

## The new millennium challenges of HRD practices

Arumugasamy G

*Management studies, ponjesly college of Engineering, Parvathipuram, Nagercoil-629 003, Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu, India*  
g.arumugasamy@ymail.com

### Abstract

As we enter into the new millennium and move to become a fully industrialized nation and to achieve the aspirations of Vision 2020, human resource development (HRD) will continue to be the most crucial ingredient to ensure its success. Thus the development of the human capacity and their capabilities to meet the challenges of the new millennium and the needs of Vision 2020 will continue to be emphasized for now and the future. Taking cognizance of the importance of human resource development, in 1994, public Administrative Improvements and had recommended the established of the human resource development. The HRD is usually established along the concept incorporated where its members are from both the public and private sectors. As we enter the new millennium of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is timely, etc. The government has spent billions of rupees in the provision of educational that we take stock of the environment and its impact on human resource development from various perspectives such as economic, social, political, financial, legal, technological, demographic facilities and services to the society. It has also invested heavily in providing various types of training and development programmers' for public sector employees in order to upgrade their knowledge and skill, and to bring a change to the work culture and attitude. Likewise, the private sector organizations and training institutes have been playing supportive and symbiotic role to supplements the efforts of the government. The HRD aims to bring together policy makers and human resource practitioners from the government sector and the private sector, to discuss the current situation and the future challenges of human resource development, and to chart a course of action for the new millennium.

**Keywords:** Human resource development; HRD challenges; Human resource management; HRD in millennium.

### Introduction

Human resource development will always be the most crucial ingredient to ensure the success of an organization. The topic today is, to some extent, about going electronic in HRM. However, computerizing HRM operations seems to really just be a surface issue with some important and fundamental issues underlying this movement. I am only hope to identify here some of the more salient issues, while more comprehensive treatment of the topic must be a focus of future efforts. The issues that are real and being confronted by businesses every day are focused. Research in this area could be both theoretically rich and relevant- a great combination.

In recent years, businesses have been shifting from paper to computer based systems for a number of years now. The application of software and shifting processes to, for example, a web based approach, has been going on in all functional areas,

including marketing, production, finance, and HRM. How prevalent and important is this trend. It has been estimated that the market for supply chain software and hardware will exceed \$20 billion in 2010. Obviously, the idea of computerization is more than just a temporary fad. There are countless stories in the popular business press about the savings that have been realized by shifting from a paper computer based system. For examples, Fed-Ex shifted from a 20 page application blank in its hiring process to an on-line application. Errors in completing the application blank are now caught immediately and HR personnel have been freed up to do the more important task of back ground checks. The bottom line impact has been positive for Fed-Ex. Spartan a store expects to increase efficiency and productivity by shifting to software to schedule labor.

Many organizations are shifting to a self-service model of HRM in which workers can make benefit choices on-line, Companies have developed

performance management software that provides for on-line appraisal of workers. Don't have time or want to develop your own performance dimensions. Just see the dimensions provided by the software. Just let the software generate narrative feedback based on the level and pattern of ratings. Likewise, many companies are going down the electronic training path with e-learning promised of training being available via internet anywhere and anytime. Similar electronic approaches to streamlining operations and increasing productivity are occurring in all areas of organizations. These efforts in HRM and other functional areas will continue and be refund. However, the current push is in integrating across all areas of the organization with software that captures the entire enterprise.

Enterprise resource planning software is meant to provide managers the information- technology needed to realize new projects or strategic direction. For examples, paired with a human resources information system, the competencies of employees can easily be electronically catalogued. Breaking a project down into its component tasks and then identifying the competencies needed for those tasks allows a manager to identify employees who have the skills that best position them to make the project a success. The electronic approach allows management to determine the type of labor needed and its likely cost. Estimates of how long the project may take to complete or to get up to speed can be made and return on investment estimates can be generated. We are not far from a system in which labor is brought together to accomplish particular projects and then reconfigured in a different fashion for another project (International labor organization, 2012a and 2012b).

The above electronically assisted approach is certainly rational. The tasks needed, associated competencies, and employees (portrayed as boxes of competencies), can all be represented as a flow of boxes on a computer screen. Putting the various components together in cyberspace can allow examination of the bottom-line impact of varying

combinations and amounts of the components. How can labor be most efficiently allocated? How should labor be assigned so that it results in the greatest productivity? How much more competitive, than, could we be in the marketplace? Certainly these are rational business questions and the ability to answer those questions is wonderfully enhanced by the use of technology (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2012).

The problems associated with the software-based approach to management don't really reside in the software. The problems stem from the mind – set that underlies or is engendered by the software-based approach. Specifically, the software approach seems to be the computerization of scientific management. The central concept here is reductionism. If projects or jobs can be unbundled in to their component tasks, then the discrete competencies needed to perform each can be identified. The competencies available in the labor force can then be assigned in the most efficient and productive manner possible. Certainly, this general approach has been with us for many years. However, competitive pressures and technology are combining to result in reductionism and allocation on a much more rapid basis. In the extreme, employees may be thrown together on a short-term basis and never even meet each other since the project is conducted virtually. What makes a manager think that people can be successfully allocated like this? For one thing, it is because labor and other pieces of the service or production function are portrayed as separate factors on an electronic display. But are the competencies so separable and successfully reconfigured. The problem of course, is that even though factors can be conceptually portrayed as independent and separable features, operationally it may be the bundle of factors that is the meaningful unit. In other words, the configuration may be more important than the separate figures. Put in terms “the whole is more than the sum of its parts” this truism was originally directed at perception, but it may apply just as well to organizational life (IRC, 2012).

A real life example may clarify why it may be compelling but dysfunctional to manage by separating parts from a whole. Consider the case of an unnamed book publisher. A cost conscious and computer savvy editor had all of the tasks associated with publishing another edition of a text laid out. Time lines and budgets were in place for each piece of the puzzle, from revising each chapter to the instructor's manual and video cases. One of the pieces that could be broken out as a separate task was editing the text. A copy editor was asked to do his job without having access to the entire text, only the new material. Thus, the context, the terms that may have already been defined, and the overall voice and style of the text were not part of the editing process. You can imagine the time and difficulty caused by this approach. The reductionist approach of breaking out all of the tasks was supposed to result in cost saving and efficiency. It must have been a compellingly attractive cost saving item on the computer screen. Unfortunately, the computer analysis was wrong and the forest was almost lost for the trees (Economic Commission for Africa, 1999).

As can be seen in the above examples, the reductionist approach can conceptually lead to greater efficiency. But can operationally lead to increased costs and other negative outcomes. Allocating labor to the various parts of the production or service function conveys to employees that they are just another cog in the process. Enterprise software provides the capability to push this approach to the extreme. Projects can be broken in to their component parts and each part can be managed to minimize costs and maximize productivity. Looking at each step in a production or service function as simply a separate component can dehumanize what really exists within those components.

## Objectives

1. To ensure professionalism and a high standard of practice among human resource practitioners.
2. To provide a platform for discussion among the members and action that can be taken on

common issues, problems and challenges related to human resource development.

3. To provide a forum to share information and ideas on human resource development practices that impact on meeting the goals of achieving Vision 2020.
4. To create a network and strengthen relationships among human resource development practitioners so as to enable them to pool and share training resources and expertise.

## Issues and Challenges of HR Development

1. To analyze the current situation of human resource development.
2. To identify the issues related to human resource development in the context of achieving Vision 2020.
3. To identify the challenges related to human resource development in order to achieve Vision 2020.
4. To formulate a plan of action in relation to the issues and challenges of human resource development.

## Code of ethics for human resource development professionals

The professional human resource developer shall strive for excellence at all times and uphold the dignity of the profession and pride of the nation by practicing the following code of conduct.

1. Provide the highest quality of service in all activities relating to the development of human resources
2. Exercise honesty and integrity in the discharge of those duties
3. Shall not take advantage of position, power and confidentiality entrusted.
4. Constantly strive to upgrade one's own competencies to enhance the image and professional standards of the HRD profession.
5. Respect and be sensitive to other individuals' rights and values.
6. Undertake assignments only within one's own competencies and proficiencies.

7. Carry out the HRD function in compliance with the copyright act and other relevant laws of the country
8. Co-operates with and support relevant bodies and institutions engaged in enhancing HRD professionalism.
9. Share knowledge and expertise with other HRD personnel for the enhancement of the image of the profession.
10. Constantly strive to practice the principles, values and skills of a professional human resource developer for the organization.

### **Conclusion and Future directions**

Several activities have been identified for the future, including:

- The creation of a data base of all human resource practitioners, institutes and organizations involved in human resource development, training and consultancy
- The publication of a directory of human resource practitioners
- Regular publications of HRD bulletins
- Identification of 100 Master Trainers
- More regular forums and seminars to discuss issues related to HRD practices, training and consultancy

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