PREFACE

Introduction

Welcome to *Human Resource Development: From Theory into Practice*. HRD is a multidisciplinary, applied body of academic knowledge and an important area of professional practice in human resource management, occupational and organizational psychology, organization development (OD), leadership development, coaching and mentoring, e-learning, consulting practice, general management, and related areas. HRD seeks to help employees to acquire the knowledge and skills required so that they can achieve their full potential and their organization can achieve its strategic goals in ways that maximise stakeholder value, respect justice and fairness, and maintain the integrity of the natural environment.

This book explores how. It does so by offering readers a comprehensive and detailed introduction to HRD that is theory-based, evidence-driven and practically oriented. The ethos of the book is the author's firm belief that learning is one of the most important sources, if not *the* most important source, of not only competitive advantage, but more importantly, of resilience and sustainability for organizations in the 21st century. If organizations are to survive and thrive in volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environments then they and their employees need to increase their capacity for effective action through learning[1], and they need to do so with meaning and purpose in ways that that both transform and transcend the self.

Structure and Content

Physicists study the universe both at the grand scales of planets, solar systems and galaxies and the minute scale of atoms and sub-atomic particles. Economists study both how the

overall economy works in terms of big-picture macroeconomics as well as how individual markets function at the smaller microeconomic scale[2]. Likewise, HRD can be studied at different levels by zooming-out to look at the bigger picture and zooming-in to look at the fine detail. This book splits the field of HRD into two sub-fields:

- 'Micro-HRD' which is concerned with the study of learning and development in organizations at the individual and group levels and seeks to describe and explain, as well as make predictions about, learning and development in organizations using concepts, models and theories from the behavioural sciences and related scientific disciplines;

- 'Macro-HRD' which is concerned with the describing, analysing and making predictions about learning and development in organizations at the strategic and organizational levels and in relation to broader contextual factors at the national, international and global levels using concepts, models and theories from economics, systems theory, strategy, organizational learning, organizational knowledge, etc.

The book's two part are 'Micro-HRD' (Chapters 1 to 7) and 'Macro-HRD' (Chapters 8-14) as shown below

Micro-HRD is covered in:

- Chapter 1, Setting the scene for HRD: this chapter covers the history, identity and purposes of HRD

- Chapter 2, 'Inside the black box': this chapter explores behavioural and cognitive theories of learning;

- Chapter 3, 'Learning from and with others': this chapter covers social and situated theories of learning;

- Chapter 4, 'Experience-based modalities': this chapter discusses experiential learning theory, action learning and andragogy;

- Chapter 5: 'Neurolearning and HRD': this chapter explores neuroscience and learning and development in organizations;

- Chapter 6, 'Formal and informal learning': this chapter compares formal methods such as training with informal and incidental learning processes;

- Chapter 7, 'Maximising employees potential': this chapter looks at coaching, mentoring, career and talent development and leader development;

Macro-HRD is covered in:

- Chapter 8, 'The bigger picture': this chapter looks at HRD's macro environment in terms of megatrends and grand challenges;

- Chapter 9, 'HRD as s strategic partner': this chapter covers the relationships between HRD and strategy and strategic human resource management, and strategic HRD (SHRD);

- Chapter 10, 'HRD and the 'learning ecosystem'': this chapter covers systematic and systemic approaches to HRD;

- Chapter 11, 'Hybrid HRD': this chapter explores how HRD methods, including digital and e-learning, can be blended to produce the optimum mix;

- Chapter 12, 'Does HRD cost or pay?': this chapter discusses methods for evaluating HRD's 'bottom line' contribution;

- Chapter 13, 'The only sustainable source of competitive advantage': this chapter discusses theories of organizational learning;

- Chapter 14, 'Knowledge and the new learning organization': this chapter discusses theories and models of organizational knowledge and the learning organization.

The book's content is aligned with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Profession Map specialist knowledge area of 'Learning and Development' and

related specialist knowledge areas such as 'Organizational Development and Design' and 'Talent Management'. This book will support you in developing the necessary specialist knowledge and expertise and skills that can be applied in learning and development practice so as to make a positive impact and add value for stakeholders. This book will support you in developing the necessary specialist knowledge and expertise to support employees and organizations in developing the knowledge and skills that are required 'to fulfil individual and organizational needs and ambitions'[3]. The book will help you to do this through the application of concepts, models and theories form behavioural science and related fields and the use of systematic and systemic approaches to drive individual and organizational performance and maximise employees' potential [4].

Pedagogical and Support Features

The book uses various pedagogical and support features that make it suitable both for self-study and classroom-based study:

- 'Chapter Check-in': These are the objectives for each chapter and state what readers should be able to do on completion of the chapter;

- 'Research Insight': these are short summaries of relevant research (including systematic reviews and meta-analyses) from scientific fields related to HRD as well as from HRD research itself. They build on and illustrate key points in the adjoining text;

- 'Perspectives from Practice': these are short vignettes, case studies, examples, etc. from the professional practice of HRD, they illustrate how relevant concepts, models and theories apply to the world of learning and development in organizations;

- 'In their Own Words': these are commentaries and quotations from seminal figures whose work is foundational to HRD research and practice;

- 'Reflective Questions': these are interactive devices to enable readers to consider and critically evaluate issues raised in the text (for example as a 'what would you say to…?' based on the principle of 'devils' advocacy'). They are intended both self-study use and as the basis for lively classroom debate and discussion;

- 'Delve Deeper': this is relevant and credible content in the form of journal articles, chapters, books, web sites, etc., that has been collated and curated to enable readers to explore specific topics in greater depth;

- 'Chapter Checkout': numbered list of key concepts formatted in such a way as to be useable as 'flash cards' to test knowledge and understanding;

- 'Skills Development': each chapter ends with an exercise, usually based on a specific business skill (such as creating a PowerPoint presentation, designing a job aid, writing an email response to a boss, etc) which enables readers to apply the knowledge and skill to a specific work-related problem or task. These Skills Development exercises are designed both for self-study and for use as group or individual activities in classrooms;

- 'SAGE sources': these are sources of additional information from relevant SAGE publications that are freely available to purchasers of the book.

It is the author's intention and anticipation that by studying the contents of this book its readers will be equipped with the professional knowledge and skills that will enable them to contribute to learning and development processes in organizations in ways that create value, meaning and purpose in people's working lives, based on the conviction that learning is at the heart of organization[5].

Endnotes

[1] See Senge PM (1990) *The fifth discipline*. London: Century.

[2] Rodrigo, CG (2020). *Micro and macro: The economic divide*. International Monetary Fund. Available online: https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/basics/bigsmall.htm Accessed 07 02 21

[3] CIPD (2020) *The New Profession Map, Specialist Knowledge: Learning and Development*. London: CIPD. Available online: www.cipd.co.uk

[4] CIPD (2020) *The New Profession Map, Specialist Knowledge: Learning and Development*. London: CIPD. Available online: www.cipd.co.uk

[5] Sadler-Smith, E. (2006). *Learning and development for managers: Perspectives from research and practice*. Oxford: Blackwell.