
UNIT 13 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT : CONCEPT AND CONTOURS

Structure

- 13.0 Objectives
- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Human Resources Development (HRD)
 - 13.2.1 What is HRD
 - 13.2.2 Need and Purpose
- 13.3 Components of HRD
 - 13.3.1 Strategic and Operational Planning
 - 13.3.2 Mechanisms
 - 13.3.3 HRD Process
- 13.4 HRD in Indian Libraries and Information Centres
- 13.5 Summary
- 13.6 Answers to Self Check Exercises
- 13.7 Key Words
- 13.8 References and Further Reading

13.0 OBJECTIVES

Human resources constitute the most important of all resources of any organization. Attention to managing and modulating this resource would greatly improve the quality of the products and services of the organisation.

After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- appreciate and grasp the value and pertinancy of one of the important management techniques - Human Resources Development (HRD);
- explain strategic and operational planning . for HRD;
- describe HRD mechanism. and instruments;
- perceive the advantages of applying HRD principles to Indian libraries and information centres.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Of all the resources of any organisation, the most valuable and important resource is quality manpower. This is the force that activates and facilitates optimal utilisation all other resources and helps the organisation achieve the best results possible in terms of its products and user services.

In this Unit we shall understand what HRD is and why is it given a central place in modern management practice. The ways and measures of building this resource to ensure quality include strategic and operational planning. Plans so made are executed through well thought out executive mechanisms and instruments.

To what extent these ideas are valuable and valid in the context of library and information centre management are also studied in this Unit.

13.2 HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT (HRD)

The effective participation and quality performance of human beings in the various activities of an organisation result in an HRD process which gets built in into the management operational structure, lends credibility to the organisation and gives it a direction for further growth and development. This is necessary for organisational success and might suggest diversification of products and services and provide directions for further growth. In consequence, this approach would benefit the personnel in the organisation in a numerous ways. Therefore HRD should be the concern of every group and individual at all levels of an organisation.



13.2.1 What is Human Resources Development (HRD)

Human Resources Development is a process of helping employees in an organisation to acquire new skills and competence on a continuing basis. The organisation should provide facilities to the employees in a planned and systematic way to:

- acquire and sharpen skills and capabilities to perform various tasks associated with their present and expected future roles;
- develop their general capabilities, discover and exploit their inner potential for their own and/or organisational development purposes;
- help bring about an organisational culture in which collaboration among sub-units is strong and contributes to the supervisor-subordinate relationships, team work and the professional well-being and pride of employees;
- facilitate upgrading of skills through mechanisms and instruments; and
- improve abilities by the introduction of strategic and operational HRD planning and execution.

Self Check Exercise

1) What is Human Resources Development?

Note: i) Write your answer in the space given below.

ii) Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

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13.2.2 Need and Purpose

The personnel of an organisation play the most vital role by converting all the other resources into tangible products and services.. Therefore attention to HRD planning and policy is worthwhile to achieve success in every aspect of the development process of an organisation. In order to ensure positive results, the knowledge and skills of the employees have to be constantly upgraded. Not only employees' competencies and abilities have to be enhanced but their motivation, dedicated participation, involvement and commitment, to achieve targeted goals and objectives of the organisation also have to be encouraged and enriched.

The twin factors that will ensure success to any organisation in enhancing its goodwill and reputation in the field are customer satisfaction and quality of products and services offered.

The purpose of involving employees with increasing knowledge and skills is obviously to achieve the above objective.

HRD, therefore, is necessary for any type of organisation for:

- survival and stability; growth and development;
- change and diversification;
- retuning the activities to become more effective;
- providing highest quality in products and services;
- playing a leadership role in the field; and
- obtaining goodwill and reputation through customer satisfaction.



Self Check Exercise

2) Explain the need and purpose of HRD for Library and Information Centres.

Note: i) Write your answer in the space given below.

ii) Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

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13.3 COMPONENTS OF HRD

Organisations should facilitate Human Resources Development by allocating adequate resources to exemplify the HRD philosophy that valuing human beings consciously promotes their willing participation.

The premises to this thinking are based on three basic concepts of HRD, viz.,

- i) the need to invest time, money and effort in the personnel of an organisation, regarding them as invaluable resources;
- ii) human resources have special characteristics that call for special treatment and cannot be handled like other resources; and
- iii) human resource handling has to focus on employees as human units of the organisation and not merely as individual employees.

An HRD programme for an organisation has, therefore, to be a planned activity. It should include a clear statement of objectives and goals, strategic and operational planning, and appropriate means, mechanisms and instruments for execution. We shall examine these aspects in some detail.

13.3.1 Strategic and Operational Planning

Strategic and operational planning is largely confined to defining the objectives of the organisation, preparing policy guidelines, evolving pragmatic plans and strategies for executive actions, and establishing appropriate procedures, rules and regulations for implementation at all levels. This would ensure:

- professionalism;
- personal involvement in work in achieving set targets;
- formalisation;
- enhancement of work skills
- increasing application of information technologies;
- evolution of a corporate culture; and
- continued progress and development.

This approach would encourage organisations to plan their future staffing structures and to take into account changes in services and technology. Exercised properly, and on a continuing basis, it should eliminate problems of oversupply or undersupply of particular skills within an organisation. It also aids the determination of training needs in relation to new skills required.

Operational planning would take care to implement and execute the activities and programme to achieve the targets set by the objectives and goals of an organisation. Further it handles personnel recruitment, selection, placement and deployment, and personnel skill development through training and hands-on experience. The distribution of personnel to the various units, divisions and departments is done through task analysis, job analysis, job description, job



specification, competencies etc. The implication of this exercise is that the right person should fit into the right job that would not only ensure work efficiency and quality but also give the concerned person job satisfaction.

Self Check Exercise

3) Distinguish between strategic planning and operational planning.

Note: i) Write your answer in the space given below.

ii) Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

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13.3.2 Mechanisms

The first step towards HRD is to set up a unit in the organisation to deal exclusively with personnel development programmes. The mechanisms to implement these programmes are to introduce a process of performance evaluation of staff at all levels, assess deficiencies or under performance, and such other shortfalls in performance. Corrective steps are to conceive and design specific instruments to set things right and get maximum productivity through the optimum efficiency of the staff. The HRD unit should concern itself with the following aspects:

- performance appraisal;
- appraisal, review, feedback, and counselling;
- exercises on role analysis; potential development;
- training policies;
- communication policies;
- job rotation;
- organisation development;
- job enrichment programmes;
- awards, rewards and incentives; and
- steps to introduce an organisational and work culture.

Performance appraisal: It is a periodical evaluation of employees' performance. Proper evaluation is carried out with appropriate yardsticks; data on performance review and feedback from the employee are estimated with reference to the employee's optimum potential. Performance coaching and counselling would enable employees to contribute to their optimum potential.

Role analysis: Role is the position an employee occupies as defined by expectations of different significant persons have for the person. Role analysis is concerned with optimum stress, linkages and autonomy. Optimum stress refers to tuning a person to raise his contribution to the optimum level. Linkages provide for infra and interrelations between individuals and teams within the units and outside. Autonomy permits an individual to display initiative in dealing with a new problem and finding a solution to it.

Training policies: These are widely laid down and practised in most organisations to build up staff skills. Training has to be with reference to the types of training required by an organisation, in-house training or training by professional bodies or institutions, evaluation of trained employees and utilisation of the training obtained.

Communication policies contribute substantially to the health of the organisation. Through appropriate internal communication channels, the organisational activities can be authentically

reported. This would prevent unnecessary faith in grapevine and gossip among the employees. The employees would also be properly informed about the activities and progress of the organisation.



Job rotation: Judicious transfer of persons to pick up experience and expertise in different areas of work in different units of an organisation also would contribute to the health of the organisation.

Organisation development: An organisation has to be dynamic and should positively respond to changes in the environment, advances in technology, and diversification of products and services. Growth, impact in the field and self-developing mechanisms are important for organisation development.

Award, reward and incentives: Another important aspect relates to awards, rewards, incentives schemes, both for individuals and groups, which would generate greater involvement of employees in work and contribute to quality assurance. This scheme needs very judicious implementation, i.e., only after a foolproof method has been evolved. If this precaution is not taken, undesirable results detrimental to organisational growth may follow.

Organisational culture: For the development of an organisational culture, an appropriate environmental climate is necessary. Communication within the organisation that permits top-down, bottom-up, horizontal, circular and external communication has to be built into the organisation. This would ensure smoothness in employee (employer relationship. This also would create the right atmosphere to develop a work culture, contributing positively to the organisation.

The above aspects would be influenced by factors like management style, environment, technology, resource availability, background and past history of the organisation, nature of business, and others.

If properly attended and successfully implemented, this is likely to be reflected in organisational effectiveness like higher productivity, growth and diversification, cost reduction, more profits and a better image of the organisation.

Self Check Exercises

- 4) State the different aspects that should concern HRD mechanism.
- 5) How does an organisation promote work cultute.

Note: i) Write your answer in the space given below.
ii) Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

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13.3.3 HRD Process

HRD is a continuous process and not merely a set of planning, and setting of mechanisms, instruments, techniques, etc. The mechanism and techniques such as performance appraisal, counselling, innovations in organisational development, etc., are meant to initiate, facilitate and promote the process of implementation. These mechanisms, instruments, and techniques need to be constantly reviewed for their effectiveness. The organisation can facilitate this process of development by the conscious application of ideas described in the earlier section.

Every work-related issue should be examined at periodic intervals and at every level managerial as well as operational Task analysis, quality of work life that includes work place democracy, autonomous work groups, active participation, etc., productivity (oriented activities, and quality assurance of the products and services are some aspects that would demand considerable attention.

A healthy atmosphere contributes to success and growth of an organisation. Activities, methods and techniques will have to be reviewed constantly to improve the impact and effectiveness of the organisation.. This is done through organisation development which is concerned with the development of competency through effective teams to diagnose problems and initiate the process of collaborative work to deal with them. Process competence is improved, aiming to monitor and maintain sound: organisational health, assisting non-performing units, helping healthy units and departments in self-renewal, conflict management, creation of strong teams, etc.

Organisational learning is a process of obtaining new skills through involvement, thereby picking up valuable experience. This is a sure way of adding value to every function In the organisation. This is very greatly helped by a research wing in the organisation which would collect data on different issues, analyse such data, interpret, evaluate and apply positive results to solve problems.

To sum up, discussions on strategic and operational planning, mechanisms, instruments, techniques and all other ideas are to be taken in their integration and not in isolation, although for the sake of presentation here they have been broken up into sections and sub-sections. Concepts such as appraisal, career orientation, training, work analysis, organisational and work culture. self-renewal, etc. are to be superimposed on organisational planning and operational analysis and planning.

Usually it is the top management that is responsible for a well defined programme, for evolving strategies and for achieving targetted goals and objectives, but it is persons operating at lower levels of management who have the responsibility of implementation.

Self Check Exercise

6) How does an organisation implement a programme of HRD?

Note: i) Write your answer in the space given below.

ii) Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

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13.4 HRD IN. INDIAN LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION CENTRES

HRD as discussed in this Unit may seem to be somewhat irrelevant to the conditions prevailing in Indian libraries and information units (LIU). The large majority of LIUs are small in terms of staff deployed and budgetary provisions. There are, of course, national library and information centres operating as independent and separate institutions. Universities, institutes



of technology and such other academic and research institutions have large libraries and information centres. But even in these larger institutions, these ideas of planned HRD are not operative. As it stands now, in most LIUs personnel aspects -are handled, by and large, by their respective parent bodies. The administrative departments of these parent bodies deal with personnel, mostly in relation to salary and allowance, discipline and control, training and deputation to conferences, performance appraisal in a limited way and such others. Moreover some of the limited personnel developmental avenues are available only to certain levels of staff, seldom percolating to lower levels. No personnel/HRD departments seem to be exclusively existing to take care of all personnel aspects as discussed in this Unit.

The relevance of this Unit or HRD, however, is with reference to future possibilities, apart from the exposure it provides you to comprehend HRD concepts and issues. Libraries and information services at -the national level and at the higher education and research level are growing in terms collection, size, variety, and services with computerisation and networking. Personnel problems, not necessarily to deal with the large number of employees but some of the other aspects like designing appropriate instruments for performance appraisal, training to all levels of employees, development of organisational and work culture, which are discussed in this Unit are sure to crop up. These aspects and others that might help even smaller LIUF to design and develop high quality products and services may include:

- personnel planning;
- orientation towards modern information products and services;
- productivity;
- customer satisfaction;
- quality of products and services;
- acquisition of new skills and knowledge;
- task analysis for deployment of personnel;
- performance appraisal, counselling and coaching;
- motivational aspects;
- organisational development; and
- R & D.

Stress should be on quality and value added information systems and services, aiming at excellence. HRD is one and an important strategy to build up a cadre of highly competent professional staff.

Self Check Exercise

7) In what ways the smaller LIUs can benefit from the HRD practices discussed in this Unit?

- Note:** i) Write your answer in the space given below.
ii) Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

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13.5 SUMMARY

This Unit deals with Human Resources Development as a positive method to upgrade the employees abilities and capabilities enabling them to work towards the achievement of set goals and objectives. HRD philosophy is to respect and value human beings as the prime and invaluable contributors to higher productivity and quality of products and services. This can be achieved through strategic and operational planning and includes mechanisms, instruments and systems.



The HRD process translates the plans and the means of applying different techniques and strategies into practice: A number of aspects like performance appraisal, training, team work, organisational culture, and self-renewal systems are discussed in detail in this Unit. This would help proper application of HRD programmes.

HRD is also relevant to the organisation and management of Indian libraries and information units, irrespective of size. It, however, needs a positive approach based on the faith that these processes would benefit them in their immediate and future growth and development.

13.6 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

- 1) Human Resources Development is a process of helping employees in an organisation to acquire new skills and competence on a continuing basis.
- 2) Human resources are the ones that convert all other resources into products and services. Investments in the development of this resource ensure a good chance of achieving higher productivity with quality. Therefore in libraries and information centres attention to the development of human resources is worth the effort.
- 3) Strategic planning involves setting goals and objectives and designing plans to create the necessary means and mechanisms for implementation. Operational planning is a set of procedures and methods for implementing the designed plan.
- 4) The HRD unit should concern itself with the following aspects:
 - performance appraisal;
 - appraisal review, feedback, and counselling;
 - exercises on role analysis;
 - potential development;
 - training policies;
 - communication policies;
 - Job rotation;
 - organisation development;
 - job enrichment programmes;
 - awards, rewards and incentives; and
 - steps to introduce an organisational and work culture.
- 5) Organisational culture and work culture have to be promoted creating the necessary environmental climate. Communication within the organisation that permits top-down, bottom-up, horizontal, circular and external communication has to be built into the organisation. This would ensure smoothness in the employee (employer relationship). This also would create the right atmosphere to develop a work culture contributing positively to the organisation.
- 6) The HRD process translates the plans and programmes into the action and is the means of applying different techniques and strategies. A number of aspects like performance appraisal, training, team work, organisational culture, and self-renewal systems are to be considered. They would help proper application of HRD programmes.
- 7) The aspects that might help even smaller LIUs to design and develop high quality products and services may include:
 - personnel planning;
 - orientation towards modern information products and services;
 - productivity;
 - customer satisfaction;
 - quality of products and services;
 - acquisition of new skills and knowledge;
 - task analysis for deployment of personnel;
 - performance appraisal, counselling and coaching;
 - motivational aspects;



- organisational development; and
- R&D.

Stress should be on quality and value-added information systems and services, aiming at excellence. HRD is an important strategy that help might help build up a cadre of highly competent professional staff.

13.7 KEY WORDS

Autonomy	:	The degree to which a job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to an individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out.
Counselling	:	Helping the employee to grow and develop in the organisation.
Feedback	:	The degree to which an employee acquires a skill and the information about the effectiveness of his or her performance.
HRD (Human Resources Development)	:	A process of helping employees in an organisation to acquire new skills and competence on a continuing basis.
Job Enrichment Programmes	:	A method of clarification of norms and standards in jobs.
Job Rotation	:	A method of rotating staff to different units of the organisation to pick up skills in all aspects of work.
Operational Planning	:	Executive functions for implementation.
Organisational Culture	:	A system, of work inbuilt into the organisation that promotes voluntary involvement by employees.
Organisational Development	:	Dynamic growth of an organisation responding to changes in environment, advances in technology, etc.
Performance Appraisal	:	Assessment of employees' positive contribution to assigned work.
Potential Development	:	Efforts to exploit the natural talents of an employee.
Strategic Planning	:	A skillful method of providing means, mechanisms and structural elements to streamline organisational work.

13.8 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Bennison, M. and Casson, J. (1984). *The Manpower Planning Handbook* New York: McGraw Hill.
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- Steuart, R.D. and Moran, B.B. (1987). *Library Management*. 3rd ed. Littleton, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited.