Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Learning and Development

Peter Cureton and Jim Stewart

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- understand the structure and main themes of the book
- explain how the content relates to the CIPD's Advanced standard for Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Learning and Development
- understand how to use the book to maximise your own learning.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In editing this book, we both reflected on how learning and development has changed in as little as a generation. Some of these changes have occurred as the discipline has assumed its own identity as a major contributor in the broad area of human resource management. Learning and development is now studied more formally. Whilst there had been many texts about training and development and learning prior to the late 1980s (for example, Nadler 1970 and Stammers and Patrick 1975), the subject had in many cases been included as part of organisational behaviour, or indeed subsumed into texts on human resource management. Other changes to the practice of training and development have occurred due to general changes in the world, notably through the development of information and communications technology (ICT).

The late 1980s proved to be a most interesting time. A scientist asked fundamental questions such as whether time could run backwards, and is the universe infinite or does it have boundaries (Hawking 2008). The war in Iraq ended; Australia celebrated its bicentennial; and the world population exceeded 5 billion people for the first time. In Britain, the formal ending of the First World War was noted as public houses were permitted to stay open all day, changing the licensing hours which had originally been introduced in 1914. It was common practice for retail shops to close on Wednesday afternoons for staff rest, an idea that may now seem anachronistic when viewed by younger generations. In the world of ICT, the first transatlantic fibre optic cable was laid, able to carry 40,000 telephone calls simultaneously. Commercial Internet services were launched in the United States and companies sought competitive advantage through forms of electronic data interchange. These developments were, however, also accompanied by the first major computer virus to infect computers connected to the Internet – the Morris WORM.

In 1988, Rosemary Harrison published *Training and Development* (CIPD), which was at that time widely regarded as *the* standard reader in the topic. The content provided a thorough analysis of the domain from a viewpoint that combined a pragmatic stance with a demonstration of the application of relevant theory in differing organisational contexts. Coverage ranged from the politics of training to a detailed treatment of the four-part systematic approach to training, all of which linked training to enhanced job performance. The term 'technology' was used, but at that time it related to '*general systems, procedures and methods*' (Harrison 1988, p256) through which individuals learned. The trainer was positioned as the person who directed and guided people in their learning, a traditional role. The Open University had very successfully used other technology such as radio, television and audio cassettes for individual learning, and the development of e-supported learning had begun in the form of computer-based training (CBT) and technology-based training (TBT, which added video images to the text on screen). Such approaches to learning seem rather old-fashioned now that the use of a range of devices, such as tablet computers with fourth generation mobile telephone standards and web 4.0 technologies, is part of everyday life.

1.2 STRUCTURE AND MAIN THEMES OF THE BOOK

So what has changed in the world of training and development in a generation? The most obvious change has seen the word training being replaced by learning. The CIPD changed the title of its annual survey on Training and Development to Learning and Development in 2006 and changed it again in 2010 to Learning and Talent Development. One of us recalls working as a consultant with a major bank in the north-west of England in the 1990s. The name of its Training and Development Centre was changed to Learning and Development, yet it could not shake off the tag of training in the minds of the staff. Perhaps this was due to the fact that they had simply replaced one word in the signage on the outside of the building. Although 'Learning' was then proudly displayed, the word 'Training' still appeared as a ghostly image as the sun had faded the brickwork, leaving an imprint of the previous word.

Other changes we have noted and consider in this book are the growth of coaching and the use of mentoring; the 'tightening' of short training courses – from five days to three days, from one day, to two hours and even the growth of so-called 'bite-sized learning', 20-minute sessions with examples of topics that provide helpful tips on how to use new routines in work. As organisations have downsized and reduced staff numbers, it seems that permitting staff to have time away from work for learning is more problematic. More learning is now delivered at and through work, learning is done on-the-job and near-job as the distinctions between work and learning soften. Individuals are encouraged to take greater responsibility for their learning as they use a range of technologies and social media to enhance their knowledge and skills. Access to learning is now available from every computer desktop.

Whilst the practitioner world has retained the title of learning and development, academics have preferred to use the term human resource development. They have questioned the fundamental purpose of human resource development and how it legitimates itself in an organisational setting. When human resource development is viewed through a critical management lens, questions about its purpose tend to fall into two areas. Firstly, does human resource development act as a mechanism to enable the emancipation of talented individuals to reach their potential by providing opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills? Or, secondly, is human resource development a servant of organisational senior managements to develop individuals solely to secure increased productivity by reinforcing accepted norm behaviours and standards? These issues continue to be debated in seminars

and conferences, notably by the University Forum for Human Resource Development (UFHRD), an international association for universities, reflective practitioners, and learning-oriented organisations (Stewart et al 2009).

A principal change that we note in the last 25 years is the profusion of texts written (upwards of 500 we believe) about learning and development generally, as well as examinations of its many component elements. Learning and development can now truly be recognised as a significant field of study in people management. So, you may ask, why is there a need for yet another text at this time?

Designing, delivering and evaluating learning and development is a key practice for human resource management and especially for human resource development professionals. Engaging in associated activities, such as recording learning activity, organising learning schedules, managing the budget and confirming the value of learning probably accounts for the major time allocation and accountabilities for most practitioners. This book is aimed at human resource management generalists as well as learning and development specialists, together with students who have an interest in designing, delivering and evaluating learning and development. It is specifically written to support the CIPD's Advanced Standard for module 7DDE, the content of which was authored by Jim Stewart. The learning outcomes are mapped to each chapter as we note in the following section, in introducing each chapter. However, the text is not just for current postgraduate students working towards their postgraduate diplomas or master's degrees. It will be a useful text for those who have studied learning and development previously and wish to engage in continuous professional development (CPD), a topic that we cover in Chapter 8, to update their knowledge and skills. We are sure that they will be surprised at how the field has developed since they completed their studies. Students on other study programmes, including undergraduates, will also find it a valuable reference source, as learning and development has become an everyday part of general business and management curricula.

Learning practitioners who are not studying towards a professional qualification will also find useful ideas about the methods of other organisations, which should encourage them to reflect on the learning they provide and be reflexive about possible improvements to the range of learning opportunities that can be adopted. We have deliberately used examples from public, private and voluntary sector organisations to appeal to as broad an audience as possible. After all, professionals who are likely to move into different occupational sectors throughout their careers and maybe different countries need to understand how practice varies in other contexts.

Although the style of the book draws on UK practice and by implication that in North America, we are acutely aware of the growing globalisation of the labour market and have included examples from practice across the world. These examples will help to identify a range of challenges that learning and development professionals face in a multicultural world that requires them to operate in an inclusive way. If the 'war for talent' is over because 'talent won', employers need to focus on supporting individuals in their learning to allow potential to be used, not just for increased performance but for career development and employability, as well as personal well-being and growth.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS LINKED TO THE CIPD'S ADVANCED STANDARDS

Whilst there is some consistency in the structure and presentation of each chapter, this is not uniform, which then allows each of the authors to explore the nuances of their topic appropriately.

1.3.1 CHAPTER 2 – INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE LEARNING

Clair Doloriert, Jim Stewart and Sally Sambrook

> **CIPD Learning Outcome 3**: Critically evaluate a range of learning and instructional design theories and principles and apply them to select and justify appropriate learning and development methods and delivery channels with the engagement and support of other professionals and managers.

The design and delivery of learning and development is predicated on understanding learning. Thus, that understanding is an essential foundation. The authors provide a critical exposition of a range of theories of individual and collective learning including cognitive, behavioural, social and constructivist models. A number of frameworks of instructional design are analysed for application of these theories, together with methods of learning and development appropriate to a range of purposes and audiences. The criteria for selecting and applying methods for use in a range of types of delivery channels, including the role of technology, are explored. The chapter also discusses approaches to and methods of engaging key stakeholders in design, including line managers, and especially their contribution to supporting learning and development.

1.3.2 CHAPTER 3 – THE EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL CONTEXT

Amanda Lee, Sophie Mills and Dalbir Sidhu

> **CIPD Learning Outcome 1**: Explain, evaluate and critically analyse the internal and external contextual factors impacting on the design, delivery and assessment of learning plans and interventions in organisations.

The practice of designing, delivering and evaluating learning and development occurs primarily in organisation contexts. Practitioners therefore need to understand factors, both internal and external, that influence those contexts. This chapter examines and analyses the role and impact of external factors such as economic and legislative conditions and internal factors on learning. These cover such topics as organisational plans and priorities, learning climate and resource availability, and how these affect the attitudes of individuals to their learning. This introduces workplace and work-based learning strategies and notions of formal and informal learning. Developments in ICT, such as e-learning, social media and games, and the opportunities and limitations of these for the design and delivery of learning are also addressed. Suggestions for strategies of blended learning are explored. More generally, external and internal barriers, inhibitors and facilitators of learning and development are identified and evaluated. The authors demonstrate how such potential restraints can inhibit the development of a high-performance work culture and the contribution that key stakeholders can make.

1.3.3 CHAPTER 4 – ESTABLISHING LEARNING NEEDS

Dr Tricia Harrison and Dr Randhir Auluck

> **CIPD Learning Outcome 2**: Evaluate, select and apply a range of approaches and processes for establishing learning and development needs at organisational, group/team, occupational and individual levels in collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

The design, delivery and evaluation of learning and development needs to be built on clear understanding of learning needs at a number of levels. This chapter begins by examining and analysing the role and responsibilities of a range of stakeholders in identifying learning and development needs. The strengths and limitations of approaches to and methods of identifying learning needs at organisational, occupational and individual levels

are then explored and critically evaluated. These are illustrated with relevant examples. As part of this, the role of data and the forms it takes in organisational settings and contexts to identify learning needs is critically examined. Human resource development practitioners may need to be proactive in seeking such data. Approaches to and methods of building support for learning among a range stakeholders are described and explored as the identification of learning needs is located within wider development processes.

1.3.4 CHAPTER 5 – DESIGNING LEARNING INTERVENTIONS

Dr Crystal Zhang and Dr Niki Kyriakidou

> **CIPD Learning Outcome 4**: Design learning plans and interventions to meet identified needs in a timely, feasible and cost-effective way.

The design stage of designing, delivering and evaluating learning and development follows logically from the specification of learning needs. Factors that determine and influence learning and development plans, such as the purpose and timeliness of learning and its associated costs are explored and analysed in this chapter. It will develop the examination of learning theory in Chapter 2 to include learning from both an organisation and learner perspective. This considers ways of meeting organisational, occupational and individual level learning needs in a timely way that reflects an organisation's culture and the diverse needs of individuals. The value of training is analysed, not just in economic terms, but by reflecting how people of different age groups view learning. This is discussed alongside the need for innovative learning to tackle global challenges on sustainable employability. Various and varying components and features of organisational, departmental, team and individual learning plans are described and explored together with the importance of specifying learning outcomes. The chapter also examines methods and processes for estimating and justifying costs, and for planning, designing and managing implementation of feasible learning interventions and events.

1.3.5 CHAPTER 6 – DELIVERING AND FACILITATING LEARNING

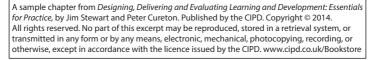Michelle McLardy and Nigel O'Sullivan

> **CIPD Learning Outcome 5**: Demonstrate skills of delivery and facilitation of learning through a range of methods and for employees at a range of organisational levels and a range of occupational groups.

The skills associated with facilitating learning of groups and individuals are examined in this chapter. Given the changes we noted in the previous section, the chapter begins by considering methods of providing one-to-one coaching and mentoring, as these are increasingly used in organisations. More traditional forms of learning delivery through the use of presentational and instructional skills are also included. The ideas and suggestions based on practice are applied in ways that help to create appropriate and effective learning climates. Feedback is a key element of learning, and approaches to and techniques of giving and receiving feedback are considered. In addition the chapter provides guidance on how to support learning of groups and individuals through blended approaches, and how the use of technology after an intervention back on the job can support the consolidation of learning. This is a necessary and often overlooked part of a learning and development professional's responsibilities.

1.3.6 CHAPTER 7 – EVALUATING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Marian O'Sullivan and Michael McFadden

> **CIPD Learning Outcome 6**: Design and implement appropriate evaluation methods to assess the success and effectiveness of learning plans and interventions.

Establishing impact and benefits through evaluation is often considered as the final stage of designing, delivering and evaluating learning and development practice.. This chapter challenges this approach and considers activities that need to be built into the learning design to ensure quality, starting with a consideration of the purposes of evaluation. It describes and critically analyses a range of approaches to and methods and techniques of evaluation including return on investment, value added and stakeholder satisfaction. A number of models and frameworks of evaluation are examined, as are a range of sources and types of data for evaluation purposes. These are critically examined and problems and limitations discussed, particularly why they have not been used extensively in organisations, despite knowledge of this crucial activity being in existence for more than two generations. This discussion focuses on problems of measurement and the politics of evaluation, among other factors. The role and contribution of formative and summative assessment in learning evaluation is explored and how these can be used for continuous improvement.

1.3.7 CHAPTER 8 – ACTING PROFESSIONALLY AND ETHICALLY

Peter Cureton and Maureen Royce

> **CIPD Learning Outcome 7**: Act ethically and professionally with a demonstrated commitment to equality of opportunity and diversity in the design and delivery of learning and development and to continuous personal and professional development.

The CIPD rightly emphasises the need for HR practitioners to act professionally and ethically and so this chapter will examine those qualities in the context of designing, delivering and evaluating learning and development. Definitions and understandings of ethics, including philosophical bases of cognitivism and consequentialism, are described and evaluated. An examination of the similarities and differences of notions of equality and diversity also forms part of the chapter, as we take a broad perspective on inclusivity and the notion that this topic is part of an organisation's 'mainstream' activities. Notions of professionalism and professional practice are examined and analysed through a consideration of both aspects of integrity and practice through the four-part systematic approach to training. The implications for and application of these concepts and associated debates in professional practice associated with design, delivery and evaluation of learning and development are explored. Rationales for and processes of CPD, including evaluation of a range of CPD methods, are considered. Challenges in CPD, particularly for human resource development professionals, form the final part of the chapter.

1.3.8 CHAPTER 9 – THEMES AND THE FUTURE OF DDE

Jim Stewart and Peter Cureton

The final chapter draws together the main themes and emerging issues from the book by proposing some personal viewpoints rather than summarising the contributions from the other authors. In highlighting the key points from the chapters, it picks up key current debates and challenges in the designing, delivering and evaluating of learning and development and human resource development discourse. The chapter also includes speculations about the future of designing, delivering and evaluating learning and development. This is intended to stimulate further thinking and challenge practitioners and academics to consider how they might make a contribution to future theory and practice. Not only should this encourage reflection about current practice but we exhort professionals to engage with and plan the continuous development of their knowledge and skills.

1.4 HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The book adopts an approach that encourages a critical examination of taken-for-granted assumptions of designing, delivering and evaluating learning and development practice. It supports this questioning by providing alternative perspectives on and accounts of practice. Whilst the book is loosely structured around a systematic approach to learning and development, readers may choose to start with a specific chapter to further their knowledge of a particular theme.

We have included case studies from practice, vignettes and activities to encourage readers to consider how suggestions might apply in their contexts. We hope they find new ideas here, or perhaps confirmation of ideas that have been developed through practice. It may also be an opportunity to refresh ideas that may have been forgotten that might be relevant now. In addition, the book supports application and development of practice through a range of pedagogical features which will be applied throughout the book and in all chapters. We also include suggested reading at the end of each chapter and web-based support for study can be found at the CIPD website.

As editors of this book, we hope that readers continue to develop their practice continually to respond to evolving work contexts and expectations. We believe that they must recognise the many and diverse ways in which learning makes contributions to the development and advancement of both organisations and individuals. If enhanced professional practice is successful in building a number of different capabilities through effective use of designing, delivering and evaluating learning and development technologies, the reputation and standing of learning and development can only be enhanced.