

Human Resource Strategy in Transforming Organisations

Creating competitive advantage through human resource strategy

Maria de los Angeles Cinta

Current Position: Senior Advisor, Organisation Development

Organisation: Shell People Services

Country of Origin: USA

Education: MA in Organisational Development and Transformation

Career History: Maria's professional experience includes over twenty years working as an executive and organisational development senior consultant. Prior to joining Shell, she consulted to companies in the US and Latin America on large system change, strategic planning and leadership. As a Senior Advisor with Shell People Services, she works on global and regional projects related to business development, organisational change, leadership development, change management and coaching.

Attended HRST: Maria attended the programme in 2001.



"This programme was a great balance of theory, team experience and application. The faculty presented the concepts in a user-friendly and conversational manner, without losing the authority that comes with serious research." – Maria de los Angeles Cinta, Senior Advisor, Organisation Development.

Meeting the need

My role as Senior Advisor involves providing a consulting service to different companies within the Shell organisation. This requires me to have a sound understanding of how 'people' and 'business' issues are integrated.

In June 2001 I was ready to deepen my understanding of how strategies can be translated into business results in a way that is satisfying for individuals and for the organisation. I was already familiar with Lynda Gratton's book, *Living Strategy – Putting People at the Heart of Corporate Purpose* (Financial Times/Prentice Hall, 2000) which offered a comprehensive view of the subject, so when I started to look for a suitable training programme, London Business School was the obvious choice.

Learning from faculty and peers

For me, one of the big selling points of Human Resource Strategy in Transforming Organisations was the international makeup of my peer group. Participants came from all over the world and had very different focuses, backgrounds, experiences and problems. What we all had in common though, was the desire to encourage rigorous thinking about people issues.

The five days we spent at London Business School were challenging, thought-provoking and intense. The two main presenters, Lynda Gratton and Sumantra Ghoshal,

delivered a well-balanced programme that was rich in content and provided an excellent platform for discussion. Together they examined how people, purpose and processes build winning organisations and showed how we could design and implement human resource processes aligned to our own company's strategy.

I was very impressed by the high calibre of the faculty. All the presenters had extensive global business experience which enabled them to bring diverse and interesting perspectives to the programme. For me, this was a major benefit. I also admired the way in which they blended theory with practical application and gave plenty of opportunity for group discussion; I value the power of conversation and believe you can learn much from sharing views and experiences. All this was supported by interesting case studies, articles and other materials, and overall, the programme exceeded my expectations.

Long term value

To summarise, Human Resource Strategy in Transforming Organisations exposed me to state of the art thinking in a highly accessible way. It has deepened my understanding of how value-based people strategies can shape an organisation's performance and enabled me to design a business change process that I have applied successfully back at my company. I can honestly say that this was one of the best training programmes I have ever attended.