CHAPTER TWO: ALIGNING TRAINING WITH STRATEGY

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Strategic planning is best defined as
    A) The development of a relatively long-term mission consistent with internal tactics.
    B) The development of relatively short-term objectives that meet the executive committee objectives.
    C) A process for determining how best to pursue the organization's mission while meeting the demands of the environment.
    D) The development of values and ideals of the organization relevant to long-term objectives.
    Answer: C
    Difficulty: Moderate
    Page Ref: 45

2. Strategic planning that focuses on the long term is a(n)
    A) Reactive strategy.
    B) Proactive strategy.
    C) Less formal analysis.
    D) Objective setting process.
    Answer: B
    Difficulty: Challenging
    Page Ref: 45

3. HRD should be involved in strategic planning by
    A) Helping shape strategy.
    B) Influencing the HR strategy.
    C) Developing its own strategy in line with the strategic plan.
    D) Both B & C.
    E) All of the above.
    Answer: E
    Difficulty: Challenging
    Page Ref: 46

4. Which of the following is a market leader strategy?
    A) Keep costs low
    B) Develop new markets
    C) Development of economies of scale
    D) None of the above
    E) All of the above
    Answer: B
    Difficulty: Moderate
    Page Ref: 47

5. The defender strategy is also referred to as
   A) Differentiator.
   B) Innovator.
   C) Cost leader.
   D) Market leader.
   E) Market follower.
   Answer: C
   Difficulty: Moderate
   Page Ref: 47

6. Which of the following statements is true in an uncertain environment?
   A) The organization must rigidly define operating methods.
   B) A market leader strategy is the best strategy to adopt.
   C) There is less complexity in the environment.
   D) Cost leader strategy is the best strategy to adopt.
   Answer: B
   Difficulty: Easy
   Page Ref: 48

7. Low uncertainty in the external environment is created by
   A) High complexity and low stability.
   B) Low stability and low complexity.
   C) High stability and low complexity.
   D) Both A & B.
   Answer: C
   Difficulty: Easy
   Page Ref: 48

8. _____ refers to the number of factors in an organization's environment and how they are interrelated.
   A) Environmental uncertainty
   B) Environmental flexibility
   C) Environmental complexity
   D) Environmental stability
   E) None of the above
   Answer: C
   Difficulty: Easy
   Page Ref: 48

9. A non-routine technology label is applied to tasks that have
   A) Well structured and defined solutions to occurring problems.
   B) Few problems.
   C) Problems that occur often and unexpectedly.
   D) A high degree of predictability.
   E) All of the above.

Answer: C
Difficulty: Easy
Page Ref: 49

10.   You would typically associate routine technology with which of the
      following?
      A)   Those with market leader strategies
      B)   A low degree of predictability of outcomes or results
      C)   No defined solutions when problems do occur
      D)   Highly specialized technologies
      E)   All of the above are associated with routine technologies
      Answer: D
      Difficulty: Easy
      Page Ref: 49

11.   Organizational design refers to
      A)   The type of technology used.
      B)   The type and style of decision making used.
      C)   How the division of labor is set up.
      D)   Both B & C.
      E)   None of the above.
      Answer: E
      Difficulty: Moderate
      Page Ref: 50

12.   A mechanistic design is best applied in which of the following
      situations?
      A)   Non-routine technologies
      B)   Small businesses
      C)   High volume assembly lines
      D)   Where there are not clear answers to many of the problems
             that arise
      E)   A & D
      Answer: C
      Difficulty: Easy
      Page Ref: 50

13.   What is one reason companies should invest in strategic HR?
      A)   To be able to grow
      B)   To increase their market value
      C)   To centralize their strategies
      D)   To involve management
      Answer: B
      Difficulty: Moderate
      Page Ref: 51

14. According to the text, the strategic planning process at Hewlett Packard Canada in the late 1980's resulted in
    A) The sales force reorganizing around specific products.
    B) A concentration on the laser printer and increasing the profit margin on each unit.
    C) Hewlett Packard being one of the toughest competitors in the marketplace.
    D) Both A & C.
    Answer: C
    Difficulty: Easy
    Page Ref: 52

15. How can HRD align itself with the organization's strategies?
    A) By developing training that focuses on the market
    B) By developing training to meet strategic performance objectives
    C) By delivering training to the right people
    D) Both B & C are correct
    E) None of the above
    Answer: D
    Difficulty: Challenging
    Page Ref: 53

16. Organizational development is best defined as
    A) A profession that deals with reacting to changes in the external environment.
    B) A profession and field of study that creates and implements planned change in organizations.
    C) A profession and field of study that deals with creating and implementing new ideas in the organization.
    D) A field of study and profession that deals with explaining serendipitous events.
    Answer: B
    Difficulty: Easy
    Page Ref: 53

17. Which of the following is NOT a step in the generic planned change model?
    A) Goals are developed and handed down by a centralized top management team.
    B) A compelling need for change is established.
    C) The results of the approach are evaluated.
    D) An approach to addressing the cause is selected.
    E) All of the above are steps in a general planned change model.
    Answer: A
    Difficulty: Challenging

18.   Which of the following statements is true regarding change?
    A)   Resistance is most often from non-management personnel.
    B)   Change requires effort and new learning.
    C)   Resistance is easily overcome.
    D)   The change process should only focus on the individual, group, or organizational level, not on all three.
    E)   OD practitioners and trainers have a similar tactical focus in dealing with change.
    Answer: B
    Difficulty: Moderate
    Page Ref: 54-57

19.   What can be done to reduce resistance to change?
    A)   Focus on changing one level (organizational, group, and individual) at a time.
    B)   Involve employees.
    C)   Let those who are satisfied with the status quo lead the way.
    D)   Both A & B.
    E)   All of the above.
    Answer: B
    Difficulty: Challenging
    Page Ref: 55

20.   Which of the following is NOT a source of conflict and disagreement between OD and training professionals?
    A)   The difference between their perceived role and power base.
    B)   The nature of OD practices challenges assumptions underlying organizational practices.
    C)   OD principles interfere with the implementation of effective training programs.
    D)   OD professionals are more likely to be guided by data than training professionals.
    E)   Companies typically organize around their functional areas.
    Answer: C
    Difficulty: Challenging
    Page Ref: 57

21.   A reason there might be conflict among HRD and OD professionals is that the OD practitioner
    A)   Has a more tactical approach.
    B)   Tends to be seen as overly analytical.
    C)   Deals with mostly middle management.
    D)   Both A & B.
    E)   Both A & C.

Answer: B
Difficulty: Moderate
Page Ref: 57

22.   OD interventions could be implemented more successfully if they
       included training where employees
       A)   Developed a common knowledge and skill base in the area of
               the intervention.
       B)   Understood group dynamics and became skilled at working
               within groups.
       C)   Understood and became skilled at using a common
               problem-solving model.
       D)   Both A & C.
       E)   All of the above.
       Answer: E
       Difficulty: Moderate
       Page Ref: 59

23.   The outsourcing of training
       A)   Is useful when the company is large and has diverse training
               needs.
       B)   Is often used by small business.
       C)   Is not a good idea when you have a decentralized HRD
               function.
       D)   A & B
       E)   All of the above.
       Answer: D
       Difficulty: Moderate
       Page Ref: 62

24.   Which best explains the strategic training alternative of the internal
       provider?
       A)   All or most training developed in house, each phase handled
               by specialists, and needs developed from a decentralized
               HRD function
       B)   All or most training purchased from outside sources, each
               phase handled by specialists, and needs developed from a
               centralized HRD function
       C)   All or most training activities provided by outside trainers
               and training function's role is to select and manage training
               suppliers
       D)   All or most training developed in house, each phase handled
               by specialists, and needs developed from a centralized HRD
               function
       Answer: D
       Difficulty: Easy

25. Most companies use the _____ strategy when addressing their training and development needs.
   A) Primary provider
   B) Mixed
   C) Manager intermediary
   D) Both A & C
   Answer: B
   Difficulty: Easy
   Page Ref: 64

26. Which of the following is a reason why some small businesses do not engage in strategic planning?
   A) Time constraints
   B) Unfamiliarity
   C) Lack of skills
   D) Lack of trust
   E) All of the above
   Answer: E
   Difficulty: Easy
   Page Ref: 65

27. Cavalier Tool and Manufacturing decided not to pursue ISO certification because
   A) They could not afford the cost associated with certification.
   B) They had attempted certification a few years earlier and it had been unsuccessful.
   C) Sometimes a customer required a "down and dirty" mold which would not be allowed under ISO certification.
   D) The owner was not interested in certification.
   Answer: C
   Difficulty: Challenging
   Page Ref: 67

TRUE/FALSE QUESTIONS

28. ___Competitive strategy focuses on positioning products and services in the marketplace. (T; p. 47)
29. ___If the external environment is highly complex and highly stable, there is low uncertainty. (F; p. 48)
30. ___The main activity associated with producing an organization's principle products and services is often called the core technology. (T; p. 49)

31.   ___Organizational design refers to the way the work is divided and organized. (F; p. 50)
32.   ___HRD contributes to the development of new strategies. (T; p. 51)
33.   ___Trainers and OD practitioners have problems getting along because trainers tend to be more strategic and more overly analytical than OD practitioners. (F; p. 57)
34.   ___Force field analysis is a type of analysis used in a TNA. (F; p. 58)
35.   ___ The internal provider is a strategic training alternative whereby the training department provides all or most of the training for the organization. (T; p. 61)
36.   ___A small business is much more likely to be involved in strategic planning than a larger one because it is easier for them. (F; Table 2.4, p. 66)

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

37.   Name and briefly describe the three components to organization structure that are discussed in the text.

   The three components to organizational structure are
   - **Organizational design - a component of how the organization is structured.**
   - **Decision autonomy - the amount of decision-making authority employees have in choosing how to complete a given task and the degree to which they are able to influence goals and strategies for their work unit.**
   - **Division of labor - the way in which work is divided up and organized.**

38.   Should an organization's strategies be reactive, proactive, or both? Support your answer.

   It is suggested that both reactive and proactive strategies are necessary for the organization to be effective. A strategic plan that positions the firm for long-term expectations, but is modified by the firm's experience as it moves forward is preferable to a rigidly held long-term plan or reactions to short-term experience without a long-term plan.

ESSAY QUESTION

39.   HRD and OD seem to complement one another but do not often work together in an organization. What are some of the reasons for this lack

of cooperation? Why do HRD professionals need OD competencies and OD professionals need training competencies?

Pages 57-433 provide this answer.
The answer to the first part is related to their differences in terms of focus as noted in Table 2-2.

For the next part of the question, the simple answer is HRD trains employees and that training requires employees to change. Creating an environment for change to occur is what OD is all about. By having OD skills, the HRD will have tools to help ensure change occurs back at the workplace, the ultimate goal of training. This is particularly true given that organizational analysis as part of a TNA will surface some issues that will inhibit new behaviors being trained. Effectively removing these barriers is where the expertise of OD specialists lies.

Similarly, OD efforts, when they fail, is often because of a lack of training. OD efforts often require groups of individuals to come together to plan, solve problems, or deal with intergroup conflict. These groups need certain skills to do this effectively; problem-solving skills, understanding group process, and also to be skilled in working in groups. So a common skill set in these areas is important. Design development and implementation of training in these areas is important to the overall effectiveness of the group effort. Training is critical at three points in time, the initial start up, after some time has elapsed and a refresher is useful, and finally new employees who join a team need to be trained.

Obviously, given the interrelationship between these two disciplines, the ideal situation is for them to work together and learn each other's skills. In that way both reap the benefits and the organization can operate at a more effective level.