

THE FACILITATOR'S STUDY GUIDE FOR

Workforce Development

Perspectives and Issues

An Edited Book by
Roger Harris
Tom Short



Springer

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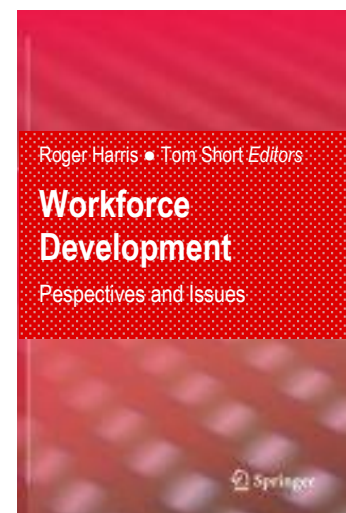
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ABOUT THE FACILITATOR'S STUDY GUIDE

This Facilitator's Study Guide is a supplementary learning resource based on the Springer book, *Workforce Development: Perspectives and Issues* - edited by Professor Roger Harris and Dr Tom Short and published in 2014. The book's chapters are arranged in four parts, but are designed to be stand-alone, and can be read in the order of the reader's choosing. This Study Guide is arranged to conform to the book, by chapters across the four parts. It poses questions that illustrate each author's arguments. The questions can be used to guide professional development, leadership training, individual learning, or to promote idea generation and debate in human resource or workforce development discussion groups.

This Study Guide can also be helpful in facilitating broader discussions about strategy, change management systems or culture in organisations where workforce development is a key priority. In particular, many of the chapters draw on research findings conducted in the Australian rail industry and therefore the questions raised have implications for senior managers and leaders. The Study Guide is suitable for organisational leaders and decision makers at all levels, as well as human resource professionals and students in undergraduate and postgraduate programs of education, business, psychology and the social sciences.



A Brief Overview of the Book

The genesis for the book (and this Facilitator's Guide) has been the research undertaken by most, though not all, of the chapter authors for the Australian Cooperative Research Centre for Rail Innovation (hereafter CRC). Their chapters are 'spin-offs' from this research, extended and reframed to make the chapters more generic to workplaces in general. Naturally, however, in some of the chapters data included or case studies presented necessarily relate to the Australian rail industry. These have been incorporated merely to furnish recent examples that may help to clarify workplace development strategies and practices for readers situated in other industries and countries.

This explanation of the genesis is more fundamental. The editors, with backgrounds in adult education and human resource management, had become increasingly intrigued with the emergence of the term, 'workforce development'. We puzzled over whether this was merely another marketing fad or buzz-word, or whether it was a genuine attempt to encapsulate the need for reconceptualising organisational policies and practices in a post global financial crisis world? We desired to collate the ideas from all of the hitherto discrete components in our research program into one volume in order to explore and interrogate more deeply this

notion not only for the educational enlightenment of ourselves and our chapter writers, but also for considered and no doubt critical analysis by a wider audience who may well be grappling with similar issues and concerns. In the end, the amount of information was substantial so we agreed to break the topic into two volumes and hence, this Facilitator's Study Guide is based on the first volume and focuses on perspectives and issues. The second guide focuses on strategies and practices.

Part I 'Sustainability, Growth and Diversity' examines a range of contemporary issues and developments in the external environment that affect workforce participation and considers a range of perspectives and challenges that can influence longer-term success, secure growth and accommodate diversity.

Part II 'Human Capability and Capacity Building' looks within organisational settings to consider a range of workforce development challenges and reports on a variety of activities used to build human capability and capacity.

Part III 'Innovation in Learning and Development' concentrates on workplace coaching, eLearning and work simulation as three modern techniques used to develop people and in innovative ways. In these scenarios the chapters reflect on the need for learners to engage and take ownership of their own development.

Part IV 'Looking Forward: Changing Perceptions and Possibilities' examines perspectives on three workforce development themes and challenges how they contribute to organisations in the present form. Finally, in Chapter 20, the editors look forward and posit a range of ten emerging topics that may become centre-stage in future workforce development.

The four parts of this book are intertwined and represent diverse viewpoints that can be pooled in order to create a holistic view of the challenges facing organisations. The chapter authors draw attention to the emerging reality that organisational change and workforce development are multifaceted, political, complex and uncertain in a globally turbulent world. However, the editors suggest that positive change can be more achievable when these workforce development perspectives and issues are considered and become part of a leader's strategic mindset. We would like to acknowledge the contributions from our chapter authors and thank them for providing this selection of thought-provoking and challenging questions.

Roger Harris and Tom Short (*Editors*).

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CHAPTER 1

Exploring the Notion of Workforce Development

Roger Harris and Tom Short

It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind

(John Godfrey Saxe, 1816–1887)

This chapter introduces the book and then explores and interrogates the notion of workforce development. In many ways, trying to explicate this concept is rather like the proverbial story of the sight-impaired people wanting to know what an elephant was, and arriving at different understandings depending on what part of the elephant's body they were touching. One believed that the object was a tree or pillar (its leg), another a snake or thick branch (its trunk), another a rope (its tail), another a wall (its side), another a spear or solid pipe (its tusk) and yet another a large fan (its ear). There can be so many different perspectives on workforce development with each user of the term approaching it from a different perspective that it might appear to be too difficult to grasp and interpret. This chapter analyses of the concept of workforce development and its increasing importance. It introduces each of the 19 book chapters that serve to illuminate the different perspectives and issues that comprise the jigsaw termed workforce development. With understanding that the whole is usually the sum of the parts, what these chapters do is unveil the many perspectives and themes (the elephant's discrete body parts) so that we may be able to comprehend more fully the notion of workplace development (the whole elephant).

Key Questions:

- What do you think workforce development means and why has it become prominent now?
- Consider the fundamental question of whether the whole is actually more than the sum of these parts!
- How do the many interpretations of workforce development enhance or impair its perception in organisations?
- How does workforce development contribute to national economic wealth?

PART I SUSTAINABILITY, GROWTH AND DIVERSITY

Workforce Development is both a human resource development process and compilation of workplace practices that educate, train, develop and build the competences of employees. Nowadays, organisations are confronted with an almost endless and unpredictable range of challenges that can threaten their very existence, such as market competition, labour mobility, shifting trends in society about the significance of work, exchange rates and the progressive reliance on technology in an information age. The literature reminds us that successful organisations that stay ahead of the curve not only survive these external challenges but also they find ways of changing and growing in a sustained way. Part of the successful formula is the way in which they anticipate their workforce development needs such as attracting, recruiting, developing and engaging talented people.

This Part serves to address six cross-cutting themes that play a critical role in building sustainability, growth and diversity. Chapter 2 considers the challenges of attracting and retaining staff and examines the significance of an organisation's brand; Chapter 3 uses a case study to report on issues associated with international skills migration; Chapter 4 reviews the challenges and opportunities of career paths; Chapter 5 reviews the challenges and possibilities within skills recognition processes such as the recognition of prior learning; Chapter 6 reports on the recognition and development of skills among Indigenous employees; and Chapter 7 reports on the challenges of attracting women to work in occupations previously dominated by men.

Attracting and Retaining Staff: The Role of Branding and Industry Image

Michelle Wallace, Ian Lings, Roslyn Cameron and Neroli Sheldon

In increasingly competitive labour markets, attracting and retaining talent has become a prime concern of organisations. Employers need to understand the range of factors that influence career decision making and the role of employer branding in attracting human capital that best fits and contributes to the strategic aims of an organisation. This chapter identifies the changing factors that attract people to certain employment and industries and discusses the importance of aligning employer branding with employee branding to create a strong, genuine and lasting employer brand. Whilst organisations have long used marketing and branding practices to engender loyalty in customers, they are increasingly expanding this activity to differentiate organisations and make them attractive from an employee perspective. This chapter discusses employer branding and industry image as two important components of attraction strategies and describes ways companies can maximise their brand awareness in the employment market to both current and future employees.

Key Questions:

- What is the difference between employer branding and employer image?
- What do you see is the image of a company from the consumer/end user perspective and the perspective of employees/prospective employees?
- From your experience, what branding strategies can be used in an organisation?
- Is employee branding a kind of control over how employees should behave?
- The chapter offers some examples of successful employer/employee branding. Consider which ones might be adapted in an organisation you know well.

International developments in Skills Migration: A Case Study of the Opportunities, Threats and Dilemmas for Australia

Peter Kell, Roslyn Cameron, Deborah Joyce and Michelle Wallace

Skilled migration is not a particularly new phenomenon however it has become a much relied upon by many nations both sending and hosting in an ever increasing global economy. This chapter explores the international trends in relation to the global mobility of workers and professionals before taking a case study approach which examines the opportunities, threats and dilemmas facing Australia and its use of skilled migration. The authors look at Australia's migration policies and recent changes in these which support a demand driven model before exploring Australia's skill shortages with particular reference to the Australian rail industry.

Key Questions:

- What are the key trends that are driving global labour mobility of professionals?
- How are governments like Australia addressing skill shortages through migration policy initiatives and programs and how are Australian organisations responding?
- Can you provide examples of Level 1 and 2 skill shortages and skill mismatches in your industry?
- What are some of the practical issues related to recruiting and onboarding skilled migrants into organisations?
- What can HRM practitioners be doing to ensure the settlement and integration of skilled migrant workers and their families?
- How can organisational diversity policies and practices ensure skilled migrant workers are being adequately acquainted with Australian workplace practices, social norms and issues of safety and compliance?

Career Paths: Challenges and Opportunities

Neroli Sheldon and Michelle Wallace

Fundamental changes in the composition and functions of organisations have led to blurring of organisational boundaries and changing employment relationships. The notion of a career path has become increasingly ambiguous, with individuals taking increased responsibility for managing their own careers. Furthermore, the growing individualisation of employment policies and non-traditional employment has implications for the management of people at work, particularly the planning and management of employee careers. Career paths benefit both employee and employer. They can strengthen the psychological contract between employer and employee, ensure the employee is not restricted to a particular job, career path or organisation, as well as ensuring employees have the skills needed both now and in the future to contribute to organisational success. This chapter draws together relevant theories on how organisations treat the notion of career paths and how they implement strategies that will engender employee loyalty, create genuine career development and meet organisational objectives.

Key Questions:

- With changes in the nature of employment, are we in a post-career path environment in many contemporary organisations?
- Do career paths exist in your organisation? If so, what types or levels of employees benefit from them?
- Have career paths and career development assisted you in your worklife?
- As a manager/supervisor are there opportunities for you to initiate career development discussions with employees?
- In what ways could the careers map at www.railcareerpathways.net.au assist or be adapted for your organisation?

Skills Recognition and Recognition of Prior Learning for Workforce Development: Challenges and Possibilities

Lisa Davies

In this chapter, the terms ‘skills recognition’ and ‘recognition of prior learning’ are unravelled and some complexities involving the concept of competence are also examined. Current research in pedagogical and policy practice is considered and, more specifically, the role of adult educators who are skills recognition/recognition of prior learning assessors and trainers. The literature and a two-and-a-half year qualitative research project undertaken in Australian industry revealed that the use of skills recognition assessments to identify and formally recognise previously unrecognised skills, knowledge and experience of employees could increase workers’ engagement. However, some problems emerged. People in these roles are driven by multiple factors including educational policy, idiosyncratic individual and organisational needs, and socioeconomic forces. The potential ethical concerns related to how adult educators can reconcile the tangential drivers of relevant policies, the managers who pay for their educational services, their own employers, and those of their adult student/applicants for skills recognition are discussed. Some approaches that can mitigate these difficulties are also identified. The principles of sound skills recognition (and recognition of prior learning) practice are also outlined and the means by which they can be used to enhance workforce capability with confidence and in an ethical manner are explained.

Key Questions:

- Can Skills Recognition (SR) and/or RPL assessments be used informally? If so, why would this be useful practice?
- It is claimed that the use of SR assessments can improve the engagement, motivation and productivity of workers. Why would this be so?
- What are the key components of sound decision making in SR assessments?
- What is “competence” for a position?
- What can you identify as three potential ethical issues when undertaking SR assessments? How would you address them?
- In regard to the application of educational policy on SR, can you describe one difference between the rhetoric and the reality?
- What kind of activities could assessors undertake to assist them in their job?

Recognition of the Skills and Knowledge of Indigenous Employees

Katie Maher

This chapter works towards recognising Indigenous employees as part of the Australian rail workforce and bringing attention to the skills and knowledge Indigenous Australians continue to contribute to the Australian rail industry. It draws on findings from interviews with rail industry employees and employers in corporate, operational and infrastructure roles in small, medium and large sized rail organisations across Australia. These interviews were carried out as part of a project on skills recognition in the rail industry funded by the Cooperative Research Centre for Rail Innovation. The chapter analyses how predominantly non-Indigenous employees and employers in the rail industry perceive equity and Indigenous capability, and the implications of such perceptions for recognising the skills and knowledge of Indigenous employees. It identifies a number of 'problems' with recognising the skills and knowledge of Indigenous employees. The analysis is informed by a historical examination of the views and actions of non-Indigenous 'settlers' towards Indigenous Australians, and consideration of how learning from history can assist us with understanding more equitable approaches to engagement among Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians

Key Questions:

- How are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people regarded in workplace policies and practices? What is left out or left unproblematic?
- What are the possible implications of regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in such a way, particularly in terms of recognising skills and knowledge?
- What are the possible implications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander employees when workplace equity is not problematised?
- What are the possible implications of treating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees 'the same' as non-Aboriginal employees? What are the possible implications of expecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to 'blend in' to the workplace?

Women in Engineering

Michelle Wallace and Neroli Sheldon

Engineers are critical to the economic innovation and productivity of nations through the production of knowledge, patents and technology as well as by driving sustainable social and economic development. However there is a growing worldwide scarcity in almost all engineering fields and, while the career is generally well-remunerated with good career prospects, there is an under-representation of women studying or working in engineering roles. This chapter discusses the role of early socialisation, schooling and university education in contributing to the low levels of girls participating in the science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects needed to study engineering and the gender disparity in engineering courses as well as the leaky pipeline of qualified women in the engineering profession. The chapter also describes a range of initiatives that attempt to address these issues that have resulted in skills wastage and engineering skills shortages in most countries.

Key Questions:

- Why do some countries have much higher percentages of women in engineering than other countries?
- Think of the situation for girls in schools in your country. What is being done to support their learning in STEM subjects?
- How can universities in your country attract and retain more women in the range of engineering specialisms?
- How could the working conditions and organisational cultures of companies employing engineers be made friendlier towards diversity?

PART II HUMAN CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Part II looks within organisational settings to consider a range of emerging workforce development themes and reports on learning activities and techniques used to build human capability and capacity. To begin, Chapter 8 reflects on a range of workplace communication techniques used to engage employees and reviews the efficacy of formal workplace mentoring in this context. Then, Chapter 9 studies the characteristics of working on complex projects and asks if this approach can be used to build a range of competencies. Chapter 10 examines the process of competence assurance and considers how authentic assessments can be achieved, especially in safety-critical workplace settings. Chapter 11 examines the development of leadership studies and considers the emerging challenges of leading in the 21st century. Chapter 12 discusses the concept of talent management as it applies to the identification of talented leaders. Finally, Chapter 13 considers the challenge of language, literacy and numeracy issues (LLN) in contemporary workplaces.

Transitions in Workplace Communication: Perspectives on the Efficacy of Formal Workplace Mentoring

Tom Short

This chapter considers the emerging practice of formal workplace mentoring and reports on how company-initiated mentoring programs have become the latest trend in a long line of communication techniques used by human resource managers to engage employees and potentially resolve a wide range of motivational, developmental or employee-related issues. Using the lenses of critical human resource development and reflective analysis the chapter compares mentoring concepts with three workplace communication strategies that have been widely deployed over the last three decades: team briefing, quality circles and performance coaching. The study uses information from the literature and qualitative research conducted in Australia to examine the present-day practice of formal workplace mentoring and uses ten characteristics to evaluate these communication techniques. The findings reveal a growing interest in workplace mentoring by employers and employees, but warn that the penalties of getting this method of communication wrong might outweigh the benefits, especially if formal mentoring programs are not planned, resourced, implemented and evaluated correctly.

Key Questions:

- In what ways could formal mentoring programs be integrated and enhance other communication strategies used in a workplace setting?
- How might it be possible for formal mentoring programs to work against other communication strategies, especially those that are used by leaders to engage people with the organisational goals?
- How can workplace mentoring avoid becoming seen as just another HR fad?
- In what ways might formal workplace mentoring programs replace the need for a performance management system?
- In what ways is formal workplace mentoring complementary or incongruous with an organisation's strategy on HRD?
- How can mentoring programs be set in the proper context to ensure longer-term success?

Building Workforce Competencies through Complex Projects

Andrew Sense and Senevi Kiridena

This chapter illuminates the current theories and concepts concerning complexity and the project management workforce competencies necessary to deal with it in projects. It exposes the valuable, yet underutilised, opportunities complex projects may present to develop the knowledge and competencies of a workforce to successfully manage complexity within a project space and across an organisation more generally. The theoretical implications of this analysis imply that more research is necessary to establish a framework of competencies that relate appropriately to the levels of complexity within a project. The practice implications are profound since managing complexity in projects requires a more expansive and divergent set of practitioner skills that move well beyond the baseline ‘technically oriented’ project management skills set. In sum, this chapter highlights the current strengths and weaknesses of extant research and standards concerning complexity in projects and provokes discussion on developing a workforce that is more ‘complexity’ capable.

Key Questions:

- Describe what you think of when a project is referred to as ‘complex’?
- Discuss how complexity manifests in the different types of projects listed below:
 - Architecture; engineering; and construction.
 - Facility expansion; plant upgrade; and planned maintenance.
 - Research & development; new product development; and process improvement.
 - Information technology; information systems; and software development.
 - System implementation; organisational design; and change management.
 - Event management; humanitarian and disaster recovery.
- Explain what you consider are the knowledge and skills required to effectively engage with ‘complexity’ in projects?
- Outline how you might consider complex projects as venues for developing the project management knowledge and skills of individual staff?
- Consider and describe how you might view complex projects as vehicles to help transform organisational skills and practices over time?
- Explore the effectiveness of alternative approaches to understanding and dealing with project complexity.

The Development Role of Competence Assurance

Liza O'Moore, Lesley Jolly and Lydia Kavanagh

Competence assurance (CA) is a process of ensuring that the workforce is able to carry out its work in a safe and competent manner. It can entail disruptive and expensive regular assessments of workers' performance, require employers to 'backfill' positions during the process, and provide little obvious direct benefit for the business. It may not provide accurate assessment if workers are withdrawn from duties for assessment as their performance obviously cannot be the same as under working conditions. If workers are assessed *in media res* there are issues around the potential observer effect on assessment outcomes. Employers and workplace assessors need ways of assessing performance that accurately target what is of interest with minimum disruption and risk. However, the authors argue that the CA process represents an opportunity lost in terms of workforce development, if what is of interest is narrowly defined as present job skills with little attention paid to workers' competencies as a whole. The authors consider how to achieve authentic assessment in safety-critical workplace settings in a way that will allow for targeted workforce development in the future. A change away from current practices to portfolio-based and 360-degree assessment has the potential to describe more accurately where skills and deficits lie, help companies identify personnel with needed competencies and provide relevant support for their development within a chosen career path, and to help workers identify their skills and goals and how they may be pursued within the industry/company.

Key Questions:

- Why is it useful to include assessment of *competencies* in competence assurance processes?
- Is the use of Risk Based Training Needs Analysis at odds with this concern with competencies?
- What kind of assessment procedure is most likely to help workers develop their competencies?
- What are the potential sources of error or bias in 360° monitoring?
- The chapter concludes: "Consideration should be given to the use of electronic means of capturing and recording monitoring and assessment data for speed, security and accessibility." What are the pros and cons of electronic data collection for competence assurance purposes likely to be?

The Challenges of Leadership in the 21st Century

Tom Stehlik, Tom Short and Janene Piip

This chapter presents and discusses organisational leadership from a historical and theoretical perspective to identify issues and challenges for leadership going forward into the twenty-first century. Leadership and management theory, the global context, changing demographics and mobilities of workers, and contemporary perspectives on organisational structures are introduced and discussed. Particular reference is then made to the Australian context with a focus on the rail industry as an example of a large and established enterprise that is facing contemporary challenges in moving towards a workplace culture based on workforce development and participation models rather than traditional hierarchical, command-control structures and bureaucratic processes. The chapter begins with a review of external perspectives including an overview of leadership and management and the latter part then focuses on internal perspectives including what it means to be a leader in Australia. The authors consider how developments in leadership and management theory and practice are viewed and dealt with in the Australian rail industry and conclude that robust evaluation tools and continuous improvement processes for leadership development programs are recommended for modern organisations to avoid costly and time-consuming mistakes.

Key Questions:

- Much has been written about the difference between leadership and management. What are your views on these two, and how might these activities blend together in organisations?
- Comparisons are drawn frequently between the 'public' and 'private' sector mindsets when it comes to developing a leadership culture. What can each sector learn from the other?
- Management gurus claim that leadership may be the most important issue facing organisations today – do you agree or disagree, and why?
- Why is it important for leadership styles to reflect the culture of an organisation, industry or country?
- What is the purpose of leadership frameworks and how can they help or harm an organisation's strategic intent to build leadership capability?

Leadership Talent Identification and Management

Janene Piip and Roger Harris

As universal trends of globalisation suck companies into a worldwide marketplace vortex, organisations and leaders are being forced into redefining what it takes to succeed. Talented leaders therefore are an integral part of business strategies that underpin how organisations thrive in these environments. As a sheer matter of survival, both exogenous and endogenous factors now require companies to know what it is that they are looking for in their leaders, make full use of the talents of all leaders and be prepared to adjust their talent management strategy as environmental conditions change. Since leadership in organisations is now more complex than ever before, talented leaders can translate the company's purpose and intent to people in teams, engaging their commitment to enhance business productivity. This chapter explores how organisations are making sense of these realities by presenting information from the literature and a recent case study from Australia.

Key Questions:

- What are the leadership talent issues facing organisations at the current time?
- What is it that we are looking for in our leaders to understand the multiple challenges in scanning the external environments for opportunities and threats to our business, and synthesising these findings into our business practice?
- What talent is needed by organisations to operate effectively in a global environment?
- How can we capitalise on our pool of highly skilled human capital to enable them to operate competently in global environments, how would this impact our organisation's structure, and how can our leaders manage and lead their operational business units successfully considering the external contexts?
- How can we identify leaders so that we can meet new requirements of customers, stakeholders and employees in a global marketplace?
- What are the leadership skills needed in this new era where greater technological and multicultural fluency, relationship expertise and strategic thinking are needed?

Literacy in the Workplace

John Benseman

This chapter considers the challenge of literacy, language and numeracy (LLN) issues in contemporary workplaces, both in Australia and internationally. It firstly considers the gradual recognition that adult LLN is a widespread issue warranting government responses and its links to debates about improving labour productivity. LLN issues among workers are then examined in detail, reviewing their distribution in the workforce and implications for LLN provision in the workplace. Implications of recent research studies of workplace LLN programs are discussed as well as the need to ensure that newly acquired LLN skills learned in courses are transferred back into everyday workplace practices.

Key Questions:

- In your experience, what evidence is there of LLN difficulties at work? How do you know this?
- How 'safe' is it to disclose LLN difficulties in the workplace? What are the risks?
- How can training programs address LLN difficulties either in stand-alone courses or integrated into main course offerings?
- In your experience, how do workplaces address the issue of readability in documentation, signage and other related material?
- What professional development should workplace trainers undertake in relation to literacy and numeracy?
- What provision is made for workers for whom English is not their first language?

PART III INNOVATIONS IN LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Part III comprises three chapters that consider a number of interesting and innovative ways in which learning and development can occur in the workplace. Chapter 14 investigates the use of coaching as a workforce development strategy and discusses some of the key characteristics of coaching - defining it and differentiating it from other similar interventions such as workplace counselling, training and mentoring. Chapter 15 reflects on the ways in which technology is impacting on organisations today and how workforce development professionals have been among the leading proponents for embracing technologies and the benefits they offer. The authors claim that their chapter represents a small step in building clarity around the relationships of social presence and interaction, and the impact of preference for affiliation, in order to achieve better e-learning outcomes. In Chapter 16, the authors consider the longstanding use of simulators to develop workplace skills and ask how these existing technologies might better serve the needs of workplace development. The authors argue for a more socio-cultural and socio-technical point of view that simulators can develop workforce competency only when jobs are understood in their socio-cultural settings and the role of technology is understood as relative to and determined by that setting.

Coaching in the Workplace

Roslyn Cameron and Mehdi Ebrahimi

The use of coaching as a workforce development strategy is the focus of this chapter. Coaching is enjoying a lot of popularity in terms of its uses by organisations internationally with the main purposes for using coaching being for individual development, leadership and building capacity and employee engagement. This chapter can in no way cover all aspects and genres of coaching but attempts to provide a broad brush approach by discussing some of the key characteristics of coaching by defining it and delineating it from other similar interventions. This is followed by a presentation of the different coaching genres and their theoretical underpinnings before presenting details of two benchmark indicators of the growth of the coaching industry, namely the growing number of coaching associations and the emergence of scholarly journals reporting coaching research. The authors then turn to the results of four reputable surveys conducted on coaching from Australia, the UK and internationally before concluding with the presentation of a conceptual map of coaching within organisational contexts.

Key Questions:

- Why is it important to define coaching and to differentiate it from other related HRD interventions?
- How is coaching different from mentoring?
- There are many approaches/genres and purposes to coaching. Can you name three of these that would have direct application to your organisation?
- How could coaching be embedded in other organisational development and HRD activities within your organisation?
- How would you go about calculating return on investment (ROI) or return on expectation (ROE)?

Contemporary Challenges in E-Learning

Kristal Reynolds, Karen Becker and Julie Fleming

Technology is impacting on most elements of organisations today and workforce development professionals have been some of the leading proponents of embracing technologies and the benefits they offer. E-learning has emerged as at least a complementary offering to face-to-face training, and in some cases has totally replaced more traditional forms of workforce development. This chapter explores the use of learning technologies and the benefits and drawbacks of its use. In particular it focuses on further exploring the issue of a perceived lack of interaction in some e-learning offerings; a factor identified as critical to address in order to ensure effective e-learning. The chapter discusses the issues of interaction and social presence to address feelings of isolation and offers some key considerations for those considering integrating technology into workforce development.

Key Questions:

- This chapter focused mostly on formal e-learning courses or modules. How could technology be used to enhance learning in less formal ways?
- Although there are many benefits of e-learning, often it is implemented to save on training costs. How can managers in particular be encouraged to see other potential business benefits of using technology for learning purposes?
- With the proliferation of mobile devices in use in workplaces, are there additional benefits and drawbacks beyond even traditional e-learning that have not yet been identified - i.e. will “m-learning” really be any different from “e-learning”?
- Given the importance of social presence to learners, what are practical ways to build this into an e-learning module when it is being offered asynchronously?
- How can e-learning developers balance the needs of some learners who have a strong desire to interact with those who do not have the same desire?

Simulating Work: Can Simulators Help Develop a Workforce

Lydia Kavanagh, Lesley Jolly, Liza O'Moore and Gregory Tibbits

The aviation model of simulator training emphasises realistic physical conditions and practice of emergency responses. Its apparent success has led to the adoption of simulators in other industries such as rail. Relatively light levels of use of the simulators in that industry indicate that simulators may not fit well in all industries, no matter how similar their operations may seem. This leads us to ask what needs to be simulated in workplace development settings and whether better-targeted simulation might expand the ways in which simulators can be used. Much of the existing technical discussion of simulators comes from a human factors perspective which focuses on micro-processes in performance. The authors argue for a more socio-cultural and socio-technical position that simulators can develop workforce competency only when jobs are understood in their socio-cultural settings and the role of technology is understood as relative to and determined by that setting. They also present ways in which industry can approach the identification of targets for simulator use and implementation strategies. These suggestions have the potential not only to save money but also contribute to a more professional and engaged workforce.

Key Questions:

- What kinds of activities should workplace simulators simulate and why?
- What are the advantages of using simulation during the recruitment process for both employee and employer?
- The chapter recommends that simulation scenarios should be developed that go beyond immediate work tasks. What kinds of activities might be simulated in such scenarios and what advantages would they give?
- How important is it for simulations to closely resemble real working conditions?
- The chapter argues that developing a workforce means going beyond minimum performance levels. How can simulation of any kind help make that happen?

PART IV LOOKING FORWARD: CHANGING PERCEPTIONS AND POSSIBILITIES

The four chapters in Part IV address some other overarching considerations for workforce development generally that do not align specifically with the themes of the first three parts and yet help us to look forward. Chapter 17 focuses on spirituality in the workplace and argues that, whether acknowledged or not, there are emotional and spiritual undercurrents in organisations. We work hard to create physical safety in our workplaces, but we also create mental, emotional and spiritual safety – safety for the whole person. Chapter 18 discusses the critical role of evaluation in workforce development and examines the way in which the practices of evaluation, appropriately conceived and implemented at the macro or national level, can alleviate concerns often expressed about the inefficiencies attached to spending with regard to duplication of effort and the ‘training silos’ that can exist across organisations. Chapter 19 outlines a range of critical perspectives on workforce development and challenges conventional understanding of the purpose and means of facilitated learning in work organisations. Finally, Chapter 20 reflects on the unfolding nature of workforce development and reviews key issues in the book as a kind of environmental audit. The authors are keen to discover whether the current vocabulary reflects a surge in innovation.

Spirituality at Work: The Contribution of Mindfulness and Personal and Workforce Development

Leigh Burrows

When we work at jobs that do not engage our mind, body, feelings or spirit we are not bringing our whole selves to our work. Whether they are acknowledged or not, there are emotional and spiritual undercurrents in organisations. We work hard to create physical safety in our workplaces. Can we also create mental, emotional and spiritual safety – safety for the whole person? There is a need to welcome and include all forms of human energy – physical, mental, emotional and spiritual – to our organisation. Through vignettes of school leaders and teachers coping with relational dilemmas at work this chapter explores what can happen when we pretend that emotions and spirit do not exist and highlights the potential of mindfulness to contribute to personal, interpersonal and structural/organisational elements of workforce development. Within the emerging areas of spirituality and mindfulness it is entirely possible to transfer new knowledge across industrial and/or professional sectors, even when the contexts and processes are different, if the emphasis is placed on stimulating reflection and learning.

Key Questions:

- Describe any examples of mental, emotional, and spiritual safety and non-safety you have observed or experienced either in this organisation or other organisations you have worked in?
- Do you believe there could be an undercurrent of feelings or viewpoints that go unexpressed in your workplace that nonetheless have an effect? What is needed to create an atmosphere of trust and safety for people to share insights that could be helpful to the organisation but may threaten some people or structures?
- What does 'spirituality at work' mean for you, and what could it mean for your staff? Do you believe there could be different interpretations and relevance for different people – including gender, age, race/culture, occupation?
- Do you believe there is a need to create peaceful spaces in your workplace to reduce stress and provide sanctuary? If so, what might be possible i.e. Are there any areas that could be transformed by adding colour, plants, screens or.....?

Evaluation in Workforce Development

Michele Simons

While workforce development embraces a range of policies and practices related to the management of people and culture in organisations, formal training and learning for work remains at the centre of developing the capability of any workforce. For organisations that operate across national (and international) boundaries, finding ways to harmonise and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of their training organisations remains a priority. In this context, the practice of evaluation which focuses on the collection of information in order to draw conclusions about ways to enhance the quality and outcomes achieved from training and development activities has much to offer. Drawing on the experiences of working with the Australian rail industry, this chapter examines the way in which the practices of evaluation, appropriately conceived and implemented at a national level, can offer a way to support workforce development. It takes as its starting point the decision taken by the rail industry that a national approach to training in a specified area of a workforce is deemed desirable. A bespoke evaluation model, developed out of existing evaluation theory, which can assist organisations in making decisions to address common areas of skill development is then presented, along with some challenges and considerations that need to be taken into account to enhance the model's effectiveness and utility for organisations.

Key Questions:

- What are some of the limitations of using evaluation for improvement purposes only?
- What are some of the problems of using needs analysis as a basis for planning learning and development interventions/programs?
- What are some of the critical issues that HDR professionals need to confront when developing evaluation frameworks to assess impact of learning and development programs/interventions?
- How can HRD professionals move from developing lists of specific environmental/contextual features that impact on the development of learning and development activities to taking these into account in meaningful ways when developing programs/interventions for workers?
- What are some of the challenges that HRD professionals would have to overcome to apply the ED²O framework in their context?

Critical Perspectives on Workforce Development

Jim Stewart and Sally Sambrook

This chapter examines recent developments in what is referred to as 'critical HRD' (CHRD). The concept of human resource development (HRD) is first explained as an alternative to 'workforce development'. This includes the argument that HRD is broader in scope and so encompasses the more limited term 'workforce development'. Then CHRD is explored as a term that denotes a shift in theorising and research on HRD which aims to question and challenge conventional understandings of the purpose and means of facilitating learning in work organisations. This is preceded by a section explaining the relationship of CHRD with the broader critiques of organisation and management studies adopted in critical management studies (CMS), which provides some of the context of CHRD. The chapter closes with some conclusions, implications and speculations.

Key Questions:

- What are the particular strengths and weaknesses of critical HRD?
- How can and should other interests such as those of employees and citizens take equal focus or even precedence over the interests of owners/boards in HRD strategies and activities?
- What challenges and obstacles will HRD professionals face in applying the principles of Critical HRD?
- How can these challenges and obstacles be overcome?
- What is the role of HRD professionals' behaviour in shaping sustainable and ethical business practices?

The Future of Workforce Development – Old Wine in New Bottles?

Tom Short and Roger Harris

In this final chapter, the authors reflect on the individual contributions and comment on the unfolding nature of workforce development. Framing the discussion as a kind of environmental audit of key issues, the authors review a range of perspectives which are currently shaping the workplace development landscape and they attempt to make sense of what the future may have in store. Developing people for employment is not a new narrative, but the terminology used in organisations is ever-changing. Workforce development is the latest label in a long line of professional titles given to education and training activities carried out in the course of employment and the authors were eager to discover whether the current vocabulary reflects a surge in innovation or is simply a case of old wine in new bottles. This chapter comments on ten themes featured in many of the previous chapters and they are explored as concluding thoughts.

Key Questions:

- This chapter offers ten new perspectives on workforce development. In your experience, which three perspectives resonate as the most compelling ideas for the future and why?
- How can the ever-changing nature of workforce development and its vulnerability to fads and fashions impact on employees in an organisation?
- The chapter considers humanistic geography and the concept of *place* or *place making*. People often use the term 'this is a great place to work', but what do they mean? How can organisational leaders use workforce development activities to make working environments better places?
- What aspects of workforce development do you see as the most sustainable?
- Is the emergence of workforce development a reality or myth? Do you think workforce development is a case of old wine in new bottles – why or why not?

Workforce Development

Perspectives and Issues

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