RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS FOR HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

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Summary

Human Resources Development (HRD) may be defined as competence building and culture building for achieving current and future goals of an organization. In a national context it aims at enabling people to make things happen. The indicators of HRD are different for an organization from that of a nation. This paper examines the resource requirements for carrying out for effective HRD at organizational as well as national levels. The resources include: HRD professionals themselves and their competencies, HRD structures, the styles and culture and HRD systems. This paper outlines in detail the requirements of each of these resources to achieve HRD goals both at National and organizational levels. The main emphasis of this paper is on developing HR professionals and their competencies as a major resource.

1. Introduction

People exist in a context. This context is provided by the boundaries, which are temporary, permanent or semi-permanent. The boundaries may be artificial or natural. The most important of the contexts are: nation, community or an organization. While all human beings belong to this universe, a country or nation at a macro level normally bound them. At micro level they are bounded by a community or group depending on where they live and what affiliations they have and where they work. These are provided by the community or the neighborhood (cities, towns, villages, religious group's etc.) at the place of living and organizations at the place of work. The organizations may be big or small, industry or services, not for profit or for profit, Government organizations or Non Government Organizations (NGOs) etc.

A most convenient classification to talk of HRD is to differentiate it on the basis of macro context and micro context. We could talk about HRD at National level and at organizational levels.

"Human Resource Development in the organizational context is a process by which the employees of an organization are helped, in a continuous, planned way to:

1) Sharpen their capabilities required to perform various functions associated with their present or expected future roles:

2) Develop their general capabilities as individuals and discover and exploit their own inner potentials for their own and/or organizational development purposes; and

3) Develop organizational culture in which supervisor-subordinate relationships, team work, and collaboration among sub-units are strong and contribute to the professional well being, motivation and pride of the employees." (Rao, 1985)

HRD is a process, not merely a set of mechanisms and techniques. The mechanisms and techniques such as performance appraisal, coaching, training, and organizational development interventions are used to initiate facilitate and promote this process in a continuous way. Because the process has no limit, the mechanisms may need to be examined periodically to see whether they are promoting or hindering the process.

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Organizations can facilitate this process of development by planning for it, by allocating organizational resources for it, and exemplifying the HRD philosophy that values human beings and promotes their development.

In a national context HRD could be viewed as follows:

" People make things happen. If people have to make things happen, they need a set of "circumstances" to make them happen. HRD is the process of enabling people to make things happen. It deals both with the process of competency development in people and creation of conditions (through public policy, programs and other interventions) to help people to apply these competencies for their own benefit and for that of others. There are many things included and implied in such a definition of HRD."
These are briefly explained:

2. Resource requirements for HRD: Competencies

Competencies may include knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. The competencies may deal with any field: agriculture, science, technology, management, various professions (like medicine, law, engineering and teaching), politics, public administration, home science, cooking, labor, telecommunications, research and tourism. The capabilities may be developed in individuals, groups and communities or collectives. The competencies may be simple like learning alphabets, or high technology applications to medicine, space, defense, environment etc.

The competencies so developed could enable people to act and improve their own lives and those of others.

Subsequently Rao (1990) further simplified this definition and suggested that HRD means:

- Competence building,
- Commitment building, and
- Culture building.

2.1. Indicators of HRD at National Level:

Human Resources development therefore deals with competency building in people. It is creation of a set of capabilities. The Human Development Reports of UNDP take a view that Human Resources Development means enhanced competencies in terms of a healthy living, long living, skill base that contributes productive activities, and enhances quality of life through creation of purchasing power. Skills help generate economic activities. Economic activities lead to enhanced purchasing power by these individuals. The purchasing power acquired through economic activity leads to healthy living and longevity of life. UNDP has been using for over the last decade three main indicators of HRD: longevity of life, skill base and purchasing power. The Human Development Index is a combination of all the three. The exact calculation methodologies may vary from year to year but this is the essence of HRD.

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2.2 Indicators of HRD at Organizational Level:

The most important indicators of HRD are differentiated into various categories: HRD instruments/subsystems/mechanisms (e.g. HRD departments, appraisal systems, Job-rotation, training etc.); HRD processes (e.g. Role clarity, trust, openness, pro-action, collaboration, etc.), HRD outcomes (e.g. more competent people, better developed roles, better Organizational health, more team work etc Organizational outcomes (profits, diversification, image productivity etc.) (Rao, 1990). Starting with 6 subsystems in mid-seventies HRD came to include several other components as newer subsystems were discovered and brought to significance. For example job-rotation, quality circles, shop-floor committees, task forces, communication systems, meetings, mentoring systems, worker development programs etc. came to be considered as HRD mechanisms.

This conceptualization applies to all forms of organizations: Corporate sector, Industry, Financial or Other Services, Service Industry, Non Government Organizations, Political Parties, Religious Groups and Government organizations.

3. HRD goals: Competencies

HRD therefore has a goal. The primary goal is competence building of its subjects (existing in that context- a nation or an organization). There are also other goals. These include the creation of a culture so those competencies can be developed on a continuous basis. Achieving the HRD goals therefore requires the following:

- Specialized people who can be called HRD Facilitators. The main task of these people who may be called HRD professionals is to help achieve the HRD goals by using various tools and technologies, processes etc. and institutionalizing for sustainability.
- Structure that can hold HRD professionals, recruit, develop, generate the and sustain their interest
- Technology and Systems that can facilitate Human Resources Development
- A Culture that can nurture and value the development of human resources
- A set of policies that can develop the culture and competencies

In addition the most important resource requirement is the material or economic resources that can facilitate the acquisition of some of the above. This also needs the top management commitment to HRD or a vision of the country Head (Prime Minister, President etc.) or organizational head or CEO that HRD can help in achieving the national or organizational goals and put it to a competitive advantage.

These are detailed out in this chapter.

4. First Resource: HRD Professionals

The set of resources required for HRD is a set of trained people who can facilitate HRD. They are essentially the HRD managers or HRD Professionals. In corporations they are HRD Managers. In the national development context these are teachers, media people

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and several others who contribute is systematic way to competence building. In the corporate sector, in addition to the HRD professionals, the line managers and the CEOs play a crucial role. In a national context, the country leaders are also important. But the specialized people are critical.

4.1 Professionalism in HR

Meeting various HRD challenges at the national or organizational level requires set of well-trained HRD professionals who can think and act professionally. Professionals in different functional areas share the following characteristics

- Focus on defined outcomes for example; physicians commit themselves to the Hippocratic oath and to healing.
- A shared body of knowledge for example, attorneys learn the canon of law
- Essential competencies for example, engineers have the skill to build bridges, design machinery, or create computers.
- Ethical standards maintained by collegial jurisdiction for example, licensed psychologists must adhere to an established set of ethical standards
- Clear roles for example, comptrollers help monitor the economic performance of the firms.
- Outcome definition, knowledge, competencies, standards, and role criteria enable these occupations to be recognized and accepted as professions."

HR policies and practices should create national level or organizational capabilities that are better able to execute strategy, operate efficiently, engage people and employees and manage change all of which are elements of competitive cultures.

" The HR professional of the future will be dramatically different from the HR employees of the past. Under the rubric of becoming business partners, HR professionals will think more about results than programs. They will focus on and guarantee deliverables from deployment of HR practices that create value for their organization, developing organizational architectures and using them to translate strategy into action. They will perform organizational diagnosis by applying their organizational architectures to set organizational priorities. HR professionals reengineer HR work through the use of technology, process reengineering teams, and quality improvements. They will be the employee's voice in management discussions, ensuring that employees feel that their issues have been heard. They will be catalysts, facilitators, and designers of both cultural change and capacity for change, establishing a vision for the HR function that excites clients and engages HR professionals" (Ulrich, 1997 p 235)

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