

HRD Practices and Interventions: Can They Be Used in the Public Education System?

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HRD research has historically focused on business-related organizations, and so have HRD practitioners. Another major organizational entity that can benefit from HRD practitioner attentions is public education. Research in both areas have utilized similar theoretical frameworks, but have focused on a different "product." HRD practitioner interventions should be effective in education, but there are obstacles to their introduction. This paper identifies HRD and education research similarities and discusses obstacles to HRD practitioners in education settings.

Keywords: Practitioner Issues, Public Education Interface, Theory and Practice

In most organizations, Human Resource Development (HRD) is seen only as a segment under the human resources management (HRM) "umbrella," and then is only identified as the Training and Development (T&D) segment of HRM. In reality, the practices under HRD have become critical to the strategic success of organizations and have expanded far beyond T&D. Gilley, Egglund, and Gilley (2002) state that HRD has grown and matured over the past 40 years, with organizational HRD personnel filling executive level positions. However, many, if not most members of a company or other organization would be hard-pressed to answer a question asking what HRD was or what HRD meant within their company or organization, other than T&D. This is because a true definition of HRD is difficult to state. Gilley, et al., (2002) define HRD as "A dynamic and evolving practice used to enhance organizational effectiveness" (p. 2). Shortly thereafter however, they make the implication that there is no "true definition" of HRD because of the multiple roles to be filled by HRD personnel and because the nature of HRD work continuously changes. Interestingly enough, a very good "working definition" of HRD exists that encompasses the spectrum of HRD services and responsibilities. Gilley and Maycunich (2000) define HRD as "the process of facilitating organizational learning, performance, and change through organized (formal and informal) interventions, initiatives, and management actions for the purpose of enhancing an organization's performance capacity, capability, competitive readiness, and renewal" (p. 6).

At the same time, there is another organization and group of professionals, to which and to whom this definition would apply. This is the public education system. The major difference between the types of organizations that are normally associated with HRD professionals and the education system is the "product:" the bottom line in business and students in our schools. The U.S. public education system has been in existence for more than 350 years, but the system today is experiencing difficulties that are much more serious than at any time in the past (Sykes, 1995). A lot of factors have been identified as possibly contributing to this situation, but two factors get more attention than others. These are individual teacher performance and overall district performance. Strangely enough, these are related to two of the basic tenets of HRD, Individual Development (ID) and Organizational Development (OD). However, due to the constraint of paper length, only possible HRD contributions to individual teacher performance improvement will be discussed.

Teacher performance can be and is addressed in many ways, including opportunities for advanced degrees for teachers, formal and informal training (professional development, and conferences) for teachers, and setting teacher performance standards. In the planning and execution of these programs for improving teacher performance, there are many instances where temporary HRD practitioner intervention has the potential to improve their outcomes, just as these HRD interventions are successful in the business arena.

Individual performance is paramount in both organizational types. The purpose of this paper is to examine the theoretical frames used in HRD and education, from a practitioner's perspective, using the four components of the HRD model of Gilley, Egglund, and Gilley (2002): Individual Development, Career Development, Performance Management, and Organizational Development, and to conjecture where and how an HRD practitioner might be temporarily useful in a school or district, within this component framework, for improving individual teacher performance. The paper also discusses realistic obstacles for HRD practitioners in individual teacher performance improvement, using the same model.

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Background and Significance

It is important to gain a perspective into the history of HRD and the American education system to understand how they developed and to see where linkages between them can be forged to assist in teacher performance improvement.

Human Resource Development Historical Perspective

The history of Human Resource Development (HRD), as a profession, has been relatively long and to a great extent unidentified as a specific professional field. Pace, Smith, and Mills (1991) present a concise, yet detailed history of the field. Pace, et al. specified four “benchmark” time periods and relevant events within each period that are precursors of today’s profession of HRD.

Pace, et al. (1991) used the term “Employee Skillfulness” to denote the first of the benchmark periods, which extended from long before the birth of Christ to the beginning of the 19th Century. This period was concerned only with the types of training afforded workers and included: the use of examples (observation), the beginning of apprenticeships, the creation of guilds, made up of persons in the same or very similar jobs, and the beginning of more formalized training in specific crafts.

The second period between 1800-1920, identified as “Employee Efficiency,” coincided with the beginning of the industrial revolution and the concurrent shift from home produced goods to the emphasis on factories. Because the factories were capable of large-scale production, the emphasis became employee efficiency, and led to production based on the Theory of Scientific Management (Taylor). This shift in focus led to several additional identified benchmarks, including early training institutes, which Nadler (1984) identified as the predecessors of modern schools for adults. In addition, factory schools were set up by owners to train unskilled workers and the federal government provided a major impetus to training through passage of the Morrell Land Grant Act of 1862, which provided for the creation of agricultural and mechanical colleges to aid in training workers (Maxell & Sweetland, 2002).

Pace, et al.’s third period was labeled “Employee Satisfaction” and lasted from 1920-1945. This period detailed a transformation from employee efficiency to employee satisfaction. The Hawthorne studies of the late 1920s were among the driving forces for this movement (increasing productivity through changes in the workplace). Benchmark activities that Pace, et al. described from this period include the beginning of specific executive and management training programs, an increase in the use of correspondence schools as sources of technical training, government-sponsored workforce development programs during the Depression, and programs instituted after the beginning of World War II to train men who were too old or medically unfit for military service. This was the first major use of on-the-job training (OJT), using supervisors as the trainers.

The fourth period, which began at the end of World War II (1945) and continues to the present day, was termed “Employee Enhancement.” The emphasis has been termed *holistic*, that is, encompassing not only the work environment and other work-related benefits, but extending also to employee activities outside of the workplace, in the attempt to increase productivity in all phases of employee life. As Pace, Smith, and Mills (1991) state, “The latter part of this era, dubbed the “human resource development” period, highlighted the growing training industry and concerns of the academic community in preparing individuals with the skills to engage in employee enhancement and improvement (HRD)” (p. 32). Four major events are recognized during this period: the founding of what is now the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD); the recognition of the value of having trained, in-house training personnel; the growth of HRD as an academic discipline, in and of itself; and increased collaboration between ASTD and the HRD community.

U. S. Public Education Historical Perspective

The history of the U. S. public education system spans the period from colonial America to the present. Prior to 1647, education was mostly a family issue, with parents teaching their children the alphabet, numbers, and how to read the Bible. In 1647, the Massachusetts colony passed the first law mandating the hiring of “elementary teachers” in towns with more than 50 families. In 1652, the colony passed another law requiring towns of more than 100 families to also hire “secondary teachers.” The law also mandated that the teachers be paid with taxes raised from the townspeople (the first official levying of taxes for education) (Maxwell & Sweetland, 2002). The next major impetus to public education was the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which led to the surveying of all the U. S. territory northwest of the Ohio River and the setting aside one of the 36 sections making up each “township” for education purposes. Following the ratification of the U. S. Constitution, the newly designated Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed a law, in 1789, that for the first time, recognized the concept of a school district and recognized the governance of the district by a school committee, the early predecessor of the current Boards of Education (Norton, Webb, Dlugosh, & Sybouts, 1996).

Individual schools were created as the movement westward progressed, with districts forming as territories and states were created. Administrators’ and teachers’ organizations formed during the mid to late 19th Century and

tensions mounted between them, as they did in the business/manufacturing arena between employee organizations and management. With public education being a governmental function, the right of employees to collectively bargain for contract rights became a major issue. Wisconsin, in 1959, became the first state to pass a statute giving public sector collective bargaining rights to school employees (Geisert & Lieberman, 1994; Webster, 1985). The guarantee for teachers to bargain on “conditions of work” has had a major impact on the possible effectiveness of HRD initiatives in schools, as will be discussed later.

Over time, the major influence of the states and the local school boards on their school districts has been somewhat diluted by federal interventions (e.g., No Child Left Behind Act, The Department of Education). These, as well as the changes in American society have created considerable stress on the educational system and contributed to the issues that must be addressed in teacher performance improvement. Both professions (HRD and education) deal with people, and have developed in parallel with each other. There are definite similarities in the ways both professions have changed, particularly over the last 30-40 years, in terms of changes in foci. These changes are reflected in the various theoretical frameworks the professions have used in training and research and the linkages that are found in looking at these frameworks.

Research Theories Related to HRD and Education

The field of HRD is based on the premise that there is a need to change the behavior of employees for the improvement of the organization. At the same time, education researchers have sought ways to better teach students, and this quest has led to considerable research into answering questions about the basis of learning and how people learn. This has led to the use of Motivation as a basis for much HRD and education research (Harris & DeSimone, 1994; Norton, Webb, Dlugosh, & Sybouts, 1996). Mathieu, Tannenbaum, and Salas (1992) state that motivation includes an employee’s (or student’s) ability to apply knowledge and an inner desire to apply the knowledge. In this frame, Warr and Bunce (1995) postulate that motivation consists of two elements: a belief among the worker/workers that the effort will change performance and that the change will have an outcome that has value (as cited in Holton, 2000, p. 10).

Many theories have been put forward to operationalize Motivation, and HRD and education researchers have made use of a number of them (Harris & DeSimone, 1994; Norton, et al., 1996). These have included: Behaviorist Theory (Pavlov and Skinner) which held that learning occurred by a stimulus-response relationship, discounting cognitive (mental) activities, Social Learning Theory (Bandura) which stated that learning occurred by observation of other people’s behaviors and the consequences of those behaviors, and Cognitive Theory (Piaget, Vygotsky, and Gagnè) which discounted the need for observable behavioral changes to signify that learning had occurred, believing instead that learning took place through the processing of symbolic mental constructs, without actually acting out learned behaviors. Also, researchers have used Gestalt Theory (Wertheimer), which proposed that learning was a higher-order cognitive process that consisted of “groupings” of cognitive stimuli that caused a particular perception or interpretation of an action or visual field to occur, ultimately leading to learning, and Constructivist Theory (Bruner) which states that learning is accomplished through reflection of each person’s experiences and forming individual mental models or “rules” to guide behavior and rejecting the idea that knowledge can be transferred from one person to another.

There are theoretical frameworks that have found more use in HRD research than in education, although they have some applicability to education. These include: Change Process Theory (Schein), also known as “unfreezing-moving-refreezing, and Human Processual Intervention Theory (Lewin) which states that behaviors are changed by changing values, attitudes, problem-solving procedures, and interpersonal styles, and General System Theory (Von Bertalanffy), which sees an organization as taking Inputs from the External Environment, subjecting these Inputs to some Process, which creates an Output which is put back into the Environment. At the same time, Feedback from the Environment is put back into the Process to make necessary changes.

At the same time, some theories have been studied by both HRD and education researchers, but have gained more of a following in the education arena. These have included Experiential Learning Theory (Dewey, Lewin, & Piaget) which holds that learning uses past experiences, both positive and negative, to develop cognitive skills, a sense of understanding, and interpersonal communication, and Humanistic Theory (Roger & Maslow) focused on self-esteem, self-fulfillment, and needs, and posited that the “self” was the most important aspect of learning and that each individual could form his or her own behaviors through perception or experience, rather than through reaction to external stimuli.

The commonality of usage of many of the theoretical frameworks between HRD and education provides linkage between the two professions. This linkage can be useful when HRD practitioners undertake interventions in the education arena, because of the commonality in training and the understanding that already exists between the two professional areas.

The research question to be answered is whether professional HRD practitioners, trained in using these theories from one perspective can be successfully integrated into a profession that has been trained in many of the same theories, but from a different perspective. In other words, can HRD practitioners be successfully employed, on a temporary basis, in specific educational activities, overcoming natural and sometimes rhetorical, structural, and process obstacles?

Methodology

This paper is not a discourse in “lessons learned,” or “best practices,” but is a compilation of some ways in which HRD practitioners can use their skills in new ways, on a temporary basis, to assist schools and districts improve their teachers’ performance. The model of Gilley, Egglund, and Gilley (2002) is used as the basis for the methodology. This model contains the four components: Individual Development, Career Development, Career Management, and Organizational Development and uses Focus (Individual and Organization) as the abscissa, and Results (Short-Term and Long-Term) as the ordinate. In the model, Individual Development is “Individual, Short-Term”, Career Development is “Individual, Long-Term”, Performance Management is “Organization, Short-Term” (although it can also be considered Long-Term), and Organizational Development is “Organization, Long-Term”. Each of the four quadrants will be covered separately, discussing specific education activities that would be contained within each, and possible HRD interventions that would be appropriate for each activity.

Individual Development (Individual, Short-Term)

New teacher orientation. New employee orientation is usually conducted at the end of the summer vacation period, just prior to the beginning of the school year. During this orientation period, new teachers are provided with human resources information, are taken on tours of the school(s) they will be in, meet with other faculty and staff, are given their assignments, and are introduced to the teachers’ organization officers. An HRD practitioner would be helpful during this period to provide the new teacher with information about activities at the school and in other venues that can lead to his or her personal performance improvement as a teacher and to begin laying out a tentative schedule for the new member to begin to undertake some performance improvement activities.

Professional development days. During the school year, all school districts schedule days during which teachers receive instruction on new teaching methods, new information about the curriculum, research findings, and other teaching related matters. Usually, attendance at these meetings is mandatory and they may be held at the teachers’ school or at some other location within the district. Most times, the “training” is given by a fellow teacher from the same school or by another teacher, brought in by the district. The “training” is provided by oral presentations, small group activities, and/or “breakout” discussion groups. A trained HRD practitioner would be very useful in assisting in the planning of these training sessions, because, as the practitioner is a highly skilled teacher/trainer, he or she would be a valuable source of advice on how to present the information in a manner that would lead to maximum individual performance improvement.

School district/regional/state/national conferences. These conferences usually last between one and three days and are a series of oral presentations, videos with discussions, group activities, and small group training sessions. Attendance at these conferences is usually considered an “official” duty of teachers. During the conferences, the teachers hear many reports from researchers, other teachers, and regional and state level personnel. A trained HRD practitioner would be very helpful in planning the conferences and assisting in the instructional development of the presentations and group sessions, especially for those presenters or group leaders who have little or no experience or expertise in this area. In addition, a practitioner would be valuable in maintaining records for the teachers, in terms of their training requirements.

Self-directed learning. Teachers are required to earn a given number of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) annually. Some meetings/conferences count toward this requirement, but other means of earning credits are available (distance learning, e-learning, correspondence courses). In this matter, a trained practitioner could serve as a temporary counselor, providing teachers with initial advice on specific types of courses to take and strategies to improve their performance.

Career Development (Individual, Long-Term)

Advanced degree and other outside coursework. By law, teachers must obtain their Master’s degree within a certain number of years to keep their license or certification (varies by state). In many cases, teachers get advice from other teachers or administrators as to what types of coursework to pursue. A practitioner on the district staff would be valuable in assisting the teachers in planning their long-term higher education goals and schedules. In addition, if the practitioner was part of the teacher evaluation process, he or she would be in a perfect position to help the teachers get the maximum benefit from their long-term education experience, by suggesting appropriate curricula or coursework to take, if the teacher was not in a specific degree program.

Performance Management (Organization, Short-Term)

Evaluation. Evaluations are generally carried out by teachers, usually by negotiated contract right. These evaluations usually consist of classroom observations of the teacher during the school year and a written evaluation report that is discussed with the teacher. As an addition to the team, a temporary HRD practitioner would be an extremely valuable asset, as he/she could assist in the evaluation process itself, creating the evaluation rubric and evaluation form, aiding in the interpretation of results, and in planning strategies to overcome identified weaknesses, in individual teachers. In this respect, he or she could make a huge contribution to the planning process for individual “remedial” training.

Highly qualified teachers. The No Child Left Behind Law of 2002 is very strongly focused on accountability and one of the parts of the law is the requirement that all schools will have *highly qualified teachers* in all classrooms. The question becomes one of defining “highly qualified”. That definition has been left up to the states, but in most cases it boils down to either “X” years experience teaching a particular subject or having a degree with a major in the subject being taught. Here a qualified HRD practitioner would be helpful to the district by suggesting strategies that teachers could utilize to overcome weaknesses, as they strive to be designated as *highly qualified*.

Performance standards. All states are now required to develop empirical methods to measure school and district performance, which reflects back on the performance of the individual teachers. Many districts use state-developed performance standards and they are “graded” on these standards, both through high-stakes testing and through other information that the schools and districts are required to submit to the state. Each school and each school district receives an annual “report card” from the state that details the number of performance standards the school or district has achieved, how many students passed the current high stakes test, and in what areas of study and how their scores compare with other schools and districts. These report cards are also available to parents and are very important to school districts as they struggle to get funding levies passed. A trained HRD practitioner would be invaluable in assisting districts and schools in devising strategies (activities and programs) to improve their “report cards,” by improving test scores, increasing the number of performance standards met, and in planning interventions to improve the performance of individual teachers, as determined by the results of the “report cards.”

Organizational Development (Organization, Long-Term)

Organizational leadership. The school and district leaders set the tone for the school or the district. It is through their leadership skills, and how these skills are utilized that the school or district succeeds or fails in its job of providing a quality education to the students. It is vital that teachers keep abreast of the latest in pedagogical research and that they maintain a solid grounding in theory and practicalities. Here an HRD practitioner would be very helpful, as individual development is an integral part of human resource development.

Process changes. In many schools, teachers have difficulty “getting the material across to the students.” One of the major reasons is that not all students learn the same way and they (the teachers) have difficulties coming up with varied teaching strategies to meet the needs of different students. HRD practitioners with considerable instructional design expertise would be valuable in assessing pedagogical processes within schools or districts and devising strategies to improve them. There are many new training aids, particularly in the technology area that can be of tremendous value to the classroom teacher and the HRD practitioner can assist the teacher(s) to integrate these into their teaching methods.

Results

In the previous section, the paper discussed specific activities in education where a professional HRD practitioner could be temporarily employed to the benefit to a school or school district in terms of improving teacher performance. The topic areas were placed in the framework of the Gilley, et al. (2002) model. This section maintains the same framework, but discusses the topics with respect to whether a school or district would actually use a professional HRD practitioner in the activities specified.

Individual Development

New teacher orientation. This is an activity in which an HRD practitioner would probably not be involved, even on a temporary basis. The orientation process is very much of a social event. School hasn’t started and the teachers usually haven’t returned full time to the classroom, even for planning purposes. A practitioner would be involved with providing information about individual performance improvement opportunities and in beginning to plan for future performance activities. The information concerning performance improvement opportunities would probably be provided by the other teachers. However, there is usually no one on staff to assist individual teachers in laying out future performance improvement opportunities. Very few districts have a full-time HRD practitioner on staff. This is an opportunity for a practitioner to seek a position, even if it is part time.

Professional development days. All teachers are trained in instructional design. However, their training is focused on curricular design for their classrooms, filled with students, not other teachers. Here, a skilled HRD practitioner has an advantage, having been trained in instructional design for adults and would be very helpful in planning this activity. Once again, however, a practitioner would probably not be brought in to be involved in these proceedings, unless the presentation was very important and the practitioner was contracted for. Teachers have a deeply held belief that they are the only ones who are knowledgeable about education matters, including professional development.

District/regional/state conferences. These conferences are planned months in advance and are very high-profile activities. Everything about them is usually pretty tightly “choreographed.” Here, there is the possibility that a professional practitioner would be brought in to assist in the planning of the presentations. State education departments usually send representatives to lower level conferences and local district and regions are very eager to appear totally professional in these settings. Money can usually be found at some level above the district for the professional.

Self-directed learning. Teachers are usually extremely busy and sometimes lose track of their required Continuing Education Units and there is normally no one at the school or in the district central office to keep track or to recommend particular courses for individual performance improvement. Each region in a state has a Regional Professional Development Committee (RPDC), among whose tasks is the certification of each teacher’s having met their annual CEUs. Notifying teachers of their standing on CEUs is not one the RPDC’s duties, unless the teacher is delinquent. Unfortunately, word of mouth is the most likely way that a teacher might gain well reasoned and professionally gained information about self-directed learning opportunities, while trying to keep track of his/her own CEUs, which is not a high priority in their work life. Using a trained HRD practitioner in this situation would probably not be considered at the district level, because of spending priorities, even if the practitioner maintained and disseminated the information at an off-site location.

Career Development

Advanced degree and other outside coursework. As teachers begin to consider options for graduate programs, they often ask other teachers, check local college/university information resources, or in some cases, act on recommendations from administrators. These tend to be personal decisions that affect the remainder of the teacher’s career. “Do I want to stay a teacher? (Master’s degree in curriculum and instruction).” Do I want to be an administrator? (Master’s degree in educational administration).” Here again, chances of having a professional practitioner involved are very small, even if one was on staff, due to the personal nature of these decisions.

Performance Management

Evaluation. Evaluation methodology is a contractually bargained item for teachers. In essentially all cases, the contract states that only teachers will evaluate teachers. In normal circumstances, even if a trained HRD practitioner were readily available, he or she would not be authorized to take part in the evaluation process, although they might be able to take part in planning the evaluation. However, teacher bargaining units are very sensitive about outsiders knowing anything about the evaluation results, particularly if teacher performance or tenure is an issue.

Highly qualified teachers. There is the possibility that at the district or state level, a practitioner (outside consultant or employee) might be used to plan strategies to implement this program. However, the likelihood is that the education community would “close ranks” and not allow anyone from the outside to have input, resting on their “qualifications as education professionals to be the best judges of what a highly qualified teacher is.” The only exception to this thinking is if the practitioner has been a teacher and is well versed in that state’s guidelines.

Performance standards. This is one of the most sensitive areas for a school or district. Because the major focus of the “community” is teacher/school/district performance and accountability, getting a “passing grade” on the school or district report card is of the highest priority, particularly if the district is planning on placing a levy on an upcoming ballot. Only a practitioner with experience in implementing, monitoring, and tracking performance standards would be useful in this situation. Once again, claims that “We are the professionals” would sound and anyone not familiar with the “jargon” would not be considered qualified to know about the school’s or district’s performance standards.

Organizational Development

Organizational leadership. Schools and school districts are organizations, just like a multinational corporation. In all cases, it is vital that the leadership of the organization take it where it needs to go. Strategic planning and goal setting are what are needed, including strategies for improving teacher performance. Although HRD practitioners are well trained in leadership skills, such as strategic planning and goal setting, most likely they would not be involved in education leadership issues, including improving teacher performance, unless the situation was critical and professional assistance was truly needed. This decision would have to be made by the Board of Education.

The Eight Hundred Pound Gorillas

Teacher unions. In essentially all school districts, the teachers are represented by bargaining units of either the American Federation of Teachers or the National Education Association (Geisert & Lieberman, 1994; Webster, 1985). These are two of the most aggressive and “tightly holding” unions in the nation, and depending on what can be negotiated with the school district administration/Board of Education, the unions can hold sway over nearly all important decisions that deal with teachers in any way. The term “conditions of work” has been defined very broadly to include such things as only teachers being allowed to evaluate other teachers, arrival and departure times from school, and creation, organization of, membership of, and power of school committees. Usually the building principal will be a member of the committee, but the majority of members are usually made up of teachers and although the principal is ultimately responsible for the running and supervision of the school, he or she has only one vote on the committee (an untenable situation). In other words, teacher unions would be very opposed to the administration bringing in a trained professional practitioner, even temporarily, who could possibly provide information contrary to what the union wanted the teachers to have.

The school funding issue. In every state the funding for public schools is a major issue (Maxwell & Sweetland, 2002). In many states, the legislatures have cut funding for public schools to help balance budgets. In others, additional funds have come at the expense of higher education, but the additional monies to public education are still not sufficient. Other types of schools, such as charter/community schools are opening, offering another choice for parents and taking the money the state provides, per pupil, with them away from the public schools. In many states, there has been litigation (and continues to be) about the lack of “adequate” funding, “equitable” funding or due process in school funding. Increasing numbers of state and federal unfunded mandates take funds earmarked for other uses within districts. In other words, schools and districts are very short of funds and few have the money available to hire even a temporary, trained HRD practitioner as part of the district administrative staff.

There is a thread between the theoretical bases of HRD and education research and the Next Steps. Both HRD practitioners and education professionals are well grounded in the theories of their fields, which, to a great extent are similar. There is common knowledge between the fields that should allow them to meld and should allow the almost seamless entry of the HRD practitioner into the HRD aspects of an educational organization. The fact that this does not happen is not due to a knowledge gap, but because of extraneous factors, such as those discussed previously. The Next Steps section is simply a list of steps that hopefully can overcome many of these factors.

Next Steps

There are steps that HRD practitioners can take that will enhance their opportunities to work with schools and districts. However, the practitioners need to realize that the process will probably be long, as educators are not people who look to the “outside” for help with internal problems, real or perceived. Districts can be persuaded to use the knowledge, skills, and abilities of HRD practitioners, but be prepared for a long and often trying journey. Following are some suggestions for creating a working relationship with schools and districts.

1. Let public educators know you exist and what you, as practitioners, can do for the schools and districts.
2. Offer assistance whenever possible. Try going through friends or neighbors who work for the schools. In other words-NETWORK! This includes the Board of Education.
3. Arrange to meet with both administration and union organizations and let them know and understand who you are and what you can do to help them specifically.
4. Practitioners need to make themselves aware of school issues and become knowledgeable enough to discuss them intelligently with educators.
5. Become knowledgeable about pedagogy, curricula, and specifically, education for children, not adults. Be able to discuss these topics intelligently with educators. Learn the jargon.
6. Meet regional and state education leaders and offer services at their levels. Good results can trickle down to the district and school level.
7. Attend any meetings, conferences, and presentations you can, in order to get comfortable with the types of presentations being given, the subject matter, the level of professionalism of the presenters and the presentations, all the time taking notes as to how you can assist them in this professional endeavor.
8. Whatever you do, BE AUTHENTIC! Educators are a suspicious lot and don't tolerate wannabes politely.

While these tips are not new, they can provide some useful information for HRD practitioners, who decide to offer their professional services to the education community, on a temporary basis. There is a great need for our profession in the education arena.

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