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# **FOUNDATIONS of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

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**BK**

BERRETT-KOEHLER PUBLISHERS, INC.  
San Francisco

# Brief Contents

## PART ONE

### **Introduction to Human Resource Development 1**

---

- 1 HRD as a Professional Field of Practice 3
- 2 Basics of HRD 14
- 3 History of HRD 27

## PART TWO

### **Theory and Philosophy in Human Resource Development 63**

---

- 4 Role of Theory and Philosophy in HRD 65
- 5 The Theory of HRD 86

## PART THREE

### **Perspectives of Human Resource Development 125**

---

- 6 Paradigms of HRD 127
- 7 Perspectives on Learning in HRD 149
- 8 Perspectives on Performance in HRD 178

## PART FOUR

### **Developing Human Expertise through Personnel Training and Development 201**

---

- 9 Overview of Personnel Training and Development 203
- 10 The Nature of Human Expertise 227
- 11 Personnel Training and Development Practices: From Individuals to Organizations 242

PART FIVE

**Unleashing Human Expertise through Organization  
Development 257**

---

- 12 **Overview of Organization Development 259**
- 13 **The Nature of the Change Process 284**
- 14 **Organization Development Practices: From Organizations to  
Individuals 317**

PART SIX

**Human Resource Development in the 21st Century 333**

---

- 15 **Strategies for Advancing HRD 335**
- 16 **Accountability in HRD 358**
- 17 **Globalization and Technology Challenges to HRD 379**

Name Index 421  
Subject Index 426  
The Authors 437

# Contents

List of Figures xii  
Preface xv

## PART ONE

### **Introduction to Human Resource Development 1**

---

- 1 HRD as a Professional Field of Practice 3**  
Purpose of HRD 3  
Definition of HRD 4  
Origins of HRD 8  
HRD Context 9  
HRD Core Beliefs 9  
HRD as a Discipline and a Professional Field of Practice 11  
Conclusion 12  
Reflection Questions 12
- 2 Basics of HRD 14**  
Points of Agreement 15  
HRD Worldviews 18  
HRD Process 22  
Threats to a Systematic Approach 23  
Ethics and Integrity Standards 24  
Conclusion 26  
Reflection Questions 26
- 3 History of HRD 27**  
The Beginnings: Survival Through Labor and Learning 29  
100 B.C.-300 A.D.: The Influence of the Greek and Romans 30  
300-1300 A.D.: The Middle Ages 32  
1400-1800 A.D.: The Renaissance 35  
Apprenticeship in Colonial America 38

The Industrial Era	40
Twentieth-Century Influences	44
Evolution of the Organization Development Component of HRD	47
Management and Leadership Development in the United States	52
Emergence of the HRD Research Community	57
Reflection Questions	62

PART TWO

**Theory and Philosophy in Human Resource Development 63**

---

**4 Role of Theory and Philosophy in HRD 65**

Importance of Theory	66
Recognizing the Theory-Building Journey as Scholarship	67
Requirements of a Sound Theory	69
Philosophy and Theory Underlying HRD	69
Philosophical Metaphors for HRD Theory and Practice	70
Conclusion	84
Reflection Questions	85

**5 The Theory of HRD 86**

The Discipline of Human Resource Development	88
Psychology and the Discipline of HRD—Contributions and Limitations	100
Economics—Human Capital Theory and Human Resource Development	106
System Theory as a Foundation for HRD	114
Conclusion	124
Reflection Questions	124

PART THREE

**Perspectives of Human Resource Development 125**

---

**6 Paradigms of HRD 127**

Overview of HRD Paradigms	128
Debates About Learning and Performance	130
Philosophical Views of Learning and Performance	131
Learning Paradigm of HRD	134
Performance Paradigm of HRD	137
Reconciling the Two Paradigms	145
Conclusion	147
Reflection Questions	147

- 7 Perspectives on Learning in HRD 149**  
 Metatheories of Learning 150  
 Middle-Range Learning Models at the Individual Level 158  
 Middle-Range Learning Models at the Organizational Level 171  
 Conclusion 177  
 Reflection Questions 177
- 8 Perspectives on Performance in HRD 178**  
 Disciplinary Perspectives on Performance 179  
 Individual-Level Performance Models 184  
 Multilevel Performance Models 188  
 Conclusion 200  
 Reflection Questions 200

## PART FOUR

**Developing Human Expertise through Personnel Training and Development 201**


---

- 9 Overview of Personnel Training and Development 203**  
 Views of T&D 204  
 Key T&D Terms 208  
 The General T&D Process 210  
 Instructional Systems Development (ISD) 211  
 Training for Performance System (TPS) 211  
 T&D Roles and Responsibilities 222  
 Comparison of Selected T&D Models 224  
 Conclusion 226  
 Reflection Questions 226
- 10 The Nature of Human Expertise 227**  
 Operational Definitions of Expertise and Competence 228  
 The Rationale for an Operational Definition of Expertise 228  
 The Theoretical Perspectives of Expertise 230  
 The Formulation of an Operational Definition of Human Expertise 236  
 The Implications for HRD 239  
 Conclusion 241  
 Reflection Questions 241
- 11 Personnel Training and Development Practices: From Individuals to Organizations 242**  
 Variations in T&D Practices 243  
 Core T&D Practices 244

Individual-Focused T&D Practices 246  
Group-Focused T&D Practices 248  
Organization-Focused T&D Practices 252  
Conclusion 254  
Reflection Questions 255

PART FIVE

**Unleashing Human Expertise through  
Organization Development 257**

---

**12 Overview of Organization Development 259**

Views of OD 260  
Key OD Terms 269  
The General OD Process 272  
Action Research (Problem-Solving Method) 273  
Organization Development for Performance System 275  
Comparison of Core OD Models 280  
Conclusion 282  
Reflection Questions 283

**13 The Nature of the Change Process 284**

Definitions of Change in HRD 285  
Core Dimensions of Change 287  
Change Outcomes 290  
Overarching Perspectives on Change 291  
Fundamental Steps of Change 296  
Resistance to Change 297  
Focused Theoretical Perspectives on Change 301  
Stages of the Organizational Change Leadership Process 314  
Conclusion 315  
Reflection Questions 316

**14 Organization Development Practices: From Organizations  
to Individuals 317**

Variations in OD Practices 318  
Core OD Practices 320  
Organization-Focused OD Practices 321  
Work Process-Focused OD 324  
Group-Focused OD 328  
Individual-Focused OD 329  
Conclusion 332  
Reflection Questions 332

## PART SIX

**Human Resource Development in the 21st Century 333**

---

**15 Strategies for Advancing HRD 335**

- Schools of Strategic Thinking 336
- The Strategic Roles of Human Resource Development 339
- Adopting a Strategic HRD Perspective 346
- Scenario Building Plus Strategic Planning 351
- Conclusion 356
- Reflection Questions 357

**16 Accountability in HRD 358**

- The Program Evaluation Approach to Accountability 359
- The Metrics Approach to Accountability 368
- Meeting the Accountability Challenge 377
- Reflection Questions 378

**17 Globalization and Technology Challenges to HRD 379**

- Globalization Challenge to HRD 380
- Technology Challenge to HRD 382
- Conclusion 385
- Reflection Questions 385

- References 387
- Name Index 421
- Subject Index 426
- The Authors 437



# List of Figures

- 2.1** Basic Systems Model 17
- 2.2** HRD in Context of the Organization and Environment 19
- 2.3** Andragogy in Practice 20
- 2.4** Nine Performance Variables 21
  
- 4.1** The Psychological Life Span 71
- 4.2** Theory-Research-Development-Practice Cycle 84
  
- 5.1** Model of Human Resource Development within the Organization and Environment 91
- 5.2** The Theoretical Foundations of Human Resource Development 93
- 5.3** Foundational Psychological Theories and Their Contribution to HRD 102
- 5.4** Performance Domains and Metrics 107
- 5.5** A Model of Human Capital Theory 110
- 5.6** A Cross-section of the Systems Leg: Contributions of System Theory 117
- 5.7** Current Limitations of System Theory as a Foundation for HRD 123
  
- 6.1** Comparison of the Learning and Performance Paradigms 129
  
- 7.1** Five Orientations to Learning 151
- 7.2** The Information-Processing Model 154
- 7.3** Process Elements of Andragogy 160
- 7.4** Andragogy in Practice Model 162
- 7.5** Individual Learner Differences 166
- 7.6** Kolb's Experiential Learning Model 167
- 7.7** Reconceptualized Informal and Incidental Learning Model 170
- 7.8** Watkins and Marsick's Learning Organization Action Imperatives 175
- 7.9** Learning Organization Performance Model 176

- 8.1** Perspectives on Domain of Performance 179
- 8.2** Campbell's Job Performance Components 185
- 8.3** Gilbert's Behavior Engineering Model 187
- 8.4** Rummler and Brache's (1995) Performance Model 189
- 8.5** Questions at Each Level of the Rummler and Brache Model 190
- 8.6** Swanson's Performance Diagnosis Matrix 194
- 8.7** Cummings and Worley's Organization Development Performance Model 195
- 8.8** Holton's Integrated Taxonomy of Performance Domains 196
- 8.9** Integrated View of Performance Domains, Outcomes, and Drivers 200
  
- 9.1** Swanson's Taxonomy of Performance 205
- 9.2** Marsick and Watkins's Informal and Incidental Learning Model 207
- 9.3** The Model of Interservice Procedures for Instructional Systems Development 212
- 9.4** Training for Performance System 213
- 9.5** Steps within the Process Phases of the Training for Performance System 214
- 9.6** Organizational Diagnosis Process 215
- 9.7** Documenting Workplace Expertise 215
- 9.8** Training Strategy Model 216
  
- 10.1** The Basic Components of Expertise 233
- 10.2** Competence of a Subset of Expertise 238
- 10.3** The Limitations of Competence 240
  
- 11.1** Analyzing Systems Tasks 251
- 11.2** Scrap and Rework Chart for a Fortune 100 Food-Processing Company before and after Implementing the TPS 252
- 11.3** Process-Referenced Expertise 253
- 11.4** Performance Roundtable 255
  
- 12.1** Organization Development Definitions 261
- 12.2** Ten Key Dependent Variables from Definitions of Organizational Development 267
- 12.3** Strategic Organizational Planning (SOP) 270
- 12.4** Definitions of Key OD Terms 270
- 12.5** Action Research Model 274
- 12.6** Organization Development for Performance System 277
  
- 13.1** Types of Organizational Change 290
- 13.2** Porras and Silvers's Model of Change Outcomes 292

- 13.3** Process Theories of Organizational Development and Change 296
- 13.4** Three-Step Model Comparison 298
- 13.5** Possible Causes of Resistance to Change 299
- 13.6** Relationship Map for Computec, Inc. 303
- 13.7** The Rummler-Brache Process Improvement and Management Methodology 304
- 13.8** Burke-Litwin Model of Organizational Performance and Change 305
- 13.9** Adopter Categories 306
- 13.10** The Three Universal Processes of Managing for Quality 308
- 13.11** Cummings and Worley's Five Stages of Change 314
- 13.12** Kotter's Eight Stages of Change 315
  
- 14.1** The OD Cube: A Scheme for Classifying OD Intervention 319
- 14.2** Shewart's Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle 325
- 14.3** Process Improvement and Process Innovation 326
- 14.4** High-Level Depiction of the Process Innovation 326
- 14.5** The Five Phases of Benchmarking Process 327
- 14.6** Cultural Values and Organization Customs 330
  
- 15.1** Ten Schools of Strategic Thinking 336
- 15.2** Strategic Organizational Planning (SOP) 353
- 15.3** Human Resource Development's Contribution in Supporting and Shaping SOP 354
  
- 16.1** Percentage of Programs and Organizations Using Each Level of Evaluation 362
- 16.2** ASTD Training Metrics 369
- 16.3** Skandia Corp. Development Metrics 373
- 16.4** Development Metrics from the Intangible Asset Monitor 373
- 16.5** Human Resource Development Metrics 375

# Preface

Human resource development (HRD) is a very large field of practice and a relatively young academic discipline. Furthermore, HRD is deeply concerned about the dynamic issues of individual and organizational change. Such a profession is in need of a complete and thoughtful foundational text. That is the purpose of this book.

The intention is that this foundation book will serve the needs of both practitioners and academics for the purpose of adding clarity to their professional journeys. While we have a personal preference as to the purpose and primary means of doing HRD work, the attempt has been to provide a fair review of the range of major views that exist in the profession.

This is not a principles-of-practice book. Many books in HRD outline their version of “best practices” but do not probe more deeply to the underlying foundations of practice. This book does the opposite. For the most part, we define the underlying foundations while providing an overview of practice. Readers who seek a deeper understanding of core models that undergird best practice; who seek to understand the history and philosophies in HRD; who want to think more deeply about learning, performance, and change; and who prefer to be reflective about their practice rather than blindly follow the latest formulas will find this book a refreshing and thoughtful explication of the field.

Because the discipline of HRD is so young, there has been little work to define the foundations of the field. Our struggle with this book has been to draw boundaries without building walls. For us this book continues the conversation about the foundations of the field. In a discipline as young as HRD, a consensus about foundations will be a work in progress for many years.

This book is directed toward several audiences. First, it is designed for university courses in HRD. We argue that every HRD academic program needs a course that teaches the foundations of the field. Second, HRD researchers will find the book thought-provoking and useful as a guide to core research issues. Third, it is written for reflective practitioners who actively seek to lead the field as it grows and matures. Finally, almost every practitioner will find parts of the book that will add depth to their practice.

The seventeen chapters of the book are organized into six parts. The first part, “Introduction to Human Resource Development,” establishes a basic understanding as to what HRD is, the general HRD model and process it relies on to do its work, and the history of HRD. Part Two, “Theory and Philosophy in Human Resource Development,” provides the critical theoretical and philosophical foundations of HRD. Both of these perspectives have generally been missing among HRD professionals and are believed to be essential for understanding and advancing the field. The third part is titled “Perspectives of Human Resource Development,” and it explicates the learning and performance paradigms of HRD and associated models within each. An attempt is made in this section to clarify the learning-performance perspectives and their logical connection.

The next part, “Developing Human Expertise through Personnel Training and Development,” captures the essence of the personnel training and development component of HRD as well as the nature of human expertise. Illustrations of personnel training and development practice that exist in host organizations are presented along with variations in core thinking, processes, interventions, and tools. Part Five, “Unleashing Human Expertise through Organization Development,” describes the essence of the organization development component of HRD as well as the nature of the change process. This section presents examples of organization development as well as variations in core thinking, processes, interventions, and tools.

The sixth and final part is titled “Human Resource Development in the Twenty-first Century” and serves as a springboard into the future based on best practices and identification of the twenty-first-century challenges to HRD. Major issues for HRD—strategic roles of HRD, accountability in HRD, and the globalization and technology challenges to HRD—are carefully explained.

Our sincere thanks go to the many HRD scholars throughout the world and their good work. They have made this book possible. We especially thank several of our colleagues for allowing us to include portions of their work in this book as well as for their critical review of the full manuscript: Richard W. Herling (chapter 10), Sharon S. Naquin (chapter 16), Wendy E. A. Ruona (chapter 5), Richard J. Torraco (chapters 5 and 15), and Karen E. Watkins (chapter 4). Additional critical reviews were provided by K. Peter Kuchinke, Susan A. Lynham, and Michael J. Marquardt. Our organizational partners also deserve recognition. We are grateful for the support we receive from the Academy of Human Resource Development, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Louisiana State University, and the University of Minnesota.

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