

EASTERN UNIVERSITY, SRI LANKA
FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT

**Final Year First Semester Examination in Bachelor of Business Administration –
Specialization in Human Resource Management 2016/2017 (January, 2019)**

(Proper / Repeat)

HRM 4023 Human Resource Development

Answer all questions

Time: 03 Hours

Q1. Read the following case study and answer the questions given below:

Case Study: Changes in HRD at Hansen Group

The Hansen Group is one of the UK's largest construction groups. Traditionally, the company has been involved primarily in civil engineering but it has recently begun to diversify, partly through acquiring local government contracts, for example for street maintenance and cleaning and the facilities management of publicly owned buildings, such as universities. Therefore, the company is now involved in a wide range of diverse activities and employs an increasingly diverse workforce, from street cleaners to highly qualified civil engineers.

The three years since the Credit Crunch of 2008 have been incredibly difficult for the construction industry in the UK. As a result of the economic downturn, many construction firms have decreased their spending on learning and development. Hansen Construction has, however, increased its investment in these activities, notably introducing a new apprenticeship scheme for construction team leaders, expanding online learning provision and continuing to recruit and develop significant numbers of graduates. Hansen recognises that talented individuals are the lifeblood of the firm and, therefore, sees investment in workforce development as a key dimension of its employment proposition. This approach is felt to be in line with its commitment to sustainability in its corporate activity.

The learning and development team at Hansen drives learning and development innovations, provides analysis of business learning requirements and manages the delivery of cost-effective learning solutions to support the achievement of business goals. Learning solutions at Hansen include traditional off-the-job classroom programmes, short courses, online learning

interventions, workbooks and mentoring. The firm has recently recruited two new team members specifically to design in-house e-learning solutions, and to upgrade the computer-based learning management system.

As well as the learning and development team located at the company's headquarters, the firm employs a further 12 learning and development professionals who are located throughout the country and work directly with particular business units and clients, many of whom have specific needs in respect of employee development.

Traditionally, training needs for Hansen staff have been identified centrally and on behalf of the employee group. This has been consistent with its traditional approach to training, which focuses on groups in classroom settings. However, with an increasingly diverse workforce, the company has sought to introduce a new performance management system that focuses on individual performance and the competencies behind that performance.

In 2010, the L&D team sought to supplement its traditional classroom-based training programmes with a series of bite-sized (typically half an hour) interactive learning programmes for construction site staff that were linked together to form part of a meaningful professional development programme. These were known as 'toolbox talks', and were delivered by site managers using materials developed to support them by the central team. The talks are mainly devoted to risk management and health and safety issues. In addition, a significant part of Hansen's approach to learning and development is to increase the amount of on-the-job training that employees receive and to create a coaching culture within its management community.

Hansen has made significant investment in technology-based learning (or e-learning), particularly software that enables e-learning specialists within the learning and development team to produce online training programmes, several of which are compulsory for all employees. The learning and development team is exploring other technological solutions, such as using mobile phones and DVDs, to deliver learning to its maintenance workers, street cleaners and other employees who do not have ready access to the Internet.

Historically, the evaluation of learning and development interventions at Hansen has focused on the initial reactions of employees by asking them to complete evaluation questionnaires having attended a training programme. However, as part of the wider changes to the

development at the company, longer-term evaluation of interventions is now in place. This involves the learning and development centre asking the manager sponsoring any new programme to define what a positive outcome would look like in order to determine an appropriate metric for assessment, such as employee engagement or productivity, and involves contacting recipients of training 3–6 months after they have completed a programme and asking them whether they are doing anything differently as a result of what they have learned.

Case Study Questions:

a) Why do you think that Hansen Construction has increased its investment in learning and development activities despite the tough economic climate?

(06 Marks)

b) What are the likely benefits associated with the introduction of an individualized performance management system, and an associated competency framework, to inform learning and development at Hansen?

(06 Marks)

c) What are likely to be the benefits of introducing the ‘bite-size’ training programme delivered by site managers, a renewed focus on coaching and substantial investment in e-learning at Hansen?

(08 Marks)

(Total 20 Marks)

Q2. a) Briefly explain about any three (03) challenges of HRD professionals in the modern business world.

(06 Marks)

b) Identify and discuss the factors that can affect transfer of training. Which two factors do you feel are the most important to ensure transfer?

(07 Marks)

- c) A common stereotype about older workers is that they find learning difficult. For two recommendations do you feel supervisors should follow to ensure effective learning experiences for older workers.

(Total)

- Q3.** a) Briefly describe the pros and cons of using Performance Appraisal information in conducting a person need analysis in Human Resource Development.
- b) One important source of person need-assessment information is the potential trainee's own opinions about their development needs. Briefly discuss the advantages and disadvantages of relying on such self-report information as part of a person needs assessment.
- c) How do you feel about attending training sessions or workshops early in the morning or after lunch?

(Total)

- Q4.** a) What is blended learning? What do you think of this as an approach to training professional employees?
- b) Discuss the effects of less general job security on work – life balance (i.e. the trade-off between the benefits of work, such as a salary and security whilst maintaining life beyond work, such as family life and leisure activities).
- c) Describe the four levels of evaluation that make up Kirkpatrick's framework.

- d) Explain how both organizations and individuals can benefit from a well-designed Career Management System.

(06 Marks)

(Total 25 Marks)

Q5. PART A: Select most appropriate/correct answer for the following questions.

1. Seeking guidance from experienced people for advising and counseling is called,
 - a) Mentoring.
 - b) Counseling.
 - c) Advising.
 - d) Coaching.
2. Reviewing of data like productivity, absenteeism, down time and product quality is useful part of,
 - a) Planning
 - b) Preparation
 - c) Follow-up
 - d) Active Coaching
3. Which of the following is not an organizational development intervention programme?
 - a) Team-Building
 - b) Survey Feedback
 - c) Leadership Development
 - d) All of the above

4. Out of the following theories, which help us to learn through observations and our personal experiences?
- a) Operant Conditioning
 - b) Social Learning
 - c) Personality Development
 - d) None of the given options
5. Which of the following is a method used in group or organisational HRD assessment?
- a) Consideration of current and projected changes
 - b) Rating Scales
 - c) Interviews
 - d) Questionnaires
6. Which of the following is a learning principle?
- a) Recognition of individual differences
 - b) Schedules of Learning
 - c) Transfer of Learning
 - d) All of the above
7. In Lewin's change model, reducing the forces that maintain the organization at its present level is,
- a) Unfreezing
 - b) Moving
 - c) Changing
 - d) Refreezing

8. Promotions are made available from within and competitive advantages based on human resources are focuses of,
- a) Regression Planning
 - b) Aggressive Planning
 - c) Development
 - d) Training
9. _____ are those learning experiences which are organized, for a specific time and designed to bring about the possibility of behavioral change.
- a) Human Resource Management
 - b) Human Resource Development
 - c) Human Capital Management
 - d) Human Analytics
10. On the basis of our understanding about human resource development, which of the following is most important for HRD?
- a) To be clearly related to the organisation's objectives
 - b) To be clearly related to the expertise in the department
 - c) To be flexible to be able to respond to sudden crisis
 - d) To operate as an extension of the HRM department
11. Which of the following term is use to describe the process of helping a new employee to settle quickly into their job so they become efficient and productive workers?
- a) Job rotation
 - b) Induction
 - c) Training
 - d) Selection

12. Which of the following is not a technique used in classroom training training?
- a) Lectures
 - b) Group discussion
 - c) Case studies
 - d) Real time experience
13. Which of the following is not a limitation of career planning?
- a) Is not relevant due to rapid changes in government policies
 - b) Is not effective in small organisations
 - c) Is not useful in taking decisions related to filling the vacancies well in time
 - d) Lots of other economic, political factors intervene
14. A combination of abstract conceptualization and active experimentation (the doing), with a focus on problem solving, decision making and the practical application of ideas is called as,
- a) Accommodative
 - b) Convergent
 - c) Divergent
 - d) Assimilation
15. The best strategy for reducing the problems of transfer of training is,
- a) To have the trainee practice the learning longer in each training session
 - b) To have the trainee develop an action plan for implementing the new learning
 - c) To provide more immediate feedback during the training period
 - d) To lengthen the training time over additional training periods

16. Difficult tasks that are hard to comprehend usually produce what sort of learning curve?
- a) Positively accelerating
 - b) Negatively accelerating
 - c) Linear
 - d) Upside-down U-shaped
17. The training method which involves a brief explanation, a demonstration and then a performance try-out by the learner is called,
- a) Job instruction training
 - b) Vestibule training
 - c) Behavior modeling
 - d) Vicarious learning
18. Which training method has limited usefulness because it does not provide for active participation of the learning and there is no feedback, no knowledge of result and limited transfer of training?
- a) Special study
 - b) Simulation
 - c) Programmed instruction
 - d) Lecture
19. A legitimate difference between andragogy versus method for teaching children focuses on,
- a) The ability to utilize past experience in the training
 - b) The desire to participate in the learning experience
 - c) The desire for relevant learning that is problem-centered
 - d) The need to involve the learner in the learning process

20. Rearrange the steps in HRD programme,

- A. What should be the level of training?
- B. What principles of learning?
- C. Who are the trainees?
- D. What methods and techniques?
- E. Where to conduct the programme?
- F. Who are the trainers?

- a) ABCDEF
- b) DECAFB
- c) CADFBE
- d) CFDABE

PART B: Decide whether the following statements are True or False.

1.	The new business reality is that machines, capital and geography are the main competitive advantage.
2.	Only Human Resource personnel within an organisation are responsible to strengthening the talent pool.
3.	In restructuring a recruitment strategy in the new labour market, a critical issue for organisations and managers is to be able to understand the values and expectations of the new workforce.
4.	According to the new approaches to development, only poor performers need development.

5.	Strongly differentiating the organisations human resources has been criticised on the grounds that it has the potential to produce a star focused culture that undermines a team culture.	True	False
6.	The human resources (HR) function has the potential to assume an increasingly critical and dynamic role in generating a sustainable competitive advantage through people by focusing on the development of diverse policies, practices and systems to attract, retain and develop these key resources.	True	False
7.	The strategic focus on the management and development of human resources can be linked to the deliberate promotion of HRD strategies as a catalyst for the attraction and retention of talented employees.	True	False
8.	Talent is the sum of the person's abilities - his or her intrinsic gifts, skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence, judgement, attitude, character and drive. It also includes his or her ability to learn and grow.	True	False
9.	Training and development does not have an influence on the retention of skilled workers.	True	False
10.	In the new approach to development, development primarily means challenging experiences, coaching, feedback and mentoring.	True	False

(1/2 Marks * 30 = 15 Marks)