus mainly on the teaching of English, British companies have to train their staff in a variety of different languages. The final irony is that because of the high marketability of its own language, many of the positive developments and examples of good practice that have taken place in the field of LL in the last few decades have happened in the UK. One such example is reported by David Jackson of Knoll Pharmaceuticals (formerly Boots Pharmaceuticals) in an article entitled 'A winning strategy' (Jackson, 1995).

KNOLL PHARMACEUTICALS
The scheme is part of an integrated human resource strategy to develop a truly international culture within the business, and is linked to another major initiative which has delivered global competences weighted by function, role and national culture, and crosscultural awareness training.

This LL programme in French, Spanish, German and Italian was developed in partnership with Nottingham Clarendon College Languages Department and is run on site by native speakers from the college's tutorial staff. The driving philosophy behind the scheme is the maximization of shareholder value. This is achieved by ensuring that the assessment is measured against the requirements of the job, focusing on adding value. Particular benefits have been reported in:

• dealing with international phone calls;

• participation in international meetings;

• discussions with suppliers and customers;

• time saved in translation of documents.

One of the strengths of the programme is its flexibility. The scheme consists of a series of 12-week sessions of two hours per week held in the workplace at times designated to minimize disruption of work. There are nine stages that span the range from survival to near native. The scheme has been so successful that a training site has been developed which includes four dedicated LL rooms equipped with audio, video and satellite TV, and the introduction of Superhighway technology is being considered. This considerable investment was justified by the saving in administration costs that have accrued since the centre was established.

Not all companies, particularly small or medium-sized ones, could match such a model. It is interesting to note that Jackson's company chose to go into partnership with an experienced institution rather than going it alone and risk a period of trial and error. Jones (1993:91) suggests a list of questions that should be of assistance to businesses when looking for such a partner:

• What experience do you have of company LL?

• What methods of teaching do you use?

• What kind of teaching materials would you use?

• What are the qualifications of your tutorial staff?

• How long should my staff take to reach each of the agreed levels?

• Have you any clients similar to us who can recommend you?

• What extra costs are there on top of the tuition fees (for materials and equipment)?

A final and very important question is, how will the results be measured? This can be done by progress and diagnostic tests but often a better alternative are external assessments such as the ones provided by the Institute of Linguists and the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In the British context, a government initiative based on the use of competences as the basis for a framework in National Vocational Qualifications and led by the Languages Lead Body also has a major contribution to make in this area. Similar bodies exist in other countries.

A systematic approach

The brochure from the recruitment consultants referred to earlier, hinted that the approach to language learning is different to the learning approaches most business people are used to: 'Language studies require a rather different learning approach compared to technical accounting.' Progress is non-linear and a multiplicity of skills are involved in most activities at even at the most basic levels. This is perhaps more reason why it is important to give an external structure to the learning process based on a systematic approach. Smith and Arkless (1993) give guidelines for good practice based on the recommendations of the Association of Language Excellence Centres, a professional body for public and private sector providers of LL and related services for business. They begin by emphasizing the importance of offering quality in all areas, including marketing and customer service and above all in programme management and product knowledge, in this case language teaching expertise.

A systematic approach would follow several stages:

1. An *enquiry form* as the basis for recording information which may be useful when formulating a training proposal.

2. A *language needs analysis* for each individual to be trained as part of a corporate programme, including job description, previous LL experience, company/personal aims. A large organization may require a language audit to determine the existing foreign language capability. Diagnostic tests are often used.

3. A *training proposal* based on the previous stage. It contains a summary of the course that has been designed for this particular company. It includes information such as the groups in which individuals will be placed, aims and objectives, materials, timing, location, evaluation procedures and cost.

4. A *trainer briefing.* Tutor or trainer effectiveness, together with learner motivation, is considered to be the most influential factor in the level of success of a LL programme.

Unlike other kinds of training, LL is heavily dependent on the competence and even personality of the tutor who is often the only model that the learner can aim to imitate. They need to be fully briefed on the training model proposed.

5. *Evaluation.* Progress should be under regular review. The process is usually informal, often supported by tests and even examinations as has been indicated above. The process of formative feedback is often fundamental. At the end of the programme, individual and group reports should be presented. Trainees should also be consulted about their views.

6. *Trainer development.* Trainers should also benefit from the evaluation process and be offered appropriate professional development.

7. Ongoing *quality control* permeates all the stages that make up the process.

THE GOOD LANGUAGE LEARNER

Can anyone be trained? This is a good question, and since we all manage to learn an L1, it is theoretically possible. In practice, however, there are studies that suggest that there are cases where the resources that would need to be allocated may not justify the exercise. One such study based on middle managers by Koch (1996:25) suggests that previous academic excellence or business acumen are not the best predictors of performance in L2. One of the measurements he suggests is based on the psychological predisposition of the learner towards other cultures: 'It has been empirically suggested that such personality traits as empathy, open-mindedness, flexibility and tolerance are associated with cross-cultural success.' This would confirm some of the points made at the beginning of this chapter. However, it is worth noting that such characteristics would also be very valuable in coping with the 'humbling experience' that is involved in learning an L2, particularly at the early stages, when the trainee is corrected and/or 'exposed' in front of others (often members of staff with less seniority), deprived of the linguistic shield that the use of one's own language offers in everyday encounters.

Lightbown and Spada (1993:34) use a series of statements to define some of the characteristics involved. They should provide ample food for thought to anyone interested in this aspect of the process. A good L2 learner:

• is a willing and accurate guesser;

• tries to get the message across even if specific language knowledge is lacking;

• is willing to make mistakes;

• constantly looks for patterns in the language.

Factors such as risk taking, focusing on the message rather than the language, adaptability, lack of inhibitions and ability to detect patterns significantly influence the degree of success.

Crystal (1997:375) questions if there is a genuine aptitude for L2 training. With sufficient motivation, intelligence and opportunity, anyone should be able to succeed. He also adds another important dimension to the search for key defining characteristics: 'Of particular importance is an ability to detect phonetic differences (eg, of stress, melody, vowel quality)—something which can manifest itself in other domains, such as drama or music.'

Ideally each of us should have all these characteristics, and others like memory and even being eternally young. However, as in so many other areas of learning and training, the emphasis should not be so much on aptitude as on the ability to resort to learning strategies which good training and development should encourage and develop. They are closely linked to learner styles and to the need to tailor courses to the specific needs of individuals and of group as a whole.

THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES

This chapter began with references to the impact of the new technologies on our daily and professional life, and if we are to believe the hype it will be a lifelong learner's paradise. If there is an area in which the promises may become a reality, it is likely to be in LL. There are already many useful and well-established developments, for example satellite television. Computers are also making a major contribution, although the existing systems are still mainly text-based, which is not the main domain in which most L2 acquisition concentrates. Pictures, and above all the imminent widespread use of sound, will bring about major changes in the area of modern language teaching methods.

The opportunities for exposure to the language of our choice will multiply. We may have many opportunities to communicate in the L2 and will be able to gain easy access to current resources and information on-line. That languages is one of the areas which will make the greatest gains is not surprising. The Internet and the WWW are about communicating information, and about communications that are the kinds of fertile ground on which LL should thrive.

There are already many opportunities offered in the area of computer-based learning. Although claims still have to be supported by adequate research, much is happening and both tutors and learners often report their latest discoveries with excitement. As has just been stated, text-based resources are widely available. For example, newspapers from most countries and in many languages are usually easy to access, as is information about many organizations, institutions and events that are very useful in developing the cross-cultural dimension, an area which classroom teaching often found difficult to come to terms with. There are also many interesting and informative sites that are developed with the language learner in mind. Some of the Web sites for trainers/learners of English are:

http://www.catesol.org/

http://www.hi-net.or.jp/hiyukita/

http://www.ilcgroup.com/home.html

http://www.planetenglish.com/

http://www.pacificnet.net/sperling/eslcafe.html

Those interested in other languages may want to visit the following sites as examples:

http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/langsite.htm

http://www.ncl.ac.uk/nsml/links/contents.htm

http://www.ncl.ac.uk/njw5/

http://bubl.ac.uk/link/subjects

http://www.travlang.com/

Overwhelming complexity is one of the characteristics of the Internet. From the point of view of LL there are some important pedagogical implications. First of all, what will be the future role of the trainer? Assistance will have to be offered so that time wasting and confusion do not overwhelm the learner. It is likely that training of trainers will become a major priority. There are also conceptual implications that have not yet been properly discussed. To what extent is the experience of surfing the Net (when looking at sites in a foreign language), with its emphasis on decision making and constant evaluation of materials akin to, for example, a visit to a foreign city? Are the new technologies not just complementing what was already there and/or offering greater opportunity for practice, but also offering opportunities for developing new skills? Will the changes go beyond how we learn into what we learn?

E-mail is already being used for collaborative learning in modern languages. Tandem learning (students linked individually and in groups to speakers of the L2) is having a major influence in a few institutions (http://www.slf.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/or http://tandem.unitrier.de/). The role of CALL (computer assisted language learning) is already well established and there are many useful CD-ROMs. One of their strengths is that they are excellent at giving attention to sound, which is often one of the main challenges in L2 acquisition. Often

melody or intonation and not so much pronunciation is the main obstacle in trying to get a message across.

All these developments may be seen as fragmented and complementary and all have their place in an eclectic approach. There are also already in existence projects that try to bring together all these experiences and use sound extensively. They call themselves 'virtual language centres'. One example is the Merlin Project (http://www.hull.ac.uk/merlin/merlin/html).

MULTICULTURAL/CROSS-CULTURAL LEARNING

We can see, therefore, that while language contributes to the formation of meaning it is rarely the complete message. There are other factors, most of which can loosely be termed 'cultural', which include gestures, tone of voice to indicate emotion, social conventions, religious beliefs, etc. We refer to the problems experienced by travellers and international professionals as culture shock, not as language shock, although as we will see the two are related. Hofstede (1994:209) describes the experience:

As illustrated over and over again in the earlier chapters, our mental software contains basic values. These have been acquired early in our lives, and they become so natural as to be unconscious. Based upon them are our conscious and more superficial manifestations of culture: rituals, heroes, and symbols. The inexperienced foreigner can make an effort to learn some of the symbols and rituals of the new environment (words to use, how to greet, when to bring presents) but it is unlikely that he or she can recognise, let alone feel the underlying values. In a way, the visitor in a foreign culture returns to the mental state of an infant, in which he or she has to learn the simplest things over again. This usually leads to feelings of distress, of helplessness, and hostility towards the new environment.

Perhaps he is overstating his case, but the points made are valid. This passage is trying to warn companies against the danger of having to terminate a placement abroad prematurely by being ignorant of the impact of the experience on the person involved. Hofstede also highlights the need for LL which incorporates cultural awareness, and not simply when travelling abroad, but when welcoming foreign visitors or when working and collaborating with ethnic minority people, businesses and organizations.

Harris and Moran (1989:271) state that employee development programmes would appear to have common objectives:

1. To encourage greater sensitivity and more astute observations of situations and people who are culturally different.

2. To foster greater understanding in dealing with representatives of micro-cultures within one's own country.

3. To improve customer and employee relations by creating awareness of cultural differences and their influence on behaviour.

4. To develop more cosmopolitan organizational representatives who not only understand the concepts of culture, but also can apply this knowledge to interpersonal relations and organizational culture.

5. To increase managerial effectiveness in international operations, especially with regard to cross-cultural control systems, negotiations, decision making, customer relations, and other vital administrative processes.

6. To improve cross-cultural skills of employees on overseas' assignment, or representatives of micro-cultures in our own country.

7. To reduce culture shock when on foreign deployment, and to enhance the intercultural experience of employees.

8. To apply the behavioural sciences to international business and management.

9. To increase job effectiveness through training in human behaviour, particularly in the area of managing cultural differences.

10. To improve employee skills as professional intercultural communicators.

More specific objectives can be seen in the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) cross-cultural training programme's focus on achieving seven skills:

1. Communicate respect.

2. Be non-judgmental.

3. Personalize knowledge and perceptions.

4. Display empathy.

5. Practise role flexibility.

6. Demonstrate reciprocal concern.

7. Tolerate ambiguity.

In the USA, Peace Corps training has the following objectives:

• Prepare the volunteer to accept and be tolerant of values, beliefs, attitudes, standards, behaviors, and a style of life that might be quite different from one's own.

• Provide the skills to communicate this acceptance to another person.

• Provide the sensitivity and understanding necessary to effectively interact with a person from another culture.

• Teach appropriate behaviour responses in situations where characteristics of the other

culture prevail.

• Prepare the volunteer to understand, anticipate, and cope effectively with the possible reactions to him or her as a stranger or as a stereotype of his or her own culture.

• Provide an understanding of one's own culture and the problems cultural bias might create.

• Provide the adaptive skills to cope with one's own emotional reactions in the new and strange situation and to satisfy one's own culturally-conditioned behaviour.

• Provide the skills needed for continued learning and adjustment in the other culture.

• Help develop an orientation toward the sojourn in the other culture as a potentially interesting, enjoyable, and broadening experience. (Harris and Moran, 1989:287)

CONCLUSION

The emphasis throughout this chapter has been on raising awareness of the implications for training and development within multilingual and multicultural areas. The aim has been to dispel misconceptions and to encourage consideration of the key theoretical and practical issues involved. The intention is to encourage greater participation by ensuring success based on realistic expectations of language and cross-cultural programmes. With this in mind, some of the main points are reiterated below:

• the link between language and communication;

• the interdependence of language and culture;

• the important role of geography and L1 in determining attitude towards L2 and opportunities for bilingualism and even multilingualism;

• the ways in which people have tried to make sense of language acquisition and the theories they have formulated;

• the ways in which the theories have been translated into practice in the form of teaching and training methods;

• the importance of a systematic approach to managing a programme;

• the role played by the individual and the personal characteristics that may contribute to effective training;

• the changing world of training and the opportunities offered by digital technologies.

Hopefully several of the issues raised will provide food for thought for those involved in training and development. A few questions may help to stimulate the process:

• What could the role of LL and cross-cultural training be within an overall HRD strategy?

• How could an organization you are familiar with implement an LL or cross-cultural development strategy?

• What is your own experience of LL and cross-cultural training? What were the strengths and limitations?

• Which language would be of greatest use to you?

• How would you go about learning that language to a proficient level?

• What do you think would be the strengths and limitations of LL courses advertised in the press as self-study courses?

• What would be the advantages and disadvantages of a total-immersion language course?

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18
Management Training and Development: Problems, Paradoxes and Perspectives

Dominic Irvine and Colin Beard

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The UK has about 2.75 million people who exercise managerial roles. About 1.1 million are in middle and senior management positions. About 90,000 people enter management roles each year. The great majority of these have no prior formal management education and training. (Constable and McCormick, 1987: Executive summary)

Constable and McCormick (1987) and Handy (1987) in their seminal reports both identified the need for formal, coherent training and development programmes for managers in response to the shortcomings of British management education in the context of international competition. In 1997, the UK Institute of Personnel and Development published its first guide on international management development (IPD, 1997). This reflects the increasing use of strategic alliances (Gugler, 1992; Nohria and Garcia-Pont, 1991) and cross-border trade (Daniels and Radebaugh, 1995; Segal-Horn, 1994) as a consequence of globalization (Harris and Moran, 1996; Julien, 1996). In the UK, there is an ever-growing assortment of training and development opportunities for managers. These range from MBAs to outdoor management development programmes in remote parts of the countryside. All purport to develop the manager, resulting in them being better suited to the challenges of the future.

In this chapter, we explore various problems, paradoxes and perspectives of management development. The aim of the chapter is to examine the fundamental issues

that affect management training and development (MTD). Reference is made to literature dealing with specific tools and techniques of MTD. We start by examining the nature of management. Then we investigate briefly the nature of development. Third, we explore the differing perceptions as to the purpose of management development. We then list the many and varied techniques of MTD. Fifth, we examine the difficulties of determining the effectiveness of MTD. Finally we conclude with a review of issues that ought to be taken into account when approaching the task of training and developing managers.

Having read this chapter you will:

• understand the difficulty in accurately defining 'management';

• know the main roles of a manager;

• know the essential principles of continuing professional development; and

• be able to evaluate management training and development.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY MANAGEMENT?

According to Drucker (1974:45) 'Effectiveness is the foundation of success–efficiency is concerned with doing things right. Effectiveness is doing the right things.' To measure, as Drucker (1974) suggests, the effectiveness of a given MTD programme it is necessary first to establish what is the desired outcome. Without this, measuring success is somewhat imprecise. To paraphrase Levitt (1991), 'unless you know where you are going, any road will take you there'. A clear idea of management enables those individuals involved in MTD to:

• assess the management development requirements of an individual;

• evaluate management development courses;

• measure the success of such management development programmes.

Herein lies the fundamental difficulty in MTD: 'What do we mean by management?' A 'lack of understanding of the concepts, principles and techniques of management makes it difficult ... to train managers' (Koontz *et al*, 1984:11). Defining management is not as simple as it might appear. Many authors have attempted definitions of management (eg, Killen, 1977; Stoner and Wankel, 1986; Torrington *et al*, 1989) to name a few, with varying degrees of success. In contrast some authors (eg, Drucker, 1974) argue that management

cannot be defined and suggest that a description of management is all that is possible. To illustrate the difficulties this creates for MTD, some examples of definitions and descriptions are

considered next. The examples cited are but a few of the many that abound. For a review of the distinction between training, education and development, see Chapter 1.

Definitions of management

A specific feature must be exclusive to an activity in order to define it according to Geach (1956). Handy (1985:361) suggests that trying to work out what are the defining elements of management is extremely difficult:

It has never been easy to define what a manager is, or what he (sic) does. It is a useful concept, 'management', the missing 'X', the exact qualities that are important, this tends to shift from equation to equation. Definitions of the manager, or the manager's role, tend therefore to be so broad that they are meaningless, or so stereotyped that they become part of the background. 'Yes, of course', we say and take no further notice.

To illustrate the breadth of definitions in use consider that offered by Torrington *et al* (1989:4):

management is not just a job done by people called 'managers'; it is an aspect of the job done by all those who have to cope with the problems and opportunities of organization: social workers, editors, ward sisters, chefs, housewives, and engineers, school teachers, and clergyman, the administrators, and many more.

Definitions such as this are almost suggesting that 'to live is to manage'. This may be the case: everybody has to manage to a greater or lesser extent whether it be pocket money, or a multi-billion pound business. However, a definition this broad is of little value to MTD as it validates almost any form of training on the grounds that it will involve management to varying degrees.

A commonly adopted solution that avoids the need to embrace the thorny issue of defining management is to describe the management process instead. By 'management process' what is meant is 'what managers do' (eg, Koontz *et al*, 1984; Tarr, 1973). Indeed, Drucker (1974:37) argues that a description of management is all that is possible:

Management … cannot be defined or understood–let alone practised–except in terms of its performance dimensions and of the demands of performance on it. The tasks of management are the reason for its existence, the determinants of its work, and the grounds of its authority and legitimacy.

This initially seems sensible reasoning. However, it can be applied to any activity. For example: '*Music* … cannot be defined or understood–let alone practised–except in terms

of its performance dimensions ...'. A *musician* is unable to make music without an instrument just as a manager without a situation to manage is unable to manage. The problem has shifted from defining the nature of management to defining what constitutes a management task, but the uncertainty remains.

Mintzberg (1973) is one of the few writers in this area to have attempted a systematic evaluation of what constitutes management. Mintzberg proposed 10 interrelated working roles performed by all managers. These are divided into three interpersonal roles, three informational roles and four decisional roles:

Interpersonal Roles:

• figurehead;

• leader;

• liaison.

Informational Roles:

• monitor;

• disseminator;

• spokesman.

Decisional Roles:

• entrepreneur;

• disturbance handler;

• resource allocator;

• negotiator.

Like Mintzberg, Stoner and Wankel (1986) described the roles of a manager. Stoner and Wankel's implication is that management requires an individual to be many things. The key headings of Stoner and Wankel's (1986:6–8) description have been listed below to illustrate this point:

- Managers work with and through people.

- Managers balance competing goals and set priorities.

- Managers must think analytically and conceptually.

- Managers are mediators.

- Managers are politicians.

- Managers are diplomats.

- Managers are symbols.

- Managers make difficult decisions.

The implications for management development are somewhat demanding. A person going into management would seem to require experience in the diplomatic service, a seat in parliament, an ability to mediate, and proven leadership–to name but a few. A tall order for the training department of an organization! This example illustrates the complexity in creating a basis and direction for management development.

Descriptions of management that preceded Mintzberg (1973) contain similar elements but not in such detail. For example: in the early part of the century, the French industrialist, Henri Fayol, wrote that all managers perform five management functions: 'they plan, organize, command, coordinate and control' (Robbins, 1991:4). Robbins adds that 'today, we've condensed these down to four: planning, organizing, leading and controlling' (1991:4). Once again these definitions are extremely broad. The teacher undertakes the four activities described by Robbins (1991). The teacher plans, organizes, leads and controls the lesson. It could be argued that a teacher satisfied the 10 roles that Mintzberg describes as well as those of Fayol and Robbins in which instance the word 'teacher' is synonymous with 'manager'. While management is an aspect of the teacher's role, just as teaching may be part of a manager's role, neither is the core aspect of the other's job.

Placing these broad, abstract concepts into the tangible realistic development training for managers is problematic. At what stage is a manager deemed satisfactorily competent at managing uncertainty? The concept does not enable a management trainer, citing the criteria identified earlier to easily:

• assess the management development needs of an individual;

• provide a template for management development;

• measure the success of such management development programmes.

One description of the purpose of management is given by the Management Charter Initiative (MCI:1997:6): 'To achieve the organization's objectives and continuously improve its performance.'

The management role is divided into seven key roles which each contain units and elements of competence (for an overview of the MCI integrated structure see Table 18.1). The elements consist of performance criteria and knowledge requirements. Interestingly, this fits in with Drucker's (1974) claim that management cannot be understood except in terms of its performance dimensions. These performance dimensions, or competences as they are known (eg, Frank, 1991;Woodruffe, 1991), are the basis of the MCI description.

The MCI Management Standards (MCI, 1997:12) provide a very useful tool for those

involved with human resource development:

The Management Standards represent a benchmark of best practice in management in the UK today. They describe what is expected of managers at all levels; they also list the knowledge, understanding and personal competencies managers require in order to perform competently.

Organisations and individual managers within them are encouraged to use the standards in any way that will help them achieve their objectives and continuously improve their performance. Organisations already put the Management Standards to a wide range of uses, including:

• auditing management capability;

• benchmarking organizational performance;

• developing organizational structures;

• improving the performance of individual managers;

• defining job roles and job descriptions;

• recruiting and selecting personnel;

• identifying training and development needs;

• defining personal development and continuing professional development programmes;

• developing training programmes;

• developing vocational and academic qualifications;

• managing and assessing performance;

• coaching and mentoring;

• planning for succession and developing promotion criteria;

• defining pay and reward schemes;

• counselling managers for redeployment and redundancy.

The MCI integrated structure is shown in .

While the MCI concept of management may be very useful, it is still a description and not a definition. In describing what a manager does, it fails to explain what is required to be a manager. It ignores the essential essence of management–the factor 'X' (Handy, 1985).

The defining feature of management enabling distinction from other activities such as teaching, without having to rely on descriptions, is absent. For the purposes of MTD, its usefulness is in its comprehensive cover of the role of the manager; the limitation is that it is relatively inflexible and is backward-looking in that it is based on a description which is, by definition, dated. In the constantly changing world of management it is always likely to be outof-date. Determining the defining elements would seem to be essential to fully understanding management.

It may be that management is analogous to Wittgenstein's example of the aroma of coffee (cited in Mounce, 1988), or Nagel's (1979) example of what it is to be a bat–impossible to define.

Where does this leave MTD? How can MTD proceed if it is not possible to overcome the first hurdle, deciding what management is? Hospers (1990:122) argues that it is quite possible to understand what is meant without being entirely clear as to the precise constitution of a term:

Table 18.1 The Management Charter Initiative (MCI): The Integrated Structure
Manage Activities Key Role A

The integrated structure

Key Role A: Manage Activities	Key Role C: Manage People
Manage Activities describes the manager's work in managing the operation to meet customers' requirements and continuously improve its performance.	*Manage People* describes the work of managers in work in managing the operation to meet getting the most from their teams. It covers customers' requirements and continuously recruiting, training, building the team, allocating improve its performance. and evaluating work, and dealing with people problems. It also includes managing oneself and relations with others at work.
A1 Maintain activities to meet requirements	C1 Manage yourself
	C2 Develop your own resources
A2 Manage activities to meet requirements	C3 Enhance your own performance
A3 Manage activities to meet customer requirements	C4 Create effective working relationships
	C5 Develop productive working relationships
A4 Contribute to improvements at work	C6 Enhance productive working relationships
A5 Manage change in organisational activities	C7 Contribute to the selection of personnel for activities
A6 Review external and internal operating environments	C8 Select personnel for activities
	C9 Contribute to the development of teams and individuals
A7 Establish strategies to guide the work of your organisation	C10 Develop teams and individuals to enhance performance

A8 Evaluate and improve organisational performance

Key Role B: Manage Resources

Manage Resources covers planning and using physical resources (money, premises capital equipment, supplies and materials) effectively and efficiently.

B1 Support the efficient use of resources

B2 Manage the use of physical resources

B3 Manage the use of financial resources

B4 Determine the effective use of resources

B5 Secure financial resources for your organisation's plans

C11 Develop management teams

C12 Lead the work of teams and individuals to achieve their objectives

C13 Manage the performance of teams and individuals

C14 Delegate work to others

C15 Respond to poor performance in your team

C16 Deal with poor performance in your team

C17 Redeploy personnel and make redundancies

Key Role D: Manage Information

Manage Information describes the manager's role in obtaining, analysing and using information effectively to take decisions. It also covers leading and contributing to meetings.

D1 Manage information for action

D2 Facilitate meetings

D3 Chair and participate in meetings

D4 Provide information to support decision making

D5 Establish information management and communication systems

D6 Use information to take critical decisions

Key Role F: Manage Quality

Manage Quality describes the specialist role of the quality manager, covering total quality management, quality assurance and quality control.

F1 Promote the importance and benefits of quality

F2 Provide advice and support for the development and implementation of quality policies

F3 Manage continuous quality improvement

F4 Implement quality assurance systems

F5 Provide advice and support for the development and implementation of quality systems

F6 Monitor compliance with quality systems

F7 Carry out quality audits

Key Role E: Manage Energy

Manage Energy describes the role of those managers with special responsibility for ensuring the organisation develops and implements policies for using energy in the most efficient way.

Key Role G: Manage Projects

Manage Energy describes the role of those responsible for planning, controlling and completing projects to the sponsor's satisfaction.

E1 Identify the scope for improvement in the way the organisation manages energy

E2 Provide advice on the development and implementation of energy policies

E3 Promote energy efficiency

E4 Monitor and evaluate energy efficiency

E5 Identify improvements to energy efficiency

E6 Provide advice and support for the development of energy efficient practices

E7 Provide advice and support for the development and implementation of systems to measure energy usage

E8 Provide advice and support for improving energy efficiency

G1 Contribute to project planning and preparation

G2 Co-ordinate the running of projects

G3 Contribute to project closure

G4 Plan and prepare projects

G5 Manage the running of projects

G6 Complete projects

Among a definite set of characteristics, no one characteristic has to be present as long as all or even some of the others are present; but it cannot do without them all. This might as well be called the quorum feature of definitions. A quorum of Senators must be present before the Senate is officially in session, but no particular senator has to be there.

This is not to imply that an acceptable definition of management will be ambiguous but that the edges of the application of the definition may be unclear. In some situations the definition is clearly applicable and others not, but that there is an area where the applicability and usefulness of the theory is not clear cut. Guba (1990:17) in this instance discussing the use of the term 'paradigm', notes that there are great many ways in which the word is used, and argues that rather than those being a weakness, they can be considered a strength. Perhaps the same could be said of management:

I believe that it is important to leave the term in such a problematic limbo, because it is then possible to reshape it as our understanding of its many implications improves. Having the term not cast in stone is intellectually useful.

It is sufficient to note here that management is not a clear and precise term on which MTD can be based. Before embarking upon a training programme it is first necessary to satisfy oneself that the outcomes of the programme relate to the concept of management as understood not only by the training organization, be it internal or external, but also by the organization for whom the training is being delivered. These are issues of culture and beliefs and are discussed in more detail later.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY DEVELOPMENT?

Development can be likened to 'growth', except that the latter is often associated with getting bigger and the former is associated with getting better or wiser. The ever-changing nature of work necessitates a process of continual management development. As Fahey and Narayanan (cited in Segal-Horn, 1994:28) suggest, 'Without a willingness to consider alternative futures, an organization is likely to find itself constrained and victimized by its implicit presumption that the future is going to be largely a replication of the past.' It is perhaps for this reason that the IPD advocates 'continuous professional development' (CPD), the essence of which is continually developing managerial competence. This requires self-direction, self-management and responsiveness to the development opportunities, be they generated through work or outside of the workplace. The essential principles of CPD (adapted from IPD, undated:3) are:

• Development should be continuous in the sense that the professional should always be actively seeking to improve performance.

• Development should be owned and managed by the individual learner.

• CPD is a personal matter and the effective learner knows best what he or she needs to learn.

• Development should begin from the individual's current learning state.

• Learning objectives should be clear and wherever possible should serve organizational or client needs as well as individual goals.

• Regular investment of time in learning should be seen as an essential part of professional life, not an optional extra.

The process is one of self-development. The key to self-development is that learners take responsibility for their own learning: what they learn, when they learn, with whom they learn, where they learn and how they learn. In so doing, the learner accepts the consequences of choosing a programme or programmes of self-development.

Over the years the self-development approach has moved from periphery to centre stage and there are few training programmes in organizations today that do not include self-development elements in the design and delivery (Stansfield, 1996). While this can be seen as placing the power and control in the hands of the learner, a process typically referred to as 'empowerment', it can sometimes be used as a means of abdicating responsibility by the organization for the learner. It can also be used as a means of reducing expenditure on training programmes as coaching and developing staff is often time-consuming, demanding and expensive. Two sources that provide detailed and informative discussion of self-development are Pedler (1990) and Whittaker and Megginson (1996).

Current evidence from many companies suggests that as pressures increase on a managers' time and resourcefulness, more organizations are focusing on the facilitation of self-development. According to Whittaker and Megginson (1996) the reasons for the increasing popularity of self-development are as follows:

• society ebbs and flows between individual choice on the one hand and social and organizational definitions of what is needed on the other; currently we seem to be approaching the end of a trend towards individualization;

• the increase in the 'unprogrammability' of jobs which makes teaching and course-based training design much less relevant to the work of organizations;

• a move from role cultures to achievement cultures;

• the removal of layers of management has meant that people have had to fend for themselves and use their own best judgement more. The knowledge explosion and the proliferation of specialisms implies that bosses, trainers and experts of all sorts find it harder than before to know as much about jobs as the people doing them. Organization capability is decreasingly located in the plant, finance and systems of the firm, and increasingly in people's heads, so these staff need to be in charge of their own development;

• people doing skilled and professional work are less likely than before to be actually employed by the organization, and more likely to work as consultants, contractors or suppliers–the flexible firm; and, in the extreme, the virtual firm: companies with huge turnover but only a handful of actual employees;

• learning at the start of a career that lasts a lifetime applies to nobody's job nowadays: continuous learning is the norm;

• as organizations federalize or fragment into business units, new forms of organizational 'glue' are needed to keep the enterprise together. The networking involved in self-development provides a powerful bond between people who may not work directly together.

The historical precedent for self-development pre-dates modern changes in business practice. Successive Indian civilizations have for thousands of years developed methodologies for self-discovery, self-improvement and self-development (Parikh, 1991:10):

The relevance becomes even more clear when you reflect on the evolution of management over time. The initial focus was on 'how to get more and better work done through machines'. The next step was 'how to get more and better work done through people'. Now the emerging interest is in 'how to develop people through work'. The thrust of management now is more towards 'mobilizing' rather than just 'organizing'. This implies creating an environment that makes better people out of your employees, rather than just better employees out of your people. Unless the people are developed to their maximum potential, corporations cannot achieve their best, reach their peak performance level, and maintain it. This is what managing yourself is all about.

Valuable lessons can be learnt from other cultures, not least the opportunity to challenge widely held beliefs on the way management should be conducted. A cautionary note is offered by Ackers and Preston (1997) who argue that the differences between cultures means that it is rarely an easy process of transplanting a differing approach in full. For a discussion on the differences between cultures and the way in which they affect business, see Daniels and Radebaugh (1995), Franke *et al* (1991) and Harris and Moran (1996).

Given the importance of self-development, the lack of time allocated by managers for self-development, management development or the coaching and development of staff is of concern. If Parikh's (1991) argument is accepted, everything a manager does is an opportunity for self-development and time taken to realize this potential should be encouraged. There are numerous tools and techniques available to help with self-development, for example: life lines, life planning, career development, self-awareness, action learning sets, learning logs and personal portfolios. The benefits of maintaining a personal portfolio incorporating a record of work done and knowledge and skills acquired are:

• a personal portfolio provides a record of work done–useful when seeking a new appointment;

• it assists in career development;

• it provides evidence of performance and development;

• it helps in determining the direction and focus for self-development;

• it can provide evidence of both corporate and team portfolios;

• it can be used to illustrate the benefits of tasks done;

• it can assist in appraising performance in the absence of a formal process.

A personal portfolio might include:

• a work file and/or box in which information is stored;

• cross-referenced achievements detailing learning outcomes, experience and skills acquired;

• materials such as copies of reports produced, publications and products;

• certificates for academic, vocational and non-vocational qualifications;

• details of ongoing studies;

• job specifications of previous and current posts including original advertisements;

• newspaper or newsletter cuttings, reports, photographs, video and audio tape footage;

• professional links with other organizations;

• learning logs.

The process of self-development is as much an issue of personal development as it is management development. It could be argued that to treat management development as a separate issue distinct from developing the person is akin to the mind/body fallacy of Cartesian Dualism (Hospers, 1990). That is to say the two cannot be viewed separately. If you develop the manager, you develop the person; if you develop the person you develop the manager. The issue then for management development is in terms of how to ensure

that a skill learnt in one environment, for example managing the risk in outdoor activities, can be transferred and utilized in another setting such as managing a business. It is not a failing of the definition of management in that it is not possible to distinguish between a teacher and a manager, but that a teacher *is* a manager. On this basis, it could be argued that it is an issue of relatives, although not in a nihilistic sense (MacIntyre, 1994). For the teacher, more of the workload is dedicated to teaching than managing and for the manager, more time is dedicated to administrative or strategic tasks than teaching. Both are inherently managerial by nature.

PERCEPTIONS OF MANAGEMENT TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The third issue facing those working in MTD (the first being the problem of defining management, the second being the nature of development) is the validity of the various theories. Increasingly within the literature, concepts which have been considered almost *a priori* knowledge in MTD are being critically scrutinized, for example Holman *et al's* (1997) review of Kolb's theory of experiential learning and Reynolds' (1997) critical examination of learning styles. MacIntyre (1994:107) for example, takes a critical look at the research evidence on which contemporary management is based and describes from an alternative paradigm a very different way of viewing research into management:

the social world of everyday, hard-headed, practical, pragmatic, no-nonsense realism which is the environment of management is one which depends for its sustained existence on the systematic perpetuation of misunderstanding and of belief in fictions ... the realm of managerial expertise is one in which what purport to be objectively-grounded claims function in fact as expressions of arbitrary, but disguised will and preference.

The problematic nature of management and the increasing number of challenges to core concepts mean that it is necessary to understand the implicit assumptions inherent within the various MTD approaches. These different approaches are referred to here as paradigms, using the broad definition offered by Guba (1990:17): 'A paradigm is a basic set of beliefs that guides action, whether of the everyday garden variety or action taken in connection with a disciplined inquiry.' While this is the definition used here, Goodman (1997) discusses the various other ways in which the term is used.

Issues of paradigm are not questions of absolutes in that one paradigm is better than the others. They represent instead the perspective taken. If it were possible to determine which paradigm was categorically right or wrong,

There would be no doubt how to practise inquiry. But all such belief systems or paradigms are human constructions, and hence subjected to all the errors and foibles that inevitably accompany human endeavours. (Guba, 1990:18–19)

Thus, the choice of MTD programme will reflect the perspective of the individual, the trainer and/or organization. For example, it is important for the individual concerned with the selection of MTD programmes to be wary of 'coffee table book' promises that offer for example 'common sense' approaches to management development. The hard-headed world of management (MacIntyre, 1994) that depends upon a common sense approach may have much appeal to the practitioner. However, the notion of common sense as justification has mythical validity. Common sense is not, as it would sometimes appear to be seen, *a priori* knowledge. Common sense is the 'unquestioned delimitation of the terrain of relevance

from that of irrelevance' (Grey and Mitlev, 1995:79). To be guided by common sense may in fact be to entrap 'oneself-in the current "traditions" or "fads" dominant among the social groups to which we belong, at work or elsewhere' (Gill and Johnson, 1991:28). Common sense may be a little more than a convenient label under which to hide unresolved issues. Moreover, *common sense* is not always *common practice*!

The power of a commonly understood concept can be phenomenal. Consider the problems associated with persuading others that the world was round, or the difficulties experienced by Darwin when presenting his treatise. Thus caution must be exercised when employing a particular MTD approach to ensure that the technique has some validity and is appropriate. What is being argued here is not that one particular approach is necessarily better than another but to foster an awareness that while one approach may appear the obvious and the most logical approach it may do so not as a function of a carefully considered set of beliefs, values, morals and ethics but because of other variables which provide an illusion of credibility such as common sense. For example, consider the different ways in which management development is viewed. According to Ackers and Preston (1997:687):

One perspective sees management development as a form of help and argues that it is necessary for managers to learn about the organizational culture for their own benefit and well being. The sense of confusion associated with a change of organization or job is intended to be lessened by senior management providing enough information to managers, so that they know what is expected of them and are able to feel part of their new place of work. Promotion opportunities and attendance on management training courses should not only provide the individual with additional knowledge and skills, but also result in improved job satisfaction and enjoyment overall. In this unitarist view, business needs and personal self-development happily coincide.

In contrast, alternative views of MTD do not see the relationship between the manager and the organization as quite so cosy. Höpfl and Dawes (1995) refer to management development not just in terms of the realization of potential but also in terms of regulation and control. As Ackers and Preston (1997:687) illustrate, 'Critics of MD (management development), on the other hand, argue that it occurs purely for the benefit of senior management and manipulates the individual managers involved.' In this view management development is perceived more in terms of the power of senior management over those in lesser positions. This is best exemplified by the unlikely event that a participant will criticize the MTD process in which he or she is involved because in so doing they are making a statement about the person who selected the methods in the first place. To criticize and destroy the training method upon which a company's strategy rests, is to call into question those who have advocated its use. It is, in effect, making a statement as to their competence in choosing such a method. An alternative way of knowing that seeks not to develop and better understand the MTD methods in use but fundamentally destroys the

credibility upon which the method rests is hardly likely to find favour with those who have chosen the initial strategy (Ackers and Preston, 1997).

We have first-hand experience of working as consultants to organizations where individuals have challenged the perceived wisdom of the training methods to which they are being subjected. Unfortunately, in many such instances, rather than this being taken as an opportunity to review the validity of the technique used, those raising their concerns have been seen as either 'not part of the team', or 'of the wrong stuff ' by the employing organization. Höpfl and Dawes (1995:26) illustrate the power of the relationship between those who have control over MTD programmes and those who do not. They suggest that:

The pursuit of an appropriate management paradigm of managerial practice leads to a partial acknowledgement of the person and a partial extension of power. This fundamental and underlying paradox resides at the heart of management development.

The point being made is that while on the one hand MTD takes into account the need of the individual and provides appropriate resources, be it training or otherwise to meet those needs, it is still within the context of control of those who are in charge within the organization. Dispenza (1996:245) applies this line of reasoning to the notion of empowerment and concludes that:

Those who do the empowering allow those who are being empowered a defined locus of power. I would argue that the term 'empowerment' involves the depoliticization of control. ... Control is the underlying outcome, but the meaning of the relationship is managed ... in such a way as to make the exercising of that control a less contentious issue: the idea of being empowered is a more comfortable prospect than being controlled (both for those doing the empowering and those being empowered), but the outcome may be the same.

Views such as those expressed by Dispenza (1996) and Höpfl and Dawes (1995) illustrate the careful way in which seemingly well understood terms, when scrutinized, turn out to be contradictory.

The world of management is a constantly changing environment, not just in terms of the greater opportunities brought about through changes in technology but also in terms of the way in which people work together. Increasingly there is an emphasis away from motivating and controlling staff in a mechanistic way to where responsibility is being divested more widely in the organization. The implications for MTD are that the approach taken needs to reflect the paradigm on which it is based. It should be able to reflect the changing culture of modern management and if necessary facilitate the change.

The difficulty is not only that there are differing perspectives about the purpose of MTD but also a change in the beliefs that underpin the way an organization is managed. To

complicate the matter further, these changes vary from industry to industry, culture to culture and from one country to another. In the telecommunications market, the shift from

state-owned organization to private company has resulted in a blurring of the boundaries between public and private sector MTD (Beard and Hartman, 1999). With some private sector managers taking 'time out' to work in voluntary organizations, elements of corporate MTD are transmogrifying the nature of voluntary sector MTD and vice versa (Paton and Hooker, 1990). Changes such as this are reflected in managerial behaviour often evidenced by a change in the language used, for example, from *control* to *empowerment* (Dispenza, 1996).

TECHNIQUES OF MANAGEMENT TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

In assessing the various tools that can be used in MTD the assumption being made is that it is possible to train and develop managers. As Smith (1993) noted, the nature/nurture argument, the influences of childhood and other experiences, may all play a part in the debate on how managers can or should be trained and developed. Wickens (1992:3) goes as far as to ask whether 'management development is dead'. He argues for a more holistic approach, an idea with which Doyle (1995) in his article on reforming management development appears to agree.

It is unsurprising given the conceptual problems described earlier that there are a great many tools and techniques offered. The cultural influences of other working styles, in particular the Japanese, mean that the range of techniques can be bewildering. For example, Collis (1993) drawing on Chinese philosophy, has no doubt that the secret lies in Confucianism. Parikh (1991) argues it is to Indian traditions that we should turn. Ackers and Preston (1997) argue that Japanese approaches might suit the Japanese culture but not that of the UK. In another ongoing debate, Ibbetson and Newell (1996) argue that 'adventurebased experiential learning' provides the key to effective management development. Again, it is possible to find those who disagree; for example Irvine and Wilson (1994) are more cautious in their support of what they term 'outdoor management development'.

A common theme throughout all the activities is an experiential element that reflects the pragmatic nature of management. Both Stoner and Wankel (1986) and Mintzberg (1973) argue that activities in MTD are essential. As Mintzberg (1973:188) somewhat esoterically described the process:

One cannot learn to swim by reading about it. One must get into the water, splash around, and practise various techniques with advice from someone who knows what skills swimming requires. Eventually, with sufficient feedback, he (sic) learns to swim. The same holds true for management skills. The student must be immersed in the milieu; he must practise the skill; and he must receive constructive feedback on his performance from someone who understands the skill.

This would seem to make sense. It is hard to imagine that any amount of study will adequately equip a manager for the experience of having to inform an employee that their services are no longer required. As a nurse once said to one of us, 'You don't have to have had a baby to be a midwife–but it helps.'

The various approaches are described in more detail in Chapters 15 and 16. Listed below is a sample of the many and varied tools and techniques available:

• attending short courses, seminars, workshops, conferences;

• being coached by a more experienced colleague;

• forming a learning agreement;

• establishing a mentorship relationship;

• participating in a learning/support group;

• team working;

• undertaking a special project, assignment or consultancy;

• taking on a new area of responsibility;

• changing work practices or systems;

• a variety of on-the-job methods such as focused staff meetings, reading, discussion, reflection, observation and maintenance of a learning log;

• undertaking a research contract;

• seeking and receiving feedback;

• engaging in action research;

• action learning sets;

• qualification courses–educational, eg MBA, Masters degrees, or vocational programmes, for example, the MCI;

- outdoor management development (OMD) programmes–see the OMD case study;

- development portfolios;

- a secondment or exchange;

- critical incident techniques;

- SWOT analysis–strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;

- specialist development consultants;

- providing cover, deputizing, shadowing.

> OUTDOOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES
> OMD has become increasingly popular as a method of developing managerial effectiveness. It relies on the use of a combination of classroom and outdoor activities to create an environment conducive to changing behaviour. It primarily focuses on personal development.

OMD courses are currently taking on a new dimension as designers reconsider the amount of physical recreational activity in the programmes which occurred as a result of instructor expertise in this area in many of the outdoor centres located in the National Parks in the UK. Such recreational activities were then translated into teamwork or leadership courses and have recently been criticized for their potential for deselecting or dis-interesting some participants, relying to some extent on physical strength or good psychomotor skills. New programmes increasingly have development specialists who are skilled in the design and facilitation of such programmes, and they have begun to incorporate community projects or environmental projects into the management development activities. This offers a greater sense of reality to the project, unlike the traditional 'planks and drums' exercises, as well as providing a sense of giving; which appears to enhance a participant's energy and possibly, the degree of transfer of learning (Beard, 1996). See Irvine and Wilson (1994) and Ibbetson and Newell (1996) for information.

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MANAGEMENT TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The other part of Levitt's (1983) suggestion about knowing where to go is not just that we know the starting point, but that we also know at what stage we are on the journey and when we have reached the destination. This is achieved through evaluation. Evaluating MTD is a challenging task. As Douglas (1983) noted, managing at any one time is a complex blend of skills. Determining whether the action of the manager is attributable to a particular programme of training or whether it a function of some other unknown variable can be difficult. A brief recollection of Elton Mayo's classic experiment (cited in Brown, 1988) illustrates the difficulty of determining what is or are the causal variable(s). Evaluation of MTD is subject to the same well-documented difficulties as experienced in social science research in general. To take the process of conducting interviews for example; there are difficulties with the translation of meaning (eg, Deutscher, 1984), differences in culture (eg, Daniels and Radebaugh, 1995) and problems of interpretation (eg, Emory, 1985). There is also the difficulty of determining whom to evaluate. Smith and Piper (1990:9) have identified four groups of people directly involved in MTD who should be involved in its evaluation:

1. the purchaser of training;

2. the training agency;

3. the trainee; and

4. the independent contracted assessor or researcher.

Consider the perspective identified earlier that an individual is unlikely to criticize a course because in so doing he or she is making a statement about those who organized the course. Given this, asking for an unbiased evaluation from a participant is perhaps optimistic. If the participant's evaluation is considered along with that of all the parties identified thus far as having a stake in the process–an evaluation by the organization which delivered the training or development; the colleagues of the individual, who should be asked whether they think the manager has improved in the areas for which the training was prescribed; possibly an independent review–then the perspective is likely to be more balanced. Too often, as Smith and Piper (1990:9) suggest, the 'potential value of these informed views is seldom realized'. More commonly an end-of-course questionnaire is distributed to the participant to be completed prior to their departure. This 'happy sheet' evaluation as it is known, because it is completed during the euphoria often associated with the end of a course, serves only to provide information as to whether the participants *think* they have changed rather than whether they *have* changed. Such an evaluation should be avoided. Information as to the effectiveness of a programme can only be known some time after an MTD programme has finished and the person has settled back into the working environment. The nature of the evaluation should take into account the difficulties associated with research into the social sciences. Texts such as Gill and Johnson (1991), de Vaus (1993) and Denzin and Lincoln (1994) give some idea of the many issues and variables involved.

KEY ISSUES TO CONSIDER

Before deciding on the appropriate MTD tool, it is first necessary to ask:

• What do I mean by management? That is to say, what are the skills required for the post of manager within the organization?

• What is the culture of the organization? The preferred method of MTD varies from one organization to another. For example, an organization dependent on volunteers will need to develop a different set of skills to those serving the public sector. (See the case study on BTCV illustrating their strategy for management development.) The public sector has different requirements to those of commercial businesses (see Sanderson and Foreman, 1996). In addition to the types of organization there are international variations in culture.

• What MTD tools are best suited to equipping the individual with the required skills, given the culture of the organization?

• How will the MTD intervention be evaluated both in terms of auditing the need and determining the effectiveness?

BRITISH TRUST FOR CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS

This case study focuses on management training and development within the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV), a voluntary organization that has been at the forefront of training and development issues in the UK environmental sector for many years.

The BTCV staff development programme and information pack is an example of a development that took place as a result of an external intervention by the UK Open University Business School at the invitation of the training and development manager and the chief executive. The BTCV senior managers were receptive to the need for change and welcomed the external consultation and research from the OU Business School.

The BTCV began in 1959 and some 20 years later, with 50–60 staff, made an appointment of a Fieldwork Adviser. In 1980 the Fieldwork Adviser became the National Training Officer. In 1987 a Training Unit was formed with four members of staff. The BTCV thus has a long history of involvement with staff and volunteer training. Many people who work in countryside organizations in the UK have some involvement with BTCV and its training programmes.

In 1984 a document called 'A Strategy for the Year 2000' predicted that some 120 training courses would be delivered in 1984, rising to 258 in 1987/8–the equivalent of 4960 training days. There was a considerable investment in training, but this was in the form of training courses. The traditional training programme was successful to an extent, but a degree of scepticism existed as to whether the organization really cared about its staff and volunteers beyond simply investing in training programmes. Some staff suggested that managers sent people on a training 'course' to solve management problems and that little support was available as a follow up after the course.

In 1989 the Open University completed its study of 'Management development issues at BTCV' and suggested that BTCV had been through a period of rapid growth and change followed by a period of entrenchment. This resulted in staff being uncertain about priorities and entering a phase of low morale. Problems were partly due to insufficient management know-how and experience among those carrying substantial management responsibility. The BTCV was thus advised to develop and state its policy and philosophy on the development of its people. The Open University also came to the conclusion that the BTCV should develop a more integrated approach to staff training, to the development of its people and to staff/volunteer appraisal. The BTCV accepted the report and responded favourably. The report also suggested that the organization should develop a managerial style with loose-tight properties–a dispersed management team in which managers had considerable autonomy and discretion but also a team tied by a shared approach and a well defined set of basic procedures. More management support, rather than management control, was needed.

Some 20 managers met in 1989 to discuss the report under the guidance of the training manager and chief executive. BTCV eventually entered a new phase of staff and managerial training and development. The BTCV undertook to declare its policy and philosophy towards staff–and created a comprehensive staff development programme and guidance pack to help those who managed people. At that time it was ahead of many management development programmes that existed in the private, public or voluntary sector in the UK.

Caring for and developing staff starts from the advertisement of the post and the appointment of the successful person and continues through their induction, their development and training and through to their eventual departure. Managers needed to keep track of staff developments and many managers in BTCV were encouraged to develop a working staff/volunteer file for each person. They also developed a greater commitment to their own development of managerial skills.

CONCLUSION

The complexity of variables which constitute the MTD environment provide a rewarding and challenging sphere of work. Successful MTD interventions depend on ensuring that there is a 'best fit' between the needs of the individual, the organization and those responsible for the delivery of the programme. Lewis (1991) provides a useful framework for achieving the latter objective. What has been argued in this chapter is that because the process of MTD is fraught with a great many variables, it is essential that time is spent determining in the first instance what is meant by management. It is only when this is achieved that an assessment of the skills of managers can be undertaken to determine the type of MTD intervention required in order to furnish participants with the desired skills and knowledge. Determining the desired management style also enables effective evaluation. These strategies will ensure that a situation does not arise whereby managers are equipped with skills which conflict with the nature of the business. For example, if the culture of the business is based on a rigid hierarchy, advocating empowerment may cause frustration and conflict and ultimately loss of staff, or business, or both. Similarly, equipping managers with skills based on an American culture of business will not help when conducting business with Asian countries.

Given the immense complexity of management, it is easy to take any MTD intervention and find faults and criticize. This is an essential part of the process by which the tools and techniques used are developed to ever improve their effectiveness. Critics should note that while it is easy to find fault, attempting to improve the way in which we manage is a worthy quest and is better than not developing managers at all.

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Section Five:
Assessment and Evaluation of Learning, Training and Development

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19
Evaluation and Assessment

Cathie Edwards

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Our preoccupation with evaluation and assessment springs from an age-old desire or compulsion to 'understand and improve our lot' (Pawson and Tilley, 1997:xi). This endeavour involves our setting out to discover all that we can, or all that we can use, about how effective we are. We may do this to comprehend or to justify past actions or we may do it to become more successful in the future achievement of identified goals and aspirations. Any exploration of the current scope and parameters of evaluation and assessment needs to acknowledge our normal daily experiences of mulling over and muddling through.

Methods of evaluation and assessment can offer us the illusion of being able to measure the unmeasurable anomalies of human experience. They can help us make judgements within hierarchical frameworks about how well or not we are doing by comparison with others. They can help us give an account of our own and others' contributions to particular projects and ventures. They can give us some insight into our own growth, progress and development. By and large we devise and seek them in order to exert some kind of rigorous control in an unpredictable and uncertain world.

What kind of control and the how, why, where, when and with whom, are guided in the first instance by the concept at the heart of the term evaluation–to value. If one accepts that, essentially, evaluation is a process for establishing the value or worth of something (Bramley, 1996) then this chapter is specifically concerned with the value or worth of those

changes that take place through the process of learning. More precisely still, it focuses on learning that is related to employment, the workplace, continuing employability and professional development.

Because values are at the heart of evaluation and of assessment, they are activities that may attract controversy and disagreement, particularly where there are underlying conflicts of interest in the world of work. Different stakeholders in any evaluative exercise will be looking for a different 'spin' on the process and on the outcomes. This 'spin' may be one that protects their investment, or their image. It may be one that helps them to tackle a problem that had not been tackled by other means. Methods of evaluation and assessment are therefore sometimes deployed to help stakeholders make better decisions. They are also deployed to justify decisions or courses of action already taken (Pawson and Tilley, 1997:xii).

Most of us living in post-industrial economies are surrounded by evaluation and assessment in every area of our lives. Our children are tested for achievement and progress, and schools are publicly accountable through league tables for how 'well' their pupils perform. The extent to which different schools can genuinely be compared with one another through these mechanisms, and the cost to the self-esteem of children and staff being judged by such unwieldy criteria have been much reported. Furthermore, customer care feedback sheets proliferate in hotels, restaurants, fast food chains, even modes of public transport.

The impression given is the handing of consumer power to the customer. But the extent to which this data is actually analysed and acted upon effectively can vary enormously. There are staff recruitment assessment processes that act as gate-keeping mechanisms, restricting entry into a particular workplace or profession. This can have the effect of protecting the public from poor practitioners. But it can also prohibit entry by members of diverse groups that differ from the incumbents, with the resultant loss of new and important contributions to the workplace. So staff recruiters in large organizations monitor the effectiveness of equal opportunity policies by evaluating data collected from interviewees. Again, what happens to this data and the extent to which it informs future practice, in turn becomes the subject of higher education evaluative research projects, and so it goes on.

This exponentially growing trend towards accountability (Phillips, 1994a) has, at the extreme edges, become an obsession no longer producing or pointing towards better practice. The demonstration and production of evidence that assessment or evaluation has taken place, has in some respects, become an end in itself. At the other extreme, there are still workplaces and areas of public activity where a total lack of concern for either betrays considerable arrogance or uncertain reputation.

This chapter concentrates, in the main, on areas that appear to be most topical and most

likely to be of value to readers who wish to discriminate between different approaches they intend to use or which might be used upon them. It offers some examples by way of illustration

of some of these different approaches, but it does not offer a comprehensive array of detailed examples. These can be sought by reference to the texts drawn upon to arrive at this overview.

Having read this chapter you will:

• be familiar with key terms associated with evaluation and assessment;

• be aware that these terms are not discrete, but overlap;

• know about contemporary approaches to evaluation and assessment; and

• know about a selection of applications of evaluation and assessment.

KEY TERMS

Many of the terms in this field are used interchangeably, notably evaluation and assessment themselves. Meanings and usage certainly overlap though you may read authors who claim they are more discrete that this implies. For the sake of continuity I propose to use the term 'evaluation' in the main when talking about the structured response and review, by designers, trainers, managers or participants of a learning event or process, and of a development or training intervention. As we shall discuss below, this evaluation might be located at individual, group, project, organizational or community level. I will use 'assessment' more specifically in relation to the learning or performance of an individual learner. Much of the literature aligns itself in this way, though it is important to stress again that this is simply a convention and you should not be too concerned where you find this otherwise.

The term 'evaluation' tends to be employed to encompass all activities undertaken to help educators, trainers and learners decide what aspect of teaching and learning design and methodology worked and what did not, what should be kept and what changed. This is to arrive at a judgement about the intrinsic value and worthwhileness of an approach to learning. Those aiming at greater precision might employ the term and techniques of 'validation'. Tools of validation attempt to measure accurately whether specific learning objectives or prescribed outcomes have definitely been achieved or not (Newby, 1992). An example of a this would be the appropriate design of a multiple choice test in which participants on a health and safety course have to record the correct sequences of a number of essential actions and procedures. With both of these terms it is the learning event, process or intervention which is under scrutiny rather than the learners themselves. The design of the test itself can be 'measured' or judged by comparison with others of a similar nature and with close reference to the original objectives.

The term 'assessment' by contrast tends to be employed to encompass activities that help decide what the individual learner has learnt. The emphasis here is on that individual's capacity and ability rather than the means by which he or she achieved the learning. Terms such as 'test' and 'measurement' here apply to the learner's demonstration of acquired learning. The assessment of ability as opposed to the assessment of learning is the premise upon which the National Vocational Qualifications movement in the UK and similar initiatives elsewhere in the English-speaking world have been built.

The assessment of work-related learning and worker ability (competence and performance) is under intense scrutiny due to a number of developments. The two most influential of these are the rapid growth of and access to information technology and the quality assurance movement. Staff appraisal is increasingly, though not systematically, being linked to the evaluation of the effectiveness of staff development and the assessment of individual learning in the workplace as organizations attempt to negotiate the boundaries between employer's and employees' responsibility for individuals' contribution to the viability and competitiveness of the workplace.

Accreditation and certification of learning either in the workplace, as with National Vocational Qualifications, through professional bodies representing sector-wide interests, or by academic institutions continues to proliferate, as employees demand external evidence of transferable skills in a marketplace where they will want or be required to change jobs and/or careers much more frequently. 'Accreditation' literally refers to the attribution of publicly recognized units of credit for attainment of a particular course of study, or demonstration of evidence of achievement or ability. 'Certification' refers to the awarding of a named certificate, usually representing a number of units of credit.

The processes of accreditation and certification of learning or competence are also in turn submitted to the further processes of quality assurance and standardization. So internal or external examiners and verifiers are trained and appointed to moderate and verify assessment and examination procedures. The purpose of moderation is to ensure parity between assessed candidates, especially where different assessors are involved whose interpretation of set assessment criteria may differ. The purpose of verification is to ensure that the criteria for assessment are being appropriately applied to the assessment process.

The evaluative and assessment processes above are by and large predicated on negotiations between individuals in organizations in the context of broad organizational policies and procedures such as boards of examination or staff appraisal policies. There is also a tradition of alternative approaches to evaluation and assessment which are based around the notion that the groups within which an individual works and is learning are influential in that learning process and therefore responsibility for learning, achievement and success should be located at group rather than individual level. Team work, collaborative evaluation, peer and group assessment and review, all stem from this

perspective that assessing the individual in isolation from the group misses essential aspects of the broader issues affecting workplace learning and competitiveness.

CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO EVALUATION

The specific purpose you have in evaluating a training intervention will influence your choice of method and approach. The effectiveness of that choice will be determined by the appropriateness of the approach and methods, how well it is carried out, what other stakeholders contribute to or detract from the process and, of course, what is being evaluated. Your purpose may be to gauge the impact of training on learners' understanding, behaviour or attitudes (Bloom, 1964) as they affect their workplace performance. It may be to justify the cost of the training staff salaries and budget. It may be to stimulate creative thinking and problem-solving in a turbulent or stagnating environment. It may be to look at links between staff development and organizational effectiveness or profitability, employee satisfaction or organizational survival.

In these contexts evaluation is best placed within a cycle of training and development of people and organizations, as shown in the training wheel in Figure 19.1.

Here evaluation is conceived in parallel with training needs analysis and design. It is not something that is tacked on to the end of the process as an afterthought. The premise here is that you can't know if you have arrived if you didn't know where you were bound. This conceptualization applies fairly comfortably where specific skills or quantifiable knowledge are the subject of the training, where discrete objectives can be set. It is less applicable where professional development or learning experiences aim to provoke creative thinking, new perceptions of self and others or the challenging of attitudes.

Evaluation of a planned learning or training intervention is notoriously difficult to carry out in ways that are valid and verifiable. So although few courses or developments take place these days without some kind of feedback sheet being handed out or feedback discussions being tabled, these procedures run the risk of appearing either superficial, or of

Figure 19.1 The training wheel

capturing and containing serious dissent or critique before it can really take hold. But there are some complex reasons for the difficulties entailed which are not just to do with a genuine desire, or lack of it, to be flexible, responsive and creative.

Kirkpatrick's (1994) now classic model of four levels of training evaluation is probably still the most robust and widely used both in research into training effectiveness and in Human Resource Development (HRD) practice:

Level 1: What is the initial *reaction* of participants to the training?

> (This is often elicited from oral discussions and feedback checklists at the end of specific events.)

Level 2: What have participants actually *learnt* from the training?

> (This is often not measured at all. When it is, it can be through tests, contributions to portfolios, more detailed oral or written feedback.)

Level 3: Are participants *behaving* differently as a result of the training?

> (Assessment through observation is sometimes used to determine this. It can be notoriously prone to bias and difficult, though not impossible, to verify.)

Level 4: Has the training of these participants had the desired *result* in the workplace?

> (Measures here are considered the hardest to apply or to attribute specifically to the training.)

This has been derived and adapted from Kirkpatrick's original and numerous subsequent sources. You may want to compare it with others including Warr *et al's* (1970) CIRO (context, input, reaction and outcome) approach. This has tended to be used more widely in Europe. A succinct explanation can be found in Phillips (1991:46). Further applications can be found in Bramley (1996) and Barrington and Reid (1997).

The longer it takes to evaluate any aspect of a training course and track its link to workplace performance the more unrelated factors may intervene (Parry, 1997:4). There may, for instance, be aspects of organizational policy and practice where it is vital that the effectiveness of training is evaluated, for the well being of staff. Nevertheless, the possibilities of undertaking this effectively may vary enormously. A nuclear processing plant may require safety checks to be understood by all staff and rigorously applied. In this instance it would be conceivable to pre-test, train, and re-test levels of employee knowledge in relation to fixed procedures.

One could also test for retention of learning after a certain period of time. This could give very accurate indicators of the effectiveness of training at individual level with additional information regarding the impact on the organization (not to mention the world at large!) gleaned from comparative accident and incident statistics. One then also has to take into account the additional effect of raised awareness on those statistics. Actual numbers of incidents may have gone down, while reported incidents go up due to increased awareness and sense of responsibility. There may be no accurate way of gauging the real figures. But

this does not mean it is not worth trying. It depends what is at stake and how much is invested in the desired 'outcomes'.

Equally important for this imaginary nuclear processing plant might be the requirement to monitor the effectiveness of anti-discrimination at work training. The pre-testing and retesting of attitudes and behaviours could still prove worthwhile indicators of change and progress. The numbers of people from diverse groups represented at senior management level, or the number of harassment incidents reported might offer some indication of effectiveness of training at organizational level. But over what period of time might one expect to have to monitor change before it could have been deemed to have taken place or not? The effect of other factors and variables might be even less easy to identify and monitor, though again this does not mean one decides to abandon evaluation. It means one takes care to make tentative or modest claims unless one has clear evidence.

Evaluative methods

At whichever level you are evaluating there are always basic questions you need to ask:

• Why are you undertaking the evaluation?

• Who are the stakeholders?

• How will you gather information?

• Who will have access to it?

• How will it be analysed?

• How will it be used and why?

• Is there a pre-designed or standard instrument available? (This may be particularly relevant for computer-based training.)

• Have you got the time and resources to pilot your methods?

• Can you anticipate the time and resources needed to complete the evaluation?

• How accurate does the information need to be, and if very accurate, how are you going to deal with error and bias?

• When, how often and over what period of time will it be undertaken?

You then need to look at the types of evaluative method or instrument you think are most suitable or available. They may well include:

• personal inventories;

• attitudinal diagnostic questionnaires;

• factual written tests;

• observations of practice or of interpersonal skill;

• group brainstorming or analysis;

• focus groups;

• observation of work performance;

• analysis of documentation according to pre-defined or open criteria;

• portfolios of evidence;

• individual or group interviews.

EVALUATION OF TRAINING USING THE FOCUS GROUP METHOD,
KIRKPATRICK'S FOUR LEVELS AND THE CIRO FRAMEWORK
Evaluator: Training Officer
Organizational context: Training Department, Radio Telefís Éireann (RTE)
Dublin, Ireland
Training needs analysis has identified a need for a more effective and creative
way of training television directors, camera crew and production assistants.
RTE is sole provider but susceptible to public ratings of programmes.
Input: Training in the use of storyboarding.
Evaluative methods used: Observation and description; focus groups and
discussion; questionnaire.
Reaction–immediate: Increased capability in the use of, and enthusiasm for,
storyboarding in the case study group. Limited use in control group indicating
little change.
Learning–Evidence of learning taking place can be inferred from subsequent
changes in behaviour.
Behaviour–Clear evidence that group were able to use the technique
effectively in programme production
Outcomes–longer term: The impact of the 'Hawthorne' effect was considered,
as future groups were not subject to such rich research, and evaluative
processes, used the storyboarding technique much less, subsequently.
In his discussion around the various methods used in this case study, Ryan
placed particular emphasis on the effectiveness of the focus group not only as
an evaluative tool but also as a means of reinforcing motivation and
commitment to the original learning aims. The method was chosen because
its perceived strengths are that it encourages group behaviours involving
creative exchange of ideas and the opportunity to express feelings. The group
discussion was facilitated rather than ad hoc. This was to maximize diversity
of opinion sharing while keeping to the topic under consideration. Ryan
considered the principal perceived weakness of this method was the hazard of
leaving participants disappointed if

the 'wish list' created as a result of creative thinking is not fulfilled. He dealt with this by discussing the issue with the participants.
Further information on the use of focus groups is in Patton (1990:336) and the details of this study can be found in the unpublished dissertation of Thomas Ryan in the DACE library at the University of Sheffield.
With acknowledgement to Tom Ryan, Radio Telefís Éireann, Dublin.

Evaluating reactions to training

In some circles it has become fashionable to talk in a rather derogatory way about end-of-course feedback as 'happy sheets'. However, where evaluation of even this brief nature is not entered into cynically but as a part of a genuine dialogue between learners, learning facilitators and learning media, the explicit expression of feelings and ideas immediately after an event, experience or incident has an absolutely essential and significant role to play. Like any aspect of reflection it enables learners to begin to communicate not only to others but also, just as importantly, to themselves. The more complex issue is what status the data collected herein should have in relation to future planning of learning for others or further learning for the person or group giving the feedback. There are no formulae that can guide this part of the process. 'Bad' feedback and 'painful feelings' do not necessarily indicate that there was no useful learning. Nor do they always indicate that the design or content of an event needs radically changing. There may be much more complex and subtle human reasons. This will always be a matter of judgement, an art and not a 'science'.

Formats for evaluations at this level can vary from open oral discussion, to individual conversation, from a simple blank sheet to a list of topics. Sometimes negotiation of criteria for feedback takes place at the beginning of a learning event, enhancing ownership of the whole process. Sometimes organizers have particular data they are required to collect which relate to organizational policy. Common criteria include:

• *content*–level, relevance, interest, quality, quantity;

• *style*–pace, format, accessibility of language, flexibility, inter-activity;

• *media*–readability, variety, clarity, user-friendly, familiar or innovative, stimulating;

• *personnel*–motivation, presentation, commitment, professionalism;

• *location*–comfort, fit-for-purpose, refreshments, access, facilities;

• *timing*–in relation to external and internal events.

And finally–congruence of all the above with the overall aims and objectives.

Evaluating cognitive learning from training

It is generally acknowledged that a high percentage of activities designed to train people are not subsequently followed by a specific evaluation of what participants have learnt. The extent to which people know more or better, or the extent to which attitudes have changed is often only traced through occasional anecdotal evidence. Indeed the interface between the evaluation of effective training and the assessment of individual learning is always problematic. Stating the obvious, it is easier to test simpler learning objectives, for example, the acquisition of procedures for using a new piece of IT software. On the other hand, the extent to which someone understands what becoming anti-racist or a more flexible manager of people means is much harder to test with that kind of certainty, because we have intrinsic problems agreeing definitions of these things in the first place.

Evaluating changes in practice and behaviour after training

Where we are talking about the acquisition of new skills that are demonstrated and then tried out in training, learners require time and the appropriate occasion to practise new learning over a period of time before new skills can become habitual. Paramedics (albeit more thoroughly trained in the first place) are much more likely to retain first aid training because they get lots of opportunities to practise it, than is a college lecturer doing a three-hour workshop on first aid to fulfil basic college requirements. Methods associated with evaluating behaviour change are mainly based on observation either in a simulated environment or in the workplace itself.

In order to evaluate the changes in behaviour of a person we need to assess the trainee against certain specific measures. These behavioural measures require careful specification and writing. Mager's (1991) informative advice on preparing instructional objectives is strongly recommended.

Evaluating how an organization benefits from training

One of the current trends in organizational evaluation of training is the desire to measure 'return on investment' (ROI). This has become highly relevant in some sectors where budgets and sponsorship are increasingly competitive, and where one has to justify expenditure or devise strategic plans at operational level. There are those who have attempted to devise ways of predicting the monetary value of training, that is to say, the extent to which training can enhance profitability, increase productivity, develop new markets or create business opportunities (Phillips, 1994a). An example of a programme which markets itself using this approach is a creative writing correspondence course which guarantees to return

a student's fee if they have not earned more than this through publication fees within the first 18 months of completing the course.

While acknowledging that 'the relationship of input to output almost never can be established without considerable effort' (Phillips, 1994a:3), the point here is to attain a level of confidence in what can be attributed to whatever, to an extent, will satisfy senior management, sponsors, or in the instance cited above, students/customers. Phillips attributes the increased pressure to demonstrate ROI in the USA, at least, to the emergence and convergence of five factors. These are the increase in training and development budgets; the linking of HRD to competitive business strategies; the perception of HRD as critical to total quality management; the need for ROI information by senior executives and the general trend towards accountability that has already been discussed in this chapter's introduction (Phillips, 1994a:5–6).

Once again, the biggest issue at stake in attempting to measure ROI of training is the level of accuracy of that measurement. One has to judge whether the extra time and rigour taken to produce criteria for valid and reliable data, to gather data and analyse it according to those criteria, and to communicate and disseminate the results, will achieve more than approximations and estimates. However, the work that Phillips has done and the number of case studies he cites are worthy of further study for anyone wishing to investigate his specific techniques and formulae in greater detail. Note also that organizational change has itself become so continual that any data thus analysed may be of more use in justifying past investment than it can be in predicting and forward planning. For those with the resources and a certain level of organizational stability, they are well worth investigating. For most of us, the assurance of certainty these quantitative methods seek to achieve is illusory.

In summary, the easier it is to gather evaluation data, particularly at the individual reactive level, the more often we tend to do it, and the less likely it is to be seriously convincing or powerful. Conversely, the harder it is to gather evaluative data, particularly at the level of organizational effectiveness, the less we tend to do it and the more valuable and powerful it is for us when we do.

CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

Contemporary approaches to the assessment of individuals' learning and of workplace performance have been influenced by two essentially countervailing philosophies. The first is the competences movement and the second the concept of continuing (professional) development, now increasingly being called lifelong learning. The key difference between them relates to the locus of control, responsibility and accountability around what it is considered important to know (or for some, what knowledge is), and what it is considered

important to be able to apply effectively in the workplace. This of course raises the controversial question: effective for whom?

Abstract generalizations around these issues become problematic and perhaps the easiest way of illustrating the debate is by caricaturing an organizational philosophy and management structure in which these different approaches might seem desirable. A very hierarchical organization, say a biscuit factory, where role demarcation is very clear cut, might choose to take a competency approach to staff development. A 'flatter' organization, such as a small public relations agency, or an owner/manager organization such as a GP practice, might embrace continuous development with a high degree of self-responsibility for learning and for keeping up to date with current techniques and research.

Part of the controversy includes different perceptions and conflicts of interest around the notion of standards, both of education and training provision and of workplace performance. In the UK, the 1997 Dearing Report has made a clear but elsewhere strongly disputed case for the establishment of a coherent national framework of qualifications at every level, congruent with the National Curriculum in schools and with National Vocational Qualifications in the workplace. There is vociferous opposition to these developments in many quarters, with an alternative case being made for peer review and for a rich and diverse mix of provision and approaches. At the heart of the controversy lie different perceptions of the nature and value of learning and conflicts of interests around issues such as freedom, responsibility and independence on the one hand and guaranteed standards and accountability on the other.

Whether assessment is related to a certificated and accredited qualification or local workplace performance criteria, there are perennial dilemmas associated with any assessment process. These include:

• the assessor as advocate for the person being assessed;

• anxiety about the implications of failure;

• leniency or strictness in the application of criteria;

• interpretations of criteria;

• rigid adherence to 'objective' criteria undermining creativity and originality;

• the assessor as gatekeeper for entry into a professional body or academic community;

• consistency between assessors;

• consistency of assessment over a period of time;

• consistency of assessment in different locations and between different cohorts;

• the impact of the environment and context of assessment–the notion of the 'competent workplace';

• the 'halo' effect of the previous performance of the assessed person or of their power position in the profession or organization;

• the ownership of learning and of assessment.

These and associated concerns have led to various assessment approaches designed to overcome the worst defects. None of these ultimately remains unchallengable.

Formative and summative assessment

Concerns about the role of assessment either in enhancing or inhibiting learning has led to a distinction between formative and summative assessment. The former offers feedback to the learner while their programme or period of learning is still taking place so that they can act on and improve their performance. The latter marks the arrival (or not) at a specific stage or level of learning which the learner is deemed to have reached. At its simplest, formative assessment would include the assessor's detailed and overall comments on a piece of written work that the learner can use to either improve that piece or the next one. An example of a summative assessment would be the grade given for the final piece of work, or the percentage achieved in an exam.

Norm-referencing and criteria-referencing

Norm-referencing entails the comparing and contrasting of standards reached by any one group of students being assessed during the same period, sometimes called benchmarking. Consistency is apparently achieved by organizing results around clusters of grades or percentages, eg a certain percentage of grade A passes. It is criticized for not taking into account different levels of ability and achievement between groups.

Criteria-referenced assessment aims at the production of set criteria to which assessors are meant to adhere, offering greater consistency within and between groups. In practice even when these are conscientiously used, it is claimed that benchmarking is still in operation and that criteria are subconsciously weighted by assessors according to their educational background, personal experience and preferences. The other problem with criteria is that over time, knowledge in and across disciplines grows and criteria may need to be constantly updated to account for this, thus undermining any claims for consistency or universal standards.

Self- and peer-assessment

Arguments in favour of self-assessment are made on two main counts. The first is that selfassessment approaches encourage individual responsibility for and commitment to learning to a much greater degree. Hence learning is deeper, richer and more relevant for the individual. The second relates to who is best placed to judge what learning has taken

place and how authority is invested in them. Is it through positional power only, within the assessing organization; is it through their external credibility; their actual knowledge and understanding of the learner or 'body of knowledge' in the subject being assessed? Obvious criticisms of self-assessment include the degree to which learners will be too hard or too soft on themselves in relation to their own perception of the standard required. Also problematic can be the learners' ability to locate their achieved understanding within a much broader spectrum of knowledge.

Peer-assessment helps to deal with some of these dilemmas by the moderating effect that several different perspectives will bring to that of the individual. This can also be beneficial where ownership of and motivation for learning are vested within a group of learners, as in the focus group in the case study above, especially when the learners also share the same status in relation to the process and the task of assessment. However, other factors influencing group dynamics, including power games and 'trade-offs' can create equal if different problems for fair and equitable assessment processes.

Competence-based assessment

Frameworks for competencies have been devised along somewhat different principles in Australia, the USA and the UK, with several other countries now beginning to look at what they might adopt or adapt. The impetus for NVQs in the UK gathered momentum in the 1980s with the government's response to indicators that the UK was lagging behind other European countries, with higher unemployment figures and lower skilled and more poorly qualified workers. Concerns expressed in the Manpower Services Commission's *New Training Initiative: An Agenda for Action* (MSC, 1981) culminated in the 1986 White Paper, *Working Together, Education and Training* (ED, 1986). The core idea was that each industry would set up a Lead Body with overall responsibility for the development of standards.

The assessors of NVQ candidates will either be their own workplace supervisor, where they have one, or an equivalent person from another workplace. The advantages of the former are that assessment formally or informally already forms part and parcel of the normal supervisory and management functions within organizations. A supervisor should have an in-depth knowledge of a person's work performance and be best placed to ensure that appropriate evidence is gathered. The disadvantages are that personal bias, or knowledge of the person unrelated to what is being assessed will result in the misuse of power and position in relation to the assessment.

Another of the great strengths of the competency approach is also its greatest drawback. Taking time to gather evidence of different and corroborating kinds can result in deeper learning if the candidate evidently needs to learn aspects of the job in order to demonstrate competence, and is afforded the time to do this well. It can strengthen the case for a

candidate's competence and result in the production of a portfolio of evidence which is far

more meaningful than a piece of 'writing about' produced via an exam or test. However, the gathering of such evidence and its assessment have become notoriously time-consuming. There are huge problems around the availability of opportunities to demonstrate some of the competences required to complete a qualification. The number of obstacles to successful completion can lead to corner-cutting, and a corruption of the assessment process. There is also the potential for assessors to collude with candidates over incomplete areas of evidence in order to finalize an otherwise seemingly endless process (Smithers, 1993).

CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to offer an overview of contemporary approaches to evaluation and assessment in the workplace. It also offers an insight into some of the controversies and anomalies surrounding any systematic attempt to account for learning and performance while acknowledging the importance and value of our attempts to do so. In fact we can no longer opt out of this growing trend towards accountability. The best we can do is to be as clear as possible to ourselves and others why we are evaluating or assessing something or someone. Where we have power we can leave room for challenge by others and be pragmatic about the level of resources we invest in these endeavours. Where we are at the mercy of others' criteria and processes we can use our insights to get the maximum learning and value out of them for ourselves.

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20
Total Quality Training and Human Resource Development

Ron Chapman and John P Wilson

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this chapter we will be considering two main dimensions. The first addresses how training and development can contribute to the introduction, development and ongoing support of the total quality management (TQM) process. Training and development play a critical role in the achievement of TQM; this is strongly endorsed by Thomas (1992:xvi) who stated that, 'Training and development have a central–arguably *the* central–role to play in making quality a reality.' Furthermore, it is in the Human Resource Development (HRD) department where the organizational change consultants normally reside; thus it is personnel from this department who are frequently the main drivers and maintainers of TQM throughout the organization.

The second dimension addresses how we can ensure that the training and development we provide is quality training. Training and development specialists must not only be able to deliver the training and support required for TQM; they must also do so in a quality manner. In other words, they must walk the talk.

The two dimensions of training for quality and quality training are very closely related and therefore we will use the term Total Quality Training to cover both of them.

Having read this chapter you will:
• be able to define quality;

• understand some of the principles of the quality gurus;

• be aware of the main quality standards;

• be able to apply the European Foundation for Quality Management model to the training and development process; and

• understand the principles and approach of Investors in People.

QUALITY

What is quality?

In common with many words that are in daily use, and which we think we understand until we inspect them closely, 'quality' is much more complex than first appears. Defining quality has proved to be a relatively elusive concept as the following quotations reveal:

Crosby (1979) 'Conformance to requirements.'

Deming (1982) 'Quality should be aimed at the needs of the consumer, present and future.'

Juran (1989) 'Fitness for purpose.'

'The totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs.' (ISO 8402, 1986)

And total quality management is defined by the British Standards Institution (1991:2) as:

A management philosophy embracing all activities through which the needs and expectations of the customer and the community, and the objectives of the organization are satisfied in the most efficient and cost-effective way by maximizing the potential of all employees in a continuing drive for improvement.

The business case for quality

At the end of World War II manufacturing output was relatively low and demand exceeded supply. For this reason manufacturers were able to sell all they produced almost regardless

of quality. Moreover, there was little competition, which encouraged a complacent attitude among suppliers of products.

One country in particular, Japan, had a major influence on manufacturing quality in the West. At the end of the war its industry was devastated but, through attention to quality it ultimately succeeded in capturing large slices of many industries. This caused concern among many Western companies who had seen their market share decline and therefore they decided to adopt many of the production techniques employed in Japan. The irony of this was that one of the main figures contributing to the renaissance of Japanese industry was Dr W E Deming from the USA who lectured on quality procedures.

This changing scenario affecting industry in the West was described by Mortiboys (1991:3), in a guide to chief executives, who stated that:

Our traditional management style has been based upon:

• short term profitability (businesses);

• clamping down on costs, but tolerating high levels of waste;

• a take-it-or-leave-it attitude to customers;

• treating employees as productive robots;

• competing on price (businesses);

• buying at the lowest price;

• discouraging change–but changing arbitrarily when forced to change;

• macho-management–the troubleshooter.

This management style was successful only as long as:

• employees would do as they were told;

• demand exceeded supply;

• customers' expectations increased only slowly;

• the worldwide situation didn't change.

But after World War II the situation *did* change, slowly at first, but then faster and faster, until we reached the current worldwide situation that is characterized by:

• more competitors than ever;

• fiercely competitive strategies;

• fluid and unpredictable financial systems;

• customers' expectations increased;

• investors' expectations increased;

• everything changing;

• businesses and service organizations fighting to survive in this environment.

Standards

In Britain production standards had existed for a long period and had been driven by the armed forces in their requirements for reliable equipment. The Engineering Standards Association was founded in 1901 to ensure levels of quality and subsequently was renamed

the British Standards Institution (BSI). The standards detailed by BSI were generally for specific areas; however, it recognized the need for an encompassing standard that addressed the whole process of design, manufacture and delivery. In 1979 it introduced BS 5750 to improve the quality of management and this has since led to the European EN 29000 and the more internationally recognized ISO 9000 standards.

The quality gurus

A number of people have been influential in the development of quality within organizations. Another source for the quality movement can be traced back to the 1920s when Walter Shewhart, a business executive at AT&T's Hawthorne Plant in Chicago, utilized statistics to control the quality of telephones manufactured at the plant.

Building on Shewart's work, Dr W E Deming worked in the US Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of the Census in statistical sampling techniques. His main impact on quality occurred not in the USA but in Japan where in the late 1940s and early 1950s he spent much time lecturing on statistical quality control to various groups including The Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers (JUSE). As a result of Deming's influence on Japanese manufacturing production he was awarded Japan's highest honour, The Second Order of the Sacred Temple.

Deming devised a checklist of 14 points to help achieve quality:

1. *Create constancy of purpose* to improve product and service.

2. *Adopt new philosophy* for new economic age by management learning responsibilities and taking leadership for change.

3. *Cease dependence on inspection* to achieve quality; eliminate the need for mass inspection by building quality into the product.

4. *End awarding business on price:* instead minimize total cost and move towards single suppliers for items.

5. *Improve constantly and forever the system of production and service* to improve quality.

6. *Institute training on the job.*

7. *Institute leadership:* supervision should help do a better job; overhaul supervision of management and production workers.

8. *Drive out fear* so that all may work effectively for the organization.

9. *Break down barriers between departments:* research, design, sales and production must work together to foresee problems in production and use.

10. *Eliminate slogans, exhortations and numerical targets* for the workforce, such as 'zero defects' or new productivity levels. Such exhortations are divisive as the bulk of the problems belong to the system and are beyond the power of the workforce.

11. *Eliminate quotas or work standards, and management by objectives or numerical goals:* substitute leadership.

12. *Remove barriers that rob people of their right to pride of workmanship:* hourly workers, management and engineering; eliminate annual or merit ratings and management by objectives.

13. *Institute a vigorous education and self-improvement programme.*

14. *Put everyone in the company to work to accomplish the transformation.* (Bendell, 1991:6)

Not all of Deming's points are accepted by other commentators, in particular the elimination of slogans and quotas. However, many of these points can be applied to the HRD department. Similarly, the points made by another guru, Juran (1989), also have applicability to the delivery of Total Quality Training. Juran advocated a 'quality trilogy' of quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement and developed a 'Quality Planning Road Map' which is as follows:

1. Identify who are the customers.

2. Determine the needs of the customers.

3. Translate those needs into our language.

4. Develop a product that can respond to those needs.

5. Optimize the product features so as to meet our needs as well as customers' needs.

6. Develop a process which is able to produce the product.

7. Optimize the process.

8. Prove that the process can produce the product under operating conditions.

9. Transfer the process to Operations. (Bendell, 1991:9)

Juran (1989) provides powerful ammunition for the HRD specialist when interacting with senior management on quality issues. He maintains that most quality defects are caused by poor management rather than poor workmanship, and that 80 per cent of quality problems arise from management control. He maintained that training to address quality issues

should begin at the top of the organization. Unfortunately, management is often very reluctant to address this and mistakenly believes that it knows what is required:

The instinctive belief is that upper managers already know what needs to be done, and that training is for others–the workforce, the supervision, the engineers. It is time to re-examine this belief. (Juran, quoted in Bendell, 1991:10)

Crosby (1979:111–12) insists that there are absolutes of quality management:

Quality means conformance, not elegance.

There is no such thing as a quality problem.

There is no such thing as the economics of quality; it is always cheaper to do the job right the first time.

The only performance measurement is the cost of quality.

The only performance standard is Zero Defects.

Juran criticizes Crosby's 'zero defects' because he believed that it was based on the notion that the majority of quality problems are a result of careless and unmotivated workers. Crosby (1979:112–19), however, maintained that 'quality is free' and detailed 14 steps to achieve it:

1. Management Commitment

2. Quality Improvement Team

3. Quality Measurement

4. Cost of Quality Evaluation

5. Quality Awareness

6. Corrective Action

7. Establish an ad hoc Committee for the Zero Defects Programme

8. Supervisor Training

9. Zero Defects Day

10. Goal Setting

11. Error Cause Removal

12. Recognition

13. Quality Councils

14. Do it Over Again

A further influential writer on quality and customer care was Claus Moller who invented the Time Manager system personal organizer and, in the mid-1980s, developed the customer care programme 'Putting People First' for Scandinavian Airline Services and British Airways. This programme was held to be largely responsible for the improved performance of both airlines. The company Time Manager International provided training for a variety of organizations including the 16,000 employees of the European Commission.

Moller emphasized the value of training and wrote a 10-point training philosophy:

1. Training should bring about change.

2. Training is a process.

3. Training is an integral part of the company's strategy.

4. Training requires management commitment.

5. Training must be inspirational.

6. Training is for everyone in the company.

7. Training should be easily understood.

8. Training should include tools and written material.

9. Training should be geared to the target group.

10. Training should be holistic. (Bendell, 1991:23)

BEST PRACTICE BENCHMARKING

If we accept that quality means 'conformance to specifications' then quality means whatever we define it to mean. Thus, we may define the specification so low that in fact the product or service we produce may be so completely lacking in quality that people will not purchase it.

McDonald's produce burgers consistently to an exacting standard millions of times per day; however, that standard will not be the same as that required for a five-star Egon Ronay restaurant where customers will expect food of a different calibre. This is not to say that food produced in one restaurant is necessarily inferior, only that it is designed for different markets and has its own standards. Likewise, if we consider automobiles; the quality of a BMW has a significantly higher specification compared with the cars produced in the former communist countries of Eastern Europe.

Thus quality on its own is of limited value since it can be specified at any level. There is no ultimate measure of quality; it is all relative and for this reason services and products need to be compared with others in order to produce some form of hierarchy. This is done by benchmarking, which involves comparing your organization with the best in the field in order to assess how good, bad or indifferent your performance is.

Best Practice Benchmarking (BPB) essentially involves:

• establishing what makes the difference, in their customers' eyes, between an ordinary supplier and an excellent supplier;

• setting standards in each of those things, according to the best practice they can find;

• finding out how the best companies meet those challenging standards;

• applying both other people's experience and their own ideas to meet the new standards– and, if possible, to exceed them. (DTI, 1991:1)

The reason for companies undertaking BPB is that there are numerous advantages, including:

• better understanding of their customers and their competition;

• fewer complaints and more satisfied customers;

• reduction in waste, quality problems and reworking;

• faster awareness of important innovations and how they can be applied profitably;

• a stronger reputation within their markets;

• and as a result of all these, *increased profits and sales turnover.* (DTI, 1991:1)

In order to undertake BPB there are five steps in the process that can be taken. These apply not only to the organization but also to the HRD department and provide a useful template for the enhancement of training and development provision.

Step 1. What are we going to benchmark?

The main factors in deciding which areas to benchmark are to consider those that are of most importance to the customer or stakeholders and which will have the main impact on the profitability or cost-effectiveness of the organization.

Benchmarks that might be considered for customers of training and development include:

• availability of courses;

• support for line managers;

• speed of response to enquiries;

• consistency of quality of delivery;

• accuracy of training records, etc.

The best way to find out what is of importance to your customers and stakeholders is to ask them, using questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, course evaluation forms, etc.

There is a view among many managers that what gets measured gets done. Thus, if specific performance indicators are identified for a department or the whole organization they will provide a focus for attention. Benchmarking factors that assess and enable the evaluation of the HRD department's performance compared to others include:

• number of courses delivered;

• number of training days delivered by each trainer per year;

• the cost of delivering training courses;

• the level of income per trainer;

• the level of client and delegate satisfaction;

• the number of repeat purchases of training, etc.

Step 2. Who are we going to benchmark against?

There are four main types of approach with which an organization can benchmark itself: internal, competitive, parallel, and generic (Bramham, 1997).

First, there is the opportunity to assess performance against other parts of the same organization (*internal*). This will provide some general indicators but there will be no direct

comparison of like-for-like information. To do this the HRD department will need to compare itself against other HRD departments in the same organization if there are multiple sites. Equally, if the organization has operations in other countries then this too provides the basis for comparison. This internal benchmarking is probably the easiest form to undertake and because the operations are similar it provides the same principles for comparison. On the other hand, it is rather introspective and does not provide an external basis for comparison. For smaller HRD departments these options are unlikely to be available.

The second form of benchmarking is *competitive* and is undertaken through comparison with direct competitors. In this way clear evidence may be provided against which to assess the extent to which the organization is performing within its particular industry or field. There are a number of difficulties involved in obtaining this information, since the other organizations may not willingly reveal commercially confidential information. However, there are industry monitors that provide market information reports and standard guidelines of industry practice.

The third type of benchmarking involves the comparison of one organization with one or more organizations which operate in *parallel* industries. For example, a bus operator might compare its operating standards with those of an airline. Or, a university might compare its student record handling with that of a credit card company.

Lastly, organizations can look for information and comparisons with those in totally different organizations–*generic.* For example, Marks and Spencer, the retailer, decided to produce sandwiches and learnt how to butter bread by studying the practices of screen printing in the textile industry.

> BENCHMARKING STRUCTURED MANAGERIAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AT DAIRYGOLD, IRELAND
> Dairygold is one of Ireland's largest producers of dairy and meat consumer products for home and international consumption in more than 50 countries. Dairygold Cooperative Society Ltd has an annual turnover of approximately $500 million, employs 3000 people, and is owned by more than 8000 farmer shareholders.
> Dairygold took part in a European Union Adapt-funded initiative designed to encourage 'adaption of the workforce to industrial change'. These changes include increased international competition, rapid technological change, and an increased demand for diversified products. These pressures for change have resulted in Adapt's four objectives:
> • accelerating the adaption of the workforce to industrial change;
> • increasing the competitiveness of industry, services and commerce;

• improving qualifications, increasing flexibility and mobility to prevent unemployment;
• anticipating and accelerating the creation of new jobs and new activities especially among SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises).
In the case of Dairygold the purpose of the Adapt programme was:
to develop and deliver structured learner-centred training and development interventions designed to enhance the managerial competencies of its managers by exposing them to world-class manufacturing techniques and tactics.
An assessment of training needs was conducted and this resulted in core competencies being identified as: managing self and strategy; managing people; managing transitions; managing teams; and managing in a competitive environment.
Adapt programmes have a transnational element designed to:
• reinforce the impact of projects upon national level policies and practices;
• foster understanding between employment/training systems in member states through planned transnational activities, ie joint development and/or exchange of expertise with one or more partners in other member states.
As a result Dairygold developed partnerships with REFA, an industrial development company in Germany; C2FAC, a cooperative organization in France; and Gussonia, an agricultural cooperative in Spain, all of which provided a valuable source of benchmarking. REFA arranged visits and some of the host firms were Siemens technological sites, MAN heavy truck assembly, Michelin tyre factory, John Deere, and Mercedes' assembly factory in Karlsberg.
The project had a number of results:
• developed group corporate strategy;
• developed management training and development strategy;
• managers from different sections met for the first time to discuss management practices;
• equipped managers with skills for a more participative management style;
• originally the emphasis was on technical skills, now it is broader with managers encouraged to be effective communicators, motivators, strategists, negotiators and leaders;
• a 'learning organization' was advocated, with managers individually and collectively developing a 'congealed knowledge base';
• the transnational dimension was cited by many managers as the most innovative and enlightening aspect of the project. It enabled the face-to-face meeting with managers of

other leading companies in Europe and facilitated a rich exchange of ideas and experiences and enabled benchmarking.
With acknowledgement to Philip O'Gorman, Training and Development Manager, Dairygold Cooperative Society Ltd.

Step 3. How will we get the information?

We have already mentioned that finding clear information which allows benchmarking is not an easy task. Indeed, the applications for assessment for the UK Quality Awards state that, 'The British Quality Foundation will take all reasonable action to ensure that applications and information therein are treated in strict confidence' (British Quality Foundation, 1994:7). While some information may not be immediately available there are numerous sources where benchmarking details can be found, including trade organizations, industry and financial publications, government reports, etc.

Two detailed delivery specifications or standards for the provision of management development are provided for buyers and suppliers (DfEE, 1997). These criteria may help reduce the following responses to management development training:

I sent two people on a management course–the brochure made it sound ideal. From their comments and what happened afterwards I suspected we had been taken in by the publicity material.

This young manager was very excited by the course content, but a lot of it was not relevant to the way we do things here and he tended to annoy colleagues with the jargon he had picked up.

The managers who went on the programme started off very enthusiastic, but then it started to go a bit flat and I lost touch with what they were up to. I wouldn't use that course again. (DfEE, 1997:3)

Step 4. How will we analyse the information?

It is the customers and stakeholders who will provide the main sources of what should be the primary benchmarks. Then, when the information has been gathered it is necessary to quantify the details where possible and ensure that like is compared with like. Managers and other employees in the organization should be consulted as to the relevance and applicability of the findings.

Step 5. How will we use the information?

It is insufficient to only gather the information: it must be acted upon even if the findings reveal that the organization is operating in an excellent manner. The company needs to retain its pre-eminent position and this means that it cannot rest on its laurels. New standards should be continually introduced which are realistic and attainable. The best practice of today very rapidly becomes the common practice of tomorrow.

BPB does not require massive investments of energy to have significant results, although the degree of commitment will have a direct bearing on its impact. The time and effort invested can be repaid very quickly. The DTI (1991:2) reports that the main requirements for BPB are:

• a strong commitment from top management to act on any major opportunities for improvement that are revealed;

• a small amount of training and guidance for employees who will have to gather the information needed to identify and analyse best practice;

• authorization for employees to spend some of their time on benchmarking activities.

QUALITY CONTROL AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality control involves checking the quality of the products or services on a regular basis; where large volumes are involved this may be frequently undertaken through statistical sampling procedures. Oakland (1997:13) states that quality control is:

essentially the activities and techniques employed to achieve and maintain the quality of a product, process, or service. It includes a monitoring activity, but is also concerned with finding and eliminating causes of quality problems so that the requirements of the customer are continually met.

However, this is insufficient to ensure that quality is achieved–this can only be done through ensuring that quality is built into every stage of the process. This is known as quality assurance and is defined by Nielsen and Visser (1997:6) as follows:

quality assurance can be regarded as the whole range of activities intended to integrate and control factors that influence the output and outcomes in such a way that the envisaged quality output is permanently guaranteed. This definition comprises both quality maintenance and permanent quality improvement.

In a study of quality in initial vocational education in The Netherlands and Denmark, Nielsen and Visser (1997:5) maintain that there should be a minimum of four dimensions of quality indicators:

1. input: the qualifications and motivation of those admitted and the resources provided by the training institutions;

2. process: the aim, structure and content of the course, the planning and execution of teaching, the physical framework, the teachers, the learning environment, and the management of training institutions;

3. product: passed examinations, school leavers' vocational, personal and general competences, course completion and drop-out rates;

4. effect: employment, productivity, innovative capacity, competitiveness, societal engagement and personal *joie de vivre* as well as intellectual resources.

With regard to the above points, Nielsen and Visser (1997:5) state that 'Quality in education must be related to the values, aims and objectives of the three user groups: pupils/ students, labour market purchasers, and society in general.' It is clear that these three stakeholder groups have different expectations and therefore quality can only be assessed when related to the objectives specified for each field. In Denmark and The Netherlands (Nielsen and Visser, 1997:3) initial vocational education objectives are described in policy statements and legislation:

This means that the system of vocational education and training will:

1. motivate young people to train and ensure that all young people who want vocational training have genuine opportunities to obtain it and to choose from a number of training schemes (or programmes);

2. give young people and adults training which provides a basis for future working life and contributes to their personal development and to their understanding of society and its development;

3. satisfy the needs of the labour market for the occupational and general qualifications required to develop trade and industry, including the development of trade and industry, labour market conditions, workplace organizations and technology;

4. provide training that will serve as a basis for further training.

QUALITY AWARDS

There are numerous awards that have been established worldwide to recognize quality excellence. The existence of these prestigious awards would appear to encourage excellence and provide an opportunity to promote the organization and to benefit from potential new

business and enhanced customer perception. The Deming Award, instituted in 1951 in Japan, is the world's oldest. A checklist indicates the main areas of focus:

1. Policy and objectives

2. Organization and its operation

3. Education and its dissemination

4. Assembling and dissembling information and its utilization

5. Analysis

6. Standardization

7. Control

8. Quality assurance

9. Effects

10. Future plans (Ainger *et al,* 1995:120)

In the USA the Malcolm Baldridge Award, instituted in 1987, is named after a US Commerce Secretary. It is the highest honour for quality achievements and its purpose is to encourage quality awareness in American business. The checklist for the award is as follows (Ainger *et al*, 1995:122):

	Points
Management of process quality	140
Senior executive leadership	90
Human resource development and management	150
Strategic quality planning	60
Information and analysis	80
Customer focus and satisfaction	300
Quality and operational results	180

Inspired by the lead of Japan and the USA a number of European companies established the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) in 1988 for the purpose of encouraging quality and excellence. The EFQM and the British Quality Foundation (BQF) use the model and points weightings shown in Figure 20.1.

In order to apply for the UK quality award, which began in 1994, the applicant organization first conducts a self-assessment of the degree of total quality and level of maturity for each category in the assessment model. The benefits of undertaking this process are that it helps to provide an objective evaluation of the organization's strengths and weaknesses. It is often the HRD department that has the responsibility for conducting this assessment.

On having completed the self-assessment a formal application is made of no more than 75 sides of A4, which is considered by a team of five to seven assessors. Subsequently, an

award jury consisting of senior managers and academics then makes a decision on which applicants to visit.

Figure 20.1 consists of enablers and results, both of which carry a weighting of 50 per cent. The enablers criteria address *how* results are achieved; and the results criteria address *what* the organization has achieved. The processes of the organization allow the abilities of the people to be channelled to produce the results. The BQF (1994:9) states that:

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION, PEOPLE (employee) SATISFACTION and IMPACT ON SOCIETY are achieved through LEADERSHIP driving POLICY AND STRATEGY, PEOPLE MANAGEMENT, RESOURCES and PROCESSES, leading ultimately to excellence in BUSINESS RESULTS.

In order to benchmark the performance of the organization, details about the enablers and results need to be provided. Information about results criteria needs to be provided as follows:

1. the key parameters your organisation uses to measure results and achievements;

2. for each key parameter, data is required. Ideally this will be in the form of trends over three years or more; The trends should highlight:

a.–your organisation's actual performance;

b.–your organisation's own targets, and, wherever possible;

c.–the performance of competitors;

d.–the performance of 'best in class' organizations.

Figure 20.1 The EFQM/BQF award assessment model: people, processes and results

3. the extent to which the parameters presented reasonably cover the range of your organisation's activities; the scope of the results is an important consideration for the assessors;

4. for each of the results criteria evidence is required of the relative importance of the parameters presented. (BQF, 1994:10)

Specific details of the nine enablers and results should be supplied to the BQF. Training and development professionals would normally provide input into all these areas in the course of their work, in particular number 3. The main areas of the UK quality award (BQF, 1994:12–15) are:

1. *Leadership*

The behaviour of all managers in driving the organization towards Total Quality. *How* the executive team and all the other managers inspire and drive Total Quality as the organisation's fundamental process for continuous improvement.

2. *Policy and strategy*

The organisation's mission, values, vision and strategic direction and the manner in which it achieves them.

How the organisation's policy and strategy reflects the concept of Total Quality and how the principles of Total Quality are used in the formulation, deployment, review and improvement of policy and strategy.

3. *The management of the organisation's people*

How the organisation releases the full potential of its people to improve its business or service continuously.

Evidence is needed of how:

people resources are planned and improved;

the skills and capabilities of the people are preserved and developed through recruitment, training and career progression;

people and teams agree targets and continuously review performance;

the involvement of everyone in continuous improvement is promoted and people are empowered to take appropriate action;

effective top-down and bottom-up communication is achieved.

4. *Resources*

The management, utilisation and preservation of resources.

How the organisation's resources are effectively deployed in support of policy and strategy.

5. *Processes*

The management of all value-adding activities within the organisation.

How processes are identified, reviewed and, if necessary, revised to ensure continuous improvement of the organisation's business/service.

6. *Customer satisfaction*

What the organisation is achieving in relation to the satisfaction of its external customers.

7. *People satisfaction*

What the organisation is achieving in relation to the satisfaction of its people.

8. *Impact on society*

What the organisation is achieving in satisfying the needs and the expectations of the community at large. This includes perception of the organisation's approach to quality of life, the environment and to the preservation of global resources and the organisation's own internal resources.

9. *Business results*

What the organisation is achieving in relation to its planned performance and in satisfying the needs and expectations of everyone with an interest in the organisation, and in achieving its planned business/service objectives.

TOTAL QUALITY TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

It is clear from the guidelines provided by the quality gurus and the awards that training and development contribute significantly to TQM. A brief resume of the role education, training and development play demonstrates this:

• Training and development have a central–arguably *the* central–role to play in making quality a reality–Thomas.

• Institute training on the job–Deming.

• Training for quality should begin at the top–Juran.

• Supervisor training–Crosby.

• Training is an integral part of the company's strategy–Moller.

• Education and its dissemination–Deming Award.

• Human resource development and management–Malcolm Baldridge Award.

• The skills and capabilities of the people are preserved and developed through recruitment, training and career progression–UK Quality Award.

From the above endorsements of the role of training and development it not only becomes essential that the HRD department supports the whole TQM process; but that it also provides a quality service to its customers. Oakland (1997:109) asserts that this includes:

For *all* staff, written procedures should be established and maintained for:

• identifying and reviewing individual training needs;

• carrying out the training;

• keeping records of training, including qualifications.

Where does Total Quality Training start? Ideally, it should be part of the mission statement of an organization. If it is part of that mission statement, then it states from the outset that the organization is serious about quality and training. This then feeds down throughout the organization and becomes an almost invisible, but critically essential, dimension of the organizational culture.

Investors in People

Investors in People (IiP) is a quality award related to training and development provided by an organization for all its employees. This national standard was designed in 1990 to support British business by ensuring the development of employees so that they could respond to the demanding competitive environment. The standard was developed by the National Training Task Force in partnership with major business organizations and professional and employer organizations. The development was supported by the Employment Department and, in 1991, was tested by Training and Enterprise Councils and Local Enterprise Councils.

The IiP standard is based on business-located research which demonstrates that effective investment in people can result in enhanced business performance in areas such as: increased production, improved quality, reduced costs, and greater customer satisfaction. The standard has been successfully introduced in many organizations and has encouraged a focus on training and development activities as they relate to the overall business needs of the organization. It has also been introduced in Australia and a variation has been developed in Ireland called Excellence Through People.

The IiP standard is based upon four key principles: commitment, planning, action and evaluation; and 12 indicators of performance (Taylor and Thackwray, 2001). An overview of the standard, which was revised in 2000, is given in Figure 20.2. The IiP national standard (IiP, 1991: 2–4) states:

An Investor in People makes a public commitment from the top to develop all employees to achieve its business objectives.

• Every employee should have a written but flexible plan which sets out business goals, and targets, considers how employees will contribute to achieving the plan and specifies how development needs in particular will be assessed and met.

• Management should develop and communicate to all employees a vision of where the organisation is going and the contribution employees will make to its success, involving employee representatives as appropriate.

An Investor in People regularly reviews the training and development needs of all

employees.

• The resources for training and development should be clearly identified in the business plan.

• Managers should be responsible for regularly agreeing training and development needs with each employee in the context of business objectives, setting targets and standards linked, where appropriate, to the achievement of National Vocational Qualifications (or relevant units) and in Scotland, Scottish Vocational Qualifications.

An Investor in People takes action to train and develop individuals on recruitment and throughout their employment.

• Action should focus on the training needs of all new recruits and continually developing and improving the skills of existing employees.

• All employees should be encouraged to contribute to identifying and meeting their own job-related development needs.

An Investor in People evaluates the investment in training and development to assess achievement and improve future effectiveness.

• The investment, the competence and commitment of employees and the use made of skills learned should be reviewed at all levels against business goals and targets.

• The effectiveness of training and development should be reviewed at the top level and lead to renewed commitment and target setting.

A TQM process

For any TQM initiative to be successful there needs to be impetus to the organization. This may come from a variety of sources but it is frequently the HRD department that is responsible for the implementation of the process. (The TQM process is shown in Figure 20.3.) This energy influences the balance of the status quo and encourages commitment to the process of introducing change (see Chapter 4). This will occur in the areas of training, communication, systems and teams, which leads to a culture change. This change in culture towards one which values quality throughout the organization will then translate into improved organizational performance. Palmer and Wilson (1995:10) state that, 'Training is one of the key factors which influences the success or otherwise of TQM initiatives.'

CONCLUSION

Training is an essential component of the TQM process. Moreover, quality training is essential in order that the HRD department is valued and highly respected. Oakland (1997:318) sums up these points by maintaining that:

Principles	Indicators	Evidence
Commitment An Investor in People is fully committed to developing its people in order to achieve its aims and objectives	**1 The organization is committed to supporting the development of its people**	Top management can describe strategies that they have put in place to support the development of people in order to improve the organization's performance Managers can describe specific actions that they have taken and are currently taking to support the development of people People can confirm that the specific strategies and actions described by top management and managers take place People believe the organization is genuinely committed to supporting their development
	2 People are encouraged to improve their own and other people's performance	People can give examples of how they have been encouraged to improve their own performance People can given examples of how they have been encouraged to improve other people's performance

3 People believe their contribution to the organization is recognized	People can describe how their contribution to the organization is recognized
	People believe that their contribution to the organization is recognized
	People receive appropriate and constructive feedback on a timely and regular basis
4 The organization is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in the development of its people	Top management can describe strategies that they have put in place to ensure equality of opportunity in the development of people
	Managers can describe specific actions that they have taken and are currently taking to ensure equality of opportunity in the development of people
	People confirm that the specific strategies and actions described by top management and managers take place and recognize the needs of different groups
	People believe the organization is genuinely committed to ensuring quality of opportunity in the development of people

Planning

An Investor in People is clear about its aims and its objectives and what its people need to do to achieve them

5 The organization has a plan with clear aims and objectives which are understood by everyone

The organization has a plan with clear aims and objectives

People can consistently explain the aims and objectives of the organization at a level appropriate to their role

Representative groups are consulted about the organization's aims and objectives

6 The development of people is in line with the organization's aims and objectives

The organization has clear priorities which link the development of people to its aims and objectives at organization, team and individual level

People clearly understand what their development activities should achieve, both for them and the organization

7 People understand how they contribute to achieving the organization's aims and objectives

People can explain how they contribute to achieving the organization's aims and objectives

Action	8 Managers are effective in supporting the development of people	The organization makes sure that managers have the knowledge and skills they need to develop their people
An Investor in People develops its people effectively in order to improve its performance		Managers at all levels understand what they need to do to support the development of people
		People understand what their manager should be doing to support their development
		Managers at all levels can give examples of actions that they have taken and are currently taking to support the development of people
	9 People learn and develop effectively	People can describe how their managers are effective in supporting their development People who are new to the organization, and those new to a job, can confirm that they have received an effective induction
		The organization can show that people learn and develop effectively
		People understand why they have undertaken development activities and what they are

		expected to do as a result
		People can give examples of what they have learnt (knowledge, skills and attitude) from development activities
		Development is linked to relevant external qualifications or standards (or both), where appropriate
Evaluation An Investor in People understands the impact of its investment in people on its performance	**10 The development of people improves the performance of the organization, teams and individuals**	The organization can show that the development of people has improved the performance of the organization, teams and individuals
	11 People understand the impact of the development of people on the performance of the organization, teams and individuals	Top management understands the overall costs and benefits of the development of people and its impact on performance
		People can explain the impact of their development on their performance, and the performance of their team and the organization as a whole
	12 The organization gets better at developing its people	People can give examples of relevant and timely improvements that have been made to development activities

Figure 20.2 Overview of the Investors in People standard (*Source*: Investor in People, 2000)

Figure 20.3 The TQM process

It's Monday—it must be training

• Training is the single most important factor in improving quality, once commitment is present. Quality training must be objectively, systematically, and continuously performed.

• All training should occur in an improvement cycle of ensuring training is part of quality procedure, allocating responsibilities, defining objectives, establishing training organisations, specifying needs, preparing programmes and materials, implementing and monitoring, assessing results, and reviewing effectiveness.

A systematic approach to quality training

• Responsibility for quality training of employees rests with management at all levels. The main elements should include error/defect/problem prevention, reporting and analysis, investigation and review.

• Training procedures and records should be established. These should show how job competence is demonstrated.

Total Quality Training is therefore an all-embracing system that applies from chairman to cleaner. An illustration of this is the man who was seen 'pushing a broom' by a visiting Senate committee to the NASA plant where the Apollo space rocket was being assembled. When asked by one of the committee what he was doing, he replied, 'I help to put men on the Moon!'

He obviously had an instilled perception that cleanliness was as important as any other function that was carried out within the plant, and the person who had explained the importance of his job function had left an indelible mark as to his importance within the NASA plant and operation. That encouragement about the value of people in achieving quality was probably facilitated by a member of the training and development staff.

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21
Accounting for the Human Resource Development Function

Chris Wiltsher

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Training and development is costly. It is necessary for any successful organization but it adds to the costs of the organization, and anything which adds to costs must be justified. Successful organizations survive by being cost-effective. Successful Human Resource Development (HRD) professionals supply cost-effective training and development programmes which help organizations become and remain successful.

But what is 'cost-effective training and development'? How do we assess programmes in monetary terms? How do we determine costs and benefits? What measures shall we use? What information do we need? The aim of this chapter is to look briefly at some of the issues relevant to accounting for HRD.

The chapter is about accounting in a double sense. We are concerned first with accounting in the sense of giving an account of income and expenditure, assessing costs and benefits, showing gains or losses. Secondly we are concerned with accounting in the sense of presenting HRD to management. Underlying this chapter is the view that money spent on training and development is part of an organization's investment. Just as organizations invest in plant and machinery, so they must invest in people. Part of our concern with accounting is the need to show that investment in training and development is worthwhile.

Viewing training and development as investment has important implications for accounting. The appraisal of investment is different from the assessment of, say, productivity, and the relationship between costs and benefits is treated differently. It is helpful for HRD managers to recognize these differences and tailor their accounting accordingly.

Even if HRD is viewed as investment, financial accounting is necessary. The HRD function must work within the financial parameters set for it. It will have a budget. Senior management will not be happy if the budget is exceeded, which is very likely to happen if a watch is not kept on costs. If the HRD function is expected to survive by being a service provider and charging its customers for services rendered, then accurate costing is needed to decide how much the customer should pay, and audit is needed to decide whether the customer was charged enough.

Audit is also needed to show that HRD programmes are cost-effective. As we noted above, any additions to an organization's costs must be justified. The HRD function is increasingly expected to show it does deliver the training and development required by the organization and its managers, and that it uses resources efficiently and effectively. This means that the HRD function must be subject to audit like any other section of the organization, even though auditing the HRD function may not be as straightforward as auditing other sections of the organization.

In this chapter we shall look at factors affecting costing and auditing the HRD function and some ways of approaching these tasks. There are many books on accounting that offer detailed descriptions of costing and auditing methodologies. Here we are more interested in principles and issues than detailed methodologies.

Having read this chapter you should understand:

• why costing and auditing are important;

• factors affecting costing of the HRD function;

• factors affecting auditing of the HRD function; and

• ways of addressing the problems raised.

THE NEED FOR FORMAL ACCOUNTING

As we have already suggested, HRD professionals need to pay attention to accounting, to costing and auditing, in order to operate professionally and to justify their work and even

their very existence in an organization.

We live in very competitive times, dominated by 'the bottom line', the financial results of the organization's activities. At the end of the financial year, is the organization in surplus

or deficit, showing a profit or a loss? No organization can survive if it consistently makes losses, even in the not-for-profit sectors.

Consequently in most organizations any and every activity is judged by its contribution to the financial health of the organization. Activities that do not help to improve organizational health are a liability. Activities that consume large amounts of resource with very little outcome are a liability. And liabilities are shed. Sometimes the activity is simply stopped, as when a factory closes; sometimes the in-house supplier is replaced by an external provider, as when catering, cleaning or data-input services are contracted out.

HRD functions are no exception to the general rule. They consume resources, and they produce outcomes. Clearly some training and development is necessary in any organization. What is not clear, what must be demonstrated, is that the training and development provided is a good use of resources.

This means that HRD professionals must show that they are providing the training and development required to meet the organization's objectives. They must also show that they are using resources effectively. In other words, they must show that what they are providing delivers the right results for the lowest cost. They must show that the job could not be done better by an external consultant–and in most organizations, better means 'more cheaply'.

It is this last factor that forces HRD professionals to pay attention to financial costing and auditing. The HRD function will be examined alongside other functions of the organization, and will be judged by comparison with them. The common denominator in all the judgements will be financial: what does it cost, what do we get out of it? The HRD function must be able to withstand scrutiny in these terms.

HRD professionals should be grateful for at least some of this pressure. The need to examine their own costs and results is also a spur to develop programmes that produce the required results in a satisfactory manner. That means focusing on the aims and objectives of the programmes offered, and ensuring that they are realistic, appropriate and met. As professionals we should welcome the opportunity to justify our programmes. What we also need to do is make sure that the complexity of the HRD function is appreciated by those making judgements.

Problems in costing and auditing the HRD function

The main problem we have already noted: the measures that are used to justify a function are primarily financial. Usually they involve some form of cost-benefit analysis. In this the costs of an activity are calculated, and the benefits of that activity for the organization are also calculated. Then the two are compared, to see whether the benefits outweigh the costs.

For example, on a production line making screws, the costs will include the costs of raw materials, labour, machinery, space, quality control, packaging and delivery; the benefit is

the money paid by customers in buying the screws. If not enough money comes in, the process cannot continue.

This is a very simple case. Cost-benefit analysis has become very sophisticated, in order to cope with the great variety of activities in the modern world. Models exist to allow analysis of costs and benefits in production environments, service environments, mixed environments, and so on. However, all cost-benefit analysis in the end relies on the same principles: everything is translated into money or a money equivalent so that comparisons can be made.

It is here that problems arise for the HRD function. It is very rarely possible to translate the outcomes of training and development programmes immediately into monetary terms. Often the results of a programme do not become evident until some time later, and there is rarely a direct link between a training programme and increases in output, for example.

This is where treating training and development as an investment becomes significant. Any investment involves the outlay of money now in pursuit of future benefits; and any investment carries with it a degree of risk, that the benefits may be less than expected, and may not justify, or even cover, the outlay. In deciding whether or not to take the risk, organizations appraise their proposed investments. To do this they find ways of stating the anticipated benefits in monetary terms, and then examining the projected returns in relation to the expected outlay.

Investment appraisal has become sophisticated, with different methods adopted for different forms of investment and different forms of company policy. Accounting textbooks such as McLaney (1991) provide details. Here we need only to be aware of the principles used and some of the terminology.

An outline of investment appraisal

Investment appraisal is concerned with making a reasoned estimate of the costs and benefits of a particular investment project, in order to decide whether or not the investment is worthwhile.

It is important to note that investment analysts make estimates. They recognize that they are concerned with future benefits, and that it is impossible to predict the future completely.

In investment appraisal, costs and benefits are expressed in monetary terms, but it is recognized that both costs and benefits may include intangibles. For example, if we introduce a new IT system, we have among other things the tangible costs of the hardware and software and the intangible costs of the disruption to the organization during the changeover from the old system to the new. Tangible benefits might include more accurate

and up-to-date performance statistics, while intangible benefits might include better decision-making by managers armed with better information. Investment analysts have developed methods of including intangibles in their estimates.

The main way of doing this is to concentrate attention on cash flows, rather than actual values. Cash flow is simply a measurement of money coming in and going out, designed to show whether we are gaining or losing money. As a simple example, suppose I wish to invest £1000 for five years. At the end of five years I should like to have more than £1000. I can assess different ways of investing my money by looking at the flow of money in and out of my account of the period of five years: which method creates the greatest net income at the end of the period? From this perspective it does not matter whether I am investing £1000 or £100,000: the cash flow calculations can be done in the same way.

Since the value of money changes over time, through factors like inflation, investment analysts often try to estimate the present value of future cash flows using a method known as discounting. In normal circumstances, discounting is only useful when the period of interest is measured in years, and so will not be greatly used in accounting for HRD. However, where long-term investment in training and development is under discussion, discounting may be valuable. Again, accounting textbooks will supply the necessary detail.

Of more significance for HRD accounting is the method used in a particular organization to assess the worthwhileness of an investment. There are four main methods in general use: net present value, payback, accounting rate of return and internal rate of return. We can state the essence of each method briefly as follows:

• *Net present value:* the net present value of a sum S is the sum we need to invest now in order to have S at the specified time in the future. Using this method of analysis, we try to calculate the net present value of the expected return on our investment, taking account of all costs and benefits.

• *Payback:* this method of analysis tries to answer the question, 'How long will it take for the investment to pay for itself '?

• *Accounting rate of return:* sometimes known as rate of return on investment, this method involves calculating the annual rate of return on the investment by comparing the annual rate of return on the investment with the initial outlay.

• *Internal rate of return:* this method uses discounting techniques to discover the rate of return on the investment which would give a net present value of zero.

Each of these methods has strengths and weaknesses, which are explored in detail in textbooks such as McLaney (1991). We cannot go into further detail here. For our present purposes there are two important things to note. The first is that the different methods can produce very different answers to the question of whether or not an investment is worthwhile. If you are going to argue that training and development is an investment, it is vital to know which method of appraisal will be applied by your organization.

The other thing to note is that all four methods depend on the accurate identification of costs and benefits and cash flows. We have already noted that this is not as simple in the case of HRD as in some other parts of an organization. But it must be done, and it will be

done: if the HRD function does not do it, the accountants will. Thus it is in the interest of the HRD function to find ways of measuring costs and outcomes that offer possible translation into monetary terms. We shall now look at how this might be done, beginning with the costs.

COSTING

Costing is in some ways a purely mechanical exercise; the sort of task for which a computer spreadsheet is ideal. However, it must be done with great care, so that the figures are correct and the correct figures are used. That is, not only must we ensure that we include accurate amounts or good estimates, we must also ensure that we include all items which should be included and, just as important, exclude all items which should be left out. Decisions about what to include and what to exclude can make a significant difference to our costings.

The costs of the HRD function can be divided into two broad groups:

1. costs associated with specific HRD activities; and

2. other costs.

We shall look at each group separately, and then see how they are related.

First we should note that costing has a cost: the collection of information required to allocate costs itself takes time and therefore has a cost. It is important that we concentrate on those costs that can be economically assessed.

Particular activities

Every specific HRD activity–a training day, a concentrated course, a development programme spread over months–has costs associated with it. Some of these are direct costs, some indirect:

• *direct costs* are costs that can be easily traced to the particular activity, for example the cost of speakers;

• *indirect costs* are costs that cannot be identified easily or economically with a particular activity.

An example of an indirect cost might be the cost of staff time devoted to setting up an activity: it is often difficult to say exactly how much time has been spent on this, partly

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because most HRD staff are involved in several activities at once, and it would be uneconomic to keep a detailed record of time spent on each.

Often indirect costs must be estimated. Depending on the operating and accounting policies of the organization, indirect costs may be counted as overheads. In that case they may be counted as a departmental overhead, and ignored in the costing of particular activities. Alternatively, indirect costs might be included in the costing of particular activities by some formula, such as dividing the overhead cost by the number of events, or the number of course participants, in a given period.

It is worth noting also the difference between fixed and variable costs:

• *fixed costs* are costs that are incurred however many people participate in the activity, for example the cost of space in which to hold the activity;

• *variable costs* are costs that change according to the number of participants, for example the cost of photocopying material to be handed out to participants.

We can now list the main headings for costing:

Direct costs

• publicity and recruitment;

• space for the activity;

• equipment;

• materials;

• reception;

• fees and expenses (external staff);

• time of internal staff;

• participants' time and expenses;

• catering;

• feedback.

Indirect costs

• development;

• planning;

• follow up.

Let us look more closely at each item in the lists.

Direct costs

• *Publicity and recruitment:* most training activities will need some form of publicity and there will be costs associated with recruitment, such as receiving and recording enrolments and cancellations.

• *Space for the activity:* the HRD function may have its own dedicated space for its activities, but on occasions even that may be unsuitable; whether the space used is dedicated or not, it carries costs.

• *Equipment:* the HRD function may have its own equipment, such as OHP and slide projectors; if not, such equipment must be provided. Again, equipment is costly, whether owned or not.

• *Materials:* under this heading we put the cost of handouts for the participants, including the cost of photocopying; we must also take into account the cost of consumables such as pens, paper, flipchart pads and OHP acetates.

• *Reception:* someone needs to receive the participants, record their presence, hand out initial papers and name badges and answer the questions about parking and the programme that accompany training activities; staff time given to this is not available for other duties, and is a cost.

• *Fees and expenses (external staff):* if external speakers, trainers or tutors are used they will require payment, which is a cost; further costs are incurred in processing their claims, and in ensuring that they arrive and depart.

• *Time of internal staff:* HRD staff or other personnel from the organization involved in staffing the activity are giving time which is taken from other duties, and that is a cost, which can be quantified as a proportion of annual staff costs.

• *Participants' time and expenses:* those who take part in a training activity are also taking time away from other duties and tasks; their work may be covered, or they may be expected to work harder to make up the time, but their absence is a cost to someone.

• *Catering:* tea, coffee, juice, biscuits, lunch, even drinking water for a hot day: all these are costly to provide and should be included in the costing of the activity.

• *Feedback:* every training activity should give opportunity for evaluation and feedback, and providing the necessary questionnaires or other instruments is a cost, as is the time taken to analyse the results.

Indirect costs

• *Development:* this includes needs analysis and the development of appropriate ideas; it also includes liaison with the customers, that is, those who will participate in the activity or those who will send the participants.

• *Planning:* this includes staff time to prepare the event, booking space, arranging speakers and other staff, ensuring availability of equipment, materials and catering, producing a detailed programme (and making last-minute adjustments).

• *Follow up:* gathering information and carrying out evaluation and audit.

In connection with indirect costs, it is worth noting that the Institute of Personnel and Development reckons that 'a useful and generally accepted rule of thumb' is that each hour of learning activity on a face-to-face course requires five hours of development time (Beaton and Richards, 1997: section 2, p 49).

As one might expect, in practice the items do not divide up as neatly as this schema suggests. For example, it may be possible to use a publicity opportunity to cover more than one activity. If the HRD function owns and maintains equipment such as overhead projectors, the cost of such equipment becomes an indirect cost (but do not forget to write the equipment off over the appropriate period for your organization). Participants' time might be allocated by the organization as a cost to the participants' department, and not included in the costing of the HRD activity.

When all the local rules have been applied, we can use the item headings above to draw up a chart of the kind shown in Table 21.1 for each activity.

Table 21.1 Costing HRD activity

	Development	Planning	Publicity and Recruitment	Delivery	Evaluation	Follow-up
internal accommodation						
external accommodation						
equipment						
materials						
consumables						
reception						
external staff fees						
external staff expenses						
internal staff time						
participants' time						
participants' expenses						
catering						
Total						

From this exercise we can work out the total cost of the activity. It is then simple to work out a break-even point, that is, how many participants are needed to make the exercise worthwhile. This may be a function of whether or not participants–or their managers–are paying for the activity. If so, the costing allows us to decide how much to charge. It is here that the fixed and variable costs become important.

Fixed costs must be met no matter how many people attend. These therefore are commitments which are entered into as soon as the activity is arranged. They may bring with them a cancellation cost: for example, if a room is hired and then the activity is cancelled, you may still have to pay a proportion of the room hire charge. Cancellation costs must be taken into account when decisions are made about whether or not an activity is to go ahead, for it may be more cost-effective to proceed with a small number of participants than cancel completely.

Variable costs may also involve commitments, for example to caterers about minimum or maximum numbers. Generally there is more flexibility with variable costs. However, their very flexibility can cause problems, as expected participant numbers can change very rapidly, and we may have to allow for those who do not turn up on the day or turn up unexpectedly, assuming there will be space for them.

HRD function

The costs of particular activities taken together form part of the costs of the HRD function as a whole, and will usually be the major part. We have already noted that some of the costs of the HRD function as a whole might be included in the costs of particular activities by some formula for the allocation of overhead costs. Examples might be the cost of dedicated training space or equipment owned and maintained by the HRD function. However, not all overhead costs can be easily or economically distributed.

The overhead costs of the HRD function might include:

• staff costs;

• staff development;

• course development;

• space;

• administration.

We can look at these in more detail:

• *Staff costs:* these are the costs of the HRD staff , including salaries and related costs such as insurance, and not forgetting the costs of temporary help at particular times.

• *Staff development:* HRD staff need training and development too! If the organization wishes to have good HRD it must pay the price.

• *Course development:* in addition to the development of particular activities, the HRD function will be constantly on the watch for training and development needs and opportunities. Is new equipment on order for part of the organization? Is legislation appearing which will demand training? Do individual managers have plans which will require staff development programmes? Discovering the answers to questions like these is time-consuming and costly–but necessary.

• *Space:* the HRD function needs office space, at least.

• *Administration:* this covers the cost of stationery, postage, telephones, computer equipment, and everything else necessary to allow the HRD function to function.

Opportunity costs

Opportunity costs are the costs of ignoring a possible course of action. For the HRD function, opportunity costs are significant in that they represent the cost to the organization of not adopting HRD solutions.

Suppose a company is faced with increased demand for its products, which means increased production. Increased production might mean employing more staff, or having existing staff work longer hours; or it might mean offering existing staff training to improve individual productivity and so achieve the increase without extra staff or longer hours. If the company ignores the possibility of training, there is an opportunity cost. The opportunity cost is the difference between the cost of the training and the cost of the extra hours or employees. For audit purposes, opportunity costs are significant, because they represent in some way what can be done with resources.

All costing information is necessary for audit purposes, because audit is in part about the cost-effectiveness of activity. It is therefore worth taking the time and trouble to make sure that the figures are correct, and that costing estimates are realistic. Overly optimistic costings and overly pessimistic costings are equally bad. Both lead to the view that the HRD function is not able to manage its affairs properly. Accurate costing is the basis for good performance in audit.

Accurate costing is also necessary for identifying cash flows to use in the appraisal of training and development as investment. For example, in a cash-flow analysis, the capital cost of equipment will usually be shown as depreciating over a fixed period, so the contribution of equipment cost to the costs of particular courses or the HRD function as a whole will be different in different years. This can make a difference to whether or not a particular course is regarded as viable.

AUDITING

We turn now to the next part of our concern: auditing the HRD function.

There are two main purposes of audit:

1. to check that resources have been used properly, for the intended purpose;

2. to check that resources have been used to the best advantage.

Audit is often said to be about 'value for money', because resources are usually expressed in terms of their monetary value. However not all resources can be expressed easily in monetary terms, nor is it always easy, or even possible, to express outcomes in monetary terms. So 'value for money' is too simple. A better description of the concerns of auditors might be 'value for input': in other words, audit is supposed to show whether or not scarce resources are being used to the best advantage for the organization.

Another way of putting this, in terms familiar to management accountants and those they advise in senior management, is to say that audit is concerned with the return on investment. Having invested a certain amount of resource in a particular function, we ask: what do we get back, and when? We recall that these questions are important in investment appraisal. Audit provides some of the information required to answer them.

The emphasis here on the organization points us to a significant difference between evaluation and audit. Evaluation is about the effectiveness in delivery; audit is about contribution to an organization.

For the HRD function, evaluation is concerned with the outcomes of training and development activities. In evaluation we ask questions such as: how much did participants learn? Were the training methods appropriate? Questions such as these are important for assessing the effectiveness of the HRD function in delivering training and development.

In audit the effectiveness of the HRD function is set in the context of the organization's goals. The key question is: could the same, or better results, have been achieved more cheaply? For the HRD function this becomes: can the organization's training and development needs be met more efficiently and cheaply in other ways?

In answering this kind of question, two comparisons must be made. First, there is a comparison with other methods of delivering training and development, such as using external contractors. Second, there is a comparison with other possible uses of the resources: what else could the organization have done with the resources devoted to HRD? If we keep these underlying questions in mind, the process of audit becomes clearer.

There are two levels at which audit can operate in the HRD function. We can audit particular activities, and we can audit the function as a whole. In both cases, auditors will need to know what resources have been used and what effects have been achieved.

Particular activities

We look first at the audit of particular activities. These might be single events or programmes lasting days or even months.

The questions we are asking are about the use of resources. We must therefore be able to say what resources have been used for the activity. Some of this information will be given to us by the costing exercise for the activity, following the lines of the previous section.

However, we must also take account of the costs to others of our provision. Each person who participates in an activity is a cost to someone. Cover must be provided for that person, or their work must be carried out in some other way. That cost is part of the resource of the activity. Clearly this information can only be obtained from the participant's manager, and it may be hard to come by. It may be that the participant is simply expected to work harder to compensate for time spent on a training activity, in which case the participant is paying the cost, not the organization.

One result of such an exercise might be a cost per participant for the activity, expressing what it cost the organization for each person who attended. This is a useful measure of comparison with other ways of providing the same training.

On the other side of the account, we are concerned with the outcomes of the activity. Naturally we shall have carried out some form of evaluation of the activity. This will tell us something about what the participants have learnt and their level of satisfaction with the activity.

We might also measure the effectiveness of training by the qualifications gained by participants. This should not be neglected as it provides an objective criterion for the success of an activity. However, not all training leads to qualifications, and not all qualifications lead to improved performance on the job. For audit purposes we need to assess the impact of the activity on participants' performance in their daily work.

To do this we need to obtain information about their performance before and after the activity. There are several possible sources of this information:

• participants;

• participants' managers;

• participants' colleagues.

• *Participants* themselves may have noticed improvements in their performance, and may be able to quantify the improvement.

• *Participants' managers* should be able to offer an assessment of improvements in performance.

• *Participants' colleagues* also may notice improvement, especially if their own work depends in some way on the performance.

Information in all these cases might be collected by interview or questionnaire or a combination of these. In some cases it might also be possible to have an objective measurement, for example, the increase in speed of a data-input clerk after training.

However the information is collected, it is important to ensure that there is some comparability across activities. This implies that the questions used to collect information must be carefully phrased. A question like, 'Has John's telephone manner improved?' is very specific and does not allow for comparison with other training activities (although it might allow comparison with others doing the same job). Comparison with other training activities would be better served by a question like, 'Have you noticed any change in the way Mary carries out her duties?'

It is important that the information sought on changed job performance should relate to the training activity. We are interested in the effect of the training activity on performance, and the training activity may relate only to a small part of the task. It may be also that there are other factors that will prevent improved performance however effective the training. Beaton and Richards (1997: section 2, p. 3) quote the case of a production line supervisor who,

noted an increasing number of substandard goods being passed as perfect and asked for a training programme in identifying defects. However, a more in-depth analysis of the problem revealed that it was caused by poor lighting conditions. Staff were fully aware of what constituted defects, but were unable to see them.

All this shows that assessing changes in performance is not easy. We should notice too how subjective the assessment is bound to be: it is rarely that one can directly link training with increased performance. Of course in the case of new machines, it is easy–but that is the exception rather than the rule.

Note that for the assessment of improvement, it is necessary to know what the starting point was. There are formulae for trying to assess improvement which can be found in the books noted at the end of this chapter. It is important to realize that even where a formula is used, the assessment of improvement is subjective, because the formulae all require data derived from the subjective assessments of participants or their managers.

It is also important to note the time factor in assessing improvement. Not all improvement in performance can be measured immediately. While training in customer relations may result in more satisfied customers, it may be months before their return demonstrates the level of satisfaction. Moreover, some of the benefits of training, such as improved staff morale or a change of organizational culture, may not show themselves clearly for a long time.

We should also note that we do not always have to show that a training activity was a

success. In order to improve our training and development programmes we must acknowledge mistakes and learn from them, and involve others in helping us to see and correct the deficiencies.

Finally, we must note that this kind of audit is related to the objectives of the participants' employers: they need training that meets their requirements.

HRD function

This last point becomes even more significant when we turn from particular activities to the audit of the HRD function as a whole. Here we need to show that the HRD function is contributing effectively and efficiently to the objectives of the organization.

The problem for the HRD function is to demonstrate the contribution of training and development to the organization. One method clearly is to use the audit of particular activities to build up a picture. But this must then be taken a step further: it must be shown that the overall contribution is valuable.

An important element in this will be the costs of the HRD function. We have already looked at some of the factors affecting costing of the HRD function. One factor not so far discussed is the way in which the costs of the HRD function are allocated by the organization. In some organizations the costs of departments with an organization-wide remit, such as the HRD function, are treated as organizational overheads and allocated across all departments according to some formula. In other organizations, HRD costs are carried on individual managers' budgets. In some organizations the HRD function is expected to recover its costs from its customers, that is, other parts of the organization; in other cases the cost of HRD is treated as an organizational investment.

Each organization has its own way of dealing with the costs of functions such as HRD, and the method is usually decided without reference to those affected. However, it is important to be aware of how costs are allocated in your organization, since this has an effect on how the case for cost-effectiveness is presented.

In addition to costing information, there are several sources of information to assist in showing the value and effectiveness of the HRD function:

• *Investment appraisals* carried out for or by other parts of the organization should take account of the associated investment in training. This information can be used both to show that the HRD function is performing effectively in relation to that investment, and to see how training and development contributes to the cash-flow analysis of the organization.

• *The organization's mission statement* will give objectives. How do training and development programmes contribute to meeting those objectives? For example, in an organization whose mission statement includes references to customer care, what development and training is offered to staff to help improve customer care?

• *Statistics may help.* For example, an organization may keep a record of customer complaints. Has the volume of complaints gone down after staff training?

• *Opportunity costing* has been discussed already. If not spent on HRD, what else would the money have been spent on? Would these other activities have had a beneficial effect on the organization? Can we compare the effects in any way?

• *Competition:* there are always other ways of providing the training and development needed in an organization, but those alternative ways may not be as cost-effective as an

in-house HRD function. It is important here to compare like with like, and ensure that an alternative form of training would do the same job. Sometimes what seems to be a cheaper way of doing things turns out to be more expensive because it does not do the whole job.

We can see from this very brief overview that auditing the HRD function is a complex operation. Often the audit will be carried out by those with little knowledge of HRD, and often the major focus will be financial. By being aware of the background to audit, and able to offer constructive ideas about how effective audit can be done, HRD professionals will be better able to convince management of the value and cost-effectiveness of their work.

CONCLUSION

Accounting is a large and complex area, which has only been touched on in this chapter. However, the main principles of costing and auditing are simple. With just a little care and attention to detail, HRD professionals can ensure that accounting becomes a useful management tool which helps in the provision of quality HRD. That is the justification of costing and auditing the HRD function, and it is too important for the task to be left to those who do not understand HRD.

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**Section Six:
Managing the Human Resource Development Function**

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**22
Managing the Human Resource
Development Function**

Pete Sayers

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This chapter is about the day-to-day management and leadership of the Human Resource Development (HRD) function within an organization. It will look at issues affecting the management of HRD practitioners but, predominantly, look at issues affecting the management of HRD as a function. It will look at HRD as something that affects individuals, teams and the organization as a whole. It will assume that the person with responsibility for the HRD function is also part of the organization, though many of the issues discussed would also be relevant for an external consultant advising an organization that has outsourced HRD.

Exactly what we call the person managing the HRD function can be problematic. Responsibility for HRD is not the same as being in charge of the HRD function. The person responsible for HRD within any organization is (or should be) its chief executive. The person responsible for any individual's development on a day-to-day basis is (or should be) that person's line manager. Megginson *et al* (1999) argue strongly that the line manager's role is crucial both in the development of individuals and in the linking of HRD to the organization's objectives. The extent to which line managers do this, or are able to do this in practice is problematic. How they can be helped in this role by appropriate leadership from an HRD function is a theme that runs through this chapter.

Moves to flatten organizational structures, as advocated by Peters (1993), have led many organizations to decrease the size of central training departments. In many organizations responsibility for training and the appropriate training budget have been delegated to production units. These can then choose to purchase training provision from outside the organization, or, in many cases, from elsewhere within the organization. They may choose to employ a training manager within their department to advise and help other managers diagnose and meet the training needs of their staff or they may use external consultants for this purpose. They may also be able to call upon the services of a central HRD function.

Where an organization retains a central training department or unit, it is most probable that it will have had to become, a) more market-oriented in its provision, and, b) more advisory or strategic in its thinking. Such moves often accompany a change of name from 'training' to 'development'. Another route, noted by Harrison (1997) is for training departments to consolidate their position within the organization by generating external income through the provision of NVQs and similar qualifications for people outside the organization.

Many possible scenarios exist, and there is considerable variation in how arrangements for training and development are set up, even when considering similar types of organizations. In this chapter the term 'HRD function' will be used as a generic term to cover all of these. Hopefully, the variety of HRD functions retain enough in common for most, if not all, of what follows to be of relevance or interest.

The management of an HRD function has a number of interesting facets to it. These can be looked at from two main perspectives:

1. managing the HRD role within an organization; and

2. managing a team of HRD professionals and support staff.

The first perspective will apply irrespective of the size of the HRD function, and is the basis of most of the issues explored below. In many organizations the number of HRD professionals employed is very small; in which case the second, how to manage the training and development team, may seem of little relevance, or even wishful thinking. There is, however, an interesting possibility here: if the number of people directly employed within the HRD function is small, then others in the organization may be encouraged to develop the skills and insights of the HRD specialist, in order to act as catalysts within their own work areas or even as part-time trainers. In this case, the manager of the HRD function may well have a substantial team, though not a large department.

Managing the HRD role within an organization can be further subdivided into:

• *how to manage*–leadership style, issues of power and control, principles and values; and

- *what to manage*–content and structural considerations for the HRD function.

Having read this chapter you will:

• be able to distinguish between management and leadership;

• know the five leadership roles;

• be able to use 'role' power and 'personal' power to lead and manage; and

• be able to apply Blanchard *et al*'s (1986) situational leadership model to the HRD function.

MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP OF THE HRD FUNCTION

The objective here is to examine ways in which a number of theoretical models of leadership and related ideas can be used and adapted to help the manager of the HRD function.

Leadership is both an essential part of management development and a quality that is often seen as separate from management. Lowe and Lewis (1994:47) illustrate the distinction by pointing out that 'no one ever *managed* an army into battle'. The distinction between *managing change* and *leading change* is more subtle and it is the former term that is more commonly used. There are different ways of defining leadership, and differing ways in which people in organizations describe the behaviours of their managers as good leadership or not. There is, in popular language, considerable overlap in usage of the two terms (see Figure 22.1), but leadership is usually seen as more proactive than management.

Lowe and Lewis (1994) suggest that leadership is more inspirational and more emotionally engaging than the more rational activity usually referred to as management. A successful HRD function will need to demonstrate a balance between proactivity and reactivity.

Figure 22.1 Management and leadership–two concepts linked in overlapping circles

Leadership, itself, is a term that can be used in different ways. It can be applied to the qualities and behaviour of a unique leader or to those that any member of a team may demonstrate. The former lends itself to the popular definition that sees leadership as a quality certain great individuals are born with. It can also apply to the type of leadership that a professional expert is called upon to use. The second sees leadership as a quality that any person can develop and learn under the right circumstances. Adair's (1973) model of 'action-centred leadership' uses this second definition. It is the kind of leadership that members of teams use selectively to enable the team to progress. As trainers who run leadership courses know, the individual providing the leadership is frequently not the nominated leader.

Both of the above definitions of leadership will be of use to the manager of the HRD function. There are five leadership roles that are of particular interest here:

• the professional expert;

• the provider of vision;

• the modeller of the process;

• the internal consultant;

• the organizational politician.

The professional expert

The most obvious way they can show leadership is through keeping up with developments in their field–maintaining a level of professional expertise and a body of knowledge relating to training opportunities and appropriate qualifications. HRD experts will be able to identify trends in training and development and explore new ways of developing their practice in line with innovations in HRD theory and practice. There are, however, problems if the only kind of leadership the manager of the HRD function demonstrates is that of the expert. Managers will also need, equally, to be facilitators of learning. More of this below in the section on control and facilitation.

The provider of vision

Another aspect of leadership is to provide vision–both for the HRD team and for the role of HRD within the organization. As the HRD manager is unlikely to be the organization's chief executive it will not be up to the manager of the HRD function to provide the vision for the business as a whole. It may well be, however, up to the manager of the HRD function to contribute to it, by providing a vision of how people need to interrelate and develop

themselves, in order to achieve the organization's mission and strategic aims.

The modeller of the process

Another way of demonstrating leadership in relation to HRD is to be a good role model–to be an illustration of the leadership qualities required to achieve the vision, and to be an embodiment of good practice. Nevis (1987) has worked with an approach to organizational consultancy based on Gestalt therapy. One of a number of techniques he recommends is *modelling the process.*

The starting point is for the consultant (or in this case, the manager of the HRD function) to increase his or her awareness of what is present and what is missing in what Nevis calls 'the client system'. The client system can be a small group or the whole organization. For example, the HRD manager might notice that in meetings of departmental managers people really don't listen well to each other. Listening is, then, what is missing. To model the process, the HRD manager demonstrates good listening skills as often as possible. The others present have the opportunity to learn something about listening skills from the HRD manager modelling the process during their meeting. This will be more effective than other ways of dealing with the problem, which might include complaining in the meeting, or talking critically about it outside the meeting. Modelling the process is safer, in so far as it doesn't involve criticizing others, and can be used in the presence of both senior and junior colleagues equally effectively. In an organization where the dominant management style is 'Do as I say', rather than 'Do as I do', modelling the process will be an effective technique for the HRD manager to use to facilitate organizational learning.

The internal consultant

The manager of the HRD function is in a very good position to do a needs analysis on the organization and to help senior managers solve problems. In more complex cases, this may also involve collaborating with outside consultants. The advantage the internal consultant has is his or her intimate knowledge and understanding of the organization and its culture. It is a role that has the potential to both increase the influence of the HRD function and the job satisfaction of its manager. To show leadership in this area is to be proactive as well as reactive, and to be able to judge what kind of contribution is appropriate at any one time. Blanchard *et al's* (1986) situational leadership can offer useful guidance (see below in the section on control and facilitation).

The internal consultant may be called upon to work with individuals, established teams, and sometimes with the whole organization (more on this below in the section on large-scale interventions). In any of these cases, but more demandingly in the latter two, the manager of the HRD function may notice various forms of resistance to change. The resistance may appear to be located in individuals, or it may be a feature of the organizational culture. In

either case the trick will be to understand the resistance before attempting to work with it, through it or against it. Argyris (1990) offers consultants (internal or external) a route through typical organizational behaviours, explains their purpose (ie, what they appear to achieve for the perpetrator, however dysfunctional they are for the wider mission of the organization), and ways of working with them.

The manager of the HRD function operating as internal consultant is in an interesting position here. He or she, as part of the organization, may well be prone to the very behaviour patterns Argyris comments on. The disadvantage is that these patterns may not be something the manager is fully aware of. In other words it may be an organizational blindspot that the HRD manager shares. On the other hand, the advantage is that an internal consultant may find it easier to build common ground with others in the organization and, with the heightened awareness that comes from learning about one's own behaviour as well as that of others, may be able to facilitate good learning in others.

The organizational politician

The problem with managing the HRD function is that it requires an ability to operate within the internal politics of the organization. This might require the HRD manager to compete with other managers for influence or resources, and to defend the HRD budget against contraction in times of recession. In this arena there might be a tendency to resort to the lowest common denominator of managerial behaviour demonstrated in the organization as a whole, rather than to maintain the ideals of the HRD professional.

The question for the manager of the HRD function is how to be an effective operator within the organization at the same time as being a role model and showing leadership as a human resource developer. One answer to this is to be a good team player. The team is the organization's management team, whether or not the individual managers in the organization perceive themselves as operating as a team. The kind of leadership the manager of the HRD function can demonstrate most effectively is the kind of leadership required of the good team player. How to play this team role effectively can also be guided by other models of communication. Transactional analysis (TA) (Stewart and Jones, 1987) offers some useful insights into the psychology of interpersonal communication that can be used for organizational problem-solving. Techniques for facilitating training groups can be deployed to facilitate organization problem-solving as well as individual learning. Heron (1993) examines some of the psychological issues affecting personal development in the workplace, as an information base for group facilitation techniques. These are techniques which the manager of the HRD function can use from the position of 'expert' and 'facilitator'. They can be used by the HRD professional in training groups, and they can equally well be used by the manager of the HRD function as a member of the organization's management team.

CONTROL AND FACILITATION–COACHING AND SUPPORTIVENESS

In an organization where the responsibility for developing individuals resides with line management, a lot of the leadership required in this area is outside the control of the HRD professional. It might be, then, difficult for the managers of HRD functions to see how they can show leadership if they are unable to exercise control. In the scenario where HRD is a line management responsibility and training budgets are delegated to operating units, it may be difficult for the manager of the HRD function to see how to be anything other than reactive. Other managers decide what training and development is required and where and when training needs will be met.

Adair's model, on the other hand, says that any member of a team can demonstrate leadership. It therefore follows that any member of a team, not just the one who controls the budget, can be proactive. The manager of the HRD function can show leadership in the context of both operational units and the organization as a whole without having to have that control.

The issue of power and control is an interesting one. Sayers and Matthew (1997) make a distinction between 'role' power and 'personal' power. Role power can be used to control others, but in a way that is more likely to achieve compliance than commitment and in a way that if used inappropriately can cause resentment and resistance. Role power comes with the job title, position within the hierarchy and the ability to control budgets. Personal power, on the other hand, comes from clarity of purpose, strength of character and the respect that earns, and leads individuals to feel in control. This distinction between 'controlling' and 'feeling in control' is a subtle, important and paradoxical distinction. Individuals who feel in control will talk about being in control of their lives, their time, their relationships, etc. Individuals who control using role power are more likely to talk about being in control of other people, places and resources.

The manager of the HRD function may have some role power deriving from his or her position within the organization and professional expertise, but it is more likely that the HRD manager's influence within the organization will be on the basis of personal power. Leadership will not be on the basis of control but of facilitation.

Sayers and Matthew (1997) present two continuums to illustrate the distinction between role and personal power and between the power that derives from being the 'expert' and that which derives from being the 'facilitator' (see Figure 22.2). When a larger amount of personal power is deployed, there is a corresponding decrease in the influence of role power.

A third model of leadership, which is useful in this context, is Blanchard *et al*'s (1986) 'situational leadership' (see Figure 22.3), which is used here to illustrate when and where

different kinds of leadership are required. There are four quadrants: directing, coaching,

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Figure 22.2 The relationship between role power and personal power

supporting and delegating. In the normal course of supervising staff, Blanchard suggests, a manager will need to move through the quadrants in that order–from bottom right to bottom left. Sayers and Matthew (1997) are most interested in the kind of power that facilitators need to use in the coaching and supporting quadrants when a high level of supportiveness is required to create the right learning environment for others.

Where the day-to-day decision-making about training and development has been delegated to line managers, one of the key roles of a central HRD function will be to assist the organization in creating the overall environment for learning required to develop staff to meet agreed objectives. The manager of the HRD function will be most valued if he or she is able to operate effectively in a supportive capacity. This requires a higher level of

Figure 22.3 Blanchard *et al*'s (1986) situational leadership with Sayers and Matthew's mapping of role power and personal power

personal power, rather than role power. Leadership here will be more facilitative than expert. There will be occasions, in the coaching quadrant, when HRD expertise will make the greater contribution, but the expertise will be most effectively deployed when line managers feel sufficient personal support from the HRD expert to implement the idea for themselves. When this happens, the HRD expert will be able to move into the delegating quadrant and trust that the line managers will be able to fulfil their HRD roles with only minimal support. Delegation will only be effective if line managers know that the central support will be there if needed.

To be an effective internal consultant the manager of the HRD function will need to be able to play this kind of coaching and supporting role within the organization as a whole, and within its senior management team in particular.

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

What underpins the HRD function? Is it structural, financial or ethical considerations? Reid and Barrington (1997) look at the training function within organizations as a structural issue concerned primarily with the content and organization of training programmes and the best location in the organizational structure for decisions about training. Harrison (1997) spends some time examining budgetary issues, especially those related to outsourcing training and development. The issue of greater interest in this chapter is the underpinning ethics of the HRD function that guide managers of the HRD function in deciding how to play their role.

A theoretical model that maps a potentially useful relationship between leadership style and the management of HRD has been produced by Covey (1992). Covey's contribution has links to a variety of sources, from theories and techniques of communication and personal development (many examples of which are referenced elsewhere in this chapter) and to individual values and attitudes in the 'learning organization' (as developed in, for example, Senge, 1992). The key word for Covey is 'principle'. Principles are fixed and non-negotiable. They are not subject to the vagaries of organizational politics, but can determine a pragmatic route through them. As Covey (1992:25) puts it:

Principle-centred leaders are men and women of character who work with competence. . . on the basis of natural principles and build those principles into the centre of their lives, into the centre of their relationships with others, in their management processes, and into their mission statements.

Covey's approach is driven by personal insights and metaphors as a way of understanding models of leadership, and he identifies four management paradigms, shown in Table 22.1.

The first paradigm can be seen as one where training would be done primarily as a way of helping individuals perform the tasks necessary for the job. The second starts with

Table 22.1 Covey's (1992) four management paradigms

Need	Metaphor	Paradigm	Principle
Physical/economic	Stomach	Scientific, authoritarian	Fairness
Social/economic	Heart	Human relations (benevolent authoritarian)	Kindness
Psychological	Mind	Human resource	Use and development of talent
Spiritual	Spirit (whole person)	Principle-centred leadership	Meaning

benign paternalism and can also be the basis of the model many employers have used to motivate their staff and help manage change, by allowing employees to choose training and learning opportunities up to an agreed amount but not necessarily job-related. The third is the model most closely associated with the title HRD and one which forms the basis of many current models of training and development, including Investors in People. In this paradigm training and development are seen as effective when individual development needs are linked to the achievement of business objectives in a planned way. How this model can be used further is explored later, in the section on strategic and operational decision making.

The fourth paradigm is the one Covey is interested in promoting. A whole-person approach to HRD is not likely to prove problematic for the HRD professional but may be problematic for the manager of the HRD function if the organization's senior executives are working with a different paradigm. The strongest argument in favour of the fourth paradigm is the recognition that for many organizations people are the most expensive and most valuable asset. As Peters (1993) has passionately put it, the success of companies such as Microsoft is built on the creativity and motivation of its staff, not just their physical presence at work for a set number of hours. He quotes evidence of companies failing to recognize or realize the potential of their workforce. In order to tap this energy and creativity the HRD function has to develop the whole person. It may not be immediately obvious why Covey uses the term 'spiritual' to describe the underlying 'need' that has to be met, but Covey offers a number of practical ways in which the manager of the HRD function can model the process.

STRATEGIC VS OPERATIONAL DECISION-MAKING

Establishing a balance between individual, team and/or organizational HRD

Harrison (1997) suggests four levels at which HRD can operate within a business. She raises these in the form of questions for managers of the HRD function when considering the business goals or strategic objectives that HRD is meant to serve within their organizations:

• No systematic training or longer-term development?

• Isolated tactical training at operational level?

• Focused HRD at the business unit level?

• Strategic HRD at the corporate level?

The first of these describes the situation, hopefully, before the HRD function is up and running. The subsequent three can be seen as stages of development for the HRD function. This could imply that if there is strategic HRD at the corporate level, then neither focused HRD at the business unit level nor isolated tactical training at operational level are required any longer. These might be seen as tiers of development for the HRD function (see Figure 22.4) which operate in a similar way to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1954)–ie, you cannot effectively work at tier 2 unless tier 1 is well established.

In order for there to be focused HRD at the business unit level, line managers will need to be confident that if they identify an individual training need, it will be met. They will want assurance that the HRD function can help them deliver the easy things before they entrust it with something more complex or risky such as team development or implementing the training implications of a business plan. Line managers in business units are more likely to accept the effort required to implement the training implications of the business plan if

Figure 22.4 Three tiers of operation for HRD

they know that similar efforts are going on at the corporate level. They are more likely to engage with the HRD function if they see senior management doing the same.

If all three tiers are operational, training for individuals at tier 1 will not be 'isolated'. However, one way that line managers can test the flexibility and responsiveness of the HRD function is to see how they respond to an isolated request for assistance.

The manager of the HRD function will need to ensure that the HRD professionals are deploying their skills at each of the three levels–and are providing:

a. training and development opportunities to meet individual needs (tier 1);

b. team development and training to achieve specific objectives at business unit level (tier 2);

c. HRD involvement in strategic planning and development at senior management level (tier 3).

Tier 1

To achieve (a) the manager of the HRD function will need knowledge of a wide range of training and development opportunities, including a wide range of qualifications that individuals can work towards for both individual, career and business development. Qualifications will include certificated status for first-aiders (and similar specialisms), nationally recognized vocational qualifications (generic and transferable), and academic qualifications such as MBAs. Individuals may go on courses (often uncertificated) to learn counselling and other interpersonal skills, the results of which can be applied at work and elsewhere in people's lives. The extent to which this kind of self-development for individuals is encouraged within the organization will depend on quite where its management culture is in Covey's paradigm chart discussed earlier.

The HRD manager will need to ensure that there are sufficient resources available to meet individual training needs. This might come in the form of fees for courses run outside the organization, availability of suitable expertise (eg, external training consultants) to bring into the organization, or equally suitable and expert colleagues within the organization.

One of the choices the manager of the HRD function has to make is what staff to employ for this purpose and how to develop them further once appointed. It is usually easier to make the case to senior management to appoint new staff to the HRD function when there is a new specific training need to be met, and for which there is sufficient demand to warrant employing someone full- or part-time within the organization. A good example is IT training. Once the IT (or any other specialist) trainer is in post, though, other

considerations may arise.

Harrison (1997) points to cases where organizations have found it easier to cut training departments in times of recession and to outsource a reduced quantity of specialist training

demand. This becomes a more acceptable solution where the HRD function is a collection of individual trainers each doing their own specialism and working only at tier 1 of <u>Figure 22.4</u>.

One way of minimizing this is for the HRD manager to ensure a team approach to training and development. Harrison (1997) and Reid and Barrington (1997) stress the value of appropriate qualifications in training and development for HRD professionals. Such qualifications are generic, rather than specific, and equip the HRD professional for a wide variety of work.

Tier 2

If the HRD function within the organization is to operate well at tier 2 (focused HRD at business unit level), the HRD manager will need a team of equally able staff to meet demand–people who can perform a supportive, internal consultant role. As mentioned earlier, this may come from within the HRD department; it may involve external consultants; and it may involve staff from other departments who have an interest in training and development. Whoever it involves, in order to deliver team development, the HRD function will need to operate well as a team itself, and attend to its own team development. If the major activity at business unit level is the implementation of the training and development implications of a business plan, individual HRD professionals will need to be able to turn their hand to a variety of facilitation functions–problem solving, interpersonal communication, etc.

At the business unit level, and at the higher corporate level, the manager of the HRD function will benefit from having a structure to work to. In the UK a government initiative, 'Investors in People' (IiP) provides a standard for organizations to achieve in the way they organize and manage HRD. IiP is now well-established in the UK and being introduced or considered by a number of other countries. To gain recognition as an 'Investor in People' an organization is assessed against a set of 'indicators' by a regional or local assessment centre. The standard and the list of assessment indicators provide a very useful model for HRD managers. In many organizations it is easier for the HRD manager to promote a national standard than his or her own model. Equally advantageous is when the initiative comes externally to the chief executive–for example, from a government agency–and is linked to an offer of partial funding for the initial costs. Central to IiP is the linking of training and development activity to the business planning process. Whether or not the business unit is part of an organization that has achieved or is committed to achieving the Investors in People standard, the linking of a training and development plan to the overall business plan will be an essential first step. In addition to this, mechanisms will be required to link business objectives with individual goals–usually a personal appraisal scheme. Training and development needs to be effectively delivered and, more importantly, its effectiveness evaluated in the context of achieving business objectives, and senior management needs to demonstrate its commitment to, and involvement in, the

developmental process.

Continuous improvement is a cornerstone of the IiP process. Formal recognition lasts for just three years before re-assessment. See Chapter 20, and Gilliland (1996) for further details.

Investors in People neatly fits into Covey's third paradigm, in which individual needs are linked to business objectives. However, this may not be quite so at home in his fourth paradigm which emphasizes a whole-person approach. Team development that is designed to align the values that guide management attitudes and behaviour and determine organizational culture will be more at home in Covey's fourth paradigm. A principled approach to management development is consistent with being an Investor in People. The aim is to ensure that the values are appropriate to the most effective long-term achievement of the mission.

Values can be described and the prevalence of one value can be measured using psycho-metric testing. Such measurements can help specify the extent to which the process that is being modelled by senior management in an organization is the process that is going to lead to long-term business success.

Tier 3

Working effectively at tier 3 of Figure 22.4–strategic HRD at corporate level–will be the greatest challenge to the manager of the HRD function. One of the goals of the HRD manager will be to ensure that an appropriate model of both individual and organizational learning and development has a central place in senior management thinking.

Reid and Barrington (1997:180) list three conditions that have to be satisfied if the training function is to secure a relatively stable place within an organization:

1. the management team should accept responsibility for training;

2. the training function should be appropriately structured within the organization;

3. specialist training staff should be seen as professionals–trained, with clearly defined roles.

To this a fourth needs to be added:

4. the HRD function must set a good example of the values it advocates and the principles that drive it. To be good listeners, it must demonstrate good listening. 'You cannot talk yourselves out of what you behave yourself into', as Covey (1992) has put it.

Harrison (1997) points out that the delegation of training (and other budgets) to

operational units can lead to fragmentation of the HR policy and overall organizational mission. Given control over budgets and the power that goes with it, managers of operational units have been observed to go their own way. If this occurs, a central HRD function may be able to

provide a coordinating role, but only if the individual HRD professionals collaborate in a way that is acceptable to the operational unit. The mission of the HRD function is 'to be heard' and the strategy 'to listen'.

Where delegation of budgets has led to a lack of cohesion, the manager of the HRD function will need to be able to offer cohesion. Employees of the organization will see inhouse training and development events as offering one of the best opportunities to meet and share ideas with colleagues in other units, and perhaps in that way regain a sense of corporate identity and mission. On the other hand, where there is considerable central control exercised in the organization, the HR function may be one of the few advocates of individual learning, self-development and 'taking responsibility' for oneself.

In some organizations both these stratagems may, paradoxically, be required.

Dealing with chaos

Stacey (1991) examines the way that the fractal patterns of chaos theory offer a metaphor for managers in how to manage the unpredictable and the paradoxical. Managers may claim to manage by objectives but, given that it is impossible to predict the future, will, in reality, need to resort to a form of creative improvisation.

In times of rapid change the need for creative improvisation increases. It is at this point that the manager of the HRD function may no longer know exactly what to do, or what to advise senior managers. It may, however, be a good time to re-evaluate strategy in the light of circumstances.

The beautiful fractal patterns of chaos theory occur at places in the graphical representation of a certain type of mathematical formulae. They occur at those places where there is slowest progression towards either zero or infinity. There is a tendency in Western society to look for a right answer that can be seen as the opposite of the wrong answer. Chaos theory suggests that steering a route between opposite poles might produce the more elegant solution. This is no revolutionary insight as liberal (in the broadest sense of the word) politicians have been seeking the middle road for years. Within the politics of teaching and learning (in which training and HRD can be included) though, there is a tendency to respond to new ideas in the same way as the clothes-conscious respond to fashion: in with the new and out with the old.

Research into the effectiveness of teaching methodologies consistently points to the learner's relationship with the teacher as the strongest factor determining the quality of the learning. It seems, then, that good, collaborative working relationships are more likely to lead to the success of an HRD strategy than adherence to the current, preferred orthodoxy.

The manager of the HRD function will have her or his own preferred paradigm, but success in implementing it will, paradoxically, mean having to work effectively with directors and operational managers who are working with other paradigms.

Learning from feedback

People can learn from feedback. However, most people also get defensive and resistant if feedback is not given well, or if they fear that accepting feedback is linked to blame. They need to work in an organizational culture that values feedback–not a blame culture. Neuro-linguisitic programming (NLP) offers a useful set of techniques and principles for helping individuals at work to learn how to use feedback. Andreas and Faulkner (1996) lists the set of presuppositions that form a foundation to learning NLP techniques and which are also useful for the manager of the HRD function operating at the strategic, corporate level. One is, 'The meaning of your communication is the response you get'. Another is 'Underlying every behaviour is a positive intention'. Any HRD manager having a difficult time in the organizational politics and struggling to be heard or valued, may find such slogans from NLP lack immediate attractiveness. However, on reflection, it can be seen that the essence of good feedback is the separation of intentions from effects. If people feel that their (good) intentions have been understood, they are more likely to listen to unintended (bad) effects.

For any HRD professional operating at the strategic, corporate level, work soon gets unpredictable. It may be the actions of senior managers that produce the unexpected or it may be the interventions of the HRD professional. Small actions in a chaotic environment soon produce large unpredictable effects. Even the best devised plans produce unwanted side effects. This has greater risks for the manager of the HRD function than it does for an external consultant. After all, if things go wrong, the external consultant can leave and seek future business elsewhere. The manager of the HRD function will need to be able to continue working within the organization and this is likely to mean being able to deal with any feedback that needs to be given or received in the light of unexpected negative effects.

Large-scale interventions

A major challenge to the manager of the HRD function is to evaluate trends in HRD theory and practice. One emerging field for HRD worth mentioning at this point is the 'large-group intervention'. In this context a large group could be more than 2000 people. Bunker and Alban (1997) give an overview of 12 methods of large-group interventions currently in practice. Increasingly organizations, especially large organizations, are recognizing that their current dominant culture cannot adapt fast enough to the changes that their business must accommodate if they are to survive in the marketplace. To make a significant change across an organization within a short time-scale requires all members of the organization to participate in collective debate and decision-making. Such events may also include other stakeholders and customers.

Most of the methods used to achieve this rely on someone (an internal or external consultant) organizing venues, catering, and information flows to ensure that a lot of people attend a lot of meetings within a short period. Venues can be anything from a conference hall to an aircraft hangar. Events designed to facilitate whole organization change require the senior management team to interact with the rest of the organization in a way that enables each group to talk among themselves and to each other.

Such events require a large amount of planning and organization and will be a huge challenge to the manager of the HRD function. Working with large numbers can be scary, to say the least, but the benefits of success are also huge. If HRD is to be seen as a prime strategic mover within the organization and the manager of the HRD function is to be seen as the person who can be relied upon to effect strategic change at corporate level, then the large-scale intervention will be one way to make a considerable mark.

FURTHER POINTS FOR MANAGERS OF A TEAM OF HRD PROFESSIONALS

Throughout this chapter there have been parallels drawn between the qualities required of the manager of the HRD function and the manager of a team of HRD professionals. It is of value to remember that cloning individuals is unlikely to benefit the HRD team. It is far healthier if there is a mix of individuals, perhaps along the lines of Belbin's team roles (Belbin, 1993). All will benefit from a leadership style that provides vision, models the process and works effectively within the politics of the organization. Blanchard *et al*'s (1986) situational leadership applies equally well to the management of the HRD team and issues of power and control are equally problematic. Sayers and Matthew (1997) describe some of the paradoxical situations that people can get into if they attempt to use role power where personal power would be more effective. If the manager of the HRD function is over-controlling (using role power) he or she is unlikely to feel in control of a team of HRD professionals. HRD professionals don't usually want to be told what to do. Megginson *et al* (1999) have a chapter on 'managing the HRD specialist' and their suggestions are intended for managers using internal or external HRD professionals. One of the messages is, 'Know what you want', which is about clarity of vision, not instructions. The manager of the HRD function is much more likely to feel in control if there is a shared vision for the HRD function and if working relationships within the team are good.

Techniques and ideas from counselling and therapy are increasingly influencing HRD practice. Lowe and Lewis (1994) note that 'organizational development and individual development go hand in hand'. HRD professionals engage emotionally with what they do, and benefit from techniques that have been developed by other professionals who need to manage the emotional effects of their work as well as the practical ones. Social workers and

therapists have 'supervision' sessions where practitioners can talk through the issues and the emotional stresses involved in their work. Managers of HRD functions may well need to have similar supervision sessions with their staff.

Another technique increasingly being used by training consultants is the 'awayday'–a day away from the office where staff can review their work and talk through future plans. Again, topics of discussion will be about both practical issues and the emotional stresses of the work. A good awayday will contain a mix of serious content and relaxation. A lot can be achieved by an after-lunch walk with colleagues.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented a number of ideas about the management of the HRD function. It has looked at models of leadership that can be applied to the management of the HRD function and how issues of control and facilitation impinge on those models. Principles and values that underlie the practice of HRD underpin how HRD professionals work at a number of levels. Three tiers of activity–working with individuals, working at business unit level and working at the strategic, corporate level–require different approaches, both from the HRD professional in general and the manager of the HRD function in particular. Steering a course through the politics of the organization benefits from an insight into chaos theory and techniques for giving and taking feedback. Effecting a significant change in the organization over a short period presents one of the greatest challenges to the manager of the HRD function.

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23
Marketing Human Resource Development

Jennifer Joy-Matthews, Ian Andrews and Richard Firth

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Many people associate the word 'marketing' with advertisements and selling and none of the rest of the marketing process. There might also be an image of all that unsolicited junk mail that arrives on one's desk. Consequently, there is the possibility of resistance to the idea of marketing Human Resource Development (HRD) within an organization.

The perceived lack of focus on the issue of marketing HRD might be one of the reasons why training and development is not always given the credence it deserves:

The situation in many companies is that there is not a meaningful tradition of valuing and developing their staff. Consequently there are real difficulties in embracing new ideas and practices that inevitably mean change, and challenge existing ways of thinking and acting. (Megginson *et al*, 1999:13)

Staying ahead of the competition and coping with the increasingly turbulent environment are issues that challenge most managers, thus, focusing on the development of themselves and their staff has to be of major importance. Attracting or locating those organizations and individuals who are extremely successful at employee development is also critical. Furthermore, those individuals and organizations who are good at being noticed and obtaining the business either in their own organization or as an external agent are also

would take a large investment in premises, expertise, facilities, catering and probably accreditation. None the less, a high price could be asked, and even paid, for the HRD function's expertise. However, high overheads might make the HRD function too expensive to train the entire workforce.

PINDERFIELDS & PONTEFRACT HOSPITALS NHS TRUST

The Trust is a provider of regional and district-wide acute healthcare. Situated in West Yorkshire, England, it operates from five geographical sites. Being a large Trust its HRD needs are considerable. It has, due to its diverse service profile, professional staff and history, inherited four functions active in training, education and developing employees. In addition, contracts with universities are agreed through a local Education and Training Consortium. The Centre for Learning and Development has more than doubled in size since being created and works with approximately 80 per cent of the 2500 organizational staff each year. It consists of:

Learning and Development Manager;

Professional Development Manager;

Learning and Development Facilitator;

Training Officer;

Centre Administrator;

Secretary;

Youth Trainee; and

Project Nurse.

The purpose of the function is to help the organization achieve its goals by enhancing the performance and professionalism of the workforce. It has classrooms and expertise that enable learning to be facilitated across the generic management and professional areas. Being the only HRD function within the organization that can currently offer an integrated approach to development (that is, all development except medical/clinical skills) it could be described as having a competitive and differential advantage over the others. It still, however, targets supervisors, ward and/or general managers with its marketing strategy. In doing so it offers accredited management development programmes and generates income by selling places on these to managers outside the organization. This income then supports other development at the personal level by equipping a learning centre and at

higher levels by funding organizational and professional development.

By concentrating its marketing efforts towards management development and creating a quality learning experience for this particular customer group, the Trust's HRD function claims the following benefits:

• Influencing a target group who have the sanctioning power to allow others to develop personally.

• Generating income that supports personal, organizational and professional development.

• Promoting the function's services and activities through 'word of mouth' referrals (manager to manager, and manager to staff).

• It bypasses senior managers who tend to look elsewhere for their own needs.

• Adding more value to all services year-on-year due to the income generated.

With acknowledgement to Richard Firth, Learning and Development Manager.

This case study illustrates how important it is to consider HRD customer needs, as well as individual learning needs. There is no suggestion here that one is more important than the other but they are difficult to separate. By understanding what customers and consumers expect from the HRD function, there is a greater chance of providing what they need.

It also demonstrates that targeting a specialized customer segment and offering a quality service to this group can lead to spin-off activity. Other industries do this through 'branding' for example, Virgin Cola or Virgin Railways. Why not HRD?

HOW DO WE REACH THE CUSTOMERS?

The purpose of reaching training and development customers in a marketing context is to inform them of:

• the service provided;

• the benefits of those services;

• the next steps needed to turn interest into business.

For the communication from HRD organization to customer to be successful three key points need to be considered:

1. Use a medium that the customer uses.

2. Use a language and style that matches the customer's needs.

3. Make contact when it is timely for the customer.

Use a medium that the customer uses

There is little point using costly advertising in a magazine or journal that is read by a very small percentage of your potential market, or sending a mail shot to managers who are not in a position to purchase your services. Use market research techniques to establish the best medium for your particular market, for example telephone interviews, postal surveys or focus groups. For a range of mediums see the section on 'Core techniques for communicating with customers'.

Use a language and style that matches the customer's needs

The customer is more likely to buy when the benefits described closely match his or her particular needs. It is useful to remember that those needs will not just be about HRD outcomes but also about the way that you convey the benefits in your promotional materials. Some people prefer great detail, theoretical models, techniques, etc, while others are less interested in your processes and more concerned whether you are credible and have a proven track record or are accredited. To discover a suitable format ask a sample of customers and review materials from other suppliers.

Make contact when it is timely for the customer

The best time to contact a potential customer is when they have a specific training or development need that can be addressed using your services. This relies on having access to accurate information on potential customers or being fortunate with good timing! An example of a seasonal influence on demand for training and development is the need of some line managers to spend any unused training budget just before their financial year ends. This is so that they can argue for at least an equal training budget for the following year.

Keeping a record of all existing customers and their past buying patterns means you can contact them at opportune times. To attempt to contact customers who are in a known busy period, for example accountancy firms leading up to the usual financial year ends of 31 December and 31 March, or gas companies during the winter, will probably result in your information being ignored. It is better to send it when your target is likely to have the time to read and respond to it.

Core techniques for communicating with customers

Start with effective market research to identify how best to reach your customers. This way, resources are not wasted on ineffective communication.

There are many ways of communicating with customers and potential customers. Finding ways that are appropriate for your style and your potential customers is essential. Examples of marketing communication include:

• direct mailing;

• telephone sales;

• brochures and inserts;

• HRD newsletters;

• corporate newsletters;

• Internet and Intranet;

• seminars and conferences;

• focus groups;

• media:

advertisements on television and radio;

advertisements in journals and newspapers;

articles or case studies;

• customer visits and consultancy;

• word of mouth.

Direct mailing

Sending unsolicited information in the post to potential customers usually gives a poor success rate. If you know that the recipient is in need of your type of services then you can expect a much higher success rate. There is a high probability that the person you send your information to feels inundated with similar information from other suppliers. It is not unusual for some line managers to throw away unsolicited marketing materials before reading them. (See the case study about David Matthews, the outdoor pursuits instructor and trainer, who targets copies of his brochure to tourists boards and local accommodation

providers.)

Telephone sales

Many organizations try to get leads through telephone sales. This can be when there is no prior contact and no knowledge of a particular need for your product at the target organization. This requires a particular set of combined selling and telephone skills. In the case of training products this often requires the seller to be able to answer questions on training. This can be a difficult problem especially if the product supplied is not off-the-shelf but tailor-made.

Brochures and inserts

There are companies that specialize in producing brochures. A training organization could employ them using their specialists to produce the artwork and write the script. Although this can be expensive it can be worthwhile if the image portrayed by the brochure is critical to marketing success. Many organizations have access to computer publishing packages that allow them to design and produce their own brochures. This reduces the outsourced costs, but will incur in-house costs, particularly as it can be time-consuming. Inserting brochures or leaflets into appropriate publications is another method that is used. (See the case study about the IYHF who produced a simple two-sided A4 sheet that sells the benefits of the Hostel 2000 programme.)

HRD newsletter

This provides a regular opportunity to promote your services to your customer base. To encourage busy customers to read it, it must contain interesting material. Perhaps it could cover a summary of a new concept in HRD or a review of successful high-profile courses so that the reader will see that similar benefits could possibly be repeated for them. (See the case study on BBSRC who produce a newsletter called *Spectrum*.)

Corporate newsletters

Having regular HRD features in a corporate newsletter will be cheaper than producing a separate one for HRD. If it has a wide circulation, probably due to its contents appealing to a wider audience, it can be a very cost-effective way of promoting the HRD function to all levels of the organization.

Internet and Intranet

An ever-increasing number of businesses are advertising their products on the Internet. This leads to the problem of encouraging a potential customer to find and open up your particular web pages. It is likely that your information is lost in the mass of HRD information on the Net. Larger organizations have their own internal Internet called an Intranet. The HRD function has the opportunity to promote its Intranet web-site address to all employees, increasing the chances of people with HRD needs opening up its pages and seeing its promotional material. There are specialist companies that design and set up websites if you are unable to do so yourself. (See the BBSRC case study.)

Seminars and conferences

Seminars can be used as a vehicle for promoting your services to key budget holders. To encourage line managers to take time out from their usual work activities and attend a seminar, you will probably need to offer something that they will perceive as adding value to their working life.

Training organizations often have a representative as a speaker at conferences. The key to this is to promote your organization while giving interesting information to the audience. This often takes the form of a case study of a successful HRD intervention, even better if it is on a topical issue. A benefit of this approach is the ability to target the type of conference that will have an audience suited to your needs. The Institute for Personnel and Development's Harrogate and London conferences, and The American Society for Training and Development's conference, are prime examples.

Focus groups

Gathering together a group of people, at random or specifically chosen, to discuss a particular topic is one way to raise awareness about an issue. It enables the HRD practitioner to refine his or her own ideas and consequently design a product or service that is appropriate to the customer's needs.

Media—advertisements on television and radio

In the UK there is very little HRD promotion on television or radio except for government-funded schemes such as NVQs and training schemes for the unemployed. This is probably due to a combination of the high cost and the difficulty in targeting an HRD audience.

Media—advertisements in journals and newspapers

Advertising in professional HR and management journals will aim your promotion at a known target audience. Newspapers will give a wider circulation. Both are expensive. Your advertisement is likely to be compared to others and you therefore need to ask the following questions. Can I afford the expense and resources to make it compare favourably? If not, is there better value in investing in other marketing mediums?

Media—articles or case studies

Writing an interesting article or case study that promotes your organization is a much cheaper alternative to advertising. The time spent writing it can be costly and often professional ghostwriters are used to give a polished edge to the article.

Customer visits and consultancy

It is an important skill of HRD professionals to be able to promote their services when opportunities occur during visits with potential customers. A key skill taken from consultancy is to be able to spot the possible benefits your services can provide for potential customers. This is particularly useful when they themselves have not identified the need. Some HRD organizations link themselves to consultancies which recommend them as part of a possible solution to various business change strategies.

Word of mouth

A number of HRD organizations rely on referrals from satisfied customers to promote their work. If this works sufficiently well it can help reduce expensive investments in marketing.

> THE BIOTECHNOLOGICAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
> RESEARCH COUNCIL (BBSRC)
> *Matching with customers' language and technology*
> The BBSRC is a UK government-funded body whose principal remit is to fund 'blue sky' research in the fields of biological science and biotechnology. To complete this task it has an annual budget in the order of £150 million. It is also charged with developing world-class researchers and raising public awareness and understanding of science. The Council employs about 3500 staff, the majority of whom are actively involved in research projects, including the highly public investigation into BSE and the cloning of Dolly the sheep.
>
> The BBSRC has a small, centralized training team based in Swindon. The team is supported by, and in turn supports, training officers at institute sites across the country, providing a wide range of activities and facilities for staff and organizational development. Success with in-house training activity has led to increasing requests from universities for the team to run programmes for university-based researchers.
> *Reaching their customers*
> The training team sends a training brochure to every employee at the beginning of the year. Training notice boards display key information at each site. However, they believe that the most effective high-profile promotion seems to be through the organization's

regular HR newsletter, *Spectrum.* Much effort is made by the central team to give the training officers, who are closer to the customers, the skills and knowledge to promote training. This includes using external suppliers to develop their marketing and influencing skills.

The training team's own market research has indicated that their customers, particularly the scientists, use IT in their work and are proactive in using the organization's own Intranet. The team have training pages on the Intranet but realize that without the knowledge or will to find them among the thousands of other pages they are ineffective as a marketing tool. To overcome this, they are developing a house style for their literature that mimics web pages with a list of information links to the Internet. This will better integrate training information into the medium and language used by their customers and therefore increase its effectiveness as a marketing tool.

This is a good example of a training function using innovative thinking to help respond to the changes in technology and language used by its customer base.

With acknowledgement to John Scott, Training Consultant, BBSRC.

HOW DO WE KEEP THE CUSTOMERS?

It is important to keep customers! Marketing campaigns can be expensive if they are not geared to give a good return on investment. Targeting existing or past customers offers a safer return on investment, as you are aiming your products at people with a proven ability to buy your services. If you keep your customers satisfied, you are likely to be the first people asked when a new need arises or may be recommended to others.

Factors leading to a potential loss of existing customers are:

• They are dissatisfied with the product you supply.

• They can make significant cost savings from another supplier.

• There is political pressure to try another supplier.

• There is a company policy to use another supplier and/or go out to tender after a set period.

Here are some ways to improve customer loyalty:

- Exceed customer expectations.

- Relationship marketing.

- Growing the business within a customer organization.

Exceed customer expectations

This can be done in:

• pre-course information;

• course delivery outcomes;

• post-course follow up.

The ability to achieve this is often dependent on the level of customer expectation and the investment in resources you feel able to apply to a customer.

Relationship marketing

HRD services are purchased by people. By working on the relationship between those people and yourselves it is possible to gain customer loyalty. This can be achieved by:

• ensuring that they perceive that they are important to you;

• building rapport with them;

• giving them opportunities to gain prestige with their peers and in particular their boss;

• taking time to understand their needs more specifically;

• encouraging them to take ownership for the service that you provide;

• offering rewards or incentives for repeat business.

Growing the business within a customer organization

Once having gained access to an organization, if you have a reasonable rapport with your contact you should use them to gain information on who else in their organization is likely to want your products. The contact may be encouraged to make referrals and even introductions on your behalf. This requires good judgement as to how far you can push one customer to help provide another. If you get this wrong you may damage your relationship with the existing customer who then may take his or her business elsewhere.

If you get the relationship right and your contact has confidence in your ability to improve their own status if they recommend you, then they become a champion for you and your

products. This is a very cost-effective way to market your services.

EVALUATING THE WHOLE MARKETING PROCESS

As has been demonstrated earlier, the whole process of marketing is complex and time-consuming. As a result of this it is also expensive, so it is critical to attempt to assess the return on investment.

A sensible place to start would be by remembering just what the original issue/problem was: has it been addressed satisfactorily? Can you place a value on this?

The following case study shows how a small idea has grown over a number of years into a worldwide initiative. It has gained support from a variety of people at all levels within numerous organizations. Some attempt has been made to assess the take up of the training.

Exercise: What would you do to assess how successful the marketing of this initiative has been?

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH HOSTEL FEDERATION (IYHF)–HOSTEL 2000
The IYHF is a secretariat for national associations that run youth hostels. The Youth Hostel Association of England and Wales (YHA) is one of these national associations and has been involved in training and development activities for many years. The YHA's Personnel Director and a lecturer from High Peak College have been working with a steering group from 14 European associations; this work resulted in an acknowledgement of a need for training. Funding provided by the European Union has so far enabled a training needs analysis (TNA) and the design and delivery of a series of courses to be undertaken on behalf of the steering group. The process is described below.
Hostel 2000
Stage 1
European Force funding enabled a TNA across participating associations to be undertaken. It raised awareness and helped with the product specification.
The following key areas were identified as needing a training input:

• managing customers;

• managing operations;

• managing people;

• managing finance and resources;

• managing information;

• managing environment;

• managing quality.

Stage 2

European Leonardo funding enabled the steering group to design a course, a handbook, and for a training programme to be delivered in English and German with common training manuals, acetates and videos. Participating countries included Denmark, England, France, Germany, Portugal, the Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Spain, Sweden and Wales.

The concept was to train a team of trainers who would be licensed to deliver courses they had experienced as participants. 'Training the Trainer' was the first course followed by training those trainers in customer care.

The cascading approach means that there are now about 30 trainers, recruited by invitation, and 693 trainees who have experienced the course. The individual associations incorporated these courses into their own training programmes.

Stage 3

Another two years' funding was obtained from Leonardo and further courses were designed and delivered to support the TNA undertaken in Stage 1:

• Working with Young People

• Quality Management

• History, Philosophy and Ideals of the Youth Hostel Movement with Selling Techniques

• Managing Staff through Change.

With acknowledgements to Terry Rollinson, Personnel Director, YHA, and Kay Price, High Peak College.

A key issue that arises from this case study is how to evaluate the success of the initiative. Remembering the original need is important–in this case it was to raise the level of provision in all associations. In this instance we are interested in how successful the marketing of the programme has been. We can assess this in two main ways:

1. Collecting data to demonstrate the number of courses run, the number of trainees involved and which countries they represent.

2. Attempting to find a measure, or measures, of improvements within the hostelling network would demonstrate the ultimate worth of the initiative.

The primary evaluation of the programmes to date shows:

• The ability to undertake translations has improved and the trainers can have confidence in the training pack they receive.

• Some trainers are more assiduous than others at going back to their own associations and running courses.

• There is still a need to convince the General Secretaries of the national associations to take ownership of the courses rather than pass it to the trainers.

Some of the solutions to the identified problems are:

• Try 'double-handed' delivery to ensure and increase the quality and quantity of courses run. It is crucial to spread the message.

• Arrange more 'Training the Trainer' courses to ensure the team can cope with cascading courses into other countries around the world.

• Sell the benefits to General Secretaries to engage them more in the process.

• Use word of mouth–as the courses cascade and success becomes known, more associations will want to become involved, so the next step is to go beyond Europe.

THE WAY FORWARD, OR WHAT YOU CAN DO

Theories and case studies are very useful. However, what really matters is how you apply the information in your own work.

It seems to us that one of the main methods you can employ is a SWOT analysis. What are the *strengths* and *weaknesses* of the way you currently market your services? Do you actively market, or are you waiting for the work to come to you and wondering why it does not? A wonderful trainer at Guardian Business Services once said, 'Trainers should strap on a backbone'. He went on to explain that many trainers do not plead their case effectively or blow their own trumpets! Knowing what you have done well and telling people about it are essential. Being aware of areas where you need to develop and improve is also essential. Benchmarking against other organizations, not necessarily just training and development ones, is a great way to identify relative strengths and weaknesses.

Where are the *opportunities* for you to grow? Try working on consolidating relationships with existing clients and accessing new clients (see earlier parts of this chapter for practical ideas). The world is changing at an ever-increasing pace and, while this can be discomforting, it also provides opportunities of new markets and products.

What are the *threats* that face you? It seems to be a fact of life that training and development are cut in lean times. Taking steps to be really useful to a client while working with them is essential. Some organizations are starting to see that in lean times undertaking training and development is a great use of time.

CASE STUDY REVISITED: DAVID MATTHEWS, OUTDOOR PURSUITS INSTRUCTOR AND TRAINER

At the start of the chapter we asked what you would do to increase David's trade. Here are some of our ideas.

Constraints

There is a low budget for marketing and a lack of expertise in marketing. There are several markets and therefore David needs to consider market segmentation, dealing with each of the segments separately or combining them together into manageable groups:

• *Supply teaching in outdoor centres:* delivering what the centres require and being professional and supportive with the groups and permanent members of staff is probably the best strategy. However, this work relies on external factors over which he can have little control, eg, the number of school groups making bookings and the health of permanent members of staff. He should consider how he might gain access to centres that he does not currently work for, researching where those centres are and then undertaking a targeted mailshot.

• *Schools:* the same strategy as for supply teaching, with the addition of relationship marketing, building a relationship with the client; perhaps sending New Year cards to the teachers. Christmas cards are often lost in the general melee and are not appropriate in all schools where the dominant religion is not Christian. Keeping a record of notable incidents that occurred on the last visit to personalize the card is also a way of building the relationship.

• *Youth clubs:* some local authorities have magazines and mailing lists for youth clubs in their area. Getting his name known on a wider scale will be useful.

• *College and university students:* accessing 'freshers' weeks' where students are choosing to join a society, and making contact with lecturers who have a need for outdoor pursuits.

• *Hen nights and stag parties*: this is likely to be word-of-mouth marketing. So telling participants, such as teachers and youth leaders, on other courses that this is an option is one way to attract more business.

• *Managers:* at the moment this is very much a reactive process. Working on designing a new brochure and identifying likely contacts is sound use of the winter months.

• *Disabled groups:* many instructors are not experienced with such groups, so capitalizing on this strength and ensuring that all publicity contains reference to working with disabled groups and individuals is essential.

  • *Families:* brainstorming contact points and then placing brochures there is one way, for example, contacting Youth Hostels, bed and breakfast establishments and other holiday accommodation, and building the relationship with the owners/managers so that they will promote him.

  • *Individuals:* considering whether it is possible to run an open course and in that way cut the cost to each participant. Quite often individuals have no one to come with but do need or want individual tuition, so forming them into a group is one option.

These are ideas for a sole trader working outside an organization. However, much of the process of brainstorming and benchmarking are equally as appropriate for an in-house operation. The other case studies give examples of how the organizations have changed or shaped their product and processes and in doing so have been in a much stronger position to market themselves.

Ask yourself:

• What are you currently doing?

• How do you know you are being successful?

• What could you do in the future?

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**24
Supporting Learning in the Third
Millennium**

Rita Johnston

INTRODUCTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The problems which writing this chapter pose are different in kind from those normally encountered in producing a chapter in an academic or professional text. Usually the author has to research and assemble all the facts, structure them to address the particular slant of the title and then add a critique or evaluation of their validity and usefulness. Unfortunately, when we peer into the future, 'facts' become a matter of speculation. This is, of course, true for any strategic planning or forecasting but in the realm of learning, 'facts' are more nebulous to start with, particularly in the affective domain. So, of necessity, the content of this chapter and the argument and critique which follows from it are more tentative and open to debate than the chapters which precede it. Why then, you might ask, include it at all? Why end on a note of ambiguity rather than on one that is strong and authoritative?

The answer has to be that to end on a strong and authoritative note would be misleading. The postmodernist future into which we are accelerating will be more ambivalent than ever before. In order to deal with that world effectively we will need a different mindset, a new frame of reference. What is more disturbing to some people is that, in a rapidly changing environment, there will be no time to look to 'experts' or gurus to provide an authoritative response nor, in the increasingly differentiated micro-cultures of the new

millennium, would any single, expert response be universally valid. In the 21st century we each need to be our own expert in our own context.

Perry (1970) identified three stages in the development of an autonomous learner:

• searching for the universal, authoritative 'right' answers;

• realizing that there are no universal right answers; and

• creating their own, contextually and provisionally right, answers.

Trainers and human resource managers will have to develop in themselves, and in those for whom they have training responsibility, the ability to become autonomous lifelong learners in a changing and often unpredictable environment. This will require the building of self-confidence to think the unthinkable and empowerment to create strategies for coping with the unknowable.

The role of the human resource manager is thus becoming both more challenging and less easily definable. The people for whose development he or she is given responsibility will, increasingly, be the products of the massification of higher education. Hopefully, therefore, they will already have developed some skills as continuous and autonomous learners. It will be part of the responsibility of the Human Resource Development (HRD) manager to participate in and encourage the next great educational wave, necessitated by the continually changing environment, the massification of creativity.

It was with the awareness of this future scenario in mind that this last chapter was included. The aims of the chapter are:

• consciously to stimulate the ability to speculate and create future scenarios;

• to get over the learning blocks of 'Can you prove it?' and 'I'm not a creative thinker';

• to develop tolerance of ambiguity and uncertainty; and

• to encourage self-confidence in the ability to look for and implement a contextually appropriate response, rather than to seek out some 'expert's' 'right answer'.

Having read this chapter you will be able to:

• debate the inherent uncertainty of prediction;

• evaluate available methods and tools for forecasting;

• suggest possible future scenarios with confidence;

• identify probable future learning needs for yourself and others;

• suggest appropriate development strategies to meet those needs; and

• argue the case for sustainable development with regard to human resources for the future.

THE NATURE OF TRENDS AND PREDICTIONS

Forecasting is a dangerous business. The Meteorological Office only claims 80 per cent accuracy for UK weather forecasts, for a maximum of eight days. Apparently safe predictions from established trends, such as the Victorian forecast that the streets of London would be knee-deep in manure (due to the proliferation of private horse-drawn carriages), were overtaken by unforeseen innovations (in this case the combustion engine), whereas apparently wild flights of fancy (such as Arthur C Clarke's space predictions) have come to pass.

Historically, an accepted method of forecasting the future has been to look at current trends and to project them, incrementally, ahead. For many years Toffler (1980), Naisbitt (1982) and others have warned us that the pace of change is now increasing not arithmetically but logarithmically and so our forecasts have had to take this into account by projecting trends exponentially rather than incrementally.

Even this is no longer adequate. As Jarvis (1992) and Barnett (1997), working from chaos theory, have pointed out, the future is no longer just unknown, it is now unknowable because the reflexivity consequent on that exponential change must be added to the model and, unfortunately for forecasting, that reflexivity is, quite literally, unpredictable! So the environment on which the most recent change will impact can never be what we thought it would be, because by the time the change arrives, the environment will have altered, in some chaotic way, as a reflex response to the impact of the previous waves of change.

For these reasons, the political, economic and artistic experts whose predictions for the year ahead fill our New Year newspapers, are notoriously unreliable. If experts have difficulty in forecasting in a specialist area for one year only, what hope is there for millennium planning over the whole spectrum of training and development? How can this chapter perform its function of suggesting how best to prepare for the demands of learning, training and development in the third millennium?

Two different types of preparation for the future are possible. One type is that based on the limited, though not totally discredited, methods of forecasting using trends and guestimates, which we have described. When using these methods the best planning is not rigid but flexible enough to allow for change when the predictions need to be corrected as a result of unforeseen error. The second type of preparation is of a different order and is concerned with the preparation of the mind to respond flexibly and appropriately to whatever unforeseen circumstances the future may bring. One way of achieving this works from the principle that 'fore-warned is fore-armed' and consists of flying kites–floating ideas, however seemingly outrageous–so that the mind is prepared to contemplate currently unthinkable circumstances that may materialize in the future. This is the contribution made by such futurologists as Toffler and Naisbitt and, in the field of

management development, by many of the recent works of Charles Handy. On a different scale, trainers

have long employed techniques such as brainstorming and guided fantasy exercises to aid with this sort of mental exercising.

The two methods can be combined as Ringland (1998) has shown, by scenario planning, which starts with quite concentrated studying of trends and relevant data. Next, the mind is let free to envisage the multiplicity of futures which, as chaos theory has shown, could be equally possible outcomes of the trends. Scenario planning then requires a consensus on the organizationally preferred option, out of all the possible ones. Finally, every effort is made to concentrate on promoting those factors that will bring about the selected option in preference to the others. As Ringland has shown, this can be a powerful tool in bringing about desired change, but it is essentially a very context-specific procedure.

In addition to these types of mental preparation, and complementary to them, are the methods long espoused by Eastern philosophies and religions and manifested in such practices as yoga and tai chi, whereby the mind is cleared of the equivalent of computer 'noise' and so is left calm, reflective and unlikely to react to 'the new' with either aggression or defensiveness. It is beyond both the scope of this book and the competence of this author to develop the Eastern model of mental preparation. None the less, it may well transpire that this is the most effective preparation of all for the challenges of the new millennium and such an approach is strongly recommended in addition to the contemplation of the ideas outlined in the rest of this chapter.

LIFE AND WORK IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

Before developing our own predictions it might be useful to look at the work of McLagan and Suhadolnik (1989) who reported the 14 key trends, identified by the American Society for Training and Development, which were then influencing the workplace. These were:

• competitiveness and productivity;

• rapidity of change;

• volatility of the domestic economy;

• technological change;

• increased investment in human capital;

• demographic shifts;

• quality of workplace life issues;

- population diversity;

- emphasis on health and well-being;

- workforce quality;

- changing role of business in society;

- growth of the service sector;

• globalization of business;

• smaller, self-contained work groups.

A list of 20 current buzzwords in training and development, taken from titles of recent journal articles and textbook chapter headings, provides a snapshot, for purposes of comparison. They are shown in Figure 24.1.

[!Figure 24. 1 about here!]

This indicates that many of the American preoccupations, such as globalization, workforce diversity, quality issues and information technology are geographically widespread and are still with us. Some concerns have either diminished in significance, become taken for granted (which may be the case with 'rapidity of change' and 'growth of the service sector'), or remain local problems. Other issues have surfaced: empowerment, sustainability, lifelong learning and capacity building. Ten years from now we should expect that many of these current preoccupations will still be with us, some will have decreased in significance, and additional items will have come to the fore.

Rather than concentrating on each individual issue, therefore, it would seem most profitable to group them into generic families (these are indicated in Figure 24.1 by similarity of type face). The natural groupings are very similar to those identified by Garavan *et al* (1995):

Image

Figure 24.1 Twenty current buzzwords in training and development

• world political, social and economic changes;

• changes in the workforce from demography to aspirations;

• technological advances;

• cultural and philosophical shifts.

We shall consider each of these in turn.

Political and economic changes

Garavan *et al* noted the impact of globalization and the influence on business and trade of such events as the collapse of the Soviet Union, the conflicts in the Gulf and the Balkans, and the emergence of the new South Africa. The specific examples are of less importance than the realization that political and economic events in one area of the world have knock-on effects globally and that these are constantly changing.

Most recently it has become evident that environmental issues must be considered along with political and economic factors. Concern is not simply for development, but for *sustainable* development and this is true in the area of human resources as much as in the area of physical resources. The current preoccupations with workforce diversity and with capacity building in multinational, multicultural organizations are likely to become even more crucial.

Changes in the workforce

Overall the global population is showing a relative decline in the rate of increase. This is largely due to lack of replacement births in developed countries, which has been ascribed to increased standards of living and education in general and to greater participation of women in the workforce in particular. Whatever the causality, the consequences are an ageing workforce, key skills gaps in the central years and higher aspirations of work satisfaction and remuneration for those entering the workforce. The entry of more women into the workforce has accelerated the tendencies towards flexible employment practices and a blurring of the distinctions between flexible, part-time and full-time working.

Although levels of education and training are rising rapidly in many parts of the developing world, economic constraints remain, together with multiple demands on the funds that are available. There is likely, therefore, to be a continuing educational shortfall, with the consequence that whole countries may be considered as areas of cheap or low-skilled labour. These countries may thus attract investment for unskilled manufacturing processes and, worse, polluting or dangerous industries.

Technological advances

It is in this area that linear predictions based on current trends seem safest. MacFarlane (1994a) has asserted that reductions in the cost of equipment and advances in compacting for storage will increase dependence on technology in all aspects of work and life in general. There are now over 400,000 microchips for every man, woman and child on the planet. Information technology, based on personal computers linked by the World Wide Web, is almost ubiquitous. MacFarlane (1994a:2) has claimed that personal computers are halving in size and cost and doubling in capacity every three years. Yet none of this would have been envisaged two decades ago. Given the accelerating rate of change and the declining shelf-life of inventions, it is more than likely that, within the first decade of the millennium, unforeseen technologies, perhaps organically based, will have superseded our current electronics-based computer systems. Whatever the medium, IT-mediated learning, particularly in the knowledge-based industries, will be an essential feature of lifelong learning and of the learning organization.

Although Geidt (1996) has warned that we should not regard IT as the panacea for education and training in developing areas such as South Africa, in general the impacts of technological change will undoubtedly be global. One impact will certainly be the increase in potential for off-site working, for off-site training and for decentralization of tasks, combined with centralization of strategy and overall planning and control. It will also impact on quality control systems and the assessment and accreditation of individual learners.

Cultural and philosophical shifts

It is inevitable that the political, demographic and technological changes referred to above will result in perceptual shifts, leading to the emergence of new philosophies and cultures. It is unthinkable, for instance, that any developments in human cloning would not impact upon current Western concepts of individuality with its implicit notion of the unique nature and thus unique value of each human being. Even if Huxley's kite-flying in *Brave New World* never becomes a reality, we could see a shift of emphasis from the value of the individual and onto the group or team.

In the global economy, with non-expendable power sources (solar, wind, wave) manufacturing industry, particularly that which is polluting, dangerous or labour-intensive, could be 'outsourced' to, in the case of the former, areas which are remote or isolated and in the case of the latter, places where there is abundant cheap labour, in a geographical manifestation of neo-Taylorism. Enzer (1986:471) has warned:

The internationalization of business will accelerate the rate at which jobs flow to the most efficient source, a euphemism for the cheapest workers capable of performing the required task.

Such measures would necessitate a re-articulation of concepts of equity and the acceptable face of capitalism.

The postmodern philosophy of inclusivity has already provided evidence of an overall movement towards the breaking down of artificial barriers and of binary thinking; not 'A-levels or NVQs', not 'work or study', not 'information or entertainment'. We are moving towards combinations and mergers, which is even starting to be reflected in our vocabulary with such new words as 'faction' and 'infotainment'. The fastest growing segment of the holiday industry in Europe is what is termed 'activity breaks', combining leisure with learning new skills, from calligraphy to palaeontology. In education this is also reflected in new structures with modular, project-based and workplace-assessed degree courses. With these developments comes the postmodern dilemma with regard to standards and quality. By which stakeholders are these defined? What criteria are acceptable? How are these assessed, monitored and coordinated? How are standards of universality or permanence affected?

We can conclude this section with the sure forecast that there will be change in many areas and, equally surely, that change is all we can be totally certain of!

SOCIETY AND WORK IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

Although it is impossible to be precise about the exact impact that changes in these variables of politics, demography, technology and culture will have in the new millennium, what reflexivities they will trigger or how a balance between them will be struck, it is possible to use the trends to sketch a tentative vision of life and work in the future.

What will 'going to work' mean in the third millennium? The concept of *going* to work has already vanished for a significant number of people. Instead, work will come to large groups of people, via new technology. The current estimate is of over 4 million homeworkers in the UK. Many of these are 'knowledge workers', involved in certain professions such as law, architecture, marketing and graphic design, together with managers of small service businesses. The expectation is that in the future, a much higher percentage of workers in the developed world will be employed in knowledge-based industries and that many of these will be predominantly home-based workers using cable and modem links, video phones, video conferencing and interactive multimedia communication. Many more home-workers will be employed in jobs which have not yet been identified but which will develop as a consequence of the opportunities presented by future technological advances.

The nature of work itself will change rapidly, for two reasons. First, the shelf-life of equipment and machinery and consequently the skills needed to operate that equipment will become obsolete at an ever-increasing rate. Second, the structure of organizations will

be more fluid, giving more flexibility both vertically and horizontally and eliminating the

tight demarcations around job boundaries. Workers will move from one task or project to another rather than being committed to one job for many years. Between tasks or projects, periods of unemployment or under-employment will be filled by retraining and multi-skilling. In addition to this 'recurrent' education, where new skills are acquired at intervals as old ones become redundant, workers will also have to develop skills of continuous, rather than recurrent learning, much of it on-the-job, a trend in which Hedbery (1986) maintains that Sweden is currently providing the lead. The future requirement for continuous education will be underpinned by the four trends which Curson (1986) has identified as characterizing the organization of work in the future:

• workforce reduction with no 'slack';

• high unemployment and decline in union and labour power;

• a pool of unemployed available for marginal work;

• 'core business focus' with all non-core activities outplaced.

Postmodern society will be increasingly a consumer, not a producer society. If current trends are to continue then consumer demand will take two contrary lines. One sort of demand will be for cheap, quickly accessed, mass-produced products, which can be discarded and replaced with ease. These will include foods, home goods, clothing and entertainment such as videos, games, music and films.

In complete contrast there will be a much smaller but growing demand for goods of high quality and complexity and also for individual, personally crafted consumer goods of unique quality and high price. This will range from haute cuisine and haute couture to more widespread employment of personal accountants and dieticians and acquisition of works of art and minority performing arts. (The small invited audiences for the performance of chamber music or opera, which was a prerogative of the upper classes, has begun its translation down the social scale, oddly enough starting in the 'limited editions' of performances of magicians, jugglers and the like at middle-class children's birthday parties.)

Reich (1991) has identified three types of future work to supply these consumer demands:

• routine production services;

• in-person services;

• symbolic-analytic services.

Routine production services are characterized by high-volume, mass-production processes. Reich includes in this category not only the material production of mass consumables referred to above but also such routine processes as low-level information services (general banking), and basic teaching, nursing and supervisory jobs. Routine production will be

increasingly marginalized, literally as well as metaphorically. Metaphorical marginalization will increase as many of the currently personal tasks (such as patient monitoring in nursing, and testing and assessing in education) will be replaced by programmed computers or robots. Literal marginalization, particularly where the production processes are either dangerous or polluting, will mean that such industries will increasingly be located in politically powerless areas of low-skilled population or in geographically remote areas.

In-person services will be needed to cater for the second identified consumer trend, and are characterized by one-to-one attention. They include a range of services from hair-dressing to sports coaching and personal counselling. These services are characterized by a need for high-level communication and interpersonal skills and are often associated with consultancies or small business organizations.

Symbolic-analytic services (or 'knowledge-based' according to MacFarlane, 1994b) include all unique or contextual problem solving, strategic, innovative work and range from jobs in the arts and media to engineering, investment banking, architecture and management consultancy. This, according to Reich, will be the main growth area of the new advanced technological economies in the third millennium.

Change in the nature of work and society will impact on the understanding of 'human resources' in the future, and thus on the role of the HRD manager.

LEARNING NEEDS IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

What will the workers in this changing future environment need to learn? The productive and survival skills that they will need will clearly be very different from those needed in the past. Heretofore, in terms of Bloom's three domains of learning (Bloom *et al,* 1956)–the cognitive, the psychomotor and the affective–the emphasis for most of the trained workforce (excluding the vast majority who laboured with little or no training), was on semi- or highly specialized psycho-motor skills. A minority, the professional and managerial classes, were required to have highly developed cognitive skills. The affective domain was virtually ignored by the world of work. Feelings and attitudes were perceived to be either surplus to requirements or else downright dysfunctional. This will not be the case in the new millennium (see Goleman, 1996).

Types of learning

Larsen (1994) has identified four distinct types of required learning for the future:

• updating functional skills and acquisition of new ones;

• developing organizational and interpersonal skills;

- developing positive traits and attitudes towards change and innovation;

- cultural and multicultural acclimatization.

It is obvious from this list that there will need to be a shift in emphasis in training or, in leading companies, an acceleration of a process which has already started.

Psycho-motor and cognitive skills will still be in great demand in the future, but more and more these will be linked to infomatics and new technology as well as to the skills required to manipulate ever more complex and sophisticated machinery. At present, computing skills concentrate on basic keyboard and data manipulation skills but the new millennium will require a far greater degree of sophistication in accessing and surfing knowledge sources via the Internet and its heirs. Cognitive skills training will need to concentrate not so much on finding and exploring new knowledge, as at present–of knowledge there will be an over-abundance!–but in processing that knowledge and distinguishing between essential knowledge and ephemera, between salient data and 'noise'. Boyer (1994:118) predicted:

I think that the challenge of the next century is not only the discovery of knowledge, but fitting those discoveries into a larger pattern and perspective so that we can move from information to knowledge and from knowledge, perhaps, to wisdom.

Undoubtedly this process will be needed well beyond the next century. The skills of data analysis, synthesis and communication, currently relatively rare, will be much more generally required, as more and more people will be working in the knowledge industries. At the same time Reich's 'in-person' services will necessitate more widespread demonstration of originality and creativity.

As Larsen's list has indicated, much learning will be initiated from the affective domain. Positive attitudes towards change, creativity and enterprise will no longer be the exclusive province of the manager but will be essential requirements of the average worker. Barnett (1997:29) has emphasized that:

Essentially what is required is ... a positive orientation towards uncertainty, complexity and change. A predisposition of openness–epistemologically and socially–together with a readiness actively to engage with change and to assist in its development and necessary qualities.

Handy (1994) has recommended that in order to counteract the potentially destructive effects of excessive change, fragmentation, isolation and atomization, both in the workplace and in society in general, workers of the future will need to cultivate what he has identified as 'the three senses':

• a sense of continuity;

• a sense of connection; and

• a sense of direction.

Implicit in the call for development of these senses of continuity, connection and direction, is the covert threat that without some means of integrating the past, present

and future, in an increasingly changing and fragmenting environment the sense of personal continuity and integrity will be at risk. This echoes the arguments of Barnett (1997:29) who stresses that the role of education and training in the future will be to provide us with: 'a means of finding a personal existential anchorage amidst the never-ending challenges of professional life'. His recipe for producing this anchorage is the renaissance of the liberal tradition, which would encompass the needs identified by Larsen and Handy.

At a more prosaic level, but moving towards a similar conclusion, MacFarlane (1994a) in his Robbins Lecture, warned that the changes in the nature of work in the future will tend to widen the gaps between the routine production workers and those in the knowledge-based industries with the result that it, 'relegates those lacking useful skills, and those without a good basic education, to a potentially unemployable underclass in society'. To offset this, he recommends four basic criteria for education and learning:

• good general basic education, including numeracy and literacy;

• sound training in interpersonal skills;

• super-skilling and meta-skilling for the knowledge-based industry;

• learning-to-learn skills to cope with lifelong change.

That this should be promulgated as a new way of thinking is ironic, since the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead was insisting in 1919 that:

Managers, designers, and artisans must be equipped to adapt themselves to circumstances which are forever changing. Now, to produce this adaptability there is only one method, and that is education. This education must not be conceived on narrow lines. It is of no use to train the young in one very special process which will probably be superseded before they are middle-aged. Give them alert minds exercised in observation and reasoning, with some knowledge of the world around them and a feeling for beauty.

If those words were true at the start of the century, how much more pertinent are they now, when a worker may expect to change tasks and skills half a dozen times before middle age? The last requirement seems particularly prescient for tomorrow's world with the increasing emphasis on design and presentation in all aspects of manufacture and marketing. Interestingly, all MacFarlane's points are areas targeted by the UK government paper, *The Learning Age,* as priorities for the University for Industry.

Because of the segmented and specialized nature of work in the global economy, communicative and integrative skills will be at a premium, as will those of creativity, strategic planning, information systems, cross-cultural training and data analysis.

Certification

In addition to a better educated and trained workforce, the new millennium will see the rise of a more highly certificated workforce. The competency movement in the UK has proved popular with employees and employers alike and workforce accreditation has been encouraged by all major political parties. The success of APL (accreditation of prior learning) and APEL (accreditation of prior experiential learning) has provided access to academic qualifications for many employees who were previously excluded from these. Reid and Barrington (1997) have noted that the EU has started to develop mutually recognized and interchangeable training qualifications between the member states.

In the Pacific Rim, the 'paper chase' is well identified, as the young, demographically-large, worker population hits a bottleneck for promotions. Further and higher qualifications are recognized as having positive discrimination value in progressing to higher levels in the organization. In the ageing workforce of the United States, LaPidus (1997) has drawn attention to the same phenomenon of gathering paper qualifications, or 'defensive credentialism'. In this case qualifications are regarded as a lifebelt against delayering and outplacements. Thus, from different motivations, the current preoccupation with accreditation is likely to continue, with all the implications that this has for individual workers and for human resource managers.

Assessment

In the past, through schooling and into training, much accreditation has relied on assessment of cognition, what Whitaker (1997) has defined as 'left-brain intelligence' and Postle (1989) as 'intellectual intelligence'. Yet, as Boyer (1994:124) has said, 'there is a great part of us that goes beyond cerebration and the cognitive ... Maybe, beyond the intellectual quest there is an aesthetic satisfaction'.

Right-brain power, the ability to distinguish patterns, rhythms and images and the ability to show imagination, intuitiveness and empathy have been neglected areas for assessment. Johnston and Sampson (1993) suggested that these elements might be useful in order to stimulate the sort of creativity for competitive edge that is now being sought by many Far Eastern economies. Information technology is moving away from traditional sequential and linear patterns of thought towards asynchronous, immediate and multi-representational information. New methods of accreditation and assessment will need to address all of Postle's four and Whitaker's seven identified types of intelligence in addition to the traditional cognitive approaches. The development of criteria-referenced assessment of different types of competences (in all of Bloom's domains) will enable employees, in the future, to accumulate flexible personal learning portfolios.

Responsibility for learning

The onus will be increasingly on the individual worker to become a lifelong learner, assembling his or her constantly updated portfolio to demonstrate 'employability'. Such shifting of responsibility for training from the employer to the employee, coupled with recent developments in subsidiarity and worker empowerment, can be seen not just as democratic and liberal movements but also (see Johnston and Sampson, 1993) more negatively, as an attempt to make the employee, rather than the state, responsible for his or her employability. Duke (1997) has pointed out that the emphasis on self-reliance and private provision in the area of lifelong learning is simply part of the dominant ideology reflective of a low-employment, ageing-demography economy. Empowerment and its associated ideas are seen, in this light, not as an advance in workplace democracy but as necessary accoutrements for the autonomous worker required by a postmodern industrial society, stripped of the former employer's welfare commitment to its workforce.

This shifting of responsibility for learning, from the state or company to the individual, impacts on the role of the HRD manager who, in the future, will take on the mantle of mentor and resource provider more than that of direct trainer.

Training and learning for all

So far this section has considered what training may be needed in the future, but it is also essential to consider who will need to be trained. At present, the most likely predictor of how much training an employee will need in the future is the amount of training they have already had in the past–'the Matthew phenomenon' of 'to those who have it shall be given' (see Maguire *et al,* 1993). Fortunately, with the massification of higher education, the educational background of those entering the workforce, worldwide, is increasing, so there is likely to be a growing demand for continual education, training and development. This demand is already enshrined as a right in the European Social Chapter and it is likely that this type of legislation will spread. Even where there is no legal requirement, surveys in both Europe and North America suggest that provision for training and development is becoming an increasingly important factor in the attraction and retention of key employees.

In addition to attending to the equal opportunities provision for an increasingly diverse workforce within any one part of the organization, Iles (1996) has pointed out that the HRD manager of the future may be required to service the needs of the workforce of a global organization, including host country nationals, expatriate nationals of the home country and nationals of other countries who may be sources of labour, distribution or financing. They too will have learning needs in the four areas identified by Larsen, and the human resource manager may need to supply these in the home country, in the host country or online.

Evidence from a recent survey of past Master's graduates in training and development suggests that the role of the trainer is, increasingly, an international one and this trend will surely continue.

All of this training will increasingly be subjected to rigorous systems of quality control. Harvey and Green (1993) have suggested that training will not only have to meet quality requirements for fitness for purpose, value for money and efficiency in meeting objectives, but also will have to meet a quality specification to be 'transformational' in terms of employee empowerment and facilitation of change.

Learning everywhere

It is also necessary to consider when and where the employee of the future is likely to be pursuing his or her learning. Larsen has predicted a rise in the importance of on-the-job learning as opposed to courses given off-site. MacFarlane (1994b) has asserted that:

The proliferation of the technology of self-paced tutor-supported learning delivered at a distance will both revolutionise the use of training in industry and the provision of professional training throughout a working life, and so will open up significant commercial opportunities both for the provision of courseware and for the delivery platforms on which it will run.

He attributed the predicted growth in this area to the operation of three factors:

• the demand for quality training that is effective and cost-efficient;

• the spread of networking systems for learner support;

• the growth in research and development of targeted software and delivery systems.

MacFarlane has also predicted a massive rise in distance, particularly IT-based learning. Evidence from colleges and universities worldwide is that, particularly related to postgraduate professional courses, part-time study is now dominant and growing relative to full-time study.

As noted earlier, one characteristic of future development is likely to be the abandonment of binary thinking and inappropriate boundaries. The new mindset will be one of inclusivity rather than exclusivity. Large numbers of people of post-school age will not be *either* at work *or* in education but will be *both* working and studying. Their qualifications will not be either academic or vocational/professional but joint, or at least recognized interchangeably as the workplace, along with the college or university, is accepted as a legitimate site for learning and accreditation. This will be particularly important as distinctions between

subject knowledge, technical and professional competence and personal skills overlap and become blurred.

The learning needs of the new millennium will be softer, less discrete, more integrated and across a wider domain than in the past.

THE HRD MANAGER IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

Tasks and roles

Based on the American Society for Training and Development trends referred to earlier, McLagan and Suhadolnik (1989) analysed the impact these forces would have on the tasks and roles of the HRD manager. They identified:

• Increased pressure for outcomes in terms of productivity and cost-effectiveness.

• Increased pressure to demonstrate improved quality and value.

• Accelerated change in tasks and roles.

• More emphasis on customer service and satisfaction.

• Increased sophistication in HRD tools, technologies, methods and theories.

• Increased pressure due to workforce diversity in demographics and values.

• Pressure to meet increased expectations of worker creativity, risk taking and adaptation to change.

• Increased use of systems.

• Business strategies that concentrate on human resources.

• Pressures due to changed organizational emphasis from loyalty to merit.

• Increasing pressure of globalization.

• More workforce demand for meaning and participation in work.

• More team changes due to flatter and more flexible organizations.

Some of these predicted pressures relate to other chapters of this book, concerning such matters as strategy, organizational structure, cost-effectiveness and systems. What is of particular interest here, is that this research confirms the emphasis of this chapter on the

prime need to develop and support accommodation to change, acceptance of diversity and workforce creativity and participation. To do this will require a proactive stance on the part of the HRD manager. As McLagan and Suhadolnik (1989:117) have said:

the HRD person must think of his or her role in the broadest possible context. Individually and collectively, HRD professionals must be prepared to step outside familiar boundaries to take a broad perspective ... This is a positive opportunity for the HRD professional who is equipped to develop, at any level in the organization, the skills needed in turbulent times. The HRD person should not wait to be invited to the table, however.

When the HRD manager comes to the Board table, invited or uninvited, he or she will need to be able to demonstrate the ability to do more than diagnose the problem and say what should be done in very general terms. An actual management programme to address the issues will be required. Mangus (1986) has identified four learning systems that the HRD manager of the future could effectively establish and monitor:

• experiential, on-the-job learning;

• learning-monitoring systems and peer-learning group systems;

• computer-based training;

• learning within government/education/organization learning partnerships.

The tasks associated with managing these systems can be subsumed within four major roles:

1. To devise and continually update a strategic plan to ensure the skills are available in line with projected company requirements. Accepting that on-the-job training will predominate, the challenge will be to liaise with line managers in the design of jobs which facilitate creative learning opportunities.

2. To guide and facilitate individual employees in appropriate career paths, recommending their acquiring the projected necessary skills and providing the opportunities for them to develop. In larger companies this role will be subsumed into the third one.

3. To train line managers in the function of assessing and accrediting competences, as well as in mentoring and coaching skills.

4. To set up quality control systems for monitoring all of these functions.

The part of the current role of the HRD manager most likely to diminish in the future is that of actual training provider, as this will increasingly be outsourced to consultants or bought in from specialist providers personally, or via IT packages. According to Larsen (1994) another area of decline in the training function will be in training-needs analysis, on the grounds that this process is time-consuming and predominantly reflects currently identified needs and is therefore likely to produce a list of needs which is out of date as soon as it is compiled. Creative job design should, he believes, anticipate training needs more effectively than the old analysis method while at the same time leading to continuous learning and development.

In summary, the HRD manager of the third millennium will have responsibilities of a different order from those that he or she had in the past (except for the small minority already working in forward-looking organizations). Training is less likely to be recurrent, through off-the-job programmes and more likely to be continuous, through both planned and serendipitous learning through work. The training responsibility will be that of

resource provider and developer, and monitor of a quality system to ensure that provision, development and retention of key staff–often globally–are in line with company requirements.

The HRD manager will not be developing a training empire within the organization, though, as in the past. The systems for provision, monitoring and evaluation will be inhouse, but much of the actual training and development work will be outsourced. Because of this, the training manager will need good networking skills, to identify and attract the most effective specialists in the required field. It will be important for him or her to link into professional institutes and associations at local, national and international levels.

Developing the skills to support the millennial workforce

It has never been easy to be an effective HRD manager and it will be a very complex and difficult role in the future, for which preparation and self-development is essential. Since many of the learning opportunities of the future will present themselves through information technology, it will be essential for managers to update their own skills in IT. In addition, perhaps the biggest challenge will come in the affective domain. Personal and organizational success in the future will require considerable attitudinal change, from individualism to communitarianism, from competitiveness to collaboration and from segmentation to holism. Managers will need to learn to embrace change, not indiscriminately but without undue defensiveness, and to develop skills in acting as collaborative colleagues, flexible team workers and effective networkers. They themselves will be expected to model autonomous lifelong learning through reflective practice and by taking advantage of learning opportunities. Barnett (1997:29) has recommended the cultivation of, 'the capacity critically to go on interrogating one's taken-for-granted universe ... in order to assimilate and to accommodate the new order'.

There will be pressure to develop in all of these work-related ways at the expense of the other aspects of personal and social lives. These pressures, even if self-imposed, must be resisted. (A recent survey in the UK showed that those who worked the longest hours were those who had most discretion over their workloads–arguably the middle-class equivalent of Marx's 'false consciousness' of the proletariat!) The workaholic individual and the workaholic organizational culture should be recognized as, at best, a short-term coping response, not a problem-solving, much less a problem-avoiding, strategy. It will be necessary, in the future, to establish filter systems to guard against information overload. Broader and deeper cultural interests must be recognized as not simply a personal luxury but as a professional imperative to act as a buffer against the stresses of postmodernity. This requires time and, as Garavan (1993:91) has noted, 'Only if top management expressly frees up employees' time for the purpose does learning occur with any frequency'.

SUMMARY–THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABILITY

It is not appropriate to summarize a chapter such as this by a recapitulation of the speculations and forecasts herein: these are matters of debate and critique. A more useful approach would seem to be an assessment of the contents in terms of what is, arguably, the key issue of the third millennium–sustainability.

Earth Summit Conferences have concluded that for development of the physical environment to be sustainable, innovation and change must be kept in balance with consolidation and conservation. The same is true of the human environment. New developments, particularly those associated with information technology, will need to be encouraged and accommodated, worldwide. At the same time, traditional interpersonal and communication skills will need to be conserved and consolidated if, as Boyer suggested, we are to turn information into wisdom.

Just as the physical environment has been found to need the protective covering of the ozone layer, so education, training and development need the protective mantle of culture and liberal education. Only if this is maintained will organizations avoid the long-term erosive side-effects of excessive instrumentalism, global competitiveness, genetic engineering and monetarist market economies.

Perhaps the hardest challenge for the HRD manager of the new millennium will be to define, develop and monitor appropriate performance indicators for the sustainable management of human resources.

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