NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY
FISCHLER GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
AND HUMAN SERVICES

**DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
IN ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

LDR 9430

ADVANCED STUDY: IDEAS, ISSUES, AND PRACTICES IN HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Online Study Guide

Lisa L. Burroughs, EdD

Revised April 2004

Table of Contents

PREFACE

The third Human Resource Development (HRD) specialization course, **LDR 9430 Advanced Study: Ideas, Issues, and Practices in HRD,** offers students the opportunity to integrate theories, practices, and leadership strategies related to HRD. The students are asked to create a HRD proposal within the framework of consulting. This course requires more creativity, innovation, and independent learning than the other two specialization courses. This course is presented in a seminar format, which means that its major components are research and discussion.

The course content is left up to the student who plays the role of an HRD consultant, tasked with creating a proposal for an organization that needs help. In such an open scenario, students have the freedom to explore the whole gambit of HRD issues, ideas, and practices.

The consultative process has two specific stages that the student will create as course assignments. The first assignment is the discovery process and the second assignment is the consulting proposal. Students will be given specific guidelines regarding the requirements of both assignments. The culmination of the course is the sharing of the proposals, which creates a versatile and rich resource for all class participants.

As an active learner your first task is to read this guide carefully and thoroughly. The instructor will provide you with further areas for discussion, reflection, and collaboration with your course colleagues during your interactive online sessions.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

LDR 9430
Advanced Study: Ideas, Issues, and Practices in HRD

This is a seminar course that includes a menu of topics and issues in HRD that students will select for further study, contingent upon faculty approval. Students are expected to synthesize and integrate the learning experiences in HRD and to evaluate research and current topics relative to the field. Topics for consideration: cross cultural diversity, on-demand training, creativity and innovation, ethics and values. (6 credits).

LEARNING OUTCOMES

As a result of actively engaging in the learning process within LDR 9430, participants will:

- Examine the role of a consultant.
- Define value-creating consulting.
- Discuss the current issues regarding effective consulting practices.
- Create a profile of an organization in need of consulting.
- Collect and interpret data about the organization’s problems.
- Incorporate current HRD issues, trends, and practices into a consulting proposal
- Design a consulting proposal to correct a HRD problem in a specific organization.
- Review and discuss consulting proposals with class peers.

COURSE CONDUCT

LDR 9430 Advanced Study: Ideas, Issues, and Practices in HRD is conducted using a Web-based course management system, WebCT. More specific information about WebCT may be obtained in the program guide. You will also communicate with the instructor and your course colleagues through e-mail.

As previously stated, this course is divided into two components. The student is asked to act as a consultant to an organization that requires help in the area of HRD. In order to respond to the organization’s needs, the student will have to write a consulting proposal. The proposal consists of two parts (assignments). The first assignment is the discovery process and the second assignment is the actual proposal.

Writing at the doctoral level should be indicative of quality, formal, and very appropriate English. Sometimes the best papers in content will not read well because they are full of errors. Be careful of this.

Formal writing is not conversational. To help yourself write more formally, imagine that you are writing for a superior with whom you do not have much interaction. He/she is the target audience. You want to make the very best impression you can make. Imagine that your promotion/job is dependent on making a formal presentation of some research you have just completed.

Since clear and proper communication is so important to succeed in this course and the real world, correct grammar, format, logic, and punctuation are required for all formal written assignments. Therefore, pay attention to the "quality" of your communication on papers and outlines. Again, this is for formal assignments, not for the class discussions. A good way to produce a better copy is to write your communication, then set it aside. Come back later and reread it. If you wait at least an hour, you can look at what you wrote with fresh eyes.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Bartram, S., & Gibson, B. (2000). *The training needs analysis toolkit: A resource for identifying training needs, selecting training strategies, and developing training plans.* Amherst, MA: HRD Press.

Davis, L. (2000). *Pioneering organizations: The convergence of individualism, teamwork, and leadership.* Provo, UT: Executive Excellence Publishing.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Students are referred to the extensive bibliography prepared for the Organizational Leadership program and the HRD Specialization. This can be accessed online through the WebCT site. In addition, the instructor may recommend additional readings during the course.

Gabarro, J. (1992). *Managing people and organizations.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing.

Hartley, D. (2000). *On-demand learning: Training in the new millennium.* Amherst, MA: HRD Press.

Hersey, P. & Blanchard, K. (2000). *Management of organizational behavior: Utilizing human resources* (8th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Hesselbein, F., & Cohen, M. (1999). *Leader to leader.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Learning activities for **LDR 9430 Advanced Study: Ideas, Issues, and Practices in HRD** consist of readings; chats: interactive learning experiences; and written assignments: major written assignments, discussions/responses.

Readings: The readings are organized to span the spectrum of issues and practices related to the HRD field. The student will be asked to review some of the readings from the previous two courses, as well as engage in new readings from the educational impact materials, and readings related to the LDR 9430. The readings will focus on three core study areas of the course: defining consulting, collecting data for the discovery process, and creating a consulting proposal.

Furthermore, the reading assignments are vital in the preparation of your written assignments. It is important that you complete all of the required reading as quickly as possible to be adequately prepared for the course assignments. You are expected to integrate the content of reading assignments into all of your work. There will be opportunities for questions and clarification of the concepts presented during each online chat. Reading assignments will be posted on WebCT.

Core I: Defining Consulting

Value-Creating Consultant, Selected Readings/Articles

Leader to Leader, Chapters 8, 9, 22, 32, 34

On Demand Learning

Core II: Discovery Process

Value Creating Consultant, Selected Readings/Articles

Pioneering Organizations, Epilogue, and Part III

Managing People and Organizations – Parts: Managing Organizational Effectiveness and Managing the Human Resource

The Training Needs Analysis Toolkit, Chapters 1-10 (Another instrument provided by the instructor may also be used.)

Management of Organizational Effectiveness – Chapters 3, 6, 7, 10, 13, 16

Core III: Consulting Proposal

Value Creating Consultant, Selected Readings/Articles

The Training Needs Analysis Toolkit

From time to time additional reading assignments may be posted in the WebCT folder. Be sure to check carefully each week.

Chats: You will be required to participate in three interactive instructor-led chats and five interactive cohort chats. Each chat will last approximately one hour. The dates and times for the instructor-led chats are identified in the COURSE ASSIGNMENT OUTLINE within this study guide. The cohort chats will be conducted without the instructor, but will be guided by a specific topic or issue relevant to the course. Chats are intended to be scholarly discussions for the assigned topics; therefore, social "chit-chat," sidebar conversations, and other irrelevant interactions are not appropriate. Scheduling the cohort chats is the responsibility of the students. However, the first cohort chat should take place in Week Three. ***Chat participation, both quantity and quality, is part of your final course grade. (See Grading Criteria.)***

Written Assignments: Unless otherwise indicated, **written assignments are due by MIDNIGHT EST. on Sunday** of the determined week. Assignments should be posted to the appropriate WebCT folder as assigned by the instructor. All assignments must conform to the requirements of the APA (5th edition) publication manual and the Organizational Leadership Form and Style Guide. Please familiarize yourself with the program's policy on plagiarism. All students are advised to keep a copy of all written assignments throughout their doctoral program.

Major Written Assignments

Assignment 1: **Discovery Process**
Assignment 2: **Consulting Proposal**

Weekly Discussion Questions

Limit most discussion responses. Focus more on *content and presentation* than simply volume alone. The best assignments (Chats and Discussion Questions) are those that express their insightful ideas clearly at the smallest reasonable length.

GRADING CRITERIA

The major assignments for LDR 9430 and their corresponding points are as follows:

<u>**Assignment**</u>	<u>**Points**</u>
1. Discovery Process	**30**

In order to get full credit, not only must the work be complete, thorough etc. but it must also meet strict adherence to the APA format requirements, AND EXCELLENT GRAMMAR.

2. **Consulting Proposal** **45**
   In order to get full credit, not only must the work be complete, thorough etc. but it must also meet strict adherence to the APA format requirements, AND EXCELLENT GRAMMAR.

3. **Discussion Questions** **15**
   In order to get full credit for the DQs, your response must reflect conclusions from your readings and other discussions.

4. **Chat Participation** **10**
   In order to get full credit for the chat participation, you must attend on time, and participate during the conversation for the entire hour. Please do not miss chats.

Point Spread for Class Grade

90 – 100 points	A
80 – 89 points	B
below 80 points	F
Incomplete work	I

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS

Written Assignment 1

THE DISCOVERY PROCESS

The discovery process is the first part of the consulting proposal that the student creates. The discovery process includes: (a) the description and the historical background of the organization; (b) the problem statement, which is the reason for consulting; (c) data collection regarding the problem; and (d) data analysis.

The student is responsible for selecting an organization for the consulting project. This organization may be the student's workplace or an organization that the student selected just for the project. The detailed description of the organization requesting the consulting services includes the name, mission, historical background, staffing configuration, and any other important information regarding the recent events in the organization.

The problem statement is the reason for the consulting request. The problem needs to be in the HRD field. That is, it needs to be related to problems being experienced by employees, managers, executives, and/or customers or clients. The problem statement is clear and succinct and presents a definite problem that is concrete and can be supported by data.

The actual data collection can come from many sources, such as: organizational reports, interviews with key individuals and employees, external sources, etc. The collected data will have to be complete, analyzed and interpreted. Conducting interviews and providing full transcripts of key players are essential. Developing surveys and questionnaires are also recommended. All data collection instruments should be approved by the instructor prior to being administered. However, students are *not required to administer the instruments* for the purpose of this assignment. Additional information about construction of various needs assessment instruments is located in the Appendix at the end of this guide.

The last part of this assignment contains the analysis of all the data and the conclusions regarding the results. The data can be submitted in the form of an appendix. The expected length of the paper is 12-15 pages.

Written Assignment 2

THE CONSULTING PROPOSAL

The consulting proposal begins with the purpose. This is the reason why the intervention is needed. The purpose is usually a brief description consisting of clear and specific information related to the organization's request for services. The problem statement is presented next using the language of the organization. Supporting data collected during the discovery stage is also mentioned in order to give more credence to the problem. The problem is also presented in a brief format consisting of one or two paragraphs.

Data that support the problem are presented next. In this section, the student needs to make decisions, how best to convey the reality of the problem. Organizational politics, personalities of key players and the truth must be delicately balanced. The information from the discovery stage may be presented in this section, but in a new and creative manner.

The bulk of the assignment is devoted to the intervention strategies that make up the consulting plan. The most important guideline for the plan is that it must be written with clarity and with enough detail to the extent that another consultant can replicate the intervention. Be sure to include appropriate timelines for each process of the proposal and/or for completing the overall proposal. Timelines are always important to the client and most likely would impact the cost of your services.

The last part of the plan consists of the rationale why you should be given the job. You are expected to briefly describe your track record as a consultant and your expertise in solving this particular problem. The student should also keep in mind that the entire proposal must have great eye appeal, because such proposals are presented in very competitive environments. Audiovisual and technical enhancements are encouraged and welcome.

This final assignment is submitted in two parts: a formal written paper which is approximately 20 pages and a presentation using PowerPoint, with at least 8 – 10 slides. The proposal and the PPT presentation will be submitted as though the person were making a presentation with documents to a board of directors.

Expected length of the paper is 20 pages.
Expected length of slides is 8 – 10 slides

COURSE ASSIGNMENT OUTLINE

Most weeks the instructor will upload all instructions, assignments, topics and questions for discussion, instructor's comments, and a description of the week's activities. Please check for current information on the week's activities and assignments. During the first few weeks, you will be reading and working on various exercises and answering discussion questions. The following outline will be followed throughout the term.

WEEK ONE
May 3, 2004

- Review WebCT tutorial
- Post personal/professional sketch in the PROFILE folder
- Read the LDR 9430 study guide thoroughly
- No discussion posting for week 1
- Read Required Readings (Core Area I)
- **Instructor-Led Chat 1: Thursday, May 6, 8:30 PM EST**

WEEK TWO
May 10, 2004

- Read and respond to Discussion Week 2
- Read Required Readings (Core Area I)

WEEK THREE
May 17, 2004

- Read and respond to Discussion Week 3
- Read Required Readings (Core Area I)
- **Cohort Chat: Date selected by class members. The class must schedule 4 other class chats on the weeks when there is not an Instructor-led chat.**

WEEK FOUR
May 24, 2004

- Read and respond to Discussion Week 4
- Complete Required Readings (Core Area I)

WEEK FIVE
May 31, 2004

- Read Required Readings (Begin Core Area II)
- **Instructor-Led Chat 2: Thursday, June 3, 8:30 PM EST**
- **Assignment 1 Due: Discovery Process**

WEEK SIX
June 7, 2004

- Read and respond to Discussion Week 6
- Read Required Readings (Core Area II)

WEEK SEVEN
June 14, 2004

- Read and respond to Discussion Week 7
- Read Required Readings (Core Area II)

WEEK EIGHT
June 21, 2004

- Read and respond to Discussion Week 8
- Complete Required Readings (Core Area II)

WEEK NINE
June 28, 2004

- Read and respond to Discussion Week 9
- Begin Required Readings (Core III)

WEEK TEN
July 5, 2004

- Read and respond to Discussion Week 10
- Read Required Readings (Core Area III)

WEEK ELEVEN
July 12, 2004

- Read and respond to Discussion Week 11
- Read Required Readings (Core Area III)

WEEK TWELVE
July 19, 2004

- Read and respond to Discussion Week 12
- Finish Reading Required Readings (Core III)

WEEK THIRTEEN
July 26, 2004

- Read and respond to Discussion Week 13

WEEK FOURTEEN
August 2, 2004

- **Instructor-Led Chat 3: Thursday, August 5, 8:30 PM EST**
- **Final Assignment Due: Consulting Proposal**

WEEK FIFTEEN
August 9, 2004

- Read and respond to Final Discussion

Appendix

Needs Assessment Instruments

NEEDS ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

Researchers employ a variety of techniques in assessing needs. The most common needs assessment instruments are (a) **surveys**; (b) **interviews**; and (c) **attitudinal surveys**. Some of the instruments are very complex while others are easy to administer and score. The type and the quality of instrument used in the needs assessment stage of a project will greatly influence the intervention and the results. There are also some basic procedures that should be followed in writing any form of a needs assessment instrument.

Criteria for Survey Writing

Criteria require that the instrument must have an appropriate title. The title should describe the topic of the survey and mention the target audience, as a minimum. Sample topics include: Technology Training Needs Survey, Staff Development Questionnaire for Middle-Grades Faculty, and Employee Work Satisfaction Questionnaire.

Directions: Every survey, test, or questionnaire must contain a statement about the purpose of the instrument and explicit **directions** for completion. The more explicit the directions are, the more chance there is that the population being surveyed will provide data that will be more meaningful and easier to interpret.

Examples:

- The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information regarding the attitudes of secondary-school students toward the athletic program. Please answer the following questions by circling your response.

- The information collected with this questionnaire will be used to determine the effectiveness of the new computer-based customer service program. Please respond to the following questions by selecting the most appropriate number for each response. Number 1 represents lowest preference and number 5 represents the highest preference.

Criteria for Item Writing

Writing items for needs assessment instruments requires a great amount of knowledge, skill, and practice. Items should always be written with great care and much planning. It is a good idea to submit a survey or a questionnaire for review to a colleague or a content expert prior to implementation. It is also desirable to submit the questionnaire or survey to a “panel of experts” to insure validity.

Common errors can be avoided by asking yourself the following questions during the writing process.

1. Is the question related to the problem/project or goal?
2. Is the type of question appropriate?

3. Is the item clear and unambiguous?
4. Is the question in any way leading?
5. Does the question demand knowledge and information that the respondents do not have?
6. Does the question demand personal or sensitive information?
7. Is the question in any way biased?
8. Are there enough questions to adequately explore the issues?

Surveys

Surveys are widely used in many different occupational sectors and professions. Surveys can be adapted to measure human behavior and attitudes, as well as physical concepts. Results of surveys are used to assess goals, establish baseline data, and analyze trends across time, just to name a few. Well-constructed surveys have some characteristics in common. They are **systematic** and executed to ensure appropriate coverage and efficient data collection. They are representative and should reflect the population either by including everybody or everything, or by using a scientific sampling procedure. Surveys must be **objective** in order to allow the investigator to collect data that is as observable and as explicit as possible. Finally, well-constructed surveys should yield **quantifiable** data that can be expressed in numerical terms.

Most surveys are dependent on direct communication with persons having characteristics, behaviors, attitudes, and other relevant information appropriate for a specific investigation. This makes them reactive in nature, which means that they elicit a reaction from a respondent. Although direct communication is often the most efficient way of collecting data, it does present some problems. Among the limitations are:

1. Surveys tap only respondents who are accessible and cooperative.
2. Surveys produce "response sets" or proneness to agree with positive statements or questions.
3. Surveys are vulnerable to bias, a tendency for respondents to constantly give very high or very low ratings.
4. Surveys produce the "Hawthorne Effect" among respondents by making them feel special as participants in research, which in turn affects their responses.

Some of the general guidelines for designing surveys are the following:

1. Define the purpose and scope of the survey prior to writing any items.
2. Use closed-ended questions as opposed to open-ended questions.
3. Avoid using existing surveys.
4. Be aware of potential bias in the items.
5. Use Standard English and appropriate terminology.
6. Analyze the comprehensiveness of the instrument prior to administration.
7. Field-test the survey whenever possible, or have a peer review.
8. Ensure easy scoring.

There are several types of surveys. When choosing a particular one, the researcher should keep in mind the appropriateness of the instrument for the project.

1. **Survey of Records**. These surveys are non-reactive because they do not involve responses from people. These surveys are usually inexpensive and provide excellent baseline data if the records are accurate and current. Record surveys can also be incomplete, inaccurate, and misleading, depending on how the records were compiled.

2. **Mailed Questionnaires**. This is the most commonly used method and the one that can be most misleading. It is inexpensive, self-administering, anonymous, and comprehensive. Some of the disadvantages can be low response rate, no assurance that the questions were understood, or that the intended respondent answered the questions.

3. **Telephone Surveys**. These are widely used in place of face-to-face interviews. The advantages are that they provide unlimited callbacks, are not restricted by time, have extensive geographical coverage, and allow the respondents to be more candid. Drawbacks might include: Telephone interviews are sometimes viewed as intrusive; problems occur when some individuals have unlisted phone numbers or have no phones. There is no opportunity to read body language.

Interviews

Individual Interviews are especially useful for in-depth exploration of problems and sensitive issues. This form of inquiry is also useful in collecting information when existing data are insufficient. Face-to-face interviews are probably the most expensive to conduct. They are flexible and adaptable and allow for interpretation of body language. Researchers should be well trained in interviewing techniques so as to be able to elicit valid responses. An interview may be skewed because of personality differences between the interviewer and the client. The findings are often difficult to summarize because of lack of objectivity. **Group interviews** are used in group settings because they are efficient and provide for brainstorming, which increases interaction and reflects group consensus. This form of survey can also foster conformity, suppress individual differences, and polarize opinions.

Interviews can be **unstructured**, **semi-structured**, or **structured**. An **unstructured interview** gives the respondent broad freedom to express himself in his own time and in his own way. Frequently the information is of a highly personal nature and may even be threatening. Of the three interview formats, this one is the most vulnerable to biases and error, usually due to the inexperience of the interviewer. An unstructured interview is commonly used in client-centered therapy.

Semi-structured interviews are constructed on a few essential questions, which the interviewee uses to expand and explore in other directions. This structure also allows for additional in-depth exploration of issues and problems not included in more structured experiences. In both the unstructured and semi-structured interviews, the interviewers require training.

Structured interviews are well defined and often resemble an objective questionnaire. There is very little room for exploration and digression. They are factually oriented and aimed at obtaining specific information. Structured interviews are especially suitable when information is required from all respondents and when the type of information fits the format. The interviewers do not require specialized training to conduct structured interviews.

Students often use interviews to collect information for a project. It is therefore important to address a few principles and guidelines regarding this method of inquiry. The first step is to plan an interview in order to ensure that it will yield the desired information. The planning steps should include the following.

1. Define the reason for using the interview as opposed to another data collection technique.
2. Translate the general goals of the study or project into objectives that can be fitted to the particular interview pattern.
3. Develop a tentative set of procedures to use during the interview.
4. Develop a satisfactory method of coding and decoding responses.

The researcher should keep in mind the following guidelines when formulating the interview questions.

1. Questions should be stated in language familiar to the respondents. Avoid ambiguity.
2. Avoid leading or biased questions.
3. Ensure that the frame of reference of each question is clear, so that each respondent understands the same thing.
4. Ascertain whether the population being interviewed has the information sought by the interviewer.
5. Ensure that the respondents appreciate the purpose of each question.

Attitudinal Scales

An **attitudinal scale** is a device consisting of symbols that have a value assigned to them by the researcher. Attitudinal scales are very popular measurement instruments they are easy to administer and yield quantifiable data. The best-known type of scale is the **Likert Scale**, which consists of items to which a subject responds with varying degrees of intensity. The rating scale usually consists of numbers or letters that signify a range of preference from the strongest to the weakest degree. Five to seven positions are recommended. For example, strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD), are commonly used alternatives. Numbers can also be used to represent values, with the lowest number 1 representing the low spectrum of the scale and 5 representing the most favorable rating possible.

Likert rating scales are used extensively in behavioral research. They are easier to develop and to administer than other forms of data collection instruments; they yield about the same kind of information as more sophisticated instruments; and they produce a greater degree of variance. Researchers warn that producing a greater variance also increases the possibility of biases in responses.