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AUTHOR MacFarland, Thomas W.  
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ABSTRACT

While human resource development (HRD), an extension of education, is regarded as a helping profession, industry mandates that HRD contribute to the maximization of organizational outcomes. HRD personnel can easily become demotivated because of dual loyalties. In order not only to avoid stress and demotivation but also to maximize outcomes humanely, HRD personnel should employ Skinnerian behavior management. Because management is perceived as working with and through individuals and groups to accomplish organizational goals, HRD must first identify goals and then must consider motivation, since motivation for performance springs from goal-based responsibility, achievement, and recognition. Therefore, using its central role between management and labor, HRD must assist in collaborative goal setting. If involvement in goal setting is so critical to workers' later performance, HRD must remember, too, the individuality of workers. Specifically, incongruence may exist between company goals and individual goals. HRD personnel must also keep in mind the idea of moderate goal setting (not too high nor too low) for the highest motivation. (YLB)

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A STRATEGY TO LINK EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AND  
REWARDS TO OVERALL ORGANIZATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

by

Thomas W. MacFarland, Ed.D.

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## INTRODUCTION

Organizations must, through systematic "change aimed at increasing individual and organizational effectiveness" (Hammons, 1978:8), maximize productivity within the limitations of the present economic system (Blai, 1984:234). The concern for productivity must, however, not show favoritism or status, but instead recognize the value and worth of all workers. Dewey recognized that "the general adoption of the scientific attitude in human affairs would mean nothing less than a revolutionary change in morals, religion, politics, and industry" (Wirth, 1980:179). Human Resources Development (HRD), whether for the pragmatic (McCullough, 1980:46) or the ideal (Walz, 1982:102), can play a pivotal role so that both management and labor are fully satisfied with all terminal outcomes that increase productivity.

It is the purpose of this paper to offer and defend the use of behaviorism as the most appropriate, expedient, and humane technique to maximize organizational development. Paralleling the need to critically examine all aspects of intended and actualized behavior is the succinct observation that "only when the management of an organization conceptualizes the organization as a system will these unintended negative consequences [inefficiency and waste] be identified" (Schneider, 1974:19). It will not be feasible, within the context of this paper, to adequately detail all behaviorist

strategies, e.g., reductionism, task analysis, behavioral objectives, shaping, token rewards, oscillation of behavior, and criterion-referenced evaluation. Explicit detail can be found in Bigge (1982), Bower and Hilgard (1981), Hill (1977), Skinner (1971), and Wittrock (1977).

#### BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT TO MAXIMIZE OUTCOMES

HRD professionals are commonly placed in a precarious position. HRD, an extension of education, is regarded as a "helping profession." Yet, industry mandates that HRD contribute to the maximization of organizational outcomes. Cherniss (1984) realistically discussed the career expectations of HRD personnel with a caution that personnel can become easily demotivated because of dual loyalties. It is suggested that not only to avoid stress and demotivation but also to humanely maximize outcomes, HRD personnel should employ Skinnerian behavior management which is defined by Clements and Farrar (1982:22) as

the application of sets of procedures that rely on the specification, measurement, and control of behavior through the alteration of consequences or behavior modification.

HRD must recognize that because management is perceived as "working with and through individuals and groups to accomplish organizational goals" (Hersey and Blanchard, 1982:3), before all else, goals must be identified. Considering first the historical research about goals, Steers and Porter (1974:7) cited Mace's 1935 statement that "subjects assigned specific goals improved in performance

across trial blocks at a much faster rate than subjects assigned less specific goals." Secondly, motivation must also be considered when speaking of goals. Because "motivation for performance springs from goal-based responsibility, achievement and recognition" (Snyder, 1981: 25), it is critical that HRD, using its central role between management and labor, assists in the collaboration of goal-setting.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

If involvement in goal-setting is so critical to the later performance of workers, the individuality of workers must also be remembered by HRD. Specifically, incongruence may exist between company goals and individual goals. The common disparity between mandated goals and idiosyncratic goals was recognized by Steers and Porter (1974:31) when they stated, "care must be taken in both theory and research to draw a clear distinction between externally-assigned task goals and personal aspiration levels on these goals."

HRD personnel, in their professional role of goal-development, find to their despair only too soon that reaction to assigned/negotiated goals can be far more complex than originally perceived. McClelland (1973, 1985) has richly contributed to the profession by describing the complex role motives, skills, values, and needs achievement have upon goal setting. McClelland (1973:10) referred to moderate goal setting as being "distinctly preferable to

setting goals either too high or too low, which leads more often to failure." Weiner, Heckhausen, Meyer, and Cook (1977:112) continued the theme of moderate goal setting, and after investigation found that

the greatest elicitation of beliefs in effort as an outcome determinant, and the place where subjects state they should try hardest to maximize gain, is at tasks of intermediate difficulty.

In brief, motivation is the highest when the probability of success is 50 percent.

Accordingly, it is suggested that HRD personnel must become better acquainted with the relationship of goal setting to later productivity. Using a vast repertoire of Skinnerian behavioral modification techniques, HRD personnel must be able to not only effectively recognize that "behavior is shaped and maintained by its consequences" (Skinner, 1971: 16), but also to meet their professional mandate by arranging the contingencies of reinforcement. In effect, HRD personnel must have the personal skills and political power necessary to perform their duties.

Therefore, it is suggested that only the highest professional standards should be acceptable to HRD. Above all else, the integrity of the profession must be maintained. It is recommended that use of Skinnerian behaviorism and corollary actions will not only assist immediate efforts, but will also contribute to greater professional recognition-- both by management and labor. Improvements in behavioral management and technology are providing greater professional impact for HRD, but only if opportunity is taken.

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