



Paradigms of Human Resource Development

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INTRODUCTION

Like most professional disciplines, Human Resource Development (HRD) includes multiple paradigms for practice and research. A paradigm is defined as a "coherent tradition of scientific research" (Kuhn, 1996, p. 10). Thus, multiple paradigms represent fundamentally different views of HRD, including its goals and aims, values, and guidelines for practice. It is important to understand each paradigm, as they often lead to different approaches to solving HRD problems and to different research questions and methodologies. It is also important that each person develops a personal belief system about which paradigm or blend of paradigms will guide his or her practice. This chapter reviews the major paradigms, discusses the learning versus performance debate, examines core philosophical and theoretical assumptions of each paradigm, and examines their merger.

OVERVIEW OF THE HRD PARADIGMS

For our purposes, we divide HRD into two paradigms, the learning paradigm and the performance paradigm (Figure 7.1). These two paradigms are the most clearly defined and dominate most HRD thinking and practice. A third paradigm, the meaning of work and work-life integration is an emerging perspective (Morris and Madsen, 2007). It seems to have arisen out of a backlash against the workplace as a result of downsizings, layoffs, and other corporate actions that have left workers unemployed or otherwise feeling disenfranchised. One important HRD role from this perspective is helping people create a sense of meaning in their work and balance in their lives.

The first paradigm, the learning paradigm, has been the predominant paradigm in HRD practice in the United States. As shown in Figure 7.1, this perspective has three different streams. The first, *individual learning* (column 1a), focuses primarily on individual learning as an outcome and the individual learner as the target of interventions. Two characteristic approaches within this stream are adult learning (Knowles et al., 2005; Yang, 2003) and instructional design (Allen, 2006; Gagne, 1965; Gagne, Briggs, and Wagner, 1992; Gagne and Medsker, 1996).

Most HRD practice has now advanced to *performance-based learning* (column 1b) or *whole systems learning* (column 1c). The key change when moving from individual learning to these two streams is that the outcome focus changes to performance, though it is still individual performance improvement as a result of learning. The primary intervention continues to be learning, but interventions are also focused on building organizational systems to maximize the likelihood that learning will improve broader performance. *Performance-based learning* (column 1b) is focused on individual performance resulting from learning. Performance-based instruction (Brethower and Smalley, 1998) and systematic training (Allen, 2006) are two examples of this paradigm. *Whole systems learning* (column 1c) focuses on enhancing team and organizational performance through learning in addition to individual performance. It does so by building

Figure 7.1 Comparison of the Learning and Performance Paradigms

	Learning Paradigm	
	(A) INDIVIDUAL LEARNING	(B) PERFORMANCE- BASED LEARNING
Outcome focus	Enhancing individual learning	Enhancing individual performance through learning
Intervention focus	Individual learning	- Individual learning - Organizational systems support individual learning
Representative research streams	- Adult learning - Instructional design	- Performance-based instruction - Transfer of training

systems that enhance learning and performance. Most representative of this perspective are the work of Nevis and Nevis, 1998; Marquardt, 1996.

The second paradigm, the performance paradigm, is for those who have embraced performance-based learning (HPT) (Brethower, 1995). It focuses on total performance, but the interventions are focused on the individual learning systems perspective.

Within the performance systems perspective, *individual performance improvement* (column 1b) focuses on individual level performance systems. *Whole systems learning* (column 1c) focuses on enhancing team and organizational performance through learning in addition to individual performance. It does so by building

Figure 7.1 Comparison of the Learning and Performance Paradigms

	1 Learning Paradigm			2 Performance Paradigm	
	(A) INDIVIDUAL LEARNING	(B) PERFORMANCE- BASED LEARNING	(C) WHOLE SYSTEMS LEARNING	(A) INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	(B) WHOLE SYSTEMS PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT
Outcome focus	Enhancing individual learning	Enhancing individual performance through learning	Enhancing multiple levels of performance through learning	Enhancing individual performance	Enhancing multiple levels of performance
Intervention focus	Individual learning	- Individual learning - Organization systems to support individual learning	- Individual, team, and organizational learning - Organizational systems to support multiple levels of learning	- Nonlearning individual performance system interventions - Learning if appropriate	- Nonlearning multiple-level performance system interventions - Multiple-level learning if appropriate
Representative research streams	- Adult learning - Instructional design	- Performance-based instruction - Transfer of learning	Learning organization	Human performance technology	Performance improvement

systems that enhance learning at the individual, team, and organizational levels. Most representative of this perspective is learning organization theory (Dibella and Nevis, 1998; Marquardt, 1995, 2002; Watkins and Marsick, 1993).

The second paradigm, the *performance paradigm*, is quite familiar to those who have embraced performance improvement or human performance technology (HPT) (Brethower, 1995). From these perspectives, the outcome focus is on total performance, but the intervention focus is on nonlearning as well as learning interventions. It is the incorporation of nonlearning components of performance and associated interventions that distinguishes this group from the learning systems perspective.

Within the performance systems perspective are also two streams. The *individual performance improvement* approach (column 2a) focuses mostly on individual level performance systems. Human performance technology (Gilbert, 1978; Stolovich and Keeps, 1992) represents this approach. *Whole systems performance improvement* is the broadest perspective, encompassing learning and nonlearning interventions occurring at multiple levels in the organization. What

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is generically called *performance improvement* (Holton, 1999; Rummier and Brache, 1995) or *performance consulting* (Robinson and Robinson, 1995) is representative of this approach.

DEBATES ABOUT LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE

Since 1995, an intense debate in the U.S. research literature has revolved around the learning versus performance paradigms of HRD (Watkins and Marsick, 1995; Swanson, 1995a, 1995b). This has occurred in spite of the fact that HRD practice in the U.S. has been found to be increasingly focused on performance outcomes and developing systems to support high performance (Bassi and Van Buren, 1999).

In this debate, the performance paradigm of HRD has come under increasing criticism, some of which reflects misconceptions about the basic tenets of performance-based HRD. For example, Barrie and Pace (1998) argue for a more educational approach to HRD manifested through an organizational learning approach. They are also particularly critical of the performance paradigm with respect to the individual:

Improvements in performance are usually achieved through behavioral control and conditioning. Indeed, performance may be changed or improved through methods that allow for very little if any willingness and voluntariness on the part of the performers. In fact, behavioral performance may be enhanced decidedly by processes that allow for minimal or no rational improvement on the part of performers in the change process. Their willingness of consciousness as rational agents is neither encouraged nor required. Such persons function in a change process purely as "means" and not "ends." (Holding, 1981, p. 50)

Their criticisms became even harsher: "It is the performance perspective that denies a person's fundamental and inherent agency and self-determination, not the learning perspective. All of the negative effects of training come from a performance perspective" (Barrie and Pace, 1999, p. 295).

Bierema (1997) calls for a return to a focus on individual development and appears to equate the performance perspective to the mechanistic model of work. She says, "The machine mentality in the workplace, coupled with obsessive focus on performance, has created a crisis in individual development" (p. 23). She goes on to say that "valuing development only if it contributes to productivity is a viewpoint that has perpetuated the mechanistic model of the past three hundred years" (p. 24). Peterson and Provo (1999) also equate the performance paradigm with behaviorism.

Dirkx (1997) offers a somewhat similar view when he says that "HRD continues to be influenced by an ideology of scientific management and reflects a view of education where the power and control over what is learned, how, and

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why is located in the leadership, corporate structure, and HRD staff" (p. 42). He goes on to say that the traditional view in which learning is intended to contribute to bottom-line performance leads "practitioners to focus on designing and implementing programs that transmit to passive workers the knowledge and skills needed to improve the company's overall performance and, ultimately, society's economic competitiveness. In this market-driven view of education, learning itself is defined in particular ways, largely by the perceived needs of the sponsoring corporation and the work individuals are required to perform" (p. 43).

What is striking about these comments and others offered by critics of the performance paradigm of HRD is that they all contain rather gross errors and misunderstandings. In reality, there is less of a gap between the performance and learning paradigms than is represented by learning paradigm advocates. Simply put, when properly and clearly framed, the performance paradigm is not what the learning paradigm advocates present it to be. While there can be no denying that some tension will always exist between the learning systems and work systems in an organization (Van der Krogt, 1998), there is actually more common ground than has been portrayed by critics of performance.

Our purpose in this chapter is *not* to argue for a unifying definition or perspective of HRD. Rather, we present a framework for understanding paradigms of HRD to highlight both the common ground and the differences between the perspectives. As Kuchinke (1998) has articulated, it is probably not possible or even desirable to resolve paradigmatic debates, but the sharp dualism that has characterized this debate is also not appropriate or necessary. Others would argue to at least search for common ground.

PHILOSOPHICAL VIEWS OF LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE

Underlying this debate is tension about whether performance is inherently "bad" and learning "good." From a philosophical perspective, this is a discussion about the ontology of learning and performance because it focuses on making the fundamental assumptions about the nature of these phenomena explicit and clearly articulated (Gioia and Pitre, 1990; Ruona, 1999, 2000). In this section, we define the multiple perspectives of performance and learning that can be identified within the learning versus performance debate and argue that neither performance or learning can be considered inherently "good" or "bad," and that human resource development can embrace both as humanistic (Holton, 2000).

Three Views of Performance

Performance has largely been a practice-based phenomenon with little philosophical consideration. Three basic views pervade the thinking about the performance

paradigm: Performance as (1) a natural outcome of human activity, (2) necessary for economic activity, and (3) an instrument of oppression.

Performance as a Natural Outcome of Human Activity

In this view, performance is accepted as a natural part of human existence. Human beings are seen as engaging in wide varieties of purposeful activities with performance as a natural and valued outcome. Furthermore, the accomplishment of certain outcomes in these purposeful activities is regarded as a basic human need. In other words, few people are content not to perform.

Many of these activities occur in work settings where we traditionally think of performance; however, they may also take place in leisure settings. For example, a person may play softball for leisure but be quite interested in winning games. Or, a person might be heavily involved with church activities such as membership drives or outreach programs and exert great effort to make them successful. In both of these examples, performance is a desired aspect of their freely chosen behavior.

In this view, for HRD to embrace performance is also to embrace enhancing human existence. It is this perspective that many, although not all, performance-based HRD professionals advocate. This view of performance-based HRD views advancing performance and enhancing human potential as perfectly complementary (Holton, 2000).

Performance as Necessary for Economic Activity

This perspective is a more utilitarian view that considers performance to be an instrumental activity that enhances individuals and society because it supports economic gains. More value-neutral than the first perspective, this view sees performance as neither inherently good nor bad but rather as a means to other ends. It is largely a work-based view of performance. Performance is seen as necessary for individuals to earn livelihoods, be productive members of society, and build a good society. In this recursive process, performance at the individual level leads to enhanced work and careers, and performance at the organizational level leads to stronger economic entities capable of providing good jobs to individuals.

Some models and concepts of performance improvement can be associated with this perspective as they attempt to enhance the utility of learning by linking learning to individual and organizational performance outcomes. While this objective is worthy by itself, it is criticized for lacking the intrinsic "goodness" of the first ontological perspective. As the performance paradigm has matured, it has broadened to embrace the first perspective.

Performance as an Instrument of Organizational Oppression

From this perspective, performance is seen as a means of control and dehumanization. Through focusing on performance, organizations are seen as coercing and demanding behaviors from individuals in return for compensation. Per-

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formance is viewed as threatening to humans and potentially abusive. As such, it is largely a necessary evil that denies human potential.

It is this perspective that seems to be represented in critics of performance-based HRD. For example, Barrie and Pace (1998) say that "it is the performance perspective that denies a person's fundamental and inherent agency and self-determination" (p. 295). Others (Bierema, 1997; Peterson and Provo, 1999) refer to the mechanistic or machine model of work when referring to the performance perspective.

The underlying presumption of this perspective is that performance is antithetical to human potential. It seems to be most closely aligned with critical theorists who wish HRD to challenge organizational power structures that seek to control performance outcomes.

Three Views of Learning

Much philosophical work has focused on learning and adult education since ancient times (Gutek, 1998; Elias and Merriam, 1995; Lindeman, 1926; Bryson 1936; Hewitt and Mather, 1937). For purposes of this discussion, we group the views of learning into three analogous ontological views of learning as (1) a humanistic endeavor, (2) value-neutral transfer of information, and (3) a tool for societal oppression.

Learning as a Humanistic Endeavor

The primary purpose of learning in this perspective is to enhance human potential. Most closely aligned with humanistic psychology and existentialist philosophy, humans are seen as growing, developing beings. Learning is viewed as a key element in helping individuals become more self-actualized and inherently good for the person. Most HRD scholars view learning from this perspective. They believe deeply in the power of learning to enhance human potential. It is important to note that most within performance-based HRD also see learning in this way.

Learning as a Value-Neutral Transmission of Information

Learning in this view has instrumental value in that it transfers information that individuals need and desire. Closely aligned with Dewey's (1938) pragmatic philosophy, learning is seen as a means to solve problems of everyday living. Instructional designers and many organizational trainers approach learning from this perspective as their primary task is to transfer information effectively. A large part of training practice in the United States is grounded in this perspective that sees learning as largely value-neutral and instrumental.

Learning as a Tool for Societal Oppression

Largely overlooked by most HRD scholars in the United States is the fact that learning can also be a tool for oppression, particularly outside organizational settings.

For example, communist use of learning to control people, cults use learning to brainwash people, religion has used learning to restrict worldviews of people, and education has used learning to restrict or misrepresent Native American, African American, and female history. Freire (1970) and Mezirow (1991) are examples of scholars who have warned about the potentially oppressive nature of learning. Thus, learning can also be a tool for oppression and control.

Comparing Philosophical Foundations

The first conclusion is that neither learning nor performance are inherently good or bad. Both can be instruments of oppression or means to elevate human potential. We maintain that human resource development can elevate human potential and enhance the human experience by focusing on *both* performance and learning.

It is disturbing that debates in the literature have reflected diverse ontological assumptions about performance without explicitly owning and acknowledging them. Specifically, critics of "the" performance-based HRD have categorized all emerging views of performance into the third perspective, an instrument of organizational oppression. As a result, learning has been incorrectly portrayed as inherently "good" and performance as inherently "bad." It is equally possible for performance to be "good" and learning to be "bad" in a given situation. Any notion that either performance or learning has these inherent qualities should be abandoned in future exchanges.

Performance-based HRD should adopt the perspective that *both* learning and performance are inherently good for the individual because both are natural parts of human existence. It is hard to imagine a life without learning or without performance. The challenge for the human resource development profession is to ensure that neither one becomes a tool for oppression but rather elevates human potential.

LEARNING PARADIGM OF HRD

The learning paradigm is familiar territory to most HRD professionals. In this section the learning paradigm is defined and its core assumptions presented.

Definition of the Learning Paradigm

Watkins (1995) offers a useful definition of the learning paradigm of HRD: "HRD is the field of study and practice responsible for the fostering of a long-term work-related learning capacity at the individual, group, and organizational level of organizations" (p. 2). Furthermore, she says that HRD "works to enhance individuals' capacity to learn, to help groups overcome barriers to learning, and to help organizations create a culture which promotes conscious learning" (p. 2).

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Core Theoretical Assumptions of the Learning Paradigm

The core assumptions of the learning paradigm have not been clearly articulated by any one individual. Ruona (1998, 2000) provides particularly good insights in her study of the core beliefs of HRD scholarly leaders. Others have offered strong arguments in favor of what we are calling the learning paradigm (Barrie and Pace, 1998; Watkins and Marsick, 1995; Bierema, 1997; Dirkx, 1997). Drawing on these and other sources, the following ten core assumptions from the learning paradigm have emerged.

Learning Paradigm Assumption 1: Individual education, growth, learning and development are inherently good for the individual. At the heart of the learning paradigm is the notion that learning, development, and growth are inherently good for each individual. This assumption is drawn from humanistic psychology that stresses self-actualization of the individual. This assumption is also central to all of human resource development practice and is unchallenged by any paradigm of HRD.

Learning Paradigm Assumption 2: People should be valued for their intrinsic worth as people, not just as resources to achieve an outcome. Learning advocates object to characterizing people as "resources" to be utilized to achieve a goal, particularly in an organization. For HRD to value people only with regard to their contribution to performance outcomes is offensive because it invalidates them as human beings. Furthermore, it leads to workplaces that devalue people and can quickly become abusive to employees. From this perspective, HRD should value people for their inherent worth and not seek to use them to accomplish a goal. Thus, learning and development should be a means to enhance people and their humanness, not merely to accomplish performance goals.

Learning Paradigm Assumption 3: The primary purpose of HRD is development of the individual. From this paradigm, the needs of the individual should be more important than the needs of the organization, or equally important at a minimum. Those learning advocates who are concerned about power structures in society would argue that the learning and development needs of the individual should take precedence over the needs of the organization (Bierema, 2000; Dirkx, 1997). Others might take a more moderate view that the needs of the individual need to be balanced against the needs of the organization. Regardless, the primary goal of HRD from this perspective is to help individuals develop to their fullest potential.

Learning Paradigm Assumption 4: The primary outcome of HRD is learning and development. In this paradigm, learning is considered to be the primary outcome of human resource development. While performance is acknowledged, the core

outcome variable is learning. As stated in the overview, there are variations within this paradigm such that some focus mostly on individual learning while others take a whole systems approach (individual, team, and organizational). Regardless, the end result is some form of learning and development.

Learning Paradigm Assumption 5: Organizations are best advanced by having fully developed individuals. Performance outcomes that benefit the individual and the organization are presumed to occur if the individual is developed to full potential. That is, the specific performance behaviors desired by the organization are best achieved by focusing on the individual's development. Performance, then, flows naturally from development instead of having performance drive development. As Bierema (1996) states, "A holistic approach to the development of individuals in the context of a learning organization produces well-informed, knowledgeable, critical-thinking adults who have a sense of fulfillment and inherently make decisions that cause an organization to prosper" (p. 22). Indeed, learning and development are presumed to be able to nourish the individual to higher levels of performance than can be achieved by a focus on well-defined performance outcomes.

Learning Paradigm Assumption 6: Individuals should control their own learning process. This assumption is deeply rooted in the democratic as well as humanistic principles of adult learning. Individuals are presumed to have the inherent capacity and motivation to direct their own learning in a way that is most beneficial to them. Because of this, HRD is presumed not to need to specify performance outcomes because learners are able to determine their own course to high performance and will actively seek to do so. Deeply rooted in the inherent belief of the goodness of people and the concept of self-organizing systems, this assumption frees HRD from focusing on performance outcomes by striving to create nourishing learning situations.

Learning Paradigm Assumption 7: Development of the individual should be holistic. For people in organizations to achieve their fullest potential, they must be developed holistically, not just with specific skills or competencies for specific tasks (Barrie and Pace, 1998; Yang, 2003). HRD, from this paradigm, should focus on all aspects of individual development.

Holistic development integrates personal and professional life in career planning, development, and assessment. Holistic development is not necessarily linked to the present or future job tasks, but the overall growth of the individual with the recognition that this growth will have an effect on the organizational system. (Bierema, 1996, p. 25)

Learning Paradigm Assumption 8: The organization must provide people a means to achieve their fullest human potential through meaningful work. This assumption

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extends assumption 3 to say that organizations have a duty and responsibility to help individuals develop to their full potential. Furthermore, one of the primary vehicles for this is human resource development.

Learning Paradigm Assumption 9: An emphasis on performance or organizational benefits creates a mechanistic view of people that prevents them from reaching their full potential. This assumption is particularly important because it creates the largest gap with the performance paradigm. Learning advocates tend to think that emphasizing performance outcomes in HRD, and targeting HRD interventions to improve performance, results in an overly mechanistic approach to HRD and organizational life. As a result, people in organizations are limited and many fail to reach their full potential. Such an approach fails to tap into the capabilities people have to accomplish great things, leaving them more alienated from the organization and ultimately hurting the organization.

PERFORMANCE PARADIGM OF HRD

The performance paradigm of HRD has seen renewed interest in the 1990s. As shown in chapter 3, it actually has very deep roots in training practices throughout history. It has come to the forefront of HRD debates because changes in the global economy have put renewed pressure on HRD for accountability.

Definition of the Performance Paradigm

Holton (1999) points out that the performance paradigm of HRD has not been formally defined in the literature, although there are definitions of HRD that are performance based (Weinberger, 1998). Holton offers several useful definitions. *Performance* is defined as:

accomplishing units of mission-related outcomes or outputs.

A *performance system* was defined as

any system organized to accomplish a mission or purpose.

It is important to note that the term *performance system* was used instead of *organization*. Performance systems are simply purposeful systems that have a specified mission. All organizations are performance systems, but some performance systems are not an organization. For example, a community could become a performance system if it adopts a mission.

Then, the performance paradigm of HRD was defined as follows:

The performance paradigm of HRD holds that the purpose of HRD is to advance the mission of the performance system that sponsors the HRD efforts by improving the capabilities of individuals working in the system and improving the systems in which they perform their work.

Core Theoretical Assumptions of the Performance Paradigm

In this section, eleven core assumptions are presented (Holton, 2002). It is important to remember that the performance paradigm has evolved over the last decade with only limited work to explicitly define it (Swanson, 1999; Holton, 1999). Thus, these core assumptions represent a snapshot of the performance paradigm at this point. Clearly literature from ten years ago might appear to represent different perspectives because the performance paradigm was just emerging. Indeed, in their zeal to get performance added to the HRD framework, early performance advocates focused mostly on performance variables and may have unintentionally appeared to exclude learning and human potential.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 1: Performance systems must perform to survive and prosper, and individuals who work within them must perform if they wish to advance their careers and maintain employment or membership. The performance paradigm views performance as a fact of life in performance systems (e.g., organizations) that is not optional. For example, if organizations do not perform, they decline and eventually disappear. Performance is not defined only as profit, but rather by whatever means the organization uses to define its core outcomes (e.g., citizen services for a government organization). Every performance system has core outcomes and constituents or customers who expect them to be achieved. Even nonprofit and government organizations face restructuring or extinction if they do not achieve their core outcomes.

By extension, then, if individual employees do not perform in a manner that supports the system's long-term interests, they are unlikely to be seen as productive members of the system. Thus, in an organization persons may not advance and may ultimately lose their jobs. This is not to suggest that employees must blindly follow the organization's mandates. In the short term they are expected to challenge the organization when necessary, but over the long term every employee must make contributions to core outcomes. Thus, the greatest service HRD can provide to the individual and to the performance system is to help improve performance by enhancing individual expertise and building effective performance systems.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 2: The ultimate purpose of HRD is to improve performance of the system in which it is embedded and which provides the resources to support it. The purpose of HRD is to improve performance of the system in which it is embedded (or within which it is working in the case of consultants) and that provides the resources to support it (Swanson and Arnold, 1997). All interventions and activities undertaken by HRD must ultimately enhance that system's mission-related performance by improving performance at the mission, social sub-system, process and individual levels (Holton, 1999). Aside from general ethical responsibilities (Dean, 1993), HRD's primary accountability is to the system within which it resides.

The system's mission comes of that system. Every system, either explicitly or implicitly, has a mission, and then it also has desired performance. Performance occurs in every system. Performance is raised, individuals help raise it, and the system's licenses issued, criteria, and, of course, to profit. Performance is not seen as an important fact of life in a system.

The particular system's relationship to its external environment is important. In that sense, this is a system (see Kaufman, Watkins, 1999). The system is argued that societal beneficence should not be ignored. Rather, the relationship between the system and its environment is appropriately captured by the performance paradigm.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 3: Performance systems must learn and improve, but also perform. The performance paradigm has positioned the two as appropriate theoretical perspectives. At different levels of outcome, theory building has been going on for a long time. Competing perspectives (micro, meso, and macro) have been characterized. The micro theory integrates the individual, and the macro theory integrates the system, and the meso theory integrates the individual and the system.

Multilevel theories of performance processes, clarified by the performance paradigm, occur within organizational level characteristics that shape organizational performance.

From the multilevel perspective, the performance paradigm is Furthermore, individual performance is an organizational and individual performance.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 4: Performance systems must be nurtured, respected, and improved. The performance paradigm learning and the performance paradigm.

The system's mission and the goals derived from it specify the expected outcomes of that system. Every purposefully organized system operates with a mission, either explicitly or implicitly, and the role of the mission is to reflect the system's relationship with its *external* environment. If the system has a purpose, then it also has desired outputs, so performance theory is applicable. Performance occurs in everything from churches (e.g., number of members, money raised, individuals helped), to government (e.g., health care in a community, driver's licenses issued, crime rates), to nonprofits (e.g., research funded, members), and, of course, to profit-making organizations. Under this broad definition, performance is not seen as inherently harmful or nonhumanistic but rather as an important fact of life in systems organized for purposeful activity.

The particular system's definition of its performance relationship with the external environment is fully captured by the mission and goals of the organization. In that sense, this model differs from that of Kaufman and his associates (see Kaufman, Watkins, Triner, and Smith, 1998; Kaufman, 1997) who have argued that societal benefits should be included as a level of performance. This difference should not be interpreted to mean that societal benefits are unimportant. Rather, the relationship between the performance system and society is most appropriately captured by the mission of that system.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 3: The primary outcome of HRD is not just learning but also performance. The argument over learning versus performance has positioned the two as equal and competing outcomes. In reality, this is an inappropriate theoretical argument. Performance and learning really represent two different levels of outcomes that are complementary, not competing. Multilevel theory building has become increasingly popular as a means to integrate competing perspectives (Klein, Tosi, and Cannella, 1999). In management, this divide has been characterized as the "micro" domain where the focus is on the individual and the "macro" domain where the focus is on the organization. Multilevel theory integrates the two by acknowledging the influence of the organization on the individual, and vice versa:

Multilevel theories illuminate the context surrounding individual-level processes, clarifying precisely when and where such processes are likely to occur within organization. Similarly, multilevel theories identify the individual-level characteristics, behaviors, attitudes and perceptions that underlie and shape organization-level characteristics and outcomes. (Klein et al., p. 243)

From the multilevel perspective, then, neither level is more or less important. Furthermore, individual learning would be seen as an integral part of achieving organizational and individual goals.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 4: Human potential in organizations must be nurtured, respected and developed. Performance advocates believe in the power of learning and the power of people in organizations to accomplish great things. It

is important to distinguish between the performance paradigm of HRD and simple performance management. The latter does not necessarily honor human potential in organizations as performance-oriented HRD does. Performance-oriented HRD advocates remain HRD and human advocates at the core. Performance advocates do not believe that emphasizing performance outcomes invalidates their belief in and respect for human potential.

The performance paradigm of HRD recognizes that it is the unleashing of human potential that creates great organizations. While performance advocates emphasize outcomes, they do not demand that outcomes be achieved through control of human potential. Performance advocates fully embrace notions of empowerment and human development because they will also lead to better performance when properly executed (Huselid, 1995; Lam and White, 1998). Furthermore, they see no instances where denying the power of human potential in organizations would lead to better performance. Thus, they see it as completely consistent to emphasize both human potential and performance.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 5: HRD must enhance current performance and build capacity for future performance effectiveness in order to create sustainable high performance. Kaplan and Norton (1996) suggest two categories of performance measures: outcomes and drivers. Unfortunately, they do not offer concise definitions of either. For our purposes, *outcomes* are measures of effectiveness or efficiency relative to core outputs of the system, subsystem, process or individual. The most typical are financial indicators (profit, ROI, etc.) and productivity measures (units of goods or services produced) and are often generic across similar performance systems. According to Kaplan and Norton, these measures tend to be lag indicators in that they reflect what has occurred or has been accomplished in relation to core outcomes.

Drivers measure elements of performance that are expected to sustain or increase system, subsystem, process, or individual ability and capacity to be more effective or efficient in the future. Thus, they are leading indicators of future outcomes and tend to be unique for particular performance systems. Together with outcome measures, they describe the hypothesized cause and effect relationships in the organization's strategy (Kaplan and Norton, 1996).

From this perspective, the views of performance improvement experts who focus solely on actual outcomes, such as profit or units of work produced, are flawed in that they are likely to create short-term improvement but neglect aspects of the organization that will drive future performance outcomes. The views of experts who focus solely on performance drivers such as learning or growth are equally flawed in that they fail to consider the actual outcomes. Only when outcomes and drivers are jointly considered will long-term, sustained performance improvements occur. Neither is more or less important, but both work in an integrated fashion to enhance mission, process, subsystem, and individual performance. Performance-based HRD advocates do not support such "perform-

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mance at all costs" strategies. Long-term sustainable high performance, which is the goal performance-oriented HRD advocates, requires a careful balance between outcomes and drivers. High short-term performance that cannot be sustained is not really high performance.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 6: HRD professionals have an ethical and moral obligation to ensure that attaining organizational performance goals is not abusive to individual employees. Performance advocates agree that the drive for organizational performance can become abusive and unethical. In no way should performance-oriented HRD support organizational practices that exceed the boundaries of ethical and moral treatment of employees. Clearly, there is ample room for disagreement as to the specifics of what is ethical and moral, but the basic philosophical position is that performance improvement efforts must be ethical. This is not viewed as hard to accomplish because of the assumption described below that effective performance is good for individuals and organizations.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 7: Training/learning activities cannot be separated from other parts of the performance system and are best bundled with other performance improvement interventions. The broadest approach, and the one advocated by performance-based HRD, is the whole systems performance improvement approach. This approach focuses on improving performance outcomes at multiple levels with nonlearning and learning interventions. In most organizations there is no profession or discipline charged with responsibility for assessing, improving, and monitoring performance as a whole system. This void is directly responsible for the proliferation of "quick fixes" and faddish improvement programs, most of which focus on only a single element or a subset of performance variables. Because HRD is grounded in systems theory and the whole systems perspective of organizations, it is the logical discipline to take responsibility for whole system performance improvements in organizations.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 8: Effective performance and performance systems are rewarding to the individual and to the organization. Performance clearly benefits the organization. However, lost in the literature is the recognition that effective performance benefits the individual equally. In many instances, performance is presented as almost antithetical to individual benefits, implying one must choose between them. In fact, a variety of research tells us that people like to perform effectively:

- The goal-setting literature indicates that individuals build self-esteem by accomplishing challenging goals (Katzell and Thompson, 1990).
- Hackman and Oldham's (1980) job characteristics model and the research supporting it have shown that experienced meaningfulness of work and responsibility for work outcomes are two critical psychological states that individuals seek.

- Self-efficacy is built when individuals experience success at task performance that is referred to as *enactive mastery* (Wood and Bandura, 1989).
- The relationship between job satisfaction and performance has been shown to be a reciprocal relationship, with performance enhancing job satisfaction and vice versa (Katzell, Thompson, and Guzzo, 1992; Spector, 1997).
- Success at work is seen as important to an individual's basic adult identity because it helps them see themselves as productive, competent human beings (Whitbourne, 1987). Conversely, failure or frustration threatens an individual's self-concept of competence.
- Work allows the individual to implement his or her self-concept and fulfill their unique goals and interests. Work and life satisfaction depend on the extent to which individuals find outlets for their needs and abilities (Super, Savickas, and Super, 1996).
- Success at work fulfills an individual's innate drive for what has been called *self-actualization* (Maslow, 1970) or the need for achievement (McClelland, 1965).
- Self-determination theory and research suggest that humans have three innate needs that are essential to optimal functioning and well being: The needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Thus, effective performance will contribute to an individual's sense of well being by enhancing feelings of competence.
- Certain individuals have high levels of a dispositional trait called *conscientiousness* that is a valid predictor of job performance (Barrick and Mount, 1991). For these individuals, failure to perform would be very frustrating.
- Performance also helps individuals achieve instrumental goals. It may lead to more career advancement and career opportunities in organizations as well as valued intrinsic and extrinsic rewards as a result of performance.

This list is not offered as a comprehensive presentation of ways that performance benefits individuals. Rather, it is representative enough to conclude safely that performance benefits individuals in a myriad of ways. People do not want to fail to perform in their jobs. Therefore, to the extent that HRD helps them be more successful in their jobs, performance-oriented HRD is just as valuable to the individual as the organization. Effective performance can make a significant contribution to individuals as well as their organizations.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 9: Whole systems performance improvement seeks to enhance the value of learning in an organization. Performance-based HRD actually seeks to increase the value of the individual employee and individual learning in the system, not diminish it. It fully agrees that enhancing the expertise of individual employees is fundamentally important. However, performance-

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Performance Paradigm Assumption 10: The primary focus of HRD is to achieve the highest performance possible for the organization. The primary focus of HRD is to achieve the highest performance possible for the organization. The primary focus of HRD is to achieve the highest performance possible for the organization. The primary focus of HRD is to achieve the highest performance possible for the organization.

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based HRD suggests that individually oriented HRD violates the fundamental principles of systems theory (Bertalanffy, 1968), which tell us that no one element of the system can be viewed separately from other elements. Intervening in only one element of the system without creating congruence in other parts of the system will not lead to systemic change. Furthermore, intervening in the whole system to improve outcomes or drivers alone is also flawed. For example, a company that downsizes drastically may increase profits (outcomes) in the short run, but it will leave itself without any intellectual capital (driver) for future growth. Human performance technologists (Stolovich and Keeps, 1992) and needs assessors (Moore and Dutton, 1978) have understood the need to view the individual domain within the larger organizational system in order to make individual domain performance improvement efforts more effective. Whole systems performance improvement goes a step further to analyze and improve performance of the whole system through a balanced emphasis on outcomes and drivers in the four performance domains.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 10: HRD must partner with functional departments to achieve performance goals. One common lament from HRD practitioners is that the performance approach forces them to deal with organizational variables over which they have no control (e.g., rewards, job design, etc.). Performance-oriented HRD acknowledges this and stresses that HRD must become a partner with functional units in the organization to achieve performance improvement, even through learning. Opponents often suggest that HRD should focus on learning because they can influence learning. Yet, classroom learning is the only variable in the performance system over which HRD professionals have the primary influence. Learning organization advocates stress the fact that much of the really valuable learning that takes place in organizations occurs in the workplace, not the classroom (Watkins and Marsick, 1993). Performance-oriented HRD advocates suggest that if HRD is not willing to be a performance partner, then it is doomed to play only small roles in organizations with minimal impact and with great risk for downsizing and outsourcing.

Performance Paradigm Assumption 11: The transfer of learning into job performance is of primary importance. Because the dependent variable in performance-oriented HRD is not just learning but individual and organizational performance, considerable emphasis is placed on the transfer of learning to job performance. As Holton et al. (2000) point out, researchers are still working to operationalize the organizational dimensions important to enhancing transfer. Nonetheless, there is widespread recognition that the transfer process is not something that occurs by chance or is assured by achieving learning outcomes but rather that it is the result of a complex system of influences (Baldwin and Ford, 1988; Broad, 2000; Ford and Weissbein, 1997; Holton and Baldwin, 2000). Learning is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for improving job performance through increased expertise

(Bates, Holton, and Seyler, 2000; Rouillier and Goldstein, 1993; Tracey, Tannenbaum, and Kavanaugh, 1995). Expertise has emerged as a construct integrating the performance component of HRD with learning (Swanson and Holton, 1999). Expertise, defined as "human behaviors, having effective results and optimal efficiency, acquired through study and experience within a specialized domain" (p. 26), focuses HRD on core outcomes from learning. Performance advocates are known for emphasizing measurement of HRD outcomes to see whether outcomes are achieved. Measuring performance is a common activity in organizations, so it is logical that performance-oriented HRD would also stress measurement. This emphasis stems from two key observations. First, it seems that important performance outcomes in organizations are almost always measured in some manner. Thus, if HRD is to improve performance, then it must measure its outcomes. Second, components of organizational systems that are viewed as contributing to the organization's strategic mission are usually able to demonstrate their contribution through some measurement. Thus, if HRD is to be a strategic partner, it must measure results.

Myths about the Performance Paradigm

It should be apparent that a variety of the criticisms leveled at the performance paradigm are actually myths.

Performance is behavioristic. The performance paradigm is not the same as behaviorism. The performance paradigm is most concerned that performance outcomes occur, but in no way are the strategies and interventions employed restricted to behavioristic ones. Barrie and Pace's (1998) contention that "improvements in performance are usually achieved through behavioral control and conditioning" is simply wrong. Similarly, Bierema's (1997) view that the performance approach is "mechanistic" and Dirkx's (1997) view that it leads organizations to "transmit to passive workers the knowledge and skills needed" are also wrong. The performance paradigm advocates none of these things, nor must it lead organizations in that direction. This myth probably arose because of the early work in performance technology that indeed grew out of behaviorism (Gilbert, 1978). It may persist for two reasons: (1) the performance paradigm places considerable emphasis on building effective systems, in addition to individual development, and (2) performance-based HRD sanctions interventions that change the system in which the individual works but do not involve the individual.

It is perfectly possible for a performance-oriented person to take a humanistic approach to HRD, as long as that approach will lead to performance outcomes. For example, interventions that attempt to spark more creativity and innovation in an organization can rarely be done using a behavioristic strategy. Or, a more spiritual approach to adding meaning to employees' lives may be quite appropriate, if it leads to performance outcomes. Furthermore, the performance paradigm would not restrict learning solely to the objectivist paradigm

(Mezirow, 1996) but would be needed to improve performance to improve performance about their work and the organization to adopt any type of HRD strategy in support of the mission of the system.

Performance is deterministic. The performance paradigm demands that outcomes be known before the interventions. If that were the case, the only acceptable outcomes would be those that have already occurred, thereby leaving out strategic interventions. The performance paradigm advocates that outcomes be comfortable as learning and development occur. If outcomes do occur at some point, then an organization does not need to intervene. However, the performance paradigm expects to see that performance outcomes be assessed to assess outcomes when

Performance ignores individual differences. The performance paradigm honors and promotes individual differences. The key to the performance paradigm is learning and growth will occur. That is, learning and growth will never benefit the organization. Note that many performance advocates ignore the growth of the individual and the organization-sponsored

Performance is abusive to employees. The performance approach to HRD can be abusive to employees. The cost-cutting through development. However, this is not the case. The theoretical framework clearly shows that creating a learning environment for employees is not only a performance outcome but also a performance outcome. When performance is abusive to employees.

Performance is focused on short-term results. The performance paradigm is focused on short-term results. The performance paradigm is focused on short-term performance outcomes.

(Mezirow, 1996) but would also embrace critical and transformational learning if needed to improve performance. In fact, many organizational change interventions to improve performance encourage employees to think more critically about their work and the organization. The performance paradigm can and does adopt any type of HRD strategy, as long as outcomes occur which further the mission of the system.

Performance is deterministic. Another mistaken belief is that the performance paradigm demands that outcomes of HRD interventions be predetermined before the interventions. If that were true, then the only interventions that would be acceptable would be those for which outcomes could be determined in advance, thereby leaving out strategies such as the learning organization. In fact, the performance paradigm advocates no such thing. Performance advocates are just as comfortable as learning advocates with less certain outcomes, provided that outcomes do occur at some point. For example, in a learning organization example, an organization does not need to know exactly *where* the performance improvement will occur. However, performance advocates would say that they should expect to see that performance improvements do occur at some point and be able to assess outcomes when they do occur.

Performance ignores individual learning and growth. The performance paradigm honors and promotes individual learning and growth just as much as a learning paradigm does. The key difference is that the performance paradigm expects that learning and growth will benefit the performance system in which it is embedded. That is, learning and growth for the sole benefit of the individual and which will never benefit the organization is not acceptable for organization-sponsored HRD. Note that many performance HRD advocates would honor learning and growth of the individual as a core outcome for other circumstances, but not for organization-sponsored HRD.

Performance is abusive to employees. There is little doubt that a performance approach to HRD *can* be abusive to employee, particularly when organizations use cost-cutting through downsizing as a substitute for sound performance improvement. However, this is a problem of implementation, not one that is inherent in the theoretical framework. Research (e.g., Huselid, 1995; Lau and May, 1998) clearly shows that creating an environment that is supportive and respectful of employees is not only the morally right thing to do, but also results in improved performance. When properly implemented, performance-based HRD is not abusive to employees.

Performance is focused on the short term. Once again, this is a problem of implementation, not theory. It is true that many organizations place too much emphasis on short-term results. However, most organizations have learned that focusing on short-term performance and not building capacity for long-term success simply

does not work. There is nothing inherent in performance theory that says it must be short-term. Many long-term interventions have been abused by companies and inappropriately conducted with a short-term perspective (e.g., Total Quality Management). Performance-oriented HRD is no different—some will do it right, and others will not.

FUSING THE TWO PARADIGMS

In recent years more energy has gone into reconciling the two paradigms and finding common ground. It is fair to say that there is now much greater understanding and harmony between groups representing both views.

Runoa (2000) studied the core beliefs of a select group of HRD scholar-leaders. Her findings, profiled in Figure 7.2, summarizes the issues around serving both individuals and organizations. Straddling belief systems that honor both the individual and the organization creates a natural tension that the HRD profession believes is both important and difficult.

In the end, substantial overlap exists between the HRD paradigms. In particular:

- A strong belief in learning and development as avenues to individual growth
- A belief that organizations can be improved through human expertise
- A desire to see people and organizations as healthy and growing
- A commitment to people and human potential
- A passion for learning and productivity

It is this common ground that keeps people within the two paradigms in the field of human resource development. They represent a strong uniting bond that clearly defines the field and separates it from other disciplines.

At the same time, unresolved issues persist between the two paradigms. The differences seem to be deeply held values and philosophical assumptions (Runoa, 1999). Because of that, they are very difficult to resolve, as there are few "right" answers when the differences are defined at the value level. Let's review some key differences.

The issue of organizational control over the learning process and outcomes is a difficult one for those who believe that only the individual should control his or her learning process (Bierema, 2000). It may be the one issue where there can be no agreement because it is a philosophical issue about which people have passionate feelings. The performance paradigm accepts the premise that the organization and the individual should share control of the individual's learning if the organization is the sponsor of the intervention. However, performance advocates would argue that ignoring performance in favor of individual control might ultimately be bad for the individual if the organization is not able to survive or prosper.

Figure 7.2 Serving Individual and Organizations: Contrasting Systems of Beliefs

	Serving Individuals
Core focus for HRD	Defined by its relationship with people
Responsibility for HRD	To and for individuals and organizations
Setting for HRD	Any setting—the individual, the organization, or the community
Importance of organization	To improve the condition, help people achieve life purpose, and improve social conditions
People in organizations	Should care for people, foster growth, and help people achieve their potential
Profit	Needs of individuals and organizations are more highly valued than profit
People	People are the focus of the HRD process
Humans and learning	Humans are the focus of the HRD process
Results of development	Growth of individuals and organizations, helping people achieve their potential
Driver to develop systems	To help people achieve their potential
Prioritization between the individual and organization	Put people first, then the organization

Source: Runoa, 2000, pp. 22

Figure 7.2 Serving Individuals versus Serving Organizations: Potential Contrasting Systems of Beliefs for Human Resource Development

	<i>Serving Individuals</i>	<i>Serving Organizations</i>
Core focus for HRD	Defined by its work with people	Defined by its work with organizations
Responsibility for HRD	To and for individuals	To and for organizations and organizational mission and goals
Setting for HRD	Any setting—not limited to the organizational setting	Conducted in some kind of goal-oriented system
Importance of organization	To improve the human condition, help individuals achieve life purpose, and improve society	To achieve organizational mission and goals, and contribute to capitalistic system, thus benefiting individuals and society
People in organizations	Should care for and support people, fostering meaning, and help people connect to something	Have some, but not primary, responsibility for individuals' short- and long-term development
Profit	Needs of individuals should be more highly valued than the aims of profit	HRD should enhance performance on multiple dimensions and for short- and long-term value
People	People are inherently valuable	People are valuable to organizations for the resources they provide
Humans and learning	Humans are learning beings	Humans are learning beings, however when learning is organizationally sponsored, individuals learn on behalf of the organization (explicitly in full agreement)
Results of development	Growth of the individual and helping people reach their full potential	Changes in job/role and performance, fulfilling organizational needs
Driver to develop systems	To help people achieve their potential within the system	To foster alignment and help organizations achieve their mission and goals
Prioritization between the individual and organization	Put people first, and organizational benefits will follow	Put organizations first, and people benefits will follow

Source: Ruona, 2000, pp. 23–24.

The individual employee presumably needs the benefits of employment (e.g., economic, psychological, instrumental) that will only exist if the organization thrives. Thus, sharing control in order to advance organization performance is viewed as appropriate and beneficial to both parties. Learning advocates would argue that learning is inherently an individual and personal experience that should never be controlled. That is, to control a person's learning is to control the person, which is objectionable.

The other argument for shared control is an economic one. Simply, if the performance system or organization is paying for the HRD efforts, it has a right to derive benefits from it and share control over it. This is one area of criticism that performance advocates truly struggle to understand. It is difficult to understand how organizations can be expected to pay for HRD efforts yet have those efforts focus primarily on what is good for the individual. To performance advocates, this sounds perfectly appropriate for schools and universities in a democratic society, but not for organization-sponsored HRD. In fact, most would wholeheartedly support the individually oriented philosophy for learning activities outside of organizations. Yet, most performance advocates also understand there are deeply held fears about institutional control over individual learning. Nonetheless, they view the situation as different once HRD crosses the organizational boundary and employers fund HRD efforts.

Many of the learning paradigm tenets are best understood by remembering that their roots are in adult education. Adult education is a broader and different field of practice than human resource development, although some would debate this. Adult education is grounded in the idea that education should be used to maintain a democratic society, which is best accomplished by building individuals' power through education and knowledge. When viewing adult learning in a broader societal context, this makes perfect sense. Where the differences arise is when learning is moved inside the boundaries and sponsorship of a purposeful system like an organization. Then performance advocates believe a different set of assumptions is warranted. Learning advocates, on the other hand, believe that a very similar set of assumptions still applies.

We acknowledge that our bias is toward the performance paradigm. Perhaps the best way of thinking about the importance of the performance paradigm is to ask this question: Could HRD sponsored by a performance system survive if it did *not* result in improved performance for the system? Most would agree that the answer is no. Second, will it thrive if it does not contribute in a *substantial* way to the mission of the organization? Again, most would answer no. Like all components of any system or organization, HRD must enhance the organization's effectiveness. The challenge is to consider how performance is incorporated in HRD theory and practice, not whether it will be.

The performance paradigm is the most likely approach to lead to a strategic role for HRD in organizations. HRD will only be perceived as having strategic value to the organization if it has the capability to connect the unique value

of employee experience (Swanson, 1995; 'chance that HRD core performance human and performance the organization; it is likely to end

CONCLUSION

While it would be difficult to ever converge on a common ground, research and development more clearly define core areas of common ground served by the in

REFLECTION

1. Which of your own assumptions are most challenged by this article?
2. Do you agree or disagree with the author's perspective on the role of HRD?
3. How can we ensure that HRD is truly for the benefit of the individual and the organization?
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of employee expertise with the strategic goals of the organization (Torraco and Swanson, 1995; Walton, 1999; Yorks, 2005). Performance advocates see little chance that HRD will gain power and influence in organizations by ignoring the core performance outcomes that organizations wish to achieve. By being *both* human and performance advocates, HRD stands to gain the most influence in the organizational system. If HRD focuses only on learning or individuals, then it is likely to end up marginalized as a staff support group.

CONCLUSION

While it would be naive to think that the performance and learning paradigms would ever converge, it is important to realize that there may be much more common ground than has been stated by learning advocates. Further scholarly research and debate are needed to articulate the similarities as well as the differences more clearly. This chapter is a step in that direction as we have attempted to define core assumptions of each paradigm in order to discuss differences and common ground more accurately. In the end we believe HRD is probably best served by the integration of the two paradigms.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Which paradigm do you feel most comfortable with and would adopt as your own personal belief system?
2. Do you see the learning and performance paradigms as competing paradigms, or do you see them as mutually reinforcing?
3. How can HRD operate from a performance paradigm and ensure that human development is honored and supported?
4. How can HRD operate from a learning paradigm and play a core strategic role in organizations?
5. How would an employee, an employee's manager, and a corporate CEO each view the preceding issue?



Perspectives on Performance in Human Resource Development

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Introduction

Organizational Effectiveness as a Precursor to Performance

Disciplinary Perspectives on Performance

Financial Performance

- Units of Performance
- Financial Benefit Analysis
- ROI of Human Capital

Multilevel Performance Models

- Brache's Enterprise Model
- Rummler and Brache's Performance Model
- Performance Diagnosis Process and Matrix
- Organization Development Performance Model
- Holton's Integrated Taxonomy of Performance Domains

Process and Team-Level Performance Models

Individual-Level Performance Models

- Campbell's Model of Individual Performance
- Gilbert's Human Performance Engineering Model

The Spoils of Performance

Conclusion

Reflection Questions

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines core theories of performance that inform the performance perspective of HRD. Unlike learning theory that is essentially focused solely on the individual, performance theory is much more diverse. Performance theories address individuals, teams, processes, and organizational systems. Some theories are multilevel.

One of the hallmarks of performance theories is that they all attempt to capture the complexity of organizational systems while still presenting a set of constructs discrete enough to be usable. Given the complexity of organizational systems, it is easy to develop a model so complex that it becomes unwieldy. Thus, most performance theories take a particular perspective so as to define a more limited range of useful performance ideas while maintaining their integrity with systems theory. Imagine picking up a crystal and turning it in the light—each perspective yields a slightly different view. Such is the case with performance theory, where each theory is an attempt to capture adequate complexity but still be useful to the HRD profession.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AS A PRECURSOR TO PERFORMANCE

Cameron (2005) has provided an important analysis and discussion of the concept of *organizational effectiveness* that helps in thinking clearly about performance. He notes that organizational effectiveness was once the dominant outcome or dependent variable in organizational studies, and that other variables have

taken its place. Examples include financial ratios, and share price

In Figure 8.1, Cameron (2005) integrates the five well-known models of organizational effectiveness along with an encapsulation of their presence within the five models of organizational effectiveness (Figure 8.2).

The competing values are positioned into four cells of the competing values framework. The four cells represent competitive leadership positions might suggest. The model and therefore in the upcoming discussion in this chapter suggests that HRD has the potential to enhance effectiveness in all four cells. It can facilitate performance

Figure 8.1 Well-known Models of Organizational Effectiveness

Model	Definition	Appropriateness
	ORGANIZATION EFFECTIVE IF:	MODEL PREFERRED WHEN:
Goal	It accomplishes stated goals.	Goals are clear, overt, consensual, time bound, and measurable.
System resource	It acquires needed resources.	Resources and outputs are clearly connected.
Internal processes	It has smooth functioning and an absence of strain.	Processes and outcomes are clearly connected.
Strategic constituencies	All constituencies are at least minimally satisfied.	Constituencies have power over or in the organization.
Human relations	Members are satisfied and collaboration occurs.	Coordinated effort and harmony are directly attached to results.

Source: Adapted from Cameron, 1984.

The Human Relations Model

Collaboration
Engagement
Harmonious relations

Internal
Maintenance

The Internal Processes Model

Control
Efficiency
Consistency

Figure 8.2 The Competing Values Framework: An integration of the five well-known models of organizational effectiveness

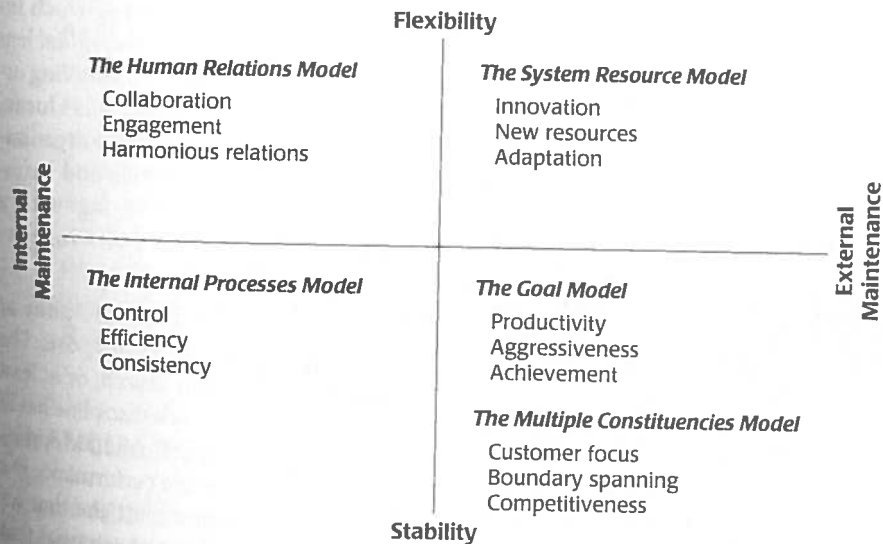
Source: Cameron, 2005, p. 309.

taken its place. Examples include customer loyalty, productivity, error rates, financial ratios, and share price (Cameron and Whetten, 1996).

In Figure 8.1, Cameron (2005) summarizes five models of organizational effectiveness along with an encapsulated definition and assessment of appropriateness. For the most part these models are self-explanatory, and it is easy to recognize their presence within any organization or the tension between stakeholders having different positions about their organization. Cameron then places the five models of organizational effectiveness into a competing values framework (Figure 8.2).

The competing values around organizational effectiveness and performance are positioned into four cells created by the axes of *flexibility-stability* and *internal maintenance-external positioning*. The effectiveness models placed into the four cells represent competitors. Some people in HRD and in organizational leadership positions might see HRD as being totally in the *Human Relations Model* and therefore in the upper left corner of the framework. The extended discussion in this chapter suggests otherwise. In developing and unleashing expertise, HRD has the potential to contribute to performance and organizational effectiveness in all four cells. It is up to HRD professionals to understand, advocate for, and facilitate performance based on professional judgment.

Figure 8.2 The Competing Values Framework of Organizational Effectiveness: An integration of the five well-known models, with key areas of interest



Source: Cameron, 2005, p. 309.

DISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES ON PERFORMANCE

HRD is not the only discipline that is interested in performance and performance improvement. It is thus very important to recognize that HRD is advanced, challenged, and judged by these various performance perspectives in business and societal organizations.

To clarify perspectives on performance, it is important to be aware of the performance theories and models in disciplines within HRD and those closely associated with HRD. The results, as discussed here and shown in Figure 8.3, are meant to be representative, not comprehensive.

These models illustrate the diversity of performance perspectives and point to key considerations in performance theory:

- *Performance is a multidisciplinary phenomenon.* It should be apparent from Figure 8.2 that many different disciplines study performance. This search revealed performance models in a wide range of disciplines, including psychology, human resource management, ethics, quality, sociology, economics, strategic management, and industrial engineering. This range of disciplines is consistent with performance improvement competency models that indicate that a performance improvement professional must be proficient in skills drawn from multiple disciplines (Stolovich, Keeps, and Rodriguez, 1995).
- *Performance models have a disciplinary bias.* Each discipline has defined performance to fit its unique needs. For example, psychology, which focuses on individuals, has defined performance through the *individual* lens (Campbell, 1990). The quality movement, which focuses on improving organizational processes, sees performance through a *process* lens (Juran, 1992). Strategic management, which focuses on positioning the organization competitively, sees performance through the *organization* and *industry* lens (Porter, 1980). While nothing is inherently wrong with a disciplinary bias, it does indicate a need for caution when viewing performance models from other disciplines.
- *There is no such thing as a single view of performance.* Each discipline or perspective has defined performance in a way that fits its purpose. The search for a single model of performance may be a futile search, or at least likely to result in a model so complex as to be unusable. Each discipline has to limit its performance models to focus on aspects of performance appropriate for that discipline. The lesson is that HRD must define performance in a manner that fits its unique role in performance improvement and that acknowledges the legitimate role of other disciplines. It is not essential that HRD's model define every possible view of performance. As professionals

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responsible for improving performance in predominantly work-related social systems (Dean, 1997), HRD needs to define performance domains that fit that purpose.

- *Types (levels) of performance and indicators of performance are confused in some models.* One persistent source of confusion in the literature is between levels of performance and indicators or metrics of performance. For example, several models include "customer" as a level of performance (Edvinsson and Malone, 1997; Juran, 1992; Kaplan and Norton, 1996). Clearly customer satisfaction is important, but it is an indicator of process and organizational performance, not a level of performance. Similarly, several models define some aspect of employee behavior such as learning (Edvinsson and Malone, 1997; Kaplan and Norton, 1996), demonstrating effort (Campbell, 1990), or individual ethics (D. L. Swanson, 1995) as a level of performance. All are really indicators of individual performance but are defined as levels due to disciplinary biases.

Sleezer, Hough, and Gradous (1998) point out that performance is usually not measured directly. What is measured are attributes of performance and their indicators. Performance indicators and metrics are vitally important but must not be confused with performance itself. And, as Sleezer et al. point out, multiple levels of measurement may be involved. For example, customer satisfaction may be an indicator of process performance, but it is also measured in multiple ways. That is, we do not measure all possible dimensions of satisfaction directly but could use a metric such as repeat visits to a store as an indicator of satisfaction.

- *Subsystems in the models vary widely.* Part of the disciplinary bias is reflected in the subsystems included in the models. Organization development (Cummings and Worley, 1993) defines groups as its primary subsystem because OD focuses on interpersonal dimensions of an organization. Needs assessment (McGehee and Thayer, 1961; Sleezer, 1991) defines work or task as its primary subsystem because it focuses on analyzing work-related learning needs. Others (Rummler and Brache, 1995; Swanson, 1994, 2007) include process as a subsystem, reflecting current emphasis on process improvement. In the case of human capital or strategic management, the organization becomes the subsystem, with society as the larger system. There seems to be little uniformity in terminology.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

For most HRD professionals, assessing the financial benefits of HRD programs is an underdeveloped area of expertise. Much of the activity of HRD is spent on performance drivers versus actual performance. Thus, HRD uses interventions

Figure 8.3 Perspectives on the Domain of Performance

<i>Perspective</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Domains of Performance/Analysis</i>
Performance improvement	Brache (2002); Rummier and Brache (1995, 1990)	▪ Environment ▪ Organization ▪ Process ▪ Individual
Performance improvement—strategic	Hronec (1993)	<i>Quantum Performance Matrix Levels</i> ▪ Organization ▪ Process ▪ People <i>Measures</i> ▪ Cost ▪ Quality ▪ Time
HRD and performance improvement	Swanson (2007, 1994)	<i>Levels</i> ▪ Organization ▪ Process ▪ Team ▪ Individual <i>Measures of Outputs</i> ▪ Quantity ▪ Time ▪ Quality features
Human performance technology	Kaufmann, Rojas, and Mayer (1993)	<i>Organizational Elements Model Results</i> ▪ Mega-outcomes ▪ Macro-outputs ▪ Micro-intermediate products <i>Means</i> ▪ Processes ▪ Units of Performance ▪ Performance value calculation ▪ Resources ▪ Cost calculation ▪ Benefit calculation
HRD and microeconomics	Swanson (2001)	▪ Organizational ▪ Functional ▪ Human capital management
HRM and macro/microeconomics	Fitz-Enz (2000)	▪ All organizations in society ▪ All organizations in system ▪ Organizational ▪ Work/task ▪ Whole organization ▪ One unit of organization ▪ Individual
Human performance technology	Silber (1992)	▪ All organizations in society ▪ All organizations in system ▪ Organizational ▪ Work/task ▪ Whole organization ▪ One unit of organization ▪ Individual
HRD—training	McGehee and Thayer (1961); Moore and Dutton (1978); Sleezer (1991) Ostroff and Ford (1989)	<i>Levels</i> ▪ Organizational ▪ Sub-unit ▪ Individual <i>Content</i> ▪ Organizational ▪ Task ▪ Individual level ▪ Organizational ▪ Group ▪ Person ▪ Psychology ▪ Individual
HRD—organization development	Campbell (1990) Cummings and Worley (2001)	▪ Organizational ▪ Group ▪ Individual

(Continued)

Figure 8.3 Continued

<i>Perspective</i>	<i>Author</i>
HRD—organization development	Rashf
Management—strategy	Kapla
Management—strategy	Porte
Management—strategy	Hitt, (199
Systems—quality	Jura
Systems—reengineering	Han
Social responsibility	D. L
HR—performance management	Sch
HRM—general	Lev
Economics—human capital	Be
Economics—macroeconomics	Ca
Intellectual capital	Ec
Sociology—general	Ki (1
Sociology—industrial	H
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Figure 8.3 Continued

<i>Perspective</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Domains of Performance/Analysis</i>	
HRD— organization development	Rashford and Coghlan (1994)	▪ Organizational ▪ Interdepartmental group	▪ Face-to-face team ▪ Individual
Management— strategy	Kaplan and Norton (1996)	▪ Financial ▪ Customer ▪ Internal business process	▪ Learning and growth (employee based)
Management— strategy	Porter (1980)	▪ Society ▪ Industry	▪ Company
Management— strategy	Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson (1997)	▪ Corporate level ▪ Competitive dynamics	▪ Business level
Systems— quality	Juran (1992)	▪ Customer needs ▪ Product features	▪ Processes
Systems— reengineering	Hammer and Champy (1993)	▪ Process efficiency	
Social responsibility	D. L. Swanson (1995)	▪ Societal impacts ▪ Organizational ethical performance	▪ Individual ethical performance
HR— performance management	Schneir (1995)	▪ Company ▪ Work process ▪ Unit	▪ Team ▪ Individual
HRM— general	Lewin and Mitchell (1995)	▪ Firm ▪ Plant	▪ Individual
Economics— human capital	Becker ¹ (1993)	▪ Society/economy ▪ Firm	▪ Individual
Economics— macroeconomics	Case and Fair (1996)	▪ Society/economy ▪ Markets	▪ Firm ▪ Individual
Intellectual capital	Edvinsson and Malone (1997)	▪ Financial ▪ Customer ▪ Process	▪ Renewal and development ▪ Human focus
Sociology— general	Kammeyer, Ritzer, and Yetman (1997)	▪ Society ▪ Cultures ▪ Organizations	▪ Groups ▪ Individuals
Sociology— industrial	Hodson and Sullivan (1995)	▪ Workplaces (firm) ▪ Occupation ▪ Industry	▪ Labor force ▪ Worker
Sociology— industrial	Ford (1988)	▪ Macro (society, social systems, culture) ▪ Mezzo (organizations and associations)	▪ Micro (social groups, roles, and norms/rules)

¹Derived from analysis of levels discussed in the book.

(Continued)

like executive coaching, system redesign, training worker expertise, action research, and valuing diversity as a means to a performance goal, not as a goal in itself.

A number of value-laden myths have influenced the HRD profession, and a few have been related to financial analysis of HRD: (1) HRD costs too much, (2) you can't quantify the benefits of HRD, and (3) it is good to give organizations the HRD they want. These myths should be exploded.

Myth: HRD Costs Too Much. Good HRD generally costs a fair amount of money. Most of the worthwhile projects that go on in an organization cost a fair amount of money. Usually management decides to spend available dollars on the equipment, services, and projects that will give it the best return on its investment. Whenever something must be purchased that apparently will have little effect on the business, management will request the one with the lowest price.

The following example will have a familiar ring: If low quality mailing envelopes will do the job, management tends to say, "Get them as cheaply as you can." If these inexpensive envelopes later stick together or will not feed through the postage machine, or if they make the organization look tacky in the eyes of customers, management then will tend to say, "Stop buying such junk." Conversely, if the more expensive envelopes are the kind that seal automatically and thus increase output, or if they catch the attention of potential customers and bring increased sales, management will tend to say, "Get a good price if you can, but we want the best."

Cost figures by themselves are irrelevant. Reviewing HRD costs without also reviewing the associated benefits is not smart. Analyzing what you get for your money is smart. What most HRD managers fail to realize is that organizational decision makers usually focus only on HRD costs. When they lack information about the economic benefits of HRD, many decision makers decide consciously or unconsciously that a proposed HRD program is just another HRD program—just as an envelope is only an envelope. "So get the cheapest one."

Myth: You Cannot Quantify the Benefits of HRD. Listening to people find excuses why something cannot be done is always interesting. Rationalizing that the benefits of HRD cannot be quantified has kept the HRD profession in the dark ages of organizational performance. Do you suppose that management knows how many products it will sell next year? Of course not. If it knew the correct figures ahead of time, it would make exactly that many products. But because management does not know precisely how many products it will sell, it gathers the best estimates it can find and makes its decision without the satisfaction of knowing it is right. This process takes knowledge of past results, intelligence, and guts—not perfection. Likewise, a record of assessed benefits, a little more intelligence, and a lot more guts on the part of HRD professionals will explode this myth.

There is a strong possibility that these myths have arisen from inside the HRD profession. If decision makers have also learned these HRD myths, they

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probably learned them from HRD people. Executives, as leaders of change and opportunity, have the right to expect HRD departments to join them in their struggle to achieve performance and profitability. Organizational decision makers are not enemies of HRD. They want to be organizational partners and to reap the added value that HRD can provide to the organization.

Myth: It is good to give organizations the HRD they want. The real pressure for HRD activity will come as the result of identifying critical performance requirements. Good performance analyses are the basis for making financial benefit assessments. A major practical issue in most organizations is how to distinguish between wants and requirements. What managers want is not always what they need or require. Performance variables are critical conditions that organizations must meet in order to achieve their performance goals and mission. The relationship between financial benefits assessment and performance requirements is important. Wants are not so important. The most important HRD skill is to be able to work with decision makers to discover genuine organizational performance requirements and to convince them that they want what they need. This goal is best accomplished by working in partnership with managers rather than by making high-pressure attempts to sell faddish HRD programs.

The outcome of a particular HRD program is valuable only if it is connected to an organizational performance goal and the core processes designed to achieve those performances. A high-cost HRD program does not always result in a performance gain, while a low-cost HRD program may result in a large performance gain. Determining the critical performance to be attained and its value to the organization should precede the financial assessment of an HRD program.

Units of Performance

All human-made organizations are economic entities. Organizations produce goods and services for customers and over time they must have income that equals or exceeds the costs of operating that system. This is equally true for multinational corporations, family-owned businesses, nonprofit arts groups, churches, regional governments, and families.

The goods and services that an organization produces are expressed in terms of units of performance or a clear proxy that makes the most sense. A retail furniture corporation can express its unit of performance simply as total dollar sales in a particular time period. This then could be compared to the total cost of operation during the same time period to determine if there is a profit or loss. In a sales organization, units of sales performance can be tracked to the total organization, each division, each department, each line of products, each sales team, and each salesperson.

Thus, HRD programs aimed at improving sales performance can be financially assessed. Each unit of performance can be monetized. The number of ad-

ditional units produced following the intervention times the monetary value of each unit gets you to the real financials of an organization and the bottom-line impact of HRD interventions.

Financial Benefit Analysis

A number of scholars have addressed the topic of assessing the financial benefits of investing in human resources (Bassie and 2003; Cascio and Boudreau, 2008; Fitz-Enz, 2000; Swanson, 2001). Financial benefit analysis is a research-based and field-tested methodology for financially assessing HRD programs (Swanson, 2001). Using the microeconomic methodology, assessing financial benefits of HRD interventions is quite easy. The process follows the *Basic Financial Assessment Model* (Swanson, 2001, p. 28):

$$\frac{\text{Performance Value (performance value resulting from the HRD intervention)}}{\text{Cost (cost of the HRD intervention)}} = \text{Benefit (benefit is the performance value minus the cost)}$$

Worksheets are provided for each of the three components of the model. In addition, a framework for assessing financial benefits is presented that identifies three perspectives on assessing the financial benefits of HRD interventions:

- What is the *forecasted financial benefit* resulting from an HRD intervention? (Before-the-fact assessment based on estimated financial data.)
- What is the *actual financial benefit* resulting from an HRD intervention? (During-the-process assessment based on actual financial data.)
- What is the *approximate financial benefit* resulting from an HRD intervention? (After-the-fact assessment based on approximated financial data.)

These three perspectives offer three financial benefit assessment strategies that fit with the financial decision points in an organization.

ROI of Human Capital

Jac Fitz-Enz (2000) presents a research-based and field-tested methodology for determining the return on investment (ROI) of human capital through employee performance. His methodology spans macro and micro-economics. While Swanson (2001) focuses on the ROI of individual HRD interventions, Fitz-Enz provides methodology for assessing human capital performance contributions at the organization-wide level and organization-wide change initiative level. In creating a corporate scorecard, he combines quantitative and perceptual data for organization-level financial assessment. In addition, he provides a methodology that is aimed at assessing processes under human control.

Human capital performance evaluation, according to Fitz-Enz, uses a matrix to acquire and categorize data. The matrix contains four core human resource ac-

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*EAP = Employee as
Source: Fitz-Enz, 200

tivities: acquisition, maintenance, development, and retention on one axis. The second axis specifies component performance measures: cost, time, quantity, error, and reaction. Figure 8.4 illustrates the Human Capital Performance Matrix with examples in the cells.

MULTILEVEL PERFORMANCE MODELS

Scholars of organizational performance have long been frustrated with piecemeal approaches to performance improvement. Systems theory tells us that interventions that focus on only a subset of organizational performance variables are usually doomed to failure unless they are embedded in the context of whole-system performance improvement. Thus, efforts to improve performance using an individual-level model are missing key elements of the organizational context. Fundamentally, this is the reason that the performance-based HRD perspective has developed and become popular. Development is often futile unless it is embedded in a systems approach to organizational performance improvement.

When viewed from a systems perspective, organizations are extremely complex social systems. In fact, they become so complex that the average person has trouble comprehending them, let alone improving them. Thus, various scholars have attempted to reduce the complexity of organizational systems to a more manageable form by creating taxonomic models of key performance variables. These models usually embrace multiple levels of performance and multiple dimensions of performance within those levels. This chapter looks at five multilevel models: Brache's (2002) enterprise model, Rummier and Brache's (1995) performance model, Swanson's (2007) performance diagnosis process and matrix,

Figure 8.4 Human Capital Performance Matrix and Examples

	Acquiring	Maintaining	Developing	Retaining
Cost	Cost per hire	Cost per paycheck Cost per EAP case*	Cost per trainee	Cost of turnover
Time	Time to fill jobs	Time to respond time to fulfill request	Cost per trainee	Turnover by length service
Quantity	Number hired	Number of claims processed	Number trained	Voluntary turnover rate
Error	New hire rating	Process error rate	Skills attained	Readiness level
Reaction	Manager satisfaction	Employee satisfaction	Trainee responses	Turnover reasons

*EAP = Employee assistance program
Source: Fitz-Enz, 2000, p. 109.

an OD performance model from Cummings and Worley (2001), and Holton's (1999) integrated taxonomy of performance system domains.

Brache's Enterprise Model

Brache (2002) presents what he calls a holistic approach to enterprise health. His approach supports the idea that performance improvement professionals need to understand organizational structures and how organizations work. The methodology guides the analysis of the internal and external variables of an organization's environment as a means of diagnosing the overall health of a firm.

Brache presents his Enterprise Model (see Figure 8.5) as a holistic view of the structures of an organization that are categorized into internal and external components. In addressing the integration of the organization as a whole, the importance of each individual variable of the Enterprise Model is described as well as the impact they have on each other. Brache's work is particularly good at providing a clear and not overly technical conceptualization of how organizations work and the key questions required to assess an organization's health.

Rummler and Brache's Performance Model

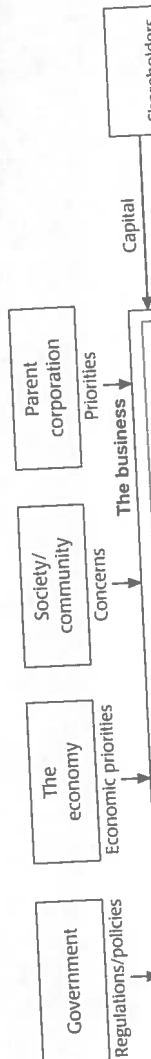
Rummler and Brache (1995) provide an integrated framework for achieving competitive advantage by learning how to manage organizations, processes, and individuals effectively. The subtitle of their book is *Managing the White Space in Organizations*. From a sociotechnical perspective, the white space represents the essential connection between components and where performance breakdowns most often occur. Beginning with a holistic view of the organization, they set forth a rational, clear, yet simple view of the organizational skeleton, process levels, and interdependencies. Their model hypothesizes that organizational failure is due not to lack of desire or effort, but lack of understanding of the variables that influence organizational, process and individual performance. Rummler and Brache call these variables "performance levers" (p. 2). With a complete understanding and holistic management of these variables, high performance should result.

To guide the management of organizations as systems, Rummler and Brache present the nine-cell matrix described here and in Figure 8.6, along with questions each cell raises. They define three levels of performance:

- *Organizational level*—the organization's relationship with its market and the basic skeleton of the major functions that comprise the organization
- *Process*—the work flow, how the work really gets done
- *Job/performer*—the individuals doing various jobs

Within each of these three levels are three performance variables:

- *Goals*—specific standards that reflect customers' expectations for product and service quality, quantity, timeliness, and cost



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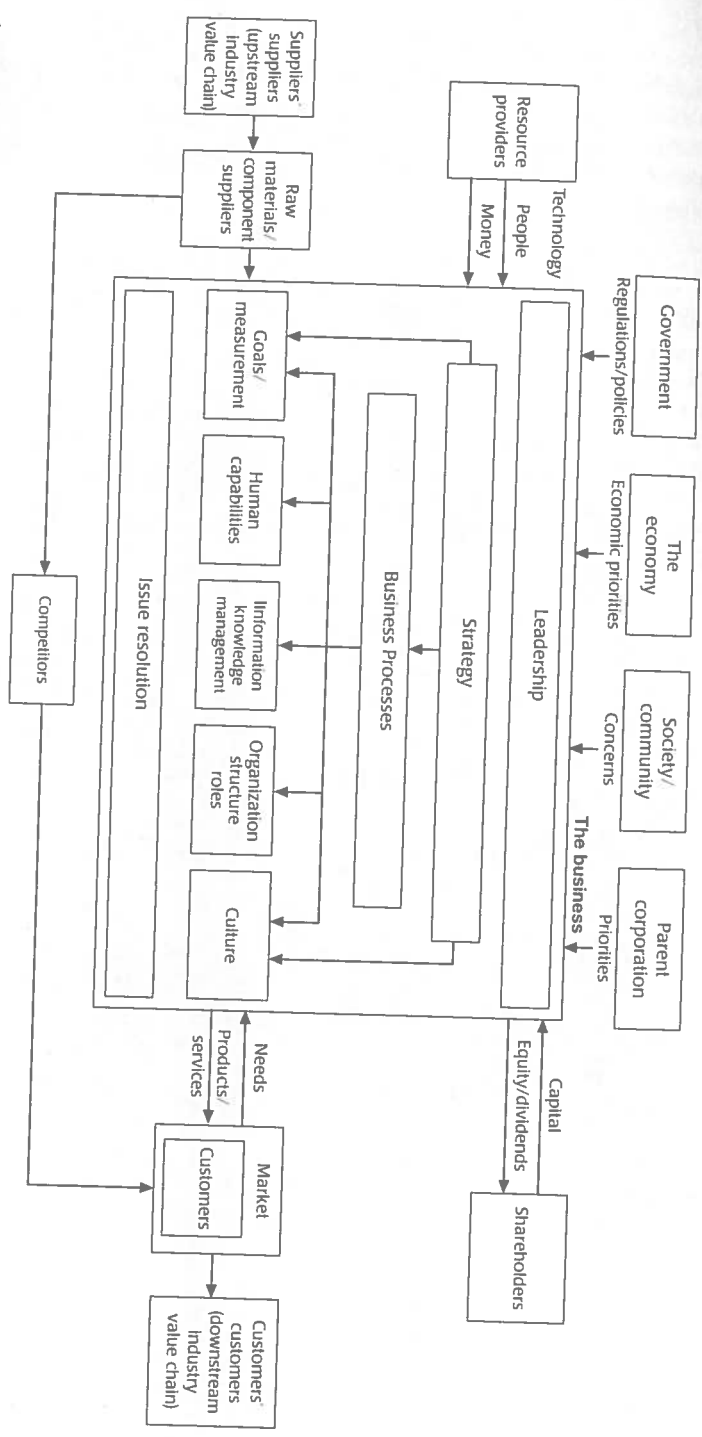


Figure 8.5 The Enterprise Model
 Source: Brache, 2002, p. 5.

Figure 8.6 Rummler and Brache Model and Questions at Each Level

<i>Organization Goals</i>	<i>Organization Design</i>	<i>Organization Management</i>
- Has the organization's strategy/direction been articulated and communicated? - Does the strategy make sense, in terms of the external threats and opportunities and the internal strengths and weaknesses? - Given this strategy, have the required outputs of the organization and the level of performance expected from each output been determined and communicated?	- Are all the relevant functions in place? - Are all functions necessary? - Is the current flow of inputs and outputs between functions appropriate? - Does the formal organization structure support the strategy and enhance the efficiency of the system?	- Have appropriate function goals been set? - Is relevant performance measured? - Are resources appropriately allocated? - Are the interfaces between functions steps being managed?
<i>Process Goals</i>	<i>Process Design</i>	<i>Process Management</i>
Are goals for key processes linked to customer and organization requirements?	Is this the most efficient/effective process for accomplishing process goals?	- Have appropriate process subgoals been set? - Is process performance managed? - Are sufficient resources allocated to each process? - Are the interfaces between process steps being managed?
<i>Job/Performer Goals</i>	<i>Job Design</i>	<i>Job/Performer Management</i>
Are job outputs and standards linked to process requirements (which are in turn linked to customer and organization requirements)?	- Are process requirements reflected in the appropriate jobs? - Are job steps in a logical sequence? - Have supportive policies and procedures been developed? - Is the job environment ergonomically sound?	- Do the performers understand the job goals (outputs they are expected to produce and the standards they are expected to meet)? - Do the performers have sufficient resources, clear signals and priorities, and a logical job design? - Are the performers rewarded for achieving the job goals? - Do the performers know if they are meeting the job goals? - Do the performers have the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the job goals? - If the performers were in an environment in which the five questions listed above were answered yes, would they have the physical, mental, and emotional capacity to achieve the job goals?

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- *Design*—the necessary structural components configured in a way that enables the goals to be efficiently met
- *Management*—management practices that ensure goals are current and being achieved

Organization Level

According to Rummler and Brache (1995), "If executives [leaders] do not manage at the organization level, the best they can expect is modest performance improvement. At worst, efforts at other levels will be counterproductive" (p. 33). This "level emphasizes the organization's relationship with its market and the basic 'skeleton' of the major functions that comprise the organization" (p. 15). They further suggest that organization-level performance addresses the set of core questions as shown in Figure 8.6.

Process Level

According to Rummler and Brache (1995), an organization is only as good as its processes. Organizational processes describe the actual work of an organization and are responsible for producing goods and services (i.e., outputs) for customers. For the process level, the analyst must go "beyond the cross-functional boundaries that make up the organization chart, we see the work flow—how the work gets done. . . . At the process level, one must ensure that processes are installed to meet customer needs, that those processes work effectively and efficiently, and that the process goals and measures are driven by the customers' and the organizations' requirement" (p. 17).

Rummler and Brache (1995) make these arguments for the importance of focusing on processes in performance systems:

- Process is the least understood and least managed domain of performance.
- A process can be seen as a value chain, with each step adding value to the preceding steps.
- An organization is only as effective as its processes.
- Enhancing organizational and individual effectiveness will improve performance only as much as the processes allow.
- Strong people cannot compensate for a weak process (p. 45).

Individual Level

Finally, Rummler and Brache (1995) identify three performance variables at the job/performer level: job/performer goals, design, and management, and they developed the core questions shown in Figure 8.5. "At the individual level it is recognized that processes . . . are performed and managed by individuals doing various jobs" (p. 17). These performance levels determine effectiveness at the individual job/performer level and contribute to the efficiency of the process and organizational levels.

Swanson's Performance Diagnosis Process and Matrix

In his book, *Analysis for Improving Performance* (2nd Edition), Swanson (2007) advances a process and method of performance diagnosis. His general five-phase process, shown in Figure 8.7, begins with an initial purpose and culminates in a performance improvement proposal.

Within the performance diagnosis process, assessing the performance variables is a critical phase. Swanson provides a matrix similar to Rummler and Brache's matrix, but with changes in categories. Initially advanced as part of his performance analysis system, the core performance diagnosis model also stands alone as one definition of an organizational performance system.

Performance Levels

Four levels are identified and consistently referred to throughout the performance diagnosis phases:

- Organization
- Process
- Team
- Individual

Organizational system levels have been carefully presented by FitzGerald and FitzGerald (1973). Systems theory helps us understand the levels. For example, the cause of a company sending a customer a contract bid containing an inaccurate budget and an incomplete list of services may lie in any or all of the four levels. Even so, the decision maker may be falsely convinced early on that the cause is lodged at a single level. For example:

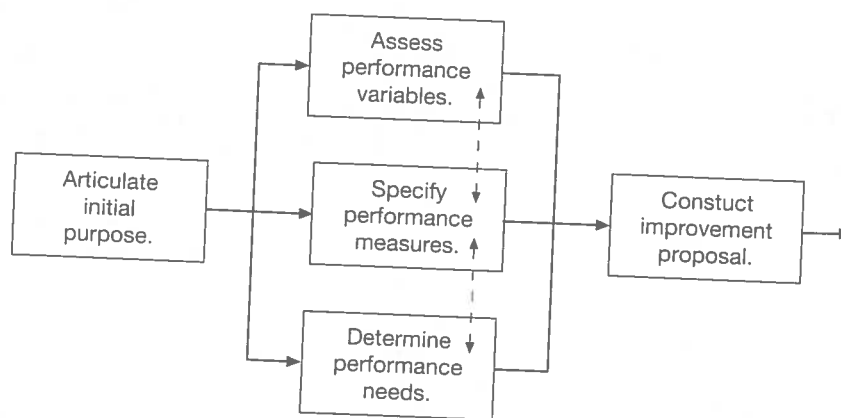


Figure 8.7 Diagnosing Performance Process
Source: Swanson, 2007, p. 58.

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- "There is so much bureaucracy around here that it is a miracle anything even gets done!" or
- "The financial computer program has a glitch in it!" or
- "Our financial analysts are incompetent!"

Performance Variable

The second component of the performance diagnosis is five performance variables that occur at each of the four performance levels:

- Mission/goals
- System design
- Capacity
- Motivation
- Expertise

These performance variables, matrixed with the levels of performance—organization, process, and/or individual—provide a powerful perspective in diagnosing performance. For example, a work process may have an inherent goal built into it that is in conflict with the mission and/or goal of the organization or a person working in the process. The questions presented in the performance variable matrix help the diagnostician sort out the performance overlaps and disconnects (see Figure 8.8).

Like all multilevel models, Swanson emphasizes that bad systems almost always overwhelm good people. This idea was most evident in the World War II performance improvement efforts (Dooley, 1945). How else to explain the failure of workers with high aptitudes? When the work system ties the hands of competent persons behind their backs and then punishes them for doing their best, they either quit and leave—or quit and stay! Likewise, when a well-designed work process is coupled with organizational policies and procedures that hire employees lacking the capacity to perform the work, no reasonable amount of training will get the employees up to required performance standards.

Organization Development Performance Model

Another representative multilevel performance model comes from organization development. Figure 8.9 shows the Cummings and Worley (2001) organizational diagnosis model. This model is typical of performance models found in the OD field.

There are several clear differences between the OD model and the Rummeler and Brache models. The obvious difference is in the levels defined. Instead of including a process performance level, most OD models include a group or team performance level. Swanson's model includes both. The other two levels—organization and individual—are usually the same in most models. The group/team level

Figure 8.8 Swanson's Performance Diagnosis Matrix

Performance Variables	Performance Levels			
	ORGANIZATION LEVEL	PROCESS LEVEL	TEAM LEVEL	INDIVIDUAL LEVEL
Mission/Goal	Does the organization mission/goal fit the reality of the economic, political, and cultural forces?	Do the process goals enable the organization to meet organization and individual missions/goals?	Do the team goals provide congruence with the process and individual goals?	Are the professional and personal mission/goals of individuals congruent with the organization's?
System Design	Does the organization system provide structure and policies supporting the desired performance?	Are processes designed in such a way to work as a system?	Do the team dynamics function in such a way to facilitate collaboration and performance?	Does the individual clear obstacles that impede his or her job performance?
Capacity	Does the organization have the leadership, capital, and infrastructure to achieve its mission/goals?	Does the process have the capacity to perform (quantity, quality, and timeliness)?	Does the team have the combined capacity to effectively and efficiently meet the performance goals?	Does the individual have the mental, physical, and emotional capacity to perform?
Motivation	Do the policies, culture, and reward systems support the desired performance?	Does the process provide the information and human factors required to maintain it?	Does the team function in a respectful and supportive manner?	Does the individual want to perform no matter what?
Expertise	Does the organization establish and maintain selection and training policies and resources?	Does the process of developing expertise meet the changing demands of changing processes?	Does the team have the team process expertise to perform?	Does the individual have the knowledge and expertise to perform?

Source: Swanson, 2007, p. 65.

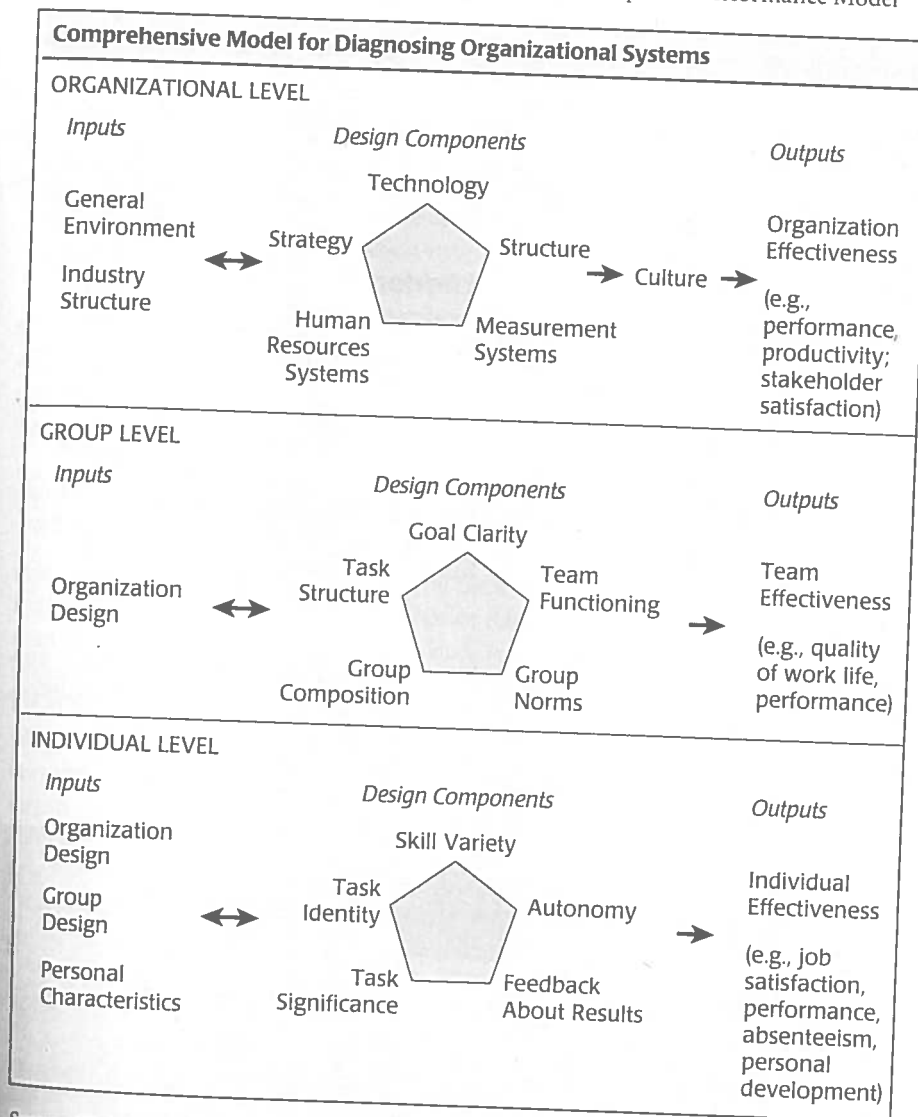
Figure 8.9 Cumulative

Comprehensive
ORGANIZATION
Inputs
General Environment
Industry Structure
GROUP LEVEL
Inputs
Organization Design
INDIVIDUAL
Inputs
Organizational Design
Group Design
Personal Character

Source: Cumulative

reflects a clear great deal of The model, which included across all levels at the

Figure 8.9 Cummings and Worley's Organization Development Performance Model



Source: Cummings and Worley, 2001.

reflects a clear difference in values and perspective by OD professionals who place a great deal of emphasis on groups and interpersonal dynamics in organizations.

The other clear difference is in the performance variables included in the model, which are called *design components* in this model. Sixteen variables are included across the three levels, roughly equivalent to the other models. The variables at the organization level are similar, encompassing strategy (goals), design,

have the knowledge and expertise to perform?

team process expertise to perform?

Does the process of developing expertise meet the changing demands of changing processes?

Does the organization establish and maintain selection and training policies and resources?

Expertise

Source: Swanson, 2007, p. 65.

systems, and management. Notice, however, that one key variable explicitly included is organization culture, another variable of key interest to OD but not as explicit in other models. At the group and individual levels, the variables included represent traditional areas of concern for OD professionals. They emphasize elements that affect the social dynamics in organizations that are likely to enhance quality of work life. In fact, this model explicitly includes quality of work life, job satisfaction, and personal development as outcome variables along with performance.

Holton's Integrated Taxonomy of Performance Domains

Holton (1999) presents an integrated taxonomy of performance system domains in an attempt to reconcile differences between various models (see Figure 8.10). In addition, he wanted to change the language of the model to make it more universal and to address criticisms of other models whose performance was viewed as a short-term phenomenon.

Holton proposed four domains of performance: *mission*, *process*, *social subsystem*, and *individual*. It should be noted that he originally called social subsystem "critical performance subsystem" but since changed it.

Mission Domain

The system's mission, and the goals derived from it, specifies the expected outcomes of that system. Every purposefully organized system operates with a mission,

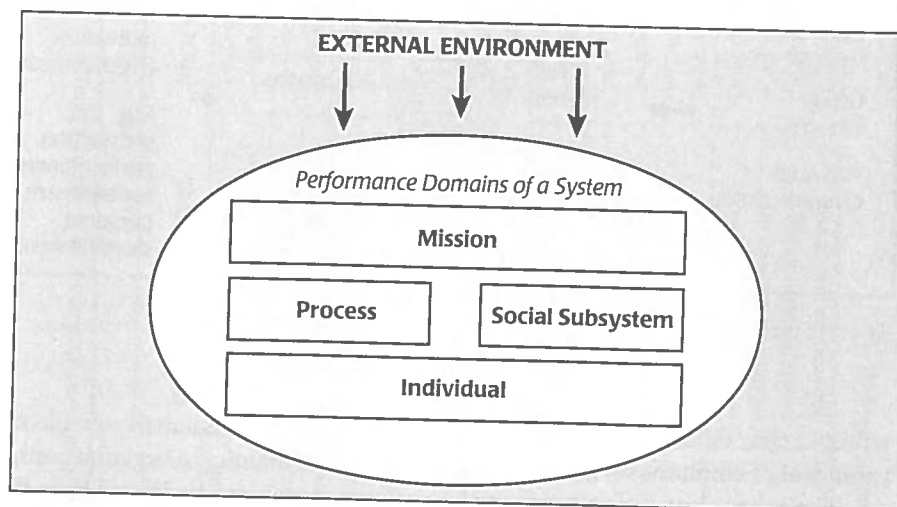


Figure 8.10 Holton's Integrated Taxonomy of Performance Domains
Source: Holton, 1999.

either explicitly relationship with mission may reflect nonprofit organization and society levels of impact on the firm's understanding

It is important instead of "organization" to accomplish so many outputs, so performance will be the main concern of firms. However, in the tire industry, the Academy of the HRD professionals include community

The participation in the external environment. In that sense, human et al., 1999 included as a means that social mission of that system performance system targets societal performance

For business, motivated by transformation. However, the by metrics. The notion of the system's performance

Process Domain

The process. Swanson's reengineering of the process performance domain of 1993; Hrc

either explicitly or implicitly, and the role of the mission is to reflect the system's relationship with its *external* environment. For a business organization, the mission may reflect its relationship with its industry, society, and competitors. For a nonprofit organization, its mission may reflect its relationship with the community and society. It is not necessary to specify in the taxonomy what the possible levels of impact outside the system are, because the mission will reflect that system's understanding of its responsibilities to the external environment.

It is important to note that the concept of "performance system" was used instead of "organization." A mission may be defined for any system organized to accomplish some purpose. If the system has a purpose then it also has desired outputs, so performance theory is applicable. In many instances, the mission domain will be the same as the organization domain, particularly in for-profit firms. However, for a trade association, the mission domain may focus on an entire industry, or an entire profession for a professional association. For example, the Academy of Human Resource Development's mission is the advancement of the HRD profession through research. In other situations, the mission may include community outcomes, or societal outcomes.

The particular system's definition of its performance relationship with the external environment is fully captured by the mission and goals of the organization. In that sense, his model differs from that of Kaufman and his associates (see Kaufman et al., 1998; Kaufman, 1987), who have argued that societal benefits should be included as a level of performance. This difference should not be interpreted to mean that societal benefits are unimportant. Rather, Kaufman believes that the mission of that system most appropriately captures the relationship between the performance system and society. The degree to which the performance system targets societal outcomes will be incorporated in its mission. The actual level of societal performance targeted will vary greatly, depending on the performance system.

For business organizations, the mission-level metrics are likely to be dominated by traditional business outcome measures, including economic outcomes. However, the mission domain for a government organization may be dominated by metrics assessing societal benefits first and the economic effectiveness second. The notion that the performance perspective only embraces economic returns as the system's mission (Bierema, 1997; Dirkx, 1997) is fundamentally flawed. Performance metrics are defined by and depend on the mission of the organization.

Process Domain

The process domain in Holton's model is identical to Rummler and Brache's and Swanson's. Holton notes that one of the positive outcomes of the quality and reengineering movements is the realization that managing and designing effective processes is an essential part of performance improvement. A number of performance experts have clearly articulated the need for including the process domain of performance (Davies, 1994; Hammer and Champy, 1993; Harbour, 1993; Hronec, 1993; Juran, 1992; Kaplan and Norton, 1996; Rummler and Brache,

1995; Swanson, 1994, 2007). Readers desiring a deeper understanding of the importance of process to performance improvement should consult these sources.

Social Subsystem

This taxonomy includes a domain for social subsystems, defined as an *internal* social entity (group, team, department, etc.) for which performance goals have been set that are derived from, and contribute to, the mission of the overall system. Thus, the core difference between this domain and the mission domain is that the mission domain defines performance outcomes relative to the external environment, while this domain defines internal performance subsystems that do not always directly connect with the external environment. Social subsystem is a more general construct than "group" or "team" although it encompasses both of these terms. In the case of structural subunits, it is easier to see how the "organization" domain can be redefined to be "department" or "division" than for team performance that has unique components.

The social subsystem is an important point of analysis. For example, the following questions may have to be answered:

- What are the social subsystems that are critical to accomplishing the system's mission?
- What are the explicit social subsystems? The implicit ones?
- Are the explicit and implicit subsystems congruent?
- Are the social subsystems appropriate for the mission of the system?
- Are the relationships between social subsystems optimal?
- Do organizational factors help or hinder subsystem performance?
- Are appropriate metrics in place?

Drivers and Outcomes in Each Performance Domain

Kaplan and Norton (1996) suggest two categories of performance measures: outcomes and drivers. Unfortunately, they do not offer concise definitions of either. For our purposes, *outcomes* are measures of effectiveness or efficiency relative to core outputs of the system, subsystem, process or individual. The most typical are financial indicators (profit, ROI, etc.) and productivity measures (units of goods or services produced), and they are often generic across similar performance systems. According to Kaplan and Norton, these measures tend to be lag indicators in that they reflect what has occurred or has been accomplished in relation to core outcomes.

Drivers measure elements of performance that are expected to sustain or increase system, subsystem, process, or individual ability and capacity to be more effective or efficient in the future. Thus, they are leading indicators of future outcomes and tend to be unique for particular performance systems. Together with outcome measures, they describe the hypothesized cause-and-effect relationships

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PROCESS AND PERFORMANCE

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in the organization's strategy (Kaplan and Norton, 1996). Thus, drivers should predict future outcomes. For example, for a particular company, return on investment might be the appropriate outcome measure, which might be driven by customer loyalty and on-time delivery, which in turn might be driven by employee learning so internal processes are optimized. In a state government department of revenue, an outcome measure might be the percentage of tax returns processed correctly within two weeks of receipt. A performance driver for that outcome might be the number of quality improvement initiatives successfully implemented.

Kaplan and Norton (1996) go on to say:

Outcome measures without performance drivers do not communicate how the outcomes are to be achieved. . . . Conversely, performance drivers without outcome measures may enable the business unit to achieve short-term operational improvements, but will fail to reveal whether the operational improvements have been translated into expanded business with existing and new customers, and, eventually, to enhanced financial performance. A good balanced scorecard should have an appropriate mix of outcomes (lagging indicators) and performance drivers (leading indicators) of the business unit's strategy. (pp. 31-32)

From this perspective, performance improvement models that focus solely on actual outcomes, such as profit or units of work produced, are flawed in that they are likely to create short-term improvement but neglect aspects of the organization that will drive future performance outcomes. Models that focus solely on performance drivers such as learning or growth are equally flawed in that they fail to consider the actual outcomes. Only when outcomes and drivers are jointly considered will long-term sustained performance improvement occur.

The correct perspective is that performance drivers and performance outcomes should be linked within each performance domain. Both work in an integrated manner to enhance mission, process, subsystem, and individual performance.

PROCESS AND TEAM-LEVEL PERFORMANCE MODELS

Performance perspectives at the process and team levels functionally fall between the organizational and individual levels. Much of the organization and individual-level thinking and many of the tools are equally useful in these middle levels. Yet, there are some unique differences.

There are two major views of process performance improvement. One is incremental and the other is radical. *Reengineering* is a radical approach to performance improvement. Impatient with standard process improvement,

reengineering is willing to scrap an entire process for one that is projected to be more efficient and more effective. The criticisms of reengineering are that it takes a narrow systems view without seriously considering human beings as part of the equation.

Incremental *process improvement* is focused on measuring processes at each step and assessing the process steps and the process as a whole as being under control (within quality range limits). Once under control, additional process improvement actions are taken and performance measures track the results. The mantra for process improvement is the relentless pursuit of quality.

W. Edwards Deming (1986) and Joseph Juran (1992) are considered the gurus of quality and total quality management. Six Sigma methodology is simply upping the bar for the performance expectations. Six Sigma is a quality process improvement method developed by Motorola Corporation. Quality methods embrace the following:

1. Continuous efforts to reduce variation in process outputs is key to business success.
2. Manufacturing and business processes can be measured, analyzed, improved and controlled.
3. Succeeding at achieving sustained quality improvement requires commitment from the entire organization, particularly from top-level management.

Some process performance efforts rely heavily on the use of statistical analysis of process data (2 above) while others rely more heavily on team building and managerial support (3 above).

Team performance is often pursued as a part of process performance. The core idea that teams oversee processes and that teams can cooperatively make sound judgments is central to process improvement efforts.

To a larger extent, pursuit of team development takes place outside the *process performance* banner by organizations wanting to simply improve work-team performance. As team work increases and individual work wanes, the performance measures that once were attributable to individuals are now attributable to teams.

INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL PERFORMANCE MODELS

Because HRD has its roots in individual learning, it was logical that individual-level performance models would be the first to develop. These models are now known collectively as *human performance technology* (Stolovich and Keeps, 1999) models. The common characteristic of these models is that they attempt to define individual performance and key factors that impact upon individual performance. Two representative models are John Campbell's taxonomy of

individual performance model.

Campbell's Model

Campbell's (1999) performance model noted that psychology (performance) focused on the individual said, "The literature is a virtual desert. V

Campbell's model of performance determines that the predictors of declarative education, training, and motivation are

Campbell's model of performance determines that the predictors of declarative education, training, and motivation are

be collectively known as the *theory of occupational performance*.

1. Job-specific performance
2. Non-job performance
3. Written individual characteristics
4. Demographic, task, and task

Declarative

- Facts
- Principles
- Goals
- Self-knowledge

Figure 8.11 (Source: Campbell)

individual performance and Thomas Gilbert's human performance engineering model.

Campbell's Model of Individual Performance

Campbell's (1990) model of individual performance is considered one of the few performance models in industrial psychology. Campbell developed it because he noted that psychologists had paid little attention to the dependent variable (performance) focusing most of their energy on the independent variables. As he said, "The literature pertaining to the structure and content of performance is a virtual desert. We essentially have no theories of performance" (1990, p. 704).

Campbell's theory has three key parts: performance *components*, performance *determinants*, and *predictors* of performance determinants. First, he suggests that the predictors of performance fall into three groups (see Figure 8.11). Predictors of declarative and procedural knowledge include ability, personality, interests, education, training, experience, and the interaction of these components. Predictors of motivation vary depending on which theory of motivation one uses.

Campbell (1990) then proposed eight components that are hypothesized to be collectively sufficient to describe job performance in all listings in the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*. They are as follows:

1. *Job-specific task proficiency*—the degree to which an individual can perform the core substantive or technical tasks central to his or her job.
2. *Non-job-specific task proficiency*—the degree to which an individual can perform the tasks or execute behaviors that are not specific to his or her particular job
3. *Written and oral communication*—the proficiency with which an individual can write or speak, independent of the correctness of the subject matter
4. *Demonstrating effort*—the consistency of an individual's effort day by day, the degree to which he or she will expend extra effort when required, and the willingness to work under adverse conditions

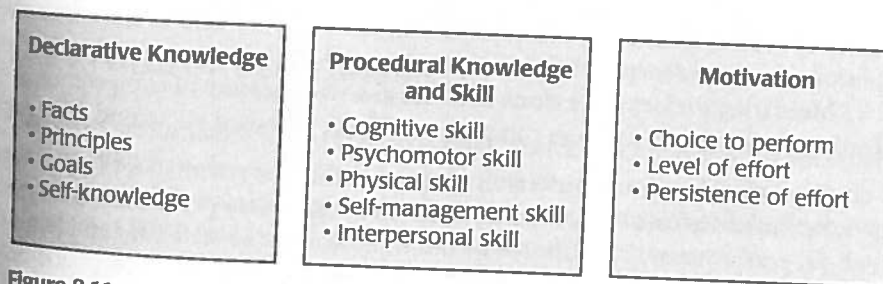


Figure 8.11 Campbell's Job Performance Components
Source: Campbell, 1990.

5. *Maintaining personal discipline*—the degree to which negative behaviors are avoided (e.g., abusing alcohol, breaking laws and rules, etc.)
6. *Facilitating peer and team performance*—the degree to which the individual supports his or her peers, helps them with job problems, and helps train them
7. *Supervision*—proficiency in the supervisory component includes all the behaviors directed at influencing the performance of supervisees through face-to-face interpersonal interaction and influence
8. *Management/administration*—includes the major elements in management that are independent of direct supervision

Gilbert's Human Performance Engineering Model

Tom Gilbert's 1978 book *Human Competence: Engineering Worthy Performance* is regarded as one of the classics in human performance technology. While the more recent multilevel performance models discussed in the next section are more comprehensive, Gilbert's work remains as an important benchmark in individual-level performance improvement.

Gilbert presented his work in a series of theorems which he called "Leisurely Theorems." His first theorem states:

Human competence is a function of worthy performance (W), which is a function of the ratio of valuable accomplishments (A) to costly behavior (B).

Mathematically this is stated as:

$$W = \frac{A}{B}$$

According to Gilbert, this theorem tells us that having large amounts of work, knowledge, and outcomes without accomplishment is not worthy performance. Performance, he points out, is not the same as activity, but rather is a function of the worth of the accomplishment for a given unit of effort (similar to return on investment). Thus, systems that reward people for effort, not worthy accomplishments, encourage incompetence, according to Gilbert. Similarly, rewarding accomplishment without examining the relative worth of those accomplishments squanders people's energies.

Measuring performance alone does not give us a measure of competence, according to Gilbert. To measure competence, Gilbert proposed his second theorem:

Typical performance is inversely proportional to the potential for improving performance (the PIP), which is the ratio of exemplary performance to typical performance. The ratio, to be meaningful, must be stated for an identifiable accomplishment, because there is no "general quality of competence." (1978, p. 30)

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Mathematically this is stated as:

$$PIP = \frac{W_{ex}}{W^t}$$

The PIP tells us how much competence we have and how much potential we have for improving it. For example, simply knowing that a person can produce ten widgets a day tells us little about competence. If the best performance possible is ten widgets, then this person is an exemplary performer. On the other hand, if the best performance is twenty widgets, then this person is only at 50 percent of exemplary performance and has a high potential for improving performance.

The third theorem deals directly with engineering human behaviors to create the accomplishments. It states:

For any given accomplishment, a deficiency in performance always has at its immediate cause a deficiency in a behavior repertory (*P*), or in the environment that supports the repertory (*E*), or in both. But its ultimate cause will be found in a deficiency of the management system (*M*).

Gilbert (1978, p. 88) then provides what may be the most well-known part of this model, the behavior engineering model (see Figure 8.12).

Gilbert's notion of human performance was clearly grounded in behavioral psychology. The strength of his framework is that he focused on both the individual and the individual's environment, unlike Campbell's model that focuses solely on the individual. While modern conceptualizations of performance encompass more than just behaviorist notions of human behavior, Gilbert's emphasis on the environmental influences on behavior are fundamental to performance improvement. In addition, his emphasis on the worth of behavior as a measure of wise investments in competence remains fundamental to performance-based HRD. Gilbert's emphasis on behaviorism is viewed by some as its weakness. These criticisms suggest that his work is mechanistic and dehumanizing. The irony is that he believed in human beings and their capacity to perform, in human potential, and in providing people what they needed to successfully perform.

THE SPOILS OF PERFORMANCE

Getting to performance is no small accomplishment. It is important to note that attaining ethical performance goals is worthy and important to individual contributors, top executives, and society. In the big picture, it is important and discouraging to note that HRD tools and techniques can be and are being used for evil purposes. These applications are generally quite obvious and should be shunned and reported.

Figure 8.12 Gilbert's Behavior Engineering Model

	S^D Instrumentation	R Instrumentation	S_T Motivation
E <i>Environmental supports</i>	Data 1. Relevant and frequent feedback about the adequacy of performance 2. Descriptions of what is expected of performance 3. Clear and relevant guides to adequate performance	Instruments 1. Tools and materials of work designed scientifically to match human factors	Incentives 1. Adequate financial incentives made contingent upon performance 2. Nonmonetary incentives made available 3. Career development opportunities
P <i>Person's repertory of behavior</i>	Knowledge 1. Scientifically designed training that matches the requirements of exemplary performance 2. Placement	Capacity 1. Flexible scheduling of performance to match peak capacity 2. Prosthesis 3. Physical shaping 4. Adaptation 5. Selection	Motives 1. Assessment of people's motives to work 2. Recruitment of people to match the realities of the situation

Source: Gilbert, 1978.

At a more subtle level, questions of exploitation, inequity, and unfairness in the distribution of the spoils of performance are deeply disturbing. These questions go beyond the performance paradigms and into the realms of ethics, human decency, morality, abuse of power, and the law. While the field of HRD should and must be a partner in pursuing performance, HRD professionals should avoid being duped into facilitating conditions of exploitation, inequity, and unfairness in the distribution of the spoils of performance. This warning is particularly important in applying the group process tools within organization development when used to placate workers or to provide the illusion of meaningful participation instead of their true purposes.

CONCLUSION

The integration of performance models into HRD has introduced an entirely new perspective to HRD thinking, research, and practice. Their primary contribution is that they all remind us that the individual is embedded in a perfor-

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mance system that has a major effect on the individual's performance. Even if one believes that the primary purpose of HRD is to enhance individual development, the individual is embedded in an organizational system and so HRD professionals must understand the system and its effects on the individual. A broader view suggests that enhancing human performance means working on the system as well as developing individuals. The broadest application of these models suggests that HRD professionals should work to improve all aspects of the performance system.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Which performance model do you think best represents performance constructs of concern to HRD? Explain why.
2. What are the implications of multilevel, multiattribute performance models for HRD practice?
3. Do performance models enhance or diminish the value of learning in organizations?
4. Performance models are often seen as useful to management, but not as tools to benefit employees. What is your position on this?
5. How can HRD lead change in each of the performance variables?
6. What do you believe is the future of performance-oriented HRD and why?



Perspectives on Learning in Human Resource Development

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Introduction

Basic Theories of Learning

- Behaviorism
- Cognitivism (Gestalt)
- Humanism
- Social Learning
- Constructivism
- Holistic Learning
- Summary

Learning Models at the Individual Level

- Andragogy: The Adult Learning Perspective
- Experiential Learning Model
- Informal and Incidental Workplace Learning
- Transformational Learning

Learning Models at the Organizational Level

- The Learning Organization Strategy
- Learning Organization and Performance Outcomes

Conclusion

Reflection Questions

INTRODUCTION

Learning is at the heart of HRD and continues to be a core part of all paradigms of HRD. Whatever the debates about paradigms of HRD, nobody has ever suggested that HRD not embrace learning as an organizing construct for the field. This chapter takes a closer look at some representative theories and research on learning in HRD. First, six core theories of learning are discussed. Then, representative learning models at the individual and organizational level are reviewed. The purpose of this chapter is to provide key foundational perspectives on learning, but not a comprehensive review.

BASIC THEORIES OF LEARNING

A summary of six basic theories of learning including humanism, social learning, constructivism, and holistic learning as well as behaviorism and cognitivism are summarized in Figure 9.1. These are six theoretical perspectives that can apply to learning in all settings, for all age groups, and for all types of learning events. In this section, each theory is described along with its primary contribution to HRD. Each has been the subject of extensive thinking, writing and research.

Figure 9.1 helps to show that each approach represents a fundamentally different view of learning. Each would define learning differently, prescribe different roles for the teacher, and seek different outcomes from learning. Each has made a substantial contribution to learning and will continue to inform HRD practice. This section provides only a brief summary of each. Readers interested in a more thorough presentation are encouraged to consult Ormond (1999), Hergenhahn and Olson (1997), or Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner (2006).

It is important to realize that very few HRD professionals or HRD interventions utilize only one of these metatheories. Most are quite eclectic, using a combination of approaches that fit the particular situation. Thus, these six approaches should not be read as either-or choices but rather as five different approaches to be drawn upon as appropriate to one's particular needs. They are presented here in their more pure form to enhance the understanding of each. However, in practice they are usually adapted and blended to accomplish specific objectives. The challenge for the HRD professional is to understand them and be able to make sound judgments about which approach to utilize in a given situation. It is important not to reject any single theory, for each has its strengths and weaknesses.

Behaviorism

Behaviorists are primarily concerned with changes in behavior as a result of learning. Behaviorism has a long and rich history, having been originally developed by John B. Watson, who introduced the term in 1913 and developed it in the early twentieth century (Ormond, 1999). Six prominent learning theorists are

Figure 9.1 Six Orientations to Learning

Cognitivist
Constructivist
Holistic
Social Learning

Figure 9.1 Six Orientations to Learning

Aspect	Behaviorist	Cognitivist (Gestalt)	Humanist	Social Learning	Constructivist	Holistic
Learning theorists	Thorndike, Pavlov, Watson, Guthrie, Hull, Tolman, Skinner	Koffka, Kohler, Lewin, Piaget, Ausubel, Bruner, Tolman, Gagne	Maslow, Rogers, Knowles	Bandura, Rotter	Candy, Dewey, Lave, Piaget, Rogoff, von Glasersfeld, Vygotsky	Yang, Jarvis & Parker
View of the learning process	Change in behavior	Internal mental process (including insight, information processing, memory, perception)	A personal act to fulfill potential	Interaction with and observation of others in a social context	Construction of meaning from experience	Involves facets of explicit, implicit, and emancipatory knowledge
Locus of learning	Stimuli in the environment	Internal cognitive structuring	Affective and cognitive needs	Interaction of person, behavior and environment	Internal construction of reality by individual	Occurs as a result of interactions with and between knowledge facets
Purpose of education	Produce behavioral change in desired direction	Develop capacity and skills to learn better	Become self-actualized, autonomous	Model new roles and behavior	Construct knowledge	Systematization, participation, and transformation
Teacher's role	Arranges environment to elicit desired response	Structures content of learning activity	Facilitates development of whole person	Models and guides new roles and behavior	Facilitates and negotiates meaning with learner	Facilitator
Manifestation in adult learning	- Behavioral objectives - Competency-based education - Skill development - Skill development	- Cognitive development - Intelligence, learning, and memory as function of age - Learning how to learn	- Andragogy - Self-directed learning	- Socialization - Social roles - Mentoring - Locus of control	- Experiential learning - Self-directed learning - Perspective transformation - Reflective practice	- Holistic and dialectical perspective - Dynamic

Source: Adapted from Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner, 2006, p. 264.

mostly commonly included in this school: Ivan Pavlov, Edward L. Thorndike, John B. Watson, Edwin R. Guthrie, Clark L. Hull, and B. F. Skinner. Pavlov and Skinner are the best-known contributors, with Pavlov having developed the classical conditioning model and Skinner the operant conditioning model. While each of these six men scholars had different views of behaviorism, Ormond (1999) identified seven core assumptions that they share:

1. Principles of learning apply equally to different behaviors and to different species of animals.
2. Learning processes can be studied most objectively when the focus of study is on stimulus and response.
3. Internal cognitive processes are largely excluded from scientific study.
4. Learning involves a behavior change.
5. Organisms are born as blank slates.
6. Learning is largely the result of environmental events.
7. The most useful theories tend to be parsimonious ones.

As discussed earlier, behaviorists put primary emphasis on how the external environment influences a person's behavior and learning. Rewards and incentives play a key role in building motivation to learn. In classic behaviorism, the role of the learning facilitator is to structure the environment to elicit the desired response from the learner.

Behaviorism has played a central role in human resource development. Its key contributions include the following:

- *Focus on behavior.* The focus on behavior is important because performance change does not occur without changing behavior. Although behavior change alone without internal cognitive changes is usually not desirable, neither is cognitive change alone. Thus, behaviorism has led to popular practices such as behavioral objectives and competency-based education.
- *Focus on the environment.* Behaviorism reminds us of the central role the external environment plays in shaping human learning and performance. Individuals in an organization are subjected to a number of factors (e.g., rewards and incentives, supports, etc.) that will influence their performance. As discussed in chapter 6, behaviorism thus provides the link between psychology and economics in HRD.
- *Foundation for transfer of learning.* Behaviorism also provides part of the foundation for transfer of learning research. Transfer of learning is concerned with how the environment impacts the use of learning on the job. Transfer research (e.g., Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993) shows that the environment is at least as important, if not more important, than learning in predicting use of learning on the job.

■ *Foundational behaviorism oriented contributors*

Behaviorists who prefer a more objective approach is that behaviorism does learning. The only learning interventions that teaching professionals behavioral research

Behaviorists also because they favor a more systematic approach to learning when the situation is externally controlled. plant operation programs

Cognitive

Gestalt psychology behaviorism roots can be traced to the 1950s and 1960s

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- *Foundation for skill development training.* As indicated in Figure 9.1, behaviorism has provided much of the foundation for skill or competency-oriented training and development. Behavioral objectives are another contribution from behaviorists.

Behaviorism has also been heavily criticized, primarily by adult educators who prefer a more humanistic and constructivist perspective. The chief criticism is that behaviorism views the learner as passive and dependent. In addition, behaviorism does not account for the role of personal insight and meaning in learning. These are legitimate criticisms and explain why behaviorism is rarely the only learning theory employed. On the other hand, there are training interventions that are appropriately taught in a behavioral approach. For example, teaching police officers how to respond when attacked is an appropriate use of behavioral methods because officers have to respond instinctively.

Behavioristic interventions are also objectionable to some HRD professionals because they find it offensive at a values level. This is particularly true of those who favor an adult learning perspective that abhors external control over a person's learning process. Most believe that there are legitimate uses of behaviorism when the situation warrants this type of learning. We question the objections in training such as the police example or in situations where certification of skills externally mandated is essential for safety. For example, airplane pilots, chemical plant operators, and nuclear plant operators all must pass rigorous certification programs that are behavioristic but which few of us would want changed.

Cognitivism (Gestalt)

Gestalt psychology (cognitivism) arose as a direct response to the limits of behaviorism, particularly the "thoughtless" approach to human learning. The early roots can be traced back to the 1920s and 1930s through the work of Edward Tolman, the Gestalt psychologists of Germany, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky (Ormond 1999). However, contemporary cognitivism did not begin to appear until the 1950s and 1960s. Ormond (1999) identifies seven core assumptions of contemporary cognitivism:

1. Some learning processes may be unique to human beings.
2. Cognitive processes are the focus of study.
3. Objective, systematic observations of people's behavior should be the focus of scientific inquiry; however, inferences about unobservable mental processes can often be drawn from such behavior.
4. Individuals are actively involved in the learning process.
5. Learning involves the formation of mental associations that are not necessarily reflected in overt behavior changes.
6. Knowledge is organized.

7. Learning is a process of relating new information to previously learned information.

Cognitivists are primarily concerned with insight and understanding. They see people not as passive and shaped by their environment but instead as capable of actively shaping the environment themselves. Furthermore, they focus on the internal process of acquiring, understanding, and retaining learning. Because of that, they suggest that the focus of the learning facilitator should be on structuring the content and the learning activity so learners can acquire information optimally.

Gestalt theory is one type of, and the first form of, cognitivist theory. Some very well-known names within HRD fit under this umbrella, including Kurt Lewin (organization development), Jean Piaget (cognitive development), Jerome Bruner (discovery learning), and Robert Gagne (instructional design). Contemporary cognitivism can be thought of as having three perspectives: information-processing theory, constructivism, and contextual views (situated cognition).

Cognitivism has made significant contributions to HRD and adult learning. Some key ones include the following:

- **Information processing.** Central to cognitivism is the concept of the human mind as an information processor. Figure 9.2 shows a basic schematic view of the human information-processing system. Notice that there are three key components: sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory. Cognitivists are particularly concerned with the processes shown by arrows in this schematic. These arrows represent the mental processes of moving information from sensory memory to short-term memory, and from short-term memory to long-term memory, and retrieving information from long-term memory.
- **Metacognition.** Along with these basic information-processing components, cognitivism also focuses on how individuals control their cognitive processes, which is called *metacognition*. This concept is more commonly known in HRD and adult learning as “learning how to learn.”
- **Cognitive development.** Another important contribution has been the focus on how cognition develops over the life span. It is now generally accepted that cognitive development continues throughout adulthood. Chapter 13 will discuss adult cognitive development in more detail.

Cognitivism has not received the same degree of criticism that behaviorism has. For the most part, cognitivism has made important contributions and is widely utilized in HRD. At the same time, it is viewed in some circles as incomplete because it views the human mind as too mechanical. Cognitivism is also seen as the stimulant for more recent trends of brain research. Byrnes (2001) argues that several “trends have created an atmosphere on increased (though certainly not universal) acceptance of the idea that neuroscientific research could

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Figure 9.2
Source: Bruner

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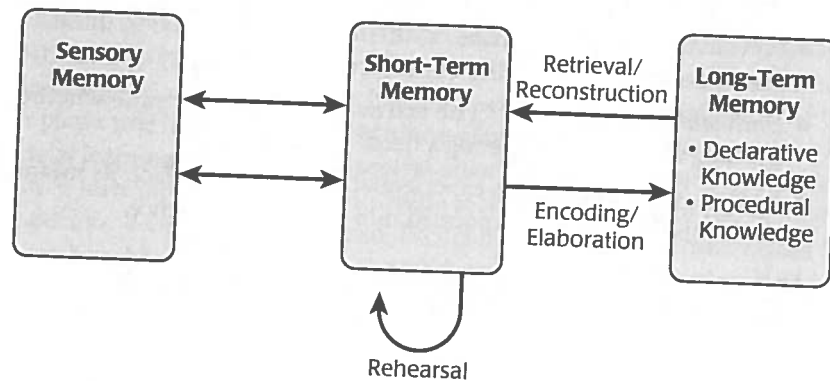


Figure 9.2 The Information-Processing Model

Source: Bruning, Schraw, and Ronning, 1999, p. 16. Used with permission.

provide answers to important questions about learning and cognition. But I must underscore my use of the term 'could' here. Most scholars believe that the available neuroscientific evidence is provocative and interesting, but far from conclusive" (p. 2).

Humanism

Humanism did not emerge as a learning theory but rather as a general approach to psychology. The work of Abraham Maslow (1968, 1970) and Carl Rogers (1961) provides the core of humanistic psychology. Buhler (1971), a leading humanistic psychologist (Lundin, 1991), suggests that the core assumptions of humanism are as follows:

- The person as a *whole* is the main subject of humanistic psychology.
- Humanistic psychology is concerned with the knowledge of a person's entire life history.
- Human existence and intention are also of great importance.
- Life goals are of equal importance.
- Human creativity has a primary place.
- Humanistic psychology is frequently applied to psychotherapy.

Rogers (1980) puts forth his principles of significant learning by saying that such learning must have the following characteristics:

- Personal involvement: The affective and cognitive aspects must come from within.
- Self-initiated: A sense of discovery must come from within.

- Pervasive: The learning makes a difference in the behavior, the attitudes, perhaps even the personality of the learner.
- Evaluated by the learner: The learner can best determine whether the learning experience is meeting a need.
- Essence is meaning: When experiential learning takes place, its meaning to the learner becomes incorporated into the total experience.

Humanism adds yet another dimension to learning and has dominated much of adult learning. It is most concerned with development by the whole person and places a great deal of emphasis on the affective component of the learning process largely overlooked by other learning theories. The learning facilitator has to take into account the whole person and his or her life situation in planning the learning experience. Humanists view individuals as seeking self-actualization through learning and of being capable of controlling their own learning process. Adult learning theories, particularly andragogy, best represent it in HRD. In addition, self-directed learning and much of career development are grounded in humanism. (Andragogy will be discussed in much more detail in the next section.)

In many respects, humanism is absolutely central to the field of human resource development. If humans are not viewed as motivated to develop and improve, then at least part of the core premise of HRD disappears. At the same time, humanism is also a primary source of debate within the field because the performance paradigm is viewed by some as violating the humanistic tenets of the field. As we have stated, we do not believe they are contradictory. However, if a person believes completely in the humanistic view of learning, then allowing for behavioral components in the learning process is disconcerting. We prefer to see them coexist.

Social Learning

Social learning focuses on how people learn by interacting with and observing other people. This type of learning focuses on the social context in which learning occurs. Some people view social learning as a special type of behaviorism because it reflects how individuals learn from people in their environment. Others view it as a separate metatheory because the learner is also actively making meaning of the interactions.

A foundational contribution of social learning is that people can learn vicariously by imitating others. Thus, central to social learning processes is that people learn from role models. This was in direct contradiction to behaviorists who said that learners had to perform themselves and be reinforced for learning to occur. Thus, the facilitator must model new behaviors and guide learners in learning from others. Albert Bandura is probably the best-known name in this area. It was his works in the 1960s and extending through the 1980s that fully developed social learning theory.

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Ormond (1999) lists four core assumptions of social learning theory: people can learn by observing the behaviors of others and the outcomes of those behaviors; learning can occur without a change in behavior; the consequences of behavior play a role in learning; and cognition plays a role in learning.

Social learning also occupies a central place in HRD. One contribution is in classroom learning in which social learning focuses on the role of the facilitator as a model for behaviors to be learned. Facilitators often underestimate their influence as a role model and forget to utilize role modeling as part of their instructional plan.

Social learning may make its biggest contribution through non-classroom learning. One area is in new employee development, where socialization processes account for the largest portion of new employee development (Holton, 1996c; Holton and Russell, 1999; Korte, 2007). *Socialization* is the process by which organizations pass on the culture of the organization to new employees and teach them how to be effective in the organization. It is an informal process that occurs through social interactions between new employees and organizational members. Another key area is mentoring, a primary means of on-the-job development in many organizations. It is often used to develop new managers. This is clearly a social learning process as mentors teach and coach protégés. Yet another key area is on-the-job training whereby newcomers learn their jobs from job incumbents, in part by direct instruction but also by observing the incumbent and using the incumbent as a role model.

There are few critics of social learning as it mostly contributes to learning theory in HRD without inciting any sharp arguments. Social learning is widely accepted as an effective and important learning process. When properly applied, it enhances learning and contributes learning that often cannot occur in the classroom.

Constructivism

While controversial, especially in its more radical versions, constructivism is emerging as a useful perspective for some adult learning situations (Wiswell and Ward, 1987). Constructivism stresses that all knowledge is context bound and that individuals make personal meaning of their learning experiences. Thus, learning cannot be separated from the context in which it is used. They also stress the cumulative nature of learning. That is, new information must be related to other existing information in order for learners to retain and utilize it. For adults, experience might be conceptualized as creating a giant funnel of previous knowledge, whereby new information that enters the top of the funnel cascades downward and eventually falls out unless it "sticks" to some element of prior knowledge. The role of the facilitator is to help learners make meaning of new information.

Many learning theorists, including Ormond (1999), do not view constructivism as a separate metatheory but rather as a special type of cognitivism. Adult

learning theorists (e.g., Merriam and Caffarella, 1999) are more inclined to differentiate it from cognitivism because of its importance for adult learning.

The contributions of constructivism to HRD are still emerging. The emphasis on how adults make meaning of new information by relating it to previous experience largely supports the andragogical view of learning (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson, 2005). In fact, the parallels between moderate views of constructivism and andragogy are rather striking. Both stress ownership of the learning process by learners, experiential learning, and problem-solving approaches to learning. However, andragogy and the more extreme views of constructivism are not compatible. Constructivism plays an important role in understanding informal and incidental learning, self-directed learning, and perspective transformation.

Holistic Learning

More recently, the *Holistic Theory of Knowledge and Adult Learning* has been advanced by Baiyin Yang (2003; 2004a; 2004b). His theory plays a unique role in integrating so many of the rival learning theories that distinguish themselves by their differences, rather than their commonalities. Yang's holistic theory conceptualizes knowledge into three indivisible facets—implicit, explicit, and emancipatory. Furthermore, each of these has three layers—foundation, manifestation, and orientation. The interactions between the facets and layers are shown in Figure 9.3.

It is important to note that most perspectives on learning are focused on the individual level, and that the holistic theory embraces the individual, group, and organizational learning challenges facing HRD. Figure 9.4 visually arranges the knowledge facets and knowledge layers in an individual and social group/organization relationship.

Another feature of the holistic theory is its attempt to harness the best of three major views on the nature of knowledge and learning put forth by Mezirow (1996). They include: (1) the empirical/analytic paradigm (objective interpreta-

Figure 9.3 Holistic Theory of Knowledge and Learning: Indications of Three Knowledge Facets and Three Knowledge Layers

Knowledge Layers	Knowledge Facets		
	EXPLICIT	IMPLICIT	EMANCIPATORY
Foundations	Axioms, assumptions, beliefs, hypotheses	Habits, social norms, traditions, routines	Values, aspirations, vision
Manifestations	Theories, principles, models, conceptual frameworks, formulas	Tacit understandings, know-how, intuition, mental models	Attitudes, motivations, learning needs, equity, ethics, moral standards
Orientations	Rational	Practical	Freedom

Source: Yang, 2003.

Figure 9.4 Holistic Theory of Knowledge and Learning: Interactions between Individual and Social Group/Organization



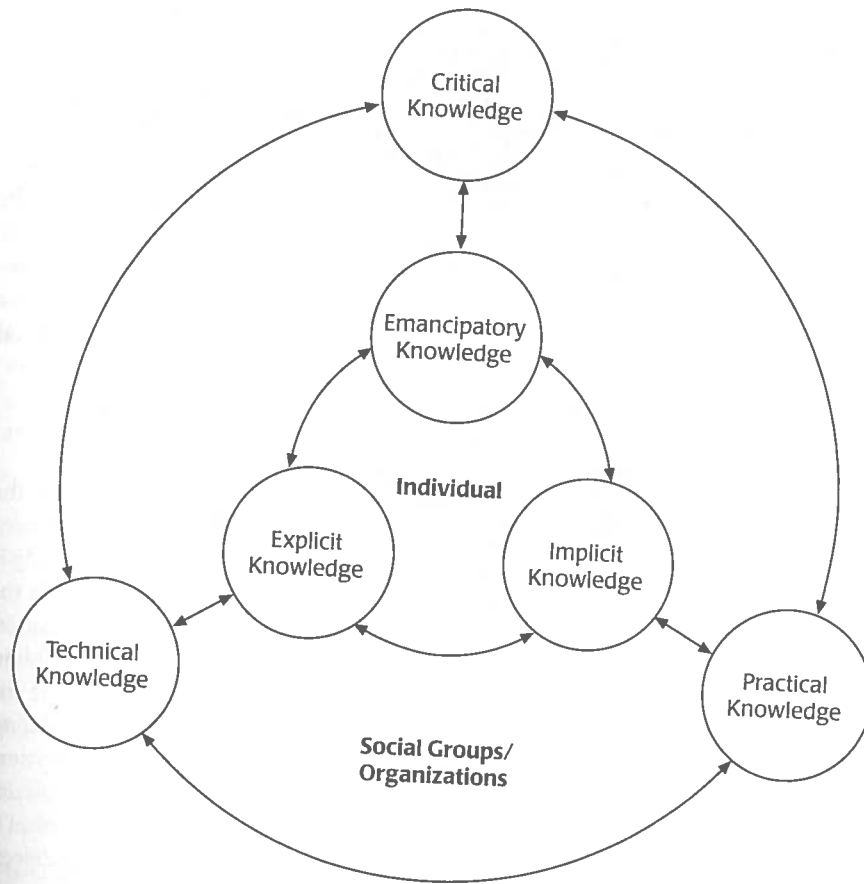
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Figure 9.4 Holistic Theory of Knowledge and Learning: Dynamic Relationships between Individual, Organization, and Social/Cultural Contexts



Source: Yang, 2003.

tion), (2) the interpretist paradigm (subjective interpretation), and (3) the critical paradigm (power interpretation).

The value of the holistic theory is in making connections between seemingly disparate streams of philosophy and research related to knowledge and learning (Jarvis and Parker, 2005; Nafukho, 2006). Critics would argue that such connections are tenuous.

Summary

Most learning theories in HRD can be embedded in one or a blend of these six general theories of learning. Each general theory makes unique contributions and adds power to learning practice in HRD. Readers are advised to understand

each so that they can be employed in appropriate situations. We reiterate that no single approach is best, but in any given situation one or a combination of approaches is likely to be most powerful.

LEARNING MODELS AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

In this section, four middle-range models of learning are reviewed. First, andragogy is discussed as a core adult learning model that has played a central role in adult learning within HRD. Also, the andragogy in practice model (Knowles et al., 1998; Holton, Swanson, and Naquin, 2001) is presented as a more comprehensive elaboration of andragogy. Next, Kolb's experiential learning model is considered, followed by informal and incidental learning. Last, transformational learning is discussed.

Andragogy: The Adult Learning Perspective

In the late 1960s when Knowles introduced andragogy in the United States, the idea broke new ground and sparked much subsequent research and controversy. Since the earliest days, adult educators have debated what andragogy really is (Henschke, 1998). Spurred in part by the need for a defining theory within the field of adult education, andragogy has been extensively analyzed and critiqued. It has been alternately described as a set of guidelines (Merriam, 1993), a philosophy (Pratt, 1993), and a set of assumptions (Brookfield, 1986). Davenport and Davenport (1985) note that andragogy has been called a theory of adult learning/education, a method or technique of adult education, and a set of assumptions about adult learners. The disparity of these positions is indicative of the perplexing nature of andragogy. But regardless of what it is called, "it is an honest attempt to focus on the learner. In this sense, it does provide an alternative to the methodology-centered instructional design perspective" (Feur and Gerber, 1988).

Despite years of critique, debate and challenge, the core principles of adult learning advanced by andragogy have endured (Davenport and Davenport, 1985; Hartree, 1984; Pratt, 1988), and few adult learning scholars would disagree with the observation that Knowles's ideas sparked a revolution in adult education and training (Feur and Gerber, 1988). Brookfield (1986), positing a similar view, asserts that andragogy is the "single most popular idea in the education and training of adults." (p. 91). Adult educators and human resource development professionals, particularly beginning ones, find them invaluable in shaping the learning process to be more effective with adults.

The Core Andragogical Model

Popularized by Knowles (1968), the original andragogical model presents core principles of adult learning and important assumptions about adult learners.

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viewed. First, andragogy played a central role in the model (Knowles et al., 1986). The model is presented as a more comprehensive learning model. Last, transformational

the United States, the research and controversy. That andragogy really is a learning theory within the field has been analyzed and critiqued. (Knowles, 1993), a philosopher (Knowles, 1986). Davenport and Knowles (1986) theory of adult learning/development provided a set of assumptions indicative of the perplexing nature of the field. This is an honest attempt to contribute to the methodology of the field (Knowles, 1988).

The core principles of adult learning presented by Knowles (1985) and Davenport (1985) are core principles of adult learning. These principles would disagree with the model in adult education and training. The model is presenting a similar view, as the education and training resource development is valuable in shaping the

The model presents core principles about adult learners.

These core principles of adult learning are believed to enable those designing and conducting adult learning to create more effective learning processes for adults. The model is a transactional model (Brookfield, 1986) in that it speaks to the characteristics of the learning transaction. As such, it is applicable to any adult learning transaction, from community education to human resource development in organizations.

Depending on which resource is consulted, various authors present andragogy in different ways. Accordingly, it has often been difficult to ascertain both the number and content of the core principles of andragogy. This difficulty stems from the fact that the number of andragogical principles has grown from four to six over the years as Knowles refined his thinking (Knowles, 1989). The addition of assumptions and the discrepancy in the number cited in the literature has led to some confusion (see Holton, Swanson, and Naquin, 2001 for a complete review of the history of the andragogical assumptions). The current six core assumptions or principles of andragogy (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson, 2005) are as follows:

1. Adults need to know why they need to learn something before learning it.
2. The self-concept of adults is heavily dependent on a move toward self-direction.
3. Prior experiences of the learner provide a rich resource for learning.
4. Adults typically become ready to learn when they experience a need to cope with a life situation or perform a task.
5. Adults' orientation to learning is life centered, and they see education as a process of developing increased competency levels to achieve their full potential.
6. The motivation for adult learners is internal rather than external.

These core principles provide a sound foundation for planning adult learning experiences. Absent any other information, they offer an effective approach to adult learning.

The second part of the andragogical model is what Knowles (1995, 1984) called the *andragogical process design* for creating adult learning experiences. Originally, Knowles presented this as seven steps (Knowles 1984, 1990). Later, he added a new first step, preparing learners for the program, which brought the total to eight steps (Knowles, 1995): (1) preparing learners for the program, (2) establishing a climate conducive to learning, (3) involving learners in mutual planning, (4) involving participants in diagnosing their learning needs, (5) involving learners in forming their learning objectives, (6) involving learners in designing learning plans, (7) helping learners carry out their learning plans, and (8) involving learners in evaluating their learning outcomes.

Figure 9.5 shows the andragogical process elements and andragogical approaches as presented and updated by Knowles (1992, 1995).

Figure 9.5 Process Elements of Andragogy

<i>Element</i>	<i>Andragogical Approach</i>
Preparing learners	Provide information Prepare for participation Help develop realistic expectations Begin thinking about content
Climate	Relaxed, trusting Mutually respectful Informal, warm Collaborative, supportive
Planning	Mutually by learners and facilitator
Diagnosis of needs	By mutual assessment
Setting of objectives	By mutual negotiation
Designing learning plans	Learning contracts Learning projects Sequenced by readiness
Learning activities	Inquiry projects Independent study Experiential techniques
Evaluation	Learner-collected evidence validated by peers, facilitators, and experts. Criterion referenced.

Source: Developed from Knowles (1992, 1995).

Integrated System or Flexible Assumptions?

In early works Knowles presented andragogy as an integrated set of assumptions. However, following the period of experimentation, it now seems that the power of andragogy lies in its potential for more flexible application. As others have noted (Brookfield, 1986; Feur and Gerber, 1988; Pratt, 1998), over the years the assumptions became viewed by some practitioners as somewhat of a recipe implying that all adult educators should facilitate the same way in all situations. Clear evidence indicates that Knowles intended for them to be viewed as flexible assumptions to be altered depending on the situation. Knowles (1984) reiterated this point in the conclusion to his casebook examining thirty-six applications of andragogy. He noted that he had spent two decades experimenting with andragogy and had reached certain conclusions, including these:

- The andragogical model is a system of elements that can be adopted or adapted in whole or in part. It is not an ideology that must be applied totally and without modification. In fact, an essential feature of andragogy is flexibility.

- The applicational model

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- The appropriate starting point and strategies for applying the andragogical model depend on the situation (p. 418).

More recently, Knowles (1989) stated in his autobiography, "So I accept (and glory in) the criticism that I am a philosophical eclectic or situationalist who applies his philosophical beliefs differentially to different situations. I see myself as being free from any single ideological dogma, and so I don't fit neatly into any of the categories philosophers often want to box people in" (p. 112). He further stated that "what this means in practice is that we educators now have the responsibility to check out which assumptions are realistic in a given situation" (Knowles, 1990, p. 64).

It seems clear that Knowles always knew, and then confirmed through use, that andragogy could be utilized in many different ways and would have to be adapted to fit individual situations. Unfortunately, he never offered a systematic framework of factors that should be considered when determining which assumptions are realistic in order to adapt andragogy to the situation. As a result, the andragogical assumptions about adults have been criticized for appearing to claim to fit all situations or persons (Davenport, 1987; Davenport and Davenport, 1985; Day and Baskett, 1982; Elias, 1979; Hartree, 1984; Tennant, 1986). While a more careful read of Knowles's work shows he did not believe this, andragogy is nonetheless open to this criticism because it fails to account for the differences explicitly.

The Andragogy in Practice Model

Andragogy in practice, the framework depicted in Figure 9.6, is an enhanced conceptual framework to apply andragogy more systematically across multiple domains of adult learning practice (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson, 2005). The three dimensions of andragogy in practice, shown as rings in the figure, are (1) goals and purposes for learning, (2) individual and situational differences, and (3) andragogy (core adult learning principles).

In contrast to the traditional model of andragogy, this approach conceptually integrates the additional influences with the core adult learning principles. The three rings of the model interact, allowing the model to offer a three-dimensional process for adult learning situations. The result is a model that recognizes the lack of homogeneity among learners and learning situations and illustrates that the learning transaction is a multifaceted activity. This approach is entirely consistent with most of the program development literature in adult education that in some manner incorporates contextual analysis as a step in developing programs (e.g., Houle, 1972; Knox, 1986; Boone, 1985).

Goals and purposes for learning, the outer ring of the model, are portrayed as developmental outcomes. The goals and purposes of adult learning serve to shape and mold the learning experience. In this model, goals for adult learning events may fit into three general categories: *individual*, *institutional*, or *societal*.

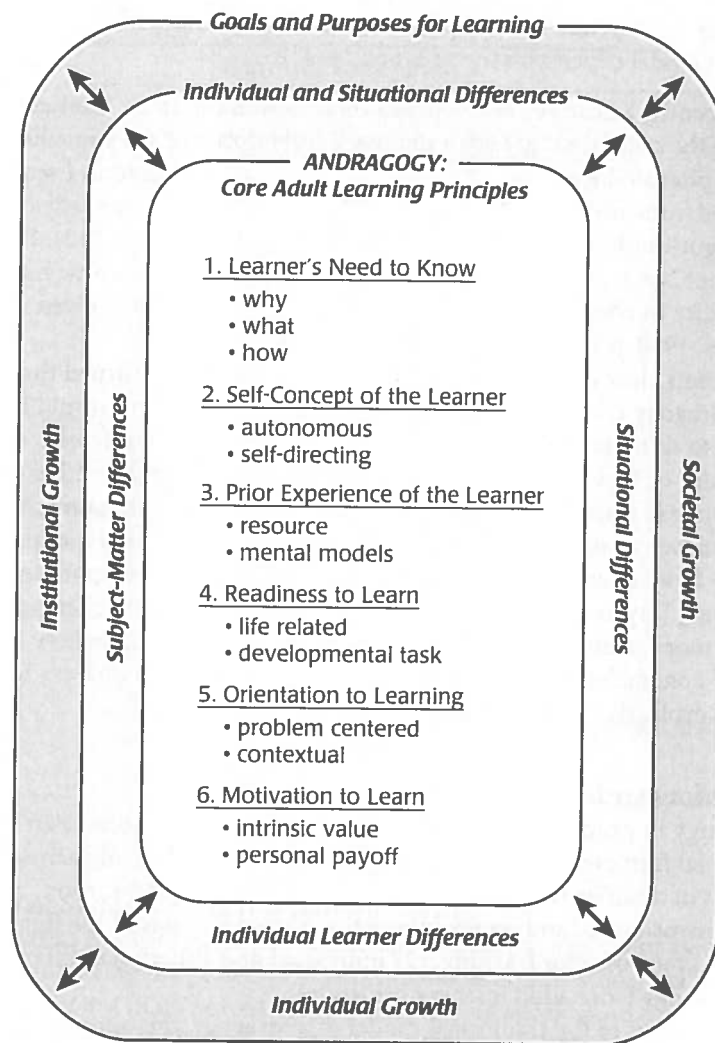


Figure 9.6 Andragogy in Practice Model

Source: Knowles, Holton, and Swanson, 2005, p. 4.

Knowles (1970, 1980) used these three categories to describe the missions of adult education, though he did not directly link them to the andragogical assumptions. Beder (1989) also used a similar approach to describe the purposes of adult education as facilitating change in society and supporting and maintaining good social order (societal), promoting productivity (institutional), and enhancing personal growth (individual).

Merriam and Brockett (1997) discuss seven content-purpose typologies (Bryson, 1936; Grattan, 1955; Liveright, 1968; Darkenwald and Merriam, 1982;

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Apps, 1985; Rachal, 1988; Beder, 1989), using Bryson's (1936) five-part typology (liberal, occupational, relational, remedial, and political), noting that the purposes for adult learning have changed little since then. Bryson's (1936) typology would also fit into Knowles's three-part typology with liberal, relational, and remedial fitting into the individual category; occupational fitting into the institutional category; and political fitting into the societal category. Thus, Knowles's three category typology can be seen as also encompassing all of the categories found in other major typologies of purposes for adult learning.

Individual Growth

The traditional view among most scholars and practitioners of adult learning is to think exclusively of individual growth. Representative researchers in this group might include some mentioned earlier such as Mezirow (1991) and Brookfield (1987, 1984). Others advocate an individual development approach to workplace adult learning programs (Bierema, 1997; Dirkx, 1997). At first glance, andragogy would appear to fit best with individual development goals because of its focus on the individual learner.

Institutional Growth

Adult learning is equally powerful in developing better institutions, as well as individuals. Human resource development, for example, embraces organizational performance as one of its core goals (Brethower and Smalley, 1998; Swanson and Arnold, 1996), which andragogy does not explicitly embrace, either. From this view of human resource development, the ultimate goal of learning activities is to improve the institution sponsoring the learning activity. Thus, control of the goals and purposes is shared between the organization and the individual. The adult learning transaction in an HRD setting still fits nicely within the andragogical framework, although the different goals require adjustments to be made in how the andragogical assumptions are applied.

Societal Growth

Societal goals and purposes that can be associated with the learning experience are illustrated through Paulo Freire's work (1970). This Brazilian educator sees the goals and purposes of adult education as societal transformation, contending that education is a consciousness-raising process. He says that the aim of education is to help participants put knowledge into practice and that the outcome of education is societal transformation. Freire is clearly concerned with creating a better world and the development and liberation of people. As such, the goals and purposes within this learning context are oriented to societal as well as individual improvement.

Individual and situational differences, the middle ring of the andragogy in practice model, are portrayed as variables. We continue to learn more about the differences that impact adult learning and which act as filters that shape the

practice of andragogy. These variables are grouped into the categories of individual learner differences, subject-matter differences, and situational differences.

Subject-matter differences may require different learning strategies. For example, individuals may be less likely to learn complex technical subject matter in a self-directed manner. Or, as Knowles stated in the earlier quote, introducing unfamiliar content to a learner will require a different teaching/learning strategy. Simply, not all subject matter can be taught or learned in the same way.

Situational differences captures any unique factors that could arise in a particular learning situation and incorporates several sets of influences. At the micro-level, different local situations may dictate different teaching/learning strategies. For example, learners in remote locations may be forced to be more self-directed, or perhaps less so. At a broader level, this group of factors connects andragogy with the sociocultural influences now accepted as a core part of each learning situation. This is one area of past criticism that seems particularly appropriate.

Jarvis (1987) sees all adult learning as occurring within a social context through life experiences. In his model, the social context may include social influences prior to the learning event that affect the learning experience, as well as the social milieu within which the actual learning occurs. Thus, situational influences prior to the learning event could include anything from cultural influences to learning history. Similarly, situational influences during learning can be seen as including the full range of social, cultural and situation-specific factors that may alter the learning transaction.

Individual differences is a result of a surge of interest in linking the adult education literature with psychology to advance our understanding of how individual differences affect adult learning. Analyzing psychological theories from an adult learning perspective, Tennant (1997) argues for psychology as a foundation discipline of adult education. Interestingly, a group of educational psychologists has recently argued for building a bridge between educational psychology and adult learning, calling for creation of a new subfield of adult educational psychology (Cecil and Pourchot, 1998).

This may be the area in which our understanding of adult learning has advanced the most since Knowles first introduced andragogy. A number of researchers have expounded on a host of individual differences affecting the learning process (e.g., Dirkx and Prenger, 1997; Kidd, 1978; Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner, 2006). This increased emphasis on linking adult learning and psychological research is indicative of an increasing focus on how individual differences affect adult learning. From this perspective, there is no reason to expect all adults to behave the same, but rather our understanding of individual differences should help shape and tailor the andragogical approach to fit the uniqueness of the learners.

An understanding of individual differences helps make andragogy more effective in practice. Effective adult learning professionals use their understanding of individual differences to devise adult learning experiences in several ways.

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First, they tailor the manner in which they apply the core principles to fit adult learners' cognitive abilities and learning style preferences. Second, they use them to know which of the core principles are most salient to a specific group of learners. For example, if learners do not have strong cognitive controls, they may not initially emphasize self-directed learning. Third, they use individual differences to expand the goals of learning experiences. For example, one goal might be to expand learners' cognitive controls and styles to enhance future learning ability. This flexible approach explains why andragogy is applied in so many different ways (Knowles, 1984).

Applying the Andragogy in Practice Framework

The andragogy in practice framework is an expanded conceptualization of andragogy that incorporates domains of factors that will influence the application of core andragogical principles. We suggest a three-part process for analyzing adult learners:

1. The core principles of andragogy provide a sound foundation for planning adult learning experiences. Without any other information, they reflect the sound approach to effective adult learning.
2. Analysis should be conducted to understand (a) the particular adult learners and their individual characteristics, (b) the characteristics of the subject matter, and (c) the characteristics of the particular situation in which adult learning is being used. Adjustments necessary to the core principles should be anticipated.
3. The goals and purposes for which the adult learning is conducted provide a frame that puts shape to the learning experience. They should be clearly identified and possible effects on adult learning defined.

This framework should be used in advance to conduct what we call *andragogical learner analysis*. As part of the needs assessment for program development, andragogical learner analysis is used to determine the extent to which andragogical principles fit a particular situation.

Experiential Learning Model

Kolb (1984) has been a leader in advancing the practice of experiential learning for adults that we most associate with John Dewey (1910; 1938). Kolb defines learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience" (p. 38). For him, learning is not so much the acquisition or transmission of content as the interaction between content and experience, whereby each transforms the other. The educator's job, he says, is not only to transmit or implant new ideas but also to modify old ones that may get in the way of new ones.

Kolb bases his model of experiential learning on Lewin's problem-solving model of action research, which is widely used in organization development

(Cummings and Worley, 2001). He argues that it is very similar to Dewey and Piaget's as well and specifies four steps in the experiential learning cycle (see Figure 9.7): (1) *concrete experience*—being fully involved in here-and-now experiences; (2) *observations and reflection*—reflecting on and observing their experiences from many perspectives; (3) *formation of abstract concepts and generalizations*—creating concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound theories; and (4) *testing implications of new concepts in new situations*—using these theories to make decisions and solve problems.

Kolb goes on to suggest that these four modes combine to create four distinct learning styles.

Kolb's model has made a major contribution to the experiential learning literature by providing (1) a theoretical basis for experiential learning research and (2) a practical model for experiential learning practice. The four steps in his model are an invaluable framework for designing learning experiences for adults. At a macrolevel, programs and classes can be structured to include all four components, as well as at a microlevel, units or lessons. Shown below are examples of learning strategies that may be useful in each step:

Kolb's Stage	Example Learning/Teaching Strategy
Concrete experience	Simulation, case study, field trip, real experience, demonstrations
Observe and reflect	Discussion, small groups, buzz groups, designated observers
Abstract conceptualization	Sharing content
Active experimentation	Laboratory experiences, on-the-job experience, internships, practice sessions

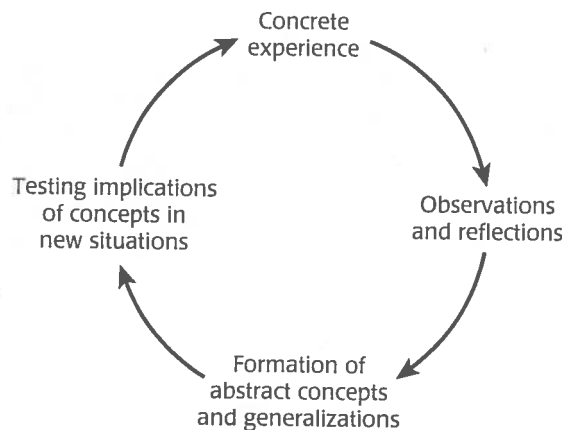


Figure 9.7 Kolb's Experiential Learning Model

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Research on Kolb's model has focused mostly on learning styles he proposes. Unfortunately, research has done little to validate his theory, due in large part to methodological concerns about his instrument (Cornwell and Manfred, 1994; Freedman and Stumpf, 1980; Kolb, 1981; Stumpf and Freedman, 1981).

Human resource development practitioners, while always valuing experience, are increasingly emphasizing experiential learning as a means to improve performance. Action reflection learning is one technique developed to focus on the learner's experiences and integrate experience into the learning process. Transfer of learning researchers are also focusing on experiential learning as a means to enhance transfer of learning into performance (Holton, Bates, Seyler, and Carvalho, 1997; Bates, Holton, and Seyler, 2000) and to increase motivation to learn (Seyler, Holton, and Bates, 1997). Structured on-the-job training (Jacobs, 2003) has emerged as a core method to capitalize more systematically on the value of experiential learning in organizations and as a tool to more effectively develop new employees through the use of experienced coworkers (Holton, 1996c). Experiential learning approaches have the dual benefit of appealing to the adult learner's experience base, as well as increasing the likelihood of performance change after training.

Informal and Incidental Workplace Learning

While many people think first of formal training in HRD, much of the learning that occurs in organizations happens outside formal training or learning events. Informal and incidental learning has deep roots in the work of Lindeman (1926) and Dewey's (1938) notion of learning from experience, although it was Knowles (1950) who introduced the term *informal learning*.

Watkins and Marsick (1990, 1992, 1997) and their associates have advanced inquiry on informal and incidental learning. They define the constructs in this way:

Formal learning is typically institutionally-sponsored, classroom-based, and highly structured. *Informal learning*, a category which includes incidental learning, may occur in institutions, but is not typically classroom-based or highly structured, and control of learning rests primarily in the hands of the learner. *Incidental learning* is defined as a byproduct of some other activity, such as task accomplishment, interpersonal interaction, sensing the organizational culture, trial-and-error experimentation, or even formal learning. Informal learning can be deliberately encouraged by an organization or it can take place despite an environment not highly conducive to learning. Incidental learning, on the other hand, almost always takes place although people are not always conscious of it. (Watkins and Marsick, 1990, p. 12, emphasis added)

Thus, informal learning can be either intentional or incidental. Examples of informal learning include self-directed learning, mentoring, coaching, networking,

learning from mistakes, trial and error, etc. Incidental learning can also lead to embedded assumptions, beliefs and attributions that can later become barriers to other learning. Argyris (1982) and Schon (1987) refer to *double loop learning* (or *reflection in action*) as the learning process required to challenge the implicit or tacit knowledge that arises from incidental learning. Tacit knowledge is increasingly recognized as an important source of knowledge for experts and innovation (Glynn, 1996).

Watkins and Marsick (1990, 1992; Cseh, et al., 1999) have developed a model of informal and incidental learning where learning is embedded within the individual's daily work and is highly contextual. Furthermore, they contend that learning occurs as a result of some trigger (internal or external) and an experience. This is in sharp contrast to the planned learning approach of formal learning events.

The question of whether informal or incidental learning can and should be facilitated is unsettled. On the one hand, it seems that there are efforts HRD organizations should use to facilitate the process. For example, Raelin (2000) suggests using action learning, communities of practice, action science, and learning teams in management development to encourage informal work-based learning. Piskurich (1993) takes a similar approach to self-directed learning, while Jacobs (2003) and Rothwell and Kanas (1994) advocate a structured approach to on-the-job training. Realistically, attempting to over-facilitate informal and incidental learning gets to the point that they become formal learning.

Nijhof and Nieuwenhuis (2008) have published the most up-to-date analysis of workplace learning related to HRD in their book titled *The Potential of Workplace Learning*. They note, "Learning is becoming a constituent part of work. Anthropologists would smile, because it is their main belief that lifelong learning in context is the essence of mankind, and therefore an integral part of what people do, including work" (p. 4). Yet, one conclusion is that there are misconceptions about learning in the workplace and that the workplace is not always an effective learning environment (Nijhof, 2006). Figure 9.8 profiles learning functions as being most appropriate in a classroom or workplace setting.

Figure 9.8 Functions of Schooling and Learning Settings

Functions	Formal Learning (generic)	Workplace (job-specific)
Socialization		X
Innovation		X
Maintenance		X
Cognitive acquisition	X	
Skills acquisition	X	
Personal development	X	
Career development		X
Lifelong learning	X	X
Vocational studies	X	
Job performance		X

Source: Nijhof and Nieuwenhuis, 2008, p. 5. Used with permission.

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Throughout this discussion of informal workplace learning, it is important to highlight the ideas of unstructured and structured on-the-job learning. Unstructured is equivalent to informal workplace learning and structured on-the-job training uses the actual workplace as a learning setting.

"The learning potential of the workplace should be proved by evidence that students and employees learn something that changes their behavior with durable results—cognitive, affective, technical, and social. While the workplace is a place to work and perform, learning is an intermediate condition, and the learning potential of the workplace therefore lies in its condition to support or stimulate learning" (Nijhof and Nieuwenhuis, 2008, p. 5).

Transformational Learning

Transformational learning has gained increasing attention in HRD. The fundamental premise is that people, just like organizations, may engage in incremental learning or in deeper learning that requires them to challenge fundamental assumptions and meaning schema they have about the world. This concept has appeared in a variety of forms in the literature.

Rumelhart and Norman (1978) propose three different modes of learning in relation to mental schema: *accretion*, *tuning*, and *restructuring*. Accretion and tuning involves no change or only incremental changes to a person's schemata. Restructuring involves the creation of new schema and is the hardest learning for most adults.

Argyris (1982) labels learning as either "single-" or "double-loop" learning. *Single-loop learning* is learning that fits prior experiences and existing values, enabling the learner to respond in an automatic way. *Double-loop learning* is learning that does not fit the learner's prior experiences or schema and generally requires learners to change their mental schema in a fundamental way. Similarly, Schon (1987) discusses "knowing in action" and "reflection in action." *Knowing in action* refers to the somewhat automatic responses based on our existing mental schema that enable us to perform efficiently in daily actions. *Reflection in action* is the process of reflecting while performing, to discover when existing schema are no longer appropriate and changing those schema when appropriate.

Mezirow (1991) and Brookfield (1986, 1987) are leading advocates for transformational learning in the adult learning literature. Mezirow (1991) calls this *perspective transformation*, which he defines as "the process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative perspective; and finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings" (p. 167).

The concept of deep transformational change is found throughout the HRD literature. Many believe that transformational change at the organization level (discussed in chapter 14) is not likely to happen unless transformational change

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While individual learning has long dominated HRD practice, in the 1980s and particularly the 1990s, increased attention turned to learning at the organizational level. The literature refers to two related but different concepts: Organizational learning and learning organizations. A *learning organization* is a prescribed set of strategies that can be enacted to enable organizational learning. It is important to recognize that *organizational learning* is different, and that the terms are not interchangeable.

According to Kim (1993), the key element differentiating individual and organizational learning revolves around mental models. When individuals make their mental models explicit and organizational members develop and take on shared mental models, organizational learning is enabled. Learning becomes organizational learning when these cognitive outcomes, the new and shared mental models, are "embedded in members' minds, and in . . . artifacts . . . in the organizational environment" (Argyris and Schon, 1996). Organizational learning is embedded in the culture, organizational systems, and work procedures and processes.

The learning organization became a focus of attention in the organizational literature in the 1990s. Interest in this organization development (OD) interven-

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tion has been spurred by the constantly changing work and business environments, which have been prompted by technological advances, increased levels of competition, and globalization of industries. Senge and other researchers have described the characteristics of the learning organization and made suggestions for organizational implementation (Kline and Saunders, 1993; Marquardt, 2002; Pedler, Bourgoyne, and Boydell, 1991; Senge, 1990; Watkins and Marsick, 1993).

The dimensions commonly described in the literature as being associated with a learning organization are not new concepts, but their coordination into a system focused on organizational learning is. However, there is no single definition of what the learning organization is. Senge (1990) defines a learning organization as "a place where people are continually discovering how they create their reality" (p.13). Watkins and Marsick (1993) define it as "one that learns continuously and transforms itself" (p. 8). A comprehensive definition of a learning organization is offered by Marquardt (1996): "an organization which learns powerfully and collectively and is continually transforming itself to better collect, manage, and use knowledge for corporate success. It empowers people within and outside the company to learn as they work. Technology is utilized to optimize both learning and productivity" (p. 19).

There appears to be some common recognition and agreement about the core characteristics of a learning organization. Researchers suggest that individuals and teams work toward the attainment of linked and shared goals, communication is open, information is available and shared, systems thinking is the norm, leaders are champions of learning, management practices support learning, learning is encouraged and rewarded, and new ideas are welcome (Marquardt, 2002; Senge, 1990; Watkins and Marsick, 1993). The learning outcomes found in a learning organization are expected to include experiential learning, team learning, second-loop learning, and shared meaning (Argyris, 1977; Argyris and Schon, 1978; Dodgson, 1993; Senge, 1990). As a result of this learning, organizations are believed to be capable of new ways of thinking.

Senge's Learning Organization Theory

Peter Senge (1990) is credited with popularizing the learning organization, even though considerable work was done on it in the 1980s. In laying out the foundation for his model of the learning organization, Senge (1992, 1993) speaks about the three levels of work required of organizations. The first level focused on the development, production, and marketing of products and services. This organizational task is dependent on the second level of work: the designing and development of the systems and processes for production. The third task undertaken by organizations centers around thinking and interacting. Senge (1993) claims that the first two levels of organizational work are affected by the quality of this third level. That is, the quality of the organizational thinking and interacting affects the organizational systems and processes, and the production and delivery of products and services. This belief places organizational thinking in a pivotal

position affecting the ability of an organization to accomplish goals and perform effectively.

It is the third level of organizational work that Senge addresses with his concept of learning organizations. In defining a learning organization, he states, "We can build learning organizations, where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together" (1990, p. 3).

Senge (1990) suggests that organizations need to develop five core disciplines or capabilities to accomplish the following defined goals of a learning organization:

- Personal mastery
- Mental models
- Shared vision
- Team learning
- Systems thinking

Systems thinking, the fifth discipline, acts to integrate the other four disciplines. It is described as the ability to take a systems perspective of organizational reality. Senge (1990) discusses strategies that organizations can implement to develop and encourage the five core disciplines of a learning organization. The recommended strategies involve the following organizational variables: climate, leadership, management, human resource practices, organization mission, job attitudes, organizational culture, and organizational structure.

Watkins and Marsick (1993) suggest that learning is a constant process and results in changes in knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors. They also believe that, in a learning organization, the learning process is a social one and takes place at the individual, group, and organizational levels. They propose six imperatives that form the basis for the organizational strategies recommended to promote learning:

1. Create continuous learning opportunities.
2. Promote inquiry and dialogue.
3. Encourage collaboration and team learning.
4. Establish systems to capture and share learning.
5. Empower people toward a collective vision.
6. Connect the organization to its environment.

Figure 9.9 shows the interrelationship of these six imperatives across the individual, team and organizational levels.

These six imperatives are similar to the disciplines suggested by Senge (1990, 1994). Marquardt (1996) similarly focuses on a learning system composed of five linked and interrelated subsystems related to learning: the organization, people, knowledge, technology, and learning. Most theories of a learning organization

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Figure 9.9

Source: Watkins and Marsick (1993).

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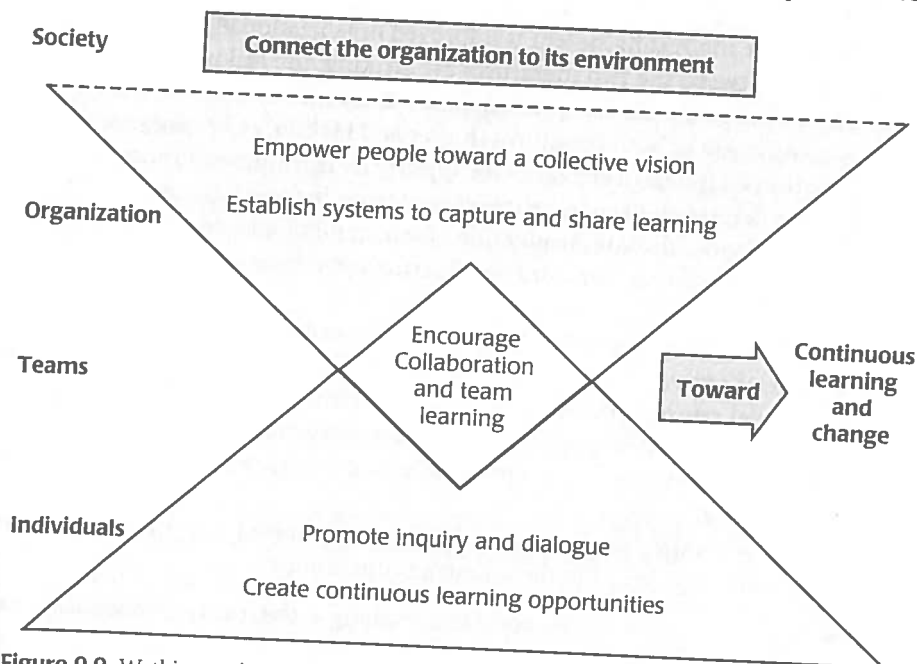


Figure 9.9 Watkins and Marsick's Learning Organization Action Imperatives
Source: Watkins and Marsick, 1993, p. 10. Used with permission.

appear to focus on the values of continuous learning, knowledge creation and sharing, systemic thinking, a culture of learning, flexibility and experimentation, and finally a people-centered view (Gephart et al., 1996).

Learning Organization and Performance Outcomes

Much of the learning organization literature is conceptual and descriptive. While there are numerous descriptive accounts and suggestions about why the process works, there are limited concrete descriptions about *how* it works to achieve performance improvement. Learning organizations perceive learning as the means to long-term performance improvement (Guns, 1996). However, there is little data supporting the claim that performance improvement is directly related to adoption of the learning organization's suggested behaviors or policies. One exception is recent evidence that firm performance is associated with those strategies (Ellinger, Ellinger, Yang, and Holton, 2000) and that learning organization strategies are related to perceived innovation (Holton and Kaiser, 2000).

Kaiser and Holton (1999) suggest that innovation provides the critical link between learning organization strategies and performance. The learning organization and the innovating organization are both dependent on the acquisition of information, the interpretation of information, the creation of meaning, and the creation of organizational knowledge. The stated end goal of both the learning

system and the innovating system is improved organizational performance. The similarities between the two literatures are striking: the linking pin for both is knowledge; the goal in both is performance improvement.

A comparison of both literatures (Kaiser and Holton, 1999) suggests that the organizational strategies engaged to support the learning and innovating endeavors are similar and suggest parallel strategies. Innovation appears to be affected by culture, climate, leadership, management practices, dynamics of information processing, organizational structure, organizational systems, and the environment.

Kaiser and Holton (1999) propose the conceptual model in Figure 9.10 based on their review of the learning organization and innovation literature and on the parallel sets of variables and theorized relationships to performance improvement. This model hypothesizes that learning organization strategies increase learning and innovation (performance drivers), which in turn improve performance outcomes.

This hypothesized model of the learning organization as a performance improvement strategy results in the following conclusions:

- Learning—in particular, improved learning at the team and organizational levels—leads to increased organization innovation.
- The adoption of learning organization strategies is appropriate for organizations in markets where innovation is a key performance driver.
- Innovation is expected to result in improved performance outcomes, leading to competitive advantage for the organization.

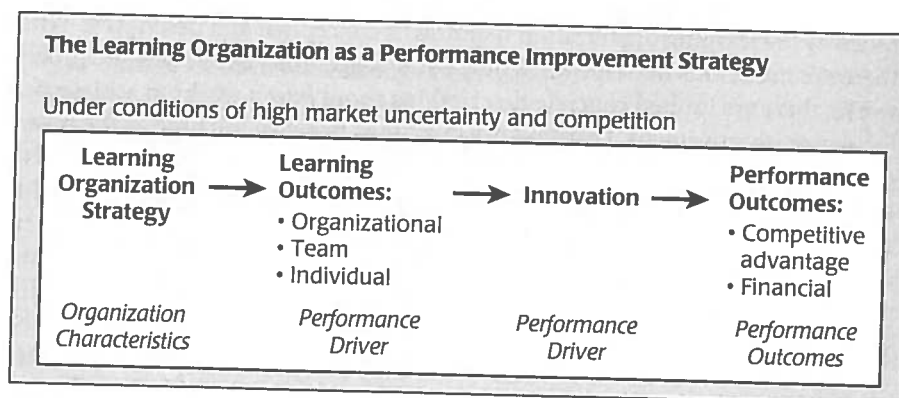


Figure 9.10 Learning Organization Performance Model
 Source: Kaiser and Holton, 1999.

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CONCLUSION

The good news for HRD is that learning has never been as highly regarded in organizations as it is today. HRD is entrusted with developing the knowledge and expertise in organizations to enable them to be competitive and effective in a challenging global economy. HRD must continue to research and define effective learning processes. While much is known about learning, much remains to be discovered about learning in the workplace.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Think about the six learning theories discussed in this chapter. Which is most attractive to you and why?
2. Think about the four learning models at the individual level presented in this chapter. Which is most attractive to you and why?
3. How can the andragogy in practice model be applied to enhance the learning that takes place through HRD?
4. Do you believe that organizations can learn? Or, are organizations merely the sum of individual learning? Take a position and explain.
5. If learning is a defining construct for the HRD discipline and field of practice, how can learning be made more powerful in organizations?

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