Module 5

Acquiring and Developing Human Resources

Overview

In this module you will learn two approaches to HRM (acquiring and developing) Acquiring human resources is referring to recruitment, selection and orientation. This module defines and discusses the meaning of recruitment, selection and orientation. It explains various methods of recruitment and selection, taking into consideration the environmental circumstances influencing this process while at the same time introducing international recruitment practices of Europe, Japan and the U.S. It views the process of recruitment and selection right from influencing environmental factors both from within and without the organisation inclusive of the labour market to the expected views of both the potential employee and the organisation. It then discusses the mechanics of the recruitment and selection exercise. Various methods of selection and barriers to an effective selection process are included. It ends by discussing the orientation process to put new members of the organisation on the right footing to be an asset of the organisation.

Developing Human Resources is referring to learning and development, training and management development introduces and defines the concepts of learning, development and training as well as the roles these elements play in further enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation. This module attempts to provide insights into the development of human capital and organisations that are successful today are those that have schemes to develop, enhance and retain quality workers. Acquiring human resources takes a lot of time and effort and it also involves cost. It is essential for an organisation to ensure that its workers are developed to its needs. This module discusses in depth the learning, training and development process, the nature of it all and the outcomes that are derived. The role of HRM and the methods it can deploy in analysing training needs, training methods and its evaluation as well as understanding international training trends, adaptability and changes in the 21st century are also covered. It also deals with management development and the implementation of management development programmes in an organisation and discusses issues and controversies surrounding management development today.

Outcomes

Upon completion of this module you will be able to:

- *distinguish* between "recruiting" and "selecting" and describe the recruiting process in an organisation.
- *contribute* to the mutual matching of expectations of recruits and the expectations of the organisation.
- *detail* the orientation process and describe why orientation improves the chances of employees' success at work Hold an intelligent discussion on the international dimensions of HRM in the light of globalisation.
- *describe* the learning process and state why human resource managers need to understand the process of learning and development.
- *identify* the characteristics of adult learning behaviour.
- *explain* how management development is conceptualised by the human resource profession.

Terminology

Terminology

Action learning:	A training technique by which management trainees are allowed to work fulltime analysing and solving problems in other institution.
Development:	The act or process of developing such as growth or progress of learned skills or knowledge (usually through maturation and learning).
Halo effect:	A problem that could happen when some traits or personal characteristics influence or overwhelm others.
Headhunter:	External personnel recruiter for a corporation or executive recruitment agency.
In-trays:	This is a real-life workplace simulation exercise. This exercise simulates what a manager might find in his/her in-tray and the candidate is allocated a limited period of time – say, about 30 minutes – in which to go through the in-tray of memos, letters, reports and other documents and to make appropriate written decisions.
Learning:	The act by which a person acquire skills, knowledge and abilities (through experience).
Off-the-job training:	Training done outside the premises of the working environment.

On-the-job training:	Training an employee while he or she still working on it.
Orientation:	Orientation is the personnel activity which introduces new employees to the enterprise and to their tasks, superiors and work groups.
Outplacement:	Service provided by some firms to individuals who are asked to leave permanently. The services may include resume preparation, counselling and training.
Personality:	The characteristic way a person thinks and behaves in adjusting to his or her environment.
Recruitment:	Recruitment is that set of activities an organisation uses to attract job candidates who have the abilities and attitudes needed to help the organisation achieve its objectives.
Reliability:	The consistency of scores obtained by the same person when retested with the identical or equivalent tests.
Selection:	The process by which an organisation chooses from a list of applicants or person who best meet the selection criteria for the vacancy.
Training:	The systematic process of altering the behaviour or teaching employee new skills or knowledge.
Validity:	Validity refers to its accuracy as a predictor of job performance and there are a number of different sorts of validity.

Acquiring and developing human resources

Recruiting and job search

In the military, the way of life of its “employees” is different from that of civilian organisations. The military’s “executives” expect unquestioning obedience. Military personnel must live in the same area where they work; they live in communities that may consist almost entirely of military staff. The “employer” provides for many of their social and off-work facilities (recreational, religious, social and shopping). However, many do not find this way of life appealing. As such, thousands of military personnel retire or leave the service each year. A well-planned and properly-executed recruitment process can help solve problems faced by organisations such as the military.

Recruitment tends to be studied only for practitioner purposes and there is little evidence of any overarching theory. A few general personnel textbooks have discussed recruitment and selection – for example, Armstrong (1999) and Cole (1991). Most texts however do not deal with selection.

So, what is recruitment? How does it differ from selection? Let us examine this in detail.

Definition of recruitment

Glueck (1978) wrote: “Recruitment is that set of activities an organisation uses to attract job candidates who have the abilities and attitudes needed to help the organisation achieve its objectives.”

Another useful definition is: “searching for and obtaining potential job candidates in sufficient numbers and quality so that the organisation can select the most appropriate people to fill its job needs” (Dowling & Schuler, 1990). How does recruitment differ from selection? Whitehill (1991) describes the recruitment process as a positive one: “building a roster of potentially qualified applicants” as opposed to the “negative” process of selection.

The recruitment process has two key aims: (1) the attraction and retention of the interest of suitable applicants, and (2) the projection of a positive image of the organisation to those who come in contact with it.

Recruiting is directly related to a number of other personnel activities. Employment planning determines the number of employees needed. All subsequent personnel activities (such as selection, orientation, development and compensation) cannot be effective unless good employees have been recruited (Refer to the following diagram).

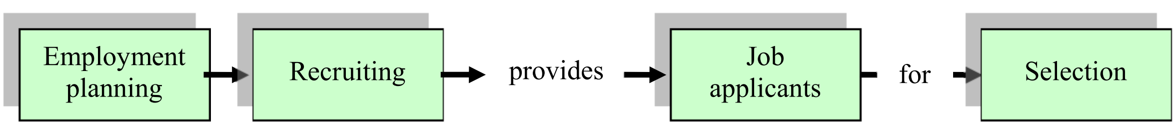


Figure 5.1 The Recruiting Process

The recruiting process begins with an attempt to find employees with the abilities and attitudes desired by the organisation and to match them with the tasks to be performed. Whether potential employees will respond to the recruiting effort depends on the attitudes they have developed toward those tasks and the organisation, on the basis of their past social and working experiences. Their perception of the task will also be affected by the work climate in that organisation.

How difficult the recruiting job is depends on a number of factors: external influences such as government and union restrictions, the labour market, the employer’s requirements and candidates’ preferences.

External influences

The external influences affecting recruitment are of two types: (1) government and union restrictions, and (2) labour market conditions.

Government and union restrictions

These restrictions represent the main external influences. Government regulations prohibiting discrimination in hiring and employment have a direct impact on recruiting practices. In many countries, government agencies can and do review the following information about recruiting to see if an organisation has violated the law:

- The list of recruitment sources (such as employment agencies, civic organisations and schools) for each job category.
- Recruiting advertising.
- Estimates of the firm's employment needs for the coming year.
- Statistics on the number of applicants processed by category (gender, race, and so on.) and by job category or level.

Of course, job descriptions and job specifications must avoid positive discrimination on gender. If the job can be done by both genders, the descriptions should not suggest one gender or the other. Recruiters need to be aware of perhaps unconscious gender stereotypes that may cause them to screen out a candidate on the sole basis of gender.

Recruiters have to keep records as the government requires reports of recruiting and hiring practices and may require statistics on the number of recruits accepted and rejected by job and employee categories. This is also to ensure that minorities in certain countries are not discriminated against. Agencies also review a firm's employment advertising for legality - it must have no reference to preferences for gender, race and other protected categories unless these characteristics are bona fide occupational qualifications.

Sometimes, the government requires organisations to implement affirmative action programmes to recruit qualified employees who are not well represented among present employees. This is common where the representation of females in managerial positions is concerned. For example, a firm with no female managers may be requested to recruit at universities where women are a majority and where professional courses for women are featured.

Government agencies can examine recruiting and hiring procedures on two somewhat contradictory bases. One is percentage goals in the recruitment of minorities and women, whereby the organisation is asked to hire enough minority employees so that their numbers in each job category (managers, for instance) approximates the minority population in that area. The other basis is adverse impact, whereby the organisation can be judged as discriminating if it rejects higher proportions of minority applicants than other applicants. The conflict is that when the firm's rejection rate of them is likely to be higher if it recruits more minorities (by attracting a larger pool of minority candidates), the firm may have to thereby reject a larger number of such candidates.

Labour market conditions

The second external environment factor affecting recruiting is labour market conditions. How does it happen? If there is a surplus of labour at recruiting time, even informal attempts at recruiting will probably attract more applicants than there are vacancies. When there are fewer people, skilful and prolonged recruiting may be necessary to attract applicants that fulfil the expectations of the organisation.

There are several ways through which an employer can find out about the current employment picture. The Central Department of Labour (relevant in a particular country situation) or a Bureau of Labour (as the case may be) issues employment reports. In many countries, there are also sources of information about specific types of employees. Trade unions covering certain crafts and professional associations keep track of employment conditions as they affect their members. It is important to note that local conditions are more important than national conditions unless the employer is recruiting nationwide.

Interactions of applicants/recruits and the Organisation

Having considered how external factors such as government, unions and labour market conditions affect the options of an organisation to recruit, you must try to understand the recruiting process: the interaction of the applicants and the organisation in recruiting.

On one hand, there will be the nature of the organisation and the goals of the managers. On the other hand, there will be the nature of the task, the techniques used and sources of recruits; all these varying with the job. With regard to the applicants, how they go about seeking a job will be affected by their abilities, attitudes, past work experience as well as the attitudes of their friends and colleagues.

At this stage, you may find it useful to consider the recruitment process from both the employer’s and the employee’s viewpoints. How does effective recruiting take place? Looking for certain characteristics in a potential employee, the employer offers a job with associated rewards. The recruit has abilities and attitudes to offer and he/she is looking for a kind of job that meets his/her minimum expectations. A match is made when sufficient overlap exists between these two sets of expectations.

The recruiting process usually requires some modifications and compromises on both sides. The following model (Glueck, 1978) depicts the recruiting/attraction process.

ORGANISATIONAL EXPECTATIONS		POTENTIAL EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS
Requirements:		**Characteristics:**
Abilities	From education ↔	Abilities
	From work experience ↔	Experience
Attitudes	From prior experience ↔	Attitudes
Personality	↔	Personality
Job offering:		**Characteristics:**
Job characteristics (e.g., variety and responsibility	↔	Minimum expectations of job characteristics
Job rewards:		**Characteristics:**
Pay Benefits Promotions Intrinsic rewards	↔	Minimum expectations of pay, benefits and promotion

Figure 5.2 Recruiting/attraction process

Organisation's point of view of recruiting

At least three aspects affect recruiting from the organisation's point of view: (1) the recruiting requirements set (2) organisation policies and procedures, and (3) the organisational image. Organisations must be careful and deliberate in setting recruiting requirements. Organisations usually specify the requirements they consider to be ideal in applicants for positions. They can easily have unrealistic expectations of potential employees. However, the effective organisation examines the specifications that are absolutely necessary for the performance of the job and uses these as starting expectations.

What is meant by organisation policies and practices? For instance, a job aspirant would like to know what the policy on promotion is. If there is a policy to promote from within (the organisation recruits from outside at only the initial hiring level), it is bound to have a positive effect on job aspirants. Whether this is a good policy is another issue altogether. Other recruiting policies such as opportunities for the handicapped, war veterans, and so on, would affect who is recruited.

The third aspect – organisational image – also affects recruitment. What does the public think of the organisation? This is an important factor especially at the higher levels of recruitment and in specialised fields. An organisation's image is complex. It is based on what that organisation does and whether it is perceived by job aspirants as providing a good place to work. Usually, large organisations are more likely to have a well-developed image. How does this image affect recruiting? Job applicants can seldom have interviews with all the organisations that have job openings of interest to them. As there are time and energy limits to their job search, they do some preliminary screening. One of these screens is the image the applicants have of the organisation and that can attract or repel them.

It is important for you to understand that recruiting in the public sector has some similarities to and differences from the private sector. There are rules and regulations that govern recruitment in the public sector such as where the applicant lives. Some jobs would require them to live within a specific area. Other requirements may be that they have to take a competitive test such as the Civil Service Examination. Recruiting managers in the public sector will have to cope with labour market problems, union restrictions, and so on.

The government also has image problems as most private sector organisations offer better pay, incentives and benefits than the public sector. The best graduates in most developing countries opt for the private sector – the reverse of the past trend.

In short, organisations cannot afford to be strict on ideal job specifications. Their job specifications may have to be adjusted so as to meet the stark realities of the labour market and other factors such as government and/or trade union restrictions, limitations of organisation policies and practices, and the organisation's image. If an inadequate number of quality job aspirants apply, the organisation may have to either adjust the job to fit the best applicant or intensify its recruiting efforts.

Potential employee's view of recruiting

Having examined the organisation's viewpoint of recruitment, let us now look at the point of view of the potential employee. There are several factors relevant to how a recruit looks for a job: the applicant's abilities, aptitudes, attitudes and preferences based on past work experiences; friends' experiences and attitudes; and influences by parents, teachers and others. These factors affect potential employees in two major ways: (1) how they set their job preferences, and (2) how they go about seeking a job.

Understanding both of these factors is vital to effective recruiting by the organisation. Just as organisations have ideal specifications for recruits, so the recruits also have a set of preferences for a job. Many recruits are unlikely to get all their expectations fulfilled. The recruit faces the limits of the labour market (good or bad from the recruit's point of view which is usually the opposite of the organisation's), government and union restrictions, and the limits of organisational policies and practices. The recruit must anticipate compromises just as the organisation needs to do so.

When you consider a job aspirant's point of view, his/her choice of the organisation is a two-step process. First, the individual makes an occupational choice (a choice of the occupation) probably when he/she is in high school (or senior secondary in some countries) or just after. Then, he/she makes a choice of the organisation to work for within the occupation chosen.

Occupational choice: The three most notable perspectives from which this has been analysed are psychological, economic and sociological. A person's occupational choice is influenced by his/her preferences and images (psychological), the realities of the labour market and the person's calculation of his/her nett advantage (economic), and the structural limitations of the world of work and the individual's socialisation to it (sociological). Given the restrictions of the labour market and the conditioning of the social structure in which the person lives, it seems reasonable to view occupational choice as a decision which reacts to personal motivation and aspirations that include economic motivations.

Organisational choice: We have assumed that everyone makes an occupational choice and goes on to making an organisational choice within that occupation. This is true in the case of those who stay in school through high school (or senior secondary school) and beyond. What about the others who make up the majority in many countries? For them, chances are that the occupational choice is quite limited and that they would make a job-organisation choice without considering occupational choice.

What factors affect the organisation-choice decision? A number of researchers have found that more educated persons know the labour market better, have higher expectations of work, and find organisations that pay more and offer more stable employment. Although much of the research suggests that this decision is fairly rational, the more careful studies indicate that unconscious processes, chance and luck also influence the decision. In countries where an allowance or unemployed insurance is paid to those unemployed, it may also be an important factor as to why people look for jobs or otherwise.

Who does the recruiting?

In larger organisations, the HR/personnel department does this. The branch of the department with this responsibility is called the employment office or department. Recruiters, interviewers and clerical persons staff such a department. This group also does the preliminary selection. Employment offices are specialised units that provide a place to which applicants can apply. It conducts the recruiting at both the work site and at times away from it.

In smaller organisations, multi-purpose personnel people do the recruiting along with their other duties or operating managers may take time to recruit and interview applicants. Sometimes, the organisation puts together a recruiting committee of operating and personnel managers.

The role of the recruiter is crucial to the well-being of an organisation. The recruiter is usually the first person from that organisation that an applicant away from the work site or a potential employee meets. Applicants' impressions about the organisation are based to a large degree on their encounter with the recruiter; hence the need for effective recruiter behaviour.

If the applicant applies in person at the work site, those in the employment office serve a similar purpose. This initial meeting can be called the reception phase of employment. The applicant is greeted, supplied with an application, and perhaps given some information on present hiring conditions and the organisation as a place to work. If the applicant is treated indifferently or rudely at this phase, he/she can form a lasting poor impression of that workplace. The reception phase is very much similar to the initial contact a salesperson makes with a prospective customer. It must be borne in mind that all applicants are potential employees. They are also potential clients for the organisation's services and/or products. Therefore, it is vital that those who greet and process applicants (in person and/or by telephone) be well trained in communication techniques and interpersonal skills. As job seeking can be a difficult experience for many applicants, recruiters should enjoy meeting the public and helping people in stressful conditions.

Sources of recruits

When organisations need additional employees, they are faced with two recruiting decisions: (1) sources (where to search), and (2) methods (how to notify applicants of the positions).

Basically, there are two major categories of sources of applicants: (1) internal (present employees), and (2) external (those not presently associated with the organisation). Among these categories, there are many sources.

Internally, there are job postings and bidding, friends of present employees, and skills inventories maintained in the organisation by the personnel department. Externally, walk-ins, various agencies, schools and other sources such as unions, professional associations and former employees are potential sources.

Say, the shortage is for higher-level employees. If the organisation has a policy of promoting from within, it will use the skills inventories to search for candidates. However, personnel managers may not be aware of all employees who want to be considered for promotion. So, they use an approach called job posting and bidding. In the job-posting system, the organisation notifies its present employees of openings by using bulletin boards, organisation publications and so on. Dahl and Pinto (1977) provide a useful set of guidelines for effective job-posting systems:

- Post all permanent promotion and transfer opportunities.
- Post the jobs for about one week prior to recruiting outside the organisation.

- Eligibility rules should be clarified. For example, minimum service in the present position might be specified as six months. Seniority may be the decision rule used to choose between several equally-qualified applicants.
- Job specifications should be listed. Application forms should be available.
- All applicants should find out what happened in the choice.

If the labour shortage is short-term or a great amount of additional work is not necessary, the organisation can use present employees. It can offer to pay various types of bonuses to people who are not on a time payroll; overtime procedures have been developed for those on time payrolls.

Before going outside of the organisation to recruit, many organisations ask present employees to encourage friends or relatives to apply. Some equal employment opportunity programmes do prohibit this. For first jobs, this source of recruits can be impactful and organisations should use it wisely.

When an organisation has exhausted internal sources, external sources are used. The most fruitful of outside sources is walk-ins. Private employment agencies serve as a placement agency for some white-collar employees and as a source of recruits for many employers. School counsellors and teachers can also help – usually for managerial, professional, technical and white-collar employees. In many countries, there are government-run institutions such as labour exchanges or employment exchanges that have tried to serve more applicants and organisation needs but these agencies still provide primarily blue-collar applicants and only a few white-collar applicants. The general view is that these government agencies do not help employees or applicants much (Glueck, 1978).

Even though there appear to be many sources from which employees can be recruited, employers generally use only a few sources to recruit each type of employee.

Methods of recruitment

A number of methods can be used to recruit external applicants such as advertising, personal recruiting, computerised matching services, special-event recruiting and internships. To decide which method to use, the organisation should know which are most likely to attract the types of candidates they seek.

Beardwell and Holden (1998) developed the following table describing and assessing various methods used by organisations in seeking both internal and external candidates.

	Method	Comments	Advantages	Disadvantages
1.	Internal existing employees Internal advertising may be a requirement for some organisations under union negotiated agreements			
1.1	Self-applicants	Inexpensive, quick.	Motivational factor.	Can be indirectly discriminatory. No new talent into the organisation.
1.2	Supervisor /manager recommendations	Know the applicant's strengths/weaknesses/behaviour well.	Records of existing acquired skills and experiences need constant updating.	
1.3	Succession planning	Training and development already in place; therefore, succession is smoother.	Information may be subject to bias.	
2.	Using existing contacts			
2.1	Unsolicited enquiries	Write-ins and personal enquiries on spec. Note: Such enquiries should be handled courteously as they may affect the success of other external methods.	Less expensive. Know that applicants are already interested.	Needs system implementation to cope. Need to review "hold" file after time period (e.g., six months).
2.2	Previous applicants	Maintain forms of unsuccessful applicants for a given time period and assess them against new vacancies as they arise.	Can enhance organisation image if handled well. May speed the process considerably.	As above (2.1)
2.3	Previous employees	Particularly retirees or others leaving to "no paid job" (new mothers, to care for elderly/sick dependants) in the "would re-employ" category.	By changing terms of employment (especially by increasing flexibility reducing hours).Could re-attract to part-time, flexible or temporary working to meet peak organisational demands. Known work behaviour.	Inbuilt flexibility requirement for employee is not always feasible in given situations.

	Method	Comments	Advantages	Disadvantages
2.4	Existing employee contacts	Existing employees encourage family, friends and/or other contacts to apply for vacancies.	Employee may well know others (with similar skills, knowledge and attitudes) who have passed on knowledge of culture and job requirements.	May well be indirectly discriminatory if not combined with other methods.
3.	External contacts			
3.1	Union referrals	Register kept by union of members seeking employment. Usual in some sectors (printing) where “closed-shop” and/or custom and practice arrangements are traditional.	Confidence in skills. Cost.	Indirectly discriminatory. Overlooks those in work.
3.2	Professional referrals	Registers as above – particularly for professions such as lawyers, doctors, accountants, engineers and linguists.	As 3.1	As 3.1
3.3	Job centres	Central government provision via Department of Employment. Network covering most towns/cities acting as agents for potential employers/employees. Particularly concerned with manual and junior positions in administration, clerical and retail areas.	Variety of free services which can be provided at the local or national level. Speed. Perceived as providing socially responsible service within a secure, non-profit-making framework. Extremely valuable if effort is made to cultivate job centre contact.	The unemployed rather than the employed register, reinforcing the old Labour exchange image. As with all agencies, results reflect the quality of job description and person specification supplied.
3.4	Outplacement consultants/ Job registers	Providing practical help to redundant employees, enforced early retirees, etc.	Actively seeking to place and may provide training and retraining required.	
3.5	Private selection – local	Deals mainly with clerical typing, junior admin, shop	Reduces administration for employers. Normal	Employers pay for recruits. No guarantee against

	Method	Comments	Advantages	Disadvantages
		staff, etc. Recruit and select.	method in many cities.	recruits leaving quickly.
3.6	Management selection	Usually recruitment plus initial stages of selection of managerial, professional and specialist staff.	Specialist knowledge, objectivity, selection skills (especially when unusual recruitment is needed for the organisation).	Payment by the employer. May lack cultural awareness of the organisation. Internal applicant(s).
3.7	Search consultants – head-hunters	Informal network of contacts keeping track of those likely to be in constant demand – especially senior management. Promising candidates sought out and approached directly.	The possibility of joining can be discussed without commitment. Concentrates on those in employment.	Potential candidates outside head-hunters' network are excluded. Recruits may be head-hunted again by the same consultant. May be costly.
3.8	Schools and careers service	Guidance and some testing of young people	Useful source of raw recruits to be developed by the organisation. In-depth knowledge of potential applicants. Can assist in image enhancement. Some guidance of higher quality than other methods.	Cost. Possibility of indirect discrimination if recruitment is concentrated on one or two institutions.

Table 5.1

Source: (Beardwell & Holden, 1998)

Effective recruiter

As you would understand by now, there are three elements involved in recruiting: (1) the organisation (2) the applicant, and (3) the intervening variable – the recruiter. The recruiter is the filter and the matcher. He/she is the one who is actually seen by the applicants and is perceived, observed and studied as a representative of the organisation. Job aspirants/applicants see the recruiter not just as an employee but as an example of the kind of person the organisation employs and wants in the future.

Students prefer certain personal characteristics in recruiters. The students William F. Glueck (1979) studied tended to prefer recruiters between the ages of 35 and 55 as they felt that persons over 55 do not understand them. Recruiters under 30 were found to lack the experience that would have given them the answers to the students' questions. Students rated recruiters well for having had work experience in their specialties and some personal knowledge of the university they were visiting.

During the recruiting interview, characteristics in the recruiter the students wanted most were friendliness, knowledge, personal interest in the applicant, and truthfulness. Secondarily, some applicants (usually average students) preferred enthusiastic and convincing communicators.

Major flaws that students found in typical recruiters were:

- **Lack of interest in the applicant**. They inferred this if the recruiter was mechanical in his/her presentation, was bureaucratic and seemed programmed. A study also found that recruits accepted offers from recruiters who showed interest and concern for them as individuals.
- **Lack of enthusiasm**. If the recruiter seemed bored, the students inferred him/her to be from a dull and uninteresting organisation.
- **Stressful or too-personal interviews**. The students resented too many personal questions about their social class, their parents, and so forth. They wanted to be evaluated for their own accomplishments. They also unanimously rejected demanding or sarcastic interviewing styles.
- **Time allocation by recruiters**. The final criticism of recruiters had to do with how much time they talked and how much they let the applicant talk and ask questions. From the point of view of the applicant, much of the recruiter's time was wasted with a long canned history of the organisation, number of employees, branches, products, assets, pension plans and so forth. Many of the questions the recruiter asked the applicant had been answered in the application.

These findings re-emphasise the need for organisations engaged in college recruiting to train effective recruiters and to have a well-planned visitation schedule. The applicant should receive printed material describing the less-interesting aspects of information (such as organisation history and details of organisation operations). The recruiter should also utilise the time allotted to him/her effectively by dividing approximately equal time between the recruiter and the applicant. Students would want to hear about the job itself, the work climate and the kind of person the organisation is trying to hire for the job.

It is also important for recruiters to provide realistic expectations of the job. It has been found that there is significantly lower turnover of new employees when they do so. Researchers have found that most recruiters give general, glowing descriptions of the organisation rather than balanced and/or truthful presentations.

Companies that wish to influence applicants should also review their recruiting literature to make sure it appeals to the most successful students. In addition to advertisements and articles in trade publications, this literature is the main non-human influence on the organisation-choice decision.

An evaluation of the recruitment process itself

You probably now realise that organisations have to take recruitment very seriously as the costs of recruitment can be high. Throughout the recruitment process, a variety of costs are being incurred:

- Recruiters' salaries
- Management and professional time spent on preparing job descriptions, personnel specifications, advertisements, agency liaison
- Cost of advertisements and other recruitment methods (agency fees)
- Cost of producing supporting literature
- Recruitment overheads and administrative expenses
- Cost of overtime or subcontracting while the position remains unfilled
- Cost of recruiting unsuitable candidates for the selection process.

Organisations must be alert to the real facts of recruitment and question whether the recruitment methods used were valid, the recruitment process itself effective, and the costs justified.

Statistical information on the cost of advertisements, time taken for the process, the position regarding applications from under-represented groups and, above all, the suitability of the candidates for consideration in the selection process should be gathered and evaluated but organisation-wide experience shows that these processes seem to be carried out only rarely.

Dowling and Schuler (1990) emphasise the importance of such evaluations of recruitment practice and recommend attention to the following:

1. Return rate of application forms sent out
2. Number of suitable candidates for the selection process
3. Costs of methods used and labour involvement
4. Effectiveness of recruitment method(s) employed
5. Time taken in:
    - Agreeing to terms and conditions
    - Communicating the message
    - Selection (providing information to candidates and receiving completed application forms).
6. Qualitative judgment on equal opportunities provision
7. Comments on the image projected

8. Recommendations for improvement.

It is also prudent to undertake an evaluation of various methods used in recruitment. The following need to be examined to ascertain whether the methods used have produced the desired results.

- The number of initial inquiries received which resulted in completed application forms.
- The number of candidates (especially those shortlisted) at various stages of the recruitment and selection process.
- The number of candidates recruited.
- The number of candidates retained in the organisation after six months.

Recruitment in fluctuating labour markets

The economy and its cycles of boom and recession can impact significantly on organisations and their recruitment activities. When the economy is buoyant and in tight labour markets, organisations experience increased difficulties in attracting candidates and have to adopt flexible approaches with regard to the groups targeted and recruitment methods used. In particular, considerable care should be taken to ensure that –

- Planning activities highlight staff shortfalls well in advance.
- Reward packages will fit with the packages currently being enjoyed by the existing workforce if they are enhanced to attract and retain the interest of potential recruits.
- Measures are in place to maximise the retention of staff.
- Training and development programmes are available to those with potential who could be recruited (as opposed to trying to locate those already in possession of relevant skills, experiences, etc.).
- Recruitment activities are responsive and user-friendly.

Recessions generally create the most difficult times for personnel specialists. In such conditions, personnel departments have to handle downsizing – redundancy and redeployment, in particular. Often, in the midst of downsizing, openings arise in other parts of the organisation, necessitating recruitment. Needless to say, recruitment during such periods requires a particular sensitivity to the needs of employees, their representatives and the managers concerned.

If external recruitment is considered in such conditions, there may be many candidates (both suitable and unsuitable) applying since downsizing activities in other organisations produce a surplus in the labour market. During such periods, it is essential that organisations have adequate screens in place. The screens make clear the specific requirements related to the job and may also include tight application deadlines. Such screens will also employ the use of less user-friendly techniques (for example, requesting a letter of application to be made as opposed to telephoning or the use of box numbers).

Personnel specialists would do well to keep in mind the considerable drawbacks these two examples would pose. It is possible that the organisation may be dissuading suitable applicants already in employment from applying – a factor compounded if the individual perceives too great a risk of foregoing redundancy protection in current employment to move to a non-protected position.

Another problem the recruiting personnel may find would be increasing pressures to circumvent equal opportunity policies in times of plentiful supply of advantaged applicants, increasing the problems for those within groups which are most severely hit by the economic situation. Minority groups are an example of such groups already hit by recession.

International recruitment

Recruitment methods adopted in different parts of the world vary from country to country. For purposes of comparison, what is practised in Europe, Japan and the U.S. will be discussed here.

Europe

Recruitment practices vary considerably between countries. Legislation determines different levels of state intervention and worker participation. Methods used vary in popularity according to national custom and practice. As you would know, culture plays a role in recruitment. As there is a great variety of different cultures just as there are many different languages within the European community, it is difficult to comment on the European culture. There is also a wide discrepancy in the size of labour forces.

There is wide variation in the level of direct state involvement in the recruitment process. In countries such as Portugal and Denmark, there is no statutory obligation to consult with the authorities over recruitment. In France, Belgium and Spain, the state HR planning service has to be informed of all vacancies.

The recruitment methods most frequently used are newspaper advertising, the state employment service, private employment agencies and more informal methods such as word of mouth and speculative applications. Depending on the type of job to be filled, organisations frequently use a number of different methods but legislation, custom and practice can lead to national variations. One of the most commonly used recruitment methods is newspaper advertising. State employment services play an active role in several countries mainly for non-managerial jobs. Private recruitment agencies are frequently used in a number of countries but they are prohibited in Germany and Spain. The more informal methods (such as word of mouth and speculative applicants) are a very common means of recruitment in several countries. The purpose of this very brief outline is to show you that there is no single best way of recruiting in Europe and that there are a number of different approaches. Success will depend on several factors including the job itself and the country in which it is based.

Where equal opportunities are concerned, the European Union (EU) has issued directives and all member states have introduced regulations that proscribe discrimination in recruitment, and forbid any phrasing of a job advertisement which might suggest that either men or women would be more favoured. Enforcement, and the degree to which equal opportunities on the grounds of race and gender are advocated positively, do vary considerably between member states.

Japan

As you would expect, Japanese culture has had a major impact on the recruitment practice. In Japan, employees are considered the most valuable asset an organisation possesses and lifetime employment within one organisation is the aim of both employer and employee. It is interesting to note that the male and female roles in society are quite strictly defined: the male as breadwinner, with a complementary and arguably synergistic role of home and family organiser for the female. As such, many women may leave work for marriage or because of their respective husbands' relocation.

There is a two-tier system of employment status found in Japan. There are the regular workers and the special workers. Regular workers, for whom lifetime employment is anticipated, particularly in larger firms, are male and in possession of personal characteristics deemed suited to organisational fit rather than skills and experiences specific to a particular job. These regulars enjoy special privileges and high status.

The other category – the special workers – includes full and part-time women, mid-career recruits (often possessing highly specialised skills), temporary workers and foreigners. Special workers are discriminated against in terms of security of job, rewards, training opportunities, and are seen as providing the flexibility required in the employment system where one group (the regulars) have near lifetime security of employment. In regard to recruitment methodology, Japan has certain peculiarities.

As a result of the culture described, the Japanese labour market has traditionally been closed although there has recently been an increase in the number of channels (private employment agencies and headhunters) available in the recruitment process. University-organisation links are strong, and most recruitment is either through university or college processes or through private connections, with graduates recruited on the personal recommendations of specific university professors. Professors play a vital role here as in effect, they pre-screen graduates when they make recommendations. Most regular employees are hired directly from universities and schools once a year, with prestigious companies looking to prestigious universities for recruits. The old-boy network is very important.

The open labour market is more apparent with special workers as direct application is more of a norm. Again, however, highly developed links with schools, subcontractors, subsidiaries and retrenching firms are typical recruitment channels as Japanese organisations have little tradition of pirating employees from competitors.

In 1986, the Equal Job Opportunity Law was passed requesting companies to make efforts to treat men and women equally, arguing that the number of women in professions and leadership roles was small. The impact of legislation on the system does not appear to be marked.

United States

U.S. culture is similar to British culture although some recruitment practices suggest more aggressive policies, particularly in relation to acquiring recruits from competitors.

Again, the methods employed are very similar to those established in Britain although Werther and Davis (1993) argue strongly in favour of the blind advertisement, disguising the name and/or salary concerned (as opposed to the British-preferred “good practice”). There also appears to be an increased likelihood of employees becoming liable to fees on placement by private agencies.

An important aspect in the U.S. is the extensive legislation meant to provide equal opportunity without regard to race, religion, gender, disability, pregnancy, national origin, age (over 40) and war veterans. Victims can sue for compensation and punitive damages (Civil Rights Act of 1991) in certain circumstances and courts can insist on certain action being taken to remedy a given situation. Many organisations have responded by drawing up affirmative action plans which ensure compliance with the laws or remedy past discrimination. Unlike in Britain, quotas are acceptable and affirmative action plans must be registered by organisations where any part of the organisation sells to the federal government (Werther & Davis 1993).

Recruitment in multinational organisations

In the case of multinational organisations, many factors come into play. International recruiters face particular challenges and constraints pertaining to a thorough knowledge and appreciation of the organisation’s policy on international recruitment. Dowling and Schuler (1990) describe these policies under four headings:

1. **Ethnocentric** where all key positions are filled by nationals of the parent company – a typical strategy employed in the earlier stages of a venture.
2. **Polycentric** where host country nationals fill all key positions in the subsidiary company.
3. **Geocentric** where the “best” people are recruited regardless of nationality – for example, a national of a country in which neither the parent company nor the subsidiary company is based could also be considered.
4. **Regiocentric** where decisions will be made on a regional basis (the new subsidiary will be based in one country within this

region) with due regard to the key factor for success of the product/service. For example, if local knowledge is paramount, host country nationals will be recruited; if knowledge of established product is the key factor, parent country nationals are likely to be targeted.

Obviously, circumstances will dictate which policy is relevant and the factors to be considered include the following (Beardwell & Holden, 1998):

Country

- The culture of the country in which the subsidiary is based – in particular, its perceived toughness. Dowling and Schuler (1990) suggest that India/Pakistan, South East Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, East Africa and Liberia pose particular difficulties for Western expatriates.
- Contacts (embassies, consulates, consultants) available to assist in the recruitment of host country nationals and/or give advice generally.
- Host government requirements regarding the employment of foreigners and immigration requirements.

Individuals

- Language competence
- General international awareness
- Personal fit with cultural requirements above
- Requirements for training
- The degree of technical competence to do the job.

Organisational Considerations

- Considerable costs of international relocation of the individual and his/her family
- High levels of expatriate failure rates discovered to be between 25-40 per cent
- Opportunities for individuals to develop career paths without international experience.

The recruitment strategy adopted will be contingent on the conclusions reached in these areas.

Selection

In the previous module, you saw that recruiting takes place when an organisation believes additional people are needed to get the work done. Recruiting provides a list of potential employees (recruits). Selection is the decision that makes the choice of who should be chosen from that list.

Definition of selection

Selection is the process by which an enterprise chooses from a list of applicants the person or persons who best meet the selection criteria for the position available, considering current environmental conditions. This definition emphasises the effectiveness aspect of selection but selection decisions must also be efficient. This means that the selection process must do so at the least cost possible while finding the best person to fill the opening.

It can be argued that staff selection is becoming the axis on which all other human resource issues turn. In this fast-moving work environment, the time available for new employees to adapt and develop is diminishing. They are expected to become effective almost instantly, to perform and to move on.

How do organisations actually select their employees? Arguably, firms could simply take every third name or a random selection from a list of recruits, but few (if any) would do so.

One area in which practices vary is with regard to who actually makes the selection decision. In many larger organisations, personnel specialists screen the applicants and the operating manager involved makes the choice. In smaller organisations, the operating manager does both the screening and the selecting. Many organisations also give co-workers a voice in the selection choice: applicants are interviewed by their potential co-workers who then express their preferences. This procedure is commonly used in university departments and professional organisations where the faculty or professional colleagues express their preferences for applicants.

Generally, more effective selection decisions are made when many people are involved in the decision and when adequate information is furnished to those selecting the candidates. As a general rule, the operating manager and the work group should have more to say about the selection decision than the personnel specialist.

Environmental circumstances influencing selection

The environment of the organisation

The nature of the organisation doing the selecting can have a profound effect on the selection process. For example, the way the private sector selects personnel and the way the public sector selects employees differ because of dissimilarities in the kinds of organisations and the environments that typify these sectors. In the public sector, selection traditionally has been made on the basis of either political patronage or merit. The patronage system provides jobs to reward those who have worked to elect politicians. In the private sector, friendship with managers and/or employees can become a factor in the choice. Pure merit selection (choice based only on the employee’s excellence in abilities and experience) is an ideal which systematic personnel selection tries to achieve but seldom does.

Other aspects of the organisation affect selection: its size, complexity and technological volatility. It is costly to develop and uses systematic, reliable and valid personnel selection techniques. So, generally only the large organisations can afford to use these techniques. Even then, the large organisations must be stable in both technology and jobs; otherwise, it will not be cost-effective. In summary, the size, complexity, technological volatility and the nature of the organisation will influence the selection techniques that are cost-effective for the organisation.

The nature of the labour market

The second factor affecting the selection decision is the labour market with which the organisation must deal. The labour market for the organisation is affected by the labour market in the country as a whole. It is further affected by the working conditions the organisation offers, the job itself and the organisation's image which have been discussed in this course.

Those who work in personnel analyse this labour market factor by using a measure known as the selection ratio:

$$\text{Selection ratio} = \frac{\text{The number of applicants to be selected}}{\text{The number of applicants available for selection}}$$

If the selection ratio is 1:1, the selection process is short and unsophisticated; if the selection ratio is 1:44, the process can be quite detailed. When there is a larger ratio, it also means the organisation can be quite selective in its choice.

Union requirements

Many organisations are unionised – either fully or partly. In such instances, union membership prior to hiring or shortly thereafter is a factor in the selection decision. At times, employee unions in their contracts with the organisation require that seniority (experience at the job with the organisation) be the only criterion, or a major one, in selection. Thus, you would see that in many ways, a union can affect an organisation's selection process – openly and subtly.

Government regulations

The fourth sector affecting selection is the government. Many governments prohibit employers from asking prospective employees questions about their race, gender, national origin and the like. Even indirect questions are sometimes prohibited. In the United States, the federal government also regulates selection practices. What is important is whether a practice is likely to have an adverse impact on a prospect because of his/her age, race, gender, religion or national origin.

Selection methods

An organisation's success depends on whether that organisation employs the right people. Choosing the right person for the job is therefore critical to its success. A poor or inappropriate choice will not only be costly to the organisation but demoralising to the employee (who finds himself/herself in the wrong job) and certainly demotivating to the rest of the workforce. In many instances, the perfect match is not always possible and the organisation will then be faced with three further time-consuming and costly choices:

1. To change or modify the job to fit the person.
2. To encourage personal change and development until an acceptable fit is reached.
3. A mixture of the abovementioned choices.

While there is a vast array of selection methods available to an organisation, from psychometric exercises (fast becoming popular) to graphology (inferring character from handwriting), the following list comprises the set of practices most commonly used and therefore to be discussed further:

- Interviews
- Biodata
- Group methods (roles and problem solving)
- In-trays
- Presentations
- Work simulations
- Repertory grids
- Personality assessments
- Assessment centres.

Interviews and interview skills

Interviewing is by far the most popular method. It is popular because of the ease and convenience to conduct interviews but it requires discipline and skill to interview well. There are myriad variations to interviewing but there are three common forms: one-to-one, sequential and panel.

Most people are familiar with the one-to-one interview – either as an interviewee (the one who is subject to the interview) or an interviewer (the one who conducts the interview). In this form of interview, one interviewer sits with one recruit/candidate and conducts the interview. This kind of interview could either be unstructured or structured. The unstructured interview typically involves little preparation. The most notable characteristic of a highly unstructured interview is that no specific questions are systematically asked of all applicants. The presumed advantage of an unstructured interview is the freedom that it allows the interviewer to adapt to the situation and to the changing stream of applicants (Ivancevich, 1998). In contrast to an unstructured interview, Ivancevich (1998) argues that a structured employment interview is characterised by a high degree of continuity between applicants. The interviewer will have a standardised list of questions that he/she will ask of all applicants. In addition, the interviewer will have a scoring form for the recording of applicants' responses. In a highly structured interview, there might even be a predetermined sequence of questions to ensure that the same information is obtained from everyone. The structured interview has therefore substantially greater potential ability than an unstructured one but it does constrain both the interviewer and the applicant. Neither may be given the opportunity to express certain attitudes or to explore certain areas of information that might prove useful. After many years of research on employment interviews, there now seems to be considerable agreement that all else being equal, structured interviews will be more reliable and more valid than unstructured ones (Ivancevich, 1998, p. 240 citing Michael A. McDaniel et al.).

The sequential interview is a little more advanced as it is a series of interviews. The sequence can be structured so that the outcomes of the first interview are fed to the second interviewer before that interview. The candidate moves from room to room and is interviewed by different interviewers. The panel interview consists of two or more interviewers. Naturally, any panel interview is less intimate and more formal. It can however provide a wealth of information if it is handled well. Otherwise, it may only make the candidate very nervous and feel ill at ease. There has to be coordination among the members of the interview panel – that is who is going to ask what and in what order.

The setting of the interview is very important and attention should be paid to details such as noise level, avoiding interruptions, lighting, the candidate's reception as well as the dressing and the manner of the interviewer. The physical positioning of furniture is also instrumental in dictating the tone of the interview; it is therefore important in creating the appropriate atmosphere. The atmosphere may be informal but the candidate has a certain role to play. Argyle (1972) expresses this well:

> *There are certain subtleties about being a good candidate. It is necessary to draw attention to his (her) good qualities whilst remaining modest and submissive. (S)he may need to show what a decisive and forceful person (s)he is – but without using these powers on the selection board.*

All interviews should be well-planned. It is essential that interviewers plan the sequence as well as the content of events. There is a vast body of research and knowledge regarding the do's and don'ts in interviewing. Some of the more important ones are presented as follows:

- The interviewer should limit his/her talking to approximately 20 per cent of the time, thus allowing the interviewee to talk for 80 per cent of the interview.
- Limit the use of closed questions; open questions are preferred by candidates and generally elicit more information from them.

- Avoid premature closure on a decision about the candidate. It has been estimated that the interviewer usually makes a decision within the first four to nine minutes and then seeks evidence to support the decision.
- Be aware that interviewers recognise and like a candidate similar to them (such as same social background, school and the like). Good practice requires that such factors be neutralised as much as possible.
- Be mindful that interviewers are affected by contrast so that an average performer seen after an exceptionally weak one will be rated highly. Also, the last candidate tends to be remembered more clearly than the others.
- Be aware that there is a tendency to place more emphasis on negative information rather than on positive information.
- Have a basic structure to the interview that carries consistently from candidate to candidate. The success of an unstructured interview for selection is only slightly better than chance.
- Only 10 per cent of communication is through the content of the spoken word, 50 per cent is from voice tone, level, accent, and 40 per cent from body language. How you say something is therefore as important as what you say. Interviewers like animated (but controlled) body language. Candidates should consider posture, facial gestures and intonation in the voice.
- The interview provides a cheap method and an ideal opportunity for the organisation to sell itself.

Despite criticisms of the interview as a method, it remains extremely popular. It is worth remembering that the criticisms are largely about the interviewer(s) and not the process.

The foregoing discussion clearly illustrated that skill and discipline on the part of the interviewer is critical to employing the interview as a method for finding the best person for the job at hand. Cole (1988) summarised the key skills to effective interviewing as follows:

- Ability to prepare adequately
- Ability to listen such as picking up points implied in the candidate’s responses
- Ability to ask relevant questions at the right time by having good questioning skills
- Ability to analyse the picture of the candidate that is emerging at the interview
- Ability to summarise and make notes of the candidate’s performance
- Ability to supply relevant information to the candidate without boring him/her
- Skill in building and maintaining rapport with the candidate

- Ability to control the interview with tact, diplomacy and firmness

Biodata

This refers to biographical information about the candidate and much of this sort of information is gathered on application forms. Application forms, as with other tools used for selection purposes, should be clearly designed so that selectors know how they are going to use the information when it is received.

Relevancy is a criterion in determining the type of information that is to be gathered. Be sure that there is a reason for asking for data such as personal information and that it will be appropriately used. Such information may help the selectors to find out more about the candidate's group orientation and/or individual orientation as well as further assess his/her leadership qualities.

Shortlisting from application forms can be risky. Many candidates who do not have the "right" background or have not had the same opportunities that others had might be ruled out without regard to how well they might perform the job at hand. Researchers have found that selecting candidates on the basis of application forms can be a haphazard affair with candidates who filled in the white spaces on the form standing a better chance of selection because filling in the spaces was equated with motivation.

Group methods

There are two main group methods of selection: roles and problem solving. Organisations must always look for people who can be members of teams since most roles within an organisation are performed in a team context. Techniques that identify such candidates are therefore critical in the arsenal of selection techniques. Some organisations are using Meredith Belbin's work on team roles, not only to identify the roles that exist at present within the team and therefore what the gap is, but also to select a candidate with the required role preference.

Belbin (1993) has identified nine team roles: plant, resource investigator, coordinator, shaper, monitor evaluator, team worker, implementer, completer, and specialist. A person is seldom strong in all nine roles.

In the problem-solving method, a small group of six–eight people is asked to solve a work-related problem within a limited time. Each individual may also be asked to provide feedback to the assessors on the behaviour of a chosen candidate; thus, each individual would not only be asked to contribute to the solving of the problem but would also be required to appraise another individual. The candidate would be assessed on:

- Creativity in problem-solving ability in the short term and the long term
- Ability to work well and contribute to a team situation
- Interpersonal skills
- Ability to listen as well as to appraise and assess others

- Leadership and chairing qualities.

In-trays

This is a real-life workplace simulation exercise. This exercise simulates what a manager might find in his/her in-tray and the candidate is allocated a limited time – say, about 30 minutes –to go through the in-tray of memos, letters, reports and other documents and make appropriate written decisions. These decisions or suggested actions will be communicated and explained to an assessor following the event. This exercise is designed to assess:

- Ability to make appropriate decisions during situations of time pressure
- Capacity to deal with situations appropriately
- Awareness of the knock-on-effect of decisions to other parties
- Ability to organise and prioritise

Presentation

Each candidate is asked to write and present a piece of work to an audience. It will be time-limited and on a relevant topic. For example, a person applying for a job as a manager of a multinational organisation where the job will be to liaise with and manage overseas staff may be asked to present a 15-minute paper on managing cultural diversity. He/she would be assessed on verbal and nonverbal presentation skills, relevant content, time management and the ability to cope with questions.

Work simulation exercise

A typical work situation will be simulated so that a candidate's ability to do the job effectively can be assessed. This method provides an alternative to relying on what the candidate says he/she would do in a given situation. We all know that what and how they say they would carry out a piece of work may be quite different to what they would do in practice. Examples of this method would be a secretary being asked to take a typing test or a television newscaster presenting a news item as if he/she were doing it in real-life.

Repertory grid technique

The notion of personal construct psychology as a theory of personality was developed by G. A. Kelly in 1955. During the early 1990s, this was adapted for use in the selection process. The technique allows the individual to make sense of his/her world by identifying similarities and differences between sets of events in his/her life and in this way develops personal constructs or ways of seeing oneself. Anderson (1990) used this technique to elicit constructs that relate to preferred tasks. In this technique, the candidate is asked to denote his/her likes and dislikes on a given set of activities. In the case of a marketing manager, one cluster of constructs showed that he liked variety, challenge and responsibility for the marketing function while the other cluster of constructs showed a dislike of closely supervised work, desk-bound tasks and advertising responsibilities. For a detailed explanation, you should refer to Anderson's work on repertory grids (1990). The repertory grid is extremely useful when you are trying to uncover a candidate's real motivation and preferences. This technique marks an exciting step forward in the field of selection.

Personality assessment

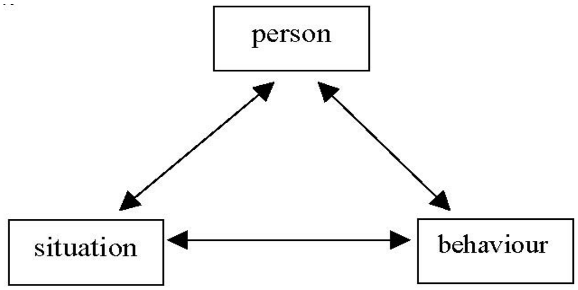
The use of personality questionnaires in employee selection is not an area for the amateur. Some experienced users find this an invaluable tool. There are many psychometric self-report questionnaires on the market that purport to measure personality. There are also many definitions of personality – one of which is as follows (Jessup & Jessup, 1975):

> *That which makes one person different from another and includes all the psychological characteristics of an individual personality is used to describe the non-cognitive and non-intellectual characteristics of an individual. It refers more to the emotional make up of a person and is reflected in the style of his (her) behaviour rather than the quality of his (her) performance.*

Robbins (2001) describes personality as "The sum total of ways in which an individual reacts and interacts with others". "Personality" here is not meant in the popular sense that a person has charm, a positive attitude toward life, or a smiling face. When psychologists talk of personality, they mean a dynamic concept describing the growth and development of a person's whole psychological system.

Opinions are diverse on the use of personality assessment as a selection method. Some authors argue that personality is relatively stable and that it is consistent from one time to another and different from the behaviour of others in similar situations. Others have questioned whether people are consistent and/or variable across situations (cross-cultural consistency) and from one time to another (temporal stability). Yet, some others have suggested that real consistency of behaviour would be helpful when trying to assess personality but that real consistency may suggest abnormality or maladaptive behaviour.

Bandura (1977) questions whether the trait approach to personality, or the situation, explains the behaviour. Clearly, it may not be very useful to assess personality as part of the selection process if personality does not (to a large extent) explain behaviour. Bandura further suggests that behaviour is a result of the person/situation interaction. The following diagram suggests that both personality and situation determine behaviour.



Person/Situation Interaction

Figure 5.3

Source: (Beardwell & Holden, 1998)

Assessment centres

The topic of assessment centres arose in Module 2 but merits further discussion here. Lewis (1985) has described this method as a selection procedure using multiple methods. It is a programme of tests, work simulation situations, exercises and interviews which are designed to measure and assess a wide range of different abilities, skills, behavioural characteristics and potential required for effective performance in the job. Although assessment centre techniques have gained prominence and popularity since then, they are not new; they date back to World War II.

Setting up an assessment centre specifically for an organisation involves six stages:

1. Identifying skills and behaviours required of the post.
2. Relating specific exercises and tasks to Stage 1.
3. Testing the exercises on an appropriate sample of individuals to ascertain that they do measure what they say they measure, and then feeding this information back into the process.
4. Training assessors from within the organisation to observe and rate candidates effectively, or providing professionally-trained staff to carry out the task.
5. Running the assessment centre and choosing the appropriate candidate.
6. Giving feedback to the candidate on the process.

Although the setting up of an assessment centre that is relevant to the organisation entails enormous costs, and requires time and expertise, it provides the organisation with the capacity to view and assess candidates from a number of differing perspectives using a wide variety of methods. Further, assessment centres also provide candidates a wide opportunity to exhibit their skills and talents to the assessors and also to get to know the organisation well. This places the candidates in a position to make a well-informed decision if they are offered the job. Overall, the assessment centre is a more holistic approach to assessment.

Barriers to effective selection

We have discussed a number of selection methods designed to predict future work behaviour and potential. The effective methods of selection not only provide more information about the candidate but also information that is relevant, useful and comparable between candidates. There is an important distinction or difference to be drawn between the amounts of information produced and how relevant the information is. More does not necessarily mean better.

Evaluative standards

The effectiveness of selection methods will depend upon a number of factors which Muchinsky (1986) refers to as “evaluative standards”. The usual standards or measures against which methods are selected are as follows:

- Fairness
- Cost
- User-friendliness
- Acceptability (to both the candidate and the organisation)
- Validity and reliability
- Applicability.

Some evaluative standards are easier to assess than others. It is quite evident that there is the need to quantify cost as it affects and constrains the process. However, it is not easy to quantify both direct costs and hidden costs (such as the cost of selecting the “wrong” candidate or the opportunity cost of the selector’s time) when you consider them. In addition, other constraints and issues such as perception, fairness as well as validity and reliability are not only difficult to assess but the importance of the concept may also not be immediately obvious.

Perception

One of the most fundamental barriers to selecting the “right” candidate on a truly rational and objective basis is that we (as individuals or groups) do not have the ability to perceive others precisely. To select staff, we require an individual or a group of people to assess and compare the respective competencies of others with the aim of choosing the right person for the job. Yet, our views are highly personalised through the processes of perception. Each of us has a different view of the world. We are all subject to our own cultural conditioning and find it hard to be totally aware that others do not see the world as we do. It is thus not an objective view of the world; it is merely our own reality.

Perceptual selectivity

To illustrate this barrier, let us take an example from the workplace such as the taking of business minutes. Recollect a meeting at which several people were in attendance. No matter how many people were at the meeting, only one (the person who took the minutes) will feel it is a totally accurate representation of what was said. If every member of the group were asked to take minutes, there would likely be as many different accounts of what happened as there were people in the group. This is due to the perceptual differences we have.

Our view of the world or of any situation is selective and partial. You and I see the same situation differently. The notion of perception is of extreme importance to the process of selection.

Stereotyping

This is one of the most common barriers to accurate perception. Stereotyping means the forming of opinions that are based on very few facts (usually on the basis of class or category). Stereotyping takes place when we first meet people (as is usually the case at an interview). We try to categorise them, place them in boxes and subsequently ascribe to them traits or personal characteristics on the basis of this categorisation. For example, we may assume that:

- All professors are absent-minded, older, males and have their heads in the clouds.
- All civil servants are boring and wear pin-striped suits.
- All social workers are left-wing and wishy-washy.

Stereotypes are therefore generalisations which are oversimplified and hence untrue by definition. However, they are very useful shortcuts which allow us to assess and evaluate people and situations quickly. In certain instances, there may be a grain of truth behind the stereotype or there may have been an element of truth to the stereotype at one time. Nevertheless, the description or view is untrue and can be damaging for the vast majority of those being stereotyped.

So, why do we stereotype if stereotypes are misleading and untrue? Individuals compare others with themselves or other situations with their own. During this process, small differences become accentuated and form the basis of stereotypes.

Stereotyping – Gender issues

Under this topic, it is also important to discuss gender-role stereotypes. For example, with more women entering the managerial ranks, it is important to understand how both men and women view the manager’s job. In the early days, men predominantly held managerial jobs and those jobs have been viewed as being primarily masculine in nature as a result. Such stereotyping of management and its incumbents has produced negative reactions to women in management, thereby inhibiting women from either choosing or being chosen for managerial positions. In order to discover more about the possible effects of gender-role stereotypes on women in management, Virginia Schein carried out two related studies among male and female managers.

Schein (1973, pp. 95-100 and 1975, pp. 340-344) conducted a questionnaire survey among samples of 300 male managers and 167 female managers. Managers were asked to identify those traits that characterised men in general, women in general, and successful middle managers. It was hypothesised that both male and female managers would describe successful middle managers as possessing characteristics, attitudes and temperaments more commonly ascribed to men than to women. The results of the study clearly indicated that both men and women have strong male-oriented stereotypes of successful managers – that is, managers of both genders described successful managers as exhibiting primarily masculine traits. Several important implications for management result from this study – particularly in the area of employee selection, placement and promotion. First, if a woman's self-image incorporates certain aspects of the stereotypical feminine role, she may be less-inclined to pursue a managerial career because of an inconsistency between her (male-oriented) perceptions of the job and her own self-image. Moreover, if male managers also view a managerial career as primarily a masculine one, they may attempt to dissuade (or even block) a woman from attempting it. Finally, a male gender-role stereotype of a manager's job may cause a sink-or-swim attitude among a new female manager's male peers. Without co-worker support, her chances of survival in a predominantly male world would obviously be diminished.

From the information given, it is clear that stereotyping has implications for gender issues in management. It is easy to see how this can be transferred from gender issues to race issues or from race issues to ageism and so on.

Stereotyping – Older employees

A study by Rosen and Jerdee (1976) found that business students had certain views about older employees and these views were:

- They are more resistant to change.
- They are more rigid and less creative.
- They are less likely to take risks.
- They have fewer physical abilities.
- They tend to avoid learning new things.

Both of these pieces of research (on gender and age) indicate how easy it would be to make selection decisions based on prejudice rather than skills and ability. For instance, it would be easy to assume that a person who lists his/her age as 50 years old on his/her application form is going to be resistant to change. A person of any age may be resistant to change and such information should be obtained during the selection process and not be assumed on prejudiced views.

Halo effect

Another barrier to selection is the halo effect which can be either positive or negative (the negative description is often referred to as the horns effect). It occurs when some traits or personal characteristics influence or overwhelm others. For example, if an interviewee is liked initially, it may also be assumed that he/she is intelligent and we will then only hear the information during the interview that supports our original view. There is also a strong tendency for individuals to conform to the expectations held of them. So, if workers are treated like children, they may behave like children.

Projection

Projection is a defence mechanism whereby it is thought to be used by individuals who do not wish to acknowledge their own weaknesses. Projection is the act of attributing onto others our own traits or weaknesses. Therefore, if we often feel insecure or anxious, we project this feeling onto others and see it in them. It is said that we only see in others what is present in ourselves and therefore that what is said about another says more about the sender of the message than the receiver.

At an interview, it is easy to see how we are likely to ascribe to the interviewee traits that are present not in the candidate but in ourselves. So, ask yourself when you assess the candidate, "Am I describing myself or the interviewee?"

Fairness

The laws of many countries draw attention to the unacceptability of unfair discriminatory practices in relation to gender and race although they do so less frequently in relation to age. Many organisations claim in their advertisements and in policy documents not to discriminate inappropriately on the grounds of race, gender, disability, age, religion or culture. Certainly, an awareness of prejudice within structured selection methods can minimise unfair discrimination.

Validity

Any method of selection should be valid and reliable. Validity refers to its accuracy as a predictor of job performance and there are a number of different sorts of validity. The three different types are discussed as follows:

1. **Face validity:** This refers to the feel or image of the test. On the face of it, does it seem to be valid to the candidate and the tester? It may seem a rather superficial form of validity but it is very important to the candidate in gaining their acceptance and therefore desire to undertake the exercise. Personality questionnaires usually depend upon low face validity so that there is an unawareness of which questions relate to which personality trait.
2. **Predictive validity:** This refers to the relationship between the outcome or results of the selection technique and the ability to perform effectively when in post. The selection method should distinguish between good and poor work performers and it is irrelevant if good performers have a low score and poor

performers have a high score as long as there is a clear distinction between the two.

3. **Content validity:** It is important that the test or exercise is assessing a skill or ability that is relevant to the job. Trying to assess personality traits provides a good illustration of the importance of content validity. For example, if the selectors were interested in the characteristic of charisma for a senior management position, it would be necessary to not only define what this means in practice but to be also sure that the method of selection fully assesses this type of behaviour.

Reliability

A reliable method is one that will produce consistent results when it is repeated in similar situations.

All the above-mentioned factors would affect selection as barriers to effective selection. As far as possible, organisations should strive to eliminate the effects of some of these barriers or at least minimise them.

Popularity of selection methods

Robertson and Makin (1986) listed and classified the many selection methods that exist into three distinct groupings:

1. Those concerned with describing past behaviour:
    - Biodata
    - References
    - Supervisor or peer group ratings

2. Those concerned with present behaviour:
    - Personality self-report questionnaires
    - Interviews
    - Self-assessments
    - Work samples
    - Handwriting
    - Repertory grids

3. Those concerned with the future:
    - Future biography
    - Situational interviews

Selection decision

All the foregoing methods related to selection are designed for making decisions. We can group the various approaches to making the actual selection decision into three categories:

1. **Random choice or chance approach**: Examples of this approach are choosing the third applicant interviewed or putting names in a hat and drawing out a name.

2. **Emotional-clinical approach**: The manager unconsciously selects the applicant who was most likeable in the interviews.
3. **Systematic quasi-rational approach**: This is a systemic approach using various selection techniques while being mindful that unconscious emotional choices are likely to enter into the decision.

An attempt may be made to try to reconcile differences of opinion on selection between personnel specialists and operating managers. If that does not work, it appears reasonable that the view of the operating manager who will supervise the applicant should prevail since this is the manager who must deal with an unsuitable or ineffective employee.

Orientation

In many instances, when employees report for work on their first day, there is hardly any advice given to them regarding how to get about the job, what pitfalls should be avoided, and in general what the company expects them to do in the job. In short, has there been some kind of orientation? Let us look at one definition.

Definition

Orientation is the personnel activity which introduces new employees to the enterprise and to their tasks, superiors and work groups.

Orientation has not been studied a great deal and little scientific research has been done on whether the programmes are adequate. The nature of the employee and the nature of the task, the work group and the leadership are all important features of an effective orientation programme. The nature of the employee and the task are critical factors. For example, managers are given a more detailed orientation programme than other employees. The orientation programme focuses on introducing the new employee to the task, the work group and the supervisor-leader. During orientation, the work policies of the organisation, the job conditions and the other employees the new employee has to work with to get the job done are discussed.

The style by which new employees are oriented varies from organisation to organisation. The style is generally affected by the organisation and its operating climate. What are called conservative organisations will orient employees quite differently than how liberal organisations will. Some organisations start the orientation programme immediately on the day the employee reports for work though he/she may be the only one; other organisations wait for a “sufficient” number to report before they embark on orientation, citing feasibility and cost as reasons. Another area that needs to be given due consideration is the implementation of online orientation which can be done even before the new employee sets foot into the organisation.

In general, the orientation process is similar to what sociologists call socialisation. Socialisation refers to the process that adapts new employees to the culture of the organisation. When new employees first join the organisation, they are unfamiliar with the norms and values of the organisation. With this ignorance, they may exhibit undesirable behaviours which may disturb the beliefs and customs that are already in place. They may feel confused and disoriented; and they may decide to leave the organisation soon. If they fail to adapt and learn the essential behaviours, they may also be labelled as "non-conformists" or "rebels", which often leads to expulsion. Hence, organisations will deliberately take the effort to help new employees to adapt to the existing organisational culture.

Employee socialisation can be conceptualised as a process made up of three stages: (1) pre-arrival stage, (2) encounter stage, and (3) metamorphosis stage:

1. Pre-arrival Stage	The period of learning that occurs before a new employee joins the organisation. New employees would have undergone a considerable amount of prior socialisation in training and in school. In school, they would have learned the attitudes and values that businesses desire. For example, they may have learned that to be successful employees, they must work hard, be loyal, and have a high need for achievement. During the hiring and selection process, the firm must ensure that they find the "right type" – those who will fit in with matching values. The newly hired must be well-informed of the expectations and values of the organisation.
2. Encounter Stage	The period in which a new employee actually sees what the organisation is really like upon joining the organisation. During this stage, the new employee may confront the possibility that his expectations and the reality are different. When this happens, the organisation must help the new employee adapt to the new culture. The new employee will undergo socialisation to learn new behaviours and values that the organisation deems desirable. If the new employee fails to adapt, they may become disillusioned and may decide to leave the organisation.
3. Metamorphosis Stage	The period in which a new employee changes and adjusts to the new working environment. Adaptation to the new working environment implies going through changes – hence, this is called metamorphosis stage. During this stage, the new employees will sort out any problems faced during the encounter stage. They will slowly blend into the existing organisational culture by adopting the norms, beliefs, and work values of the organisation. The entry socialisation process is said to be completed once the new employee has internalised the norms and standards of the organisation. Now the new member is comfortable with

	the organisation –their job, co-workers, and the working conditions. The new member feels accepted by their supervisor and peers, and is confident that he can carry out their job successfully. They understand the system, rules, procedures and practices within the organisation. They know what is expected of them and what constitutes a job well-done.

Table 5.2 Employee socialisation

Successful metamorphosis should lead to positive outcomes. As shown by the diagram below, socialisation has a positive impact on employee's job performance and commitment to the organisation. The internalisation process also reduces employee's propensity to leave the organisation.

Purposes of orientation

An effective orientation programme serves a number of purposes. The principal purposes of orientation are as follows:

Reduces start-up costs for a new employee

In most instances, the new employee does not know the job, how the organisation works, or whom to see to get the job done. In fact, he/she is a sort of a stranger to the organisation. This means that (for a while) the new employee is less efficient than the experienced employee and additional costs are involved in getting the new employee started. These start-up costs vary depending on the level of the employee; it will cost much more in the case of top managers than for lower grades of staff. Effective orientation reduces these start-up costs and enables the new employee to reach standards sooner.

Reduces the amount of anxiety and hazing-a-new-employee experiences

Anxiety in this case means fear of failure on the job. Hazing takes place when experienced employees "kid" the new employee. For example, experienced employees may ask the new worker, "How many toys are you producing per hour?" When the employee answers, he/she is told, "You'll never last. The last one who did that few lasted only two days." In the military, the situation may be more devastating to a new recruit. Such hazing serves several purposes. It lets the recruit know he/she has a lot to learn and is thus dependent on others for his/her job. It may be "fun" for the old-timers but it can cause great anxiety for the recruit. Effective orientation alerts the new person to hazing and reduces anxiety.

Reduces employee turnover

If employees perceive themselves to be ineffective, unwanted or unneeded, they may seek to deal with these negative feelings by quitting. Turnover is high during the break-in period and effective orientation can help in reducing this costly condition.

Saves time for supervisors and co-workers

Improperly-oriented employees must still get the job done and they need help to do so. The most likely people to provide this help are the co-workers and supervisors who will have to spend time breaking in new employees. Good orientation programmes save everyone time.

Develops realistic job expectations, positive attitudes towards the employer and job satisfaction

In what sociologists call the “older” professions (law, medicine) or total institutions (the church, prisons and the military), the job expectations are clear because they have been developed over long years of training and education. Society has built up a set of attitudes and behaviours that are considered proper for these jobs. However for most of the working world, this does not hold true. New employees must learn realistically what the organisation expects of them; their own expectations of the job must be neither too low nor too high. Each worker must incorporate the job and its work values into his/her self-image.

Who orients employees?

In general, orientation is a joint effort between operating managers and representatives of the personnel department. The personnel department usually introduces new employees to the organisation, handles the paperwork of getting them enrolled, puts them on the payroll, and explains personnel policies regarding pay, benefits and work rules. It may also develop an orientation checklist and briefs employees on the expectations of their respective superiors.

The operating manager or supervisor explains the task to the new employees. He/she shows them around the workplace and introduces them to other employees. The supervisor also explains what is expected in the way of job performance and work rules. Better supervisors usually alert present employees about the hiring of new employees and encourage them to help the recruits and welcome them to the work group. In some unionised organisations, trade union officials also take part in orienting new employees.

How orientation programmes work

Orientation programmes vary from quite informal, primarily verbal efforts to formal schedules that supplement verbal presentations with written hand-outs. Formal orientations often include a tour of the facilities or slides, charts and pictures of them. Usually, they are used when a large number of employees must be oriented.

The formal programme usually covers such items as:

- The history and general policies of the organisation.
- Descriptions of the organisation’s services and products.
- The way the organisation is structured.

- Safety measures and regulations.
- Personnel policies and practices.
- Compensation, benefits and employee services provided.
- Daily routine and regulations.

Glueck (1978) presents five guidelines for conducting an employee orientation:

1. Orientation should begin with the most relevant and immediate kinds of information and then proceed to more general organisation policies.
2. The most significant part of orientation is the human side giving new employees knowledge of what supervisors and co-workers are like, telling them how long it should take to reach standards of effective work, and encouraging them to seek help and advice when needed.
3. New employees should be sponsored or directed by an experienced worker or supervisor in the immediate environment who can respond adequately to questions and keep in close touch during the early induction period.
4. New employees should be gradually introduced to the people with whom they will work rather than be given a superficial introduction to all of them on the first day. The objective should be to help them get to know their co-workers and supervisors.
5. New employees should be allowed sufficient time to get their feet on the ground before demands on them are increased.

You should keep in mind that orienting management trainees is a special activity. Most management trainees come directly from universities or colleges and have to adjust from study life to working life. There is little doubt that initial experiences with an organisation are important predictors of future managerial performance. Therefore, the first impressions received are important to career and employee development. It is hence crucial that management trainees (as they are future leaders) are put under the supervision of a successful senior executive who can be a role model for the trainees and who also wants to get the trainees off to a good start. It must be ensured that trainees would not have unpleasant experiences during the initial period because fast turnover may cause heavy losses for the organisation.

Assignment, placement and orientation follow-up

Having selected the new employees, the next or final phase of the orientation programme is the assignment of the new employee(s) to the job. At this point, the supervisor is supposed to take over and continue the orientation. However, as in many instances, supervisors are busy people and however well-intentioned they are, they may overlook some of the facts needed by the new employee(s) to do a good job. One way to assure adequate orientation is to design a feedback system to control the programme or use the management by objectives (MBO) technique.

Cost/benefit analysis of orientation programmes

There are several approaches to evaluating the costs and benefits of orientation programmes. One simple way is to calculate the cost per new employee for the orientation programme. This is done as follows:

Direct costs

Cost of trainers or orientation specialists

+ Cost of materials provided

+ Cost of space used (if applicable)

Indirect costs

Cost of time to supervise trainers/orientation specialists

+ Cost of supervisors of new employees on the job

= Orientation costs

After computing these costs, the organisation should compare its costs per employee to the costs for comparable organisations. The organisation can also compare the costs of running its own programme with the costs of contracting it to external vendors. This is presently often not done. Trainees can be asked to evaluate the benefits by using an appropriate attitude questionnaire.

Introduction to training and development

Since different and yet interrelated terms will be used here, the first imperative is to establish what the various terms mean. Harrison (1992) outlines the following connections:

> *Development is the all-important primary process, through which individual and organisational growth can through time achieve its fullest potential. Education is the major contributor to that process, because it directly and continuously affects the formation not only of knowledge and abilities, but also of character and of culture, aspirations and achievements. Training is the shorter-term, systematic process through which an individual is helped to master defined tasks or areas of skill and knowledge to pre-determined standards. There needs to be a coherent and well-planned integration of training, education and continuous development in the organisation if real growth at individual and organisational levels is to be achieved and sustained.*

Beardwell and Holden (1998) propose that to achieve and maintain the survival and success of any organisation, its managers not only have to acquire appropriate people to resource it but they also need to train and develop their employees. The reasons adduced by them are:

- New employees are, in some respects, like other raw materials – they have to be "processed" to become more able to perform the tasks of their job adequately and to fit into their work-group and into the organisation as a whole.
- Jobs and tasks may change over time, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and employees have to be updated to maintain their adequate performance.
- New jobs and tasks may be introduced into the organisation and be filled by existing employees who need re-direction.
- People need training to perform better in their existing jobs.
- People themselves change –their interests, their skills, their confidence, their aspirations, their circumstances.
- Some employees may move jobs within the organisation, on promotion and/or to widen their experience, and so they need further training.
- The organisation itself, or its context, may change or be changed over time so that employees have to be updated in their ways of working together.
- The organisation may wish to be ready for some future change and require (some) employees to develop transferable skills.
- The organisation may wish to respond flexibly to its environment and so require (some) employees to develop flexibility and transferable skills.
- Management requires training and development. This will involve initial training for new managers, further development and training for managers, management succession and the development of potential managers.

Beardwell and Holden add a word of caution: "We also have to recognise that human resource development does not take place in a vacuum. To be effective, it presupposes effective selection, effective supervision and an appropriate management style, the opportunity to transfer learning to the workplace, career paths and promotion possibilities, appropriate incentives and rewards. It also presupposes some degree of planning, and linkage to the strategy of the organisation, and is, therefore, implicit within organisation development."

Learning and development

Is it really necessary that human resource managers need to understand learning and development? If you examine what organisations look for in their members, you will realise that it is important for you to understand these basic processes so that you are able to make use of them effectively for the organisation.

Barrow and Loughlin (1993) assert that organisations will be expecting the following abilities of their employees:

- A high level of education (possibly up to degree level) so that employees can operate new technology, understand the contribution of their role(s) to the company, and make decisions appropriate to their jobs.
- The ability to learn new skills and adapt to changing circumstances by taking responsibility for their own learning, keeping their skills up-to-date and learning new processes.
- The ability to work in organisations with flatter structures and fewer layers of management – for example, to work without supervision, set their own objectives, monitor their own performance, correct failures.
- The ability to manage the interface with customers and between departments, requiring a good level of interpersonal skills.
- The ability for problem solving, creative thinking about future possibilities, and contributing their own unique ideas.

Barrow and Loughlin (1993) further describe how Grand Metropolitan Foods Europe (merged with Guinness plc to form Diageo in 1997) was confronting the challenges of the 1990s with a training strategy that would give employees of all levels access to qualifications in business and management through programmes focused on learning, self-development and developing others.

Rothwell (1992) reports how organisations are extending their activities to developing the skills of both suppliers and customers in order to improve the quality of their supply chain.

In order to be an effective HR manager, you must understand the processes of learning and development, what influences them and how they may be facilitated. Learning and development cannot be just simply thrust upon us. Beardwell and Holden (1998, p. 274) argue that learning and development are processes that we all experience. They are active processes which we all engage in.

Defining learning and development

You have observed that the concepts “learning” and “development” are often used loosely and interchangeably at times. The following definitions will enable you to understand the concepts clearly and distinguish between them.

> *Learning is … a process within the organism which results in the capacity for changed performance which can be related to experience rather than maturation. (*Ribeaux & Poppleton, 1978, p. 381)

Note that learning is seen as a process through which experience (as distinct from maturation) produces the capacity to behave differently. It is not just a cognitive process that involves the assimilation of information in symbolic form (as in book learning) but also an affective and physical process (Binsted, 1980). Beardwell and Holden (1998) similarly state that our emotions, nerves and muscles are also involved in this process. It is a process that can be undertaken at various levels of effectiveness, producing either positive or negative change in the learner. The more conscious we are of the learning process, the more effective it is likely to be.

Development, however, is the process through which an organism or an individual becomes increasingly complex, more elaborate and differentiated, by virtue of both learning and maturation. In an organism, greater complexity, differentiation among the parts leads to changes in the structure of the whole and to the way in which the whole functions (Reese & Overton, 1970, p. 126). In the individual, this greater complexity opens up the potential for new ways of acting and responding to the environment. This leads to the opportunity for even further learning and so on. You may have experienced for yourself that learning thus contributes to development. The key point is that learning is not synonymous with development but development cannot take place without learning.

According to Beardwell and Holden (1998, p. 274), the outcomes of a person's learning and development are the way he/she thinks, feels and interprets his/her world (his/her cognition, affect, attitudes, overall philosophy of life); the way he/she sees himself/herself, his/her self-concept and self-esteem; and his/her ability to respond to and make his/her way in his/her particular environment (his/her perceptual-motor, intellectual, social and interpersonal skills). Daloz (1986, pp. 24-26) likens it to a journey that starts from the familiar world and moves through "confusion, adventure, great highs and lows, struggle, uncertainty … Toward a new world, in which nothing is different, yet all is 'transformed'; its meaning has 'profoundly changed'." It should be clear to you that learning and development are thus significant experiences for individuals and for organisations.

Learning about learning from your own experience

All of us engage at some time or the other in the processes of learning and development but often without paying conscious attention to them and therefore not fully understanding them. This module will help you understand the motivation for learning and influences upon learning. It will also examine how people learn, and what helps or hinders them. Later, you will have the opportunity to identify who benefits from and who pays for your learning. This will help you understand something of the problematical issues inherent in employee development.

The need for learning and development in the organisation

Beardwell and Holden (1998, p. 276) note that today's organisations must emphasise the characteristics of quality and continuous improvement, flexibility and adaptability in order to survive and be effective. These make learning and development of their members of crucial and strategic importance not just in terms of extensive training in task skills but also completely new task boundaries and hence work relationships as well as ways of working and thinking about work. Overall, they amount to the need for all individual employees to learn how to learn, for managers to facilitate this and for all together to become a learning organisation.

Peter Senge (1990) popularised the concept of learning organisations in his book *The Fifth Discipline*. He described them as places "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".

According to Garvin (1993), learning organisations appear to be proficient in a number of activities: systematic problem solving, experimentation with new approaches, learning from their own experiences and history, learning from the experiences and best practices of others as well as transferring knowledge quickly and efficiently throughout the organisation. Howard (1992) reports that learning in firms such as Xerox, General Electric and Pittsburgh Plate Glass (PPG) has been traced using a learning perspective involving three stages:

1. **Cognitive** – As members are exposed to new ideas, they expand their knowledge and begin to think differently.
2. **Behavioural** – Employees begin to alter their behaviour.
3. **Improvement of performance** – Changes in behaviour lead to measurable improvements in results.

Ivancevich (1998) states that training is a top priority in an organisation dedicated to creating a learning environment. He further states that learning organisations do not simply appear; they need to be fostered by devoting time, energy and resources on a continuing basis to the training and development of employees (managerial and non-managerial).

The need for quality and flexibility

Quality is achieved through continuous improvement in the processes, products and services of the organisation: Deming's "journey of never-ending improvement". It calls for the transformation of the management of the people "so that employees become involved in quality as the central part of their job" (Sheard, 1992, p. 33).

The main features of total quality management (TQM) are giving satisfaction to customers, both internal and external; continuous improvement in process and product; employee involvement, usually through teamwork; and also management by data and facts. It thus demands an organisation-wide culture that emphasises the importance of attitudes and the generation of enthusiasm and commitment to quality from top to bottom of the organisation. The striving for quality therefore makes great demands for extensive learning and development in organisations and not just at the level of training employees in task skills and in the operation of quality procedures.

Morgan's (1988, pp. 21-22) description of the operations concept called just-in-time (JIT) also intimates the deep-seated nature of the learning and development required by this element of the quality approach. It transforms the patterns of management and control.

> *Four-hour margins [in supply of stock] allow little room for error or prolonged decision-making, and spread responsibility and control throughout the system. … These systems call for a new type of involvement in the work process and dissolve the traditional relations between workers and managers. Every person in the system becomes a kind of manager and quality controller.*

Beardwell and Holden propose that organisations also need to be flexible: "the business outlook is uncertain and the response must be flexibility. The prerequisite for flexibility is a highly-skilled body of staff". With a complex environment and information society, organisations need to seek competitive advantage through the use of human resources (who at the same time have increased expectations about their job content and quality of life).

The increase in or enhancement of the skills that employees use is frequently now referred to as multi-skilling. There are many examples of multi-skilling. Barry (1988) reports how one company used multi-skilling to rectify the skills imbalance that resulted from restructuring and redundancy. It initiated a major programme of training and development for its fitters and electricians to "introduce cross-trade competency, increasing core trade skills, significantly increasing flexibility and developing a team approach in the engineering department". The programme called for attitude change, improved communication and team-building; it also involved the supervisors. It was carried out through college and in-house training that included residential weekends and work-based projects. Such training led to the City and Guilds accreditation of this multi-skilling.

Crofts (1990, p. 17) reports on another multi-skilling programme that followed company restructuring and rationalisation after a merger:

> *The aim was to end up with core employees fully trained to carry out all aspects of production, changeovers and maintenance. Quality would be improved through their own corrective action rather than by inspection.*
>
> *One of the first hurdles facing the organisation before any multi-skilled training could take place was to achieve a major shift in management style. A new breed of participative managers was*

needed, who was prepared to involve employees and foster their creativity. It required greater delegation, a lot of information-giving and building up levels of trust. (Crofts, 1990, p. 16)

The nature of the learner

According to Beardwell and Holden, learning is a natural process in which we all engage. It is not just a cognitive activity and it affects the person as a whole, be that person an infant or the adults who concern you as a manager. Managers, educators and trainers must be aware not only of the human ability to learn but also the inevitable barriers to learning and development, the most salient of which will be discussed here.

Learning and development throughout life

Like all animals, we humans learn and develop from birth. This learning and development leads to skilful and effective adaptation to, and manipulation, of the environment which is one element in a much-quoted definition of intelligence (Wechsler 1958 in Ribeaux and Poppleton, 1978). Society also plays a vital role in the development of humans. It fosters and facilitates these activities of its members; it also channels and controls them through socialisation and education so that they yield outcomes that contribute to and are acceptable to it.

People continue learning throughout life – whether encouraged or not, whether formally taught or not, whether the outcomes are valued or not. They learn at work and at home, in their hobbies and their social lives.

> *Most of us have learned a good deal more out of school than in it. We have learned from our families, our work, our friends. We have learned from problems resolved and tasks achieved but also from mistakes confronted and illusions unmasked. Intentionally or not, we have learned from the dilemmas our lives hand us daily. (*Daloz, 1986, p. 1)

> *Learning organisations are possible because, deep down, we are all learners. No one has to teach an infant to learn. In fact, no one has to teach infants anything. They are intrinsically inquisitive, masterful learners who learn to walk, speak … . Learning organisations are possible because not only is it our nature to learn but we love to learn. (*Senge, 1990, p. 4)

Not all individuals have had happy experiences although they may have had a lifetime's experience of being learners (especially those in formal educational settings). Again, they may not necessarily be competent or confident learners.

What is lifelong learning? It means continuous adaptation. An individual's capacities to adapt to the environment and to change it are strengthened by increased knowledge and improved skills. Further internal changes and new possibilities for the individual then emerge which feed the individual's self-esteem and confidence as well as enhance social status. Learning generates far-reaching changes in the individual and promotes development.

Barriers to learning and development

Mumford (1988, p. 26) identifies significant blocks to learning when he writes primarily about managers. They are also relevant to other learners in the organisation. These blocks to learning are listed in the following table.

Perceptual	Not seeing that there is a problem
Cultural	The way things are here
Emotional	Fear or insecurity
Motivational	Unwillingness to take risks
Cognitive	Previous learning experiences
Intellectual	Limited learning styles Poor learning skills
Expressive	Poor communication skills
Situational	Lack of opportunities
Physical	Place and time
Specific environment	Boss and/or colleagues being unsupportive

Table 5.3 Blocks to learning

Source: (Mumford, 1988, p. 26)

Anxiety and lack of confidence are frequently emphasised as significant impediments to learning. Personality characteristics such as an external rather than internal locus of control may also make the individual less open to new learning.

Adult learners: Malcolm Knowles (1984) proposed that adults learn differently because their needs and experiences are different. He put forward what he called an "andragogical" model of learning which suggests that:

- The adult learner is self-directing.
- Adult learners have experience on which to draw and learning events need to take this into consideration. They may have developed poor learning habits and be defensive about their habitual ways of thinking. However, their former experience is a source of self-identity. So, it must be approached sensitively and with respect.
- Adults are ready to learn when they become aware that they need to know and do something so that they can be more effective:

they "do not learn for the sake of learning". Learning experiences therefore have to be related to their needs and situation.

- What motivates them most are their needs for "self-esteem, recognition, better quality of life, greater self-confidence, self-actualisation".

Human resource development has to address these needs appropriately.

The outcomes and process of learning

Having read the previous modules, you would be able to appreciate that human resource managers need to understand the processes and nature of learning and development. Let us therefore examine these topics as follows:

1. The outcomes of learning:
    - Skill
    - Competence
    - Know-how and tacit knowledge
    - Hierarchies of cognitive and other skills.
2. The process of learning:
    - Theories of the process of learning
    - Elements in the process of learning
    - The stages of learning
    - Cyclical models of learning and learning styles.

Source: (Beardwell & Holden, 1998)

The outcomes of learning

Human resource managers are generally concerned about several outcomes of learning: knowledge of various types and levels, skills of various kinds and levels and attitudes. The following module looks at the distinctions between and among know-how and tacit knowledge, skill, competence and higher-order thinking skills.

Know-how and tacit knowledge: According to Beardwell and Holden, knowing "how to do something" is a very different matter from knowing about "knowing how to do something". This truism is captured in the everyday suspicion and disparagement of the ivory tower: "those who can, do; those who can't, teach".

Howard Gardner, the Harvard education psychologist (1985, p. 68) makes the distinction between know-how and know-that. For him, know-how is the tacit knowledge of how to execute something whereas know-that is the statement of formal thinking (propositional knowledge) about the actual set of procedures involved in the execution:

> *Thus, many of us know how to ride a bicycle but lack the propositional knowledge of how that behaviour is carried out. In contrast, many of us have propositional knowledge about how to*

make a soufflé without knowing how to carry this task through to successful completion.

Tacit knowledge is an essential ingredient of know-how. Sternberg (1985, p. 269) recognises this in his definition of practical intelligence:

Underlying successful performance in many real-world tasks is tacit knowledge of a kind that is never explicitly taught and in many instances never even verbalised.

Myers and Davids (1992) say that this tacit knowledge would appear to be acquired through experience rather than through instruction and is embedded in the context in which this experience takes place. However, unlike the formal knowledge that it accompanies, this tacit knowledge never becomes explicit although it remains very significant. Myers and Davids (1992, p. 47) question whether tacit skills can be taught and identify that they are often transmitted in "an environment of intensive practical experience" and in task performance. They also note the need to take into account both formal and tacit knowledge in selection. Later in this module, you will examine the concept of action learning which contextualises learning and hence draws upon tacit knowledge, and is needed for the development of all levels of skills.

Beardwell and Holden further say that, traditionally, practical knowledge tends to be the characteristic feature at lower level in any representation of the social hierarchy of skills.

Cooley (1987, pp. 10-13) draws attention to the way practical knowledge such as craft skill is devalued in the face of technological progress.

Beardwell and Holden say that organisations need both know-how and know-that: the concept of competence is potentially a significant one for them.

Skill: The following definition would give you an idea of what skill means in the context of organisations.

*... the performance of any task which, for its successful and rapid completion, requires an improved organisation of responses making use of only those aspects of the stimulus which are essential to satisfactory performanc*e. (Ribeaux & Poppleton, 1978, pp. 53-54)

This definition is particularly appropriate to perceptual-motor skills which involve physical motor responses to perceived stimuli in the external world. Beardwell and Holden argue that such skills are needed at every level of the organisation – from the senior manager's ability to operate a desktop computer to the cleaner's operation of a floor-scrubbing machine. High levels of such skills are particularly needed to operate complex and expensive technology. There are, however, many other kinds of skills needed in organisations such as cognitive, linguistic, social and interpersonal skills that could also be defined in these terms. Their complexity also suggests the need to recognise various levels of skill and such recognition will be addressed in the following modules.

Competence: Beardwell and Holden hold that while the concept of skill has long been an intrinsic part of theories of selection and training, the notion of competence is a much more recent arrival. Throughout the world, it is now becoming a major element in the design of training and development. Despite considerable debate about its integrity as a concept and its effectiveness as a practice, it maintains its significance. For example, much management education and training is now increasingly formulated in terms of management competencies. The various definitions of competence include these two definitions:

> *… an underlying characteristic of a person which results in effective and/or superior performance in a job. (*Boyatzis, 1982)

> *…The ability to perform the activities within an occupational area to the levels of performance expected in employment.* (Training Commission, 1988)

The core of the definition is an ability to apply knowledge and skills with understanding to a work activity. Note at this point that the concept of competence integrates knowledge and skill that are evident and assessed via performance.

Hierarchies of cognitive skills and other skills: Today's organisations need their employees (particularly managers) to practise the thinking skills that occupy the upper categories in various hierarchies of skills. The HR manager can use these hierarchies to identify the prior learning that needs to take place before the higher order skills can be attained. Then, the organisation can plan ways of facilitating the entire learning sequence. A model of the hierarchy of cognitive skills that has informed practice since its presentation several decades ago is Bloom's *Taxonomy of Cognitive Skills* (Bloom et al., 1956). The following is a brief look at this model which describes the various levels of thinking at which learning can take place.

Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Skills (Fontana, 1981, p. 71):

1. **knowledge** (i.e., simple knowledge of facts, of terms, of theories, etc.)
2. **comprehension** (i.e., an understanding of the meaning of this knowledge)
3. **application** (i.e., the ability to apply this knowledge and comprehension in new concrete situations)
4. **analysis** (i.e., the ability to break the material down into its constituent parts and to see the relationship between them)
5. **synthesis** (i.e., the ability to re-assemble these parts into a new and mean¬ingful relationship, thus forming a new whole)
6. **evaluation** (i.e., the ability to judge the value of material using explicit and coherent criteria, either of one's own devising or derived from the work of others).

The process of learning

Having identified the learning that has to be achieved, now examine the process by which it will be achieved. This module looks at two theories of the process of learning and the elements within it: (1) behaviourist approaches to learning, and (2) the information-processing approach to learning.

Behaviourist approaches to learning

Beardwell and Holden state that the behaviourist approach has been one of the most influential in the field of psychology. According to them, it proposes that learning is the process by which a particular stimulus (repeatedly associated with, or conditioned by, desirable or undesirable experiences) comes to evoke a particular response. Known as conditioning, this process can be of two kinds. Classical conditioning occurs when a stimulus leads automatically to a response. Dogs, for example, salivate at the presentation of food; Pavlov demonstrated that they could also be conditioned to salivate at the sound of a bell rung before food is presented. Operant conditioning (Skinner) takes place after a desired response which is then reinforced or rewarded to increase the probability of the repetition of the same response when the stimulus recurs.

The information-processing approach to learning

This approach regards learning as an information-processing system in which a signal (containing information) is transmitted along a communication channel of limited capacity and subject to interference and noise (Stammers & Patrick, 1975). The signal has to be decoded before it can be received and then encoded to pass it on. In learning, data received through the senses are filtered, recognised and decoded through the interpretive process of perception; this information is then translated into action through the selection of appropriate responses. The effectiveness of learning depends on attention being paid only to the relevant parts of the stimuli, the rapid selection of appropriate responses, the efficient performance of them, and the feeding back of information about their effects into the system. Overloading or breakdown of the system can occur at any of these stages.

Development

Development is the process whereby, over time, learning brings about significant changes in the individual. HRM is the management area that is responsible for shaping human change towards productive ends. So, the concept of development is worth exploring in some detail for this field.

Concept of development

What organisations need of their members is development for this is the process whereby a person, through learning and maturation, becomes increasingly complex, more elaborate and differentiated. They then become better able to adapt to the changing environment.

Beardwell and Holden further argue that development is a significant topic that contributes to the understanding of how people change through life – an understanding that is needed in many areas of policy and practice. However, development is a difficult area to study, embracing both the individual's inner life and the changing nature of a complex world with the lifespan as the time dimension.

Lifespan development

According to Beardwell and Holden, lifespan development embraces the total development of the individual over time and results from the interweaving of the biological, social, economic and psychological strands of the individual's life. It is the framework within which individuals learn and hence constitutes an important background to the development of the employee of which the employer needs to be aware.

There are two perspectives in the literature regarding the influence of the socio-cultural context on the individual's lifespan experiences.

1. The first perspective proposes that there are tendencies towards common patterns in individual experiences resulting from socialisation. In any given social setting (whether culture, class or organisation), the members of that social group experience pressures to conform to certain patterns of behaviour or norms. Sometimes, these pressures are expressed as legal constraints (the age of consent, marriage, attaining one's majority), as quasi-legal constraints (such as the age at which the state pension is paid and hence at which most people retire from the labour force) or as social and peer group expectations.
2. In contrast, the other perspective places emphasis on the environment and how it offers different opportunities and threats for individual lives. The process of development or elaboration takes place as the individual's innate capacity to grow and mature unfolds within a particular context which in turn facilitates or stunts growth, or prompts variations upon growth.

Career development

Individuals in work settings do not develop independently of the organisation. Their development interacts with the organisation and its development through the individual's career. Career development is therefore significant to both the individual and the organisation as well as its human resource development.

The career development of employees is one manifestation of human resource development, and those responsible for it will benefit from utilising knowledge of the theories of it and lifespan development. Indeed, unless managers construe the work of blue-collar workers and of women in terms of career, the development of these classes of employees may continue to be neglected.

The concept of career

Beardwell and Holden argue that although the term "career" is well understood in everyday language, the concept is a complex one with several levels of meaning. Two much-quoted definitions imply the concept of development:

> *… a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered, predictable sequence.* (Wilensky, 1960, p. 554)

> *… a career consists, objectively, of a series of status and clearly defined offices … subjectively, a career is the moving perspective in which the person sees his life as a whole and interprets the meaning of his various attributes, actions and the things which happen to him.* (Hughes, 1937, pp. 409-410)

Like Hughes, the literature often makes the distinction between the objective and the subjective career. Human resource development is clearly concerned with both.

Continuing professional development

Beardwell and Holden are of the view that many professions are now requiring their members to undertake continuing professional development (CPD) because the changing environment is rendering obsolete some of their original skills and knowledge and also demanding the development of others. CPD is more than updating: it calls for a continuous process of learning and of learning to learn, and so is likely to have considerable benefits for organisations employing professionals.

Whittaker (1992) states that CPD is needed to ensure that professionals remain up-to-date in a changing world and that the reputation of the profession is enhanced, to encourage professionals to aspire towards improved performance and ensure that they are committed to learning as an integral part of their work. She identifies the following principles underlying CPD:

1. Development should always be continuous; the professional should always be actively seeking improved performance.
2. Development should be owned and managed by the learner.
3. Development should begin from the learner's current learning state – learning needs are individual.
4. Learning objectives should be clear and (wherever possible) serve organisational goals as well as individual goals.
5. Investment in the time required for CPD should be regarded as being as important as investment in other activities.

Other forms of development within organisations

Some other forms of development within organisations merit the brief discussion that follows.

Self-development: Self-development is the term used to denote both "of self" and "by self" types of learning (Pedler, 1988). People developing themselves take responsibility for their own learning, identify their own learning needs and how to meet them (often through the performance of everyday work) monitor their own progress, assess the outcomes and reassess their goals. The role of others in self-development is not to teach or to train but perhaps to counsel or act as a resource. Self-development is often advocated as an appropriate form of management development.

Employee development: One definition of employee development makes it apparent that investment in employees is a wise business strategy. It is Harrison who defines employee development as:

> *… The skilful provision and organisation of learning experiences in the workplace … [so that] performance can be improved … work goals can be achieved and that, through enhancing the skills, knowledge, learning ability and enthusiasm at every level, there can be continuous organisational as well as individual growth. Employee development must, therefore, be part of a wider strategy for the business, aligned with the organisation's corporate mission and goals.* (Harrison, 1992, p. 4)

Staff development: Beardwell and Holden state that this is similar to professional development but staff development generally refers to the development of administrative and technical staff by the organisation. Its aim is to enable such employees to perform their current and future roles effectively but generally does not include their development as managers.

Management development: The development of managers will be discussed later in this module.

Organisation development: This does not strictly fall under the ambit of this module but organisations (like people) need to develop to become more flexible, differentiated and adaptable to their environment. Indeed, the very development of organisational members will contribute to the development of the organisation itself.

The organisation as a context for learning

We have been discussing how people learn and develop. It is interesting to see how individuals can learn and develop within organisations.

Learning and development are unrestricted

What does this mean? You should understand by now that the process of learning knows no boundaries. Beardwell and Holden argue that people bring the fruits of this naturally occurring and continuous process into their place of work and so, as Cooley (1987, p. 169) shows, "ordinary people" have the potential to contribute the knowledge, skills, attitudes and creative thinking that organisations need for their survival, flexibility and development. Interestingly, their learning and development continues within the organisation. Many employers realise that they benefit from this and they encourage, facilitate and extend those aspects of their employees' learning that are essential for the organisation and support them informally or undertake formal employee development activities (Beardwell & Holden, 1998).

Beardwell and Holden further argue that organisations themselves can sometimes make inhospitable environments for the learning and development that individuals bring to them. Some employers ignore the significance for the organisation to this learning and do little to overcome the way their organisation may thwart the development of their employees or to foster that learning and development.

We must recognise in our overview of human resource development that much employee development may not be intended, planned or systematic. Beardwell and Holden present that (in spite of this) individuals may:

- Learn how to carry out their initial and subsequent jobs through doing and observing, through trial and error, through the influence of and feedback from their peers and supervisors, through modelling themselves on others, and through informal mentors.
- Develop themselves through their own more or less systematic analysis of their learning needs.
- Take the initiative to acquire additional knowledge or understanding by attending educational courses and other courses.

Because of this, employee development can be problematical. Some employers may feel threatened by the potential of their employees' learning and development, and not welcome significant changes in the people they had selected as employees. Their fear is based on the enhanced marketability of the employees; through work, employees may acquire knowledge and skills that make them marketable to other employers.

Influences upon learning and development in the organisation

Several factors need to be considered here as the following section prompts you to do.

It is based on Beardwell and Holden who have observed that the learning and development of employees are affected by –

- The organisation and its management.
- The people of the organisation.
- Career management in the organisation.
- Influences outside the organisation.

The organisation and its management: When employees carry out their jobs, learning and development take place. It includes factors such as the design of jobs and the organisation structure, and the degree to which it is centralised and bureaucratised, influence learning opportunities of employees. Beardwell and Holden argue that an organisation that is growing or changing is more likely to offer opportunities for employees to grow than one that is static or declining.

Effective learning and development can take place only if the managerial style is compatible with this need. The higher-order skills needed in organisations require the opportunity to take risks and hence to make mistakes. For this to happen, a pre-condition is the nature of the management style: risk-taking and supportive management style. Essentially, organisations that want to develop these characteristics need also themselves to learn to learn so as to become learning organisations.

The people of the organisation: Other people in the organisation are significant for learning and development, to provide instruction and feedback, support and encouragement, confidence building and perhaps even inspiration. Learners at times look upon them as models or as points of comparison. Always, learners do not only learn just from their formal instructors or supervisors but also from their peers and subordinates. The strength of this informal method of learning is that it offers whole rather than part learning and the opportunity to make use of tacit knowledge.

Beardwell and Holden state that organisations attempt to capture and formally use some of these informal ways of learning through people. For example, shadowing is a method that gives the opportunity for a learner to observe the actions of a senior manager systematically and over a period of time. From this observation, the learner can infer certain general principles, grounded in everyday organisational realities. Mentoring is another way in which informal learning is initiated formally.

Career management in the organisation: Herriot (1992) argues the importance of career management which according to Mayo (1992, p. 37) is "making sure that the organisation will have the right people with the right skills at the right time". Organisations that promote the careers of their employees are likely to provide learning and development opportunities for them. One step in Mayo's framework for career management is the review and revision of opportunities for learning through experience.

Sternberg (1985) indicates that tacit knowledge is important in achieving successful organisational careers:

Tacit knowledge relevant to managing one's career appears to be more important to career success than does tacit knowledge relevant to managing people, tasks, or self. By "managing career", he means "knowing what activities lead to the enhancement of one's reputation and success in one's field of endeavour".

Influences outside the organisation: Beardwell and Holden argue that many significant influences upon learning and development emanate from outside the organisation. They further elaborate that the competency movement in particular has in recent years greatly influenced both what and how organisations develop in their employees. Government-driven education as well as training initiatives and changes have contributed to the institutionalisation of competency-based education and training and so influenced human resource development. If you are interested in some of the schemes in the U.K., read *Human Resource Management: A Contemporary Perspective* (Beardwell & Holden, 1998, pp. 312-314). It provides a detailed account on the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) and the Investor in People (IIP) initiative.

Facilitation of learning and development in organisations

Beardwell and Holden describe ways in which organisations can facilitate the learning and development of their members. These ways will be discussed briefly under the topics of the design of learning, mentoring, action learning and becoming a learning organisation.

The design of learning: The messages about how to design effective learning are very consistent. For example, the advice that Sternberg (1985, pp. 338-341), a theorist of intelligence, gives on how intelligent performance can be developed includes:

- Make links with real-world behaviour.
- Deal explicitly with strategies and tactics for coping with novel tasks and situations.
- Be sensitive to individual differences and help individuals capitalise on their strengths and compensate for their weaknesses.
- Be concerned with motivation.

The implications of the androgogical model of learning introduced by Knowles (1984) are that the facilitator of adult learning needs to:

1. Set a climate that is conducive to learning – in terms of both physical and psychological learning (one of mutual respect, collaborativeness, mutual trust, supportiveness, pleasure, humanness, openness and authenticity.
2. Involve learners in mutual planning of their learning.
3. Involve them in diagnosing their own learning needs.
4. Involve them in formulating their learning objectives.
5. Involve them in designing learning plans.
6. Help them carry out their learning plans such as by using learning contracts.
7. Involve them in evaluating their learning.

Belbin and Belbin (1972) draw upon their experience of studying training in industry and provide the following advice on training adults between the ages of 40 and 55:

1. Reduce anxiety and tension in the adult learner:
    - Provide social support and allow social groups to form
    - Use acceptable instructors
    - Offer a secure future.
2. Create an adult atmosphere.

3. Arrange the schedule:
   - Appropriate length of sessions
   - Preference for whole rather than part method
   - Start slowly.
4. Correct errors at the appropriate time.
5. Address individual differences:
   - Different instructional approaches
   - Effects of previous education and work
   - Spare-time interests.
6. Follow up after training.

The value of these approaches is illustrated in the lessons drawn from the adoption in Britain of the Deming-inspired quality and continuous improvement programmes (Hodgson, 1987, p. 43):

> *Train with extreme sensitivity – pick trainers who have operators' confidence, are alert to remedial training needs and people's fears about going back to class; minimise the gap between awareness, training and use; gear course contents to people's learning needs – don't impose blanket programmes.*

Action learning

The architect of action learning is Revans (1983, p. 16) who wrote that "There can be no action without learning, and no learning without action" and who has helped managers learn through action in several countries since the 1940s. According to Beardwell and Holden, Revans sees learning (L) as the combination of programmed knowledge (P) and questioning insight (Q):

$$L = P + Q$$

When facing unprecedented changes, Revans argues that managers cannot know what programmed knowledge they will need. Instead, they need to understand "the subjective aspects of searching the unfamiliar, or of learning to pose useful and discriminating questions". Action learning helps achieve this understanding by "the simple device of setting them to tackle real problems that have so far defied solution" (Revans, 1983, p. 11).

There are two phases of an action learning programme (Revans, 1983, pp. 31-32):

1. Diagnostic phase:
   - Analysis – identifying the key questions.
   - Development – finding the paper answers to them.
   - Procurement – preparing to explore further by marshalling resources and support.

2. Therapeutic phase:
   - Construction or assembly – the resources and collaborators are brought into contact upon which there may be a return to the stage of analysis in the diagnostic phase.
   - Application – the assembled resources are set in motion; fresh key questions may be uncovered.
   - Review – the application phase acquires momentum and the efforts to address the key questions have to be reviewed.

The diagnostic phase calls for only intellectual skills whereas the therapeutic phase draws upon interpersonal skills.

Action learning offers a philosophy and a practice that human resource managers can adopt to help bring about the higher order skills needed in an organisation. However, it demands commitment and support from the top, and would need to be cascaded down from higher learning sets.

Mentoring

Beardwell and Holden state that many organisations have introduced mentoring programmes. In organisations, mentors are more experienced employees who guide, encourage and support younger or less-experienced employees or protégés. These mentors are often managers.

Organisations set up formal mentoring programmes for various reasons (Clutterbuck, 1991). These include the support of a graduate intake or training scheme and the development of high-flyers or senior managers; the encouragement of career advancement of women or those from minority groups; the nurturing of employees with skills in short supply; the stimulation and fostering of innovation in the organisation; and the support for managers in training or for other learners in the organisation.

Protégés are not the only beneficiaries of mentoring: mentors also gain greatly from being challenged to understand their jobs and the organisation as well as to find ways of helping their protégés share this understanding and work effectively. Mentors may also find that they need mentoring too. Mentors draw upon their own networks to give experience and support to their protégés as well as to encourage them to develop networks of their own. In this way, the practice and benefits cascade through the organisation (Beardwell & Holden, 1998).

The learning organisation

Morgan (1986) discusses how an organisation can become more intelligent, transcend the bounded rationality of bureaucracy, learn to learn and challenge assumptions. The way to do this, he argues, is to encourage openness and acceptance of error and uncertainty; recognise the need to explore different viewpoints; offer guidelines on the limits to action rather than specific targets, and let the goals emerge from these processes; and create the kinds of structures and processes that will allow the abovementioned to take place.

Since learning and development are an important HR responsibility for all managers and since a number of interesting topics have been covered up to now in this module, a few points of summary are in order:

1. The development of individuals is the key to the development of an organisation's ability to cope with external pressures and changes.
2. Those who plan learning and development activities in organisations should be cautious so as to give consideration to the need for –
    - Quality and flexibility of the learning and development activities.
    - The nature of learners.
    - Concepts of adult learning.
    - Individual and organisational barriers that could impede learning by individuals.

Training

The Manpower Services Commission of the United Kingdom, which was set up by the Employment and Training Act 1973 until it was replaced in 1988, defined training as:

> *A planned process to modify attitude, knowledge or skill behaviour through learning experience to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities. Its purpose, in the work situation, is to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation.* (Manpower Services Commission, 1981)

Are training and development the same?

Goss (1994, p. 62) argues that although the terms "training" and "development" are frequently treated by some as synonymous or by others as representing mutually exclusive activities, from a HRM perspective, they are better understood as being linked, such that training is seen as both a part of and a pre-condition for development. The traditional reason for regarding training and development as distinct personnel practices has much to do with hierarchical divisions within organisations. Training has evolved as something that is provided for non-managerial workers whereas development has been treated as the preserve of management (hence the still common pairing – management development). Goss adds that this type of binary divide has two difficulties within a HRM perspective. First, it undermines the assumption that all employees are a valuable resource to be developed to their maximum potential. Secondly, it can obscure the fact that managers also need training.

From a HRM perspective, the connection between training and development must be regarded then as highly interactive, each facilitating the other, in what may be thought of as a dialectical relationship (Goss, 1994, p. 62).

Ivancevich (1998) presents the following points in respect of training:

1. Training is the systematic process of altering the behaviour of employees in a direction that will achieve organisation goals. Training is related to present job skills and abilities. It has a current orientation and helps employees master specific skills and abilities needed for them to be successful.
2. A formal training programme is an effort by the employer to provide opportunities for employees to acquire job-related skills, attitudes and knowledge.
3. Learning is the act by which individuals acquire skills, knowledge and abilities that result in a relatively permanent change in their behaviour.
4. Any behaviour that has been learnt is a skill. Therefore, improvement of skills is what training will accomplish. Motor skills, cognitive skills and interpersonal skills are targets of training programmes.

Training and HRM

Beardwell and Holden argue that the recognition of the importance of training in recent years has been heavily influenced by the intensification of overseas competition and the relative success of economies like Japan, Germany and Sweden where investment in employee development is considerably emphasised. They add that technological developments and organisational change have gradually led some employers to the realisation that success relies on the skills and abilities of their employees, and this means considerable and continuous investment in training and development.

It is the view of Beardwell and Holden that HRM concepts such as “commitment” to the company and the growth in the “quality” movement have led senior management teams to realise the increased importance of training, employee development and long-term education. Such concepts require not only careful planning but a greater emphasis on employee development. Indeed, some commentators have seen this aspect of HRM as so important that they see human resource development (HRD) as being a discipline in its own right and as important as HRM (Hall, 1984; Nadler, 1984).

Training and individual needs

Let us now look at the extent to which training is important to the individual. Very often, individuals are unaware of their own training needs. So, helping them towards some awareness is becoming an important issue especially where (as discussed earlier) the organisation supports self-development.

Beardwell and Holden quote from the Price Waterhouse Cranfield Project Report (1990) to highlight the sad fact that the further down the organisational ladder a job category resides, the less money is spent on training. Thus, managers and professionals generally receive more financial support for training than clerical and manual workers do.

Beardwell and Holden argue that the divide between professional and non-professional workers is increasing with the growing use of flexible work patterns which emphasise core and periphery workers engaged on part-time or restricted contracts. As a result of these changes, management is less likely to be committed to training periphery workers.

The creation of a HRD plan

Beardwell and Holden argue that there are no set procedures to producing a HRD plan. However, they present eight basic points to be used as guidance in developing such plans:

1. Discern the training and development requirements from the organisational strategy and business objectives.
2. Analyse the training requirements for effective work performance in organisational functions and jobs.
3. Analyse the existing qualities and training needs of current employees.
4. Devise a HRD plan that fills the gap between organisational requirements and the present skills and knowledge of employees.
5. Decide on the appropriate training and development methods to be used for individuals and groups.
6. Decide who is to have responsibility for the plan and its various parts.
7. Implement the plan as well as monitor and evaluate its progress.
8. Amend the HRD plan in the light of monitoring/evaluation and changes in business strategy.

Analysing training needs

According to Hall (1984), the first vital step in HRD is the "identification of needed skills and active management of employee learning for their long-range future in relation to explicit corporate and business strategies". If an organisation wants its training to be effective, not only should individual needs be identified but also how their needs fit the overall organisational objectives. This is however, not an easy task.

Bernhard and Ingolis (1988), in studying training and its strategic implementation in U.S. companies, believe that a considerable amount of money is "thrown away" mainly because fundamental issues such as the analysis of training needs in relation to the short-term and long-term business plans have not been addressed.

An integral part of analysing training needs is the recognition of what will "fit" the company culture as well as the company strategy and objectives. In other words, the training scheme that may fit one company may not fit another, and these company differences can only be ignored at great cost.

Methods of training needs analysis

Beardwell and Holden propose two elements for consideration in carrying out a training needs analysis – the job requirements and the person requirements.

In regard to the job, the following need to be examined (Beardwell & Holden, 1998, p. 342):

- Job description
- Job analysis
- Interview with job holders
- Interview with managers and supervisors
- Performance objectives
- Analysis of competencies
- Person specification – characteristics of people required

Job description: Given the recent popularity of flexible work practices in many organisations, there has been criticism levelled at too-highly-structured job descriptions. Job descriptions are however necessary in order to give employees a sense of purpose and to enable their respective immediate superiors to appraise performance but a culture must prevail which enables employees to deal with problems that may be outside their immediate work domain.

Job analysis: Job analysis is a more sophisticated method of evaluating job functions and is often used to discern the levels of skill necessary to do a job, primarily for the purpose of creating pay structures. The information gleaned from such procedures can be useful in analysing the skill needs and requirement of jobs.

Interview with job holders: This is one of the most commonly used methods whereby a manager, supervisor or member of the personnel department interviews the current job holder about the duties and functions of the job. The interview can be structured in the sense of having a series of questions framed to cover all aspects of the job.

Interview with managers and supervisors: Alternatively, a personnel manager or a senior manager can interview the immediate supervisors of the job. Often, descriptions arising are compared with the interview responses of the job holder to act as a double check for discrepancies or elements missed by either party.

Performance objectives: The aim of increased quality, for example, will require performance objectives to be laid down. In doing so, assessment must take place as to whether current employees need training to reach these objectives.

Analysis of competencies: An analysis of competency requirements could be useful to match standards (such as NVQ in U.K.) that are considered relevant to the various jobs involved.

Person specification: The effort to identify skills and competency requirements often forgets the characteristics of the people required for the job although this will have emerged to some extent in the competencies analysis.

Beardwell and Holden present the following aspects for consideration in relation to individuals:

- Personal profiles
- Performance appraisal
- Assessment centre techniques
- Global review and training audits
- Relating resources to the training objective(s).

Here is a closer look at these aspects:

Personal profiles: Personal profile records, which include information concerning career aspirations of employees which may well be of significance in creating training initiatives, are increasingly being used in organisations and are useful for training needs analysis.

Performance appraisal: Although the performance appraisal has come in for much criticism recently, a good appraisal can reveal much about the strengths and the weaknesses of individuals in terms of their performance. Indications of areas where training and development programmes could improve performance are vital to both the individual and the organisation.

Assessment centre techniques: Assessment centres are the most thorough way of analysing individual strengths and weaknesses although they are rather elaborate and expensive to implement. Various techniques are used; they include in-depth interviews and re-interviews, psychometric tests and team performance simulation exercises. A detailed profile of employees which is useful for analysing training needs can be constructed. The only disadvantage is the high cost incurred.

Global review and training audits: The most wide-ranging method of training needs analysis is to undertake a global review (more modestly known as a training audit). These are usually undertaken when far-reaching changes are planned within an organisation. The use of survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews are often used together with all, or combinations of, the approaches previously mentioned.

Relating resources to the training objective(s): An across-the-board use of all these methods should be cautioned, as they could be too expensive in terms of time and money. It is essential therefore to assess the cost-effectiveness of training needs analysis in relation to the outcomes and returns expected.

Training methods

Despite the available variety of methods, an organisation has to be cautious when it selects training methods for its use. A careful use of training methods can be a very cost-effective investment; however, it has often been found that organisations often use inappropriate methods which bring very little improvement in the performance of employees and can be both costly and time-wasting. Storey, in a comparative analysis of training in British and Japanese organisations, found that some British training is wasted as it is not embedded in the organisation, as it is with the Japanese. British organisations also suffered from the band wagon effect and what he calls "programmitis" or a constant series of newly-launched programmes and initiatives which led to chopping and changing rather than consistently coherent long-term training initiatives (Storey, 1991).

Types of training

According to Beardwell and Holden (1998, p. 345), training methods can generally be divided into two types: on-the-job training and off-the-job training. Depending on the situation, each can be effective at meeting certain training requirements. The following comments present the two types in detail.

On-the-job Training

This is probably the most common approach to training and can range from relatively unsophisticated "observe and copy" methods to highly-structured courses built into workshop or office practice. Most organisations in many countries still resort to traditional methods of training. For instance, there is much to admire in the German dual apprenticeship system which is based on a thoroughgoing traditional scheme composed of a combination of on-the-job training and off-the-job training.

Three common methods used in on-the-job training are:

1. Learning by doing
2. Mentoring
3. Shadowing and job rotation.

Learning by doing

"Learning by doing" is still a very popular method of teaching new skills and methods to employees. These traditional methods can still be very effective although some modern consultants underrate their efficacy. The advantages are that they are tried and tested and fit the requirements of the organisation. Here, the new worker observes a senior experienced worker and learns what to do. The disadvantages are that the senior worker has not usually trained himself/herself in the skills and methods of training and therefore it can be a process that may be time-consuming as a newcomer struggles to cope with the senior worker's explanations.

Far more successful is to use a senior or experienced worker who has been trained in instruction or training methods and whose teaching skills are coordinated with a developed programme linked to off-the-job courses. Such a system is clearly exemplified by the apprenticeship system in Germany.

Mentoring

Mentoring is another version of the system whereby a senior or experienced employee takes charge of the training and development of a new employee. This suggests a much closer association than master/apprentice and elements of a father/son or mother/daughter relationship can exist whereby the mentor acts as an advisor and protector to the trainee.

Shadowing and job rotation

Shadowing is another popular on-the-job training method that usually aims to give trainee managers a feel for the organisation by giving them the experience of working in different departments. Trainees must be encouraged to feel that it is not time-wasting and people in the various departments in which they are temporarily working must feel a commitment and involvement in the training if it is to work. Unfortunately, trainees are often not warmly welcomed and are seen by supervisors and workers in the department as obstacles to the daily routines. Nonetheless, this method can be worthwhile if it is structured well and planned with the cooperation of all departmental supervisors.

Job rotation is another version of training that became popular in the 1970s to help relieve boredom and thereby raise the productivity of shop floor workers. If appropriately implemented, this can be an excellent learning experience for workers and suitably fits with HRM concepts of teamwork and empowerment whereby people are encouraged to take greater responsibility for their work and that of the team. On the negative side, there have been criticisms that not enough structured training is given to enable workers to do these jobs well.

Off-the-job training

As with on-the-job training, you will find a variety of methods under off-the-job training, Beardwell and Holden present some of the more popular ones: (1) courses, (2) interactive learning methods, and (3) induction training.

Courses

In general, courses and other types of off-the-job training have come in for much criticism recently. Yet, rejecting off-the-job training in this way would be akin to throwing out the baby with the bathwater. Off-the-job training is sometimes necessary to get people away from the work environment to a place where the frustrations and bustle of work are eliminated. This enables trainees to study theoretical information and/or be exposed to new and innovative ideas. The problem arises when those ideas or learning experiences do not appear to relate to the work situation.

Although there is a variety of training methods, it would be impossible in this module to cover in depth all the rich variety and approaches. You would find it useful to bear in mind that there may be nothing wrong with the methods but how they are utilised by the trainer and the learner. In other words, making the appropriate match between the training requirements of the employees and the training methods available is the key.

Much traditional training is a one-way learning process where the student is normally a passive learner receiving information from a lecturer, a tutor or an instructor. While this can be an efficient way of imparting information, all education theorists agree that the best form of learning is where the student is actively involved in the learning process.

Interactive learning methods

According to Beardwell and Holden, there is a wide variety of interactive learning techniques; some are adaptations of one-way approaches:

- **Workshops**: This is a term used to describe an intensive training activity in which participants learn primarily by doing as against a sit-and-listen type of activity. The key idea is heavy participant activity and high interaction stemming from the use of a good variety of participative training techniques.
- **Case studies**: The case study method presents a trainee with a written description of an organisational problem. The person analyses the case in private, diagnoses the problem, and presents his/her findings and solutions in a discussion with other trainees.
- **Role play**: The aim of role playing is to create a realistic situation and have trainees assume the parts (or roles) of specific persons in that situation.
- **Simulations**: Participants engage in realistic problem solving. They do so usually as members of two or more simulated companies that are competing in the marketplace.
- **Interactive computer learning packages, videos and audio tapes**: This method assists the learner through the use of sight and sound, interactive videos, audio tapes. Programmed instruction (using text, machine and/or computer) could be used where the trainee receives immediate feedback on answers. A correct answer brings new information whereas an incorrect answer generally results in remedial material.
- **Problem solving**: This is a technique used by experienced trainers to ensure that training is organisation-related and job-related. An opportunity is given to the trainee to identify and solve real problems. When participants use problem solving to solve their own problems, they do not experience training shock from returning to their jobs and not knowing how to apply their

new found knowledge and skills; the reason being that they brought chunks of their jobs into the classroom (Eitington, 1996).

Beardwell and Holden recommend that you read Training and Development (Harrison, 1988) and Training Interventions: Managing Employee Development (Reid, Barrington and Kenney, 1992) for a fuller explanation of these techniques and others.

Induction training

Beardwell and Holden propose that one of the most important initial steps in the training process is the induction programme. New recruits often perceive their new work environment as perplexing and even frightening. Not surprisingly, there is a high turnover rate in many jobs in the first few weeks which gradually trail off with increased service with the organisation.

Much can be done to allay the fears of inductees. Many organisations try to reduce uncertainty in new employees by presenting them with lots of information concerning the organisation such as:

- The history of the organisation
- The mission statement and organisational objectives
- Company ethics
- The structure of the organisation
- Personnel policies
- Terms of employment
- Payment systems and benefits
- Holidays and sickness arrangements
- Rules and regulations of the organisation
- Discipline and grievance procedures
- Trade unions and/or staff associations
- Welfare and social facilities
- Health and safety measures
- Job description
- Introduction to immediate supervisor
- Introduction to fellow workers

Although the above list is not exhaustive, such information can be useful. However, some forms of information may intimidate new employees. Therefore, the induction programme should be planned around the needs of new employees and the imparting of information should be given at appropriate moments – explanation of pay-related issues should be provided on pay day. The information is more likely to be remembered by the inductees.

Too much lecturing can also have a negative effect. Inductees want to have a go at the job to see if they can do it. Therefore, the programme needs to be spread over time to give variety. A break from the job to give further information could be a welcome change of activity (Reid, Barrington, & Kenney, 1992).

Responsibility for and delivery of training

We have so far discussed various aspects of training and the different types of training. Another important consideration is: "Who is to be responsible for training and who will deliver it?" Beardwell and Holden place the alternatives in the following three categories: (1) training departments, (2) training consultancies, and (3) line managers.

Training departments

From the 1950s, and particularly in the 1960s, the responsibility for and delivery of training in many large organisations rested with specialist departments. However, by the 1980s and the 1990s, training departments had come under considerable criticism and were accused of:

- Being too rigid to respond to the changing needs of the organisation.
- Being too much of an administrative expense.
- Having lost contact with the changing skills needed on the shop floor or at the place of work.
- Being self-serving and bureaucratic.
- Providing off-the-job training at their various centres which did not match up to on-the-job needs.
- Providing training that was too theoretical and not practical enough.
- Not providing training and development which met individual needs. Courses were too class-based/group-based.

However, there are signs today of many organisations returning to in-house training.

Training consultancies

Consultancies for training could be useful if they are carefully selected. You may have noted in your experience that providing training consultancies has become a thriving industry. While there are many excellent consultancies, there are also spurious consultancy organisations which have unqualified, inexperienced and untrained staff.

When reputable consultancies are used carefully, they can provide invaluable specialist services and expertise that are often not available in organisations (particularly small and medium-sized ones).

Training and the line manager

Every line manager should know the training needs of employees under him/her. A line manager could easily suggest training scenarios suitable for his/her employees, usually in consultation with the personnel or training department. Organisations are devolving training budgets to their line managers in the belief that funding can be spent most effectively at the points where needs have been identified.

This can be very effective because the assessment and delivery of training is more closely attuned to people in their working environment but its efficacy depends very much on how it is carried out.

Evaluation and monitoring of training

Although evaluation and monitoring is one of the most important stages in the training process, it is often the part that is most neglected or least adequately carried out. It may look simple but it could also be complicated. Why is it seen as simple? Normally, information from the trainees is obtained and analysed, and programmes and courses amended if the need arises. However, it is complex because there are other stakeholders such as the training designers, the trainers and the sponsors, each of whom may have their own purpose. To be properly conducted, evaluation must be carried out with a view to all of the abovementioned stakeholders.

Methods of evaluation

Several methods are cited (Beardwell & Holden, 1998):

- **Questionnaires** (feedback forms) are a common way of eliciting trainee responses to courses and programmes.
- **Tests and/or examinations** are common in formal courses – especially those that result in certification – a diploma in word processing skills. End-of-course tests can also be employed after non-certificate short courses to check the progress of trainees.
- **Projects** are initially seen as learning methods but they can also provide valuable information to instructors about the participants' understanding of the subject matter.
- **Structured exercises and case studies** provide opportunities for trainees to apply learnt skills and techniques under the observation of their tutors and evaluators.
- **Tutor reports** gather the opinions of those who deliver the training. This gives a valuable assessment from a different perspective.
- **Interviews** of trainees after the course or the instruction period are another technique for gathering information directly from them. These can be informal or formal, individual or group, face-to-face or by telephone.

- **Observation** of courses and training by those devising training strategies in the training department is very useful and information from these observations can be compared with trainee responses.
- **Participation and discussions** during training can provide invaluable insights about the learning experiences of participants. This activity requires people who are adept at interpreting responses as this can be highly subjective.

For complicated training evaluations, it is recommended that a combination of these approaches be used.

International training trends

> *Advanced industrialised nations have long recognised the importance of training to the development of the economy. As new technology progresses, making certain jobs and skills redundant, an increasing emphasis is being placed on the need for a skilled and highly trained workforce. Many of the jobs being replaced by machines have been of an unskilled and semi-skilled nature, and this emphasises the need for higher education and skills for those wishing to gain employment in the future. In addition, traditional skills in various technical fields, for example, the engineering and construction industries, are also rapidly being made redundant. The type of economy in which a young person can receive an apprenticeship that would hold them in good stead for a lifetime career is dwindling. This trend is an international one and poses problems for people in USA, Japan, Germany, France, Sweden and other industrialised nations. To many, the solution for such countries is the investment of more capital in education and training, and the creation of an ever more skilled and knowledgeable workforce, partly because these countries can never compete with Third World economies in terms of cheap labour*. (Beardwell & Holden, 1998, p. 352)

Adaptability and change in the 21st century

According to Beardwell and Holden, if economies are to remain relatively prosperous, one of the policy imperatives for the future must be a considerable investment in education and training by both public and private organisations as well as governments.

Advanced economies of the future will not be based on a cheap and unskilled workforce. As noted, developed countries can never compete with developing countries on these terms.

Beardwell and Holden further argue that there has to be a training and education imperative requiring the expansion of school and higher education funding. There will have to be greater accessibility to universities by more of the population as well as a coherent system of vocational education and training (VET) in which harmonised qualifications are accredited and appreciated by all employees. Beardwell and Holden (1998) are of the view that the future organisation is a learning organisation and the future employee is one who is continually seeking to develop himself/herself.

Management development

Definition

Management development has been defined as:

> *A conscious and systematic process to control the development of managerial resources in the organisation for the achievement of goals and strategies.* (Molander, 1986)

> *An attempt to improve managerial effectiveness through a planned and deliberate learning process.* (Mumford, 1987)

Management education and training are not development

Beardwell and Holden argue that management education and training are important components in a development programme but they do not, by themselves, constitute management development. According to them, when we educate managers, we seek to introduce, extend or improve their learning and understanding about the managerial world they occupy. For example, managers on a postgraduate diploma in management studies will study and learn about the psychology of individuals and organisations. This will begin to raise their awareness and understanding about human behaviour and how to manage people more effectively in the reality of the workplace.

Management training tends to be specific and short-term. It is primarily concerned with teaching managers the skills to perform their jobs more effectively. For example, managers will attend short courses during their careers on a whole range of business topics such as financial planning, improving communication skills and the like.

Management development, as you have seen from the above-mentioned definition, is a systematic process to control the development of managerial resources in the organisation. Dessler (2001) opines that management development is any attempt to improve managerial performance by imparting knowledge, changing attitudes or increasing skills.

HRM and management development

HRM and the role of management

Human resource management is about the effective management of people in organisations. According to Kerfoot and Knights (1992),

- HRM involves the integration of people with business goals and strategies.

- HRM views people as assets (to be developed and utilised in a productive way) rather than as costs to be minimised or eliminated.

We can draw an inference from these features: people do matter. People influence effectiveness and success in a way that is seen as significant for the organisation. What is therefore important is the way people are managed. The way people are managed within a given organisational context is the outcome of two important and interacting sets of variables. According to Beardwell and Holden, these are:

1. The philosophies, ideologies, values and beliefs of management that operate and dominate within the organisation.
2. The practices, policies and management styles that managers employ in their managerial roles.

There are various approaches to human resource management. These have been grouped into categories that have come to be known as hard and soft approaches to HRM.

A harder approach to HRM emphasises a rational-economic perspective where people, although acknowledged as important to an organisation's success, are viewed as a resource to be used alongside and in conjunction with capital and plant. They are deployed in a seemingly calculative, instrumental way for economic gain: people are a means to an economic end (Beardwell & Holden, 1998, p. 377).

In the softer approach to HRM, a more humanistic perspective is adopted where organisational goals are achieved with and through people. People are seen as a valued resource to be nurtured and developed.

Beardwell and Holden suggest the following propositions based on the above discussion.

- If there is such a thing as a philosophy of human resource management, it is essentially a philosophy of management control over employees depicted in management strategies, policies and behaviours.
- Management acts as a conduit through which human resource management is enacted. They establish the rules, guidelines, procedures and systems.
- Senior managers determine the extent to which people are integrated into the organisation's strategic plans. They set the agenda and create the cultural climate of prevailing values, attitudes and behaviours.
- Middle and junior managers translate and "operationalise" broader human resource strategies and policies. They give human resource management its meaning and reality. It is their preferred management style and actual behaviour that decide how the human resource is deployed and managed and thus what people experience as "human resource management".

- The way managers themselves are managed and developed is a significant influencing factor in the way people are subsequently treated.

Some implications for management development

If you accept the above propositions, there are certain implications that you can identify (Beardwell & Holden, 1998, p. 378):

- **Managerial attitudes and values**: If strategic HRM is to be effectively implemented, managers must possess a set of values and attitudes that support the thinking that people are central to the success of the organisation. If managers entertain the notion that technical and business skills are central and that people are subordinate, there could then be conflicting situations. However, in the contemporary management development scenario, the focus is on imparting people skills and helping managers to be (more) emotionally intelligent.
- **Managerial roles and relationships with employees**: There is no doubt that managers should accept and adapt new managerial roles and forge new relationships with their employees. The notion that the managers have “a right to manage” (the so-called “managerial prerogative”), where a managerial elite plans, makes decisions and controls resources, is fast becoming obsolete. However, there is a certain resistance from managers (at especially the middle level) in letting employees participate in the decision-making process.

Organising and implementing management development programmes

Organising

When the organisation has a clear set of policies, objectives and approaches established, it is in a position to consider the best way to organise and implement the development programme.

Organising an effective management development programme (even a modest one) is no easy task and requires considerable effort. Very often, the task of organising management development programmes falls on personnel and training specialists while line managers shy away from it.

Beardwell and Holden (1998, p. 396) hold the view that there has to be a clear and unambiguous allocation of responsibility and a willingness to accept that responsibility if a development programme is to be successfully planned and implemented. Traditionally, responsibility for development has rested with the personnel function with some input from the managers’ boss. Individual managers were essentially passive in the process: they were only required to “turn up and be developed”.

In contemporary management development, organisations are adopting and promoting a tripartite view where responsibility is shared among the personnel specialist, the boss and the individual.

The effective development of managers requires the full involvement and participation of all three parties. An active process of discussion and negotiation usually results in all parties accepting and owning a share of responsibility for development objectives, planning and implementation (Beardwell & Holden, p. 1998).

There are several factors that need to be seriously considered in organising management development programmes. Beardwell and Holden discuss these factors as follows:

1. **Availability of suitable managers**: To achieve strategic objectives, organisations need to ensure that they have the right numbers of managers with the right skills available at the right time. A managerial audit is normally carried out, utilising information from sources such as performance appraisals, personnel files and discussions with bosses, to reveal the skills available to meet forecast demand. These skills are then compared with the organisation's established HRM plan and development objectives. In certain cases, it may not be feasible or appropriate to develop the existing stock of managers and organisations will then enter the marketplace to buy in the required skills.
2. **Reward and appraisal systems**: Extrinsic reward systems such as competitive salaries and performance-related pay with fringe benefits such as company cars, company pension schemes and share options are important to successfully recruit and retain high calibre managers. Equally as important are also the intrinsic reward systems. Those responsible for development must provide regular feedback in the form of guidance, praise and encouragement. This is true for experienced managers and inexperienced managers alike.
3. **Resourcing and support**: To be successful, development requires adequate resourcing and support. In smaller organisations, the physical resources to carry out development (trained personnel, training space and materials) are rarely available and external resources in the form of consultants, academics and professional institutions are utilised. In larger organisations, skilled training personnel are normally available together with other resources like dedicated training and residential facilities. External resources may also be used if it is cost-effective or if specialist skills are required. Whatever the resources available, no development programme will succeed if senior and middle management do not support it. There has to be sustaining support for the duration of the programme – especially during a time of major change.
4. **Promotion and succession planning**: In conjunction with reward and appraisal systems, careful consideration needs to be given to career paths and progression – especially for younger managers. This requires a well-prepared human resource plan that looks to the future. It links the development of managers to succession planning where managers are pencilled into positions

vacated by those who retire or when leavers and organisation growth create new opportunities.

5. **Structures and systems**: Implementing management development successfully is dependent upon an effective management development infrastructure that:
    - Identifies and allocates responsibility.
    - Provides and disseminates information efficiently.
    - Provides administrative support.
    - Increases awareness and visibility.
6. **The diversity of management**: By now, it should be clear to you that development has to be linked to the reality of managerial work. Development programmes must make room for the diversity of management skills, attitudes and experience that reside within the organisation.

Implementing management development programmes

It is important to anticipate the question "Why are we developing this particular manager?" You should be familiar with some techniques and choices available to organisations when they implement development programmes.

Management education and training comes in a variety of forms. A great deal of it is formalised, planned and structured. It can take place on-the-job (in the workplace environment) or off-the-job (away from the workplace). This is true for young managers at entry level. Older, more experienced managers might attend short courses (either internally or externally) which are designed to "top-up" their managerial skills base (Beardwell & Holden, 1998, p. 402).

Within these and other programmes, you find a diverse range of formalised learning methods. These methods have tended to evolve through a pragmatic process of trial and error. Research by Burgoyne and Stuart (1991) reveals the following methods that are likely to be used (in order of predominance of use):

1. Lectures
2. Games and simulations
3. Projects
4. Case studies
5. Experiential (analysis of experience)
6. Guided reading
7. Role playing
8. Seminars
9. Programmed instruction (computerised/packaged).

Although these methods are widely used in education and training, their abstract, detached and artificial nature can never compensate for the reality of dealing with everyday managerial problems and issues (Burgoyne & Stuart, 1991). Beardwell and Holden present a summary of the other weaknesses that have been identified in formalised management education and training. They are:

- A clash between academic culture/expectations and managerial culture/expectations.
- Difficulty in transferring and applying knowledge to the reality of the workplace.
- The relevance of course materials to the needs and wants of individual managers and organisations.

Issues and controversies in management development

Beardwell and Holden argue that the development of managers – like so many aspects of organisational life – is surrounded by debate and controversy. You may be acquainted with some of the more significant contemporary issues and controversies.

Organisational power and politics

Managers are employed by organisations to "get things done through people" (Torrington et al., 1989). They make things happen. As well as technical, human and administrative problems, managers are confronted by political factors. They have to contend with obstacles such as:

- Competition for scarce resources
- Conflicting viewpoints and priorities
- Confrontation with coalitions of vested interests
- Managing ambitious and self-interested individuals.

To cope and to survive in an organisation, managers have to become "politically competent". To achieve political competence, managers must first understand power in organisations: the ability to make things happen (Lee, 1987). They must be aware of how power manifests itself, its sources and how it is used. They need to understand the way political strategies and tactics are formulated and how they are used by various "actors" (Ryan, 1989). They must develop an awareness of political context: the rules of the game, individual actors' power bases, relationships and coalitions, and political agendas (Lee, 1987).

There is a growing realisation that managers require some measure of political competence and awareness. The absence of politics on development programmes, which tend to be politically neutral, is generating frustration and confusion in managers who find difficulty in relating or applying what they learn to the reality of managing back in the workplace (Baddeley & James, 1990).

A politically competent manager can contribute to organisational effectiveness. Equally, a politically incompetent manager can hamper and damage organisations as well as themselves.

The ethics of management development

As with power and politics, the ethical conduct of management and the ethical frameworks used by developers has received little attention beyond academic journals and books. More recently, ethical conduct has become an important consideration, especially for human resource management, because of its influence on managerial behaviour. For example, there is increasing publicity in the media about organisations that are being accused of abusing employee rights and exploitation (Beardwell & Holden, 1998, p. 415).

The Institute of Management (U.K.) states in its Code of Conduct and Guides to Professional Management Practice:

> *The discharge of one's duties as a professional manager also involves the acceptance and habitual exercise of ethical values, among which a high place should be accorded to integrity, honesty, loyalty and fairness. But the Institute recognises that … it is usual for managers to encounter circumstances or situations in which various values, principles, rules and interests appear to conflict … no ready answer can be given for such conflicts.*

Beardwell and Holden propose that we ask ourselves "Is ethical conduct rarely taught on development programmes because there is actually nothing to teach?" In other words, managerial work is so complex, ambiguous and at times confusing that it is not possible to legislate or create an all-embracing framework of moral competences.

Managerial competences

Since the late 1980s, there has been something of a mini-revolution in management education and training. The Management Charter Initiative (MCI), an employer-led initiative in the U.K. with the aim of developing recognised standards in management practice, established a set of generic standards based upon "the areas of activity which the majority of managers would be expected to perform competently" (Miller, 1991), namely managing –

1. Resources
2. People
3. Information
4. Finance.

The standards are based upon management competences derived from a functional analysis that breaks down the various job functions of a manager into a series of elements and units. Against these units and elements are performance criteria that a manager is expected to meet if they are to be assessed as competent. However, the competency approach has drawn a considerable amount of criticism.

The future of management

Beardwell and Holden cite several authors on this issue. They hold that, as in so many other walks of life, trying to predict the future of management will always be problematical. As management development is future-oriented, those responsible for development will have to form views about the way management as a profession will progress and the skills and knowledge that will be required in the future.

According to Beardwell and Holden and several authors they cite, the following are trends that seem likely to develop in the future:

- Organisations will continue to decentralise and seek greater flexibility from their workforce. A smaller and more highly skilled group of managers will assume an expanded role in clearly-defined strategic business units. They will be given greater control over resources (technical, financial and human) and be expected to utilise those resources to achieve broad objectives and performance targets (Storey, 1992, p. 266).
- The nature of managerial control will change as a better educated workforce, the growth of professionals in the workforce and new technology will lead employees to demand greater autonomy over their jobs and working lives. Managers will be under pressure to respond by adapting their management styles and behaviour and moving towards a more participative, facilitative approach (Wilson & Rosenfeld, 1990).
- There is an increasing awareness that people represent a real source of competitive advantage. The competitive gap is narrowing as technology becomes cheaper and more widely available; barriers to competition are removed and markets are globalised. Organisations are encouraged to adopt the view that they must release the potential locked up in their employees and use that potential to achieve and sustain organisational success. Many organisations appeared to be adopting the softer HRM approaches discussed earlier. The goal is to increase employee participation, commitment and performance.
- The growth of information technology (IT) has led to information being more available and more accurate than ever before. Instead of tiered ranks of middle managers manually collecting, sifting and analysing information for decision-making and control purposes, technology has enabled strategic decision makers at senior manager level to obtain an immediate and detailed view on how their organisation is performing. In some cases, this has had a dramatic influence on the nature of managerial work, the numbers performing that work and the status of managers.

  Middle management is often used as a punctuation mark, a control between top and bottom. That is reduced with information *technology. People are managing and controlling themselves.* (*Management Today*, May, 1991)

- As you have seen, managers will be expected to adapt and respond to environmental and organisational changes. However in some circumstances, the question arises: "Do we need managers at all?" Human resource initiatives such as autonomous working groups, quality circles and teamwork are founded on the belief that employees are capable of organising themselves, solving problems, making decisions, exercising responsibility and working with minimum supervision. Continuing to exercise control through traditional management styles may be seen as an inhibiting and constraining force.

- Linked to the previous point, a possible question is: "Are managers a disappearing resource?" Hunt (1987) argues that a trend may be developing where there is a "shift by individuals away from the objective of managing a team of people towards a search for autonomy, creativity, growth and accountability for oneself". He cites a number of factors that may be contributing to this shift:
  - Idealistic management development practices
  - Inadequate reward packages for managers
  - Poor career prospects created by hierarchical structures
  - The growth of professionals who are self-managing
  - A false view of management contained in management texts
  - A loss of authority and status amongst managers.

- Managers of the future will possess skills and attributes that are markedly different from those that have gone before. The emphasis will shift more to managing people and developing flexibility, adaptability and coping skills in the face of complexity as well as relentless and unremitting change. To achieve this, new skills will have to be developed. Limerick and Cunnington (1987) identify cognitive, transformational and empathetic skills as being significant.

- The notion of established career paths and career ladders will have to change. Organisations and managers alike will have to learn to re-negotiate their psychological contracts as expectations of each other change (Herriot 1992). Managers will be expected to take greater ownership for their careers although few seem to be preparing themselves for this (*Management News*, January, 1992).

Beardwell and Holden argue that in view of the above, the future nature and role of management is predicted to change, and in a fairly significant and dramatic way in some areas. This will undoubtedly have implications for both management development and human resource management.

Evaluating management development

According to Beardwell and Holden, one of the first difficulties organisations encounter when they seek to evaluate their development programmes is deciding what it is they are evaluating. Management development extends well beyond education. Training and effective evaluation should therefore take into account wider factors such as changing values and attitudes, selection processes, reward and promotion structures, strategic and individual objectives, environmental influences and the like.

In most organisations, evaluation is carried out at three stages:

1. **At the input stage**: Methods and participants.
2. **At the process stage**: What took place.
3. **At the output stage**: The effects.

The evaluation of management education and training tends to concentrate on the input and process stages (methods used and what took place) and less on the effects of the activity (Rae, 1986). Beardwell and Holden argue that it is usually immediate in time scale and narrow in both scope and content (questionnaires issued at the end of a training course) where evaluation does take place at the output stage. They propose that more data must be gathered so that evaluation can be conducted effectively. In their view, a range of methods can be employed:

- In-course and post-course interviews and questionnaires
- Attitude surveys and psychological tests
- Observations by trainers, managers and others
- Self-reports by managers.

Once data is gathered, it has to be interpreted. However, this may pose difficulties. Some of the difficulties are technical while many complexities reside in individual and organisational value and belief systems.

Beardwell and Holden hold the view that evaluating the success (or otherwise) of a systems-wide management development programme is extremely difficult and, in most cases, it has to rely on an intuitive, ideological belief that development will improve organisational effectiveness. This does render programmes vulnerable and open to criticism during difficult times.

Module Summary

Summary

Recruiting is the set of activities an organisation uses to attract job candidates who possess the abilities and attitudes needed to help the organisation achieve its objectives. There are many external factors that affect recruitment. These factors include government and union restrictions, the state of the labour market, the composition of the labour force and the location of the organisation.

Three factors affect the recruiting from the organisation's viewpoint: (1) recruiting requirements (2) organisational policies and procedures; and (3) the organisation's image. Applicants' abilities, attitudes and preferences based on their past work experiences and influences by parents, teachers and others affect them in two ways: (1) how they set job preferences, and (2) how they go about seeking a job.

In large organisations, the HR department does the recruiting while multi-purpose HR people or recruiting managers in smaller organisations recruit and interview applicants. Two sources of recruits could be used to fill any need for additional employees: (1) internal employees, or (2) outside persons (external). Organisations could adopt one of several methods to attract potential employees. The method to be adopted depends on the size of the organisation and costs involved. There are certain criteria that characterise successful recruiters. Many factors need to be taken into consideration when international recruitment has to be done.

Selection takes place after recruitment is completed. The basic objective of selection is to obtain the employees who are most likely to meet the organisation's standards of performance and being those who will be satisfied and developed on the job. Selection is influenced by environmental characteristics such as the nature of the organisation (public or private), labour market conditions, union requirements, selection ratio, government regulations and legal restrictions on selection. A number of selection methods are available for organisations: interviews, bio-data, group methods, in-trays, presentation, work simulation exercises, repertory grid technique, personality assessment and assessment centres.

Although organisations try to do their best in the selection of employees, there are certain barriers. Some of the major ones include evaluative standards, perception, perceptual selectivity, stereotyping, gender issues, older employees, halo effect, projection, fairness, validity and reliability. The principal purposes of orientation is to reduce start-up costs for new employees, to reduce the fear and anxiety of new employees, to reduce turnover, to save time for supervisors and co-workers as well as to develop realistic job expectations, job satisfaction and positive attitudes towards the employer.

The operating manager in smaller enterprises does all the orienting but the operating and HR managers in medium-sized or larger enterprises share this task. Orientation programmes range from quite informal, primarily verbal efforts to formal schedules that supplement verbal presentations with written hand-outs. Formal programmes could be quite extensive in their coverage. Orientation should begin with the most relevant and immediate kinds of information and then proceed to more general organisation policies. Having selected the new employees the next or the final phase of the orientation programme is the assignment of the new employee to the job. At this point, the supervisor is supposed to take over and continue the orientation. There are several approaches to evaluating the costs and benefits of orientation programmes.

Quite a number of definitions of learning rest on the viewpoint that the acquisition of knowledge and understanding facilitates change in perceptions and practice. In the modern world of work, employees are expected to cope with change and the emergence of new technology, assume more responsibility, become more skilled and knowledgeable, and (through it) develop the ability for problem solving and creative thinking. For all these to happen, learning and development is essential. As organisations become flatter with a greater degree of responsibility devolved to the workforce and as they also become more flexible, individual employees must be ready to accept more responsibility through a continuous process of learning how to learn.

The nature of learning, the nature of the learner in relation to work and career has been discussed in this module. As changes occur in the environment, individuals at work must adapt continuously and that can be achieved only through learning which a lifelong process is. However, this is not easy as there are barriers to learning which include anxiety and lack of confidence on the part of the learner. As all employees are adults, the concept of adult learning and Knowles' theory of adult education have been discussed. The outcomes of learning and the processes including the acquisition of new skills, competence, know-how and tacit knowledge have been discussed. Various theories and models of learning have been presented.

The concept of development was examined as a process which is being demanded of employees in modern organisations. The concept of career development and continuing professional development has been dealt with in the organisational context. Organisation as a context of learning, and the concept of the learning organisation have also been discussed. Although the terms "training" and "development" are frequently treated by some as synonymous, training is seen as both a part of and a pre-condition for development. Training has evolved as something that is provided for non-managerial workers whereas development has been treated as the preserve of management. From a HRM perspective, the connection between training and development must be regarded as highly interactive, each facilitating the other, in what may be thought of as a dialectical relationship. Training is seen as a key instrument in the implementation of HRM policies and practices – particularly those involving cultural change and the necessity of introducing new working practices.

The first and most vital step in a HRD plan is to analyse the training needs of the organisation in relation to the organisation's strategy and equate it with the needs of the individuals within it. A variety of methods could be adopted to carry out a training needs analysis. Job analysis, interviews with managers and supervisors as well as performance appraisals are some methods that are commonly used. Despite the available variety of methods, an organisation has to be cautious when it selects training methods for its use. A careful use of training methods can be a very cost-effective investment. There are two major types of training: on-the-job training and off-the-job training. Depending on the situation, each can be effective in meeting certain training requirements. Implementing training programmes could be handled by training departments, training consultancies and/or line managers.

Although evaluation and monitoring is one of the most important stages in the training process, it is often the most neglected or least adequately carried out part. It may look simple but it could also be complicated. Here as well, a variety of methods could be adopted. One way management development could function is as an attempt to improve managerial effectiveness through a planned and deliberate learning process. A viewpoint highlighted in this module is that management education and training are important components in a development programme but they do not, by themselves, constitute management development.

If strategic HRM is to be effectively implemented, managers must possess a set of values and attitudes that support the thinking that people are central to the success of the organisation. The notion that the managers have a right to manage the so-called managerial prerogative where the managerial elite plans, makes decisions and controls resources is fast becoming obsolete. Organising an effective management development programme (even a modest one) is no easy task and requires considerable effort. In contemporary management development, organisations are adopting and promoting a tripartite view where responsibility is shared among the personnel specialist, the boss and the individual. The effective development of managers requires the full involvement and participation of all three parties. Several factors need to be seriously considered in organising management development programmes.

Assignment

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1. Identify and list the recruitment methods you have observed in the organisations where you have worked. Of those, what methods have helped organisations to select effective employees? Give reasons in each case.

2. List the advantages and disadvantages of the selection methods discussed above, with reference to your work situation.

3. In your first employment and subsequent ones, what orientation activities have you gone through? How do you see those as contributing to your effectiveness at work?

4. In your opinion, what are the barriers to learning and development of the adult learner? How do adults differ from young students in the way they learn?

5. Consider your workplace to be the setting for this activity. What opportunities and threats is the company facing? What are the strengths and the weaknesses of the workforce in the present situation? Who needs development? Of what kind? How will it be undertaken? Who will be responsible for it? Who else would play a part in it? What are the barriers to their development or the constraints upon their development likely to be? What further learning and development will you need for yourself?

Assessment

Assessment

1. What are your views about the recruitment strategies employed in your country? Do they conform to some of the views mentioned above? If not, what reasons could you adduce?

2. What are the barriers of selection your organisation has attempted to eliminate or reduce the effect of? Explain how it was done.

3. Maintain a learning diary: Reflection is essential for effective learning. Systematically reflect upon what and how you learn by keeping a learning diary. It will also help you remember issues to discuss with your instructor/mentor and may also contribute to your continuing professional development portfolio. Spend half an hour every week to record the following:

    - The most meaningful or stressful events of the week.
    - How they came about and who was/were involved.
    - What you felt about them.
    - How you dealt with them.
    - The outcomes and your evaluation of your actions.
    - What you would repeat/avoid in the future.
    - What further knowledge, skills and understanding do you need to perform more effectively?
    - How could you acquire these?
    - What is your action plan?

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