**Extracts relating to stakeholder perspectives on HRD**

**Extract from Grugulis I 2019, Training, development and skills, in (eds) A Wilkinson, N Bacon, S Snell, D Lepak*, Sage Handbook of Human Resource Management*, London, Sage.**

It is difficult to argue against the merits of training and development. They add to employees’ earnings, limit their chances of unemployment (and their chances of longterm unemployment), provide access to more interesting and higher status jobs and, when supported by formal qualifications, enable employers and employees to find each other more readily. For employers, providing training reduces their dependence on the outside labour market so they run less risk that, when skills are required, they will not be available (or will not be available at the price the organisation is prepared to pay). Training and development may also support productivity and high-quality production and send a key symbolic message to staff: literally that their employer values them and is investing in their future. At a national level, countries that invest more in their education systems, as well as vocational education and training, compete more effectively in knowledge intensive industries.

So far so positive. Small wonder then that training and development are the litmus test of human resource management, HRM (Keep 1989). In the fraught and contentious literature on ‘Best Practice HRM’, ‘High Commitment Work Practices’, ‘High Involvement Management’, ‘High Performance Work Systems’, ‘High Commitment Management’ or ‘High Performance Practices’ training is the only constant, the only practice that appears on all best practice lists (Grugulis and Stoyanova 2011). When companies train and develop their staff other HR practices make sense. Skilful trained and developed staff will contribute more to decision-making and problem-solving, should be rewarded for the contribution they make to the firm and are likely to make better use of discretion in their work. There is suitably robust evidence to support each of these links and, through them, all parties to the employment relationship can benefit: employees, employers, trade unions, professional bodies, employer organisations and the state. There seems little question but that the state should support training, firms should provide it and individuals should pursue it. Such is the consensus on the positive impact that training and development have that it might be anticipated that the provision of, and participation in, vocational education and training (VET) is high and rising. After all, since all parties benefit from VET it makes sense to organise it, enrol on it and participate in it. Yet even a cursory glance at the realities of working lives and working labour markets demonstrates that this is not necessarily the case.

In absolute terms training levels are falling. In absolute terms training levels are falling. In the UK the volume of vocational training fell by half between 1997 and 2012 (Green et al. 2013), a fall that pre-dated the recession. Quality is tenuous, with some training involving only watching a short video (Leidner 1993) and much provision is at low levels. Or, as Keep (2015) puts it, too few employers are offering training, too few individuals are able to access it, and much of the training on offer is of questionable quality. Given the positive outcomes observed above this might seem illogical, but it is not. While training and development can and do have an extremely positive impact, not all jobs require training and development, and not all training and development are developmental.

The issue that so many commentators forget, when writing about the merits of training and development, is that training is a derived demand (Performance and Innovation Unit 2001) or a third-order issue (Keep and Mayhew 1999). In other words, organisations are not established with the primary purpose of devising the best, most rigorous, most developmental training activities for their staff. They are set up to make a profit or provide a service. The route to profitability or efficiency may require highly skilled and knowledgeable staff, as in the production of luxury cars or the provision of cuttingedge professional advice (Starbuck 1993). Where this is the case training and development, mentoring and skills support are likely to be key elements of firm practice. But not all organisations choose to compete on the basis of skills, knowledge and quality. Many extremely successful companies compete by routinising or automating work, limiting the skills that employees require or can exercise. So McDonald’s bells, buzzers and lights, work routines and pre-prepared foods serve to restrict employees’ discretion in an attempt to ‘employee-proof’ jobs (Ritzer 1996; Royle 2000), insurance sales may be boosted by the use of scripts (Leidner 1993) and call centre technology shapes and controls work (Taylor and Bain 1999).

There are two central points here. The first is that not all training is equal. Training varies by type, quality, rigour and relevance to skill. The second is that the nature of work varies. Put simply, the training required depends on the work that people do. Not all jobs are developmental, or skilful, or knowledge-based, nor do they include areas of discretion or responsibility. Some may, while others demand only the exercise of a very limited range of skills to achieve a narrow set of tasks. Any evaluation of training depends heavily on what that training consists of and what job the trainees are doing or will do.

**Extract from Grugulis I (2007) *Skills, training and human resource development, A critical text*, New York, Palgrave.**

**Chapter 1, ‘Human Resource Development’, pp. 6-9.**

Training and development may pass on information on organisational events, it may introduce workers to new workplaces, products or practices and it may provide a source of entertainment that distracts from monotonous routines. It may also build employee skills or build organisational capacity. But not all forms of development have all these objectives, which themselves are far from uniform – not least because there may be a great deal of difference between training that boosts employees’ skills and that which develops organisational capacity. Two examples may help to illustrate this. Becoming a doctor requires many years of dedicated study. Prospective medics are required to enrol on an accredited university course, provision is limited and competition for places fierce. While on these courses student doctors have no income and may be expected to pay high fees. The education and professional training they gain during their degrees provides them with a sound knowledge of medicine and this is supplemented by several years of guided work experience during which individuals may choose to specialise in particular branches of the subject, a choice that may require extra study. Once qualified, doctors enjoy high earnings and high status. At the other end of the skills spectrum is the training provided for call centre workers. In some call centres, if a customer service representative lets their voice drop during a telephone conversation and this is noted by their supervisor, they may be sent to a half day workshop to learn how to keep their voice tone and tempo even (Callaghan and Thompson 2002). The training is short and the lessons it teaches may be useful for the call centre but they confer little advantage on the individual worker who gains no pay, no status and no skills.

Training can be developmental. It can equip workers with skills that can empower them in the labour market, improve their career prospects and add considerably to their lifetime earnings. But none of these results are inevitable and it would be naïve to assume that all forms of training take us one step closer to a knowledge based economy. Different types of training advantage different parties to the employment relationship (see, for example Payne 1991; Peck 1993; Mole 1996; Keep 1999; Mole 2004). Advantage may be shared, as in professional qualifications, or it may be unequal as for the call centre worker.

Such a conclusion may be self-evident, but it rarely enters the discussion of human resource development, which tends to adopt a *unitarist* perspective on the employment relationship. This view assumes that the interests of managers and workers are identical (Fox 1966). Those who hold it may describe the workplace as a team with managers as coaches and lower ranking workers as players. However, such a consensus is often assumed to exist because workers will agree with and adopt management’s views rather than managers agreeing with workers’ views. A *pluralist* frame of reference, by contrast, assumes that the workplace has a ‘babel of different voices’ (Cully et al.1999), that people who work together may agree over some things but not all, and that while the interests of managers and workers may coincide they may also differ. In the unitarist frame of reference conflict is pathological, in the pluralist one it is inevitable.

The implications of this for training and development are significant. When a unitarist perspective is adopted, any developmental process that benefits the firm must also benefit the employee. So, the unfortunate call centre workers being taught to control their voices are assumed to be gaining from this process because their interests are the same as those of the call centre. From a pluralist frame of reference their complaints, misbehaviour and resistance are legitimate, because their interests differ from those of their employer…’

**Extract from: Deiser, R 2009, *Designing the smart organisation: how breakthrough corporate learning initiatives drive strategic change and innovation*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.**

Chapter 1: ‘The corporate learning imperative’ pp.12-13.

*The Ascent of Knowledge-Based Organizations*

...During the past twenty-five years, the foundations of Western economies have become more and more knowledge based. The value of products and services lies increasingly in their inherent intellectual capital, and knowledge workers are slowly becoming the majority of the workforce. The “rise of the creative class,” as social economist Richard Florida puts it, is slowly changing the texture of Western Societies.

The ascent of knowledge as the strategic lever for value creation has huge consequences for the way organizations deal with this asset. The effective management of knowledge is critical to the business model of the firm – both in terms of marketplace intelligence and internal competence – and they need appropriate policies and mechanisms to acquire, aggregate, and utilize this *relevant* knowledge.

This is not an easy task for organizations that have been designed to be efficient machines. While some knowledge can be treated like dead material and quickly processed according to an industrial paradigm, the bigger and more relevant parts of today’s knowledge tend to be tacit and ambiguous. This type of knowledge rests in people and in practices and is closely linked with the context where it gets applied. It is harder to access and cannot be “managed” like a database of information. It needs to be absorbed and continuously re-evaluated through discourse as it derives from multiple internal and external perspectives. It is of little use if it is not converted into shared meaning and sense-making organizational maps that then inform the organization’s strategic response.

**Extract from Cooney, R 2012 ‘The dimensions of union interest in training: Trade unions and workplace training in Australia’, in R Cooney & M Stuart (eds), *Trade unions and workplace training: Issues and international perspectives*, Routledge, New York, USA, pp.41-56.**

*Training as a Benefit*

Union concern with vocational training as a labour market good for union members also stimulates union interest in the regulation of training at the workplace as part of the employment relationship. Unions are interested in how training is conducted, whether it is in paid time or unpaid time, and whether it is for a recognised qualification or not. Unions are also interested in how skills are defined, assessed, and accredited at work, and they are interested in how these skills are related to pay and job classification systems.

If vocational training is seen as an issue for enterprise bargaining, then the key issues that arise for unions are the definition and assessment of skill; the matching of skill levels to pay and classification systems; payment for training (training wages, payment for attendance, pay relativities for skill differentials, etc.); and member progression through training and, hence pay and classification levels.

Unions are interested in the development of firm-specific skills for their members, but they are also interested in the development of transferable skills. They thus seek training that leads to recognised qualifications that are portable within an industry or that give their members some advantage in external labour markets.

**Extract from Bratton, J., Helms-Mills, J., Pyrch, T. and Sawchuk, P. (2003) *Workplace Learning: A Critical Introduction.* Toronto: Garamond Press., pp.**

The paid workplace is one of the most important spheres of learning in society today. However, the learning that goes on this sphere can be understood from at least two different perspectives: that of management and owners on the one hand, and that of workers and their organizations on the other. In fact, workplace learning represents a contested terrain of social, political and economic struggle. The purpose of trade unions is to represent the interests and worldview of the diversity of workers, and its goals in terms of workplace learning can be seen as overlapping as well as in opposition to those of management. Unions represent these interests by providing organizational, and, in most liberal democracies, legal frameworks for workers to mobilize around issues they themselves deem important. The labour movement, more generally, is comprised of the trade union movement, the co-operative movement and workers’ political parties. Within this stream of movements, trade unions in particular have incredible capacity to shape the character and experience of learning at work through course provision, collective bargaining and other forms of intervention. Unions also play an important role in shaping training and vocational education policy at various sectoral, national and, more recently, international levels (in many cases with the help of established workers’ political parties). Perhaps most pervasively of all, however, unions can and frequently do play an important role in shaping the everyday experiences of workers within the labour process, through specific information and action campaigns, as well as through their effects on learning through mass media, literature, drama and art (p.141).

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Whether unionized or not, workers learn a great deal informally through the course of the everyday experience of the labour process. As we discussed in chapter 3, the way paid work is designed (task variety, flexibility, decision-making, etc.) represents a type of informal ‘pedagogy’ complete with overt as well as hidden forms of curriculum. This learning can be understood at the instrumental or even the existential level: that is, work can teach workers practical skills of communication, technical competence, managerial resistance, grievance handling and collective mobilization; and, work also teaches workers about their place in the world as an individual and as a solidaristic group, complete with lived experiences of deeply felt pride, joy, shame or despair. Unions, through their varying levels of involvement in control over the production system, thus influence this learning experience and shape its curriculum, and in many cases generate a curriculum of their own (p. 156).

<https://www.theage.com.au/politics/victoria/security-industry-review-exposes-little-training-sham-contracting-20200704-p5590f.html>

**Security industry review exposes little training, sham contracting**

**By**[**Paul Sakkal**](https://www.theage.com.au/by/paul-sakkal-h17jxj)**and**[**Clay Lucas**](https://www.theage.com.au/by/clay-lucas-hved8)

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Add to shortlist

A review of Victoria’s troubled security firms, released by the Andrews government amid coronavirus outbreaks spread among guards at the state’s quarantine hotels, details an industry beset by poor hiring practices and contentious subcontracting policies.

It found security guards were lowly paid, regularly lacked English-language skills, and are often so poorly trained they do not perform the basic functions of their job.

The Andrews government review, that covers the industry and the state’s 33,000 licensed guards, was released last week, days after guards were cited as the likely source behind outbreaks.

In March, Premier Daniel Andrews announced that more than a dozen Melbourne hotels would house thousands of travellers returning from overseas for a compulsory 14-day quarantine. But the coronavirus infections starting in those hotels among guards and their contacts have been identified by Mr Andrews as central to the wider outbreak now spreading across Melbourne.

Add to shortlist

The paper in part focuses on subcontracting, something most companies in the industry do.

The review's release came as it emerged the state government had selected a NSW firm not on its list of preferred security companies to run security at nine of the hotels.

That firm, Unified Security, subcontracted out work to at least one smaller firm after being contracted.

Unified Security provided guards at the Rydges on Swanston hotel, where one of the two quarantine hotel outbreaks occurred.

At the 2018 state election, the government promised to review the laws covering an industry beset by transient, casual labour and guards with deficient skills. It is the first review of the sector in a decade.

The Department of Justice and Community Safety circulated the paper, which details the concerns of employers, employees, industry bodies and unions, and notes there is consensus that standards should be higher.

“The industry is characterised by a workforce that is highly casualised, relatively low-paid and transient,” the paper found. It said on-the-job training seldom occurred because most employers were not “willing to invest in casual or transient staff”.

Workers were often expected to “complete training on their own time”, while language barriers were so bad that in many cases “students may not be understanding the training material delivered”.

The report also delved into “sham contracting” – where an employer illegally pretends an employee is a private contractor so that the worker is responsible for their own pay and conditions.

In the security industry, it means that this employee “may no longer receive employment entitlements such as overtime, penalty rates, and leave”, the review said.

Many guards in the industry, it found, were asked to work as independent contractors or were paid cash-in-hand rather than electronically.

*The Sunday Age* has seen Whatsapp groups that include thousands of mainly south-Asian men who respond to job advertisements for security shifts at venues and events. Many of the advertisements state payment will be made in cash or via an ABN, a sign of sham contracting, and specify guards will be required to wear the uniform of the security company that holds the contract with the client.

While security guards at some of Melbourne’s highest profile events – the Spring Racing Carnival, or the grand prix for instance – “may appear to be working for a single private security company, but are in fact largely engaged by subcontractors”, the the United Workers Union has said.

One of the three security firms selected by the government without tender and at less than 24 hours notice to guard potential coronavirus infected returned travellers is Unified Security.

Registered and owned by New South Wales residents, the firm had guards working at nine of around 15 hotels used by the government to house travellers. Unified was not on a government “panel” that allowed five firms – MSS Security, G4S, National Protective Services, SecureCorp and Wilson – to be contracted at short notice.

The Andrews government on Friday declined to answer questions about the use of Unified Security despite it not being on this shortlist, instead issuing a statement only about its $3 million review of the botched quarantine program.

“A judicial inquiry has been established at arm’s length from [the] government to examine issues relating to hotel quarantine,” a spokeswoman said. “We will let the inquiry do its work – our focus remains on containing this virus.”

Unified Security, asked about how it came to be selected, said in a statement: “As Australia’s largest indigenous owned private security company, we were appointed to provide services in line with the Victorian government’s procurement guidelines.”

The statement said any further questions should be asked of the state government, which had approved its contracting arrangements.

The Department of Justice and Community Safety last week circulated a detailed paper to stakeholders in the security industry to elicit feedback on the first review of the sector in a decade.

A final report will be handed to the government in December, at which point the government may amend the act governing the industry.