



WILLIAM J. ROTHWELL
ROLAND SULLIVAN
EDITORS

PRACTICING ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

A GUIDE FOR CONSULTANTS

2
SECOND EDITION

THE PRACTICING ORGANIZATION CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT SERIES
KRIS QUADE, ROLAND SULLIVAN, AND WILLIAM J. ROTHWELL, EDITORS



About This Book

Why is this topic important?

Organization development (OD) is about planned change. As change has turned into the only constant, many managers and other people are pursuing change strategies with vigor. OD is a major strategy for leading and managing change at the individual, group, intergroup, organizational, interorganizational, and large systems levels. This book is about what it takes to be an effective change manager, change leader, and OD consultant.

What can you achieve with this book?

Simply stated, this book provides everything you need to think through on how to function as a competent OD professional.

How is this book organized?

The book is organized into five parts. Part 1 consists of Chapters 1 through 7 and is entitled "Foundations." It includes information on key terms and definitions, models, origins of OD, and practitioner competencies. Part 2 consists of Chapters 8 through 13 and is entitled "Steps to Guide Planned Change." This section covers marketing, pre-launch, launch, implementation, evaluation, and separation. Part 3 consists of Chapters 14 through 19 and is entitled "Levels of Organizational Change." In it we discuss the issue of organization culture and interventions across various levels: individual, team, large systems, and interlevel. Part 4, the final part of the book, addresses some special issues in OD: global OD, values, appreciative inquiry, human systems dynamics, technology, consultant issues, and looking to the future.

The book concludes with three appendices that offer a variety of supplementary information, including a self-assessment tool for OD competencies. The CD-ROM that accompanies this book provides reproducible slides, as well as copies of the appendices and resource lists.

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Practicing Organization Development

A Guide for Consultants

Second Edition

Edited by William J. Rothwell
Roland L. Sullivan

Pfeiffer
A Wiley Imprint
www.pfeiffer.com

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Published by Pfeiffer
An Imprint of Wiley.
989 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-1741 www.pfeiffer.com

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Printed in the United States of America

ISBN: 0-7879-6238-4

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Practicing organization development : a guide for consultants / edited by William J. Rothwell, Roland Sullivan.— 2nd ed.

p. cm.

Rev. ed. of: *Practicing organization development* / edited by William J. Rothwell, Roland Sullivan, Gary N. McLean. c1995.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-7879-6238-4 (alk. paper)

1. Organizational change—Management. 2. Business consultants—Handbooks, manuals, etc. I. Rothwell, William J., date- II. Sullivan, Roland. III. *Practicing organization development*.

HD58.8.P7 2005

658.4'063—dc22

2004022754

Acquiring Editor: Matthew Davis
Director of Development: Kathleen Dolan Davies
Developmental Editor: Susan Rachmeler
Editor: Rebecca Taff
Senior Production Editor: Dawn Kilgore
Manufacturing Supervisor: Becky Carreno

Printing 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



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Personal Dedications

William J. Rothwell dedicates this book to his wife, Marcelina Rothwell, and to his daughter, Candice Rothwell. Their love, zest for life, and practical outlooks have always served as his inspiration. And they give proof to the song lyric “girls just want to have fun.”

Roland Sullivan dedicates this book to his daughter, Arielle, brother, Thomas, and centric mentors: Dr. Sivananda of Rishikesh, Dr. Jack Gibb, Richard Beckhard, Dr. Bob Tannenbaum, Ms. Kathleen Dannemiller, and Dr. David Cooperrider.

Professional Dedications

The editors dedicate this book to Kathleen Dannemiller for:

- *Co-inventing Real Time Strategic Change and Real Time Work Design (now called Whole-Scale Change) approaches to magically move organizations to new states;*
- *Being a passionate advocate of empowerment, engagement, and systems theory for more than thirty years;*
- *Believing that there is no conversation that is above or beneath anyone and that everyone needs to have a voice in shaping the future; and*
- *Being recognized worldwide for her ability to move an entire system in large group interactive events forward with speed, depth, and spirit.*

We also dedicate this book to Edgar Schein for:

- *Co-founding and then being the major lead (with Richard Beckhard and Warren Bennis) in documenting the theory and practice of the new field of OD in its start-up phase via the well-known Addison-Wesley Series;*
- *Being one of the first to articulate the constraints of the consultant’s role as expert and advisor, and for articulating the then-new notion that the consultant should help others discover what they need and then with sensitivity facilitate them toward their desired state;*
- *Helping the field of organization change and development become aware that results in change efforts come largely from the design, facilitation, and management of processes;*
- *Making the concept of “process consultation” a household word among change agents; and*
- *His contributions while being a Sloan Fellows Professor of Management Emeritus and Senior Lecturer at MIT’s Sloan School of Management and through his countless articles and books.*





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No book is the product of its author(s) or editor(s) alone. This book is no different. Accordingly, we would especially like to thank Dr. Don Cole, president of the Organization Development Institute, for his support of this project. Although he did not see the many drafts of this work, he was supportive of it. It was his original idea to define the knowledge and skill necessary for competence in OD.

We also want to thank the participating authors for their willingness to write their chapters and respond to our repeated demands for revisions. However, we must accept ultimate responsibility for any mistakes or misstatements made in this volume because we read all the chapters and revised them so as to maintain consistent writing styles.

Finally, William J. Rothwell acknowledges the helpful contributions of his talented Chinese graduate assistant, Ms. Wei (Aleisha) Wang, in tracking down and securing copyright permissions as necessary for the busy contributing authors. Helping her in that task was an equally talented Korean graduate assistant, Yeonsoo Kim. He would also like to thank Wei Wang and another graduate assistant, Tiffani Payne, for their devoted assistance in rereading the entire manuscript to ensure that many typographical errors were avoided during the editing process.

William J. Rothwell
University Park, Pennsylvania

Roland Sullivan
Deephaven, Minnesota



PRACTICING ORGANIZATION CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT SERIES BOARD STATEMENT

On behalf of the advisory board, I am pleased to be a part of and to support the (re)launching of the Practicing Organization Change and Development Series. The series editors, the publishers, and the advisory board vigorously discussed and debated the series' purpose, positioning, and delivery. We challenged extant assumptions about the field of organization change, change management, and organization development; we argued about perspectives on relevance, theory, and practice; and we agreed that there's a story that needs to be told through a series of books about change. In this first board statement, I want to relate—as best I can—our rationale for re-naming the series, describe our purpose, and position this book in the series.

The most obvious change in this re-launching is the series title. We argued and agreed that it should be changed from “Practicing Organization Development: The Change Agent Series for Groups and Organizations” to the “Practicing Organization Change and Development Series.” While that may be the most obvious change, it is certainly not the most significant one. Our discussion and debates led us to the firm belief that organization development (OD) was only

one method of organization change, that OD was misunderstood by many to be synonymous with organization change and change management, that OD's reputation is at best fragmented, that the field could not be defined by tools and techniques but had to embrace the entirety of the social and behavioral sciences, and that the series we wanted to be the advisory board for should be of the highest quality in terms of both theory and practice. Ultimately, we agreed that the books in this series should redefine the field of organization change and development in the broadest sense and should describe the best of innovative approaches to organization change and development.

A good example of our intent to redefine the field is to compare and contrast OD and change management. While both are concerned with change, the labels do describe their intent and philosophy. Organization *development* is concerned with development, growth, learning, and effectiveness. It is based primarily in the behavioral sciences. Change *management*, on the other hand, is concerned with implementation, control, performance, and efficiency. It is borne out of re-engineering and project management perspectives. Our view was that organization leaders would be best served by a series that embraced and integrated a variety of views on change. "Good" change in a global economy cannot be defined only by amounts and levels of participation, by costs (or people) reduced or profits achieved, or increases in organization size.

The first book in the series re-launching, *Practicing Organization Development*, is a good example of this purpose. It represents an initial step to define one boundary of the field of organization change and development. Written from the OD perspective, it proposes that good change is more often participatory than dictated, more concerned with learning and growth than performance, and more dependent on the behavioral sciences than economics. To be sure, the field of organization change and development is broader than the perspective described here. However, this first installment in the series does represent a practical, state-of-the-art description of the OD perspective.

In addition to redefining the field, we believed that the series should be written for and by practitioners interested in facilitating effective organizational change. Books should be grounded but not constrained by theory and practice and geared to providing advice on the practical issues and applications facing organizations and their leaders. Again, *Practicing Organization Development* reflects our intended purpose. It is written by some of the best scholar-practitioners in the field. The authors have the standing to describe best practice authoritatively. Finally, the chapters in this book are grounded in both theory and practice.

Our hope is that this series will raise the level of debate about organization change and development and that it will be of great assistance to change practitioners and organization leaders entrusted with growth, development, and performance of organizations. We hope you agree that this book is a good start.

—Christopher G. Worley

Series Editors

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Ed Schein, Series Consultant
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FOREWORD

OD: A PROMISE YET TO BE REALIZED

Building on a sound research base from the behavioral sciences, OD started in the 1960s with great promise. From the early Hawthorne studies and then expanded by the work of Argyris, French, McGregor, Likert, Marrow, Maslow, and others, OD appeared to open up an entirely new way to produce change and to manage organizations. Research in the laboratory and the field suggested that:

- Expertise is not just held by the experts, but exists throughout the organization—especially by those who are closest to the problem.
- “Resistance to change” doesn’t have to be a given. When people are involved in the change process, not only does cooperation increase, but the quality of the outcome dramatically improves.
- It is possible to not only solve the problem at hand, but the very process of dealing with difficult, even contentious issues can significantly increase individual, team, and organizational ability to function more effectively. That is the *development* in OD.

Organizations ranging from such major corporations as Esso, TRW, Alcan, P&G, and General Foods to religious organizations (such as the Episcopal

Church) and the U.S. Army eagerly embraced organization development to help them cope with the increasing demands of change. The OD Network was formed and quickly grew in size. Consultants would gather to share what they had learned and build on the experiences of others. From all of this a variety of new approaches were developed that involved meaningful participation of all levels throughout the organization, and not just those at the top. Internal OD consultants held positions high in the organization, often reporting to the most senior executives.

A series of core learnings emerged from this growing field:

- *Action research as a change strategy.* Kurt Lewin had observed, “The best way to understand an organization is to try to change it.” This led to the approach of collecting data after each intervention as a basis for further redesign.
- *A systems approach* where one had to look as much, if not more, at the *connections* between the parts as to the parts themselves. For a while, *socio-technical systems* thinking played an important role in helping integrate work processes with human needs.
- *“The client knows best.”* Rather than the external expert arriving with the answer to lay on the organization, it would now be a joint endeavor. OD consultants saw that one of their key tasks was to assist the client in discovering what solution was best.
- *The emphasis on processes* and not just on outcomes. Focusing on improving the organizational processes would increase the probability of a successful solution.
- *Working at multiple levels of analysis.* There might be training needed for individuals to support change, team building, working on inter-group collaboration, and so forth. While there was less emphasis on structure, attention was paid to issues of culture. It was understood that working at only one level of analysis was insufficient.
- *The importance of values* not just in the organization, but the values held by change agents in terms of how individuals are to be treated.

These were heady days in the late 1960s and 1970s, and even into the 1980s. There appeared to be numerous success stories, OD went international, and The OD Institute was established and set up a process of certification for consultants.

But those heady days appear to have passed. Even though the number of people who call themselves “OD consultants” has continued to increase, they are rarely in the top layers of organizations. Instead, if they exist at all within the institution, they are relegated far down in the bowels of the organization, usually being part of HR (not the highest status area itself). CEOs rarely call in OD consultants and instead rely on the major consulting firms, many of which

have taken on the rhetoric (if not the practice) of the OD field. OD consultants may be brought in, but usually for small ventures—a team-building activity, a “visioning” experience at some retreat, perhaps some personal coaching, but rarely the system-wide interventions that occurred before.

What is perplexing about this diminution in role and status is that one would have expected an increase in importance of OD, given the forces facing organizations today. Change is occurring at an even faster pace than three decades ago, so the ability to productively manage change is a key leadership concern. Why with so many mergers and acquisitions, changes in technology (including the central role that IT now plays), globalization with new markets and new competitors—all of which require new ways for individuals, departments, and divisions to operate and relate to each other—don’t all leaders have an OD consultant by their side? Also, as more and more organizations are moving into the “knowledge economy,” why aren’t OD professionals, who are expert on approaches that release the expertise throughout the organization, heavily involved in the central workings of most organizations?

These questions are troubling many in the OD field. The OD Network, in collaboration with The OD Institute, has launched a study to examine the present state of OD and where it should be going. The December 2004 issue of *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* is devoted to this question. And we (myself and Warner Burke) will publish a book in the Pfeiffer *Practicing OCD Series* that asks the leaders in the field to comment on this dilemma.

While no final conclusions can be drawn at this time, I think there are four major factors that play a part in the decreased centrality of OD:

1. *Few of those who call themselves OD consultants are really doing OD!* I am defining OD as “planned change that takes a systems approach and makes extensive use of collaborative techniques to both solve the immediate problem and leave the organization in a more competent state to handle future challenges.” What is interesting is that there is no agreed-on definition of OD, which says something about the scattered nature of the field!

Most people who label themselves as OD consultants may use various *techniques* and *approaches* that the field has developed, but that is not the same thing as a comprehensive systems approach to planned change. Doing some team building here, some coaching there, and training over in that area is not OD. These approaches can be useful in solving an immediate dilemma, but it is unlikely that alone they can produce sustained improvement in how the organization functions. OD has been accused of being faddish in grabbing on to the latest technique. Such approaches can be useful as *means* to an end, but they should not be an end in and of themselves.

2. *Where is the O in OD?* This was a question that Richard Beckhard repeatedly raised. If the key goal is to make the *organization* more effective, that has to be the primary focus of any intervention. Improving individual competency or team performance is a laudable objective, but that is unlikely to translate to *organizational* improvement. Likewise, if one wants to improve the organization as an entity, then it is important to also consider other core organizational functions. Unfortunately, socio-technical systems thinking has largely disappeared. Yet OD has to be concerned and work with the impact of other processes, such as the introduction of new information systems or ways to make re-engineering both effective and humane. But most OD consultants tend to ignore these areas.
3. *There is no integrative theory of change.* OD has some models of change, but these tend to describe change as a series of steps or stages. An integrative theory of change would speak to such issues as *When should one collaborate and when should change be imposed? What are the various ways to build alliances and with whom? What stakeholders are crucial and which can be ignored? How should internal politics be handled?* And even, *When should one use political strategies?* Change is a multi-dimensional process and OD has been charged with being politically naïve. There is a time for openness and transparency and a time when that won't work. That is the world in which organizational leaders live, and if OD is to be listened to and is to be effective, it needs a sophisticated, integrated theory of change.
4. *OD is confused about its values.* On the one hand, OD claims that it is firmly based in the applied behavioral sciences. But on the other hand, it stresses its humanistic roots. What happens when the latter is not supported by the former? Unfortunately for many OD consultants, it is the humanistic values, not the applied behavioral sciences, that dominate. (A senior consultant in the field commented that "Imposed change never works," which denies so much historical reality.) What OD has lost is its commitment to rigorous, objective analysis of what truly is effective and instead has replaced that with a view of what it thinks the world should be.

OD is potentially too important to forego the impact it should have. Fortunately, this book comes at a very propitious time in the field's history. The editors have assembled a wide range of views. I would urge the reader to drink deeply from these many sources. But you will benefit most if you see these chapters as separate pieces of an unassembled mosaic that need your help to

join them into an integrative whole. What theory of change must you build to produce a systemic approach to planned change that truly leaves the organization much more developed to face future problems? If you have done that, then organizational leaders are more likely to seek your counsel.

David L. Bradford, Ph.D.
Graduate School of Business
Stanford University
Palo Alto, California
September 2004



Introduction

Getting the Most from This Resource

William J. Rothwell and Roland L. Sullivan

The paradox of our time is that change has become the only constant. And, indeed, the rate of change itself has also changed, with some experts suggesting that the rate of change—and the body of human knowledge—is doubling every ten years (Colteryahn & Davis, 2004). Changes occur in organizations every day. Organizations are started, and some evolve while others dissolve. Some undergo mergers, takeovers, or buyouts; some go bankrupt. Changes in corporate ownership may result in corporate rightsizing, downsizing, early retirement offers, or various other staffing alterations. To cope with the fierce competition organizations face, senior managers are taking innovative steps by introducing many change efforts.

Practicing Organization Development: A Guide for Consultants (2nd ed.) is about facilitating these and other organizational changes. But this book is not about just any type of organizational change; rather, it focuses on planned, systematic, and educationally oriented change that is carried out for organizational improvement. The book is about organization development (OD). *Organization development* may be defined as “a system-wide application of behavioral science knowledge to the planned development, improvement, and reinforcement of the strategies, structures, and processes that lead to organization effectiveness” (Cummings & Worley, 2005, p. 1).

Although the book addresses organizational change, many principles described in it also apply to change efforts with individuals, with teams, or across organizations.

THE AUDIENCE FOR THE BOOK

This book has three intended audiences: internal and external OD consultants, workplace learning and performance professionals, and managers and executives.

The primary audience is OD consultants. There are two levels of OD consultants: practitioners and master practitioners. This book is geared to *practitioners*, those who are already carrying out the role of change agent but need more formal grounding in organization development theory and practice. This includes students enrolled in courses on OD, organizational behavior, or organizational change. *Master practitioners* may also find this book useful as a guide to OD literature and as a tool to help them orient, train, and mentor other OD consultants.

Our second audience is workplace learning and performance (WLP) practitioners, previously called human resource development (HRD) practitioners. Some WLP practitioners specifically train employees. They devote their attention largely to increasing employees' job knowledge and to improving individual performance in organizational settings. But many WLP practitioners go beyond training to ensure that identified training needs take organizational and work-group cultures into account. In addition, results-oriented WLP practitioners are aware that individual performance improvement can only occur when the surrounding work environment supports it. The theory and practice of changing organizational and work-group cultures are OD topics. To do their jobs and achieve results, WLP practitioners sometimes need to apply competencies associated with OD.

Our third audience consists of managers and executives. In today's dynamic business environment, they must know how to introduce and consolidate change successfully if they are to realize their visions for organizational improvement. When executives or managers lack competence in change theory, they will never see their visions realized.

THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE BOOK

The purpose of this second edition of *Practicing Organization Development: A Guide for Consultants* is to build the readers' competencies in diagnosing the need for—and facilitating implementation of—change in organizational settings. When readers finish this book, they should be able to do the following:

1. Define OD;
2. Define a model of planned change, its key steps, and explain how it is related to OD;
3. Describe the competencies necessary to conduct each step in the planned change model;

4. Apply, at a minimum level, the competencies necessary to conduct each step in the planned change model; and
5. Define *intervention* as it is used in the OD field and describe typical OD interventions.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE BOOK

This book is based on research about the activities of internal and external consultants functioning as internal or external OD change agents. The current research results appear on the Organization Development Network (ODN) website. Earlier drafts of this research study on the competencies of OD consultants appeared as early as 1990 in *OD Practitioner* (McLean & Sullivan, 1990) and, even before that, in an earlier draft of “Essential Competencies of Internal and External OD Consultants.” “The Essential Competencies” were developed from an attempt to combine previous efforts to describe what change agents do as they diagnose the need for change and participate in planned-change efforts. Sullivan started the study in the mid-1970s with a review of OD literature and has been updated annually, based on continuing literature reviews. It has been repeatedly scrutinized in feedback sessions held at Pepperdine University, Malibu, California; the Southern Minnesota Chapter and Region 6 Conference of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD); the Minnesota OD Network; the OD Interorganization Group Worldwide in Austria; and annual Organization Development Institute (ODI) conferences. In 1988 the study was examined by a committee of twenty top OD consultants under the auspices of ODI. Since then, it has been revisited countless times and in settings all over the world.

Practicing Organization Development: A Guide for Consultants (2nd ed.) takes up where competency studies on OD leave off. Practice is emphasized in the book, and that word is imbued with multiple meanings. As Kinnunen (1992, p. 6) points out, *to practice* can mean any or all of the following:

- To do frequently or by force of habit;
- To use knowledge and skill in a profession or occupation;
- To adhere to a set of beliefs or ideals;
- To do repeatedly to become proficient; and
- To drill in order to give proficiency.

This book explains the competencies described, in abbreviated form, in these OD competency studies. But the other meanings of practice listed above can also apply to the editors’ intentions in assembling this book.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

What are the competencies of an effective OD consultant? That is the central question addressed by this book. This book is structured in four parts:

- *Part One, Foundations*, provides essential background information about OD and planned change.
- *Part Two, Steps to Guide Planned Change*, focuses on the OD intervention process. Chapters in Part Two address marketing, pre-launch, launch, implementation, and continued implementation, evaluation, and separation.
- *Part Three, Levels of Organizational Change*, focuses on different levels of interventions.
- *Part Four, Special Issues in OD*, focuses on such issues as international OD, ethics in OD, appreciative inquiry, complexity theory, technology and OD, the self as instrument in OD, and the unique challenges facing internal OD practitioners.

In Chapter One, contributing editors William J. Rothwell and Roland Sullivan introduce the book. The chapter defines OD and key terms, summarizes the history of OD, places OD in context, and clarifies when OD should and should not be used. Chapter Two, which is also written by the contributing editors, describes models for organizational change and summarizes phases in planned organizational change efforts.

In Chapter Three, authors Billie Alban and John Scherer review the origins of OD. In Chapter Four, authors T.V. Rao and William J. Rothwell describe how the HRD audit can be used as a means of integrating OD and HR management. In Chapter Five, authors Christopher Worley, William Rothwell, and Roland Sullivan examine the competencies of OD practitioners. In Chapter Six, Don Warrick summarizes the opinions of leading OD people in the world about OD. In Chapter Seven, entitled “A Future-Responsive Perspective for Competent Practice in OD,” authors Saul Eisen, Jeanne Cherbeneau, and Chris Worley report the results of a futures study affecting OD and describe their implications for future competence in the field.

Part Two opens with Chapter Eight, in which Alan Weiss examines the unique issues associated with marketing OD. He describes how OD consultants determine a value proposition, establish the routes to the economic buyer, establish conceptual agreement, and create proposals that close business.

In Chapter Nine, David Jamieson focuses on the pre-launch phase of an OD change effort. He covers such topics as the dilemma of pre-launch, the essence of pre-launch, and elements of pre-launch, including identifying client(s) and

sponsor(s) and how OD consultants can orient themselves to their client's world. He also offers sound advice, based on experience, about how consultants can establish their competence and credibility; develop open, trusting, and aligned relationships; complete preliminary diagnostic scans; and manage other issues that may arise during the pre-launch phase.

Chapter Ten focuses on the launch phase of OD interventions. Author Don Warrick addresses topics centered around organizational assessment and action planning.

In Chapter Eleven, W. Warner Burke describes how to manage the implementation and continued implementation phase of an OD intervention. In Chapter Twelve, Gary McLean and Steve Cady examine the evaluation phase of an OD intervention, defining evaluation within a systems perspective. And finally, the last Chapter in Part Two, authored by W. Warner Burke and Ann Van Eron, provides guidance on the separation phase of an OD intervention.

The chapters in Part Three examine levels of organizational change. Edgar Schein emphasizes the importance of taking organization culture seriously in Chapter Fourteen. Udai Pareek, John Scherer, and Lynn Brinkerhoff cover personal and interpersonal interventions in Chapter Fifteen. W. Gibb Dyer, Jr., provides wisdom on team building—past, present, and future—in Chapter Sixteen. Thomas G. Cummings and Anne Feyerherm address interventions in large systems in Chapter Seventeen. Chapter Eighteen, by Steve Cady and Kathleen Dannemiller, focuses on Whole Systems Transformation. And finally, in Chapter Nineteen, David Coghlan examines OD through interlevel dynamics.

The chapters in Part Four address many issues of interest to OD professionals. Chapter Twenty focuses on global OD. Authors Gary N. McLean, Karen J. Davis, Mila N. Baker, and Juana Anguita discuss the context for global OD, the vision of a global society, dilemmas in OD, and related topics. In Chapter Twenty-One, Terri Egan and William Gellermann review ethics in OD. Chapter Twenty-Two, by Frank Barrett, David Cooperrider, and Ronald Fry, offers exciting theoretical perspectives on appreciative inquiry. Chapter Twenty-Three, by Glenda Eoyang, offers thoughts on human dynamics and complexity theory. Chapter Twenty-Four, by Soren Kaplan, offers thoughts on technology and OD. In Chapter Twenty-Five, Bob Tannenbaum and Saul Eisen emphasize the OD practitioner as human being. Chapter Twenty-Six, authored by Kristine Quade, is about using the self effectively. In Chapter Twenty-Seven, Allan Foss, David Lipsky, Allen Orr, Beverly Scott, Terrence Seamon, Julie Smendzuik-O'Brien, Anna Tavis, Dale Wissman, and Catherine Woods offer thoughts on the unique challenges facing internal OD practitioners. Meg Wheatley concludes the book with some reflections on the times in which we live in Chapter Twenty-Eight.

Appendices at the back of the book provide two self-assessment instruments: one to give readers a means by which to compare themselves to present OD competencies and another to give readers a means by which to compare themselves to future OD competencies.

Accompanying this book is a CD that contains the following:

- A PowerPoint® presentation of key issues from the book;
- A syllabus for an Introduction to OD course;
- A compilation of OD websites;
- A use of self bibliography; and
- Appendices, worksheets, and instruments from the book.

Further resources can also be found at the Practicing Organization Change and Development website (www.PracticingOD.com).

HOW IS THIS EDITION OF *PRACTICING ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT* SIMILAR TO AND DIFFERENT FROM THE FIRST?

Readers will note unique similarities and differences between the first and second editions of this book. The editions are similar in that both are based on OD competency studies. They also share many authors in common, who have reprised (and updated) their chapters.

The editions are different in that the change model in this second edition is considered more current than that described in the first edition. The second edition has been wholly rewritten and updated—to the extent that the first and second editions may be properly regarded as entirely separate books.

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PART ONE



FOUNDATIONS

Part One lays the foundation for the book. It consists of seven chapters that provide the definitions of important terms, useful historical information about OD, background about models to guide the organizational change process, and the characteristics (competencies) essential for OD professionals to ply their trade. The chapters are

Chapter One	Organization Development, by William J. Rothwell and Roland L. Sullivan
Chapter Two	Models for Change, by William J. Rothwell and Roland L. Sullivan
Chapter Three	On the Shoulders of Giants: The Origins of OD, by Billie T. Alban & John J. Scherer
Chapter Four	Using the HRD Audit to Build Convergence Between Human Resource Management and Organization Development, by T.V. Rao and William J. Rothwell
Chapter Five	Competencies of OD Practitioners, by Christopher G. Worley, William J. Rothwell, and Roland L. Sullivan
Chapter Six	Organization Development from the View of the Experts: Summary Results, by D.D. Warrick
Chapter Seven	A Future-Responsive Perspective for Competent Practice in OD, by Saul Eisen, Jeanne Cherbeneau, and Christopher G. Worley



Organization Development

William J. Rothwell and Roland L. Sullivan

What do you believe about change? Why should you care about organization development (OD)? What is change management (CM), and what is organization development (OD)? What special terms of importance are used in organization change and development? What is systems thinking, and why is it important to OD practitioners? What are the philosophical foundations of OD, and why are they important? How is OD related to other HR fields? This chapter addresses these and related questions.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ABOUT CHANGE?

Get some paper and record your answers to the following questions. Write down the first thing that comes to your mind in response to each question:

1. *Who* should be involved in an organization change effort, and how should they be involved?
2. *Who* should make decisions about the way in which a change effort of any kind is launched? Implemented on a continual basis? Evaluated?
3. *What* do you believe about change in the world generally?
4. *What* do you believe about change in today's organizations?
5. *What* do you believe are the biggest challenges facing decision-makers in organization change efforts?

6. *What* do you believe are your own strengths and developmental needs in enacting the role of “helper to others” in a change effort? What do you do especially well? What do you wish to personally develop to become a more effective change agent? On what basis do you believe as you do?
7. *When* do you believe that a group of people might need a helper in a change effort?
8. *Where* do you believe that the most profound changes are occurring in the world, and why do you think as you do?
9. *Why* should organization change and development be a focus for the attention of managers? Other groups?
10. *How* should change be marketed? Launched? Implemented? Evaluated?
11. *How* have you reacted in the past to change in an organization in which you have been employed or been a consultant with? Think about what you did and how you felt as the change occurred.
12. *What* are some common examples of organization change in organizations? Reflect on what they are. Consider such interventions as team building, implementing technological change, succession planning, culture development, aligning management, enterprise wide change, mergers and acquisitions, and structural reorganizations.

Write down these questions and your answers on a sheet of paper—or else use the worksheet in Exhibit 1.1. Then take a break from the book and identify a few professional peers or colleagues—or find yourself some mentors whom you believe to be more experienced than you are—and pose these questions to them. Use this activity as a “warm-up exercise” to focus your thinking about organization change and development. When you finish, continue reading.

WHY CARE ABOUT ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT (OD)?

According to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus, “There is nothing permanent but change.” By that he meant that everything is always in flux. Nobody can step in the same river twice, because the river is always in motion and is therefore always changing. What is new since our last edition is that change has quickened.

The last time the world was this troubled was in the in middle of the Renaissance, a golden age of creation. But hang on to your hat. We will experience more change the rest of our lives than has been experienced since the beginning of civilization. We can expect more confusion in our organizations than at any other time in history. On the positive side, nano-technology, artificial intelligence, and the robotic world will bring advances beyond our most bodacious fantasies.



Exhibit 1.1. A Worksheet for Reflecting on Your Assumptions

Directions: Use this worksheet to organize your thinking. For each question posed below, write your answers in the space provided. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers in any absolute sense. However, some answers may be better than others.

1. *Who* should be involved in an organizational change effort, and how should they be involved?
2. *Who* should make decisions about the way in which a change effort of any kind is formulated? Implemented? Evaluated?
3. *What* do you believe about change in the world generally?
4. *What* do you believe about change in today’s organizations?
5. *What* do you believe are the biggest challenges facing decision makers in organizational change efforts?
6. *What* do you believe are your own strengths and weaknesses in enacting the role of “helper to others” in a change effort? What do you do especially well? Not so well? On what basis do you believe as you do?
7. *When* do you believe that a group of people might need a helper in a change effort?
8. *Where* do you believe that the most profound changes are occurring in the world, and *why* do you think as you do?
9. *Why* should organizational change and development be a focus for the attention of managers? Other groups?
10. *How* should change be formulated? Implemented? Evaluated?
11. *How* have you reacted in the past to change in an organization in which you have been employed or for which you have worked? Think about what you did and how you felt as the change occurred.
12. *What* are some common examples of organizational change in organizations? Reflect on what they are. Consider such issues as team building, implementing technological change, planning for successors, mergers and acquisitions, and company downsizings and reorganizations.

Yes indeed!! The pace and magnitude of change has itself been changing over the last few decades. Dramatic, mind-boggling, transformational change has been accelerating. One reason is that improvements in communications, wrought by technological innovation, make otherwise local events global in scope.

The field of organization development has a history of over forty years. OD practitioners have been thinking about, and intervening actively, to help society make the most of the change age. It is worth asking this question: *Why should anyone care about all the organization change occurring?* To answer that question, it is worth devoting some time to reflect on what changes are occurring, why change is occurring so fast, and what effects those changes are having.

What Changes Are Occurring?

One study of human resource management practitioners identified six key changes that would have the greatest impact in the workplace and workforce over the next ten years (Rothwell, Prescott, & Taylor, 1998). The study began with an analysis of published accounts of workplace trends. Only trends mentioned three or more times were included on the initial list. A total of 158 trends were identified in this way. Then a handpicked group of HR experts rated the trends for their relative importance on the present and future workplace and workforce. The result was a narrowed-down list of six key trends:

- Changing technology;
- Increasing globalization;
- Continuing cost containment;
- Increasing speed in market change;
- Growing importance of knowledge capital; and
- Increasing rate and magnitude of change.

Changing technology refers to rapid advances in human know-how. *Increasing globalization* refers to the impact of rapid transportation and global communication on doing business. *Continuing cost containment* refers to efforts undertaken by organizations to address declining profit margins, wrought by the ease of price comparisons through web-based technology, by making decided efforts to improve profits by reducing the costs of business operations. *Increasing speed in market change* refers to the continuing importance of beating competitors to the punch to meet the rapidly changing tastes of consumers. *The growing importance of knowledge capital* refers to the key value-added capabilities of human creativity to identify new businesses, new products, new services, and new markets. And finally, the *increasing rate and magnitude of change* refers to the increasing speed and scope of changes that occur. In short,

change itself is changing—and posing ever-more-daunting challenges for business leaders to respond in real time to breaking events.

Each trend influences the others. The definition of each trend may vary by organizational context and even by functional area. The trends are related in that many are root causes of other trends or consequences of other trends. And each trend requires new competencies from leaders to respond to, or even anticipate, the changes wrought by each trend.

Anderson and Anderson (2001a) provide a compatible perspective, discussing the so-called *drivers of change model*. To them, change is wrought by external environmental influences that change the marketplace requirements for success. These marketplace requirements, in turn, lead to new business imperatives that, in due course, lead to organizational imperatives, corporate cultural imperatives, requirements for changes in leader and employee behaviors, and (finally) in new leader and employee mindsets and beliefs.

Why Is Change Occurring So Fast?

Time has become a key strategic resource. The challenge of the future is to help people adapt to change, often in real time and as events unfold. Time has become important precisely because changing technology provides many possible strategic advantages to organizations. Today the organization that makes it to market first by commercializing basic research results seizes market share—and is likely to keep it. And organizations that miss technological innovations to increase production speed or improve quality lose out to global competitors who function in a world where differences in labor costs can easily be taken advantage of because of the relative ease of international travel and communication.

Changing technology is also a driver for the information explosion—and vice versa. Consider the sheer magnitude and pace of the information explosion:

- The sheer quantity of information is increasing so fast that nobody can keep pace with it. The amount of information created over the last thirty years is greater than what was produced over the previous five thousand years.
- According to one source (see www.softpanorama.org/Social/overload.shtml), more than 100,000 new book titles are published in the United States every year—and the total number of books published worldwide may exceed one million.
- The amount of information stored online is now more than 2.5 times what is found on paper—and human knowledge, at least as measured by the amount of information available online, is doubling every one hundred days (see Heylighen, 1999).
- We all are experiencing an invasion of our time with a tremendous amount of phone calls, emails, and voice mails. The cell phone is with some people twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week.

People have different ways of responding to information overload and to change. One approach is to give up. Another approach, widely used, is to try to master clever ways to do more than one thing at a time—that is, multi-tasking. And yet, according to University of Michigan researcher David E. Meyer, efforts to cope with the effects of change by trying to do more than one thing at a time are causing their own problems. Multi-tasking can actually reduce productivity because it may take as much as 50 percent longer to process two tasks performed simultaneously than it takes to do two tasks one after the other, according to Richtel (cited in Heylighen, 1999).

What Effects Are Those Changes Having?

There are many effects of change.

One effect is that change begets more change. As organization leaders struggle to meet competitive challenges, they search for ways to slash cycle times for product development, chase fads to discover new ways to gain advantage, and struggle with efforts to manage across a burgeoning number of improvement programs.

A second effect is that so much change has prompted an increasing amount of cynicism about change, an emerging theme in the literature about change management (Bruhn, Zajac, & Al-Kazemi, 2001; Cutler, 2000). *Cynicism about change* means that workers and managers increasingly question the motives of those who sponsor, champion, or drive change. Cynicism about the motives of other people erodes trust and confidence in organizational leaders. And a growing number of scandals in business, government, education, the media, and the church only reinforce that cynicism.

A third effect is growing stress on individuals and their families. As the rate and magnitude of change increase, individuals struggle to keep up emotionally as well as cognitively. Their stressed-out feelings about change, if expressed, occasionally erupt in workplace violence, as found from studies of over 300,000 instances of workplace violence that occur annually in the United States (Magyar, 2003). It may also prompt increasing instances of “desk rage” (Buhler, 2003), create pushback through growing interest in work/life balance programs (“New agenda for rights at work needed,” 2001), and encourage some people to seek innovative ways to work through telecommuting or other efforts that distance individuals from others.

So Why Should Anyone Care About Organization Development?

People should care about organization development because it is rapidly emerging as a key business topic—if not *the* key business topic.

The ability to manage change successfully may set leaders apart from followers. A study by Rosen and Digh (2001) identified “guiding people successfully through change” as one of twenty key competencies for global managers. Anderson and Anderson (2001a, p. 1) note that “In today’s marketplace, change

is a requirement for continued success, and competent change leadership is a most coveted executive skill.”

And there is clearly a need for improvements in demonstrating that competency. After all, the track record of change efforts is not so good. Consider: success rates for reengineering efforts in Fortune 1000 companies range from 20 to 50 percent (Strebel, 1996). A study of corporate mergers revealed that only 33 percent could be classified as successful (Dinkin, 2000), and Doucet (2000) found that four in ten firms did not realize desired savings from mergers. Only 28 percent of information technology projects are successful (Johnson, 2000), and 50 percent of firms that downsized actually experienced a decrease—not an increase—in productivity (Applebaum, Everard, & Hung, 1999). The inability to manage change has thus proven to be the undoing of many otherwise laudable organizational efforts. The situation is so bad that managers would get a C if they were being graded on managing change (Burke, Spencer, Clark, & Corruzzi, 1991). As Anderson and Anderson (2001a, p. 25) note, “A major source of the failure of most of the change efforts of the past decade has been the lack of leader and consultant skill in the internal domain of people.”

Smith (2002) reaches several conclusions about failed change efforts based on a survey of 210 managers. His survey results revealed that 75 percent of change efforts fail to make dramatic improvements, that top and middle management support for change is essential to success in change efforts, that about 50 percent of all change efforts emanate from the top but about 47 percent come from division or department heads, and that most change efforts come about as a reaction to a combination of organization and environmental factors. Further, the survey results reveal that most organizations rely on financial, operational, and customer service metrics to evaluate the success of change efforts, that success is highly correlated with visible support from a change sponsor, that failure is associated with missing or conflicted leadership, and that managers agree much more clearly on why change succeeds than on why it fails.

In an opinion piece about failures in change, Zackrisson and Freedman (2003) identify fifteen possible reasons why so many change efforts fail:

1. *Ill-advised interventions*: They should not have been undertaken to begin with.
2. *Inappropriate use of external consultants*: Consultants were engaged, or took responsibility, for interventions that should have been addressed by the organization.
3. *Self-centered consultant*: The consultants were more interested in doing their own thing than in helping the client.
4. *The wrong type of consultant*: Many change efforts failed because the wrong type of consultant was selected to help facilitate or manage the change.

5. *Solving with symptoms*: The change effort focused on an issue that was really a symptom of some other root cause.
6. *Providing first aid to terminally ill patients*: The organization's management waited until it was too late to start an improvement process.
7. *Dead elephants are ignored*: Consultants and/or key stakeholders ignore a problem that should have been addressed, and that (in turn) leads to failure.
8. *Management was incapable of managing the change*: Change efforts fail because managers do not feel a strong need to change or else do not know how to go about it.
9. *Management was incapable of keeping the change going*: Change efforts fail because there is no sustained commitment to change.
10. *Lack of key stakeholder support*: Change efforts fail because key stakeholders do not provide the necessary support.
11. *Consultant uneducated or disinterested in change processes*: Change efforts fail because the consultants do not know how to make the change themselves.
12. *Inadequate or inappropriate evaluation*: Many consulting interventions fail because the consulting effort was inappropriately or ineffectively evaluated—or else not evaluated at all.
13. *Confusion between "od" and "OD"*: Many OD consulting interventions fail because so-called OD consultants were unable or unwilling to recognize the difference between "little od" and "big OD." *Little od* is about one change effort. An example would be a consultant who specializes in team building and calls herself an OD consultant. But team building is not *big OD*, the entire field that focuses on bringing about change in organizational settings through various interventions and through a process of involving those who are affected by change.
14. *Confusion between techniques and processes*: Many OD interventions fail because the consultants responsible for their design and facilitation were so hung up on their own favorite techniques that they forgot to pay attention to relevant existing and/or emerging processes.
15. *Focusing on improving processes instead of on improving the outputs that those processes produce*: Many OD interventions fail because the consultants designing and facilitating them began by asking, "What are we going to do?," when they should have begun by asking, "What do we want to achieve?"

To summarize, then, organization change presents one of the greatest challenges in modern organizational life. All managers and employees will have to

deal with it. If they cannot, they are not likely to be successful in what they do in the future—no matter what their specialty areas might be.

WHAT IS CHANGE MANAGEMENT, AND WHAT IS ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT?

“Defining change management is tough under any circumstances,” write Holland and Skarke (2003, p. 24), “especially in the context of a new technology being implemented in an existing organization. Mention the issue of change management and a typical response is the question ‘Does it really matter in the real world?’” The answer to that question is “Of course.” After all, definitions are important because they can provide clarity in discussions about any issue.

Change Management Defined

In the simplest sense, *change management* means the process of helping a person, group, or organization change. The word *management* implies an effort to plan the change and exert influence over other people in the process. Change management thus implies a purposeful effort to bring about change. Kudray and Kleiner (1997, p. 18) define change management as “the continuous process of aligning an organization with its marketplace—and doing it more responsively and effectively than competitors.” Anderson and Anderson (2001b, p. xxviii) define change management as “a set of principles, techniques, and prescriptions applied to the human aspects of executing major change initiatives in organizational settings. Its focus is not on ‘what’ is driving change (technology, reorganization plans, mergers/acquisitions, globalization, etc.), but on ‘how’ to orchestrate the human infrastructure that surrounds key projects so that people are better prepared to absorb the implications affecting them.”

Planned change has always been a key ingredient in any definition and application of OD. Warner Burke made a unique distinction between planned change and change management in his 2004 Linkage OD Summit keynote address. To summarize, he said that planned change results from an extensive assessment of the situation and then plans for customized interventions that are created to increase organizational excellence. Change management is thus the management of the planned changes. Organization change planned in today’s environment is never implemented as planned. For that reason, management of the change planned is thus required—and essential.

Perhaps, then, a difference just might be that OD works from a base of valid information coming from assessment, along with making free choices with the client system regarding what tools or interventions to enact the change might be best. Additionally, another difference just may be that the OD process seems to have more of a human values base. We mentioned this to one of our

colleagues and he said we were treading on a slippery slope. So let's reserve judgment but ask you (the reader) this question: *Do you think that in your interactions with OD people you experience a greater emphasis on human values than in your interaction with people who call themselves change management consultants?*

Organization Development Defined

According to Clardy (2003, p. 785):

“The field of planned organization change was long equated with organization development (OD). OD proponents were up-front with the bona fides of their approach: full disclosure, informed consent, inclusive participation, and so on. These canons of OD provided the principles and practices that could be applied to any organizational change project. Yet, for a number of years, standing alongside the OD literature were smaller volumes (Zaltman & Duncan, 1977, was an early example) that did not so neatly fit the OD mold. By these accounts, the geography of organizational change management was bigger than that encompassed by OD.”

While some might disagree with the assertions in the preceding paragraph, those assertions are effective in forcing readers to confront what they believe about OD—and what they do not.

Over the years, organization development has been defined by just about every author who has written about it. Here are a few chronologically organized definitions that represent a range of ways to understand OD:

- Organization development is an effort (1) planned, (2) organization-wide, and (3) managed from the top, to (4) increase organization effectiveness and health through (5) planned interventions in the organization's “processes,” using behavioral-science knowledge (Beckhard, 1969, p. 9).
- Organization development is a response to change, a complex educational strategy intended to change the beliefs, attitudes, values, and structure of organizations so that they can better adapt to new technologies, markets, and challenges, and the dizzying rate of change itself (Bennis, 1969, p. 2).
- Most people in the field agree that OD involves consultants who try to help clients improve their organizations by applying knowledge from the behavioral sciences—psychology, sociology, cultural anthropology, and certain related disciplines. Most would also agree that OD implies change and, if we accept that improvement in organizational functioning means that change has occurred, then, broadly defined, OD means organizational change (Burke, 1982, p. 3).

- Organization development is a top-management-supported long-range effort to improve an organization's problem-solving and renewal processes, particularly through a more effective and collaborative diagnosis and management of organization culture—with special emphasis on formal work team, temporary team, and intergroup culture—with the assistance of a consultant-facilitator and the use of the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including Action Research (French & Bell, 1990, p. 17).
- Organization development is “a systemic and systematic change effort, using behavioral science knowledge and skill, to change or transform the organization to a new state” (Beckhard, 1999, personal communication).
- Organization development is a system-wide and values-based collaborative process of applying behavioral science knowledge to the adaptive development, improvement and reinforcement of such organizational features as the strategies, structures, processes, people, and cultures that lead to organization effectiveness (Bradford, Burke, Seashore, Worley, & Tannenbaum, 2001).

For more definitions of OD, see Chapter Six.

These definitions imply several key points deserving elaboration.

First, *OD is long-range in perspective*. It is not a “quick-fix” strategy for solving short-term performance issues, as employee training is often inappropriately perceived to be. Many managers are becoming acutely aware of the need to move beyond quick, unworkable solutions to complex organizational problems. Organization development is a means to bring about complex, deep, and lasting change. This may include *any* domain in the organization that is in need of learning to be better so performance is enhanced. Patience and a long-term effort are required to achieve deep and significant change. In many organizations OD is coupled with strategic business planning, a natural fit because both can be long-range in scope.

Second, *OD should be supported by top managers*. They are usually the chief power brokers and change agents in any organization; top managers control an organization's resources and reward systems. Although OD efforts can be undertaken at any organizational level without direct top-management participation, OD is less likely to succeed if it does not have at least tacit approval from top management.

Third, *OD effects change, although not exclusively, through education*. Organization development expands people's ideas, beliefs, and behaviors so that they can apply new approaches to old states of existence. Even more importantly, OD change efforts go beyond employee-training efforts and concentrate on the work group or organization in which new ideas, beliefs, or behaviors are to be applied. Organization development for many has always been synonymous with

organization learning (Argyris, 1993, 2004; Bennis, 1969; Kanter, 1992; Lippitt, 1958; Senge, 1990; & Vaill, 1996). Peter Senge (1990, p. 13) says, “A learning organization is a place where people are continually discovering how they create reality. And how they can change it. Organization-wide learning involves change in culture and change in the most basic managerial practices, not just within a company, but within a whole system management. . . I guarantee that when you start to create a learning environment, people will not feel as though they are in control.”

The words *change* and *learning* are often used to mean the same thing, thus the title of a classic book, *The Laboratory Method of Learning and Changing*, by OD founders Benne, Bradford, Gibb, and Lippitt (1975). These men, and so many of the early leaders of the field, were innovative educators. Many OD founders were leading educators. They saw one of OD’s major goals to innovate and re-invent education.

Fourth, *OD emphasizes employee participation in assessing the current and a positive future state, making free and collaborative choices on how implementation should proceed, and empowering the system to take responsibility for achieving and evaluating results.* In this sense OD differs from other methods that hold managers or consultants responsible for the success or failure of a change effort. The entire system is accountable rather than just management.

In OD, everyone in an organization who is affected by change should have an opportunity to contribute to—and accept responsibility for—the continuous-improvement process or the transformation. Organizational effectiveness and humanistic values meet as employee ownership increases in change processes and outcomes.

What Organization Development Is Not

David Bradford, who wrote the foreword to this book, challenged the authors to convey a strong message to readers. OD is more than the use of a tool kit filled with canned tricks, piecemeal programs, gimmicks, techniques, and methodologies. Rosabeth Moss Kanter said, “Piecemeal programs are not enough. Only total transformation will help companies and people master change” (1995, p. 83).

Consultants reduce their chances for success if they rely on cookbook approaches to change. One size does not fit all. And one approach to change, as listed in a step-by-step model, does not work with all groups, all corporate cultures, all national cultures, or all people.

We believe that OD is not a mechanical rote application of someone else’s best practice. On the contrary, it uses one’s whole self encountering the full and quantum living system. Living systems are made up of vibrant communities, changing networks—formal and informal, feedback, self-organization, ongoing change, and learning. They need an organic and emerging helping process. Rote mechanisms and un-integrated change projects are less effective.

OD is not about short-term manipulation to achieve immediate financial gains. Using OD in such a way ensures failure. Instead OD is utilized as an adaptable and real-time discipline that encounters living systems that require feedback to govern next moves and adjustments. It is interactive. It is relational. It is super-engaging. It is participative. Rigid tools most often prevent the use of living robust processes to help that magical, intangible high-performing culture from emerging.

Effective trainers can be in control of a management development effort. But facilitators of organization change are not in control of the change effort. Instead they facilitate in collaborative fashion. They learn and personally change with the organization. Successful change efforts require an ebb and flow. If an inappropriate tool is chosen, it may not bend and relate to the living personality of the system.

The following statement by Edgar Schein came to us via email last week. It is in regard to his well-known contribution to the OD field titled *Process Consultation*: “What gets me is that people still see it as a technique to be chosen among other techniques rather than a core philosophy of how to establish a relationship with a human system. Oh well.”

In his classic book, *Process Consultation Revisited*, Schein (1999) wrote:

“In previous versions of this book, I attempted to categorize interventions. . . I have concluded that such categories are not really useful because they divert one from the more fundamental question of figuring out what will be helpful at any given moment in the evolving relationship. I prefer a general concept of ‘Facilitative Intervention’ that implies that a consultant should always select whatever intervention will be most helpful at any given moment, given all one knows about the situation” (p. 245).

WHAT SPECIAL TERMS OF IMPORTANCE ARE USED IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT?

Organization development consultants use special terms. Every field of endeavor has its own nomenclature, and OD is no different. Although these terms can create barriers to understanding and may be potential sources of suspicion for those not versed in them, they are useful when consultants and customers communicate with one another.

Organization Change

Roland Sullivan invited the professional OD community, which often dialogues at www.odnetwork.org/listsinfo, to respond to a concern he heard often from Bob Tannenbaum. Bob felt that OD needed a fresh definition of “change.” He wished for a common definition that those who initiate change would find

useful in helping the larger world better understand who we are and what we do.

Matt Minahan summarized the dialogue:

“We put this question to our 1500+ members, and found, to no one’s real surprise, that there isn’t one definition to which many members subscribe.

“There were discussions of change for what reasons, with which values, at the service of whom, at what scale, whether it has to be proactive or could be reactive, whether it should be led or managed, and even whether our field should just use the existing definitions for simplicity and clarity.

“Integrating the best of everything that was offered, we could say that *organization change is the process of learning and behaving differently, in order to achieve new and better outcomes, by reordering the system structures that drive behavior.*

“Of course, ‘new’ and ‘better’ are loaded with implicit values, but a values basis for the definition seemed to be important to our members.

“Other variables that came up in the list discussion included the beliefs that we—and our client organizations—hold about the world and change and how we organize those beliefs; the fit between our capability/willingness to change and the challenge, danger, or opportunity that confronts us; the alignment between the organization and its environment and the likelihood of suboptimization at some point; the ability to deeply influence the organization, down to the pattern, or second loop level; the patterns of relationships resulting in and arising from different conversations.

“Finally, there was an interesting conversation about the difference between managing change as reacting to the environment, versus leading change as anticipating and influencing the environment.”

Organization change is a departure from the status quo. It implies movement toward a goal, an idealized state, or a vision of what should be and movement away from present conditions, beliefs, or attitudes.

Different degrees of change exist. In a classic discussion on that topic, Golembiewski (1990) distinguished among three levels of change:

- *Alpha change* implies constant progress, a shift from a pre-change state to a post-change state in which variables and measurement remain constant. It is sometimes associated with incremental change.
- *Beta change* implies variable progress, a shift from a pre-change state to a post-change state in which variables and measurement methods themselves change. For example, as members of an organization participate in a change effort, they become aware of emerging issues that were unknown to them at the outset. The members change their vision of what should be and thereby alter the course of the change effort itself.

- *Gamma change* implies, in addition to beta change, a radical shift from what was originally defined as a pre-change state and a post-change state. It is sometimes called transformational change, a radical alteration from the status quo, a quantum leap or paradigm shift. It involves a complete revolution in “how we do things” or “what results we strive to achieve.”

Anderson and Anderson (2001b) provide a more recent perspective on levels or types of change. They distinguish between:

- *Developmental change*: It “represents the *improvement* of an existing skill, method, performance standard, or condition that for some reason does not measure up to current or future needs.” (p. 34)
- *Transitional change*: “Rather than simply improve *what is*, transitional change *replaces what is with something entirely different.*” (p. 35)
- *Transformational change*: It is the “most complex type of change facing organizations today. Simply said, transformation is the radical shift from one state of being to another, so significant that it requires a shift of culture, behavior, and mindset to implement successfully and sustain over time.” (p. 39)

Change Agent

One of this chapter’s authors had a conversation with Bob Blake, a noted founder of OD, many years ago regarding the origin of the term change agent. If my memory serves me accurately, in the 1950s NTL founders were in Europe collaborating with the Tavistock Institute. Someone from Tavistock used the phrase “change agent” to describe a person who facilitates change through interventions in groups and organizations. The NTL group started using it on their return and now, as you well know, it has become a common phrase among change makers and leaders. So when you hear the phrase “change agent,” recognize that it is a key OD phrase that has become popularized over the years. It says what we do. We are agents who facilitate positive learning, change, and development.

So what is a change agent? Cummings and Worley (2005) define a change agent “as a person who attempts to alter some aspect of an organization or an environment. Change agents may come from inside an organization, in which case they are called *internal consultants*, or they may come from outside an organization, in which case they are called *external consultants*.”

It is interesting to note that recently Drucker takes the term change agent to a new level. As the classic definition above states, traditionally we have heard the phrase used to define a person. But management pundit Drucker challenges us now to see the organization as change agent. Writing in *Executive Excellence*,

Drucker (2004, p. 3) says, “We can already see the future taking shape. But I believe that the future will turn in unexpected ways. The greatest changes are still ahead of us. The society of 2030 will be very different from today’s society and bear little resemblance to that predicted by today’s futurists. The next society is close enough for action to be considered in five areas. [The fourth area is] change agents. To survive and succeed, organizations will have to become change agents. The most effective way to manage change successfully is to create it.”

Client

The *client* is the organization, group, or individuals whose interests the change agent primarily serves.

Although consultants often think of the client as the one who authorized the change effort and pays their bills, they are not always certain whose purposes are to be served. For this reason, a key question for any OD consultant to consider is “Who is the client?” (Varney, 1977). On occasion, the “client” may not be the one who originally sponsored or participated in the change effort.

Culture

One focal point of OD is making changes in an organization’s culture. Prior to the early 1980s, the issue of culture was restricted to anthropology and OD circles, but *culture* became a popular buzzword after the publication of *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life* by Deal and Kennedy (1982) and *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America’s Best-Run Companies* by Peters and Waterman (1982). Peters and Waterman provided numerous examples demonstrating the importance of culture in many of the best-known and best-run companies in the United States at that time. Generally, corporate culture means:

“*Basic assumptions and beliefs* that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic ‘taken-for-granted’ fashion an organization’s view of itself and its environment. These assumptions and beliefs are *learned* responses to a group’s problems. They come to be taken for granted because they solve those problems repeatedly and reliably.” (Schein, 1985, pp. 6–7)

Culture should not be confused with climate. *Culture* refers to the overall organization. *Climate* refers more specifically to how things are done in a local team, department, or site.

Intervention

In the nomenclature of OD, an *intervention* is a change effort or a change process. It implies an intentional entry into an ongoing system. Cummings and Worley (2005) define intervention as “any action on the part of a change agent. [An] intervention carries the implication that the action is planned, deliberate, and presumably functional.”

Many people suggest that an OD intervention requires valid information, free choice, and a high degree of ownership in the course of action by the client system. Argyris defined an intervention with the following classic statement: “To intervene is to enter into an ongoing system of relationships, to come between or among persons, groups or objects for the purpose of helping them. The intervener exists independently of the system” (1970, p. 15).

Sponsor

A *sponsor* is one who underwrites, legitimizes, and champions a change effort or OD intervention.

Stakeholder

A *stakeholder* is anyone who has a stake in an OD intervention. Stakeholders may be customers, suppliers, distributors, employees, and government regulators.

WHAT IS SYSTEMS THINKING, AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO OD PRACTITIONERS?

In the simplest sense, a *system* is a series of interdependent components (Burke, 1980). For example, organizations may be viewed as social systems because they depend on interactions among people (Katz & Kahn, 1978). In addition, any organization that gives and takes information from the environment is an *open system*. Organizations take in *inputs* (customer requirements, raw materials, capital, information, or people), appreciate value through the input of a *transformation process* (production or service-delivery methods), and release them into the environment as *outputs* (finished goods, services, information, or people) (see Figure 1.1). This transformation cycle must continue to add value in the process of producing desired results if an organization is to survive.

A *subsystem* is a part of a system. In one sense, subsystems of an organization (a system) may include work units, departments, or divisions. In another sense, subsystems may cut across an organization and encompass activities, processes, or structures. It is thus possible to focus on an organization’s maintenance, adaptive, or managerial subsystems (Katz & Kahn, 1978), among others.

“The interdependent nature of our world calls for all of us to collaborate with others within and outside of our organizations each and every day. ‘Going-it-alone’ is often an ineffective, even damaging, strategy, particularly in light of the tremendous complexity of the challenges we face. The success of our organizations—and our individual and collective well-being—depends more and more on our ability to work with others to create a common understanding of the systems from which both problems and solutions emerge.” (*Building Collaborations*, 2004)

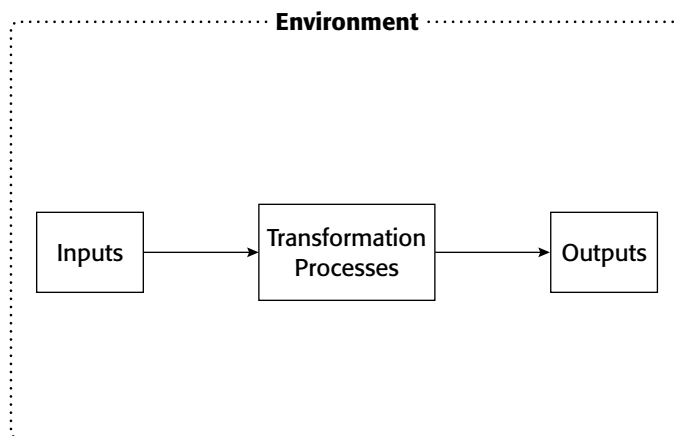


Figure 1.1. A Model of a System

Facilitating collaboration with our clients is a key competency for OD practitioners. The identity of a system shifts when it creates a new collective and common understanding. The shift creates a culture where many ideas for action will bubble up. Helping the system distill “B” (suboptimal) ideas from “A” (best) ideas is a role very much needed today.

Interdependence comes from a trusting, open, self-realizing process. It is the opposite of a culture that is hindered by fear, closed behavior, and imposition. Such created dependence on autocratic leaders. Today we need the collaborative spirit of an engaged system to meet customer requirements and create success both for the system and for their customers. So we may say that systems thinking and acting hurls an organization into higher levels of performance.

Systems thinking is also important to OD for the simple reason that any change in any part of a system changes other parts of a system. The implications of that simple statement are, in fact, profound. The change process needs to heed such dynamics. Any change in a system will have both predictable and unpredictable consequences. Mitigating the unpredictable consequences best occurs if all parts of the system are in collaboration all through the change effort.

Exhibit 1.2 contrasts system and non-system behaviors.

WHAT ARE THE PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF OD, AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

One way to view the history of organization development stresses its emergence from three separate but related behavioral-science applications: (1) laboratory training, (2) survey research and feedback, and (3) Tavistock Sociotechnical

Systems. While Chapter Three will provide a different, and more comprehensive, perspective on the origins of organization development, it is worthwhile here to offer a brief view of historical influences.

Laboratory Training

An early precursor of thinking about organizational change and development, laboratory training is associated with unstructured, small-group sessions in which participants share their experiences and learn from their interactions. Bradford, Gibb, and Benne (1964) explain this application in the following way:

“The term ‘laboratory’ was not idly chosen. A training laboratory is a community dedicated to the stimulation and support of experimental learning and change. New patterns of behavior are invented and tested in a climate supporting change and protected for the time from the full practical consequences of innovative action in ongoing associations.” (p. 3)

Unlike employee-training sessions, which focus on increasing individual knowledge or skill in conformance with the participant’s job requirements, laboratory-training sessions focus on group processes and group dynamics. The first laboratory-training sessions were carried out in the 1940s. In particular, the work of the New Britain Workshop in 1946, under the direction of such major social scientists as Kurt Lewin, Kenneth Benne, Leland Bradford, and Ronald Lippitt, stimulated much interest in laboratory training. The leaders and members of the workshop accidentally discovered that providing feedback to groups and to individuals at the *end of each day* produced more real learning about group dynamics than did lectures. The groundbreaking work of the New Britain Workshop led to the founding of the National Training Laboratories (NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science).

Early laboratory-training sessions were usually composed of participants from different organizations, a fact that led such groups to be called Stranger T-groups. (The term *T-group* is an abbreviation of “training group.”) Bradford, Gibb, and Benne (1964) define such a group in the following manner:

“A *T-Group* is a relatively unstructured group in which individuals participate as learners. The data for learning are not outside these individuals or removed from their immediate experience within the T-Group. The data are transactions among members, their own behavior in the group, as they struggle to create a productive and viable organization, a miniature society; and as they work to stimulate and support one another’s learning within that society.”

Behavioral scientists later discovered that the participants had difficulty transferring insights and behavioral changes to their work lives. This transfer-of-learning problem increased interest in conducting such sessions in a single organization, a technique that has evolved into what is now called *team building*.

Exhibit 1.2. Comparison of Systems and Non-Systems Behavior

System Behavior	Non-System Behavior
<p>1. Wholistic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is purposefully driven from the overall view • Is synergistic connection to all • Capable of exuding transformative existence • Emerges as a whole that is more than sum of the parts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is viewed as disconnected parts • Has an activity focus • Achieves suboptimal results • Exhibits little teamwork or harmony with parts outside itself • Isolated and cut off from rich exchanges
<p>2. Open Systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to the surrounding milieu • As diverse as the environment • Accepts and incorporates differences • Everyone has access to everyone and all information at any time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed system • Ignores ring beyond self • Repels influence of other ideologies • Only cliques and the inner circle are in the know
<p>3. Boundaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated and collaborative • Are continually clarified to bring order out of chaos • Performs so those beyond one's boundaries become more successful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned only with what is happening within its domain • Throw projects over the wall • Makes it difficult for others to work with
<p>4. Interactive Feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicits and gives continual feedback • Uses two-way feedback as an influence toward effectiveness of all • Truth is welcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little feedback and isolation • Is blind to what others need • Has a distorted view of self
<p>5. Multiple Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believes there are many ways to achieve the same outcomes • Innovation is a result of creativity and risk taking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either/or—my way or else • Non-creative • Has stopped thinking because the top dictates what is to be done and how it is to be done
<p>6. Equifinality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believes in exploring many alternatives to reach the end • Flexible and agile • Re-imagination with diverse minds and ideologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct cause and effect: Believes there is one best way for all to follow • Ignores resources from outside the system • Closed minded—will not listen

System Behavior**7. Less Entropy:**

- High-energy, propels an authentic commitment to execution
- Has the ability to self-renew its energy
- Order and self-regulation surface that lead to effectiveness

8. Hierarchy:

- Self-determining
- Leaders weave substantial webs of inclusion at all levels
- A return to self-realization and reliance—I am in charge here; I am accountable
- Hyperlinks and networks subvert the old hierarchy

9. Interrelated Parts:

- Relationships, involvement, and participation
- Seeks to understand complex interconnections
- Viable networks
- Strong partnerships
- Integrated action plans and application of resources

10. Dynamic Equilibrium:

- Stability and standardization in core processes with continual adjustments being made
- Is gleeful and happy about being a change agent organization
- Becomes more effective

11. Internal Elaboration:

- Details refined sophisticated operation and effectively works to more satisfy the whole

12. Unity and All-ness and Oneness:

- Uses all resources intelligently
- Transcends holism and reductionism
- Becomes wildly successful because is in touch with the new dynamic reality

Non-System Behavior

- Rigidity stifles energy
- Confusion and disjointedness occur
- Obsolescence and death begin to set in
- The systems choke them of their vitality so often they do not survive

- Legal dictation
- Bureaucracy causes ineffectiveness
- Command and control
- Fear-driven management
- Out of touch with reality

- Components/divisions
- Ignores synergies and partnerships
- Silos and separate parts

- Short-term, myopic view
- Ruts—same old-same old
- Resistance to change

- Complexity, confusion, and frustration
- Overall does not work to satisfy the whole

- Competes with differences and destroys what they might bring for survival and success

Laboratory training was an important forerunner of OD because it focused attention on the dynamics of group or team interaction. In addition, it provided a basis for team building, which is still an important OD intervention.

Survey Research and Feedback

Survey research and feedback also made an important contribution to the evolution of OD. This approach to change was developed and refined by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan under the direction of Rensis Likert. Likert, who directed the Survey Research Center from 1950 to 1970, became widely recognized for his innovative use of written survey questionnaires to collect information about an organization and its problems, provide feedback to survey respondents, and stimulate joint planning for improvement. This technique is called *survey research and feedback* or *survey-guided development*.

Likert's method began evolving when he observed that many organizations seldom used the results from attitude surveys to guide their change efforts. Managers authorized the surveys but did not always act on the results. This “ask-but-don't-act” approach produced greater frustration among employees than not asking for their opinions in the first place.

The centerpiece of Likert's approach was a technique called the *interlocking conference*. Survey results were given to top managers during the first conference, and then other conferences were held to inform the organization's successively lower levels. In each conference, group members worked together to establish an action plan to address problems or weaknesses revealed by the survey. This top-down strategy of feedback and performance planning ensured that the action plan devised by each group was tied to those at higher levels.

A philosophy about organizational systems governed much of Likert's work. He believed that any system—that is, an organization or a component part of an organization—can be categorized into one of four types based on eight key characteristics. The four organizational types are shown in Exhibit 1.3.

Likert believed that System 4 was the “ideal” organization. In Likert's System 4 organization, leadership is based on influence, not authority or power. Employees are motivated through the intrinsic rewards stemming from the work itself. Communication is balanced, with a great deal of two-way interaction between managers and employees. Likert (1961) justified System 4 as a norm or ideal because he found that “supervisors with the best records of performance focus their primary attention on the human aspects of their subordinates' problems and on endeavoring to build effective work groups with high performance goals” (p. 7).

 Exhibit 1.3. Characteristics of Likert's Four Types of Organizations

System 1*Exploitive-Authoritarian*

- Dogmatic leadership
- Manipulative use of rewards
- Top-down communication

System 2*Benevolent-Authoritative*

- Parental approach to management

System 3*Consultative*

- Management listens to employees, but reserves the right to make decisions
- Some reliance on intrinsic rewards; most rewards are based on extrinsic (money) rewards

System 4*Participative*

- Leadership based on influence
- Intrinsic rewards predominate
- Two-way communication

Likert's views, described in his two major books, *New Patterns of Management* (1961) and *The Human Organization* (1967), have had a profound influence on OD. He demonstrated how information can be collected from members of an organization and used as the basis for participative problem solving and action planning. In addition, he advocated pursuit of a norm for organizational functioning (System 4) that has since prompted others to pursue similar norms for organizations. In some respects, Likert's views about the System 4 organization are important precursors to modern-day interest in self-directed work teams and high-performance work environments.

Tavistock Sociotechnical Systems

Another major contributor to the evolution of OD is Tavistock Sociotechnical Systems. Tavistock, founded in 1920, is a clinic in England. Its earliest work was devoted to family therapy in which both child and parents received simultaneous treatment.

An important experiment in work redesign was conducted for coal miners by a team of Tavistock researchers at about the same time that laboratory training was introduced in the United States. Before the experiment, coal miners worked closely in teams of six. They maintained control over who was placed on a team and were rewarded for team, not individual, production. New technology was introduced to the mine, changing work methods from a team to an individual orientation. The result was a decrease in productivity and an increase in absenteeism. The Tavistock researchers recommended that the new technology could

be used by miners grouped into teams. The researchers' advice, when implemented, improved productivity and restored absenteeism rates to historically low levels in the organization.

Tavistock Sociotechnical Systems' key contribution to OD was an emphasis on both the social and the technical subsystems. Tavistock researchers believed that organizations are systems and are composed of key subsystems. One such subsystem is the people in an organization. The other is the non-human subsystem. Both must be taken into account if a change is to be successful.

Process Consultation

A more recent influence on our field has been Schein's process consultation. *Process consultation* can be defined as the creation of a relationship that permits both the consultant and the client to perceive, understand, and act on the process events that occur in the client's internal and external environment in order to improve the situation as defined by the client.

In *Process Consultation Revisited*, Schein writes:

"In reflecting on process consultation and the building of a 'helping relationship,' the question arises: where is the emphasis or the essence that makes this philosophy of helping 'different'? In my reflections on some forty years of practicing 'this stuff,' I have concluded that the essence is in the word *relationship*. To put it bluntly, I have come to believe that the *decisive factor as to whether or not help will occur in human situations involving personality, group dynamics, and culture is the relationship between the helper and the person, group, or organization that needs help*. From that point of view, every action I take, from the beginning contact with a client, should be an intervention that simultaneously allows both the client and me to diagnose what is going on and that builds a relationship between us. When all is said and done, I measure success in every contact by whether or not I feel the relationship has been helpful and whether or not the client feels helped.

"Furthermore, from that point of view, the principles, guidelines, practical tips, call them what you like, fall out as the kinds of things I have to constantly remind myself of in my efforts to build that kind of helping relationship. Let us review the principles from that point of view.

1. Always try to be helpful.
2. Always stay in touch with current reality.
3. Access your ignorance.
4. Everything you do is an intervention.
5. It is the client who owns the problem and the solution.
6. Go with the flow.
7. Timing is crucial.
8. Be constructively opportunistic with confrontive interventions.

9. Everything is a source of data; errors are inevitable—learn from them.
10. When in doubt share the problem.

“These principles do not tell me what to do. Rather, they are reminders of how to think about the situation I am in. They offer guidelines when the situation is a bit ambiguous.” (1999, pp. 243–245)

So there you have it! Remember always that OD is more than just applying techniques, tools, and methods. Good OD is built on building effective relationships that are trusting, open, self-discovering, and interdependent. We best serve by staying in the here and now and innovating responses and interactions that facilitate movement to a client-desired state that helps the clients discover with us action that will bring them success and unprecedented results. It is about adding measurable value to any encounter. Personally, we receive so much pleasure in being human interaction agents and artists. This is a world of work that is most personal, challenging, and meaningful.

HOW IS OD RELATED TO OTHER HR FIELDS?

Organization development may be regarded as part of a larger human resource (HR) field that is unified in its focus on people—and primarily people in organizational settings. However, OD’s central focus differs from that of other HR fields. It is worth considering the relationship between OD and these other fields because OD activities are affected by—and, in turn, affect—other HR activities.

Leonard Nadler (1980, 1989) is one prominent authority who made an early attempt to explain these relationships. He distinguished between human resource development (HRD), human resource management (HRM), and human resource environment (HRE) activities. Taken together, they encompass all HR fields.

Human Resource Development

Human resource development, according to Nadler (1989), consists of training, education, and development. It is defined as “organized learning experiences provided by employers within a specified period of time to bring about the possibility of performance improvement and/or personal growth” (p. 6). *Training* is a short-term change effort intended to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need to perform their jobs better. *Education* is an intermediate-term change effort intended to prepare individuals for promotions (vertical career progression) or for enhanced technical abilities in their current jobs (horizontal career progression). *Development* is a long-term change effort intended to broaden individuals through experience and to give them new insights about themselves and their organizations. All HRD efforts share a common goal of bringing about “the possibility of performance improvement and/or personal growth” (p. 6).

Human Resource Management

Nadler believes that HRM includes all activities traditionally linked with the personnel function except training. *Human resource management* (HRM) is thus associated with recruitment, selection, placement, compensation, benefits, appraisal, and HR information systems. According to Nadler, all HRM efforts share one common goal: to increase organizational productivity by using the talents of its current employees.

Human Resource Environment

Human resource environment includes OD and job- or work-redesign efforts. According to Nadler, HRE activities focus on changing working conditions and interpersonal relationships when they interfere with performance or impede employee creativity. Unlike other HR fields, HRE activities share one goal: to improve the work environment through planned, long-term, and group-oriented change in organizational structures or interpersonal relations.

More Recent Thinking About HR, OD, Training, and HRD

The HR, OD, training, and HRD fields have not remained static. Thinking about all these fields has been changing in recent years. A major change has been a movement away from activities or techniques and toward a greater focus on results and on demonstrated, measurable achievements. The HR and OD fields are converging—a topic treated at greater length in a later chapter of this book. The training field has been changing with increased recognition of the importance of obtaining results rather than just training people, an activity. While systematically designed training has remained important, even at a time when e-learning methods have come into vogue and then faded in the face of the growing importance of blended learning (see Rothwell & Kazanas, 2004), greater focus has turned to what learners must do to take responsibility for their own learning process (Rothwell, 2002). *Human resource development* (HRD), now an outdated term that reflects outdated thinking, has evolved into a new generation called *workplace learning and performance* (WLP) that is defined as “the integrated use of learning and other interventions for the purpose of improving individual and organizational performance. It uses a systematic process of analyzing performance and responding to individual, group, and organizational needs. WLP creates positive, progressive change within organizations by balancing human, ethical, technological, and operational considerations” (Rothwell, Sanders, & Soper, 1999, p. 121). Unlike HRD, which was operationally defined in terms of such activities as training, OD, and career development (McLagan, 1989), WLP focuses on results, performance, outputs, and productivity through learning. It is thus goal-oriented (Rothwell & Sredl, 2000).

SUMMARY

In this chapter we addressed many important questions. The questions and brief answers to them supplied in the chapter, follow:

Question: What do you believe about change? *Answer:* Clarify your own beliefs about people, change, organizations, and other issues relevant to organization change and development.

Question: Why should you care about organization development (OD)? *Answer:* People should care about organization development because it is rapidly emerging as a key business topic—if not *the* key business topic.

Question: What is change management (CM), and what is organization development (OD)? *Answer:* *Change management* implies “a purposeful effort to bring about change. *Organization development* is a system-wide application of behavioral science knowledge to the planned development, improvement, and reinforcement of the strategies, structures, and processes that lead to organization effectiveness” (Cummings & Worley, 2001, p. 1). A key difference between OD and other change management strategies may be OD’s important focus on values and ethics, both key issues to business in the wake of a continuing spate of ethical scandals affecting previously respected organizations.

Question: What special terms of importance are used in organization change and development? *Answer:* Key terms include *change*; *change agent*; *client*; *culture*; *intervention*; *sponsor*; and *stakeholder*.

Question: What is systems thinking, and why is it important to OD practitioners? *Answer:* Systems thinking is important to OD for the simple reason that any change in any part of a system changes other parts of a system.

Question: What are the philosophical foundations of OD, and why are they important? *Answer:* One way to view the history of OD stresses its emergence from three separate but related behavioral-science applications: (1) laboratory training, (2) survey research and feedback, and (3) Tavistock Sociotechnical Systems, (4) process consultation.

Question: How is OD related to other HR fields? *Answer:* A simple way to distinguish OD from WLP is to think in terms of *what is to be changed* and *how it is to be changed*. OD focuses on changing an organization and the modes of behavior demonstrated in the corporate culture. WLP focuses on getting results in organizational settings, using any and all methods appropriate to do that—but with a heavy emphasis on learning-oriented efforts for individuals and groups.

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Models for Change

William J. Rothwell and Roland L. Sullivan

A model for change is a simplified representation of the general steps in initiating and carrying out a change process. It is rooted in solid research and theory. Managers and consultants, when demonstrating the competencies of an OD practitioner, are well-advised to rely on a model for change as a compass to show them the direction in which to lead the change effort and change process. But, as Stewart and Kringas (2003, p. 675) note, “The change-management literature contains a bewildering variety of understandings of, and approaches to, change.” Collins’s (1998) work usefully contrasts two basic types of models. The first, which might loosely be called the rational model, emphasizes the importance of planning, problem solving, and execution. The second approach, more sociological in orientation, explores *changing* rather than *change* and emphasizes the uniqueness and contextual richness of each situation.

In this chapter we review numerous models for changing rather than change—essentially, the change process. Finally, in the last section of the chapter, we point readers to other change models found in the literature and distill some key issues associated with change.

AN OVERVIEW OF KEY MODELS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

The change models that we share rely primarily on a normative, re-educative and innovative approach to behavioral change. They are (1) the critical research model; (2) the traditional action research model; (3) appreciative inquiry; and (4) our evolving view of the action research model.

While mainstream OD consultants have long relied on action research as the change model underpinning their efforts, recent research and practice underscore the need to modify the model and provides guidance for doing so (Burke, 2002). At the same time, much work has focused on analyzing common characteristics of successful change efforts so as to derive a change model from them.

THE CRITICAL RESEARCH MODEL

Critical research (CR) stems ultimately from Marxist practices. The key idea underlying CR is similar to a dialectic approach to change in which opposing positions are used to power change. Critical research assumes that every organization or group has an *ideology*, a more or less consistent rationale about how decisions should be made, how resources should be used, how people should be managed, and how the organization should respond to the environment in which it functions. In a classic definition Katz and Kahn (1978) describe ideology as “generated to provide justification for the organization’s existence and functions” (p. 101). In one sense, an ideology is a step above culture, and “culture is the manifestation of ideology, giving ‘life’ to ideology” (Lang, 1992, p. 191).

A natural tension develops between what people believe should be happening and what they believe is actually happening. The basic thrust of CR is to identify this discrepancy and use it to power change. Because individual perceptions differ within groups, CR builds an impetus for change by dramatizing these differences between the organization’s ideology about what should be and actual situations contradicting its ideology that thereby underscore the need for change. Critical research heightens the tension by pointing out inconsistency.

Although critical research has not been widely used in mainstream OD, interventions such as Beckhard’s (1997) confrontation meetings can lend themselves to it. (A confrontation meeting brings together two conflicting groups to discuss their differences and to arrive at ways of working together more effectively.) Critical research views conflict between ideology and actual practices as constructive, leading to self-examination and eventually to change. The steps in applying critical research (CR) to a change effort are listed in Exhibit 2.1.

Perhaps a simple example will underscore how the model works. Suppose the leaders of an organization have long underscored their commitment to

Exhibit 2.1. The Critical Research Model

1. Describe the ideology. (How do people believe the organization or group should be functioning?)
2. Identify situations, events, or conditions that conflict with the ideology. (What is actually happening?)
3. Identify individuals or groups desiring progressive change. (Who wants to challenge the ideology and/or actual situations to create an impetus for progressive change?)
4. Confront proponents of the ideology with conflicting situations, events, or conditions.
5. Devise a new ideology or action steps to correct inconsistency.
6. Help the client establish a timetable for change.
7. Implement the change.
8. Ask the client to monitor the change, identifying opportunities for continuous improvement as necessary.

strong customer service. In annual reports, executive speeches, and company advertising, the company's leaders pledge that they are willing to do anything to satisfy a customer. The ideology of the company is thus centered on customer service as the most important single commitment of the organization.

But then suppose that employees in the company's call center are well aware that the company is not honoring warranties on a defective product. They have been told to "find others ways to satisfy customers than by honoring the warranties."

In this simplistic example, the difference between the company's ideology (a strong commitment to customer service) and actual practices (refusal to honor warranties) provides the basis for an obvious, and troubling, difference between "what the organization's leaders say they want" and "what the organization's leaders actually do." That difference, if used to best effect, can provide an impetus for change.

Critical research has captured a large following among educators, and particularly adult educators, in recent years. It lends itself well to considering the political issues involved in change and relies on the differences of opinions among groups of people as a way of leveraging change.

THE TRADITIONAL ACTION RESEARCH MODEL

Action research has long been the foundation for many change efforts. It is properly regarded as a philosophy, a model, and a process. Like any change model, action research is a simplified representation of the complex activities that

should occur in a change effort if it is to be participative, engaging, and empowering for those affected by it. The model serves as a compass to consultants facilitating change. While it does not tell consultants, managers, or workers exactly what to do in paint-by-the-numbers fashion, it does provide a process whereby the consultant and client can jointly inquire and decide what change is required. It helps consultants track where they are and where they are going. While the action research model has been depicted in different ways, the depictions of it share common characteristics. Figure 2.1 illustrates a general model of action research.

Action research may also be understood as a process, a continuing series of events and actions. In a classic description, French and Bell (1990, p. 99) defined this interpretation of action research in this way:

“[It is] the process of systematically collecting research data about an ongoing system relative to some objective, goal, or need of that system; feeding these data back into the system; taking actions by altering selected variables within the system based both on the data and on hypotheses; and evaluating the results of actions by collecting more data.”

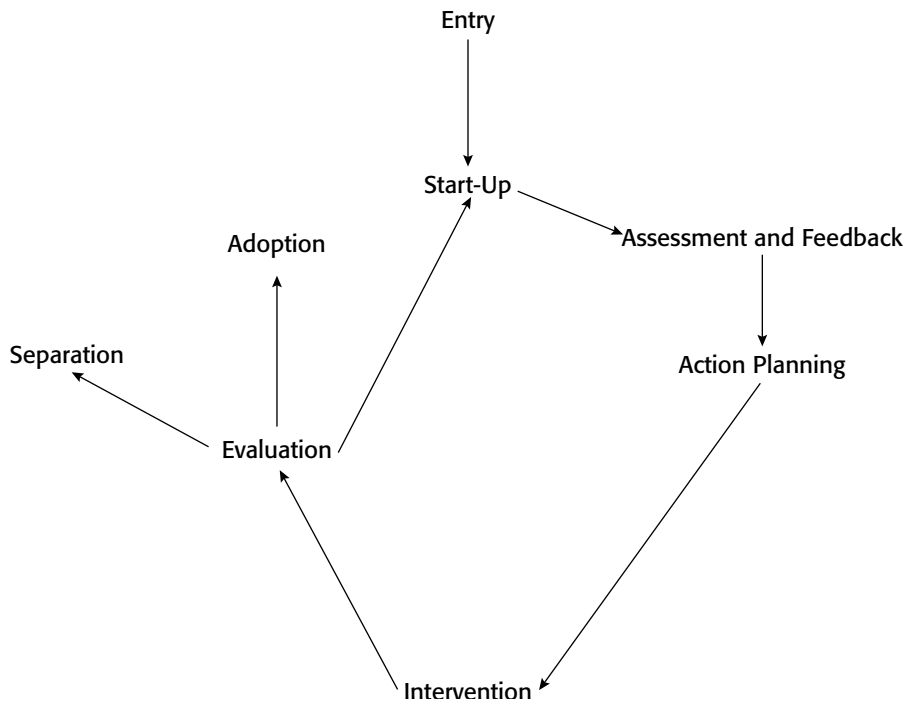


Figure 2.1. The Traditional Action Research Model

From G. McLean & R. Sullivan (1989). *Essential Competencies of Internal and External OD Consultants* (p. 14). Unpublished manuscript. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

As a process, action research is thus a cycle in which research is followed by change activities, the results of which are fed into further research. In that respect, action research (as used in OD) is sometimes confused with the related notion of action research (as used in education), where experience with classroom-based activities becomes the foundation for continuous improvement in delivering education.

One way to think about the traditional action research model depicts it as eight steps in any change effort. This traditional depiction is based on the steps originally presented in Burke (1982) and in *Essential Competencies of Internal and External OD Consultants* (McLean & Sullivan, 1989). The steps are as follows:

<i>Step</i>	<i>Brief Description</i>
1. Entry	The need for change in an organization becomes apparent. A dream is articulated. Someone or a group of people in the organization look for help in facilitating change toward the realization of the dream.
2. Start-Up	The change agent (consultant) enters the picture, working to discover what might be done, contracts with the client and gains commitment to proceed.
3. Assessment and Feedback	Information is gathered and validated about a desired positive future and gives decision makers and those having a stake in the change process feedback that can be used to design change action.
4. Action Planning	The change agent collaborates with decision makers and stakeholders to muster all their creativity to agree on a preferred future state along with innovative first steps.
5. Intervention	The action plan is implemented, monitored, and continually adjusted and embellished as the situation warrants.
6. Evaluation	The change agent helps decision makers and stakeholders assess the change effort's progress and organizational learnings to illuminate next steps as the previous phases are repeated.
7. Adoption	Members of the organization maintain the new state as resulting changes are integrated into daily worklife.

8. Separation

The change agent prepares for closure and departure. She or he works to disengage while ensuring that improvement or transformation will continue after his or her departure. This step is possible because the knowledge and skills of the change agent have been transferred to the organization.

Although the length and depth of each step may vary across change efforts, the steps are usually present in one form or another. In long-term change efforts—as many are—each step in the model may actually turn into the whole model in miniature. For example, when it is time for action planning, the consultant may use all or some of the generic phases. In other words, that step alone may call for a start-up phase, followed by assessment, action planning, and an evaluation component once or several times during the action planning process.

It is worth providing a brief overview of the steps in the traditional action research model. One reason is that the model is still occasionally used to guide change efforts. But a second and more important reason is that an understanding of this model is important as a building block for learning about more recent models to guide change efforts.

Entry

During the first phase of an intervention (change effort), a consultant identifies and specifies boundaries around an organization or part of a system that needs help and desires change. Entry can be viewed appropriately as a scouting, marketing, and selling stage. An internal consultant may be approached for help by an operating manager to achieve specific results. Ideally, internal consultants are helping to facilitate key business meetings and offsite planning retreats and provide suggestions on how OD can further facilitate the desired performance.

On the other hand, an external consultant may be so successful with one or more past clients that he or she is referred to other organizations that need help. An external consultant may also scan the business environment to identify organizations that he or she might be excited about helping. Systems on the brink of demise or beginning to experience a burst of rapid growth are especially choice candidates for new work.

Crisis is often the single best indicator of readiness for change (Beer, 1980). Examples of such crises include dramatic and widespread industry deregulation, the introduction of new competitors in an otherwise stable industry, the introduction of new technology in work methods, the appointment of a new CEO, a mismatch between corporate strategy and results, downsizing, a merger, an acquisition, and a takeover. An external consultant may directly approach

the leader of an organization undergoing such a change to describe the help that he or she can offer.

Once the organization or organizational component is identified, the consultant should first investigate its background. Studying the organization's website is often a great place to start. Some typical questions to consider may include these:

- What is the organization's size?
- What is the organization's general reputation in the industry?
- What is the organization's business?
- What are its product lines?
- Who are the key decision makers? What biographical information about them is available? What are their values?
- What visions exist for the organization? What are the organization's shared beliefs?
- What is reported in industry publications about the organization's history? missions and goals? strategies in the marketplace or industry? structure?
- How well has the organization been doing? Is it financially sound?

Once background research has been completed, the consultant contacts the key decision makers to listen to what is needed and determines whether his or her competencies match the need. (Alternatively, the client may contact the consultant.) In this process the consultant might do well to co-tailor with the client a definition of what OD is for the situation, why a change strategy is worth considering, and what results have been achieved by OD in similar organizations. The consultant should also state his or her qualifications.

We believe that one does not need to have experience working in a similar organization to be effective as an OD consultant. For a physician, the bodies of a butcher, baker, or candlestick maker all have the same components. For an OD consultant, any organization is a system. They share in common many key issues: all of them have an external environment, a mission/strategy/vision, ideology, values, leadership, culture, structure, work systems, customers, and so forth. Sometimes the less the consultant knows about an industry the better. She or he can freely facilitate the crafting of a change strategy that is uniquely suited to the needs of the leaders and people in the organization. Facilitation is more effective because the consultant is not competing with organization members to have their ideas accepted. Good facilitative interventions require neutrality, objectivity, and marginality from the agent of change. When the consultant does not possess experience with a given industry, his or her personal experiences, background, favorite solutions, or typical recommendations do not get in the way of helping the clients find their way.

Start-Up

In the second phase of the intervention, the consultant enters the group, organization, or network and, with the client system, lays the groundwork for the change effort by determining, in broad terms, what change is desired by the stakeholders, when it is desired, who desires it, who opposes it, what reasons account for the desired change, and what reasons exist for opposing the change. The consultant should form a psychological contract with the client during this phase, forging cooperation and collaboration.

During start-up, the consultant becomes familiar with the organization's culture through discussions with key decision makers and others in the organization. The consultant steps himself or herself in the organization by observing rituals and listening to stories of what has worked best. The consultant might hear about what happened during past change efforts. Identifying the informal and formal power people is useful. Getting a sense of what challenges are confronting the industry or the organization is helpful. So is observing how people in the organization interact with and relate to one another. Find out what is compelling for them. Find out what the positive pull is. The consultant must remain as objective as possible during this process, much like an anthropologist entering a foreign culture (see the classic description of that in Geertz, 1973), collecting information but taking care to verify through other sources any major challenges that are identified in the process.

Of course, the consultant also exerts some influence on the organization, a process called *personalization* (Wanous, 1980). By serving as leaders and as catalysts favoring change, consultants have an opportunity to influence the organizational culture through their own values, beliefs, and attitudes. Consultants should be straightforward about their personal motivations, expectations, capabilities, and limitations so that these are not mistaken as a reflection of viewpoints advocated by top managers or others in the organization. The consultant's real aim is to encourage those in the client organization to reflect on their own motivations and give voice to them. The client's desire for change, clarified through careful reflection about the reasons for it, is critical to a change effort.

In the second phase, the consultant also works with the client to prepare a tentative, flexible blueprint for guiding the change effort. The plan may specify the purpose for the change, the objectives to be achieved, and the measures for determining movement toward desired goals. It also includes identifiable steps and/or activities in the change effort, times for implementing change, desired results, and resources needed for implementing the change effort (including a detailed budget when necessary). The plan is prepared with the direct participation or representative participation of all affected people and groups so that they share ownership in it. The process of developing the plan can be a first key step in creating an impetus for the change and support in making it. This

process makes the vision of “what should be” in terms of the process for change tangible, realistic, clear, and achievable.

We believe that the consultant must always team up with an internal change agent. The internal person embodies the learning that occurs and can do much to sustain and repeat the change cycle over time.

Our competency research over the past thirty years has taught us—the authors of this chapter—that an excellent interpersonal relationship between the consultant and members of the client system is critically important. A must read for any person serious about being competent in change consulting is *Flawless Consulting: A Guide to Getting Your Expertise Used*, written by Peter Block (2000). As Block writes, “Consulting is primarily a relationship business. No matter how research-based or technical the project, it will always reach a point at which the success of the work will hinge on the quality of the relationship we have with our client. This relationship is the conduit through which our expertise passes” (2000, p. 374).

We believe that the key competency at the start-up phase is laying the foundation for an excellent relationship with the client. It must be a relationship that will develop as the change venture evolves. Frankly stated, clients must authentically like the OD consultant as a person.

Assessment and Feedback

The third phase is assessment and feedback, perhaps best understood as a process of collecting information about an existing or desired destiny and helping members of the client organization achieve clarity on what is possible. If any phase is crucial, it is this one. If assessment is handled improperly, if it is not performed, or if feedback is inadequate, then the resulting change effort will be a waste of time and organizational resources.

One difference between OD and the change management discipline is that OD places more emphasis on this phase. The change management world is more apt to install an intervention based more on what the consultants are comfortable with than what might be custom tailored and invented jointly with members of the client system.

During assessment, the consultant determines what domains of the organization are to be examined, uses appropriate processes to collect stories and ideas about what is possible, and architects with the client system ways to mirror or feed back the chosen theme to move forward.

Feedback is crucial at this point. The consultant must give feedback that is pertinent, appropriate, energetic, impactful, clear, understandable, valid, specific, descriptive, and owned by the client (Nadler, 1977). However it is offered, feedback should include participation from those involved in the change endeavor and should reflect sensitivity and compassion. Indeed, feedback that is given appropriately encourages healthy preparation for change and involves

those who provided input. Feedback serves two key purposes: It validates the accuracy of assessment, and it builds ownership in the data that have come from employees.

Action Planning

The fourth phase is action planning. This is the process of finalizing an action plan. During this step the consultant works with the client to brainstorm options. Action planning should be highly participative; it often requires interaction with people at many different organizational levels. The use of large interactive groups is especially valuable at this phase.

To carry out this step successfully, the consultant should:

- Set a tone for innovation and creative thinking. Brainstorm a multitude of possibilities.
- Help participants judge possible solutions critically, thinking beyond short-term solutions to long-term consequences.
- Help participants rehearse the change effort in advance to foresee possible roadblocks that may arise and ways to sidestep them or deal with them before they derail the change effort.
- Check and double-check the client's commitment to the action being created.
- Confirm who is going to do what and by when. Determine measures for each action as well as resources required to accomplish what is to be executed.
- Facilitate a conversation that will allow for free choice to prevail and for diverse ideas to surface. All points of view need to be heard.

The consultant should also work with the client to finalize the plan for change that was tentatively established in the third phase. In this process, he or she ensures that the plan is concrete, cost-effective, measurable, simple, and sequenced in logical order.

Intervention

The fifth phase of a change effort is the intervention itself. Intervention involves implementing the action plan. It is during this step that the desired change is effected.

Special terms are used during the intervention phase: Visions and change goals to be realized and then actualized are called *desired outcomes*; the individual or groups involved in the change are called the *focus of attention*; and the way the intervention is carried out is called the *engagement intervention*.

Interventions may address desired results having to do with organization or team performance, goals and plans, communication, culture or climate, leadership and authority, decision making, conflict or cooperation, role definition, or other matters. The focus of attention may be an individual, a role, a pair or a trio, a team or a group, an intergroup situation, or the entire organization. Modes of intervention include training or education, process consultation or coaching, confrontation, data feedback, problem solving, plan making, establishing an OD task force, or technostructural activity. There are thus many kinds of interventions, each suited for dealing with a specific problem.

Rather than list and categorize interventions, we choose to list the top interventions researched by Fred Massarik and Marissa Pei-Carpenter (2002). The most commonly used interventions include coaching, culture change, team building, process consultation, strategic planning, large system change, feedback, communication interventions, learning organization, leadership training, organization diagnosis, conflict management, organization design, transition or change management, and visioning.

During the intervention step, the consultant sets out to make sure that there are a few early, highly visible successes in the intervention to increase support for the change effort. Quick and highly visible successes will also help win over skeptics and build infectious enthusiasm among supporters.

Timing is particularly crucial in any intervention. The consultant should carefully examine work cycles in advance, planning an intervention to begin at a time when the work cycle is not at a peak. A peak work cycle will draw attention away from the change effort, thereby reducing the initial momentum and leading to possible failure (Mirvis & Berg, 1977).

Evaluation

The sixth phase in an intervention is evaluation. This step can actually occur before a large-scale change effort (that is, evaluation of a small-scale pilot effort), during a change effort (that is, concurrent to it), or after the change effort. It is an issue of growing importance, since stakeholders increasingly want to know what benefits they received from a change effort after they invested time, money, and effort in it.

It is important that evaluation and measurement of the change effort be practical and useful. It should be conducted by the people doing the work. It must not get in the way of change making. Imposing system-wide measurement may have an adverse impact. One of our favorite ways to evaluate is simply to have frequent and truthful conversations about how we are doing in achieving the measurements that were established in the action planning. One of the authors just completed a quick total transformation for an IT division of eight hundred people. When the client was asked a few months later how it was going, he replied, "The CEO is ecstatic with the positive change that has occurred. What

more measurement do I need? As long as he is happy, our change effort has been successful.” Another striking comment is this. Kathleen Dannemiller (2003, personal communication) told us once that if you need to evaluate, you have just failed. We understand why she would say that. In her “Whole-Scale Change Summits,” waves of standing ovations and a room bursting with excitement and energy indicates success. Magic, as she would say, happens. It is clear to all that the organization will never again be the same. People will just simply be more real, authentic, united, and focused because of what happened in the large group intervention. In our experience, even months after the summit, most people will say the performance of the system increased as a result of the team building with hundreds.

One reason that measurement in OD has perplexed OD consultants is that they fear that enthusiastic reports heralding success will only build unrealistic expectations for future interventions and, thus, potentially jeopardize the success of those interventions that hinge as much on client action as on consultant action. Yet, ironically, evidence published some years ago suggests that success rates for OD interventions exceed 50 percent (Golembiewski, 1990).

Among the common questions posed in evaluating a change effort are these:

- What changes occurred?
- How successfully was the action plan implemented?
- What dollars were saved or earned as a result of the change effort?
- Was there a match between estimated and actual consulting time and expense?
- How well did the change effort contribute to realizing the expectations of the leaders who prompted the initiation of change work?

Adoption

Adoption is the seventh phase of an intervention, defined as the process of stabilizing change and integrating it into the daily life of the system targeted for change. During adoption, the consultant collaborates with the client to jointly establish a continuous improvement effort within an organization, secures commitment from top managers and others to continue the change effort, and gives special attention to areas in which slippage is likely to occur. (*Slippage* refers to change reversals, movements back to pre-change states.) This phase is the true test of any change effort because change must be transplanted and institutionalized into the organization’s culture, traditions, and rites if the change effort is to endure. Deep change requires persistence, patience, and an extended time period.

The consultant uses several strategies to increase the likelihood of success in this phase:

- One strategy is centered in the people of the organization: The consultant with the participants secures pledges from top managers and other stakeholders to continue the change effort after the consultant leaves.
- A second strategy is centered in the structure of the organization: Top managers charge specific people with an explicit mandate to ensure continuation of the change effort. Some people are delegated responsibilities associated with maintaining the effort and they are thereafter held accountable for its success.
- A third strategy is to redesign methods of measuring results and allocating rewards. Those who achieve results consistent with the direction of the change effort are rewarded.
- A fourth strategy is to reexamine the organization for slippage and take appropriate action to rectify the situation. Slippage is common and should be watched for carefully, both during and after the change effort.

Of course, all four strategies may be used together. Also note that the best strategies for adoption will be those that the people in the organization come up with on their own.

Separation

The eighth phase of an intervention, separation, is associated with the departure of the consultant from the setting. Just prior to this step, the consultant recognizes that separation is desirable. After all, there is a point at which continued assistance in facilitating change can actually be counterproductive because it leads to client dependence.

During separation, the consultant provides feedback to the client on the change process by summarizing progress to date. Responsibility for continuing progress is transferred to the client, often most effectively through a “going-away ritual” such as a meeting or luncheon. Emotional issues for both consultant and client may well be attended to. Sometimes it takes the form of having a celebration. Finally, the consultant clarifies both appropriate and inappropriate conditions under which he or she may be called back by the client for additional support.

We have just alluded briefly to the key knowledge that seasoned practitioners have learned about action research. We hope it sets the stage for reading the rest of the book where authors more expert than we delve deeper into the heart of the matter.

AN EMERGING CHANGE PHILOSOPHY OR APPROACH: APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Appreciative inquiry (AI) is the most exciting development in thinking about change in recent years. In one of the last conversations with the authors, Dick Beckhard, the person who coined the phrase “managing change” in the 1950s, told the authors of this chapter that he believed that AI held within it the most promising future for OD. Like the action research model, appreciative inquiry is a way of being, a model, conceptual framework, and a process to guide change. Originally conceptualized by Case Western Reserve professor David Cooperrider (see Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), it has captured much attention in recent years (see, for instance, Cooperrider, 1990; Cooperrider, 1995; Cooperrider, Barrett, & Srivastva, 1995; Cooperrider & Passmore, 1991; Cooperrider, Sorensen, Whitney, & Yaeger, 1999; Watkins & Mohr, 2001). If the action research model can be regarded as comparable to the chip inside the computer that drives change efforts, then the appreciative inquiry model can be regarded as a different—but complementary—chip.

Defining Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative inquiry is a philosophy that “invites us to choose consciously to seek out and inquire into that which is generative and life-enriching, both in our own lives and in the lives of others, and to explore our hopes and dreams for the future” (Watkins & Mohr, 2001, p. 58). Instead of starting out to solve problems—a typical focus of traditionally trained managers, steeped in a philosophy of management by exception—AI focuses on what is going right, what is motivating, what is energizing, and what are the key strengths of a setting. Instead of asking the question “What is going wrong and how do we solve that problem?” AI begins by asking, “What is going right and how do we leverage that strength to achieve quantum leaps in productivity improvement?”

Key Principles of AI

Since AI is a philosophy and not so much a “technique,” it is not appropriately applied in a paint-by-the-numbers fashion. (Nor are other OD efforts, for that matter.) But AI is guided by five key principles (Watkins & Mohr, 2001, p. 39):

- “Choose the positive as the focus of inquiry.”
- “Inquire into stories of life-giving forces.”
- “Locate themes that appear in the stories and select topics for further inquiry.”
- “Create shared images for a preferred future.”
- “Find innovative ways to create that future.”

Applying AI thus requires a paradigm shift from focusing on what is going wrong to what is going right and then trying to leverage what is going right into new, higher-level visions of a positive future.

Phases in the AI Model

Numerous models of AI have been described. (See Watkins & Mohr, 2001, for an overview of them.) However, one way to think about AI is to regard it as a change model with four key phases. Those phases are (Watkins & Mohr, 2001, p. 46):

- *Initiate*: Begin the change effort.
- *Inquire*: Solicit opinions and perceptions about what is going right.
- *Imagine*: Summarize and feed back key themes and then create new ideas about new visions of the future that could leverage strengths.
- *Innovate*: Involve many people in discussions about ways to leverage strengths and realize key visions.

The model is depicted in Figure 2.2.

THE EVOLVING VIEW OF THE ACTION RESEARCH MODEL

Burke's Change Model for Leaders of Change

Burke (2002) has recently reviewed the change process. In doing so, he has posited what might be regarded as the seeds for evolving the action research model. What is exciting about this new view is that it gets away from the traditional action research model, which implicitly describes any change process as functioning as a long, drawn out, and somewhat simplistic process.

Unfortunately, recent experience suggests that so many change efforts are going on at the same time in many organizations that a linear change approach no longer works. One reason is that so many concurrent change efforts lead to a crowding out effect. They burn people out and drive people crazy because it is not possible to remember everything going on at once.

One of the author's clients stated the case well. His organization was simultaneously installing self-directed work teams, a customer service improvement effort, a Baldrige Award effort, a continuous improvement effort, a business process reengineering effort, a process improvement effort, and a statistical process control (SPC) improvement effort. He remarked, "If we have just one more change effort in this plant, the whole place is going to sink into the ground." Against that backdrop of too many simultaneous change "projects" going on, a project-based approach to change is no longer workable. What is needed is a new model to guide change that does not assume a beginning, middle, and end to a change effort. Instead, change efforts are regarded as continuing.

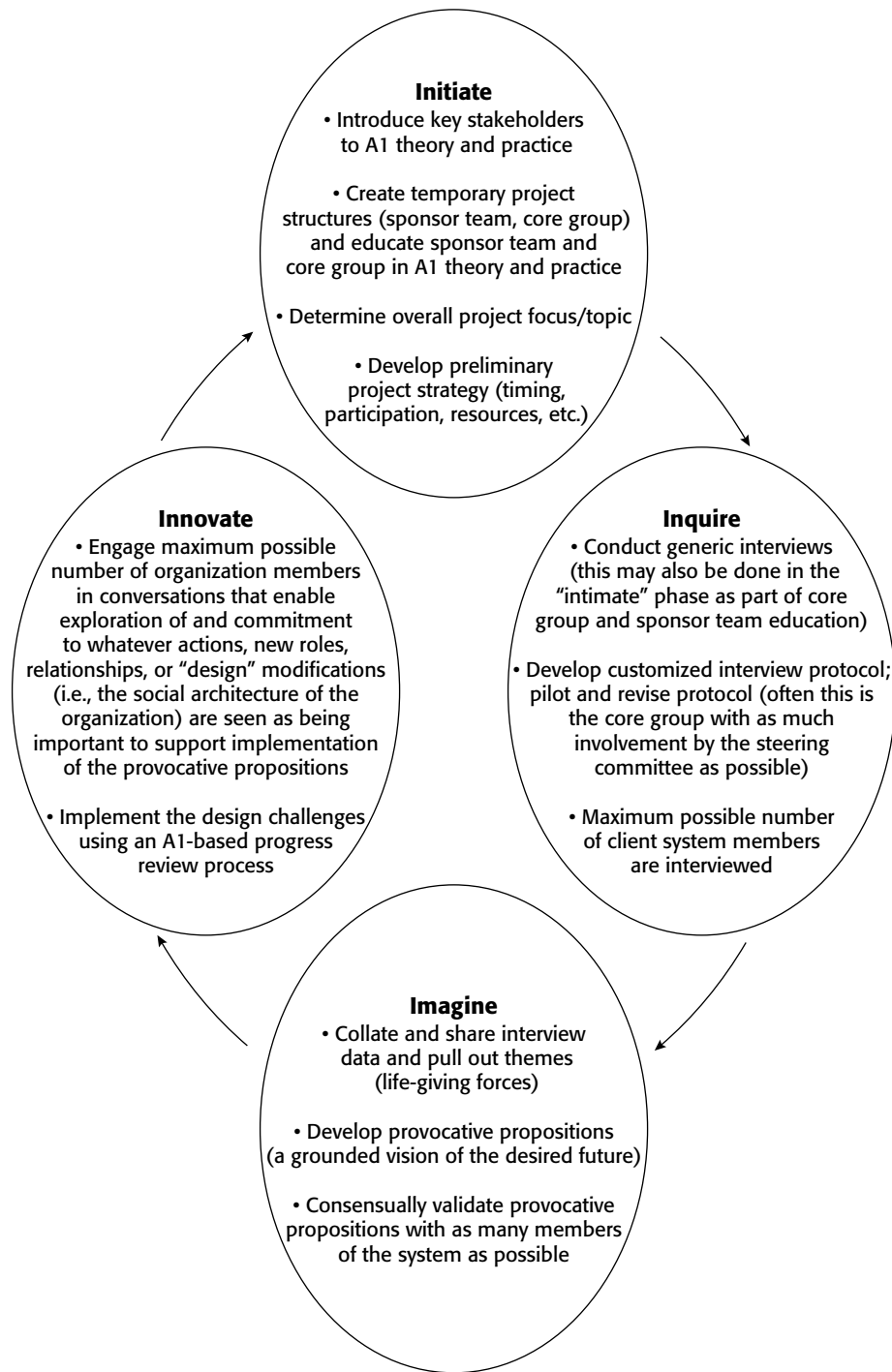


Figure 2.2. The Mohr/Jacobsgaard Four I Model of Appreciative Inquiry

From J.M. Watkins & B.J. Mohr. (2001). *Appreciative Inquiry: Change at the Speed of Imagination*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer, p. 46. Used with permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

Anderson and Anderson (2001b) also emphasize the need for a new approach to guide change. As they note:

“The most prevalent type of change in organizations today is transformation, which is vastly different from the dominant types of the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, which were developmental and transitional in nature. Developmental and transitional change can be managed. Transformation cannot. The challenge of transformation is that leaders and consultants are applying the old change management approaches for developmental and transitional change to transformation, and they just don’t work.” (p. 2)

Burke (2002) describes the phases of change as pre-launch, launch, and post-launch. The model is written as a guide for change leaders. Change efforts are regarded as proceeding like spirals rather than circles to depict their ongoing chaotic nature—and the view that what is learned from each phase of a change effort can be rolled into subsequent phases. In this way, organizations are transformed into learning organizations that “learn” from experience. The new view of the action research model is depicted in Figure 2.3. It is briefly summarized below. “An interesting paradox about organization change,” notes Burke (2002, pp. 246–247), “is that we plan as if the process is linear when in reality, it is anything but linear.”

Pre-Launch

The pre-launch phase occurs before the change effort begins. It establishes the foundation for a successful change effort. Without it, a change effort is likely to fail—or be short-lived—as other, more pressing daily crises demand attention.

Pre-launch begins effectively when leaders follow the famous advice of Socrates to “know thyself” and start with self-examination. As Burke points out, leaders should be aware of their own tolerance for ambiguity, their need for control, and their understanding of how feelings affect behavior. They should reflect on their personal dispositions and the decision-making processes they generally use—as well as their own values and motives for change.

Burke (2003, pp. 252–257) suggests considering several additional issues during the pre-launch phase:

- *The external environment:* Leaders should gather information about the environment that necessitates change. What is the business case for change? Why is change warranted to address current crises or seize future opportunities?
- *Establishing the need for change:* When leaders communicate the compelling case for change to others in the organization, they build a sense of urgency and reduce resistance to change.

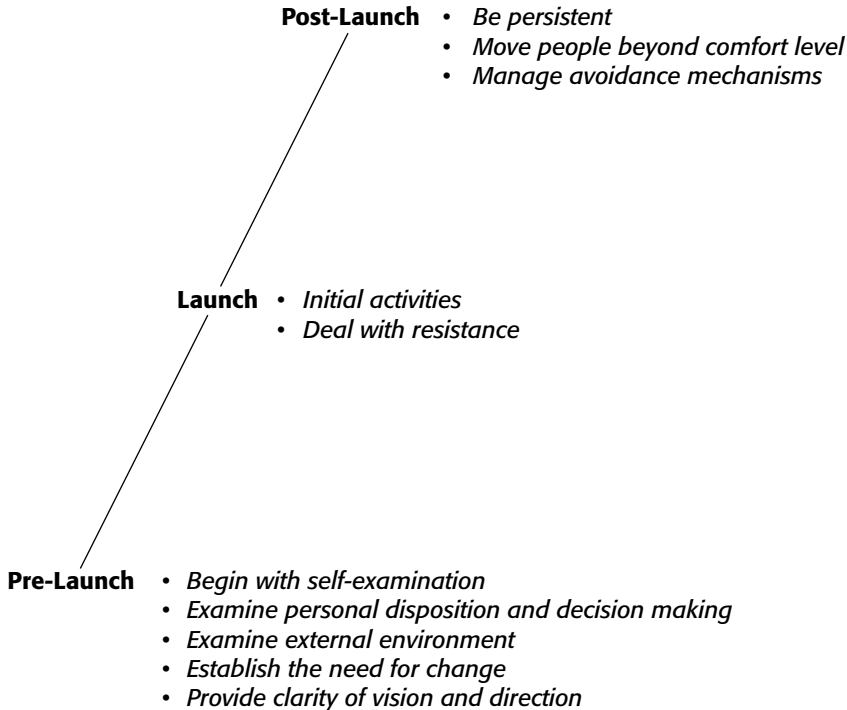


Figure 2.3. A New View of the Action Research Model

Adapted from W.W. Burke (2002). *Organization Change: Theory and Practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- *Providing clarity of vision and direction:* The direction of the effort must be clear. What objectives are to be met by the change and what will success look like? A clear vision must be established and communicated so it is embraced by key stakeholders and others in the organization.

Launch

The launch phase is the beginning of the change effort. It begins with communication to key stakeholders inside and outside the organization about the need. This is what some leaders call “making the business case,” and the case for change must be made by credible people who will be believed. Communication must be provided in many channels, since people are so bombarded with messages that they are unlikely to pick up on one short message provided in a single medium.

According to Burke (2002, pp. 258–260), the key issues to address in the launch phase are

- *Initial activities*: An event that will seize attention helps to fire imagination and enthusiasm.
- *Dealing with resistance*: Identify likely sources of resistance and try to address them before they can arise and destroy the impetus for change.

A major challenge in a long-term intervention is to maintain communication about the change effort. Stakeholders must be reminded what is being changed, why it is being changed, how the change effort is proceeding, and what benefits are being realized from the change effort (Rothwell, 2001).

Post-Launch

Post-launch involves sustaining a change effort over time. That can be particularly frustrating. The reason is that events in a change effort, even when successful, may appear to be spiraling out of control.

Burke (2002) recommends that CEOs follow the advice of Heifetz (1994). He has three suggestions. First, be persistent. Second, help people in the organization move beyond their comfort levels while keeping stress to a minimum. And third, be prepared to manage the predictable “avoidance mechanisms” that can surface during a change effort. These include “blaming other people, scapegoating, and appealing to authority figures for answers” (Burke, 2002, p. 261).

Our New Change Model: Action Research Revisited and Changed: Perpetual and Instantaneous Positive Change

Change consulting in the 21st Century requires a new model—a model that works in an environment of rapid, chaotic change. Many consultants today are frustrated by the time required for the traditional action research model, but it should not be abandoned. The response in our practice has been to create a model that responds more adroitly to the growing complexity of the consulting world, but is based on the founding principles of the field.

Edgar Schein (1999) writes:

“Consultation projects evolve in complex ways. One cannot really identify simple sequential patterns, such as ‘scouting,’ ‘entry,’ ‘contracting,’ ‘diagnosis,’ and ‘intervention.’ Instead what happens is that one finds oneself intervening initially with contact clients, then with intermediate clients, then with primary clients who may engage one in a project that involves a whole new set of contact and primary clients, all the while thinking about ultimate and unwitting clients to ensure that their needs and issues are not ignored or marginalized. In each relationship, consultants must perpetually diagnosis and gear their interventions carefully to build and maintain helpful relationships.” (p. 219)

We reviewed hundreds of models that are being used in the field today. One we particularly liked was Warner Burke's. It seemed to supply a foundational framework to integrate into our traditional eight-phase model. We feel a high level of confidence that what he was learning was on target for the burst of change happening in a typical organization's life. Using his framework of pre-launch, launch, and post-launch we came up with the model shown in Figure 2.4.

The model reflects the most current research around change agent competencies. It provides architecture to frame what we do as change technologists. The model is not a technique to be followed but a change framework that drives what we do. This framework becomes a philosophical foundation that comes alive only with your personal and creative application.

Each phase of our new change model is discussed in depth by well-known experts in Part 2 of this book. Here we will provide a brief overview of each phase. We call them phases because, unlike steps, different elements blend with others in myriad ways. As we have noted above, change efforts are seldom sequential, so keeping the overall framework in mind is important.

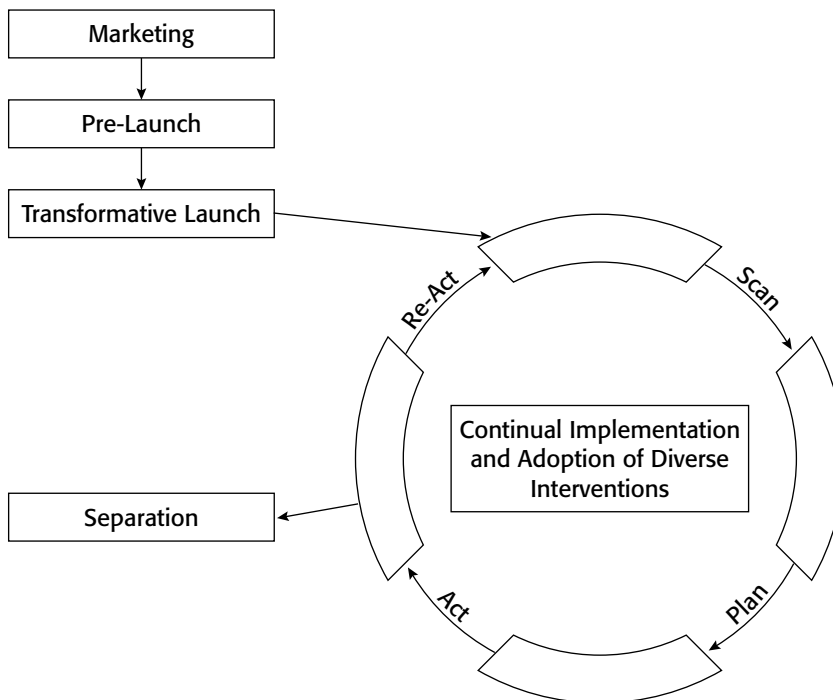


Figure 2.4. Sullivan/Rothwell Change Process Model

Marketing

In our competency research, only the category of self-awareness ranked more important than marketing. Yet OD practitioners often stumble over themselves when it comes to marketing and selling. Marketing competencies may include being:

- Aware of systems wanting to change;
- Known to those needing you;
- Able to match one's competence with a potential client's profile;
- Credible in conveying one's qualifications;
- Fast in grasping the nature of the system;
- Perceptive in identifying appropriate decision makers;
- Able to form connective interpersonal relationships instantly; and
- Able to understand customer requirements and sell results that will meet those requirements, rather than a process such as team building or whole system transformation.

We believe that internal change agents must also attend to marketing. Often they do not publicize their successes in their own enterprises and are thereby robbed of the credit they richly deserve. All organizations want a present better than the past and a future better than the present. OD is all about doing just that. So the need for OD services exists. It's up to the OD consultants to identify the need and help those in decision-making positions to see the benefits of an OD solution.

One good way is to help decision makers become aware of the kinds of competencies you possess and have demonstrated. Selling after the sale is a useful strategy. One can schedule periodic sessions with current clients to assess results, and at the same time suggest ways one can provide help in the next iteration of the change process. Dr. Alan Weiss's chapter on marketing will open a window to countless useful resources. Your challenge will be to spend the time and discipline to learn how to be a competent marketer of your professional services. Change facilitation is needed today more than ever and will be needed tomorrow even more.

Pre-Launch

As David Jamieson writes in Chapter Nine, pre-launch begins when consultants clearly have clients committed to work with them. The marketing, selling, and entry issues are complete. It ends when the psychological and non-psychological contract, relationship connecting, and clarification of expectations are completed. There is an old adage in the field that says that if anything goes awry in the change effort, it can usually be traced back to this phase.

Competencies and actions that may occur in this phase include:

- Enrolling the client in authentic commitment to the change effort;
- Dealing effectively with resistance;
- Choosing a positive focus of inquiry;
- Helping the client trust the process;
- Beginning to prepare the client to become comfortable with emotionally charged feelings;
- Advising the client and the client system how to deal with feedback that may lure defensive reasoning and behavior;
- Modeling collaborative design of the change process;
- Further clarifying real issues and tentatively determining what has to happen to increase major organization performance;
- Beginning to conceive how to link into ongoing organizational processes; and
- Identifying informal power.

Peter Block (www.peterblock.com) has had much to say about the importance of relationships in the early phases of a change effort. He says that the core competency in consulting is how to contract with clients. This is the heart of his most popular book, *Flawless Consulting* (Block, 2000). For Block, contracting is about treating the relationship as significant and central. He believes one must continually process and re-set the relationship. Modeling competency in relationship development will also go a long way toward helping the client deal with key relationships. After all, it is our intention to transfer our competence to the client system.

Our research over the years has led us to believe that the ability to initiate and maintain excellent interpersonal relationships is paramount to success in the pre-launch phase and is essential to a successful engagement. The consultant and the client must like each other and must be able to continually and honestly clarify expectations.

An indication of a solid relationship is this: When the consultant has been away from the organization for a while and returns, he or she is greeted with warmth and smiles by all. This is unlike the story that we heard about an internal consultant: When people saw him coming down the hall, they would slip into the first open office to avoid him. In summary, a strong measure of an effective consultant is the quality of the relationships that remain at the end of engagements.

Transformative Launch

This phase starts the change process by assessing the situation and planning for action in order to launch a long-term and ongoing effort. In some cases, it's a good idea to start with a bang—a striking catharsis or a euphoric liftoff! In other cases a quiet start can be more effective as a team searches for early wins in a sensitive situation. Ideally, the top team starts with itself. In either case, a flawless beginning can do much to commit the entire top team to supporting engagement and involvement of all parts of the organization.

Competencies you may use during the launch phase include:

- Knowing how to facilitate alignment;
- Gathering the right kind and amount of data in the appropriate manner;
- Clarifying boundaries for confidentiality;
- Turning raw data into organization intelligence that will have the greatest utility determining what action is needed to enhance performance in domains identified;
- Feeding back the wisdom skillfully to help the system collaboratively create a shared vision of a preferred future;
- Disturbing the system with positive and challenging forces so it begins to automatically choose a new state;
- Facilitating a commitment to innovative interventions that will create the most positive change and transformation; and
- Facilitating whole system summits that bring the entire system into an interactive space to move the organization to a new and desired positive state.

Some situations require transformative change, that dramatic shift in focus and priorities that can occur when conditions are just right. Transformative change is more than step improvement or incremental change. Freeing a caterpillar from an enclosed jar improves its situation, but doesn't change its nature. In transformation, the caterpillar becomes a butterfly. For transformative changes, the launch phase should be a striking and dramatically positive jump into a brilliant future.

Exhibit 2.2 outlines some of the distinctions between change and transformation.

The launch phase is time to set a norm regarding the importance of informal channels of communication. This is not the time to change participants' basic learning modalities, and indeed the chances are they could not be changed if we wanted to. The gossip chain, the water cooler bulletin board, and the lunchroom

 Exhibit 2.2. Distinctions Between Organization Change and Transformation

Change

- Single-loop learning (adaptive; errors are corrected without altering the fundamental nature of the system)
- Status quo facilitated toward betterment
- Change in one or a few dimensions, variables, or parts
- Change in one or a few levels (maybe the individual and/or group level)
- Change in one or two behavioral aspects (attitudes, values)
- Quantitative change—move the chairs on the deck
- Change in content
- Identity stays the same
- Corrective action
- Continuous improvement
- Development in the same direction
- Incremental changes and change that reverts back to the old state
- Change that does not alter the world view, the paradigm
- Micro results and improvement in performance

Transformation

- Double-loop learning (inquires into and changes existing norms and deeper value foundations; generative learning or learning how to learn)
- Major disruption of the what is and was going to be
- Multidimensional, multi-component change and aspects
- Multilevel change (individuals, groups, or whole system)
- Changes in all the behavioral aspects (attitude, norms, values, perceptions, beliefs, world view, and behaviors)
- Qualitative change—new ideology or shift in philosophy
- Change in context and underlying structure
- Re-imagined and reformulated identity
- Destruction of the old way
- Discontinuous change
- Exciting, explosive, fiery, disruptive, dramatic jumps in different directions
- Irreversible change with arrival of a new state of being
- Change that results in a new world view, new paradigm. (The system sees itself through a new window)
- Macro results and performance levels never reached before

conversations are parts of the informal networks, often where the real conversations are. It is the role of the change agent to bring the informal talk to the OD table. Participants need help trusting a process where truth prevails and they are ready to have a natural and authentic experience with valid data.

We expect a launch to move the organization to a point of no return. The system moves itself to a new state in which it encompasses the essential core competencies of being and becoming a change agent enterprise.

The launch (or implementation) phase we present here is distinctly different from our change model in the previous edition. In the 21st Century, change happens so fast that it seems it is at the speed of imagination. There is seldom time for a long assessment with a change plan.

Today, we see the change cycle requiring a process and philosophy built in for constant reaction and continual planning efforts. It is not a phase of a long-term effort, but rather an ongoing implementation of a myriad of interventions, an endless loop of short-cycle change.

In fact, these days, the traditional assessment and action planning can all happen in three or four days' time if all key stakeholders are in the room. The resistance that took years to unfreeze in the traditional action research model can now be broken in an afternoon if all the right people and information are present.

In Figure 2.4, you can see the launch phase broken out into a sub-model, which we call SPAR: Scan, Plan, Act, and Re-Act. This simple model is universal in application. This kind of change model is not just useful for one's work-life but may be used in one's personal and recreational life as well. Client system, family, or little league team—the principles are the same. It can be used in a long-term effort or in an intervention as short as a ten-minute phone call. It can be used as an intervention at any level of change. For example:

- An individual can use it to make changes in his or her own life;
- A coach or mentor can use it to work with a client;
- Two members of an executive team can use it to find new ways to collaborate;
- A team can use it to learn how to be more effective;
- Multiple teams can use it in the application of system theory and practice;
- Institution or enterprise-wide change efforts can use it—especially in ongoing, engaging change; and/or
- Network, community, or trans-organization development efforts can employ it.

Each phase or each session within a phase may include all four elements of SPAR. That is the Chinese box phenomenon—the famous puzzle consisting of a series of progressively smaller boxes inside a large box—which may typify many change efforts. In other words, when a change effort is big enough and long-term enough, the assessment and feedback moment or experience (for instance) may itself have an entry component, a start-up component, and so forth.

Scan. Diagnosis traditionally is the phrase that has been used to describe the major function of the scan phase. Our quantitative research over the years involving almost four thousand change agents has produced many heated arguments over whether to use assessment or diagnosis. We have been won over to the assessment side of the street because diagnosis comes more from a disease and medical model looking for something that is sick or problem-related. We prefer to look on the bright side of life. The glass is half full. Like the appreciative inquiry change agents, we strongly believe in the new positive psychology movement. Assessment is typically known as a classification of someone or something with respect to its worth. When a change process is positive, conversations are energizing. The process entropies when conversations are about problems, negativity, and the blues.

This is the phase where valid information is central. Common sense and classic research agree. Too often we see people in organizations jump right into the end-state planning without generating an accurate picture of where they are now and a clear view of a desired destiny.

It's important for the client to feel ownership of the assessment information. The more we can involve the client in jointly bringing forth valid information the better. A key competency to be utilized here is the ability to create a trusting climate so the client feels safe to reveal disturbing, grandiose, or thought-provoking information and feelings. Gathering stories of best practices from within or from without the system is often exhilarating. A positive spirit of inquiry melts resistance.

Active and non-judgmental listening is paramount at this phase. When the client senses that the consultant is being judgmental, the consultant's ability to facilitate is impaired, and his or her influence is lessened. Trust is reduced because the common ground that is facilitated toward is colored with the consultant's own bias. Of course, there are exceptions. Sometimes a consultant will have one gigantic idea, and all will say, "YES! YES!" and welcome the contribution because the people in the system as a whole will benefit. Living systems move in the direction of what is assessed as being worthy.

Asking the right questions is key. David Cooperrider (founder of appreciative inquiry, which depends heavily on crafting the right questions) says that he spent days of intense concentration determining the exact questions he would

use in breakout groups while he facilitated leaders of all the major world religions in a summit. Asking the right questions has much to do with where the client system lands in the next phase of planning.

Questions might include:

- What's up?
- What is working?
- What is our purpose?
- What outcomes do we wish to reach?
- What are your wishes and dreams?
- What do we want to change?
- What is a focus that you could really become passionate about?
- What best practices do we wish to enhance?
- What changes can we make to augment communication?
- Describe an ideal organization structure.
- Give me one strategy that if implemented would make a huge difference.

Usually we like to co-create scanning questions with the client. They know better than we do what is important. Often they need help rephrasing questions that could elicit negative, and perhaps unhelpful, responses. For example, "What is the problem with quality?" could become "What can you do to ensure superior quality?" or "The best example of high quality I have experienced around here is. . . ."

In sum, the scan phase is about helping the client system get a comprehensive view from individuals or small groups about where they are and wish to be. Creating a system-wide synthesis and common-ground intelligence base comes in the next phase.

Plan. There is a wide assortment of techniques and methods that can be used to plan what you will act on. What approach should you use? It all depends. It may depend on the scope of the effort, the style of leadership, or the nature of the data-collection methodology. One idea is to have a change team representative of the larger system help design a planning process that fits the situation.

Here are some practical tips for the plan phase:

- *Feed back the data in a distilled manner.* Normally, one has more data than can be used. A process needs to be invented that will funnel all the accumulated ideas into common themes. Go for ideas that can easily

turn into new attitude and behavioral commitments and action items. Involve participants in organizing the ideas. We do not encourage prepared recommendation reports assembled in the closet of the consultant's office and then presented and sold to the clients. Always prepare the data for planning *with* clients.

We recall working with a large financial system. The top team had just spent hundreds of thousands of dollars with a large European consulting firm that recommended a strategic plan to them. The CEO and executives just did not "own" it. We helped them rip up the plan and within four hours they had a new strategic plan. Subtle but significant adjustments were made. Now the team was excited about it. They owned it. As the old adage, generally attributed to Peter Drucker, goes, "People support what they help create."

- *Spend some time validating the data that was collected.* Clients need help seeing collectively the state they are in. Rarely will they deny what has surfaced. Validating accommodates ownership and ultimate commitment.
- *Do allow the system to disturb itself.* Do facilitate so clients are able to confront themselves. Do allow them to self-realize what they will do with the dissatisfaction. Facilitate a wake-up call. Get their attention. The value of a consultant is to help the system face itself as it is and to realize what it wishes to become.

In a keynote address to a national conference, Fritz Capra (2002), said, "People rarely do what top management wants them to do. When the system modifies the direction, they respond creatively to a disturbance. Rather than ignore it, we can work *with* people's creativity and transform it into a positive force. If we involve people in the change process right from the start up, they will '*choose to be disturbed*' because the process itself is meaningful to them."

We think Dr. Capra's statement is powerful. When people in the system are having a truthful dialogue, someone is being disturbed. Yet the emotional juice coming from a deep and substantial dialogue cements commitment to implementation in the act phase.

- *Be sensitive in confrontation.* Clients want to get rid of a past that is not working, but need help to destroy a past that is nonetheless theirs. Know how much disturbance they can handle. Realize that more change will happen if feelings are evoked and worked through. Authentic feelings in a room set the stage for serious and concentrated conversations. So it's important to only intervene as deeply as you know the client can handle. Expert and masterful facilitation is required, especially if there are five hundred people in the room.

- *Together create compelling propositions.* Establish a realistic preferred future that grows out of all the work that has been done up to this point. Unleash the creativity. Blend in the weird. Go for the moon. Develop a bold plan that matches the audacious and enterprising times of today. Challenge clients to make a *dramatic* difference, a difference that will have a huge impact on the success of the system. Help them create a future that will give them a real reason to believe in themselves. They have it in them. The answers are in the system. Surface them. Bring them to life. Just pull the right cords to unleash the extraordinary mind power that all systems have. Let the compelling possibility give them hope.
- *Ensure that clients are able to freely choose their plan.* This concept is paramount. Remember the financial case above where the executive team did not buy the strategic plan until they felt they freely chose it. People follow through and own the plan when they have choices.
- *Anticipate and name the resistance that may arise.* You considered all possible sources of resistance in your planning and engaged people in the project insofar as possible. Still, additional resistance may arise now that implementation is inevitable. Rehearse how the different choices may play out, and consider ways to involve people even at this point, giving them options in implementation that will help them feel a measure of control over their destinies.
- *Create a simple, elegant master plan format.* The plan should go after specific actions that can make the biggest splash with the least amount of resources and effort. Surface the priority focus. Establish long-term goals, but only specify activity for shorter periods, certainly not more than 120 days. Most organizations are moving too fast to plan in detail much further out. Ideally you will be able to publish the plan on a website. One of our clients used a technology where an automatic email was sent to the person responsible to alert him or her before an action was due.

Here's an example of the potential power of such a process. We had a three-day whole system transformation summit with the top 350 people of a Fortune 250 organization. During one module of the design, the issue for interaction was the executive team's relationship with the remaining 340 leaders. A design team created an activity so the room could react to the behavioral commitments that the executive team made in the previous year's summit. After a very honest and open reaction from the first table's report-out, the second person reporting started by acknowledging his pleasure with the directness that had been heard and said, "I think we must hear a detailed assessment of the executive team

from every table in the room.” Applause and a standing ovation occurred. On the spot we changed the design so all were heard. The rapt attention of the participants was stunning. The executive team spent from 8:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. crafting their response. When they presented it the next morning, they received a standing ovation. The people had been heard! In fact, this group decided not to have any structured follow-up or reaction phase. They did not need it. They just went and performed. Six months later when the board was challenging the executive team about flying three hundred people to Minneapolis for the session, the second person in charge said, “Remember how you have been challenging us for the last five years to increase our profit in one of the financial variables. Well, look at the numbers. Note the five-million-dollar difference. We know that was the result of our organization change summit.”

Act. Acting the plan is the heart and soul of what we do in OD, where the interventions we have planned with clients are carried out. The Act phase is where we get the results, where we add value. When we do it well, performance increases. If we have done all previous phases and sub-phases competently, success should spontaneously and authentically occur.

Chris Argyris offers a clear, simple, and profound statement around “Act.” He writes, “In order to act, human beings diagnose problems, invent solutions, and evaluate the effectiveness of what they have produced” (2004, p. 2). These are indeed the same steps we are describing in SPAR. A key competency of an OD practitioner is to facilitate client conversation to help these effective change actions happen.

Argyris continues by saying, “Productive reasoning (1) produces valid and validatable knowledge, (2) creates informed choices, and (3) makes personal reasoning transparent in order for the claims to be tested robustly. The core of productive reasoning is that the parties involved are vigilant about striving to avoid unknowingly deceiving themselves and others” (2004, p. 3).

The following are some practical tips for the Act phase:

- *Increase the quality of the conversation.* Being transparent includes fishing for doubts and reservations so the concerns of all parties can be on the table. Name the resistance and honor it. It is amazing how resisters move if they are allowed to have their voices heard. Alternative and dissenting views often enrich the solutions. Part of our role is to surface the “undiscussables,” to surface the below-the-table thinking, to shed light on the shadow of the system. To get a view of the “whole,” representing all parts of the system is required. (Of course, we must do so without getting ourselves fired by leadership that is not yet prepared for truth. And we must protect the truth tellers so they will continue to feel safe in speaking their view of the truth.)

Peter Block (2000) believes that this openness cannot be limited to when the consultant is present or happen only in offsite team building or whole system transformation summits. It must occur each time the people assemble in their daily work routine.

What happens in the *whole system transformation summits*, as we have named our large group work, is that the quality of the interaction, often for the first time, changes for the better. The challenge is to transfer what happens in change efforts into the daily operations of the system.

- *Facilitate high-performing relationships.* Let us share an example. We had an executive team come to a four-day residential retreat prepared to light the fire in their team. The first day they were overwhelmed by the challenges before them. The team went into a funk. We anticipated such a state from our scan. We knew that there were serious relationship issues in the team so we spent a couple of days in deep dialogue around specific relationships and the climate of the team as whole. By noon of the third day, there was a dramatic shift. They begin to feel a confidence that they could handle the challenges before them better than any other team in the world. Why? We believe that the time they spent in effective dialogue (and our masterful facilitation, of course) moved them to a place where they deepened the genuine connection to all others in the team. Deep relationships generate confidence to act on significant challenges.
- *Establish a climate of trust and openness.* Our experience indicates that participants become very excited and engaged while they are working with the reality of their system. Without doubt, if they have been in honest dialogue, they will be likely to generate effective solutions. Expectations increase. An increase in results often does not happen until an expectation is declared.
- *Empower all to “act” through engagement.* Peter Block acknowledges that he learned much about engagement from Kathie Dannemiller. Kathie is known for her co-invention of whole-scale-change methodologies and especially for her belief in empowerment. Peter says:

“A core strategy for building emotional commitment to implementation is to design new ways for people to engage each other. This may be more critical than the clarity or rightness of a decision. Results are achieved when members of a system collectively choose to move in a certain direction. It is this act of choice that is critical. . . . We tenaciously hold onto the belief that leaders can induce others to act. Leaders can no more induce action on the part of their followers than consultants can induce action on the part of their clients.” (2000, p. 265)

- *Ensure that the people in the organization are prepared to support the action.* We have found that it is best if the entire system is engaged in helping leadership define high performance behavior. If it happens, the payoff is remarkable. If the participants have been genuinely connected to the change process up to this point, support, ownership, and commitment will prevail. Also structures, high-level systems, policies, and procedures must be adapted to help the system conduct the “Act” phase successfully.
- *Engage the leaders.* Leaders must visibly support the action. If in the past they were among those leaders who do not walk their talk, a change process is a great opportunity for them to now have a breakthrough. Anyone can change behavior. The desired behaviors just need to be clarified and committed to. Leaders need to model the changed or transformed mindset. How the organization views the congruency of leadership cannot be underestimated.
- *Help internal change agents.* They can prepare to and be available to move the action plan forward. If the SPAR model is effective, the client group’s resolute spirit reaches out to internals to receive support and assistance in realizing their dreams. Perhaps they can be of assistance in areas that may be “stuck.” In other instances, internal practitioners can offer themselves as coaches. Essentially, this is the time for them to initiate their own “SPAR” process. They will best serve the system if they are continually scanning, planning, acting, and re-acting to what is occurring.

Re-Act. The “Re-Act” phase occurs in more than one way. Planning renewal is a must. Re-action is necessary as the organization responds to the implementation of the plan. The action plan always evolves differently than you might have expected, so your plan must be updated and adjusted. Reaction feeds corrective action. Now is also the time to extract the learning from the previous three phases, and to be prepared for the next cycle of SPAR.

The following section highlights some issues related to this phase:

- *Obtain information on which to base re-action.* One of the best ways to get reaction is to have informal and frequent sessions where participants can converse. That will allow unforeseen obstacles and developing resistance to be identified. This is the time to monitor what has taken place. Monitoring may include scientific or non-scientific measured reactions to what has happened and is taking place. Monitoring is the reflective process to discern what we have learned from what has just happened in the previous three steps to guide us as we repeat SPAR. It may be done with periodic online surveys. One company had all computers set so they would not fire up until the person signing on

completed a brief survey on the status of the department action plan. For example, people were asked:

- What they had accomplished the previous week
 - What they would accomplish the upcoming week
 - What the best change practice they had observed in the organization the past week was
 - What one wish they had for the larger system to change in the immediate future to increase results
- *Deal with challenges.* It's important that challenges that arise be dealt with quickly and effectively. Challenges are not always bad news. One manufacturing client in the midst of dramatically transforming the entire enterprise just to survive struck gold with an unprecedented amount of new work. For the first time in their almost 100-year history, they were getting and turning away new work from the prestigious automotive industry. Thirty percent of the industry had just gone kaput the previous 20 months. Work was going to China in waves. But not for them; they could select high-quality customers who were willing to pay a premium for their products. An entire new focus for the change plan was required. They knew that not handling the opportunity wisely could take the company under. They had to quickly scale up for the increased business.
 - *Avoid slippage.* It happens that organizations revert to previous behavior. Very often systems in place for years—systems that supported the old behavior—will become apparent now and provide pressure to do things the old way. The reaction phase is the time for the organization to invent ways to get back on track. If resistance persists after offering people chances to learn and use the new ways, leadership may have to say, “The boat to the new land has just left. If we are going to survive and you believe in what we are doing here, then we need your best. If you are not willing to give us 100 percent, we have some rowboats that you can use to make you exit.” Most importantly, people must be encouraged, supported, and cheered on in the efforts they are making toward change or transformation.
 - *Celebrate success.* This is the time to celebrate. Tell stories of success. Seek out and share best practices and examples of progress of new work process or team behaviors. One of our clients collected hundreds of success stories and made them available on the web. Leaders of the organization might give their reactions to the change action commencing. A vote of confidence from them can go a long way. Such reaction activities can be fantastic momentum boosters.

- *Apply lessons learned.* A very important aspect of the SPAR cycle is to glean the best of the change practices and institutionalize them. A learning organization recognizes what has worked and adopts it into the ongoing process of doing business, so the best new practices become standard operating procedures, culture, or policies. Once they are accepted and working smoothly, resources can be again freed up to find the next new improvements.

Every year or so, depending on how much people in an organization thirst for positive change, the change effort may start back at the launch phase when a deep dive transformation lift is needed. In one of our clients, the largest financial system in South Africa, launching transformative change has become a way of life. They are known to do a dozen summits per year. The summits are designed where the system boundaries are open to customers and events in the larger culture. That keeps them close to their customers and has made them one of the most loved brands in Africa.

Competencies for SPAR. We have selected a few of the many competencies required in the SPAR approach to list here, as we feel they are the most critical to remember. Here they are

- Keeping the client focused on the stated purpose yet allowing flexibility to flow with the river of change rather than against it;
- Being perceptive and hearing what really is happening and facilitating a response that moves the system forward;
- Ability to quickly and accurately adapt to unexpected forces;
- Knowing how to help set parallel interventions amidst a chaotic and complex environment;
- Joining with participants as the implementation unfolds in a collaborative manner to better learn to interact around how the work can achieve more results;
- Building and mobilizing commitment to the change process;
- Generalizing learnings and making new knowledge explicit so others can utilize it;
- Helping the client apply systems theory to include expansionist thinking and the establishment of connectivity;
- Looking for the positive and bringing out success stories;
- Building an interdependency within the client system rather than fostering dependency on the change agent;

- Ensuring that feedback loops are functioning effectively so specific data are flowing in a timely manner;
- Setting up a monitored accountability process to surface success and new challenges; and
- Helping the client see when a change is ready for adoption and when a change needs to be maintained.

So we see that the SPAR model can be a cycle within a cycle—a Chinese box within a box—an endless loop of response to the ongoing change in today’s organizations. Leaving the SPAR model, we come back to our larger change frame and conclude.

Separation

When we search the literature, we find little on consultant separation or closure. Yet we know from our learning on the dynamics of small groups that saying good-bye and endings are very important. Recall the organization change and transformation that grew out of the group development era of the 1950s through the 1980s. The best source of wisdom on this phase has come from our competency research.

Here are a few competencies that have surfaced:

- Recognize when the time is right for separation;
- Review how the client will continue with what has been started;
- Initiate open conversation about disengagement;
- Ensure that all contracted obligations are completed;
- Anticipate and work through one’s own post-separation feelings as well as helping clients deal with theirs;
- Discuss how the relationship can be re-established after departure; and
- Discuss what has been accomplished and what the client will now do on his or her own.

Burke and Van Eron capture very well the key notions regarding separation in Chapter Thirteen, so we only wish to add one story. We know of a well-known and respected OD consultant who establishes up-front ground rules for separation. One key ground rule is this: Either the consultant or the client can call a separation meeting at any time. The clients and the consultant commit to a full day session offsite in an environment free from distractions. At that time they can process the engagement with honesty and openness, trusting that a mutual decision about how and when to separate will evolve. Such a contractual

arrangement gave the consultant an opportunity to give the client system a wake-up call regarding what was being stirred in the system because of the intervention, while providing an opportunity to adjust the change process so breakthrough progress could be made. If the client was having issues with the change process or the consultant behavior, an opportunity was provided to work through the issues. Sometimes clients do not understand the consultant's approach. They have a natural tendency to become resistant and defensive. A heart-to-heart conversation will start movement for additional external help or a termination that can be settled on in a manner that is agreeable to both the client and the consultant.

Summary

The newly evolving view of action research is developing daily, and undoubtedly even more information will be available for our next edition. We believe such an evolving model needs to tie in the new branches of change practice such as the AI movement and the complexity science approach. It needs to support the roots from whence it came. It needs to apply to large-scale change as well as a helping interaction between our selves and our daughters or neighbors next door. It must offer a new compass to guide the unprecedented change going on globally. We predict that the pace of change will only speed up. We believe our new model emphasizes the continuous nature of change and is better than our old one because it does not assume that change occurs on a project basis . . . now change efforts are multi-dimensional and perpetual. The very nature of change has changed.

OTHER CHANGE MODELS

Writings about organizational change are replete with a dizzying array of different change models to guide change leaders and change facilitators. Three of the best-known to corporate managers are Kotter's eight-step model for strategic change, Jick's ten-step model, and General Electric's seven-step model.

Common Elements

Kotter's (1995) model is based on a study of change in over one hundred organizations of different sizes and industry categories. Kotter's model is intended to help change leaders avoid common errors. It might be regarded as a vision of what the change process should be and how it should be carried out.

Jick's (1991a; 1991b) model is focused on the tactical level of change. It is really a blueprint for a change process. The model serves a dual purpose. It can be useful in evaluating and reacting to the progress of change efforts that have already been launched. It can also serve as a roadmap for the issues to consider when launching a change effort. He labels it tactical because of his belief that most change efforts fail in execution.

Garvin (2000) published a version of General Electric's change model. GE's model is based on Kurt Lewin's (1947) model for change, which emphasizes the importance of unfreezing, movement, and refreezing. The model stresses what leaders need to do to make change happen.

The three models are summarized in Figure 2.5. According to Mento, Jones, and Dirndorfer (2002), the models share some elements in common and can be distilled to identify specific steps to be taken during a change effort:

- Step 1: Discover the idea and its context.
- Step 2: Assess to define the change initiative.
- Step 3: Evaluate the climate for change.
- Step 4: Develop a change plan.
- Step 5: Find and cultivate a sponsor.
- Step 6: Prepare your target audience, the recipients of change.
- Step 7: Create the cultural fit making the change last.
- Step 8: Develop and choose a change leader team.
- Step 9: Create small wins for motivation.
- Step 10: Constantly and strategically communicate the change.
- Step 11: Measure the progress of the change effort.
- Step 12: Integrate the lessons learned in the change process.

Critiques of Existing Change Models

"Existing change models have not been immune from criticism. As Schaafsma (1997, p. 41) has written, "Middle managers who search the current literature for successful models and case studies of change may have difficulty finding something that meets their needs." In short, the issues involving middle managers in change efforts are too often forgotten in existing change models.

Existing change models can be criticized for focusing too much attention on top-down change (Whiteley, 1995), leaving vague the details on how to establish vision, mission, and strategy, providing too much emphasis on the corporate hierarchy as a tool for the change process, directing too much attention to short-term and bottom-line measures of success, and playing too much to the "old boy network" as an instrument for change.

There is no "one best way" to manage change, when (in reality) organizational transformation may require a range of models to be used selectively. Models must be attuned to the corporate cultures and group norms of the settings in which they are applied, and so improvisation is essential (Orlikowski & Hofman, 1997).

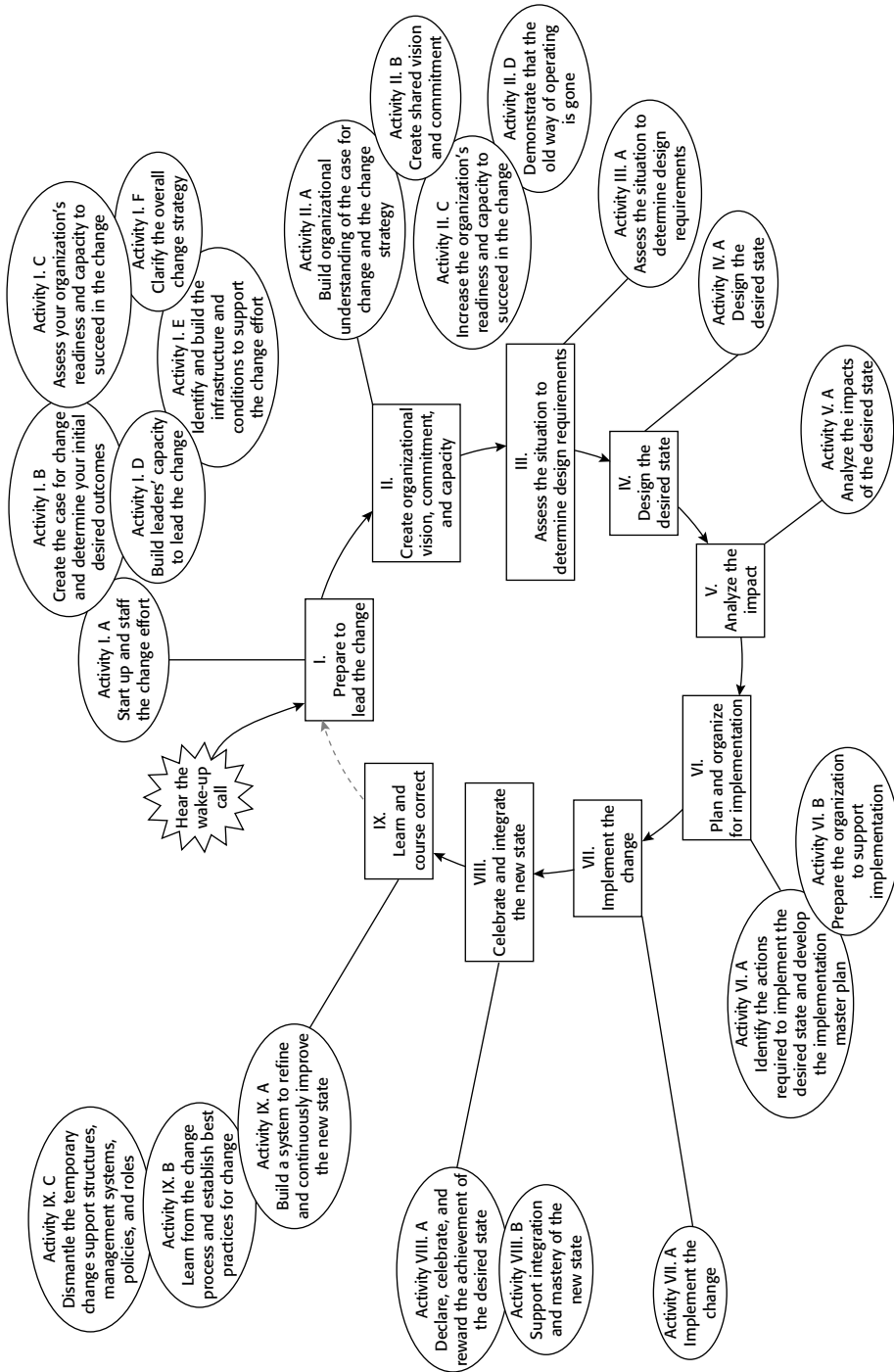


Figure 2.5. Three Models of the Change Process

From A.J. Mento, R.M. Jones, and W. Dirndorfer (2002). A Change Management Process: Grounded in Both Theory and Practice. *Journal of Change Management*, 3(1), 45-59.

There is one very comprehensive model that we like. When we started the *Practicing Organization Development* book series with Kristine Quade, we knew we wanted a book that best depicted a comprehensive and useful change model. We had known for years of the work of Linda Ackerman and Dean Anderson and invited them to summarize their model for all to share. They did so in two volumes entitled *The Change Leader's Roadmap* and *Beyond Change Management*.

An additional resource is *Organization Development at Work: Conversations on the Values, Applications, and Future of OD* by Margaret Wheatley, Bob Tannenbaum, Paula Griffin, and Kristine Quade. It has a chapter just on OD methods and models. Over thirty practitioners share not only their favorite old and new models, but the ways they have adapted the classics.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A model for change serves as a compass to guide managers and consultants as they lead or facilitate change efforts. These models are best understood as a simplified representation of the general steps in initiating and carrying out a change process. This chapter reviewed numerous models for change . . . some old, some evolving.

Critical research was the first model. Stemming ultimately from Marxist practices, CR is similar to a dialectic approach to change in which opposing positions are used to power change. Critical research drives change from the natural tension that develops between what people believe should be happening and what they believe is actually happening. The basic thrust of CR is to identify this discrepancy and use it to power change. Although critical research has not been widely used in mainstream OD, interventions such as confrontation meetings can lend themselves to it.

Traditional action research was the second model examined in this chapter. Long the foundation for many change efforts, it is properly regarded as both a model and a process. A typical way to view it is that change is managed as a project and encompasses eight key steps.

A third model examined in this chapter was appreciative inquiry. Appreciative inquiry is a philosophy. It “invites us to choose consciously to seek out and inquire into that which is generative and life-enriching, both in our own lives and in the lives of others, and to explore our hopes and dreams for the future” (Watkins & Mohr, 2001, p. 58). Although AI theorists eschew step-by-step approaches, AI could be regarded in at least one sense as encompassing a process of initiating, inquiring, imagining, and innovating (Watkins & Mohr, 2001).

A new view of action research was the fourth and final model examined in this chapter. Its creation is in response to recent research that indicates that the old linear models are not working. It reinvents the traditional action research

model based on the assumption that change efforts should not be managed as projects but instead as a process.

The final section of the chapter reviewed some other change models that have been described in the literature. A large section of this book is based on the new view of action research. The reader will therefore find chapters in Part Two that address these methods in more detail.

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CHAPTER THREE



On the Shoulders of Giants

The Origins of OD

Billie T. Alban & John J. Scherer¹

In our work as OD practitioners, whose shoulders are we standing on? Whose “conceptual DNA” runs in our veins? What are our operating assumptions and where did they come from?

More often than not, we do our OD work inside a culture of practice whose principles are simply taken for granted—things like involving people in planning and taking action, group decision making, action research, “feedback,” high-performance/high-satisfaction team development, leadership and management coaching, the stages in the consulting process. These methods and principles have not always been around. Who figured them out—and passed them on to us?

You may know personally some of the people on whose shoulders you are standing; certainly you have read the works of earlier “elders” who have shaped your work, but many of those who attempted to improve their social systems are lost in the mists of time. . .

OD’S ANCIENT ROOTS

We will get to the more recent aspects of the origin of our field, but first, it is important to acknowledge that people have been attempting to create more effective organizations since the dawn of time.

- No doubt small groups of Neanderthal cave-dwellers discussed ways to kill the mastodon more effectively—and without losing so many hunters.
- The early Egyptians had what could best be described as “consulting engineers” who made sure the many communities up and down the Nile practiced proper flood control so everyone would survive another year with an irrigated harvest.
- The biblical story of Moses and his father-in-law Jethro tells of what could be called the first recorded consultation for large-scale change.
- We know that kings and religious leaders across the centuries and around the world had advisors they would turn to when facing difficult decisions.
- There was also the court jester, who played a major if undefined role as an executive development coach, holding up a (hopefully) humorous mirror so the ruler could see the potential folly in a particular path of action.

These historical attempts to have more effective organizations were missing several important ingredients, however, and especially the distinction between *content* (where most of the above “consulting” almost certainly focused) and *process* (something yet to be discovered). It was up to the unique exploration of more recent minds and hearts to discover and apply the principles that launched what we would recognize today as organization development.

BIG BRANCHES IN OUR OD FAMILY TREE

Since 1900, there have been major contributors to the shaping of our discipline:

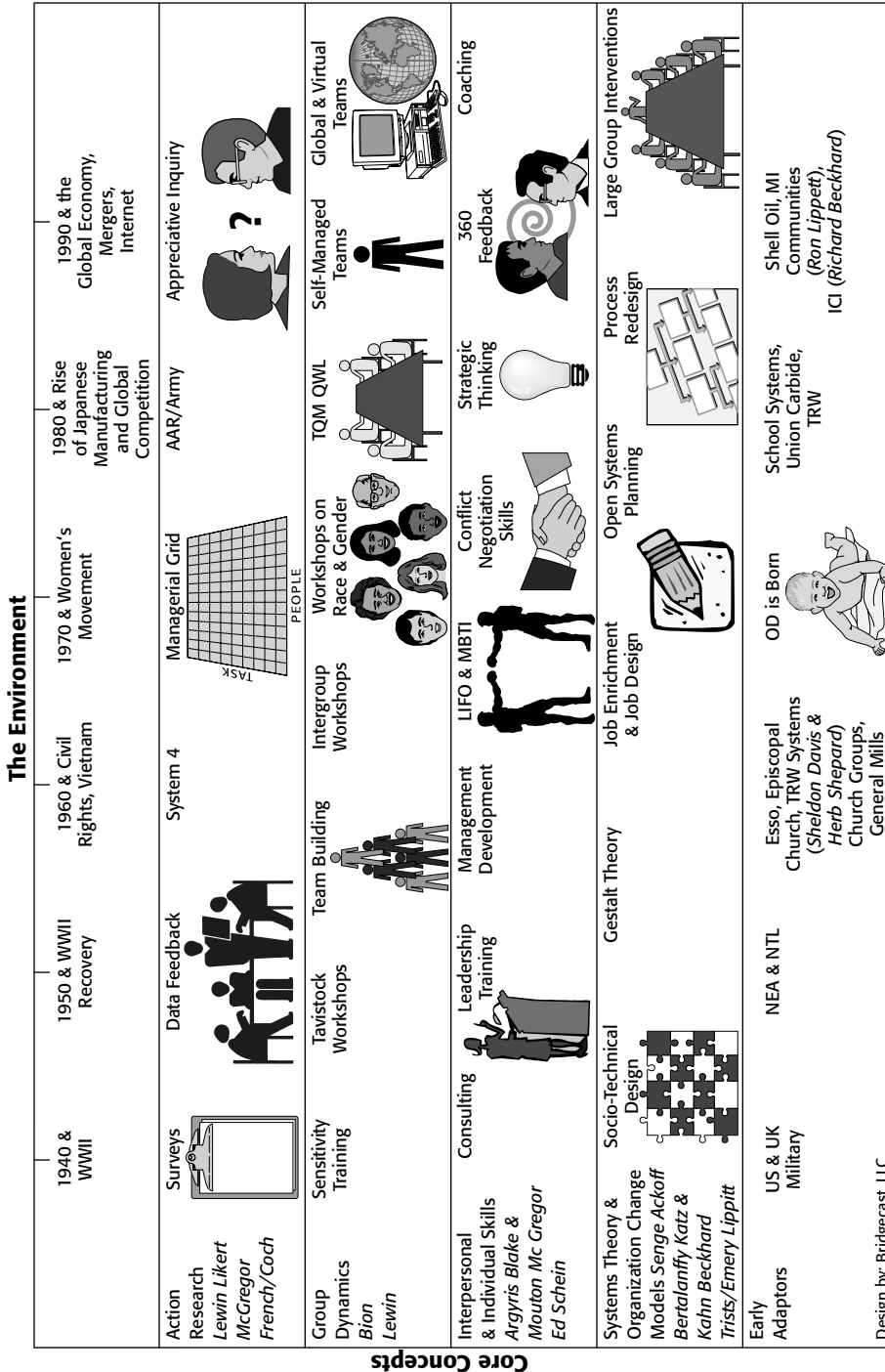
- Sigmund Freud was one of the first to postulate the existence of an inner world that drives what human beings do—something we hold today as obvious as gravity.
- Carl Jung postulated the power of archetypes operating in the human psyche and emphasized the role of the Shadow, those aspects of who we are that have not yet been integrated. He also legitimated the world of dreams and intuition and suggested that we were much more than rational beings living in a Cartesian/Newtonian world.
- B.F. Skinner took Pavlov’s salivating dogs to the next (human) level, theorizing that we are not making free-will decisions at all, but are products of stimulus/response-driven operant conditioning: what gets rewarded gets repeated. (Today’s field of performance management comes directly from this school of thought.)

- Erik Erikson saw the human being's life as a developmental journey with predictable stages or phases that must be successfully traversed. All the life cycle and developmental models of today owe a debt to his thinking.
- Abraham Maslow showed that what motivates people varies, depending on where they are in their hierarchy of needs, and that we should be investigating not just "sick" people, but those who are doing "well," to discover what makes us tick. (Appreciative inquiry, one of the more recent innovations in OD, is a direct descendant of Maslow in this regard.)
- Carl Rogers, along with Maslow, initiated what came to be called Third Force (or Humanistic) Psychology, an alternative to the operant conditioning of Skinner and the psychoanalytic model of Freud. Rogers also showed that increasing people's effectiveness happened within a *relationship* between the helper and the helpee, and that the movement toward wholeness was accelerated by empathy rather than advice-giving.
- Eric Berne, creator of Transactional Analysis, pioneered the current self-help movement by simplifying the principles of personal effectiveness and making them available to lay people. He saw the role of an internal adult mediating between the internal child and parent, and showed people the "games" they were playing inside their "life script."

But none of these extraordinary people has had more direct impact on the conception, birth, and early growth of OD than the next four. Frederick Taylor, the first in chronological order, set the stage; the second and third (Kurt Lewin and Wilfred Bion) developed and applied the principles; and the last (Douglas McGregor) made them available to managers of organizations and the general public. They are also among the first names on Billie Alban's Origins of OD Time-Line² (see Figure 3.1).

1. FREDERICK TAYLOR—SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT (CA. 1893)

Following the Civil War, industrialization in America went rampant. Large factories were dotting the landscape where farms had stood before. Machines, the exciting new technology, were promising to make business owners wealthier than ever—if only they could get those lazy and greedy front-line workers to use the machines to their maximum potential. This ever-widening gulf between wealthy business owners and disgruntled and exhausted workers led to the growth of unions, providing at least some leverage for protecting employees from becoming essentially slaves-with-a-paycheck. It was inside this social cauldron that Frederick Taylor developed and implemented the first truly systematic and scientific approach to resolving workplace production problems.



Core Concepts



Figure 3.1. Origins of OD Time-Line

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No one in our long chain of OD ancestors is as controversial as Taylor, founder of what he called “scientific management” (Taylor, 1915). You might think of him as a hard-hearted efficiency expert with a stopwatch who tried to remake each worker into the exact image of the one who could do a specific task the best. Taylor studied “Schmidt,” the now-famous pig iron loader, who was shoveling more pig iron than anyone else. The popular image is of Taylor using Schmidt like a hamster in a wheel, driving him to accomplish even more to see what human beings were capable of. However, according to one Taylor biographer, Schmidt *jogged* to and from work each day for two months and built a house in his spare time! Taylor’s great discovery was that to load as much pig iron as Schmidt (and others) could do, the arms had to be *free* of load 57 percent of the day. Taylor was focused on making work *easier*, not harder.

Along the same vein, few people know Taylor as the father of matrix management, the incentive wage system, the champion of the front-line worker, labor-management cooperation, and paying the person, not the job. He was a man who believed that respect in the workplace should be based on knowledge and performance, not position, and, believe it or not, Taylor was the one who championed “servant leadership” among supervisors. As Weisbord (1987) points out, unbeknown to many OD people, Taylor’s overriding objective was *productive labor-management cooperation*, not just time-and-motion efficiency.

Taylor’s thinking dramatically shaped the world’s workplace and its leaders and continues to shape them—and our OD work today. Taylor’s insistence on (a) maintaining tight control of his interventions to ensure implementation of changes and (b) piecework—breaking down tasks into their simplest “chunks” and requiring a single person do a single task—became his undoing. It was left to our next progenitor, Kurt Lewin, to discover an even better way to (a) get good ideas for work improvement and (b) get people to actually follow through. Lewin’s approach meant, however, letting go of control and trusting the people *themselves* to figure out—with some support and guidance—what to do.

2. Kurt Lewin—The Grandfather of OD (ca. 1946)

Anyone who has ever uttered the words “feedback” or “action research” or “group dynamics” or “self-managed work teams” or “force field,” has been impacted by Kurt Lewin.³ Known today as “the grandfather of applied behavioral science,” Lewin, a Berlin-educated Polish Jew majoring in psychology, left Nazi-dominated Germany for the United States in 1933, saying, “I will not teach in a country where my daughter cannot be a student.” This practical way of thinking about real-world situations led him to create his revolutionary conceptual models for human behavior. As he was so fond of saying, “There is nothing so useful as a good theory.” This is because a theory (from the Greek *theorein*, to see) allows one to *see* what is happening in new ways.

Many of his new ways of seeing things were put to work in a single, well-documented project that began in 1939. In response to an urgent request from the manager at The Harwood Manufacturing Company in rural Virginia for help in raising production levels, John R.P. French (an external consultant from the University of Michigan and dyed-in-the-wool Lewinian) went to see what could be done. Working with an internal personnel manager, Lester Coch, they designed and carried out what was probably the very first “action research process.” Harwood, a pajama-making facility, was losing money rapidly, with very high turnover and absenteeism, in spite of wages and other benefits greater than workers could make elsewhere. Supervisors had tried every carrot-and-stick motivation and reward system they knew, all with little or no effect.

When the consultants arrived, they initiated what was then a *radically* different process, one that you will recognize as standard practice for consultants today. First they interviewed the plant manager, then the other managers and supervisors, then a representative group of front-line employees. After observing the system in action for a while, they made recommendations to the management team. The gist of their proposal: *begin an experiment with the front-line people, to learn what might make a difference in their productivity*. It is hard for us to understand how revolutionary this was in 1939! One can imagine some managers and supervisors thinking, “Oh, great. . . we’re going to let the inmates run the prison. . . .”

In support of this process they also recommended:

- That supervisors stop trying to raise production levels by addressing the work of *individuals*, and work instead on a system emphasizing and involving entire work *teams*, and
- That management set production goals that are *clearly attainable* by workers (when they appear impossible, there is no sense of failure when they are not reached).

Self-Managed Work Teams (ca 1939)

When production increased slightly, French and Coch began to hold informal weekly meetings with a cross-functional collection of high-producing workers to discuss what difficulties they encountered and how they might be overcome. Management agreed to try whatever this group suggested (they had nothing to lose).

After getting management’s permission, the high-performing group was invited to *vote* on what the production goal for individual workers should be. They raised the existing piecework targets from 75 to 87, a level never attained before, and said they would get there in five days—which they did, much to the astonishment of everyone involved. Meanwhile other groups in the plant doing the same work had no appreciable increase in productivity.

The Lewin-oriented consultants hypothesized that *motivation alone does not suffice to lead to change*. This link is provided by *people making decisions* that affect them. His conclusion: a simple process like decision making, which takes only a few moments, is able to affect workers' conduct for a long time. The making of a decision seems to have a "freezing" effect, which is partly due to the individual's tendency to "stick to his decisions" and partly due to her wanting to be a part of "the commitment of the group."

Force Field Analysis

The consultants then had a small group of workers plan their own hourly production rates by using "pacing cards." This group hit and maintained an amazing pace, going from 67 units prior to the experiment to 82 and stabilizing there. The other groups stayed where they were. Why?

Lewin had observed that the output of a worker was "quasi-stationary" and existed, not in a vacuum, but in a constantly shifting "field of forces," some helping and some hindering the desired increase. Changes in performance could be achieved by either (a) strengthening a "driving" force or (b) weakening a "restraining" force. The increases created at Harwood were not achieved by increasing driving forces, like more pressure to produce, or management-driven motivational methods, or even paying for performance. This is because such a top-down approach usually creates its own backlash of worker fatigue, nervousness, and roller coaster productivity. The results at Harwood, the consultants believed, came from *involving the people themselves* in discovering and then reducing selected restraining forces holding production back.

$B = f(p \times e)$

Perhaps the single most significant conceptual input to OD is this one: *individual behavior (B) is a function (f) of personal factors (p), multiplied by the impact of the current social environment (e)*. This model explains why some training-oriented change efforts aimed at the individual often fail. Like the alcoholic treated alone and then sent back to an unchanged family system, change efforts that do not take into account making changes in the (social) environment will not sustain themselves. This is because personal factors are multiplied by environmental factors. Lewin is known to have said, "I have found it easier to change the group than to change one individual in the group."⁴ Training conducted with intact work groups can reduce this problem, since both the individual (p) and their group (e) are being impacted.

The Birth of the T-Group⁵

In the summer of 1946, Lewin was invited by the Connecticut State Inter-Racial Commission to conduct a training program in race relations for local community leaders. In typical Lewinian "elegance," he suggested that they design a

program that would allow them to train the participants and conduct an experiment in “change” at the same time. Working with a team of colleagues, including two young graduate students, Ron Lippitt and Lee Bradford, the researchers led discussions during the day about the roots of inter-ethnic prejudice (primarily among Polish, Irish, and Italian immigrants) and its impact on communities.

The first evening the staff met alone in a basement room at the training site (The Teacher’s College in New Britain, Connecticut) to discuss what had happened during the day. Several participants wandered by looking for a lost jacket and, when they heard a snatch of the facilitators’ conversation, asked if they could sit in. Some staffers said, “No, this is a staff meeting.” But Lewin said, “Ya, ya, come in!” During a report by one of the researchers, a participant disagreed with the “feedback,” and a heated debate began. The discussion excited Lewin (“like an electric shock” said Bradford later) because it took the whole room out of a conversation *about* prejudice and plunged them into an *experience* of prejudice in action. He saw that in this real-time group discussion, they had created a microcosm of “community” within which the forces that create prejudice were happening in front of their eyes, triggered by “feedback.” The next evening, more participants attended the evening debriefing session, which, because of its less-structured, free-for-all nature, became the most energized session of the program!

Lewin saw immediately the power of what he dubbed the “here-and-now” sessions, and suggested that the next year’s program be planned to *feature* such conversations. The small group trainings were initially called “sensitivity training sessions,” since they were designed to sensitize participants to the forces of group dynamics (things like decision making and conflict resolution) in exploring attitude formation and other forms of prejudice in community life. (The use of the term “sensitivity training” as a vehicle for personal growth was a later off-shoot, led by a group called the Western Behavioral Science Institute.)

The Housewives Experiment

Another important Lewin experiment was with the U.S. military during WW II, a result of Ron Lippitt and his colleague Margaret Mead’s connections with the Department of the Navy. The government was interested in trying to get housewives to use what were euphemistically called “variety meats” (basically Spam), rather than the prime cuts, since there was a meat shortage and the best meat was needed for soldiers overseas. In this research project there were two groups made up of housewives. One heard *lectures* on the nutritional value of variety meats and why they should try the recipes that were given out. The second group, while they attended a preliminary lecture on the topic, attended a *group discussion* on the topic, where they could share their thoughts, concerns, and reasons for resisting the idea and discuss recipes. At the end of the day, they

were asked who would be willing to try some of the recipes, using variety meats instead of better cuts. Many of the women *in both groups* made a public commitment to trying the recipes. The follow-up research, however, found that the discussion method—which allowed people to voice their resistance—had actually lowered their resistance and been far more effective than the simple “telling” approach in generating long-term change in the housewives’ attitude and behavior. Lewin’s notion of the field of forces and how to reduce resistance by surfacing and accepting it was proven once again.

The Story of the Small Group and OD

Lewin died suddenly at age 57 in February of 1947, but his followers continued his work. Some of the more individually focused practitioners, like Carl Rogers, Jack Gibb, Will Schutz, and Matt Miles, realized the impact the small-group sessions had on participants’ personal development. They began to use the powerful unstructured training group format (referred to almost immediately as the “T [for Training] group”) both in work settings and in “stranger laboratories” for the general public. Soon it became obvious that the person-centered T-group triggered so much inner change and new behaviors, accompanied by potential embarrassment on re-entry, that its use inside organizations all but halted. OD consultants, however, like Herb Shepard, Tony Petrella, Peter Block, Bob Golembiewski, Stuart Atkins, and Allen Catcher, in true Lewinian fashion, tinkered with the format and created many variations that retained the power of the small group while reducing unnecessary personal exposure and risk.⁶ In this way the small-group training experience took its central place in the practice of “planned change” and, as you will see, led directly to the “discovery” of our field of organization development.⁷

3. Wilfred Bion—The Tavistock Method (1948)

While Lewin was working in America, on the other side of the Atlantic a British psychiatrist named Wilfred Bion was responding to the fallout of World War II. Bion was asked by London’s Tavistock Institute to work with traumatized and shell-shocked soldiers from the battlefield. (See his 1940 article, “War of Nerves.”) There were too many to treat individually, so Bion brought them together into groups. His intention was to move around the group working with one veteran at a time while the group basically observed and supported non-verbally. In the process, he, like Lewin, discovered the power of the group. The soldiers couldn’t sit still while Bion worked with someone else, and they spontaneously began to share their experiences, reaching out to their buddies. As they helped each other, they were also *learning* from each other—not just from Bion, the psychiatrist and authority figure. Bion came to see that *how leaders conduct themselves creates predictable responses from those they are leading*.

When the leader takes responsibility for the group's output, participants will predictably react to the authority figure with one of these three behavioral options:

- Fight—resisting or doing the opposite of whatever the leader suggests;
- Flight—finding a way to leave, physically or emotionally, or going along with whatever the authority suggests in a subservient way; or
- Pairing—forming coalitions with one or two others in the group as a safe haven.

When the leader takes responsibility for simply raising awareness of the group's *process* to the group, participants are more likely to respond with what Bion called Work, the fourth option. A participant who is engaged in Work is authentically staying in touch with what is happening and working through whatever conflicts emerge to the learning that exists on the other side. Bion discovered how to empower a group to take responsibility for its own work and learning.

The Origin of Socio-Technical Consulting and Self-Managed Work Teams

Marvin Weisbord (1987) recounts a marvelous anecdote, told to him by his dear friend and mentor, Eric Trist, about something that has had a quantum impact on our field. It happened immediately after WW II in the coal mines of England, as they tried desperately to recover economically and socially from the devastation of the war. Kenneth Bamforth, a long-time unionized coal miner and current Tavistock student of Trist's, went back to visit the South Yorkshire mine where he had worked for many years.

What he saw stunned him. His former colleagues had been experimenting with new ways to make extracting the ore continuous, having thrown out the older, traditional "long wall" approach in which groups of miners were organized into teams that performed a single task (think Taylorism). Instead, the union miners and general manager had gotten together with union support and planned the new system. The new technology of roof control enabled the miners to go back to an earlier social system—in which miners were multi-skilled and performed all jobs—an old way of doing things that had died under the influence of the Industrial Revolution. The result was that they could now mine coal twenty-four hours a day, not having to wait for an earlier shift to complete a task. Bamforth went back to Tavistock and invited his favorite professor, Eric Trist, to come down into the mine with him to see if this might not be useful to the country's business recovery. As Trist said later, "I came up a different man" (Sashkin, 1980).

This combination of a *technical* innovation, coupled with a *social* innovation, made "short wall" mining possible, something considered heretofore impossible,

significantly increasing both hard output and morale. Trist realized immediately the connection between England's business recovery and what he had just seen, putting together the therapeutic work Bion had done with leaderless groups and Lewin's work in small group dynamics. Teams, it appeared, if given the proper support and resources, could manage their own work—and produce at high levels. Because of our fifty years of OD hindsight, it is hard for us to realize the dramatic impact of this discovery!

You can see the similarity between Trist's insights and the ones Lewin and his successors were having as the T-group evolved. It was inevitable that cross-pollination would occur, and it did, as members of the U.S.-based A.K. Rice Institute, trained in Bion's "Group Relations" work, connected with people trained in the emerging "applied behavioral science" work of Lewin and his successors, Ken Benne, Ron Lippitt, Warren Bennis, Jack Gibb, Ed Schein, and others.

The Tavistock coal mine study had an impact on several European and Scandinavian companies that began to experiment with self-managed teams, including Volvo of Sweden, Shell Oil in Canada, and Esso in Norway. A few U.S. companies, such as Scott Paper and Procter & Gamble, also applied Bion's approach to self-managed work teams, with mixed results.

Bion and The Tavistock Institute recognized in the late 1940s and early 1950s the relationship of the larger social network to the work structure and the technical system, setting the stage for the naming and exploration of the systems thinking we know today. Their finding: It was not enough to focus on individuals or groups internally; you had to look at the structures and systems that surrounded them. Work redesign and job enrichment were also systems approaches to worker motivation, with Frederick Herzberg (1959) being the foremost explorer of applying the insights from Bion to motivating employees. These approaches recognized that an employee's productivity and creativity have more to do with the way the job is designed and the system around that employee than with the characteristics of the person. The Tavistock Institute had seen and highlighted this truth in the earlier coal mine studies.

From OD Elder John Adams

"Here's an interesting anecdote for you: The U.S.-based A.K. Rice Institute people were the ones who brought the Tavistock model of group work to the United States. At each NTL summer program we would have them do a Tavistock Module in the Professional Development Learning Community in the first session, and then have Harold Bridger come over from England and run a Tavistock Module in the second session.

"One year a carry-over participant who had attended both Tavistock Modules noted that the A.K. Rice folks (mostly from Yale at that time) always dressed formally, read their speeches, and sat physically outside of the small groups. Bridger showed up in safari shorts and a T-shirt and sat down with the groups and ad-libbed his inputs to the group.

“The participant asked Bridger why there was such a difference between the British ‘Tavi’ and the U.S. Tavi, to which Bridger replied: ‘Wilfred Bion was a proper Edwardian gentleman, and therefore was always formally dressed. He was rather a shy man, and felt more comfortable with prepared texts and being physically removed from the training groups. Alas, the A.K. Rice chaps have identified with Bion’s personal idiosyncrasies, rather than the intent of his theories.’” (Note: More personal reminiscences of “OD Elders” are available on the CD accompanying this book.)

From OD Elder Marvin Weisbord⁸

“In *Productive Workplaces* (1987), I traced a number of linkages among Taylor, Lewin, and Mary Parker Follett, and the many parallels between Taylor’s writing and Douglas McGregor’s. Lewin and Follett both had an appreciation for Taylor not shared by their descendents. Long before Lewin and Lippitt discovered/invented group dynamics, Mary Follett had a keen appreciation of groups. And, with Taylor, she shared a passion for non-authoritarian supervision. However, groups scared Taylor. Unfortunately, Taylor’s *techniques* never caught up with his *values*, a human limitation that I think many OD practitioners will identify with.”

Also from Marvin Weisbord

“I videotaped hours of interviews with Eric Trist, my friend and mentor for the last fifteen years of his life. Trist read Lewin’s work at Cambridge in the 1930s. When Lewin left Germany for the U.S. in 1933, he stopped off at Cambridge. Trist, a grad student, showed him around, recalling how Lewin admired the swirls on the chapel ceiling, saying they reminded him of the topological maps he liked to draw of social situations on blackboards (precursor of force field analysis on flip charts). That was their first meeting. They kept contact thereafter. One of Eric’s sad laments was that Lewin died before he could make his planned sojourn to Tavistock. Trist was primed for great things to happen when Lewin and the Tavistock group collaborated face-to-face. Trist also told me it was their shared appreciation of Lewin’s field theory that drew him and Fred Emery, diametric opposites in so many ways, together.”

4. Douglas McGregor—Theory X and Theory Y (1954)

It was Douglas McGregor, a young faculty member in psychology, who enticed Lewin to come to MIT in 1946 to create the Research Center for Group Dynamics. McGregor, an industrial relations manager during WW II, found in Lewin the theoretical base for his own work in solving labor-management problems. Like Lewin, McGregor liked the real, rough-and-tumble world of the workplace and, by attaching the Center to the school of *engineering*, the two of them were

able to avoid many of the constrictions and traditional paradigms they would have faced had they joined the school of academic psychology. (Because of little turns in the road like this, OD's birth took place in the laboratory of *work*—money, machines, information and people—and not in the laboratory of *pigeons* or *rats*.)

McGregor is best known for his Theory X and Theory Y management model, which asserts that there are two diametrically opposed worldviews available to managers, which result in completely different workplace results. You may know the essence of his theory; you may not know the source. Just as Lewin's life-long fascination with democratic processes grew out of his early experiences in and around Hitler's top-down, elitist Nazism, McGregor's model had its roots in his own family of origin. His father was a second-generation lay minister, running a shelter for men who had lost their jobs—and some their souls—a man who carried the pain of his “clients” heavily in his heart. His Theory X manager has an uncanny resemblance to his father and grandfather's “hard” and largely negative view of human nature as dominated by sin and “fallenness” (see Bennis, 1966). Young Doug, it could be asserted, tried his whole life to choose another path, one with a more “positive” view of human nature, his Theory Y.

Theory X managers hold the assumption about human nature that people are, by nature, lazy, greedy, and self-centered and must be tightly watched and managed (controlled) from the *outside* in order to get the best work out of them. Theory Y managers believe that people are, by nature, predisposed to want to do well, to make a contribution, and to learn and grow and only need a sense of direction and support in the form of feedback and coaching to *manage themselves* to do their best.

One caveat here, from Marvin Weisbord: “When I came along in 1969, having been heavily influenced by McGregor in my own company, I was appalled to find managers being labeled ‘Theory X types,’ which drove them ever deeper into resisting change. More, we ‘Theory Y types’ had our own hang-ups. We had to *learn* democratic management practices—as Lewin pointed out—because we had nothing in our repertoire between authoritarian and laissez faire behavior. *Nobody is born practicing Theory Y assumptions.*”

McGregor's book, *The Human Side of Enterprise* (1960), took the workplace world by storm. It seemed to encapsulate two well-known sides of human nature and offered a rational explanation, with supporting evidence, for what could be counted on from each approach when it came to motivating people. The book is still in print, attesting to its staying power. OD owes a great deal of its positive stance regarding human beings and the potential of teams and organizations to Douglas McGregor. People like Frederick Herzberg (1959) took McGregor's theories to the next level and made the distinction between “satisfiers” (pay, benefits,

working conditions), which can never motivate—only dissatisfy if they are not sufficiently present—and true “motivators” (recognition, achievement, responsibility, learning)—from Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.

Barry Johnson, author of *Polarity Management* (1996), would see this as a clear polarity-to-be-managed, not an either-or. Both Theory X and Y assumptions are present in most of us, often in conflict. It is now widely believed that there is a time for telling people what to do, temporarily accepting dependency, and a time for supporting independence and self-motivation. The trick is learning as much as we can about both polarities in ourselves if we want to work effectively with a wide range of others. McGregor receives our deepest appreciation for making the “other” pole of the polarity (Theory Y) so clear and defensible.

WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT OD

Our OD “grandparents”—Taylor, Lewin, Bion, and McGregor—handed this fundamental truth down to us, each in his own way:

Finding out what is actually happening (research)—
and why it is happening—and getting all that data “on the table”
where it is seen and discussed in a safe environment, has the
power to change people and systems (action).

It is this principle that differentiates the field of OD from other efforts to help or fix social systems. Every subsequent OD theoretical model, exercise, and/or practice engages clients in *participative reflection on the process(es) governing what is happening*.

What OD’s subsequent generations—now “elders” themselves—have done with what they received follows now.

THE ORIGINS OF OD TIME-LINE⁹

Co-author Billie Alban has done anyone who ever practices OD a *huge* service by creating what we are calling “The Origins of OD Time-Line” (presented earlier in Figure 3.1). Developed using a process she and her colleagues pioneered in the now well-established practice of Large Scale Change (see Bunker & Alban, 1997; Weisbord & Janoff, 2000), the time-line shows us clearly:

- What was happening as OD came into being—and evolved;
- The core OD concepts and when they emerged;
- The major contributors—theorists, researchers, writers, practitioners;

- The significant external forces and events that paralleled—and impacted—the birth and early years of our field; and
- The institutions that were first to adapt OD as part of their workplace culture.

As you can see in the figure, the horizontal axis is time, with the decades rolling from left to right. Along the side, vertically, are Core Concepts. (Even though, for graphic reasons, they are shown to run across the page as discrete elements, they often merge and blend with other elements. For instance, data feedback is also used in team building, and systems theory is applied in *many* of the core concepts.) The following material describes the core concepts and related elements.

Action Research

Lewin’s now-classic postulate—“No research without action; no action without research”—defines this element on the chart. One of OD’s fundamental principles is the use of data-gathering as the basis for planning subsequent interventions. Rensis Likert developed a widely used approach to action research using a scale of responses, allowing people to indicate how strongly they held a particular position on some item of organizational concern. The survey-feedback process was pioneered by Ron Lippitt and is a staple in every OD consultant’s repertoire today. Ron Lippitt and his brother, Gordon Lippitt, pioneered methods for feeding back the data and for “implication derivation,” something they insisted needed to be done *with* the client, not *for* the client. Robert Blake and Jane Mouton’s Managerial Grid fast became a research tool of choice because of its strong and clear visual presentation, making it immediate useful to both the consultant and the client.

If you look toward the end of this line you will note something called AAR, which means “after action review.” It is a process used by the Army to review military engagements that have taken place. NTL had a process called EIAG, developed by early Episcopalian OD consultant/trainer Nancy Geyer. In this model, first you Experience, something “happens” or you do something. Next you Identify important points in that experience or action; you then Analyze that incident, using appropriate models or theories; and then you Generalize: What have I learned here that I need to apply to the next situation? Learning takes place in response to survey data, but learning can also be a process of discussing any activity or incident that occurs.

Survey feedback, although used by industrial psychologists, has been part of the OD field and widely used, not only with teams but also in assessing entire organizations. There are surveys that look at employee morale, perceptions of leadership, clarity about mission and strategy, and so on. Likert’s scale, a Profile

of Organization Characteristics, demonstrated that when what he termed a Systems Four method for making decisions (a participative process) was used, it was more likely to indicate a successful organization and satisfied employees. Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid looked at the role of management in integrating concern for people with concern for productivity, using a system-wide approach. Data were collected from managers through surveys that were later used in workshops they attended to increase their ability to work with their subordinates, bosses, and peers.

One of the first applications of *computers* to assist in the action research process was *The People-Performance Profile (PPP)*, developed by John Scherer and Bob Crosby in 1978. The PPP measured and fed back scaled information to the *individual* on personal factors (for example, exercise, nutrition, alcohol and drug use, stress management). Each *work group* received data on things like decision making, conflict management, or problem solving, and *top management* received data on strategic planning, physical environment, organizational stress, and other factors. In 1983, Ron Lippitt told the developers he considered the computerized PPP and the sophisticated employee-involvement process used to share the data with clients "one of the most significant contributions to applied behavioral science since Lewin." It will be interesting to see over time the impact of the Internet on action research and surveys. Organizations are now surveying their employees through the Internet. One such survey of organizational culture, developed by Dutch consultant Gert Hofstede, was a study of 130,000 IBM employees in forty different countries!

Appreciative Inquiry

An interesting new approach to action research has been the introduction of appreciative inquiry. In brief, it is a method that looks at the *positive* aspects of "what is working" in the organization through storytelling and extrapolates from these stories the "more" that is needed to sustain the positive into the future. It combines data collection with a large-group meeting (or meetings) where the stories gathered are used as building blocks to design new initiatives for the future.

Beginning with a series of case studies at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, David Cooperrider and colleagues noticed that focusing on the strengths and life-giving factors in a human system were more likely to create innovative outcomes than traditional action research methods that tended to favor a deficiency orientation (see Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Cooperrider, Barrett, & Srivastva, 1995; Srivastva & Cooperrider, 1986). Primarily through interviewing and storytelling, appreciative inquiry begins with exploring the best of the past, leading to enlivened images of what could be. AI searches for the best of "what is" (one's experience up to now) to provide the basis for imagining "what might be." The aim is to generate new knowledge that expands the "realm of the possible" and helps members of an organization to envision together a desired future.

AI is treated in more detail in Chapter Twenty-Two.

Group Dynamics

We have already described the birth of the T-group and its subsequent application to personal development. One element of a T-group was that participants were encouraged to share their perceptions of one another. As group members received feedback and discovered the impact *they had on others*, they also took the risk to reveal the impact that *others had on them*. It is important to note that, in Lewin's model, receiving and giving feedback on individual behavior was only one element of group dynamics training. Lewin was very interested that people learn about the dynamics of groups as models of larger social systems, what helped them function effectively, and what helped them make decisions that the group would willingly commit to. Lewin and his students saw small-group work as having a political aspect—a kind of *training for democracy*.

OD Elder, Saul Eisen

“Paul Sheats, the head of Extension at UCLA, was in an early NTL T-group at Bethel. In 1951 he convened a planning committee, which led to the first Western Training Laboratory (WTL) in group development in the summer of 1952. Bob Tannenbaum was one of the people invited to staff those groups. Initially, these were two-week residential labs, with a weekend break in the middle. Others involved in staffing came from a wide variety of places, like Chuck Ferguson (who had worked with Carl Rogers), Hugh Coffey (from Cal Berkeley Social Psychology), Evelyn Hooker (of the Tavistock Institute), Jim Bugental (a humanistic psychologist), Verne Kallejian (a psychotherapist), Ruth Gordon (a psychiatric social worker), Marv Klemes (a psychiatrist), Martha Deane (in physical education), Irv Weschler (on the UCLA faculty), and a number of others. There was much excitement, experimentation, and learning among this early group of T-group trainers.

“After a few years they began referring to their work as Sensitivity Training Groups, rather than T-groups. (‘Sensitivity Training’ has more recently been co-opted to refer to diversity training.) The term reflected the WTL emphasis on personal development of individual participants, contrasted with the NTL emphasis on group dynamics or the Tavistock Institute emphasis on authority issues. The goals of these groups were to develop increased *sensitivity* to (or awareness of) implicit interpersonal and group interaction processes, leading to increased *behavioral flexibility* to respond appropriately and effectively based on that awareness.

“There was a lot of communication and cross-pollination between NTL and WTL during those early years, and these distinctions became less pronounced over time. These WTL labs were offered for about twenty years at a Lake Arrowhead conference center and were linked with UCLA's Executive Development Program. Abe Maslow visited one of these groups, and wrote about his observations in a book called *Eupsychian Management: A Journal* (1965).

“These group experiences were initially offered by NTL and WTL primarily to *individuals*—usually managers and executives—from *different organizations*. The practice was to keep people working together from being in the same group. The groups were thus referred to as “stranger labs.” The idea was that the learning and personal risk taking required would be inhibited by being in a group with co-workers. One exception to this practice was a team lab that Bob Tannenbaum did around 1952 with an intact team of managers. The first published work on team building was Bob’s shared learning of his exceptional team lab. Bob and others continued the evolutionary invention of what we know as true “team development” in the mid-1960s, at places like TRW Systems in Redondo Beach, California—one of the first matrix organizations and an on-the-job laboratory for brilliant OD pioneer Shel Davis. Shel Davis was the first internal OD practitioner.”

How “Team Building” Gave Birth to OD (Still from Saul Eisen)

“Around 1955 a group of consultants, including Herb Shepard and Bob Tannenbaum, worked with Jim Dunlap, VP of HR at TRW, and Shel Davis, who reported to Jim on a planned organizational change program. In the first phase, key managers were invited to participate in stranger labs at WTL and NTL. They viewed this as a seeding process to develop a culture of change. As a second phase, as these managers began asking for help with their own teams, one external consultant and one internal consultant (usually also with T-group experience) were assigned to work with a manager and his/her team. The procedure they developed was to interview the manager and all team members about the team issues and needs needing attention.

“They then took the team off-site for a week or so of intensive work together. The session was started with a feedback presentation by the consulting team, and that became the agenda for the off-site. These sessions had a strong T-group component, considering group and interpersonal interaction issues, but it was also grounded concretely in the task issues of the group and ended with specific action plans and decisions for how they would work together toward their task mission when they returned ‘home.’ Sound familiar?

“These ‘team labs’ very quickly supplanted the ‘stranger labs’ of the first phase, and a large number of key project teams became involved, using what they had learned to tackle pressing organizational issues and tasks. A later, third phase, began extending this approach to inter-group confrontation labs based on Dick Beckhard’s model—and then into other whole system interventions involving larger organizational units. *And that is how T-groups gave birth to OD.*”¹⁰

Interpersonal and Individual Skills

In the beginning, The National Education Association sponsored Lewinian-type small-group training, which gave birth to The National Training Laboratory (NTL) in the summer of 1947. Workshops have been held every summer since then using the facilities of a boarding school in Bethel, Maine. During these

early NTL sessions, in addition to social psychologists, many clinical psychologists came to the summer workshops and were often invited to be part of the staff. It is the perception of some OD elders that with the inclusion of clinical psychologists the focus of the T-group changed, and before long the focus was more on interpersonal skills, receiving and giving feedback, and personal growth, rather than on the original focus on learning about groups and how they work. There is no question that many people found these therapeutically oriented groups helpful. Several of Lewin's old students were upset with this trend, holding a strong belief that something important was being lost. Lewin's original intent, coming out of Nazi Germany, was to give people the insights and the skills that would generate more democratic, participative processes in groups and teams.

The Western Behavioral Science Institute, formed shortly after NTL, took on more of the personal growth aspects. There was a strong focus on the individual in the Western group, with The Esalen Institute being a well-known offshoot. There were tensions between those groups, those who wanted participants to learn about group processes and those who thought that personal development and personal growth should be paramount. In the 1970s, Hal Kelner organized a well-attended workshop at NTL called, "A 1950s Group Dynamics Experience," a small-group experience to demonstrate what Lewin had intended.

Dick Beckhard used to say, "In every team and organization there are issues around goals, roles, tasks—and interpersonal issues. Start with any of the first three, and the interpersonal will surface, but always in relationship to the first three." It was sanguine advice. It is not an either/or, but a polarity. Self-development and self-awareness are important, but so are the skills in working with groups, using participative processes, and helping groups make good decisions. These polarities are reflected in this book.

Survey-Feedback-Based Skill Development

As Lewin and his early "disciples" modeled, a number of different types of surveys were used to gather data feedback, both from the managers and from their subordinates and peers, often including something on their managerial style. This feedback was then used to provide training and development in the necessary skills. Data feedback surveys like LIFO, DISC, and MBTI were used for self-assessment. Other feedback surveys such as 360-degree feedback were developed to provide data from multiple sources on how their behavior was perceived. In addition to interpersonal and management skills, it was recognized that people need conflict resolution skills, systems thinking skills, and, more recently added, coaching skills.

Early on, people recognized the need to train people, internally and externally, in consulting skills. People in staff positions were encouraged to take training in how to consult with their internal client groups, and external people were given training in how to consult with client organizations. Interpersonal

skills are often needed by people either in leadership roles or in positions where their influence is not based on their roles or titles.

Systems Theory and Organization Change

Although the concept of systems theory was familiar to some of the founders of the field, much of the early work was done in small groups. There was a general belief that by working with groups of people in an organization you could change the culture. Then, in 1958–1959 an interesting event took place at General Mills. Richard Beckhard, the external consultant, and Cy Levi, the internal, were set to work in “sensitizing” the first-line supervisors on the shop floor. The idea was to give them better interpersonal skills in managing the hourly workforce and to encourage more participative ways of managing. After the workshop was over, research was conducted to see whether the desired behavioral change had taken place. It had. There were very positive reports. There had been a definite shift in the culture.

Several months later the researchers returned and, to their surprise, the situation was now worse than it had been before the workshops had occurred! What came to light was that nothing had been done with the *managers* who supervised the first level. A clear system theory message emerged: *If you want to change an entire system, you must address the whole system.* You cannot tamper with just a part of a system if you want it to change; you have to take into account the relationship of that small system to the whole. In order to promote an organization change, all the aspects of an organization have to be looked at, including such seemingly unrelated issues as the pay system, structure, physical arrangement, policies and procedures, and the way top management operates.

A seminal book appeared during this time, *The Social Psychology of Organizations*, in which authors Katz and Kahn (1966) took the system theory of the biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy and applied it to organizations. Von Bertalanffy, in writing about biological organisms, had written that organisms survive by their ability to work out a meaningful relationship with their environment. *The OD application: Organizations survive to the degree that they can both externally and internally adapt to change.*

Two Harvard professors, Paul Lawrence and Jay Lorsch (1969), developed a concept called Contingency Theory, which explored how an organization structures itself to meet the requirements of the external environment. The type of industry, and the stability or volatility of the market environment, may require different structures for different organizations. At the same time they recognized that, as the organization structured itself to meet the demands of the external environment, there was a need to make changes internally and find mechanisms to integrate differentiated functions. This they called “differentiation and integration.”

Open System Planning

Another process that developed as the impact of the larger environment became of greater concern was a process called Open System Planning, a methodology for recognizing and addressing external forces that impacted the organization, be they government agencies, customers, suppliers, or clients. The methodology recognized the need to adapt to emerging trends, but also the possibility of *influencing* some of the trends, to change or modify potential negative impact.

It is not coincidental that much of this has emerged as the external environment has become more competitive and more demanding. After the end of World War II there was such a dearth of consumer goods that companies focused on simply meeting the demand. It was a while before there was awareness of Japanese and German autos—as well as other imports—that were flooding the market. With the growth of the global economy, the need to be continually scanning the environment for important trends, at the same time working effectively with the demands of external as well as internal stakeholders, placed enormous pressures on both profit and non-profit sectors. Large Group Intervention, the methodology of getting the whole system in the room around an issue that is important to the key stakeholder, has been an effective way of working with the whole relevant system. (See Chapter Seventeen for more on Large Group Interventions.)

OD started with small groups and action research as a means for creating organizational change. This was followed by an emphasis on changing the individual and leadership. Finally, there was recognition that change had to do with taking the whole system into account both internally and externally. This is how the field presents itself today.

Early Adopters

Organizations had come out of World War II with a need to increase production and improve human relationships within work groups. It was important to train leaders how to work with groups and how to work with their employees and peers. It was natural that organizations and institutions would become interested in this kind of small-group training, asking, “How could we make a group of people working together on a task more effective?” In the early days of the National Training Laboratories, organizations began to send people to Bethel, Maine, to learn about groups. If you look at the bottom of the chart you will see some of the early adopters. Esso, now Exxon, was one of the companies to send people, with Herb Shepard being one of the pioneers. There was General Mills, led by Douglas McGregor, and TRW Systems with Stan Herman. Industrial trainers and human resource/personnel people often represented these companies.

Another institution that embraced the newly emerging field, sending selected clergy and lay leaders to NTL laboratories, was the Episcopal Church. Their enthusiasm spun off several organizations dedicated to spreading OD and the applied behavioral sciences into religious settings. Early NTL-trained Episcopal movers and shakers were Dick Byrd, David Jones, Bill Yon, and Mary Beth Peters, who came together with Lutherans Otto Kroeger, Roy Oswald, and John Scherer, Catholics Father Gerard Egan and Roland Sullivan, Methodists Ken Mitchell, Bob Crosby, and Jay Olsen, and Presbyterians Newt Fink, Del Poling, and Arnie Nakajima to launch The Association for Religion and Applied Behavioral Science (ARABS) in 1969. ARABS morphed into the Association for Creative Change (ACC), which had over 1,500 members in the late 1970s.

As you move across the chart, you will note that team- and group-oriented interventions were being used for a number of OD applications. As the civil rights movement took off, groups were being used to sensitize people (more like sensitivity training) to deal with issues related to race and gender. As the United States found itself in a far more competitive market after World War II, groups were used to emulate some of the methods being used in Scandinavia and Japan, such as Quality of Work Life and Total Quality Management. Procter and Gamble, in several of its plants, began experiments in self-managed teams. Team building continues today as one of the most-used OD interventions. (See Chapter Sixteen on team building.)

The increase in global teams has presented the field with some interesting challenges, such as meshing cultural differences and working with people spread across great geographical distances. The Internet has given birth to “virtual teams” as a way of managing globally dispersed people who have a common task or project.

Most major organizations have used organization development, sometimes calling it, as does the military, “organization effectiveness.” Some of the early adopters have been mentioned: Esso and TRW systems, The U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, the Chaplain’s Corps, and the Episcopal Church being among the first.

Two of the people on the bottom line of the chart—Shel Davis from TRW Systems and Cy Levi from General Mills—took the risk to bring the newly emerging OD methodology into their organizations rather than simply sending people to workshops. There were several external consultants who are well known in the field, Dick Beckhard (who taught at MIT) and Herb Shepard (affiliated with Case Western Reserve), mentioned previously. They were involved over many years in consulting with some of these same early adopting organizations, as well as in training the first and second generation of OD consultants.

One other important person to mention here is Ronald Lippitt, who spent his time focusing primarily on the non-profit sector. After the downturn of the auto industry in Michigan, Lippitt used Large Group Interventions to work with citizen groups to change entire communities in Michigan. In one city he involved

three thousand people in re-creating their community. He also built into his work a process of focusing on a “desired future,” rather than spending time solving tactical problems. Once you knew where you were and where you wanted to be, you could strategize how to close the gap. One important and less-well-known piece of his research showed what happened to a group’s energy when they focused on problems (it tended to sag) and when they focused on what was working that could be improved (it grew). Appreciative inquiry is based in part on this premise. Lippitt also was one of the first to postulate *the phases in the consulting process*, something every OD consultant today knows like a favorite bedtime story. See Chapter Five on competencies to view Ron and Gordon Lippitt’s integration with Lewin’s famous change model. Lewin believed that a successful change effort includes three aspects; unfreezing, if necessary the current state; moving to higher, more positive level; and freezing the system one is changing at the new state.

A WORKING DEFINITION OF OD

“Please, give me a nice clean definition of OD!” We have heard this asked so many times. Every practitioner has his or her own definition. Here are several:

- “Organization development is a long-term effort led and supported by top management, to improve an organization’s visioning, empowerment, learning, and problem-solving processes, through an ongoing, collaborative management of organizational culture—with special emphasis on the consultant-facilitator role and the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including participant action research” (French & Bell, 1999).
- “OD is an organization-wide effort, managed from the top, to increase an organization’s effectiveness and health through planned interventions in the organization’s processes, using behavioral science knowledge” (adapted slightly from Beckard, 1969).
- Here is ours: “OD is the application of behavioral science action research and systems theory to human systems, to increase the internal and external effectiveness of the organization, especially in managing change, using participative processes that involve all those affected.”

We *are* standing on the shoulders of giants. It is now up to us, their descendants, to do what they did so many years ago: discover *new* principles and methods of assisting leaders and their organizations to be as effective as they can be.

End Notes

1. Many colleagues contributed to this chapter, among them Warner Burke, John Adams, Saul Eisen, Edie Seashore, Denny Gallagher, Marvin Weisbord, and others. We have drawn heavily from Weisbord's wonderfully rich, easy-to-read, and well-documented description of the origins of our field in *Productive Workplaces* (1987).
2. Hundreds of people have contributed to this field. Regrettably, space does not permit all the contributors to be mentioned. We have had to make choices and apologize to those who do not find their names listed.
3. See Alfred Marrow's very thorough and very readable biography of Lewin, *The Practical Theorist* (1969).
4. Personal conversation between John Scherer and Ron Lippitt—who was in the room as one of Lewin's research assistants at this birth of the T-group.
5. See Bradford et al. (1964) for a more thorough description.
6. As Weisbord points out, Roger Harrison's "role negotiation" was a major programmatic step in reducing the threat of team building. John and Joyce Weir got rid of interpersonal feedback entirely in their self-differentiation labs. The invention of "percept language" made it possible for people to provide feedback to themselves while using others as projection screens.
7. We would like to settle two unsettling questions that have been dogging our field for years: Who named OD? and What does "OD" actually stand for? Who named OD, Herb Shepard or Dick Beckhard? The friendly debate has "raged" for years, but we are hereby putting it to rest. In 1974 Larry Porter, long-time editor of *The OD Practitioner*, sat down and conducted an interview with both of them, during which he raised the question (Porter, 1974). As Larry reported it in a tongue-in-cheek footnote, "They created this response 'for the record'—prompted by Herb's elfin sense of humor: 'Both Herb Shepard and Dick Beckhard are OD consultants of the external persuasion. After some discussion among the three of us as to who did what, we agreed that I (Larry) would identify them as follows in the article: Dick Beckhard, while consulting at General Electric in 1957, invented the term organization development. Herb Shepard, while consulting at Esso in 1957, invented the term organization development.'—Ed."

The proper full name for OD—at least in so far as the original co-namers intended—is "Organization Development" and not "Organizational Development." The incorrect linguistic version probably came out of the early emphasis on personal development described above. There. That should do it.

8. Marvin Weisbord is one of the most prolific writers and innovators in the field of OD. His books, especially *Productive Workplaces* (1987) and *Discovering Common Ground* (1992), are now classics, and he is the co-creator of the Future Search process (2000).
9. This time-line, developed by Billie Alban, is being published here for the first time.
10. There had been other experiments, such as at ESSO Texas, which involved putting almost everybody through stranger T-groups. It was an abject failure. Nothing changed. The key, it turned out, was shifting to T-groups where the entire team participated together.

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Using the HRD Audit to Build Convergence Between Human Resource Management and Organization Development

T.V. Rao and William J. Rothwell

According to thought leaders in the human resource management (HRM) and the organization development (OD) fields (see Costello, Limbrick, Towle, & Warner, 2002), HRM and OD *are*—or at least *should be*—converging (Sicard, Sicard Associates, Frank, & Insights, 2002). *Convergence* means that the two fields are coming together. HR practitioners are increasingly expected to act like OD practitioners by effecting culture change and unleashing worker creativity (McBain, 2001), and, conversely, OD practitioners must increasingly become knowledgeable about HR if they are to be most successful in helping their clients.

In making this point about the convergence of the fields, Sammut (2001, p. 9) writes:

“Human resources (HR) and organization development (OD) share similar roots in the human aspect of organizations. In the past, distinct differences between HR and OD served to clearly differentiate the two disciplines. However, as each discipline has evolved, the differences between them have diminished. Currently, the fields of HR and OD are blurred, with no evident dividing line drawing distinction between these two disciplines.”

In this chapter we address the following important questions:

- What are personnel management and human resource management?
- What do practitioners in the HR field traditionally do, and how are their roles changing?

- What is organization development?
- What do practitioners in the OD field traditionally do, and how are their roles changing?
- Why are the two fields converging, and what are the implications of that convergence?
- How could HR and OD practitioners work together to realize the benefits of synergy by using an HRD audit?

WHAT ARE PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT?

Personnel management means the traditional administrative functions of keeping personnel records and managing an employer's payroll. It is tactical in focus. It is also compliance-oriented, focused on ensuring employer compliance with governmental laws, rules, and regulations and employee compliance with an employer's policies and work rules.

Human resource management (HRM) is more strategic in its orientation than personnel management. It includes personnel management but goes beyond it to ensure that the organization's people are recruited, selected, managed, and developed in line with the organization's strategic objectives. Human resource management includes such people-oriented functions as:

- Human resource planning;
- Employee recruitment;
- Employee selection;
- Employee orientation;
- Work analysis;
- Competency assessment;
- Training;
- Career management;
- Performance management;
- Compensation management;
- Benefits management;
- Health and safety;
- Employee communications; and
- Labor relations.

The traditional foundation of all HR is usually work analysis and its product, the job description and job specification. However, many leading organizations are moving away from that foundation, basing HR instead on competencies so as to reap the possible differences in productivity between exemplary and average performers in every job level and category (Dubois & Rothwell, 2004).

In the HR field, it is common to distinguish between human resource management (HRM), which is broadest in its orientation and addresses all issues about people, and human resource development (HRD), which focuses on increasing individual and group productivity through learning (Brown, 2003). HRM emphasizes the utilization of existing people in their current jobs. HRD emphasizes the preparation of people for new roles, new jobs, their development in the current roles and for unleashing the creative potential of human beings.

WHAT DO PRACTITIONERS IN THE HR FIELD TRADITIONALLY DO, AND HOW ARE THEIR ROLES CHANGING?

HR roles have been changing for some time. Historically, of course, HR practitioners have been expected to fill different roles in their organizations. Often, those roles have changed as management philosophies changed and have also, on occasion, conflicted (Rothwell, Prescott, & Taylor, 1998). However, numerous, recent competency studies have demonstrated the requirements for success in the HR field (for instance, see “Five key competencies,” 2003; “More on what CEOs want from HR,” 2003; Orr, 2001; Wright, 2001).

Today’s HR professionals often have been depicted as dramatically different from the past. For example, they are expected to focus on and guarantee deliverables from deployment of HR practices that create value for their organization; develop organizational architectures and use them to translate strategy into action; perform organizational diagnosis by applying their organizational architectures to set organizational priorities; reengineer HR work through the use of technology, process reengineering teams, and quality improvements; be the employees’ voice in management discussions, ensuring that employees feel that their issues have been heard; and be catalysts, facilitators, and designers of both cultural change and capacity for change, establishing a vision for the HR function that excites clients and engages HR professionals (Ulrich, 1997).

The six challenges for HR professionals outlined by Ulrich (1997) and his list of competencies indicate the closeness of HRM and OD. The six challenges are listed and described below.

HR Theory. HR professionals must master the theory behind HR work. Theories of learning, motivation, and organizational change should lay the foundation.

HR Tools. Improvements must continue in HR core technologies such as executive development, recruiting and staffing, training and education, rewards and recognition, performance management, employee relations, labor relations, and diversity. Five HR tools will become critical for the future: (1) global HR (focusing on the ramifications for HR of global business strategy); (2) leadership depth (defining and creating leaders for the future); (3) knowledge transfer (creating systems that will transfer knowledge throughout the organization to reduce cycle time and increase innovations and quality decisions); (4) cultural change; and (5) customer-focused HR.

HR Capabilities. The new HR capabilities should include, in addition to the traditional ones, the following:

- *Speed:* Doing HR work quickly without sacrificing quality;
- *Implementation:* Turning ideas into actions;
- *Innovation:* Thinking creatively about problems; and
- *Integration:* Linking customer goals, strategic plans, and employee needs.

HR Value Proposition. The HR investments in the future must focus on value creation and developing a value equation for HR services and products. HR practices affect employees in terms of their morale, commitment, competence, and retention; customers in terms of their retention, satisfaction, and commitment; and investors in terms of profitability, cost, growth, cash flow, and margin.

HR Governance. HR professionals must improve how work is coordinated.

HR Careers. HR professionals may work in one of four locations: site (plant); business unit (product line or country); corporate HR; or outside the HR function. He or she may be a specialist or a generalist, and he or she may be a contributor (working alone), integrator (coordinating the work of others), or a strategist (directing policies and procedures).

Key HR competencies include the following:

- Knowledge of business (financial capability, strategic capability, technological capability);
- Knowledge of HR practices (staffing, development, appraisal, rewards, organizational planning, communication, and so forth);
- Management of change (creating meaning, problem solving, innovation and transformation, relationship influence, and role influence);

- Business mastery (knowing the business, financial, strategic, technological, and organizational capabilities of the organization);
- Human resource mastery;
- Change and change process mastery; and
- Personal credibility (accuracy in all HR work; consistency or being predictable; meeting commitments or doing what is promised on time and within budget; being personally comfortable with colleagues, subordinates, and supervisors; confronting appropriately; integrity; thinking outside the box; confidentiality; and listening to and focusing on the executive problems).

Personnel management, the predecessor of HR management, was born with the advent of government laws, rules, and regulations that affect organizations. In the United States, that began during World War I when employers were first required by government to track payrolls and keep personnel records. In Europe, it started even earlier (Bouchez, 1992). At the time, the dominant management philosophy was Scientific Management, based on the work of Frederick Taylor. Taylor advocated establishing clear distinctions between managers and workers and rewarding people in line with their contributions. These early views of management led personnel managers of that time to focus attention on establishing job descriptions and devising rational pay systems.

For the most part, it is fair to say that, in the earliest role of personnel management, practitioners were expected to function as clerks who would track payroll, track benefits, and build record-keeping systems to track employers' actions with workers. That led to the role of paper shuffling administrator, a part still played by HR practitioners in many organizations to this day. It also related to the HR practitioner's role as compliance officer, one who ensures that the organization's managers and employees function in ways that are legal. A compliance officer acts to make sure that the organization abides by the law.

Following the Hawthorne studies, personnel managers found themselves facing a new view: their role should be to maintain, or improve, good morale in their organizations. That was an important impact of the so-called human relations view of management, which followed Scientific Management. One key lesson of the Hawthorne studies was that people perform better when someone pays attention to them. While subsequent critics have questioned the value of the Hawthorne studies because the research designs may have been flawed, their impact seems clear. Personnel managers became the social directors of their organizations. They were expected to lead efforts to get people to work together more effectively by paying attention to them as people and the social side of the business.

The impact of that role today on HR is still apparent. HR is often tasked to lead company picnics and other social events, track employee morale through attitude surveys, address issues centering on employee wellness, manage

cafeterias, supervise workplace security, and generally oversee “employee welfare.” It is no mistake that, in some British organizations, the HR director is called the “welfare officer.” It is the legacy of this past.

In the 1950s and 1960s, modern human resource management was born. Following a difficult recession in the late 1950s, economists and management thinkers alike began discussing the importance of the human side of the enterprise. These thinkers emphasized that organizations should do more to unleash employee potential and should focus their humanistic efforts, made popular with the human relations school of management thought, toward improving productivity. It was an appealing philosophy that still impacts many organizations to this day.

The role of human resource management should be to create a work climate in organizations where individuals can realize their potential. The important focus of this role should be to strike a balance between organizational needs for productivity and profits and individual needs for increased autonomy. It was at this time that such terms as human resource management and human resource development were first coined to declare a new role for the old “personnel” function.

But more recent thinking about HR has reflected different schools of thought. One view is that HR should shift its focus to become more strategic in its thrust, relegating highly transactional efforts (such as processing forms or record-keeping) to outsourcing agents or downloading them onto managers or employees to carry out. Another view is that HR should shift its focus to become more oriented to human performance improvement or performance consulting, which helps operating managers to troubleshoot and solve “people problems” that exceed their skills. A third view is that HR should shift its focus to help managers and workers to manage change, and that role links closely to OD.

One study of HR managers revealed their own opinions about how their roles are changing. According to the study results (Lipiec, 2001), HR managers perceive that their successors will increasingly focus on the following:

- Personnel management and managers’ competencies (training, path of careers): 43.5 percent
- Organization development (managing change, organizational culture): 41.8 percent
- Employment policy: 33 percent
- Employee cooperation: 21 percent
- Personnel administration (pay, recruiting, work evaluation): 14 percent
- Social relations: 9 percent

From these results it seems clear that HR managers in the study perceived that HR will have to focus more attention on building an organization’s

competitive advantage through focusing on human capital and on facilitating organizational change. HR will thus become more strategically focused in the future, seeking to align people with organizational direction and competitive advantage.

WHAT IS ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT?

Organization development (OD) means “a system-wide application of behavioral science knowledge to the planned development, improvement, and reinforcement of the strategies, structures, and processes that lead to organization effectiveness” (Cummings & Worley, 2001, p. 1). Its purpose is to bring about progressive change in organizational or group settings. Unlike some other approaches to change management, it is distinctive in its appreciation for—and emphasis on—human values and the participation of those affected by the change as well.

OD is differentiated from change management by Chris Worley (2005, personal communication) as follows:

- “Change management is agnostic to diagnosis. It doesn’t care if the change is the right one or not. It just implements.”
- “OD is concerned about transferring knowledge and skill. In short, it is concerned that the client system learns. That’s the only value difference that I think is justifiable. I fear that saying OD is more ‘humanistic’ oriented is a slippery slope.”

WHAT DO PRACTITIONERS IN THE OD FIELD TRADITIONALLY DO, AND HOW ARE THEIR ROLES CHANGING?

Competency studies of OD have described the kind of person an OD practitioner must be to be successful. These studies are described in this book in Chapter Five. But it is worth emphasizing that OD practitioners are themselves the instruments of change. Being an effective OD practitioner is thus as much about “being” the right kind of person as it is about demonstrating specific occupational knowledge and skills.

WHY ARE THE TWO FIELDS CONVERGING, AND WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THAT CONVERGENCE?

Few organizations operate in a stable, competitive environment. What is needed is a more systematic and strategic orientation to aligning people, and their creative abilities, to the organization’s competitive objectives. That means OD must

be integrated into HR practice. At the same time, many “levers” available to an organization’s leaders to effect change in organizations reside in HR, including recruitment, selection, reward, feedback and appraisal systems, career pathing approaches, and much more. For that reason, those who set out to effect change must be masterful in their applications of HR.

The implications of convergence mean that OD practitioners must become more familiar with all aspects of HR, from strategic to tactical, and how they can be applied to improve productivity and organizational work climate. At the same time, HR practitioners should become more familiar with OD and its total system and humanistic approach to effecting change with people in organizational or group settings. While this whole book is about OD, it may be appropriate to present some of the HRD approaches here to familiarize the OD practitioner with the thinking in the HR field. Some of the frameworks across the world are reviewed to provide appropriate background for the OD practitioner and to indicate how OD has already been tied to HRD.

Pareek and Rao’s Framework

In 1975, Larsen and Toubro, a prominent engineering company in India, appointed two consultants from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, to study the performance appraisal system and make recommendations for improvement in it. The two consultants—Udai Pareek and T.V. Rao—studied the system through interviews, observation, and analysis of secondary data and suggested a new system. They recommended that “performance appraisal, potential appraisal, feedback and counseling, career development and career planning, and training and development get distinct attention as unique parts of an integrated system they called the ‘Human Resources Development System’” (Pareek & Rao, 1998, p. 24). This system was proposed as a separate system with strong linkages with the HR system. Pareek and Rao (1977), in their second report of the human resources system in L&T, recommended that the personnel function be transformed into a human resources function (HRF) and suggested a trifurcated function: personnel administration, HRD, and worker affairs. Adding organization development also to the HRD function, the consultants recommended that, since OD is being added and it is a new function requiring new skills, it is necessary to strengthen that component part of HRD. They recommended that the company appoint an OD manager with two officers to do research and generate data needed for OD interventions (Pareek & Rao, 1977).

The consultants differentiated HRD from other components of HRF. Structurally HRD was to be a subsystem of HRF and integrated with the other two subsystems (personnel administration and worker affairs) to be administered by the director-level person (for example, a vice president of personnel and HRD) through task forces and subsystem linkages. Intersystem linkages were outlined between various HRD subsystems to create an integrated system.

Pareek and Rao also outlined a philosophy for the new HR system and fourteen principles to be kept in mind in designing the system. These principles dealt with both the purpose of HRD systems and the process of their implementation. These principles included:

- HRD systems should help the company to increase enabling capabilities. The capabilities outlined in their report included development of human resources in all aspects, organizational health, improvements in problem-solving capabilities, diagnostic skills, and the capabilities to support all the other systems in the company.
- HRD systems should help individuals to recognize their potential and help them to contribute their best toward the various organizational roles they were expected to perform.
- HRD systems should help maximize individual autonomy through increased responsibility.
- HRD systems should facilitate decentralization through delegation and shared responsibility.
- HRD systems should facilitate participative decision making.
- HRD systems should attempt to balance the current organizational culture with changing culture.
- There should be a balance between differentiation and integration.
- There should be a balance between specializations of the function, supported by other functions within the organization.
- HRD systems should ensure responsibility for the function.
- HRD systems should build upon feedback and reinforcement mechanisms.
- HRD systems should maintain balance quantification and qualitative decisions.
- There should be a balance between external and internal help.
- HRD systems should plan the evolution of the function.
- There should be a continuous review and renewal of the function.

In sum, the integrated HRD systems approach of Pareek and Rao (1975) is characterized by the following elements: (1) a separate and differentiated HRD department with full time HRD staff; (2) six HRD subsystems including OD; (3) inter-linkages between the various subsystems; (4) fourteen design principles; and (5) linkages to other subsystems of the human resource function. After L&T accepted these recommendations in full and started implementing them, the State Bank of India—the single largest Indian Bank and

its Associates—decided to use the integrated HRD systems approach and decided to create a new HRD department. Since then, many organizations in India have established HRD departments.

Other Frameworks of HR

As HRD has come to prominence in the last decade, other frameworks and models have come into existence. Some of these are briefly reviewed here.

The Strategic HR Framework Approach. This framework, formulated by Ulrich and Lake (1990), aims to leverage and/or align HR practices to build critical organizational capabilities that enable an organization to achieve its goals. This framework offers specific tools and paths to identify how a firm can leverage its HR practices. Business strategy, organizational capabilities, and HR practices are the three important elements in this framework. Dave Ulrich (1997) presented a framework for HR professionals in terms of four key roles: (1) management of strategic human resources; (2) management of firm infrastructure; (3) management of employee contributions; and (4) management of transformation and change. The activities for managing strategic human resources include aligning HR and business strategy, organizational diagnosis, reengineering organization processes, shared services, listening and responding to employees, providing resources to employees, managing transformation and change, and ensuring capacity for change.

To manage the firm's infrastructure, HR professionals must be heavily involved with examining HR processes for improvement, reducing unnecessary costs in HR efforts, and finding new ways to do old HR activities better. That requires HR professionals to design and deliver efficient HR processes for staffing, training, appraising, rewarding, promoting, and otherwise managing the flow of employees through the organization. To manage employee contributions requires HR professionals to listen and respond to workers and find ways to provide employees with resources that meet their changing demands. To manage transformation and change requires HR practitioners to identify and frame problems, build relationships of trust, resolve issues, set directions, and create and fulfill action plans.

The Integrative Framework. The integrative framework offered by Yeung and Berman (1997) identifies three paths through which HR practices can contribute to business performance: (1) by building organizational capabilities; (2) by improving employee satisfaction; and (3) by shaping customer and share holder satisfaction. Yeung and Berman (1997) argue for dynamic changes in HR measures to refocus the priorities and resources of the HR function. They argue that HR measures should be business driven rather than HR driven; impact driven rather than activity driven; forward looking and innovative rather than backward looking; and instead of focusing on individual HR practices should focus on the entire HR system, taking into account synergies existing among all HR practices.

Human Capital Appraisal Approach. This approach outlined by Friedman, James, and David (1998) of Accenture, formerly Anderson Consulting, is based on the belief that there are five stages in the management of human capital: (1) the clarification stage; (2) the assessment stage; (3) the design stage; (4) the implementation stage; and, finally, (5) the monitoring stage. There are also five areas of human capital management: (1) recruitment, retention, and retirement; (2) rewards and performance management; (3) career development, succession planning, and training; (4) organizational structure; and (5) human capital enablers. A 5 by 5 matrix using these five stages and five areas could be used to evaluate and manage the human capital well. For example, during the clarification stage the managers examine their human capital programs to fit into their strategy and overall culture. They may also examine how each area fits into the strategy.

HRD Score Card Approach. A recent approach formulated by Rao (1999) envisages that HR interventions designed for the greatest business impact should be of high quality (or mature) in terms of HRD systems, competencies, culture (including styles), and business linkages. An HRD audit is used to assess the maturity level and the appropriateness of each subsystem of HR, including the appropriateness of the HR structures and the level of competencies of HR staff, line managers, top management; the HRD culture (defined in terms of openness, collaboration, trust, autonomy, proactivity, authenticity, confrontation, and experimentation); the congruence of the top management and HR staff styles with HRD culture; and the extent to which all the systems and practices result in employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction.

P-CMM Approach. Curtis and his team (Curtis, William, & Sally, 1995) developed the People Capability Maturity Model (P-CMM) to provide guidance in improving the ability of software organizations to attract, develop, motivate, organize, and retain the talent needed for continuous improvement of software development capability.

The strategic objectives of P-CMM are as follows:

- Improving the capability of software organizations by increasing the capability of the workforce;
- Ensuring that the software development capability is an attribute of an organization rather than that of a few individuals;
- Aligning the motivation of individuals with that of the organization; and
- Retaining human assets (that is, people with critical knowledge and skills within the organization).

A fundamental premise of the maturity framework is that a practice cannot be improved if it cannot be repeated. Organizations act sporadically in their least mature state. The P-CMM describes an evolutionary improvement

path from an ad hoc approach to a more systematic and sustained approach. It helps an organization move from inconsistently performed practices to a mature, disciplined, and continuously improvement-oriented approach that emphasizes the development of the knowledge, skills, and motivation of the workforce.

It is intended to help the software organizations to (1) characterize the maturity of their workforce practices; (2) guide a program of continuous workforce development; (3) set priorities for immediate actions; (4) integrate workforce development with process improvement; and (5) establish a culture of software engineering excellence. It is designed to guide software organizations in selecting immediate improvement actions based on the current maturity of their workforce practices. The P-CMM focuses on improving practices related to the work environment, communication, staffing, managing performance, training, compensation, competency development, career development, team building, and culture development. The P-CMM is based on the assumption that organizations establish and improve their people management practices through the following five stages of maturity: initial, repeatable, defined, managed, and optimizing. Each maturity level comprises several key process areas (KPAs) that identify clusters of related workforce practices. When performed collectively, the practices of a key process area achieve a set of goals considered important for enhancing workforce capability.

According to Curtis, William, and Sally (1995):

“In maturing from the initial to the repeatable level, the organization installs the discipline of performing basic practices for managing its workforce. In maturing to the defined level, these practices are tailored to enhance the particular knowledge, skills, and work methods that best support the organization’s business. The core competencies of the organization are identified; the workforce activities are aligned to the development of these competencies. In maturing to the managed level, the organization uses data to evaluate how effective its workforce practices are and to reduce variation in their execution. The organization quantitatively manages organizational growth in workforce capabilities, and when appropriate, establishes competency-based teams. In maturing to the optimizing level, the organization looks continuously for innovative ways to improve its overall talent. The organization is actively involved in applying and continuously improving methods for developing individual and organizational competence.”

All these approaches share much in common. All of them:

1. Are systems-driven approaches that emphasize HRD systems or subsystems or tools;
2. Attempt to link HR practices with business goals;
3. Recognize the importance of HR professionals; and
4. Recognize the importance of HRD.

The integrated systems approach of Pareek and Rao envisages a separate HRD department for effective design and implementation of HRD systems. It uses strategy as a starting point (as in Ulrich & Lake, 1990) and therefore focuses on all the systems to achieve business goals and employee satisfaction. It aims at synergy—as in the integrated approach of Yeung and Berman. It also proposes the phased evolution of HRD function (similar to the P-CMM approach) and includes most elements of the human capital approach.

These frameworks indicate that HRD is essentially a change-focused process. They also provide credence to the argument that the HR or HRD manager must be essentially a skilled change manager. OD skills therefore are needed to be a successful practitioner of HRD. They indicate that OD and OD skills are essentially embedded into HR practice.

HOW COULD PRACTITIONERS IN HR AND OD WORK TOGETHER TO REALIZE BENEFITS OF SYNERGY BY USING AN HRD AUDIT?

OD is sometimes thought of as part of the HR function. HR managers are expected to be change agents. They are also expected to undertake OD interventions besides managing systems, such as recruitment, induction, performance management, career planning, training, rewards management, feedback and coaching, work redesign, and others. But one common point of reference that brings HR and OD together is human resource development, a systematic approach to develop people in organizational settings. (Of course, HRD has been renamed Workplace Learning and Performance [WLP] in many circles around the world today. That reflects new thinking about what was once called HRD.)

In the early years of HR, HRD facilitators were frequently trained in process skills and functioned as OD consultants. As the HR function evolved fully and became stabilized, issues began to emerge about variations in the performance of the function. Some organizations assigned it a limited role and failed to use it for organizational improvements. On one hand the scope and opportunity for HRD to make an impact increased in terms of creating a learning culture and learning organizations. On the other hand, sometimes ill-prepared HRD managers do not use appropriate process skills. To evaluate the impact of HRD and establish accountability for HR efforts, the HRD audit emerged. Typically conducted by a group of auditors or consultants, an HRD audit can be viewed as an OD intervention in its own right.

In the subsequent sections of this chapter, details of the HRD audit and the way it has emerged are presented. This is followed by a brief description of the results of an HRD audit and the linkages between an HRD audit and OD.

Why an HRD Audit?

To get the best from HR, alignment must exist between HR's functions, strategies, structures, systems, and styles and those of the business. HR should be aligned both with the short-term and long-term organizational efforts. The HRD audit is an attempt to assess alignment and improve it.

Having an HRD department does not guarantee effective HRD. Effective HRD in an organization requires that:

- The top management of the organization recognizes the strategic advantage and the critical value addition provided by people;
- The role of HRD be clear;
- Line managers understand, accept, and internalize their own role in developing people;
- A learning culture has been established and maintained in the organization;
- Appropriate HRD systems are identified to suit the needs, requirements, and strategies of the corporation and are effectively implemented;
- HRD systems are periodically reviewed and aligned and realigned with the organization's goals;
- Supportive HR policies are formulated and implemented;
- The HRD function is staffed with competent people;
- The styles, beliefs, and values of the top management are aligned to promote a good learning and competency-building culture; and
- The HRD function and its approaches to implementing its strategies are periodically reviewed.

It is to achieve the last objective that the HRD audit can be most effectively used. The HRD audit is a comprehensive evaluation of the current human resource development strategies, structure, systems, styles, and skills in the context of an organization's business plans. The HRD audit attempts to find out the future HRD needs of the company after assessing the current HRD activities and inputs available.

Concepts That Guide HRD Audits

Several fundamental concepts guide any HRD audit. They are worth reviewing.

First, an HRD audit is comprehensive. An HRD audit starts with a thorough investigation of an organization's business plans and corporate strategies. While an HRD audit can be carried out in organizations that lack well-formulated plans, it is most effective when the organization possesses an effective strategic plan.

Second, the HRD audit starts with attempts to answer the following questions:

- *Where does the company want to be ten years from now, three years from now, and one year from now?* Answers to this question must be provided by top management. If strategic planning documents exist, they should be reviewed. On the basis of the answers to these questions, the consultants finalize the subsequent audit strategies and methodology. The consultants also make an effort to identify what core competencies the organization will need to realize its strategic plans. The consultants also attempt to identify what competencies will be needed at various levels—such as workman level, supervisor level, junior management level, middle management level, and top management level—and in such functions as finance, production, and marketing. The listing of all these core competencies and skills needed for the future is the starting point of the HRD audit. The HRD audit normally attempts to assess what competencies exist in the organization as well as what gaps exist for realizing the strategic objectives.
- *What is the current skill base of HRD staff in the company in relation to various roles and role requirements?* To respond to this question, the qualifications of HRD staff as well as their job descriptions and the training programs they have attended are examined. HRD staff are also interviewed to identify the skill gaps in the organization. Training needs and performance appraisal forms provide further insights into HRD staff capabilities. Department heads and other employees provide insights into their competencies and other skill requirements.
- *What are the HRD subsystems available today to help the organization build its competency base for the present, immediate future, and long-term goals?* The auditors attempt to identify various HRD subsystems that are available to ensure the availability, utilization, and development of skills and other competencies in the company. These HRD subsystems are evaluated and the framework is presented as part of the HRD audit. All HRD tools existing in the organization are listed and studied in detail.
- *What is the current level of effectiveness of these systems in developing people and ensuring that human competencies are available in adequate levels in the company?* The focus of this question is to assess the effectiveness of each system. For example, what is the (relative) effectiveness of the performance appraisal system? That question is answered by discussing it with employees. The auditors examine appraisal forms, look at the linkages between appraisal and training, conduct surveys to assess how much coaching and other components of appraisals are being used and also conduct workshops as necessary to assess the

effectiveness of these systems. Similarly, consultants make it a point to meet those who have been through the induction training recently or those who are in the process of being inducted into the company and record their opinions about ways to improve the induction training method.

- *Is the organization's HRD structure adequate to manage the HRD in the company?* To address this question, HRD auditors examine how well the existing HRD structure can handle the present and future HRD needs of the company. This examination assesses the existing skill base of the HRD staff, their professional preparation, their attitudes, their values, their developmental needs, the line manager's perceptions regarding them, and other issues of interest to the client. Temporary task forces and other contingent organizational activities are examined as well.
- *Are top management and senior management styles of managing people in tune with the learning culture?* To address this question, an attempt is made to examine the leadership styles, human relations skills, and competencies of senior managers. A key issue is how much their management style contributes to a learning environment.

The HRD Audit Examines Linkages with Other Systems

The HRD audit examines the linkages between HRD and other systems such as total quality management, personnel policies, and strategic planning. Based on the results of this examination, the consultants offer recommendations about:

- The future HRD strategy required by the company;
- The structure the company needs to have for developing new competencies;
- The systems that must be strengthened;
- The styles and culture that are compatible with HRD processes in the company; and
- Other issues identified by the client.

The HRD Audit Is Business Driven

The HRD audit always keeps the organization's strategic objectives clearly in focus. At the same time, the consultants attempt to increase the professionalism of HRD in the organization. By keeping the organization's strategic objectives in focus, the HRD audit attempts to evaluate HRD strategy, structure, system, staff, skills, and styles and their appropriateness.

It should be emphasized that the HRD audit is not a problem-solving exercise. It may not be able to provide any solutions to specific problems the organization is facing. For example, it may not offer solutions to pressing industrial relations problems or corrective action problems with individuals. In other

words, the HRD audit is not a tool for troubleshooting organizational performance problems. However, it may be able to throw light on the root causes of the problems. It will not give feedback about specific individuals. It will, however, give feedback to organizational leaders and other stakeholders about the HRD department, its structure, competency levels, leadership, and processes, as well as the influence of HRD on the other systems.

The Methodology of an HRD Audit

The methods for auditing the HRD function have been used in many organizations (Rao, 1999; Rothwell & Kazanas, 2003). A team of auditors visits a corporation and uses many methodologies to assess the appropriateness and adequacy of the various HRD systems, strategies, structures, competencies, culture, and processes.

The audit starts with a briefing to the CEO and the chief of HR, who may set an agenda and focus areas for evaluation. The interview with top managers starts with an in-depth investigation of the organization's strategic plans and uses that as a basis for outlining the organization's competency requirements. The current competencies, structures, and HRD systems are assessed for their capability to position the organization for the future. Suggestions are made to improve ways of achieving the future business goals and plans. The HRD audit is contextual and, at the same time, relies on the available knowledge of the potential of the HRD systems to help the organization realize its goals.

To answer the questions posed in the previous section, auditors use various methods. They are described in detail below.

1. *Individual Interviews.* The auditors normally make it a point to interview the top managers and senior managers individually. Such individual interviews are necessary to capture their thinking about the organization's future plans, to obtain sensitive information, and to gather information about management style and corporate culture. Top managers also have a good perspective due to their strategic positions. Union leaders, departmental heads, some strategic clients, and informal leaders are also individually interviewed. In addition, if the organization is small and is manned by professionals, the auditors make an attempt to enlarge the audit coverage and interview randomly selected people from different levels and functions.
2. *Group Interviews.* It is not feasible to meet the thousands of people who may be employed in very large organizations. The authors have found that, in this situation, group interviews—sometimes called focus groups—are a good means by which to collect information about the effectiveness of existing systems. Group interviews typically include four to eight individuals, preferably drawn from the same or similar levels in the organization. In Asia, this is important because junior

employees are freer to express their views without the presence of senior managers. However, it is quite common to have cross-functional representation of employees in the same group. If the organization is large, the auditors make an attempt to conduct group interviews for each function separately so as to keep the levels homogenous. In both individual and group interviews conducted for an HRD audit, the following open-ended questions are often asked:

- What do you see as the future growth opportunities and business directions of the organization?
 - What skills and competencies do members of this organization have that you are proud of?
 - What skills and competencies do you need to run your business or to perform your role more effectively at present?
 - What are the strengths of your HRD function?
 - What are the areas where your HRD function can do better?
 - What is good about your HRD subsystems, such as performance appraisal, career planning, job rotation, training, quality circles, induction training, recruitment policies, performance counselling, worker development programs, HRD departments, and so on?
 - What is weak about them? What can be improved?
 - What changes do you suggest to strengthen HRD in your organization?
 - What do you think are the ways in which line managers can perform more development roles?
3. *Workshop*. In some cases, large-scale workshops are substituted for individual and group interviews. Workshops may be conducted for groups ranging in size from thirty to about three hundred. They are gathered in a room and tasked to do the HRD audit. Normally, in the workshop the participants work in small groups either around various subsystems of HRD, such as performance appraisal, or around different dimensions of HRD; do an analysis of organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; and make a presentation.
4. *Questionnaire Method*. A questionnaire is a powerful tool for an HRD audit. In this method, comprehensive questionnaires can be developed for assessing various aspects of HRD, including its subsystems, their execution, and impact. Such questionnaires should be administered to company executives at the outset of an HRD audit. The questionnaire can be administered individually or collectively to groups. One approach that the authors have found to work is to select respondents at random, call them to a room, explain the audit objectives, and

administer the questionnaire. This approach ensures many respondents complete the questionnaire. Rao and Pareek have developed other questionnaires since the time the first comprehensive HRD audit questionnaires were prepared. These questionnaires assess various HRD dimensions—including the competencies of the HRD staff, line manager styles, and approaches used in the implementation of various HRD systems (see Rao, 1990, 1999).

5. *Observation.* HRD auditors should physically visit the workplace—including the plant, the machinery, learning centers or classrooms, discussion rooms, the recreation and eating facilities, and other places created by the organization to promote work-life balance. In some countries, employees live in a colony or have special living places owned by the organization or created exclusively for the company, such as hostels, a hospital or dispensary, and schools. If this is the case, auditors should visit these as well. These visits afford HRD auditors opportunities to observe how congenial and supportive the climate of the company is. Such first-hand observation by HRD auditors is essential because employees are not likely to give their best if they live or work under bad conditions.
6. *Analysis of Secondary Data.* The analysis of secondary data can yield insights into the company's HRD assets and liabilities. For example, in a company employing nearly fifty HR people, only two had received technical training in the HRD area. An analysis of the training programs revealed that few had attended any HRD program in the past five years. The analysis of secondary data can prompt such insights.
7. *Analysis of Reports, Records, Manuals, and Other Published Literature.* HRD auditors should also take time to analyze reports, records, manuals, and other relevant literature. Examples include annual reports, marked handouts, the organization's training calendar, the organization's HR manual, and various circulars. An analysis of such documents can provide useful information about the organization's strengths and weaknesses.

Preparing for the HRD Audit

The organization has to prepare itself for the audit. All diagnoses are painful, particularly if improvement is necessary. If improvement is warranted, then key priorities must be identified and implemented. That requires more work. Hence, undertaking an audit requires courage from the HR department.

As preparation for the audit, the auditors must become familiar with the current HRD system. They do that by undertaking a thorough examination of documents. Exhibit 4.1 delineates a list of documents needed by the auditors before the audit.

Exhibit 4.1. Checklist of Audit Documents

- Personnel manual
- Manpower planning guidelines
- Recruitment policies
- Promotion policies
- Performance appraisal manuals
- TQM manuals
- Quality circles, shop-floor committees, etc., guidelines
- Suggestion schemes and other guidelines
- Training policy guidelines
- Succession planning and career planning guidelines and methods
- OD interventions, if any, taken by the organization
- Activities of the HRD department—annual reports, etc.
- Training calendar and reports of training activities
- Diagnostic and evaluation studies
- Reward systems—policies and guidelines
- Communication systems and reports
- In-house newsletters and other communication mechanisms
- Delegation manuals or guidelines
- Job-rotation and transfer policies and practices
- Organizational structure of HRD department
- Small-group activities, shop-floor committees, and details
- Exit interview guidelines and data
- Documents dealing with facilities offered to employees
- Worker education and training programs
- Welfare schemes and facilities
- Residential colony facilities guidelines
- Climate surveys, culture studies
- Previous HRD audit reports
- Other studies undertaken by trainees and students
- Age profiles grade-wise and department-wise for assessing retirements, etc.
- Attrition rates, department or unit-wise, and exit interview data
- Any other documents having implication for HRD strategies
- Organization charts, if necessary

The HRD Scorecard

Rao (1999) has introduced the concept of the HRD scorecard, a series of four letter grades assigned by the HRD auditors based on the audit results. They assign letter grades for the following dimensions:

1. The *HRD Systems Maturity* indicates the relative maturity of the systems in place.
2. The *HRD Competencies Maturity* indicates the competency level of the HRD managers, whether line managers have the attitudes required to learn and grow, and whether the styles of top managers are aligned to the organization's HRD philosophy.
3. The *HRD Climate* indicates whether the organization's strategic goals and the HRD culture are aligned.
4. *Business Linkages* indicates the extent to which the HRD systems, competencies, and the culture are aligned with the business goals.

The letter grades range from an "A + " to an "F," where A + indicates an extremely high level of maturity and F indicates an extremely low level, or total lack of maturity. The HRD scorecard helps to identify, at a glance, the areas where the firm needs to focus. Consider the scorecard of the hypothetical company shown in Exhibit 4.2.

The scores shown in Exhibit 4.2 indicate that this firm possesses high competency levels of HR and line staff and reasonably good HRD systems. The HRD culture has not yet fully developed (or the HRD systems did not yet have their impact). The business linkages of all the systems are weak. The organization therefore should pay attention to improving business linkages of the HR systems.

Exhibit 4.2. Sample HRD Audit Scorecard

<i>Systems Maturity</i>	<i>HRD Competencies Maturity</i>	<i>HRD Culture Maturity</i>	<i>Business Linkages</i>
B +	A	C	D

THE HRD AUDIT AS AN OD INTERVENTION

Results of HRD Audit Interventions

The author's experience in initiating OD with the aid of the HRD audit in India has shown the following results.

The audit in several organizations resulted in establishing organizational systems and processes such as potential and performance appraisal, career planning, training, and mentoring. The most frequent changes seen were the installations of performance appraisal and job rotation efforts.

In a few companies the HRD audit has resulted in the formulation of clear-cut policies on promotion, employee communication, and reward and recognition. In other organizations, the HRD audit seemed to have drawn the stakeholders' attention to issues like developing trust, collaboration, teamwork, and a quality orientation. In a few others, the HRD audit resulted in increased role clarity.

In one organization, as the audit started with the issues of future strategies, top managers could not identify what those plans were. They indicated that the plans came from the multinational head office, and they had no freedom in influencing them. The turnover from Indian operations was negligible and therefore the parent office paid little attention to the corporation. As a result, the top management could not communicate the future of the organization clearly to the employees. This affected to some extent the morale and motivation of employees. The corporation has good practices and the employees were proud. On the basis of the HRD audit report, which indicated the difficulties in ensuring employee commitment without an appreciation of the company's future plans, top managers negotiated and planned the future strategic plan for the company.

In another company, the HRD audit indicated the need for developing local workers as HRD managers and the need to reorient the HRD systems to fit the local culture. The company recruited an HRD manager on a short-term basis. That manager designed a number of HR systems and also trained the local line managers in HRD. The systems designed were integrated into the TPM, ISO 9000, and other such interventions.

The examples cited in the paragraphs above indicate that the HRD audit can prompt many insights about ways to improve company performance.

HRD Audit Failures

In at least two cases in the author's experience, the HRD audit was not successful. In one case, the HRD manager was very enthusiastic about having the HRD program audited. The audit report indicated a very poor state of HRD in

the company. The staff competencies were rated as poor; the practices were questioned; and improvements were suggested. The benchmarking data also indicated this company to be a poor performer in HRD, although the company itself was profitable and was successfully meeting competitive challenges. Although the audit started with an interview with the CEO, no opportunity was provided to the auditors to make a presentation to the CEO. As a result, the audit report did not receive any attention, and the auditors considered the effort a waste.

In another company, top managers commissioned the audit but were busy with the reorganization of a critical marketing function. Top managers devoted all their time and attention to the reorganization and did not create an opportunity to learn about the audit findings. The auditors felt that some audit findings were directly related to business improvements in the planned reorganization, but the auditors were not positioned to draw top management's attention. The effort did not produce results.

These two examples seem to make it clear that the following processes in the HRD audit have the greatest potential in initiating and managing change:

- The initial interviews with top managers;
- Benchmarking data on the HRD audit questionnaire supplied to the company;
- The presentation made to the stakeholders by the auditors at the end of the audit; and
- The report itself and the way the report is handled.

Results of a Research Study

Jomon (1997) conducted a research study to identify the factors influencing the use of an audit as a change tool. He studied four organizations that were audited about three years after the first audit. He tried to assess the influence of the following variables in the effective use of an HRD audit:

- Management styles;
- Organizational characteristics;
- A profile of the HRD department;
- The competency levels of the HRD department staff;
- The CEO's commitment; and
- The HRD chief's commitment.

Jomon's study indicated the following in each of four companies:

Post-Audit Scenario: Organization 1. Soon after the audit, the management held a number of meetings and a final action plan was formulated. Although

the action plan covered HRD at the policy-making level, at the operational level, and at the departmental level and contained a joint action plan for the HRD/training department, the reports as well as the plan were kept confidential. The following changes were brought about as a result of the audit exercise:

- A system to assess the potential of higher-level people based on key competencies has been established;
- Promotion policy is now shared with everyone;
- Employees are aware of their potential career paths;
- Mechanisms to help employees plan their work efficiently were set up and employees were helped by their supervisors to plan their work effectively;
- Employees now go for training with a clear understanding of the knowledge and skills they are expected to acquire from the training; and
- Regular circulars, notices, and bulletins give adequate information to the employees about the company, the market situation, the changes in the environment, and so forth.

Post-Audit Scenario: Organization 2. This company had shown substantial changes in a three-year post-audit period. The current situation was characterized as follows:

- Clear personnel policies have been established, including promotions policy, communication policy, reward and recognition policy, and many more;
- Team spirit at this company is of a high order as conveyed by the employees themselves;
- Performance planning review and development (PPRD) systems have been revamped and a well-structured feedback mechanism is in place now;
- Key performance areas (KPA) provide role clarity and direction to the employees in their work, and role clarity is very high among employees;
- External training programs are chosen carefully after collecting enough information about their quality and suitability; and
- Action-oriented research is very well-established and taken seriously and acted on.

Post-Audit Scenario: Organization 3. The first audit was conducted in 1993. A management council meeting was organized to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and the recommendations from the audit. Strategic

issues related to HRD were also considered at this juncture. The status in 1997 is presented below:

- Manpower requirements for each department are identified well in advance;
- Key competencies have been identified and a system is in place for assessing the potential of people for higher-level responsibilities;
- Employees also participate and contribute to annual performance plans;
- KPAs provide role clarity and direction to the employees in terms of their work;
- A very high level of role efficacy exists—as stated by the employees themselves;
- OD initiatives, research orientation, communication, empowerment, and reward systems are yet to be established; and
- The HRD staff, although inadequate in number, was considered highly competent.

Post-Audit Scenario: Organization 4. In this company, weaknesses highlighted by the HRD audit included the following:

- No potential appraisal system and an ad hoc performance appraisal system;
- No career planning system;
- Lack of role clarity;
- Poor induction procedure;
- Absence of mentoring;
- High confusion and friction in values and approach;
- Lack of initiative and a mechanical approach to work;
- Human orientation was missing;
- Operators were treated badly; and
- Personnel policies were not development-oriented but were discipline-oriented.

Once the HRD audit report was submitted, the HR chief called all the managerial staff for dinner and presented the findings. Based on the discussions, an

action plan was drawn up, which, after implementation, brought about the following changes:

- A potential appraisal system and a systematic performance appraisal system were established;
- Career planning was done up to the executive level;
- Role clarity was brought about through identification of KPAs;
- A systematic induction and training program was established;
- Mentoring was initiated;
- Employee trust level increased;
- Employees at all levels have become highly involved;
- A human orientation has been injected into the business process with opportunities for growth and development provided to all employees;
- Operators were empowered, and efforts were made to improve management-operator relationships; and
- The integration of all HR-related activities was achieved, and it is now focused on developmental activities.

A subsequent study by Jomon (1998) indicated the following:

- There is a direct relationship between the CEO's commitment toward HRD and the effectiveness of the HRD function;
- There is a direct relationship between the commitment of the HRD chief as assessed by other members of the organization and the effectiveness of the HR function;
- Organizations having senior executives with empowering management styles show a high degree of HR effectiveness. They also tend to have more effective HR systems. These companies had a dominant participative style with a backup professional or organic style. An altruistic management style was found to have an adverse effect on the effectiveness of the HR function; and
- Organizations with staff competencies were also found to be good in implementation.

The results of this study by Jomon and the HRD audit failures cited earlier indicate the importance of OD skills in the successful use of the HRD audit.

Study Conclusions

The following can be inferred from the above:

- An HRD audit is essentially a change management tool. Its focus is not limited to improvements in HR departments and the HR function. Its scope is larger, encompassing all human process improvements.
- An HRD audit uses a number of tools that are traditionally used in OD, including survey research and survey feedback, large scale interactive workshops, secondary data analysis, task forces and in-house teams, and observation as diagnostic tools. The process also essentially follows the OD process to a large extent, including initiating with top management commitment, using participative methods, and focusing on human processes (learning, development, empowerment, and so forth). It deals with improvements at multiple levels, covers all employees, uses them as a part of diagnosis (which is an OD value), and also focuses on improvements in business as well as HR strategies, HR systems, organizational climate or HRD climate, performance appraisals, workplace learning, and career systems. It aims at creating a learning culture, and its implementation involves all stakeholders and requires change management insights and skills. Hence by having OD skills, the HRD managers, HRD auditors, and other professionals involved in an HRD audit can enhance the success rate.

For the OD practitioner, the HRD audit is a tool that can help in dealing with a number of human process issues. The OD practitioner should be able to see and appreciate the intent of using HRD systems, processes, and culture as tools to achieve the same or similar goals as those OD is pursuing.

SUMMARY

This chapter addressed important questions, such as:

- What are personnel management and human resource management?
- What do practitioners in the HR field traditionally do, and how are their roles changing?
- What is organization development?
- What do practitioners in the OD field traditionally do, and how are their roles changing?

- Why are the two fields converging, and what are the implications of that convergence?
- How could HR and OD practitioners work together to realize the benefits of synergy by using an HRD audit?

The HRD audit was not originally intended to be an OD tool. By virtue of its diagnostic and participative methodology, it works as a change management tool. But the audit process does have the potential to serve as an OD intervention, and it can facilitate bringing together HR and OD.

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Competencies of OD Practitioners

Christopher G. Worley, William J. Rothwell, and Roland L. Sullivan

Consulting competencies: Any list of the professional capabilities of an OD consultant is extensive—something like a combination of the Boy Scouts’ law, requirements for admission to heaven, and the essential elements for securing tenure at an Ivy League college.

—Lippitt and Lippitt, 1978, p. 94.

Say “competency” in a management meeting and you are likely to have about the same effect as if you shouted “fire” in a crowded theater—however, instead of inciting a panic, confusion usually ensues. While competency modeling is supplanting work analysis as the foundation for human resources management and is therefore increasingly critical to those in human resource or related fields (Dubois & Rothwell, 2004; Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999), misunderstandings about the term are all too common (Mirabile, 1997). For organization development (OD), the question of competency has been the subject of both ongoing efforts (Sullivan & others, 1992–2005; Worley & Varney, 1998) and empirical research (Shephard & Raia, 1981; Worley & Feyerherm, 2003). This too has resulted in considerable confusion about whether competencies differentiate between effective and ineffective practitioners (Church, Burke, & Van Eynde, 1994), whether minimal levels of competence are required to practice OD (Worley & Varney, 1998), and whether competencies should be used as part of professionalizing the field (Church, 2001; Weidner & Kulick, 1999). In fact, these misunderstandings can be so severe that we often ask clients to stop the conversation and provide a definition whenever the term *competency* is used. Without clear understandings and shared definitions, productive conversation is usually not possible.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore OD competencies at the individual level of analysis. In addition to defining the term and its relevance to OD practice, we review prior OD competency studies and the history of a long-term

effort to define them. Based on that long-term effort, we set about the task of addressing two important questions. First, is there any underlying structure to the list of competencies? The list of competencies has grown quite large. Of both practical and research interest is whether a smaller number of reliable concepts adequately represent the longer list of specific competencies. Second, does the structure provide any increased utility to the field? That is, if there is structure to the list, are these smaller numbers of competencies more useful in defining the characteristics of an effective OD practitioner than the larger list of separate items or more useful than other competency studies? The chapter concludes with observations and suggestions for using OD competencies to guide practitioner development.

COMPETENCIES AND THEIR IMPORTANCE

In the simplest business sense, a *competency* refers to—according to an often-cited definition—“an underlying characteristic of an employee (that is, motive, trait, skill, aspects of one’s self-image, social role, or a body of knowledge) which results in effective and/or superior performance in a job” (Boyatzis, 1982, pp. 20–21). A competency is thus associated with an individual’s characteristics in performing work and includes *anything* that leads to successful performance and results. It is not tied to work activities (as job descriptions are) or to the minimal entry requirements sufficient to qualify for a job (as job specifications are). In short, *competencies are characteristics of people doing a certain kind of work*. A competency model is thus a narrative description of the person who successfully performs a job (such as a supervisor), works in an organizational function (such as the marketing division), or works in an occupation or field (such as OD).

Applied to OD, the term competency must take into account the nature of the work being performed. Informed by early definitions of competence in the field (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1978), discussions among researchers and practitioners have produced the following definition: *An OD competency is any personal quality that contributes to successful consulting performance*. The term *personal quality* is intended to embrace areas of self, including values and driving principles; areas of knowledge, including fluency with relevant theories and models; and areas of skills and abilities, including the requisite behavioral capacity to perform certain tasks.

The Motivation to Study OD Competencies

Several philosophies guide competency studies in general, including what should be described, who should be investigated, and the time span over which competencies should be studied. Approaches to competency modeling, if rigorous,

can be quite technical (Cooper, 2000; Dubois & Rothwell, 2000). For the purposes of this chapter, the relevant philosophies guiding this research include (1) What do we plan to do with the competency model? (2) What's the starting point? (3) How can competencies be measured? and (4) How should competencies be built?

The competency model created here was intended to provide newcomers to the field with an outline of the skills and knowledge required to effectively practice OD and to guide individual development or academic curriculum efforts. The starting point for this study is a competency list that has been under development for more than thirty years by Sullivan and his colleagues (McLean & Sullivan, 1992). Over time, this competency list has expanded and contracted. This study was undertaken to determine whether there was any structure underlying the current list. We hoped to provide some suggestions about how people might use the list for developmental purposes.

The Importance of Competencies to OD

OD competencies are the characteristics that define successful performance; they provide a convenient means of distinguishing OD practitioners from managers or trainers. In short, competencies in OD delineate who one needs to be, what one needs to know, and what one must be capable of doing. Thus, an OD competency model as a detailed description of an ideal performer has many practical applications.

For academicians, a competency model of the OD field could:

- Guide curriculum development;
- Provide students a way to choose programs appropriate to their career goals;
- Provide a guide for accreditation of OD academic programs;
- Help faculty members identify their own development needs in the field; and/or
- Provide a guide to the academic advising of students who are preparing to enter—or wanting to advance professionally—within the OD field.

For managers of in-house OD departments or functions, a competency model of OD could:

- Help to identify professional development needs of staff members by providing a foundation for comparisons in 360-degree assessments or performance management systems;
- Provide a starting point for devising recruitment and selection criteria; and/or

- Give clues about what interview questions to ask during selection interviews and what evidence to seek of competence during the selection process.

For clients, a competency model of the OD field could:

- Help in sourcing and selecting external OD consultants; and/or
- Provide a target or ideal set of skills and knowledge that might be transferred to the client system;

For individual OD practitioners, a competency model of the OD field could:

- Provide a starting point for self-reflection, a frame of reference against which to reflect on key personal strengths (that can be leveraged and used to mentor or coach others) and on areas needing development (that should be a focus of personal and professional development in the field);
- Provide a basis from which to seek coaching and mentoring by others; and/or
- Allow for distinctions to be made about different sets of competencies essential to practice.

For the field of OD, a competency model of OD could:

- Help the field of OD establish a clearer identity; and/or
- Provide a method to determine qualifications to practice OD.

PRIOR COMPETENCY RESEARCH IN OD

Much research has been focused on the competencies required for success in OD (see, for instance, Adams & Callahan, no date; Bushe & Gibbs, 1990; Church, Wadowski, & Burke, 1996; Eubanks, O'Driscoll, Hagward, & Daniels, 1990; Head, Sorensen, Armstrong, & Preston, 1994; Lippitt, & Lippitt, 1978; McDermott, 1984; Neilson, 1984; O'Driscoll & Eubanks, 1993; Partin, 1973; Shepard & Raia, 1981; Varney, 1980; Warrick & Donovan, 1979; Worley & Feyerherm, 2003; Worley & Varney, 1998). We draw primarily from three studies. Shepard and Raia's (1981) OD competency study is one of the earliest reports. A Delphi study with seventy "OD experts" generated a list of eighty-three items in twelve categories. More recently, Varney and his colleagues (Worley & Varney, 1998) developed a

list of sixty-seven “entry level” competencies in four categories for academic programs, and Worley and Feyerherm (2003) explored twenty-eight OD competencies with the guidance of practitioners and researchers who were early founders of the field. More details on these three studies are provided below.

More germane at this point is a description of the competency study that serves as the basis for this chapter’s empirical work. About 1974, a long-term effort to define OD competencies was initiated by Sullivan (1974). Over the past thirty plus years, he and his colleagues have worked with over 3,500 individuals from around the world to generate, refine, and build a list of practitioner attributes. His intent was to define what knowledge and skills were essential to be regarded as a competent OD practitioner. The process began with a seven-item skill list for OD practitioners developed by Kenneth Benne at the National Training Laboratories (NTL) in the 1950s. Sullivan and Ron Lippitt expanded the list from seven to twenty-five items guided by the following change phases:

1. Development of a need for change (“unfreezing”);
2. Establishment of a change relationship;
3. Working toward change (“moving”);
4. Generalization and stabilization of change (“refreezing”); and
5. Achieving a terminal relationship.

In a subsequent iteration, and encouraged by OD founders Bob Tannenbaum and Richard Beckhard, Sullivan invited feedback from approximately fifty of the most recognized experts in OD. Their task was to review the list, add items they believed were missing, and delete items they believed were not central to good OD practice. The interest was great enough that it garnered a 90 percent response rate from that group.

Since that initial iteration, there have been more than twenty revisions of the list. In terms of participation, the revisions have included similar requests of the recognized experts with additional names added over time as well as the following efforts:

- Annual reviews were conducted at national OD Network conferences;
- Periodic reviews were held at the annual OD conference in Mexico;
- Reviews were conducted at local OD network meetings and at ASTD chapter meetings;
- Sessions on OD competencies were delivered in Malaysia, Singapore, South Africa, Ireland, India, and Russia; and
- Feedback on the OD competency model was solicited from graduate OD classes at Pepperdine and Loyola Universities.

In addition, the list has been circulated and reviewed by over eighteen professional organizations, including the Academy of Management, Association for Quality and Participation, the National Training Laboratories, and the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland. Early on, the OD Institute supported the competency modeling effort by establishing an advisory committee. ODI's belief that OD needed to become a profession led them to support efforts that clarified the field's ethics or established an essential body of knowledge and skills. Versions of the OD competency list have been published in the OD Institute's *International Registry of Organization Development Professionals and Organization Development Handbook* since 1992.

In terms of the list's content and length, it has expanded and contracted over the years. From the initial list of seven and then twenty-five items, the list grew to over 220 items in the early 1990s. In response to concerns over the length, the list has been reviewed and reduced by various processes and participants. Around the fourteenth or fifteenth revision in the mid-1990s, the list was organized around a version of the action research model, including such change phases as:

- Entry
- Start-up
- Assessment and feedback
- Action planning
- Intervention
- Evaluation
- Adoption
- Separation

Continued efforts to refine and revise the list were continued throughout the 1990s, with the last formal revision occurring around 1999. At that time, the list contained over 175 items.

This event history of the OD competency list leads to three assumptions about the current study. First, the list developed by Sullivan is exhaustive and inclusive. A large number of people, representing founders of the field, new practitioners, international practitioners, and academics, have reviewed, contributed to, and revised the list. The items on the list seem representative of the competencies OD practitioners should be expected to demonstrate. The list therefore has at least some face validity, and, as a result of the broad input from different OD constituencies, there's a fair chance that it has some content validity as well (Nunnally, 1978). Second, the list is still quite long and, in some cases, the items beg measurement. For example, what exactly

does “prepare leadership for the truth” mean? Similarly, many generic items only appear in one section of the list. For example, the item “build trusting relationships” only appears in the marketing section but could easily appear in other stages of the change process. The current list may therefore be constrained in its description of OD competencies. Third, Sullivan’s efforts have been qualitative and consensus building in purpose. He has been trying to get the field to develop and agree on the skills and knowledge necessary to practice OD. As a result, the list hasn’t been subjected to any sort of quantitative testing—a requirement of any good competency modeling effort (Rothwell & Lindholm, 1999). We don’t know, for example, whether contracting skills are any more or less important than implementation skills in successful OD practice.

The time seems right, therefore, to apply a more quantitative approach to determine whether any structure exists within the list and to explore the relative importance of various competencies.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

To approach the purpose of this study—to explore the structure and utility of the competency list generated by Sullivan and his colleagues—the following methodology was applied.

First, the items were reviewed by the authors for use in a survey format. The items were screened for vocabulary (jargon), clarity, assumptions, and bias (Emory, 1980; Sudman & Bradburn, 1983). In particular, several items were “double barreled” and had to be split into two or more questions. For example, one of the original items in the list was “identify the formal and informal power in the client organization in order to gain further commitment and mobilize people in a common direction.” This item was broken up into several items, including “identify formal power” and “confirm commitment of resources.” On the other hand, many items were considered redundant and eliminated. The final number of items used in this study was 141.

Second, the questionnaire was designed. The survey was organized into sections similar to the most recent version of the OD competencies and roughly paralleled the action research process. The survey contained nine sections.

The first two sections, marketing and start-up, roughly correspond to the entry and contracting phase of the general planned change model. The marketing section contained eighteen items and the start-up section contained thirteen items. The third section was titled diagnosis and feedback and contained twenty-three items. The action/intervention planning section contained sixteen items. The fifth section, intervention, contained seven items. The next two sections, evaluation and adoption, contained thirteen and nine items,

respectively, and correspond to the evaluation and institutionalization processes of planned change. The eighth section was titled separation and contained five items. The final section presented thirty-seven items under the heading of “other competencies” and represented a list of new items suggested by experts and other contributors to Sullivan’s list of competencies.

Respondents were asked whether the competency was essential to success in OD today and, if so, the importance of the item to successful OD practice. The response format for the first question was “yes/no,” while the importance scale ranged from 1 (not at all critical) to 5 (absolutely critical). The intent in the importance scale was to encourage the respondent to make discriminations between competency items that were “nice to have” versus “had to have” for success. The data analyzed here are the importance ratings of the 141 items.

Third, the survey was placed on the web and invitations to complete the survey were sent out to OD professionals. This occurred in a variety of formal and informal ways. For example, personal invitations were made during national and international presentations by the authors, the national OD Network invited people through its website home page, and an announcement and invitation were included in several issues of the OD Institute’s monthly newsletter. In addition, electronic invitations were sent to Internet listservs operated by the OD Network, the OD Institute, the Appreciative Inquiry Consortia, ASTD, Pepperdine University’s MSOD program, and the Association for Quality and Participation. Email invitations were sent to key OD leaders.

Three hundred sixty-four people responded to the survey. The demographics of the respondents are shown in Table 5.1. The modal respondent was American, came from the private sector, and had a master’s degree. The sample represented a broad range of OD experience.

Fourth, descriptive statistics were calculated for each item. Then the analysis proceeded along two parallel tracks. The first track was an analysis of the

Table 5.1. Sample Demographics

<i>Experience</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Sector</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>%</i>
0–5 years	20	College graduate	17	Private	73	U.S.	82
6–10 years	29	Master’s	62	Government	10	Canada	6
11–15 years	20	Doctorate	18	Non-profit	12	Europe	4
> 16 years	31	Other	3	Education	5	Other	8

*N = 364

items within a section of the survey, and the second track was an analysis of all the items together. In the first analysis, items within a section, such as marketing or adoption, were factor analyzed to determine whether items possessed any underlying structure. Clusters of items measuring a similar concept were created and labeled. As part of this process, items that did not correlate with other items in the section were identified. That is, a factor analysis includes information about items that either do not correlate well with other items or that are too generic and therefore correlate with too many items to be useful. For example, the item “build trusting relationships” in the marketing section, while no doubt important, was consistently a part of almost every cluster and therefore provided little discriminating information.

In the second analysis, all 141 items were submitted to a single factor analysis so that the items from one section could correlate with items in another section. As with the first analysis path, clusters of items measuring similar concepts were created and labeled, and any items that did not correlate with other items or correlated with too many items were identified.

In the final step, the two sets of clusters were compared. Where there was similarity between the two sets, a cluster was retained using as many common items as possible. Where unique clusters showed up in either set, the authors conferred and chose the clusters that seemed to best represent a broad scope of OD competencies. Based on this final set of clusters, the research questions concerning structure and utility of the list of competencies were addressed.

The process of labeling a set of items to represent an underlying competency is neither scientific nor quantitative. It is, in fact, quite subjective, and the authors toyed with different labels in an attempt to convey the essence of the items within a cluster. This was easy in some cases and much more difficult in others. In the first sectional analysis, we tried to use labels that acknowledged the phase of the process they represented. Thus, clusters from the diagnosis section were given labels with diagnosis in mind. In the pooled item analysis, we had more free reign to provide labels reflecting nuances in the mix of items representing the competency. In the end, we chose labels that we thought were fair, but recognize that we should be cautious in believing that our labels are the “right” ones.

For the statistically minded reader, several assumptions were made about the data, including the ratio of sample size to the total number of items and whether generically worded items referred to a particular section of the survey. Any definitive OD competency study will have to substantially increase the sample size relative to the number of items. However, the exploratory nature of this study supports a more relaxed set of assumptions. We hope the data presented here can improve the efficiency of any future study. A complete output of this analysis is available from the authors.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics from the survey displayed a very consistent pattern. Almost all of the items were rated very high (4) or absolutely critical (5). The range was from 3.5 to 4.9, with only 11 of 141 items having a mean below 4.0 and 51 items having means of 4.5 or higher. Despite the intent to steer respondents away from very high scores, nearly all of the distributions are skewed. This is not very helpful, and future studies need to take this into account. In other words, respondents were unable or unwilling to effectively discriminate between the items in terms of their importance. At some level, all of the OD practitioners in this sample are saying “all of these are really important.” It is Sullivan’s belief that only high rates have survived because the list has been scrubbed and revised by so many practitioners over the years.

Section-by-Section Analysis

In the first analysis, all items within a section were submitted together, but separate from other items and sections in the survey. The analysis produced thirty-two competency clusters using 116 of 141 items. The final results are shown in Table 5.2.

Pooled-Item Analysis

Table 5.3 describes the final competency clusters from the second analysis, where all items in the survey were submitted together. In this analysis, items from any section of the survey could correlate and form a cluster with items from any other section. The table identifies the name and the number of items in the cluster. In this analysis, thirty-three clusters were produced using 115 out of 141 items.

The first fifteen clusters all contained multiple items and ranged in size from two to thirteen items. Three of the clusters contained two items, while the remaining clusters contained between three and thirteen items. The last eighteen clusters contained between one and four items, with thirteen of these clusters only containing one or two items. In comparison, only eight clusters in the first analysis had one or two items. Thus, the distribution of cluster sizes is more skewed in the second analysis. Many competency clusters in Table 5.3 closely resemble those from the section-by-section analysis. As a result, and in the interest of space, we proceed to a comparison of the two analyses.

Comparison of the Two Analyses

Table 5.4 presents a comparison of the clusters generated by each of the analyses. The table presents the two or more cluster name(s) and the number of items for each cluster where the cluster labels were similar. It then presents the

Table 5.2. Section-by-Section Results

	<i>Competency Label</i>	<i># of items</i>
Marketing	Ability to describe OD processes	7
	Quickly assess opportunities for change	4
	Clarify outcomes and resources	3
	Develop relationships	2
	Make good client choices	1
Start-Up	Set the conditions for change	4
	Address power	3
	Build cooperative relationships	3
	Clarify roles	2
Diagnosis/Feedback	Research methods	6
	Keep the information flowing	5
	Clarify data needs	4
	Keeping an open mind re: data	3
	Relevance	1
Action Planning	Creating an implementation plan – I	4
	Creating an implementation plan – II	3
	Facilitate the action planning process	3
	Obtain commitment from leadership	2
Intervention	Adjust implementation	4
	Transfer ownership of the change	3
Evaluation	Ability to evaluate change	5
	Use evaluation data to adjust change	4
Adoption	Manage adoption and institutionalization	9
Separation	Manage the separation	5
Other Competencies	Master self	8
	Be available to multiple stakeholders	7
	Ability to work with large scale clients	4
	Manage diversity	3
	Be current in theory and technology	4
	Maintain a flexible focus	2
	Possess broad facilitation skills	2
Be comfortable with ambiguity	2	

Table 5.3. Pooled-Item Analysis Results

<i>Competency Label</i>	<i># of items</i>
Self-mastery	13
Ability to evaluate change	6
Clarify data needs	4
Manage the transition and sustain momentum	8
Keep information flowing	7
Integrate theory and practice	6
Ability to work with large systems	6
Manage the separation	3
Participatively create a good action plan	6
Apply research methods appropriately	4
Manage diversity	4
Imagination skills	2
Focus on relevant issues	5
Clarify roles	2
Address power	2
Clarify outcomes	1
Keep an open mind regarding data	2
Stay current with technology	2
Apply effective interpersonal skills	3
Set appropriate expectations	4
Let data drive action	3
Manage ownership of change	3
Be mindful of process	2
Think systemically	3
Comfort with ambiguity	3
Action plan with results in mind	1
Involve leadership	2
Be credible	2
Be a quick study	2
Monitor the environment	1
Network your services	1
Make good client choices	1
Get leadership commitment	1

Table 5.4. Comparison of Competency Clusters

<i>Sectional Analysis</i>		<i>Pooled Items Analysis</i>		<i>Final Competency Label</i>		<i>Representative Items</i>
<i>Competence Name (# of items)</i>	<i>Competence Name (# of items)</i>	<i># of items in common</i>	<i>Competency Label</i>			
Self-mastery (8)	Self-mastery (13)	8	Self-mastery			Be aware of how one's biases influence interaction Clarify personal values Clarify personal boundaries Manage personal biases Manage personal defensiveness Recognize when personal feelings have been aroused Remain physically healthy while under stress Resolve ethical issues with integrity Avoid getting personal needs met at the expense of the client
Ability to evaluate change (5)	Ability to evaluate change (6)	4	Ability to evaluate change			Choose appropriate evaluation methods Determine level of evaluation Ensure evaluation method is valid Ensure evaluation method is reliable Ensure evaluation method is practical
Clarify data needs (4)	Clarify data needs (4)	2	Clarify data needs			Determine an appropriate data collection process Determine the types of data needed Determine the amount of data needed

Table 5.4. Comparison of Competency Clusters

<i>Sectional Analysis</i>	<i>Pooled Items Analysis</i>	<i>Final</i>		<i>Representative Items</i>
<i>Competence Name</i> <i>(# of items)</i>	<i>Competence Name</i> <i>(# of items)</i>	<i># of items</i> <i>in common</i>	<i>Competency</i> <i>Label</i>	
Manage adoption and institutionalization (9)	Manage the transition and sustain momentum (8)	4	Manage transition and institutionalization	Help manage impact to related systems Use information to correct negative change Transfer change skills to internal consultant so learning is continuous Maintain/increase change momentum Mobilize additional internal resources to support continued change
Stay current in theory and technology (4)	Integrate theory and practice (6) Be current in technology (2)	4	Integrate theory and practice Stay current in technology	Determine the parts of the organization that warrant a special focus of attention Ensure that learning will continue Present the theoretical foundations of change Articulate an initial change process to use Integrate research with theory and practice Communicate implications of systems theory Utilize a solid conceptual framework based on research Use the latest technology effectively Use the Internet effectively
Ability to work with large-scale clients (4)	Ability to work with large systems (6)	4	Ability to work with large systems	Facilitate large group (70–2,000) interventions Apply the skills of international OD effectively Function effectively as an internal consultant

<i>Sectional Analysis Pooled Items Analysis</i>			
<i>Competence Name (# of items)</i>	<i>Competence Name (# of items)</i>	<i># of items in common</i>	<i>Final Competency Label</i>
			<i>Representative Items</i>
Create an implementation plan - I (4)	Participatively create a good implementation plan (6)	5	Participatively create a good implementation plan
Create an implementation plan - II (3)			
Understand research methods (6)	Apply research methods appropriately (4)	4	Understand research methods
Manage diversity (3)	Manage diversity (4)	3	Manage diversity
			Demonstrate ability to conduct transorganizational development Demonstrate ability to conduct community development Consider creative alternatives (?) Co-create an implementation plan that is (1) concrete, (2) simple, (3) clear, (4) measurable, (5) rewarded, and (6) logically sequences activities Utilize appropriate mix of methods to ensure (1) efficiency, (2) objectivity, and (3) validity Utilize appropriate mix of data collection technology Use statistical methods when appropriate Facilitate a participative decision-making process Be aware of the influences of cultural dynamics on interactions with others Interpret cross-cultural influences in a helpful manner Handle diversity and diverse situations skillfully

Table 5.4. Comparison of Competency Clusters

<i>Sectional Analysis</i>		<i>Pooled Items Analysis</i>		<i>Final Competency Label</i>		<i>Representative Items</i>
<i>Competence Name (# of items)</i>	<i>Competence Name (# of items)</i>	<i># of items in common</i>	<i>Final Competency Label</i>			
Clarify roles (2)	Clarify roles (2)	2	Clarify roles	Clarify the role of consultant Clarify the role of client		
Address power (3)	Address power (2)	2	Address power	Identify formal power Identify informal power Deal effectively with resistance		
Keep an open mind (3)	Be patient (2)	2	Keep an open mind	Suspend judgment while gathering data Suppress hurtful comments during data gathering		
Transfer ownership of change (3)	Manage client ownership of change (3)	3	Manage client ownership of change	Reduce dependency on consultant Instill responsibility for followthrough Involve participants so they begin to own the process		
Be comfortable with ambiguity (2)	Be comfortable with ambiguity (3)	2	Be comfortable with ambiguity	Perform effectively in an atmosphere of ambiguity Perform effectively in the midst of chaos		
Manage the separation (5)	Manage the separation (3)	2	Manage the separation	Be sure customers and stakeholders are satisfied with the intervention's results Leave the client satisfied Plan for post-consultation contact Recognize when separation is desirable		

<i>Sectional Analysis</i>		<i>Pooled Items Analysis</i>		<i>Final Competency Label</i>		<i>Representative Items</i>
<i>Competence Name (# of items)</i>	<i>Competence Name (# of items)</i>	<i># of items in common</i>	<i>Competency Label</i>			
Keep the information flowing (5)	Keep information flowing (7)	8	See the whole picture			Quickly grasp the nature of the system Identify the boundary of systems to be changed Identify critical success factors for the intervention Further clarify real issues
Set the conditions for change (4)	Think systemically (3)					Link change effort into ongoing organizational processes Begin to lay out an evaluation model Know how data from different parts of the system impact each other
Monitor the environment for opportunities (4)	Be a quick study (2)					Be aware of systems wanting to change
	Monitor the environment (1)		Set the conditions for positive change			Collaboratively design the change process Clarify boundaries for confidentiality Select a process that will facilitate openness Create a non-threatening atmosphere Develop mutually trusting relationships with others
Relevance (1)	Focus on relevant issues (5)	3	Focus on relevance and flexibility			Solicit feedback from others about your impact on them Use information to reinforce positive change
Maintain a flexible focus (2)						Distill recommendations from the data Pay attention to the timing of activities Recognize what is relevant Stay focused on the purpose of the consultancy Continuously assess the issues as they surface

Table 5.4. Comparison of Competency Clusters

<i>Sectional Analysis</i>		<i>Pooled Items Analysis</i>		<i>Final Competency Label</i>		<i>Representative Items</i>
<i>Competence Name (# of items)</i>	<i>Competence Name (# of items)</i>	<i># of items in common</i>	<i>Competency Label</i>			
Use evaluation to adjust change (4)	Data-driven action (3)	1	Use data to adjust for change	Use information to correct negative change Use information to take next steps Establish method to monitor change after the intervention Use information to reinforce positive change Gather data to identify initial first steps of transition		
Develop relationships (2)	Set appropriate expectations (4)	5	Be available to multiple stakeholders	Collaborate with internal/external OD professionals Balance the needs of multiple relationships Listen to others		
Be available to multiple stakeholders (7)	Apply effective IP skills (3) Be mindful of process (2)			Interpersonally relate to others Use humor effectively Pay attention to the spontaneous and informal		
Good client choices (1)	Good client choices (1)	1	Good client choices	Build realistic expectations Explicate ethical boundaries Build trusting relationships		
Clarify outcomes and resources (3)	Clarify outcomes (1)	1	Clarify outcomes	Match skills with potential client profile Clarify outcomes		

number of items that were common to both clusters and the final list of items proposed to represent the competency concept. The final set of clusters includes labels that are both specific to a phase of the planned change process as well as generic skills that an OD practitioner should have. For example, the “keep information flowing” competence ensures that communications should remain open during all phases of the change process.

The final set of competencies consists of twenty-four clusters and 104 items. Several competency clusters were nearly identical from the first analysis to the second and were retained in their original form. This lends some confidence to the integrity of the final proposed competencies. Clusters with good agreement between both analyses include (1) self-mastery, (2) ability to evaluate change, (3) ability to clarify data needs, (4) managing transition and institutionalization, (5) integrating theory and practice, (6) staying current in technology, (7) the ability to work with large systems, (8) participatively creating a good implementation plan, (9) understanding research methods, (10) managing diversity, (11) clarifying roles, (12) addressing power, (13) keeping an open mind, (14) managing client ownership of the change, (15) being comfortable with ambiguity, (16) managing the separation, and (17) focusing on relevance and flexibility. In other words, more than half of the final competencies were reliably formed in both analyses. Another five competencies emerged as combinations of clusters from the two analyses.

DISCUSSION

The results from Table 5.4 allow us to address the two research questions driving this chapter. First, is there any underlying structure within Sullivan’s list of OD competencies? Second, what utility does the refined list have for OD practitioners?

Underlying Structure of the Competencies

The data generated and analyzed in this study strongly support an underlying structure in the Sullivan list of competencies. In both analyses, the data were reduced to a smaller and more meaningful set of required skills and knowledge. The final analysis suggests that twenty to twenty-four competencies adequately describe the requirements of successful OD practitioners.

Utility of the Competencies

Finding an underlying structure within a list of 141 competencies is not all that surprising. One of the primary purposes of factor analysis is to simplify and reduce complex data sets into their essential themes. As a statistical bludgeon, it has little trouble performing its task. The real issue is whether the proposed

structure has any more utility than other competency models or provides better guidance to the field.

For this purpose, we compared our final competency list with the models generated by Worley and Varney (1998), Worley and Feyerherm (2003), and Shephard and Raia (1981). The Worley and Varney list was developed with support from the Academy of Management's OD&C Division and therefore represents a primarily academic view. The Worley and Feyerherm list was derived from interviews with veteran OD practitioners and researchers and therefore represents the view of founders of the field. The Shephard and Raia list was published in the early 1980s and therefore represents an historical baseline from which to compare the development of the field. The four lists are compared in Table 5.5.

Self-knowledge and self-awareness and understanding showed up in three of the four competency studies. Only the academically oriented study did not include self-awareness. The founders of the field and the early competency list strongly supported self-understanding. That importance was reiterated in the present study.

Consulting process competencies, especially competencies around the ability to diagnose and understand a system, design and execute interventions, and work with large systems, were included in all of the lists. The competency of managing the client's development also is in this section because we see the transferring of knowledge and skill from the OD practitioner to the client as a part of the consulting process. This specific competency was a central value in the early history of OD, but it isn't included in Shephard and Raia's list nor on the competencies described by the founders of the field. It is included in the academics' list and has always been a core item in the development of Sullivan's list. It could easily be listed independently or included with other competency categories, such as integrating theory and practice, and this classification warrants further discussion and research by the field. How important is the ability to transfer knowledge and skill to the client, and what is its relationship to other competencies?

All lists have competencies associated with academic knowledge and skills in organization behavior, management, and organization theory as well as specific knowledge and skill in OD. The current study possesses one competency within this category not found in any other list—the ability to stay current with technology. Worley and Feyerherm specifically noted the *lack* of awareness and mention of technology in their interviews with founders, and the academics do not mention technology either, although one might argue it is implied under the functional knowledge of business competence. In a related theme, three of the four lists identified experience and knowledge about business as a competence. Only Sullivan's list contained no items related to this dimension. The other three lists note that knowledge and experience represent sources of insight into client issues and opportunities.

Table 5.5. Comparison of Final Competencies with Other Competency Studies

<i>Final Competency List</i>	<i>Worley and Varney*</i>	<i>Worley and Feyerherm*</i>	<i>Shepherd and Raia*</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-mastery • Being comfortable with ambiguity 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear knowledge of self • Personal philosophies and values; Ability to operate within values 	<p><i>Intrapersonal Skills</i> (including integrity, staying in touch with one's own purpose and values, active learning skills, rational-emotive balance, and personal stress management skills)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing transitions and institutionalization • Participatively create a good implementation plan • Managing separation • Managing client ownership of change • Setting the conditions for positive change • Using data to adjust change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing the consulting process • Analysis and diagnosis • Designing and choosing appropriate and relevant interventions • Facilitation and process consultation • Developing client capability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to design • Ability to deeply understand an organization 	<p><i>General Consultation Skills</i> (including entry and contracting, diagnosis, designing and executing an intervention, and designing and managing large change processes)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work with large systems • Staying current with technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization behavior (including culture, ethics, psychology, and leadership) • Group dynamics • Management, organization theory and design • History of OD&C • Theories and models for change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large systems fluency • Core knowledge about the field 	<p><i>Organization Behavior/OD Knowledge and Intervention Skills</i> (including group dynamics (team building), OD theory, organization theory and design, open systems, reward systems, large system change theory, leadership, power, and sociotechnical analysis)</p>

Table 5.5. Comparison of Final Competencies with Other Competency Studies

<i>Final Competency List</i>	<i>Worley and Varney*</i>	<i>Worley and Feyerherm*</i>	<i>Shephard and Raia*</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to evaluate change • Ability to clarify data needs • Understand research methods • Being available to listen to multiple stakeholders • Building realistic relationships • Ability to work with and manage diversity • Ability to clarify roles • Ability to work with power • Ability to keep an open mind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research methods/statistics • Evaluating organization change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate and research • Developing new models of change and organization • Interpersonal skills • Ability to bring people together • Consulting is saying the tough stuff • Power and influence • Considering multiple viewpoints 	<p><i>Research and Evaluation Knowledge and Skills/Research Design/Data Collection/ Data Analysis</i></p> <p><i>Interpersonal Skills</i> (including listening, establishing trust and rapport, giving and receiving feedback, and counseling and coaching)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to see the whole picture • Ability to integrate theory and practice • Able to focus on relevance and flexibility • Clarifying outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional knowledge of business • System dynamics • Comparative cultural perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad education, training, experience • Business orientation • Ability to see systems (systems thinking) • Cultural experience • Theory and practice • Focusing on relevant issues • Specific competencies • Luck and timing 	<p><i>Experience as a Line Manager/Major Management Knowledge Areas</i></p> <p><i>Collateral Knowledge Areas</i> (including behavioral sciences, systems analysis, R&D)</p> <p><i>Presentation Skills</i></p>

*Redundancies within the lists were eliminated and several minor competencies were omitted. The Worley and Varney list was divided into Foundational Knowledge Competencies, Core Knowledge Competencies, and Core Skill Competencies. The Worley and Feyerherm list consists of both current and future competencies.

All lists contain research methods competencies. Clearly, practitioners and academics, both new and old alike, see the ability to use appropriate data collection, analysis, and other design knowledge and skill as critical to the conduct of OD.

As an applied behavioral science, OD has always been concerned with interpersonal skills. As with the self-mastery competencies, the only group not specifically mentioning interpersonal skills is the academic list. The competencies in the current list are slightly richer in content and description than the other two. Shephard and Raia's list is very inclusive but somewhat generic, and the Worley and Feyerherm list has a mix of generic and interpersonally charged (for example, "consulting is saying the tough stuff") competencies.

All four studies indicate that OD practitioners should have knowledge and skills in collateral areas relevant to OD practice. Reflecting advancements in our theories and knowledge about change, competencies related to systems thinking show up in all four studies, although in much more specific and central ways in the three most recent competency studies. Similarly, the three most recent studies, reflective of a strong globalization trend in business and society, note the importance of working with diversity and having an appreciation of cross-cultural differences.

The current study and the competencies noted by the founders of the field suggest that OD practitioners be good at integrating, balancing, and applying both theory and practice together as well as staying focused on the relevant aspects of the change process. The academics and the early OD practitioners did not raise issues of relevance and the integration of theory and practice.

CONCLUSIONS

Two initial conclusions are suggested by this comparison. First, the present competency list is only marginally different from other lists, suggesting a certain amount of convergent validity in our understanding of OD competencies and providing a solid basis for recommending OD practitioner development. Second, the relative stability in the competency list over the past twenty-five years presents a challenge to the field to move forward.

Validity and Practitioner Development

The conclusion of convergence should be comforting to new entrants to the field or to current practitioners looking for development guidance. For several years now, fragmentation in the field and the lack of an agreed-on competency model have frustrated OD students and practitioners looking to improve their skills. An emerging consensus represents a positive and hopeful sign. So where does one begin?

The statistical process used in this study has at least one practical benefit: It orders the results in terms of their importance. Importance in this case means

that if an OD practitioner masters only the first competence, it will do more to move that person toward effective OD practice than any other competence.

As shown in Table 5.3, self-mastery is the most important competence for an OD practitioner to develop. Those familiar with the history and current state of the field will recognize this as a controversial recommendation. Some OD practitioners fear that giving personal growth and self-awareness such prominence will return the field to the days of T-groups and sensitivity training. They would be wrong, and their interpretation highlights one of the key reasons the field is fragmented: Too many groups both inside and outside of OD confuse the technology of OD practice with the characteristics of effective practitioners.

Self-mastery is a competency, not an OD intervention. As an applied behavioral science, OD values helping organizations and their members change, increasing effectiveness, and improving the system's capacity for future change through people. It is grounded in theories of change and technologies of intervention and is often facilitated by a practitioner, change agent, or consultant. The practitioner's position in relationship to the client system determines, in part, the extent to which these valued outcomes are achieved. If practitioners unconsciously position themselves as experts, inappropriately substitute self-development for organization development, or create interventions they believe the client "should" have, the likelihood of successful change, improved effectiveness, or learning is diminished. Under these circumstances, criticisms of the field are well-founded and lead, understandably, to a belief that OD is a "touchy feely" process that is irrelevant to the strategic issues facing an organization. This difficult task is a function of the practitioner's self-knowledge, not the change intervention; it is a role-modeling task carried out by the practitioner, not the goal of the engagement.

Thus, self-mastery is the most important competency an OD practitioner can have and, rather than a source of irrelevance, provides the basis for delivering powerful results. Viewed not as an intervention in the system, but a characteristic of the person doing the work, self-mastery allows the practitioner to access and apply theories and models in a customized rather than a "canned" fashion; to create with the client system a future it desires rather than one imposed on it; to confront the client's resistance or contribution to the current situation rather than conspire with the client that it's "other people's" fault; to transfer knowledge and skill to the client system rather than breed the client's dependency; and to ensure implementation responsibility rests with the client rather than believing the system has to be told what to do and how to do it. Customizing a change management process to the client's situation, focusing on implementation and effectiveness, and thinking about helping the client to learn are the relevant and practical results that derive from this most personal competency.

This conclusion does not give OD practitioners license to gather clients into a circle to share feelings or to use coaching as a mask for therapy. It does say

that every OD practitioner has the duty and responsibility to have an ongoing personal growth plan and to engage in an appropriate course of personal and professional development. The goal of such a plan is to become clearer about their strengths and weaknesses, their psychological and behavioral idiosyncrasies, and their motivations for wanting to practice OD. For some that will mean deep therapy; for others, a T-group experience will be amazingly insightful; and for still others, journaling will represent a profound journey into self-awareness. In fact, there are a variety of paths a practitioner can take to sharpen his or her self as an instrument of change (Fletcher & Bailey, 2003; Peterson & Hicks, 1996).

If the first recommendation about self-mastery was the most controversial, the second recommendation—to develop the ability to apply research methods—is surely the most surprising. Three of the top ten competencies in Table 5.3 are research related: the ability to evaluate change, to clarify data needs, and to apply research methods appropriately. Although this competency was mentioned in many prior competency lists, its importance in this list may reflect a recent trend in the field. More client organizations are asking for project justification and for evidence that OD processes will add value to the organization. The ability to collect data appropriately, analyze and draw conclusions from that data, and evaluate the effectiveness of change provides practitioners with a rationale and a vocabulary to do so. It also represents an interesting counterpoint to the self-mastery competence. The successful OD practitioner today must not only understand the self, an admittedly intrapersonal and “soft” skill, but must balance that skill with a cognitive, intellectual, and “hard” skill in research methods. The rational and positivistic approach of statistical thinking aligns well with today’s short-term, logical, and analytic cultures in many organizations.

A third and final recommendation for practitioner development is the most obvious. OD practitioners must be competent in change management technologies. The competencies of managing the transition, keeping information flowing, integrating theory and practice, working with large systems, and creating a good action plan all speak to the ability to implement change. Curiously, diagnosis, long a staple in the OD repertoire, did not specifically make the top ten list, although “keep the information flowing” and “clarify data needs” were part of the diagnostic section of the survey. Diagnostic competencies, although not specifically identified as such, are thus not ignored in the list. Future revisers and studies of this list might consider making diagnosis a more explicit competence.

These three competencies represent a starting point for practitioner development. To assist readers in building their own personal and professional development plans, an assessment tool, based on this research, is available at www.RolandSullivan.com. Another can be found in Appendix I at the back of this book. These competencies also can potentially serve as useful guidelines for curriculum development and governance of the field.

Challenges to the Field

The second conclusion for this study is that the list of competencies challenges the field to move forward. The results of this study suggest that there are about twenty competencies of effective OD practitioners, and there is considerable agreement about those competencies across studies, samples, and time. Some competencies have evolved to reflect an increased understanding of human systems and the skills and knowledge necessary to change them according to a set of values espoused by the field. Other competencies have remained relatively stable over time, reflecting some of the more enduring aspects of OD practice and philosophy.

The positive aspects of that result were discussed above. But this result also challenges the field on two counts. First, if there is relatively good agreement on the competencies, is more competency research necessary? Second, if the competencies have not evolved dramatically, has the field matured or stagnated?

To the first challenge, we propose restricting future OD competency work to a more limited agenda. That is, there are a number of pressing issues facing the field that warrant increased attention, including a better understanding of the relationship between change and performance, better measures of change, and more development and sharing of intervention technologies. Among the suggestions for future research in the competency arena, we would support targeted work in three areas. First, how are external trends, including technology, globalization, and environmental sustainability, likely to affect OD competencies in the future? The chapter by Eisen, Cherbeneau, and Worley in this book begins that process, but it is worth expanding. Second, do OD practitioners differ in their abilities in these areas and do those differences correlate with some measure of practitioner effectiveness? This will be a difficult piece of research because it requires that both successful and unsuccessful practitioners be identified. Third, do competencies differ by the practitioner's position? Are internal consultants different from externals; do line managers differ from full-time OD practitioners; and do international practitioners differ from domestic ones?

To the second challenge, the competencies reflect both a "forward to the past" and a more integrated view of OD practice. The list is most similar to Shepard and Raia's (1981) list and may therefore reflect a more traditional view of OD—some might say it's an old paradigm view. We see it as an evolution. The field began in the 1950s as part of the human relations influence in organization theory (Scott, 1981) and had a strong personal growth component. It expanded in the 1970s and 1980s to embrace more content-oriented concerns from work design, structure, and strategy. It moved away from its original roots and in many ways has become a fragmented field (Church, 2001). The current list therefore reasserts the roots of the field by noting the centrality of self-mastery as a competence of effective OD practitioners, not an OD intervention,

and its key role in integrating content and process in the field. Our set of competencies also reflects the balanced view of the OD practitioner as an instrument of values, a holder of knowledge, and a person of action and ability (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1978). This balanced view of OD competencies reflects a mature view of what OD can be—a process of planned change intended to improve the effectiveness of the client system as well as the ability of that system to better carry out change in the future. It is a process, facilitated by people clear about their strengths and weaknesses, that involves other people in achieving positive visions of the future.

Organizations and the people in them are facing an enormous range of challenges, including new and more pervasive technologies, new competitors from existing and emerging economies, globalized financial and operating markets, and threats to the ecology, to name just a few. These change management challenges are at the top of most CEOs' "to do" lists; organization development *should* be in a position to help. A more integrated field, one that understands what it can do, how it can help, the role OD practitioners can play, and (most germane to the purpose of this chapter) the characteristics of effective practitioners will be better positioned to bring out these desired and positive futures. Although tentative and not without weaknesses, we hope our work here has helped in a small way to pave the path toward this more integrated field of organization change.

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Organization Development from the View of the Experts

Summary Results

D.D. Warrick

These are times of dynamic change, fierce competition, and organization revolution and transformation, when organizations must do more with less and do everything faster, better, and smarter. It is a time when the best-led, best-prepared, best-run organizations with the best skills in adapting to change and managing change are likely to thrive, and the rest will have difficulty surviving.

The need to build organizations that can succeed in these changing times and the urgency to learn as much as possible about the change process makes this prime time for organization development. However, the field of organization development is also going through a period of dynamic change as academicians and practitioners are struggling to define and communicate what OD is and how it can help meet today's challenges and to align their theories and practices with changing times while adhering to the traditions and values of OD and find the balance between the new and the old, timeless wisdom and legitimate new approaches. With these tensions between the urgent need for what OD has to offer and yet a lack of clarity about the field, the timing seemed right to survey experts in the field to find out what their thoughts are about the field of OD and the relevancy of OD to changing times.

THE STUDY

Ninety of the leading OD people in the world were selected to receive a questionnaire on OD. The leaders were selected because of their long-term reputations as major contributors to the field of OD. They were identified based on

their reputations in OD literature, major articles and books written on OD or OD-related subjects, leadership positions held in OD, overall contributions to the field, and recommendations made from top people in the field.

Thirty-nine leaders completed the questionnaire for a response rate of 43.3 percent. The list of respondents and questions asked is shown in Exhibit 6.1. It was gratifying to learn through the survey that most of the first- and second-generation OD pioneers are still actively involved in the field. The survey was also given to Ph.D. in OD students at Benedictine University. While their results were not included in the results presented, they helped to validate the currency of the thinking of the leaders, as most were well-informed practicing OD professionals and students of OD.

Exhibit 6.1. Respondents and Questions Asked in the 2002-2003 Study

Respondents

John Adams, Wayne Boss, Tom Cummings, Ralph Kilmann, Edgar Schein, R. Woodman, Billie Alban, David Bradford, K. Dannemiller, Newt Margulies, Virginia Schein, Chris Worley, A. Armenakis, Warner Burke, Wendell French, Kurt Motamedi, Abraham Shani, Dale Zand, Jean Bartunek, Alan Church, W. Gellerman, Ken Murrell, Peter Sorensen, Roland Sullivan, Robert Zawacki, Mike Beer, Don Cole, R. Golembiewski, Eric Neilsen, Glenn Varney, Robert Blake, David Coghlan, Larry Greiner, Kristine Quade, Don Warrick, David Boje, David Cooperrider, David Jamieson, Robert Quinn, and Jane Watkins

Questions Asked

1. What is your definition of OD or your favorite definition?
2. What do you consider to be the most important characteristics of OD that make OD unique (inter-disciplinary, data-driven, collaborative, etc.)?
3. What do you consider to be the most important values of OD (authentic, straightforward behavior, involvement of key stakeholders, etc.)?
4. Do you have any thoughts about the relevancy of OD in today's changing times?
5. Do you have any thoughts about the value and balance between learning from the best of OD from the past and focusing more on new contemporary thinking?
6. What are the major competencies that you believe an OD practitioner should have?
7. In your opinion what are the best of the newer contributions to OD (new thinking or methods. . . organization transformation, chaos theory, appreciative inquiry, non-linear change, etc.)?
8. What do you consider to be the major issues facing OD in the future?
9. Who would you list as the ten most important contributors of all time to the field of OD? Please rank-order the names and feel free to include your own.
10. Are there any other questions I should have asked or comments you would like to make?

It should be noted that I conducted a smaller study with fewer experts and fewer questions in 1978. The respondents and survey questions are shown in Exhibit 6.2. The results were reported in the *Academy of Management OD Newsletter*, Winter 1978, Spring 1979, and Winter 1979 issues. In retrospect, the list of respondents is most impressive, as they clearly would be considered among the elite of the most important all-time contributors to the field of OD.

OD DEFINITIONS

One of the ongoing challenges in OD is defining what OD is, and especially defining OD in a way that makes sense to potential users as well as students and trainees who need to know about OD. Exhibit 6.3 shows definitions that are frequently cited in OD literature, and Exhibit 6.4 shows some of the newer definitions offered by the survey participants.

Exhibit 6.2. Respondents and Questions Asked in the 1978 Study

Respondents

Richard Beckard, Jay Lorsch, Robert Blake, Craig Lundberg, Leland Bradford, Newt Margulies, Warner Burke, Jane Mouton, Wendell French, William Reddin, Larry Greiner, Edgar Schein, Gordon Lippitt, and Robert Tannenbaum

Questions Asked

1. What is your definition of organization development?
2. What are the major skills needed by organization development practitioners?
3. Rank-order what you consider to be the major payoffs of organization development to clients.
4. Rank-order what you consider to be the major payoffs of organization development to OD practitioners.
5. Rank-order what you consider to be the major risks or pitfalls of organization development to clients.
6. Rank-order what you consider to be the major risks or pitfalls of organization development to OD practitioners.

Exhibit 6.3. Frequently Cited Definitions of OD

Beckhard (1969)

"An effort (1) planned, (2) organization-wide, and (3) managed from the top, to (4) increase organizational effectiveness and health through (5) planned interventions in the organization's processes using behavioral science knowledge."

Beckhard (1999)

"OD is a systemic and systematic effort, using behavioral science knowledge and skill, to change or transform the organization to a new state."

Beer (1980)

"Organization development is a system-wide process of data collection, diagnosis, action planning, intervention, and evaluation aimed at (1) enhancing congruence among organizational structure, process, strategy, people, and culture; (2) developing new and creative organizational solutions; and (3) developing the organization's self-renewing capacity. It occurs through the collaboration of organizational members working with a change agent using behavioral science theory, research, and technology."

Bennis (1969)

"Organization development is a response to change, a complex educational strategy intended to change the beliefs, attitudes, values, and structure of organizations so that they can better adapt to new technologies, markets, and challenges, and the dizzying rate of change itself."

Bradford, Burke, Seashore, & Worley (2004)

"Organization development is a system-wide and values-based collaborative process of applying behavioral science knowledge to the adaptive development, improvement, and reinforcement of such organizational features as the strategies, structures, processes, people, and cultures that lead to organization effectiveness."

Burke (1982)

"Organization development is a long-range effort to improve an organization's problem solving and renewal processes, particularly through a more effective and collaborative management of an organization's culture, with special emphasis on the culture of formal work teams, and with the assistance of a change agent, or catalyst, and the use of the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including action research."

Cole (1973)

"Organization development is the knowledge and skill necessary to implement a program of planned change using behavioral science concepts for the purpose of building greater organizational effectiveness."

Exhibit 6.3. *Continued*

Cummings & Worley (2005)

“Organization development is a system-wide application of behavioral science knowledge to the planned development, improvement, and reinforcement of the strategies, structures, and processes that lead to organization effectiveness.”

French & Bell (1999)

“Organization development is a long-term effort, led and supported by top management, to improve an organization’s visioning, empowerment, learning, and problem-solving processes, through an ongoing, collaborative management of organization culture—with special emphasis on the culture of intact work teams and other team configurations—using the consultant-facilitator role and the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including action research.”

Schein (1992)

“Organization development (OD) can best be defined as a planned change process, managed from the top, taking into account both the technical and human sides of the organization and using inside or outside consultants in the planning and implementation of the changes to be made.”

Warrick (1985)

“Organization development is a planned, long-range, systems, and primarily behavioral science strategy for understanding, developing, and changing organizations and improving their present and future health and effectiveness.”

With so many definitions and perspectives on OD, it is no surprise that people become confused about what OD is. There are, however, some common themes among the definitions. After analyzing these and other definitions from the survey results, here are some observations:

1. The most frequently mentioned definition was Richard Beckhard’s 1969 definition, which many consider to be the first formal definition of OD. For many OD professionals, this definition provides clarity on what OD is and has stood the test of time.
2. Though individual definitions vary, there are some themes that emerge from the definitions:
 - OD is a systems-wide, primarily behavioral science based and planned approach to changing organizations and improving organization effectiveness and quality of life.

Exhibit 6.4. Sampling of Definitions from the 2002-2003 Study

Armenakis

"A participative process of diagnosing, planning, implementing, and evaluating organizational changes appropriate to improving an organization's effectiveness."

Bradford (David)

"An integrated systems-wide change effort that takes account of all relevant parts of the organization (technology, systems, and structure as well as the human components)."

Burke

"OD is a process of bringing about organization change, especially culture change, by applying behavioral science theory and research."

Church

"A planned process of promoting positive humanistically oriented large-system change and improvement in organizations through the use of social science theory, action research, and behaviorally based data collection and feedback techniques."

Cooperrider

"OD is a discipline of collaborative inquiry and positive change focused on the discovery and creation of new concepts of human organization and organizations that are prosperous, that more equitably distribute power, wealth, and choice, and that are more compatible with the human spirit and the biosphere."

French

"Organizational improvement through action research."

Jamieson

"A values-based approach to changing and developing human and organization systems."

Nielsen

"Organization development is the use of the applied behavioral sciences to enhance simultaneously the achievement of individual fulfillment and organization effectiveness wherever people are involved in a collective endeavor."

Quade

"Change management on a systems level."

Quinn

"The art and science of organizational change."

Exhibit 6.4. Continued

Sullivan

“OD is the utilization of person centered competency to collaboratively create systemic positive change.”

Varney

“OD is a diagnostic and intervention process for changing organizations to (1) improve their effectiveness; (2) enhance their quality of work life; (3) become more responsive to their customers; and (4) increase their earnings.”

Watkins

“Organization development is a behavioral science that focuses on the human side of organized systems. It is values based and driven by principles of equity and fairness; the value of diversity; the centrality of trust and respect; and the belief that people are motivated by a desire to contribute to the whole of the enterprise. OD recognizes that the success of any enterprise depends in large part on the commitment and endurance of the people involved and the role of OD is to work with those people to create a healthy, nurturing, energetic, and humane environment.”

Woodman

“Organization development means creating adaptive organizations capable of repeatedly transforming and reinventing themselves as needed to remain effective.”

- The systems perspective of OD takes into account all relevant parts of the organization in designing strategies for development and change including, for example, organizational strategy, structure, processes, systems, technology, and especially an organization’s culture and human systems.
- OD is a values-driven process that emphasizes building organizations where people can thrive and are treated humanely.
- OD uses some version of an action research approach where present realities and future possibilities are assessed and the appropriate people are involved in evaluating the assessment and planning future actions.
- OD is outcomes-oriented. While there may be disagreement on what the outcomes are, and while early OD was often accused, and sometimes rightly so, of being a soft approach that focused more on process than outcomes, mainstream definitions of OD have always included such outcomes as increased organization effectiveness, health, and quality of life; culture change; increasing the success of organization change, transformation, improvement, and renewal efforts; creating learning organizations; improving organization

strategies, structures, processes, and human systems; and enhanced profitability and competitiveness.

3. The newer definitions tend to confirm many of the principles of the more traditional definitions but place a stronger emphasis on the following:
 - The change process and developing organizations that are capable of adapting to dynamic change and repeatedly transforming and reinventing themselves.
 - Positive change and finding ways to unleash human potential.
 - Values and building humane organizations that find the balance between organization effectiveness and individual fulfillment in a rapidly changing environment.
 - Accelerated change. The term “long term” traditionally used to describe OD efforts was not mentioned in any of the new definitions. I do not interpret this to mean that long term and sustainable efforts are not important but rather to recognize the need to accelerate OD efforts in today’s fast-moving environment of mergers, acquisitions, and constant change and to understand that having the luxury of two to five years to affect significant organization change is seldom an option in today’s fast changing environment.
 - Top-down, bottom-up change. Another traditional term that did not appear in any of the new definitions was “top-down change” or “managed from the top.” Anyone involved in OD would support the idea that change is greatly accelerated and infinitely more sustainable when it has top-level support and involvement. However, OD seeks both top-down and bottom-up support and involvement and, although it is a calculated risk, is sometimes pursued with minimal or initially no involvement of top-level managers.
 - A global and idealistic perspective in some of the more unique definitions that did not appear in the final new definitions list. These definitions focused on using OD to resolve world issues, build a better society, and to develop more egalitarian organizations where power, wealth, and choice are more equitably distributed.
4. There is disagreement by some on whether OD is a process used for organization-wide change as represented in the original definition by Beckhard or if it is a process that can focus on individual, group, inter-group, and/or organization-wide change. In practice OD efforts may incorporate some or all levels of change depending on the options available, as the latter viewpoint implies. However, a small minority of the leaders completing the questionnaire would challenge the premise that changing a department or team or coaching a leader is truly OD even if done from an OD perspective.

SO WHAT IS OD?

Having studied the definitions of OD from the experts, it is clear that many perspectives are offered and that there is the difficulty of choosing between a simple and crisp definition that may lack some of the key elements of OD and a more comprehensive definition that may be more accurate but may also not be easily remembered or understood, especially by non-OD practitioners. Anyone who tries to define OD labors over the concepts and words used. Often they are never fully satisfied with the result. With this in mind, Exhibit 6.5 shows how I would now define OD and the reasoning behind the definition.

Exhibit 6.5. Defining Organization Development

Definition

Organization development is a planned and collaborative process for understanding, developing, and changing organizations to improve their health, effectiveness, and self-renewing capabilities.

Clarification of Key Words

1. The term organization describes all of the workings of an organization and can include efforts to improve individual, group, inter-group, and whole organization health and effectiveness. The term development describes the focus of OD, which is to develop and improve all aspects of an organization and its self-renewing capabilities.
2. OD is a planned approach. Planning and strategizing are essential to any successful endeavor, even in dynamic situations where plans have to be frequently changed. Planned development and change has always been one of the hallmarks of OD, as contrasted with unplanned, undisciplined, primarily reactive approaches to development and change and quick-fix strategies.
3. OD is a collaborative approach. The word collaboration means to work or labor together. Another distinction of OD is that it is a collaborative effort among leaders, change agents, and key contributors and stakeholders throughout the organization. OD places a strong emphasis on involvement and cooperation in addressing issues, interpreting data, and planning and implementing change.
4. OD is a process for understanding organizations. Understanding organizations is essential to successful change and includes studying and assessing organizations to develop a clear understanding of present realities, future possibilities, and what has to be changed.
5. OD is a process for developing organizations. The word developing describes all efforts designed to improve the present and future capabilities of an

organization and can range from fine-tuning an organization to transforming an organization.

6. OD is a process for changing organizations. The heart and soul of OD is specialized knowledge in how to successfully change organizations.
7. The goal of OD is to improve the health, effectiveness, and self-renewing capabilities of organizations. Richard Beckhard's original definition of OD focused on increasing an organization's health and effectiveness. Organization health refers to the quality of leadership, life, and processes in an organization and the nature of an organization's culture. Organization effectiveness refers to the overall performance and operational capabilities of an organization and its ability to achieve the desired goals. Research on the best-run and most successful organizations clearly indicates that they focus on both organizational health and effectiveness and that focusing on one without a focus on the other will eventually have consequences to the organization. An added goal of OD, however, is improving the self-renewing capabilities of an organization. This is an effort to help organizations learn from what they do right and wrong and make needed adjustments and to develop capabilities in preparing for the future and adapting quickly to change.

OD Characteristics

Over the history of OD, many characteristics have become associated with OD that add clarity to developing an understanding of it. A definition of OD could not possibly cover all of the features that make OD unique, so its characteristics provide a broader perspective of OD. OD characteristics are rarely found in the literature on OD including textbooks. The OD experts provided a rich understanding of what these characteristics are. Exhibit 6.6 shows a summary of the major themes that emerged when the experts were asked to identify the most important characteristics that make OD unique.

OD Values

A common theme in the survey of the experts in OD is that OD is a values-driven process. Indeed, OD has always promoted humanistic values. Curiously, though, it is not easy to find sources that provide a comprehensive list of what those humanistic values and other OD values are. Perhaps the best source is a 2002 book by Ken Hultman titled *Balancing Individual and Organizational Values*.

Given the importance of values to OD, it seemed appropriate to ask the experts to identify what they consider to be the most important OD values and to look for common themes. There were in fact a number of values that were frequently mentioned. Those values are shown in Exhibit 6.7. While the values clearly have a humanistic flavor, other types of values such as "inquiry" and "experimentation" were also mentioned.

Exhibit 6.6. Characteristics of OD

1. OD recognizes that how you change things (the process of change) is equally as important as what you change (the focus of change) and that there must be an emphasis on improving the health, effectiveness, and adaptability of an organization to achieve the best results.
2. OD can be used with all sizes and types of organizations and at all levels of an organization.
3. OD is a dynamic process that emphasizes the importance of both planning change and adapting to changing conditions and recognizes that successful change takes time and commitment and that quick-fix solutions rarely last.
4. OD approaches change from a systems, big-picture perspective of an organization and its interrelated parts and considers all aspects of organization life in planning change, such as organization leadership, strategy, structure, culture, processes, and internal and external relationships and influences.
5. OD is an interdisciplinary approach that draws primarily from the behavioral sciences but increasingly also requires an understanding of business, the influence of technology on organizations, and an understanding of what it takes for organizations to succeed in changing times.
6. OD is a data-driven approach to change that uses data to determine present realities and future possibilities and create compelling reasons for change rather than basing change or resistance to change on unsupported opinions and assumptions or possible hidden agendas.
7. OD uses an action-research process that emphasizes involving key stakeholders in evaluating and analyzing data, exploring what is possible, and planning future actions.
8. OD efforts are typically facilitated by professionally trained change agents who emphasize helping others discover and find solutions to their own issues and possibilities rather than dictating what should be done. However, OD knowledge and practices can also be learned and utilized by leaders and change champions throughout an organization.
9. OD is a values-driven approach that seeks to instill values and build cultures that bring out the best in people and organizations and that encourages honesty and candor, a strong sense of ethics, and open, straightforward, supportive, authentic, innovative, self-directing behavior and a willingness to adapt to change.
10. OD is a collaborative, top-down, bottom-up process that recognizes the importance of gaining the commitment and leadership of top-level decision makers and involving key stakeholders at all levels of an organization in the change process.
11. OD is an education-based strategy that strives to integrate timeless wisdom and state-of-the-art thinking and practices and prepare leaders and others involved in the change process with the attitudes, knowledge, and skills they will need to design, implement, and sustain needed changes.
12. OD is committed to the transference of knowledge and skills and creating learning organizations capable of continuously learning, growing, improving, and adapting to changing conditions.
13. OD emphasizes the importance of reliable feedback in monitoring and managing the change process so that needed adjustments can be made in a timely manner.

Exhibit 6.7. OD Values

1. *Development.* At the heart of OD is a passion for developing and helping realize the potential of individuals, groups, and whole organizations.
2. *Professionalism.* A commitment to being a knowledgeable, skilled, up-to-date OD professional with a strong sense of ethics and uncompromising integrity.
3. *Helping People and Organizations Help Themselves.* Emphasizes facilitating and involving people and groups in identifying present realities and future possibilities and actions.
4. *Respect for All Individuals.* Treating all people from all backgrounds and levels with value, respect, and dignity.
5. *Inclusion, Collaboration, and Participation.* Working together and cooperating to get the job done and involving key stakeholders in the process. This value and numerous variations of it are often called the value of democracy. However, democracy in its actual definition is not really a core OD value.
6. *Open, Honest, and Candid Communications.* Being open with information and straightforward in a respectful way.
7. *Authenticity.* Genuine behavior with no game playing or hidden agendas.
8. *Inquiry.* Using a variety of methods to find out what is going on and what is possible.
9. *Community.* Seeking to bring organizations and people with common interests together for mutual benefit.
10. *Diversity.* Respecting differences and encouraging innovative thinking and a wide variety of perspectives.
11. *Personal and Organizational Awareness, Growth, and Learning.* Being an example of personal awareness, growth, and continuous learning and encouraging awareness, growth, and continuous learning in individuals and organizations as well.
12. *Experimentation.* Being willing to try new methods and approaches and encouraging individuals and organizations to do the same.
13. *Creating Realistic Hope.* Creating hope by showing people what is possible and how it can be achieved.
14. *Integrity.* Telling the truth and doing what is right rather than manipulating the truth and doing what is expedient.
15. *Confidentiality.* Honoring confidences, even when it is difficult to do so.

THE RELEVANCY OF OD IN TODAY'S CHANGING TIMES

This was a very interesting and enlightening part of the study. Times have changed. Certainly, these are times of rapid, unpredictable change and increased competition when organizations must respond and adapt quickly to changing conditions to compete or even survive. It is a time that has moved from a certain amount of order and stability to uncertainty and unpredictability. Markets can change almost overnight, and global, national, and local influences and events can have a significant impact on organizations throughout the world.

Add to these challenges the difficulty of managing organizations with the rush toward acquisitions, mergers, all manner of partnerships and cooperative arrangements, and the risks of litigation, and it becomes clear that organization life has changed. However, none of these considerations can compare with the impact of technology. Technology has revolutionized the way organizations are run.

With all of these changes, those in OD must ask several critical questions. Has the field that specializes in dealing with change changed with the times? Can OD still be applied in such turbulent and chaotic times? Are OD theories, methods, and practices still relevant? Clearly, with rare exception, the experts believe that OD remains relevant and in fact most said that the times make OD more relevant than ever. However, there were concerns expressed about the field and a few felt that OD had not kept up with changing times and questioned the relevancy of OD in its present form. Both viewpoints are represented in Exhibit 6.8.

THE BALANCE BETWEEN LEARNING FROM THE PAST AND MOVING TO THE NEW

Related to the relevancy of OD is the struggle between those who are well grounded in the long-time fundamentals of OD and those who either are not aware of the fundamentals or are ready to discard the past and move forward to the new.

Exhibit 6.8. Relevancy of OD in Today's Times

Support for the Relevancy of OD in Today's Times (Summary of Responses)

1. OD is extremely relevant for today's times and has gained worldwide status. It is the principle discipline that deals specifically with organization development, change, transformation, and renewal and it addresses many of the major issues and concerns of organizations. The demise of OD has been discussed and predicted almost from the beginning of OD, and yet OD continues to gain in use and relevancy. OD clearly has the opportunity to be a major player in the future success of organizations of all sizes and types.
2. Change is everywhere and the growing importance of understanding how to successfully manage change has made OD highly relevant . . . even more so than in the past. OD provides change agents, managers, and scholars with a framework for inquiry into the study of change dynamics, how to manage change, and how to prepare organizations to adapt to change.

3. The need to learn how to successfully transform organizations and build self-renewing learning organizations has also made OD very relevant to today's times.
4. While the application of OD must change with the times, the fundamentals remain sound and applicable to today's organizations.
5. The fundamentals of OD, especially knowledge about how to change and transform organizations, are so relevant to today's times that they must become part of the mainstream thinking of leaders, managers, boards, and OD and HR professionals.
6. With the complexity of today's organizations and with change occurring in all aspects of organization life, OD is very relevant, and when implemented by skilled professionals can have a profound effect on organizations.
7. OD is very relevant and OD professionals need to passionately take an advocacy role for building more healthy and humane organizations so they can more fully utilize the potential of organizations and the people in them. They also need to become more outspoken on the destructive effects of many of today's practices that dehumanize and show little concern for employees.
8. OD principles are everywhere, even if not known as OD. In particular, OD has been the major contributor to knowledge about organization change.
9. OD is coming of age as organizations are beginning to realize that designing organizations to value and utilize people will ultimately be the major factor in determining the success of the organization.
10. Some information on OD and the management of change is included in most undergraduate and graduate management curriculums.
11. Some of the corporate scandals and their far-reaching consequences could have been avoided if more organizations were utilizing OD and practicing OD values.

Concerns About the Relevancy of OD in Today's Times

1. After forty years of developing the field of OD, few executives are familiar with OD, few internal and external HR and OD people are trained professionals in OD, and academic programs in OD are growing slowly if at all.
2. There appears to be little agreement on what OD is, the fundamentals of OD, and the competencies required of OD professionals; and the fact that anyone can practice OD without training or certification has often given OD a bad name and resulted in poor OD practices.
3. A few experts believe that OD has not adapted to changing times, that old methods are being applied to a dramatically changed and much faster-moving new organization world, and that OD is not addressing many of the pressing issues facing today's organizations, such as how to manage downsizing, mergers, acquisitions, multi-cultural environments, and new organization forms.
4. It should be noted that there are a few experts who are of the opinion that there is so much chaos and non-predictability in today's work world that OD is difficult if not impossible to practice.

The majority opinion is that it is important to retain and build on the wisdom from the past, and yet it is also important to develop new theories and methods for changing times. Some OD leaders felt that there is really very little in the way of new thinking and methods being added to the field, and many expressed a concern that most OD practitioners have little familiarity with the fundamentals and that new contributors to the field are sometimes not familiar with the roots of OD and are simply modifying or renaming what has already been done. On the other hand, a few experts felt that OD is stuck in the past and is not responding adequately to contemporary times. A summary of the main themes that reflect the thinking of the experts follows:

1. There is considerable value in understanding the roots, fundamentals, and wisdom from the past in OD as a foundation for developing, evaluating, and embracing new contemporary thinking. While there are some excellent new theories and practices being integrated into contemporary OD, much of contemporary thinking is not truly new and is a trendy version of previous ideas and practices rather than breakthrough in nature. Some have compared it to old wine in new wine skins. Contemporary thinkers need to be well grounded in the wisdom of the past in addition to developing new thinking and methods for changing times.
2. OD has always eventually adapted to changing times and is struggling to do so now. For example, OD has moved from the T-groups and a heavy emphasis on humanizing organizations to a greater emphasis on results, transformational change, large-group methods, and technology-aided OD.
3. Changing times and changing theories such as chaos theory and appreciative inquiry are changing how OD is viewed and the way traditional methods such as action research are used. However, the danger will be in creating either/or perspectives rather than integrating the old and the new and creating multiple alternatives.
4. The early thinking, practices, and basics of OD are still highly relevant and central to contemporary OD. Unfortunately, the best of OD from the past is rarely practiced and needs to be strengthened, along with incorporating new theories and methods.
5. In a general sense, old OD focused more on organizational health and processes and new OD focuses more on organizational performance, results, and change. A balance of the two perspectives produces the best OD and fulfills the original goal of OD, which was to improve organizational health, effectiveness, and renewal.

MAJOR COMPETENCIES NEEDED BY OD PRACTITIONERS

Few things are more challenging in the field of OD than trying to identify the competencies needed by OD practitioners. Since the beginning of OD, experts in the field have been trying to agree on the fundamental competencies required. Organizations such as the OD Division of the Academy of Management, the OD Institute, and the OD Network are involved in identifying OD competencies. As is noted in Chapter Five, there have been studies by Burke, Church, Eisen, Lippitt, Sullivan, Varney, Raia, Worley, Warrick, and others on OD competencies. Academic programs are often designed around a set of competencies, and organizations with internal OD specialists often identify the competencies they expect their specialists to develop. And yet, there appears to be little agreement on the competencies required and some of the lists are so long and daunting that no mortal could ever master all of them.

There are a number of challenges in developing lists of OD competencies. For example, any list is dependent on how it was obtained and who is interpreting and categorizing the list. Therefore, in reporting the list of competencies shown in Exhibit 6.9 that were identified by the OD experts surveyed, I confess up-front that in compiling the list that I made the assumptions that the list has to be concise enough to understand and reasonable enough to pursue, that skilled OD professionals have different strengths and weaknesses and do not have to be proficient in all of the competencies, and that the list is no doubt influenced by my own interpretation of the survey results. I also kept in mind that the term *competence* refers to specialized skills, knowledge, or attributes. In addition, a conceptual framework developed by Roland Sullivan and Bob Tannenbaum gave special meaning to the list of competencies. They identified OD competencies as knowing, doing, and being competencies. In reviewing the data, I added one additional competency to describe the conceptual skills needed by OD professionals. I called these thinking skills. With this in mind, I classified the competencies under the categories of Fundamental Knowledge (knowing), Conceptual Skills (thinking), Consulting Skills (doing), and Personal Attributes (being). The competencies are shown in Exhibit 6.9.

THE BEST OF THE NEWER CONTRIBUTIONS TO OD

Those who think not much has changed in OD need only to review the list compiled from the experts in Exhibit 6.10. Some of the OD veterans completing the survey openly admitted that they have not kept up with recent thinking and applications in OD, and others were skeptical about the practical application of such concepts as chaos theory, quantum physics, and systems concepts from biology.

Exhibit 6.9. OD Competencies

Fundamental Knowledge (Knowing)

- Changing times, future trends, and what it takes for organizations to succeed today and tomorrow
- Organization development (OD), organization transformation (OT), organization behavior (OB)
- Systems theory and thinking
- Understanding organization culture and cross-cultural dynamics
- Group dynamics, team building, and working with virtual teams
- Change theory and the change/OD process
- Change agent roles
- Understanding action research from a traditional and from an appreciative inquiry perspective
- The fundamentals of organization assessment, analysis, and feedback
- The fundamentals of facilitating small, large, and virtual groups
- How to utilize technology in practicing OD
- Training and development practices and technology
- Interventions for improving individual, group, and whole organization health and effectiveness
- Understanding the importance and essentials of management, leadership, and transformational leadership
- Understanding the fundamentals of business
- The politics of change

Conceptual Skills (Thinking)

- Personally develop a sound philosophical and ethical basis for practicing OD
- Learn to think from a big-picture, systems perspective of organizations and the environments in which they operate
- Acquire an ability or utilize a framework to visualize, design, plan, and clearly present appropriate interventions
- Through practice and experience, learn to be innovative in adapting OD concepts and methods to changing situations
- Learn to think in terms of ways to accelerate the change process

Consultation Skills (Doing)

- Skills gaining entry, contracting for change, and communicating ideas, concepts, and processes
- Skills in interviewing and data collection, analysis, and feedback
- Helping, coaching, and facilitation skills
- Skills in changing and improving individual, group, and whole organization health and effectiveness
- Skills in transforming organizations

- Training and development skills
- Program/project management skills
- Using OD-related technology

Personal Attributes (Being)

- A genuine passion for what you do and concern for people and organizations
- A high degree of self-awareness, eagerness to learn and grow, and ability to practice what you teach
- A high level of genuineness, integrity, and believability
- An uplifting and humble attitude that promotes the success of others
- The courage and sense of ethics to do what is right
- Good rational/emotional balance and ability to be objective
- A strong sensitivity to the needs of individuals, groups, and organizations
- Excellent listening abilities
- Ability to level, confront, and resolve conflicts
- Self-discipline, self-control, and perseverance
- A good sense of humor and ability to roll with the punches
- An ability to successfully handle stress and turn difficulties into opportunities

The two most frequently mentioned new applications were the interest in appreciative inquiry and the application of technology to OD. Appreciative inquiry (AI) is clearly gaining momentum as a new approach to OD. However, some experts expressed concerns about AI theorists who they believe have wrongly characterized traditional OD as being deficiency and problem-focused and AI as being positive and futuristic-focused and practitioners who have embraced AI to the point of using AI exclusively while discarding traditional OD thinking and methods.

Technology has also had a significant influence on OD. Technology has created new alternatives for collecting and feeding back data, for facilitating small and large groups, and for working with virtual teams and new organizational arrangements. A limited number of OD experts and, it is likely, OD practitioners in general are familiar with the technology of OD. It will be interesting to see whether technology renders some OD practices and practitioners obsolete or if old and new approaches can exist side by side.

As a general observation about the newer contributions from the view of the experts, very little has changed in terms of the fundamental theories and values of OD. What has changed is the environment in which OD is practiced, the new technology available to OD practitioners, and the new methods and practices that have evolved from adapting OD to a new organization world.

Exhibit 6.10. Best of the Newer Contributions

1. Appreciative inquiry
2. The technology of OD (using technology to collect and feed back data, facilitate meetings, work with virtual teams and organizations, etc.)
3. Global OD and how OD applies to different cultures and addresses global issues
4. The multiple efforts being made to clarify OD, identify OD competencies, strengthen OD education, and increase the professionalism and ethical practices in OD
5. Learning more about the change process, the implications of concepts such as chaos theory and non-linear change on planning changes, and developing methods to accelerate the change process in times of dynamic, unpredictable change
6. New forms of action research (appreciative inquiry, participative inquiry, parallel learning structures, etc.)
7. Learning more about what is involved in systematically transforming organizations
8. Better understanding of organization culture, its impact on behavior and performance, and how to change it
9. Large-group interventions (the search conference, future search, real-time strategic change, the conference model, whole-scale change, preferred futuring, participative design workshop, etc.)
10. The knowledge and skills required to do whole-systems and large-scale change using multiple methods
11. Learning more about the new virtual organization and virtual teams
12. Creating innovative learning organizations
13. Learning more about applying OD to implementing mergers and acquisitions
14. Applying OD to inter-organization partnerships and alliances
15. The emphasis on OD professionals having a better understanding of business
16. Application of the life sciences and non-linear complex systems theory to OD
17. Transformational leadership and training leaders to be transformational leaders
18. Efforts being made to integrate OD and HR as a united, high-impact resource in organizations
19. The extensive literature and research available on OD, and especially on change
20. Some applications of emotional intelligence are finding their way into OD

MAJOR ISSUES FACING OD IN THE FUTURE

There is work to be done in OD. The experts identified many issues that need to be dealt with in OD (see Exhibit 6.11). However, two stand out as being critical to the future success of OD. The first is promoting the value of OD and the second is related—namely the need to provide quality training and education in OD.

Exhibit 6.11. Major Issues Facing OD

1. Promoting the value of OD and getting resources committed to OD work, especially during times of scarce resources. OD professionals have to do a better job individually and collectively of providing training in OD and making OD a well-known and valued process among leaders, managers, HR professionals, and appropriate undergraduate and graduate students.
2. Protecting the integrity and value of the field. Too many people are practicing and sometimes even teaching OD without any formal training in the field and are giving OD a bad reputation. There is a need for more academic programs in OD, more academicians capable of teaching OD, more consistency in teaching the fundamentals of OD while encouraging new and innovative thinking and approaches, more professional programs designed to train skilled OD professionals, and more dialogue, cooperation, and collaboration between the academic and practitioner worlds.
3. Integrating new theories and methods without seeing them as the solution for all OD efforts.
4. Training OD professionals who are skilled in global OD.
5. Learning how to integrate technology into OD and how to facilitate virtual teams using technology.
6. Learning how to better involve and utilize leaders in the change process.
7. Doing a better job of integrating OD and HR. The race is on between OD and HR as to which will adapt the quickest to changing times and become the most relevant to organizations. Greater efforts must be made to integrate the two fields.
8. Evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of certifying and developing a code of ethics for OD practitioners.
9. Doing a better job of defining the field. The definitions, characteristics, values, and competencies that define the field require more clarity.
10. Becoming better students of what makes organizations successful, how to lead and manage change in an environment of dynamic change, and how to sustain change and integrate change into daily practices rather than seeing change efforts as big, infrequent events that rarely achieve lasting results.
11. Maintaining the core values of OD while innovating new approaches suitable to a new organization world.
12. Learning how to apply OD to down times and to turning difficulties into opportunities for change.
13. Finding ways to educate OD practitioners on business practices and issues.
14. Learning how to help organizations and their members deal with continuous, discontinuous, unfathomable, and unpredictable change.
15. Developing better methods for applying OD to newer applications, such as mergers and acquisitions, inter-organization development, and global issues.

In regard to the first issue, it is ironic that, while OD is a field for the times and offers alternatives to many of the challenges facing today's organizations, it still is a field that is not well-known or understood by leaders who need to understand OD themselves and who will ultimately decide to use or not use OD. Part of the challenge is that OD educators and professionals have apparently not done a good enough job of clearly defining the field and the value of OD. Also, one of OD's greatest successes has become one of its greatest weaknesses in promoting it. I am referring to how what has been learned in OD, especially regarding how to lead and manage change, has become so incorporated in change efforts with a wide variety of names that few identify the principles and processes with OD.

The second issue is also an important challenge. OD still has not completely shed its "touchy feely" image and ill-prepared practitioners damage the name of OD for true professionals. The answer is not simply a quantitative issue of training more professionals and exposing more students and managers to OD. On this count, some progress is being made, as OD is included in most organization behavior textbooks and other management-oriented textbooks, and change management is included in most management training and is a frequently featured topic in professional as well as academic journals. Aside from this, however, there has been little growth in formal academic or professional training for those who desire advanced training in OD. In fact, academic programs that focus on OD are on the decline and it is very difficult to find qualified academicians to teach OD. However, there is also a qualitative issue of knowing what to train students, managers, and professionals in, since there is a need for more clarity about the field itself. Some efforts are being made regarding these issues with all of the efforts to better define the field, and a number of colleges and universities with OD programs are sharing information and willingly inviting their programs to be evaluated to improve their quality.

With all of the challenges facing the field of OD, it was clear that, with few exceptions, the experts still see a bright though turbulent future for OD. OD is now a global phenomenon, and it has withstood the endless predictions of its demise and efforts to redefine new or modified concepts as replacements to OD rather than extensions of it. The need for OD is certain to grow as organizations struggle with what it takes to build an organization for success and what it takes to successfully adapt to and manage change.

WHO WERE THE TEN MOST IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTORS TO THE FIELD?

In many ways, I wish that I had not asked this question. All ninety of the experts surveyed, and others as well, have made valuable contributions to the field of OD, and the list of respondents to both my 1979 survey and the

2002–2003 survey all deserve special recognition for their dedication and long-time commitment to the field of OD. Any list while honoring a few fails to mention others who have been instrumental in pioneering, shaping, and making significant contributions.

Some experts felt uncomfortable answering the question, and several said that it may do a disservice to the many major contributors and the sense of community contributors have in this field. Also, the answer is dependent on many factors such as who you are most familiar with, how up-to-date you are on more recent contributors, and certainly how the results are tabulated. Interestingly, those mentioned the most were all first-generation founders, and most are still active in OD or related endeavors today. A number of experts noted the unique contributions of people in the field such as Robert Golembiewski for the most publications of anyone in the field; Don Cole for his pioneering efforts in internationalizing OD; David Cooperrider, Suresh Sirvastva, and Jane Magruder Watkins for their contributions to appreciative inquiry; Kathy Dannemiller for her approaches to large scale change; and Billie Alban for her insights on large group methods. Some suggested that I would be better advised to list forty or fifty contributors since so many have played such important roles in the field. However, there is still the challenge of leaving deserving people out no matter what cut-off number is chosen.

In the final analysis I decided to report the findings since I asked the question and received responses, although I do so with some reluctance. In identifying the top ten, I finally resigned myself to simply recording the number of times a name was mentioned rather than other methods, as they typically produced at least twenty names that were frequently mentioned. Having said all this and realizing that all of those well-versed on OD could immediately recall many others who deserve to be identified with the top ten, here are those who were mentioned the most, listed in alphabetical order:

- Chris Argyris
- Richard Beckhard
- Warren Bennis
- Robert Blake and Jane Mouton (mentioned as one since they worked as a team)
- Warner Burke
- Wendell French
- Edgar Schein
- Herb Shepherd
- Marvin Weisbord

CONCLUSIONS

Doing this study was a very rewarding and educational experience. Having the opportunity to communicate with so many leaders in the field about important issues in OD was more than one with a passion for OD could hope for, and to see the effort that so many put into answering the questions was humbling to say the least. Clearly I could spend a great deal of time analyzing and learning from the results.

What is important, however, is that this study makes at least a small contribution to developing a better understanding of the field of organization development. My hope is not so much that others will agree with the findings but that the findings will stimulate rich discussions and additional studies that will add clarity to the field.

In evaluating the results, I have concluded that OD is alive and well, but is struggling through many important issues in adapting to the times and being relevant for changing organizational needs. In one sense this could be said of any field such as HR that addresses organizational issues. However, the time to adapt is shorter than in previous times and the stakes are higher, as the fields that do not adapt will be marginal players in the future if they are players at all. The sense of urgency will, I hope, awaken leaders in OD who will play key roles in articulating the importance of OD, adapting OD to changing times, accelerating OD processes and methods, and developing new theories, methods, and applications.

Another conclusion is that there may be more agreement on the fundamentals and values of OD than many people think. Different experts may say things in different ways and, yes, there are areas of disagreement and different perspectives, as you would expect in any field. However, when it comes to the essentials, OD is not as complex and confusing as we often make it. Again, this may be a challenge for leaders in OD to simplify and clarify the field and to do a better job of articulating the value of OD.

Finally, having done this study, I have developed an even greater respect for the pioneers who launched a new field that has been such a valuable contributor to what we know about change and how to build healthy, high performance organizations. I urge those who have carried on and added to the pioneers' legacy to stay the course in diligently practicing and training others in OD, in hopes that they and others will be re-energized to further develop and promote this valuable field.

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A Future-Responsive Perspective for Competent Practice in OD

Saul Eisen, Jeanne Cherbeneau, and Christopher G. Worley

Three decades ago, Don Michael (1973) used the phrase *future-responsive societal learning* to denote the need to move beyond reactive problem solving in response to turbulent, radically changing environments. What was needed, he suggested, was the capacity to develop purposive anticipatory performance appropriate to the changing situation by learning to continually scan the relevant environment and develop appropriate capacities in response to anticipated needs. Our world is changing—along predictable and unpredictable lines. These changes are affecting organizations and communities, some of which become our clients. It is thus important and useful for OD practitioners to consider the future and its possible implications for the work we do.

So how is our world changing, and how, consequently, will our ways of practicing OD need to evolve in the years ahead? As the global and organizational environments in which we practice continue to change, OD practitioners are called on to adapt their intervention strategies and develop appropriate competence to carry them out effectively. This chapter is based on the outcomes of an exploration of these questions among most of the chapter authors in this book, plus an equal number of other participants, including external and internal consultants, managers, and futurists. We consider the interpretation and implications of these outcomes for the present and future practice of OD and for the continuing professional development of OD practitioners.

Chapter Five provided a comprehensive inventory of competencies as currently required for OD practice. Building on that base, we consider competencies

through the lens of emerging and future conditions that our client organizations will face. There is inevitable and appropriate overlap between these two chapters; while some competencies for future OD practice may be entirely new, many will be similar or will build upon current ones. Our future-oriented lens thus helps us to understand and prioritize OD practitioner competencies in the context of emerging trends and forces acting on organizations and their managers.

A CHANGING GLOBAL CONTEXT

Significant changes in technology, global politics, demographics, and other trends are resulting in new needs and dilemmas in organizations, communities, and nations. Some changes appear to be cyclical, gradual, and normal. Historically, for example, economies have had recurring ups and downs but generally seem to grow in the long run. The global population is also growing, and the increasing demand from consumers drives a generally optimistic view of local, regional, and international markets. As part of the trend toward globalization, many trade barriers have been reduced, and populations have been shifting toward regions of higher employment. At the same time, businesses are moving jobs to regions where there is plentiful, lower-cost labor. Continuing developments in science and technology support the emergence of new products and services and increases in productivity. The Internet and wireless communication are creating an electronic global village, accelerating widespread availability of information and communication on a worldwide scale.

Other changes seem to be less predictable, harder to comprehend, and more discontinuous. As examples, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War upended assumptions and expectations about geopolitical power balances and conflicts. The September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon brought into painful focus a new threat to peace and security—decentralized, networked terrorist groups, dedicated to fighting the perceived oppression and invasion of Western values and power into Muslim lands.

Similarly, the possibly catastrophic implications of global warming have only recently begun to be widely acknowledged. And the increasing levels of population are not affecting all societies in the same way. Globally, the rate of population increase is slowing down, and some countries are expecting an actual decline. Demographically, some primarily developing nations have great proportions of people under twenty, while others are experiencing growing numbers of elders. Legal and undocumented movement across borders is creating much more diverse populations in communities, schools, and organizations.

Global mass communication, coupled with geopolitical power shifts, is creating a pressure-cooker effect of rising aspirations and growing frustration with the glacial pace of real improvement in living standards. Regional and ethnic

cultures, no longer isolated by geography or the illusion of independence, become outraged with a sense of invasion, insult, and threat from alien beliefs and behavior. Many more people feel justified in taking aggressive action in defense of their autonomy and ideals and are becoming increasingly creative and effective in punishing their perceived tormentors. Their success is fueling a mirror-image reaction from their enemies in a vicious cycle of escalation.

The material in this chapter draws on the outcomes of a Delphi study we conducted. The purpose of this study was to develop a future-responsive perspective of OD competencies that will be required in the years ahead. In the following sections we provide a brief overview of relevant literature on this subject (see Exhibit 7.1), describe the methodology of the study, present its key outcomes, and consider their possible interpretation and implications for OD practice.

Our approach for this analysis is based on the premises of strategic thinking and open-systems planning (Hanna, 1988). We are thus doing what we guide our clients to do: Monitor the relevant environment—how it is changing and how it might change in the future; consider what adaptive behavior may be appropriate to maintain the best fit between our customers' needs and our unique resources; strive for future-responsive learning to maintain our relevance and competitive advantage—as individuals and as a profession.

METHODOLOGY FOR THIS DELPHI STUDY¹

The Delphi method generates responses to a sequence of questions that are put to a defined group of relevant experts. Their answers to each question are summarized and fed back to them, and this summary provides the context for the next question. Delphi forecasting was originally developed in the 1950s as a way to draw on the expertise of diverse resource persons in situations where “accurate information is unavailable or expensive to obtain, or evaluation models require subjective inputs to the point where they become the dominant parameters” (Linstone & Turoff, 1975, p. 10). It was particularly useful in circumstances in which participants with relevant expertise were geographically dispersed. Whereas early projects were conducted by mailed questions and responses, computer-mediated electronic communication now makes it possible to manage such projects more easily and quickly.

Delphi has been increasingly applied in business settings as well as to complex non-profit and public sector issues such as health care. While it has become very popular, it has not always been applied well and has been passionately criticized by some. Sackman (1975, p. 74), for example, argued that it encouraged “a shortcut social science method that is lacking in minimum standards of professional accountability.” The most useful critiques are about designs that fail to provide anonymity to protect participants from peer pressure and the lack

Exhibit 7.1. Research on the Future of OD

The current attention and debate over the future of OD is not new. In fact, the subject has been on OD people's minds for some time. Articles considering this question, for example, first appeared in the *OD Practitioner* in the mid-1970s (Burke, 1973; Miles, 1977; Sperling, 1975), when the field was scarcely twenty years old. Today, the extant literature discussing the future of OD can be divided into three camps: (1) how practitioners need to be developed to meet the needs of the future; (2) how OD as a practice will evolve; and (3) what the research agenda for OD will be.

A good deal of the literature on the future of OD has centered on the skills, knowledge, and competencies required to practice it and how these will evolve. Initial surveys of OD practitioners by Argyris (1962), Beer (1980), Shepard and Raia (1981), and Burke (1982) have been followed more recently by those of Sullivan and McLean (1995), and Worley and Varney (1998). Among the commonalities across all of the results is a continuous emphasis on the importance of the personal growth of the consultant (Cheung-Judge, 2001; Quinn, Spreitzer, & Brown, 2000). Research by Eisen, Steele, and Cherbeneau (1995), which was published in an earlier edition of this book, also used a Delphi format. It identified five categories of trends and competencies that related to broadened frameworks in a global environment, clients and client systems, cultural and demographic diversity, values and ethics, and trends within OD.

The second type of research on the future of OD consists of descriptions of how OD practice will evolve. One stream of thought argues that current OD practice will cease to exist as organizations institutionalize the processes associated with OD, such as team building, survey feedback, conflict management, and sociotechnical work design (Jamieson & Bennis, 1981). Another stream discusses the variety of trends facing organizations and projects the needs for OD. A final stream has turned to discussions of whether there's a difference between OD and change management (Farias & Johnson, 2000; Hornstein, 2001; Warren, Ruddle, & Moore, 1999).

Finally, the future of OD has been concerned with issues of OD research. As early as 1976, Warner Burke was addressing the issue of how the research and practice agenda of OD needed to change, and he has kept this issue as a central topic in the OD literature (Burke, 1997, 2002). Pettigrew, Woodman, and Cameron (2001) noted that research in organization development and change faced six challenges, including the complexity of incorporating multiple contexts and levels of analysis, incorporating time and process, using continuous versus discontinuous change processes, and attempting to relate change to organization performance. Clearly, there is continuing research and reflection about the future of OD and its practitioners.

of adversarial confrontation of ideas among participants. In view of these considerations, our design used an anonymous multi-voting process, and we provided a discussion forum for dialogue among participants as concerns and disagreements emerged about the items being generated. These measures,

together with the range of demographic characteristics and the intentionally diverse professional expertise of panel members, made it possible to maintain a thoughtful diversity of views throughout the Delphi sequence.

We structured this study into four phases, addressing each of the following sequence of objectives:

1. Scan the emerging and changing environment in which OD is practiced.
2. Consider consequent challenges and opportunities for organizations and their managers.
3. Develop possibly new intervention strategies to respond to these challenges and opportunities.
4. Identify practitioner competencies that will be required by these new interventions and practices in the coming decade.

As indicated in our opening paragraphs, participants represented a range of relevant expertise. Of the thirty-nine participants, twelve had experience and expertise as internal consultants, eighteen as external consultants, twenty-one as educators in OD, nineteen as managers, and four as futurists. The list of participants is shown in Exhibit 7.2.

Over a six-month period, participants logged onto a secure website² approximately once a week. They each read the current question posed by the facilitator and posted three to six responses. After all participants had a chance to respond, they were asked to log onto the site again, review a summarized list of responses, and prioritize them using a multi-voting method. The top 25 to 30 percent of the total items generated was then used as the basis for the next question, and so on. Our purpose was to develop a broad context within which to consider implications for OD practice as we moved through succeeding phases of the Delphi process.

Exhibit 7.2. Delphi Panel Participants

John Adams, Juana Anguita, Terry Armstrong, Mila Baker, Patti Barker, Peter Bishop, Steve Cady, Mary Choi, David Coghlan, Don Cole, Kathleen Dannemiller, Karen Davis, June Delano, Ray Dyck, Terri Egan, Saul Eisen, Richard Engdahl, Ann Feyerherm, Allan Foss, Sarah Gevartz, Glen Hiemstra, Gary Hochman, Mike Horne, David Jamieson, Prasad Kaipa, Lenny Lind, Oliver Markley, Gary McLean, Steve Milovich, Ann Moreira, Joyce Reynolds, Carole Robin, Bev Scott, Charlie Seashore, Roland Sullivan, Brock Travis, Don Warrick, Tony Woodcock, and Chris Worley

DELPHI OUTCOMES: TRENDS, CONSEQUENCES, STRATEGIES, AND COMPETENCIES

In this section, we tell the story of the Delphi process as it unfolded and summarize the panel's prioritized responses to the sequence of four questions that addressed (1) emerging trends and forces; (2) their consequences for organizations; (3) relevant intervention strategies for responding to those trends and their consequences; and (4) related practitioner competencies that will be required to implement these intervention strategies.

Our intention, too, is to involve the reader so that the final competency outcomes can be understood in the context of the inquiry process as it unfolded. A second reason for our decision to involve the reader is our belief that an overarching *meta-competency* for effective practice in OD involves practitioners' ability to modify and evolve our practice continually in response to anticipated changes in the needs of client systems. Over and above the specific competencies listed as outcomes of Phase 4, we thus propose to engage the reader in a learning process about doing future-responsive learning itself.

With this purpose in mind, we invite the reader to be an active participant in the Delphi process. Before reading the prioritized responses to each question, you might jot down your own responses. These can then be compared with those of our Delphi panel as reported here. In many cases, we would expect readers' responses to be similar to those of our panel. Some readers' responses may well be different—perhaps because readers like you may be aware of material that was not prioritized by us. Possibly, too, events occurring after the publication of this book may signal significant new trends, challenges, and directions for the continually unfolding practice of OD.

Your active participation while reading this chapter can help you to understand these future competency outcomes—and also to learn to maintain a future-responsive approach in your own practice.

PHASE 1: EMERGING TRENDS AND FORCES

Our world is changing at an accelerating rate and along multiple dimensions. Emerging trends and forces are changing the context in which organizations function and the requirements of their leaders for assistance from consultants. The first phase of this Delphi process provided an environment scan—or perhaps a *future scan*—for organizations in this changing world. Participants were asked, “What are the most significant trends and forces that you believe will affect organizations during the next decade?” They were asked to consider trends and forces in the following categories:

- Business and the economy;
- Science and technology;
- Government and politics;
- Population and demographics;
- Education and training;
- Health and the environment; and
- Culture and belief systems.

Reader response: Before reading the panel's responses, use a notepad to write down your own thoughts about significant emerging trends and forces that may affect organizations and their managers in the next decade or so.

The material generated by Delphi participants is voluminous—even after each list was prioritized and pared down. Still, even those shorter lists are so long that it is impractical to reproduce the entire list here, and to do so would be beyond the scope of this chapter. We have therefore summarized the prioritized items for the first three phases, and reproduced here only the fourth phase—future competencies—in full.³

Summary of Delphi Panel Responses to Phase 1: Trends and Forces

Accelerated Change, Inequality, and Interdependence

The panel agreed that the perceived pace of change in many aspects of business will continue to increase and that the pressure for profits will remain intense. There was also agreement that the trend of increasing gaps between the “haves” and the “have-nots” will continue. The interdependence of the economies of the world will increase and create a very fragile system.

Technology and the Knowledge Economy

Science and technology trends included the increasing pervasiveness of the Internet, the proliferation of wireless technologies, the increasing importance of biotechnology on agriculture and health industries, and the continued trend toward a more knowledge-based society. Training will continue to be affected by technology, making education available any time, anywhere, and using multiple methods.

Complexity, Diversity, and Linkage Across Domains

There will be increasing partnerships and collaboration between business and government with complex interdependence across them. The world's population will continue to grow, live longer, become more diverse, and be more mobile. Cultural differences will become increasingly apparent—and sometimes

problematic. Successful managers and executives will become more culturally aware. Publicly traded corporations will continue to face unrelenting shareholder demands for profitability. Economic and business downturns will lead executives to focus even more on the bottom line and shareholder value.

Ecology and Sustainability

Change in the environment is occurring at an increasingly rapid pace. Our science and technology are advancing at a pace that prevents us from perceiving the social or ecological consequences of their use. Concerns about ecological sustainability, now a common issue in Europe, will move more strongly into North America.

These were the outcomes of Phase 1, in which emerging trends were identified. The reader might now compare them to her or his own views about these questions. What connections do you find? Are there new and important trends now affecting organizations? This awareness of the unfolding, sometimes turbulent, change in the environment in which organizations function can be a continual source of guidance and insight into the complexities and priorities to which our clients must respond and for which we can provide professional support. It is these conditions and their consequences for organizations that lead managers to seek assistance from internal or external consultants. Are you prepared to respond to these needs?

PHASE 2: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ORGANIZATIONS

After completing the process of identifying significant emerging trends, the Delphi group was ready to explore what those trends might mean for organizations, managers, and OD practitioners. The question put to the group was as follows: “These are the top trends we have prioritized. Our task now is to consider possible implications of these trends—what significant challenges or opportunities will they create for organizations and their managers and hence for OD practitioners?”

Reader response: On a notepad, write down your own thoughts about the challenges and opportunities that may be created by emerging trends—for organizations and their managers.

Summary of Delphi Panel Responses to Phase 2: Challenges and Opportunities

Knowledge, Information, and Decision Making Globalization and the accelerating pace of technical, environmental, and organizational change combine to require executives, managers, and staff members to absorb, identify, sort,

prioritize, and communicate a vast amount of information rapidly. They must also respond, make decisions, and move quickly.

Human Resources

The pace of change will require creative solutions to hiring, retaining, and developing core skills and knowledge. Non-core capabilities will be outsourced. The human and business costs of stress will need to be managed. The boundaries between traditional HR functions and the processes of OD will become fuzzy and possibly more conflictual.

Systems Thinking

Ecological trends, globalization, increased partnerships and alliances among a variety of organizations and governments and other trends all point to the increased importance of whole-systems thinking to understand, predict, and manage human affairs. Whole-systems thinking considers the complex interdependence among elements of an organization and also between the organization and its relevant or strategic environment.

Organic Organization Design

New organizational forms must be understood. Our knowledge of networks, alliances, and public/private partnerships must continue to develop. New models of organization, where competition and collaboration can co-exist, where the organization behaves more like a living organism that adjusts or evolves with the environment, rather than trying to control or modify it, or even worse, treat it as expendable, need to be developed. Effective, high-commitment work environments need to be developed so that front-line staff can take immediate action aligned with business objectives, seeking new partnerships when core competencies required to pursue new market opportunities exist outside the organization.

Globalization and Cultural Awareness

Globalization, the widening gap between the haves and have-nots, the increase in alliances and networks, the increased reach of technology to bring people together, and other trends all point to the need for increased awareness, knowledge, skill, and intervention processes that address cross-cultural relationships. OD practitioners need to see culture and culture work as central to what OD is about. One cannot do OD without engaging the culture and subcultures of an organization.

These were the outcomes of Phase 2 in which possible challenges and opportunities associated with emerging trends were considered. The reader might now compare them to her or his own views about these questions. What connections do you find? Are there new and important challenges or opportunities now affecting organizations? Are you prepared to respond to these needs? The next phase of the Delphi study explored possible intervention strategies that may be necessary in the coming years.

PHASE 3: EMERGING INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

The third phase of the Delphi process asked participants to consider how the practice of OD should evolve in response to the trends identified in the first phase and the challenges or opportunities they would create for organizations and their managers: “Given the prioritized list we generated in Phase 2, what new or emerging intervention strategies or approaches will be needed to respond effectively to those challenges and opportunities?”

Reader response: On a notepad, write down your own thoughts about possible intervention strategies that may be called for by the organization challenges and opportunities listed in the previous phase.

Summary of Delphi Panel Responses to Phase 3: Emerging Intervention Strategies

Working with Whole Systems

More and better techniques for diagnosing and intervening at the whole-systems level are required. For effective OD interventions to have “stickability” they must reflect a whole-systems perspective from both a practical, results-oriented focus and a process-oriented focus. We need strategies for identifying and sustainably affecting key leverage components.

Methods for Building Collaborative Advantage

The field of OD must develop intervention strategies that support collaborative decision making among multi-party, multi-organization, and total-system arrangements. OD needs to foster the capability to make collaborative decisions at the periphery of organizations based on consistency with organizational purpose.

Supporting Virtual Teams

Intervention practices that address the social, technical, and business implications of virtual teams are required. We need to help client organizations to evolve from a limiting paradigm of expert individual decision makers to new methods, assumptions, and technologies of group, networked, and distributed nodes for making decisions, solving problems, and creating meaning.

Appreciative Approaches

The shift from problem-solving and deficit-based views of interventions to an appreciative view should continue. Frequently, significant learning and improvement can occur when organization participants build on what they have done “right” or what is working especially well, rather than only focusing on the solution to a given obstacle or “problem.” Balancing problem solving with an appreciative inquiry into the healthy and high-functioning aspects of an organization can help to maintain its creative intelligence and initiative.

Developing System Leadership

New and more effective leadership development strategies are necessary to move thinking to new levels. Intervention designs must build capacity to think, make decisions, and take action systemically, that is, see the big picture, build in effective feedback loops, and recognize or anticipate and adjust for unintended, delayed, and counterintuitive long-term consequences.

OD and Return on Investment

OD interventions need to be more tied to critical business issues and more able to demonstrate their operational returns. Practitioners' view of hard-driving—and financially driven—top executives as problems must change along with our view of ourselves. Our interventions need to include and value the priorities of all organization participants and support holistic, inclusive integration at the level of core goals of people at all levels of hierarchy, as well as customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders.

Continuing Education of Practitioners

OD as a field must re-invigorate the training and professional development of OD practitioners to include more business subjects, facilitation skills, research skills, and a broad appreciation of the social and behavioral sciences. If sustainability is becoming an increasingly significant business driver for U.S. companies, it is essential to restore interdisciplinary perspectives to OD education and practice by adding economics, public policy, and ecological studies to organization development, organizational behavior, and industrial/organizational psychology curricula.

Leveraging Diversity and Culture

More sophisticated interventions are needed that appreciate, work with, and leverage cultural differences. Diversity, conceptual frames, and cultures need to assume more visible prominence in global business decisions to reduce the tendency to operate from an ethnocentric model. We need more advanced work on mediating relationships between groups and organizations and on building more sensitivity and skill in managing diversity and conflict. Because organization culture needs to be understood as central to what OD is about, our intervention proposals, designs, and strategies must explicitly integrate culture awareness and culture work as a critical focus.

These are the summarized outcomes of Phase 3 in which emerging intervention strategies were considered. The reader might now compare them to her or his own views about these questions. What connections do you find? Do your own thoughts on this diverge in some ways from those of the Delphi panel? And what competencies will be needed to use these intervention strategies? The next phase of the Delphi study considered the competencies that OD practitioners may need in the future.

PHASE 4: OD COMPETENCIES FOR THE NEXT DECADE

Our task for this phase was to consider possible implications of the previous three phases for the continuing professional development of OD practitioners. We asked, “What new or emerging competencies will be needed to implement emerging intervention strategies effectively?”

We used the definition of competency that was developed by Bob Tannenbaum and Roland Sullivan (1992–2005): *An OD competency is any personal quality that contributes to successful consulting performance.* The term personal quality is intended to embrace areas of self, including values and driving principles; areas of knowledge, including fluency with relevant theories and models; and areas of skills and abilities, including the requisite behavioral capacity to perform certain tasks.

Reader response: On your notepad, write down your own thoughts about important current or new OD competencies that will be required to implement emerging intervention strategies.

We have reflected on global trends and the challenges and opportunities they may create for organizations and their managers. We then considered intervention strategies that will be required to respond effectively to these challenges and opportunities. Based on the outcomes of the first three phases of the Delphi process, participants generated ninety items about possible emerging competencies. Using a multi-voting prioritizing process, they concluded that future OD practitioners will especially need the following thirty-five competencies to implement emerging intervention strategies and practice effectively during the next decade. They are listed here in full, arranged in twelve thematic clusters.

Prioritized Delphi Panel Responses to Phase 4: Emerging Competencies

A. Parallel Interventions in Complex Human Systems

1. Knowledge and skills required to design and lead complex interventions, using multiple parallel techniques that work with individuals, teams, large-group stakeholder conferences, trans-organizational and trans-domain events, in fast-cycle sustained coherent change, and based on action, reflection, and learning at each of these levels.
2. Ability to design and implement individual and organizational interventions that build capacity to think, make decisions, and take action systemically, that is, see the big picture; build in effective feedback loops; and recognize or anticipate and adjust for unintended, delayed, and counterintuitive long-term consequences.

3. Knowledge of societies, communities, and social systems dynamics. The ability to convey the essence of “community” as a motivational concept. Deep understanding of the concept of “the tragedy of the commons” and how that is affected by factors such as mental models, structure, technology, and globalization.
4. Ability to support effective decision making for individuals, groups, teams, organizations, inter-organizations, and communities. Skills for rapid time-to-value decision-making models and methods.
5. Strong program/project management methodology skills to manage complex business change initiatives that require firm attention to scope, cost, quality, and risk.

B. Global, Trans-Domain and Larger System Work

6. Ability to work ethically and courageously with inter-organization issues to create wider inclusive boundaries among stakeholders.
7. Skill in bridge-building and alliance management, including developing trust across a wide range of constituents simultaneously.
8. Awareness and skill related to working with the “larger” system, including contracting with the right persons for the right scope of work.
9. Expanded knowledge of systems thinking to include a global perspective, how to build strategic alliances and use large group methods when appropriate.

C. Culture Work

10. Deep understanding of culture: how it influences behavior, how it develops and changes, and the connection between culture and performance.
11. Understanding of culture as the core deep-structure organizing principle underlying all aspects of organizations—including hierarchies, reward systems, competitive strategies, technologies, work-flow structures, and shared belief systems.
12. Ability to adapt to each unique cultural situation in applying OD knowledge, skills, and strategies.
13. Ability to join with organization participants in any change process as an intentional, evolving, collaborative reconstruction of shared ways of understanding and embodying meaning in their ways of working and being together.

D. Self-as-Instrument, Continuous Learning, and Innovation

14. Effective continuous learning as needed to respond appropriately to emerging complex social needs and organizational dilemmas.

15. Commitment and skill for continuously reflecting on one's personal role as an instrument of the work, and doing one's personal and professional homework as needed to be fully available for the job of catalyzing wisdom in organizations and communities.
16. Ability to quickly scan a situation and produce innovative interventions that deal with that particular set of system dynamics.
17. Skill in the use of action research to learn on-the-fly and not just reapply techniques from another era.

E. Use of Technology and Virtual Interventions

18. Proficiency in using virtual, online approaches or a blended online/onsite approach to address business challenges of geographically dispersed organizations through such means as conference calls, interactive websites, and collaborative planning tools.
19. Knowledge of, and ability to use, practical and scalable (that is for any size groups) tools and systems that facilitate systemic thinking and action and efficient communication and collaboration.
20. Cutting-edge knowledge and application ability regarding computer-based information management and communication facilitation and the ability to stay current with continuously and rapidly evolving technologies and best practices in those areas.

F. Coaching for Whole-Systems Leadership

21. Coaching skills to work with top-level managers in reformulating their management philosophies and styles.
22. Ability to help leaders be congruent with emerging organizational forms that are self-organizing and in which most operational and change processes are self-managed at the periphery rather than at the core.
23. Skills for developing transformational leaders who are capable of championing change and transforming organizations.

G. Dialogic Reflection and Action

24. Ability to use and promote reflection, dialogue, and exploration to understand issues, differences, and values dilemmas and not rush to find a single problem solution.
25. Ability to facilitate conversations to create meaning and action—not only understanding.

H. Accelerated Methods and Large-Group Work

26. Skills in facilitating collaboration, decision making, problem solving, planning for the future, networking, teamwork, and team building, all

with new methods that are faster and more effective; ability to train others throughout the organization to use these skills.

27. Deep knowledge and skill in the design, management, and facilitation of large-group interventions.

I. Purpose and Strategic Assessment

28. Ability to identify and monitor both strategic and tactical metrics to assess whether objectives are met.
29. Knowledge and skills to design and build outcomes measurement into contracts and to build client appreciation and funding for this part of the work.

J. Multidisciplinarity

30. Multidisciplinary skills from areas such as future studies, economic analysis, public policy formulation, and systems thinking.
31. Awareness and acumen in operations, marketing, business, and finance, in addition to process skills.

K. Knowledge Management

32. Understanding of the challenges of managing knowledge in an information-rich, fast-changing organizational environment.
33. Knowledge, skills, and social technologies for designing and implementing effective methods for generating and disseminating valid relevant knowledge in organizations.

L. Appreciative Integral Change

34. Knowledge of the psychosocial dynamics of change so as to awaken and build on people's natural disposition toward development; minimizing resistance by working on the positive side of the process.
35. Skills in building high-performance organizations that are also a great place to work and in articulating how this results in a win/win situation for the organization, the organization members, and customers; how a focus on both performance and people leads to competitive advantage.

The reader may now want to compare his or her own earlier notes about future competencies with those on this list. Your own list has likely included many items prioritized by the Delphi group. You may have items on your own list that the Delphi panel did not have.

Many of these competencies are not entirely new. They may be the same as—or extensions of—core competencies generally accepted as important in current

OD practice (see Chapter Five). What is important in this analysis is that these competencies are particularly highlighted by our strategic and future-responsive consideration of emerging trends, their possible impact on organizations and managers, and the consequent intervention strategies that will be needed in the years ahead.

Self-Assessment and Professional Development

It is now possible, having reviewed and participated in this Delphi process, for the reader to engage in a self-assessment process. (See Appendix II, and the accompanying CD, for a full self-assessment instrument keyed to this chapter.) Looking over the list of future competencies generated in Phase 4, consider the following questions:

1. Which items on the list of emerging competencies are most important in your own practice? Circle the number of those competencies that are most relevant to you.
2. For those items that you have marked, how prepared are you? Mark items with a plus (+) in which you believe you have a high degree of competence or mastery. Mark items with a check (✓) if you feel adequately competent, although there is room for improvement. Mark items with a minus (-) if you sense a significant deficiency in your level of preparation.
3. For those items that you have marked with a minus or a check, consider what professional development activities or programs would give you the required preparation. Develop whatever concrete plans make sense to you for engaging in that learning. Commit to those plans by writing a professional development plan for yourself that includes goals, activities, and time lines.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR OD PRACTICE

In this chapter we have highlighted the ways in which our world is in a state of accelerating change and increasing complexity. There is more interdependence among organizations, industries, government agencies, and economies, and many of these systems seem to be more tightly linked so that changes in one reverberate quickly among the others.

The effectiveness of OD in such an environment depends on our ability to work with whole systems: bringing diverse relevant stakeholders together and creating transformative contexts in which dialogue, reflection, and learning lead to new visions, new possibilities, and new collaborative action based on shared purpose. Often this may mean linking across organizations, across communities,

across public/private domains, using a range of intervention methods as appropriate. Our world, communities, and organizations are often in conflict at multiple levels, and we must be prepared to assist our clients to address these conflicts and differences effectively. We will need to draw from and implement a variety of approaches, appropriate to a given situation, to build common ground, resolve or manage differences, and increase client capacity to perform effectively.

As technology continues to accelerate communication and to generate massive amounts of information, the capacity of organizations to manage their knowledge capital will become even more critical. Internet-based and wireless communication have already led to the emergence of virtual teams and virtual organizations with distributed information processing and decision-making nodes around the globe. There is therefore a growing need for virtual leadership and virtual facilitation as well as for methods and technologies that develop responsive organizational strategies, implement accelerated changes, and monitor operations and performance across distant locations and different time zones.

As populations and job markets continue to shift, there is also a critical need to manage our human capital well. This will require a closer integration of OD and human resource functions. Practitioners of OD need to be knowledgeable about key human resource management systems that promote organizational and individual performance and sustainability—for example, performance management, succession planning, compensation and reward systems, and various human development strategies. A strategic partnering of OD and HR specialists, an increased understanding and valuing of one another's knowledge and skills, and a willingness to collaborate will enhance the effectiveness of both and, ultimately, the organization.

This massive complexity, information overload, and turbulent change make it increasingly difficult for management systems based on centralized decision making and command-control methods to respond adequately, let alone creatively, and to guide organizations successfully. The contribution of OD has historically been significant for such issues and will become even more relevant in the future. For example, using the models developed by Emery (1967) and Trist (1978), we can support shifts from top-down command-control models toward flexible-adaptable horizontal coordination among those who are closest to the information and the work requirements while maintaining a clear orientation to the strategic directions of the organization. We can help organizations to create structures, processes, and work arrangements that unleash the human intelligence available to them.

As we engage these change efforts with client organizations, we must understand the centrality of cultural processes and structures, because culture is the implicit medium within which change emerges and stability is maintained in

any group, community, or organization. The assumptions, beliefs, values, and expectations that people embody in the work environment create and maintain the shared reality of the organization. They manifest in the form of work arrangements, production technology, reward systems, shop layout and building architecture, decision-making methods, and marketing strategies. One cannot engage any aspect of an organization without touching its culture, and yet culture is implicit and generally unconscious.

For OD practitioners, culture is the medium and the palette for all our interventions, and we need to be aware and intentional in how we engage it. When we use interventions that develop a shared vision among stakeholders (Weisbord & Janoff, 1995) or the methods of appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider, 1990) that build on past success experiences, we are explicitly working with culture. But also when we coach leaders in whole-system thinking and when we help to redesign work arrangements or to introduce new technology, culture is involved and affected. OD, in this sense, is about facilitating the evolution of culture, and OD practitioners are culture workers. The future will call on us to become even more adept at doing culture work.

To do all this, in a world of organizations that is spinning wildly into accelerating and turbulent change, the personhood of the consultant becomes even more important (see Chapter Twenty-Five). In addition to all the concepts and methods we must be able to draw on, OD practitioners should maintain sufficient self-awareness, interpersonal sensitivity, and behavioral flexibility to be able to perceive accurately and respond appropriately. In the white-water environment of modern organizations (Vaill, 1989), in which a rich array of subtle cues must be perceived, processed, understood, and responded to in the moment, one should draw on a capacity for judgment, and even for intuitive understanding, to respond adequately or even masterfully. If we have unfinished psychological homework, it can block that capacity or lead us to be inappropriately reactive. At our best, we bring our personal clarity and emotional intelligence to the work—we use ourselves as the instruments of the work. This has always been true of OD, and it will be even more important in the complex organizational environments now emerging. The future will require us to call forth important new competencies. It will, for the same reasons, require that we maintain a clear focus on those competencies and values that have been at the core of this work from the beginning.

By no means are we suggesting that OD practitioners try to “be all”—that is, be experts in all areas. The field of OD is already far too extensive for any one person to represent. But knowing the range of knowledge and skill sets that may be required enables us to bring together appropriately diverse consulting teams that can serve the client organization effectively in these increasingly complex and demanding environments. Furthermore, we can continue to use our capacity for engaging the wisdom and expertise of “those in the room” and facilitating

the empowered dialogue and learning that is possible through genuine consultant-client collaboration.

We have tried here to raise awareness of future possibilities and their implications for OD practitioners. We challenge ourselves to make conscious, thoughtful choices about those areas of competence we may need to sharpen and expand to enhance effectiveness as practitioners.

FUTURE-RESPONSIVE LEARNING IN THE COMPETENT PRACTICE OF OD

The material in this chapter is based on deliberations that took place some months before the publication of this edition and therefore reflects the best of what our Delphi participants could perceive of the possible future at that time. It is a snapshot of a global and organizational reality that is actually more like a moving picture that continues to unfold. The reader's engagement and responsiveness along the way may help to update the material to the date of reading. But the task is a continuing one—for OD practitioners and their client organizations. What new trends will become evident next month or next year?

The future-scanning activity described in this chapter may, itself, be adapted as an intervention process with client organizations. When an organization operates in the kind of complex, fast-changing environments that we have been considering here, a robust future-scanning capability can support the organization's strategic ability to adapt, grow, compete, and thrive in the present and future.

We also suggest that there is an important meta-competency for OD practice in our changing world: the ability to carry out this future-scanning process continually and to build this future awareness into our client organization. This means that we must maintain a future-responsive awareness as part of our own continuing professional development as OD practitioners so that we are always considering present choices and practices in the context of emerging futures.

Notes

1. We appreciate the research assistance provided us during this study by Patricia Andrews and Theresa Rhodes while they were graduate interns in the psychology MA program in OD at Sonoma State University.
2. We gratefully acknowledge the generous support for this project provided by Lenny Lind, president of CoVision, whose WebCouncil environment (www.webcouncil.com) served as the communication medium for this Delphi project.
3. A complete listing of the prioritized items for all four phases of the Delphi conference can be found at www.sonoma.edu/programs/od/delphi/

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PART TWO



STEPS TO GUIDE PLANNED CHANGE

Part Two consists of chapters that describe steps that can be useful in guiding planned change:

Chapter Eight	Marketing OD, by Alan Weiss
Chapter Nine	Pre-Launch, by David Jamieson
Chapter Ten	Launch: Assessment and Action Planning, by D.D. Warrick
Chapter Eleven	Implementation and Continuing the Change Effort, by W. Warner Burke
Chapter Twelve	Evaluation, by Gary N. McLean and Stephen H. Cady
Chapter Thirteen	Separation, by W. Warner Burke and Ann Van Eron



CHAPTER EIGHT



Marketing OD

Alan Weiss

Most OD practitioners fail to realize that they are in the marketing business. There are superb consultants in this area who cannot get work because they believe that marketing is beneath them. There are average consultants doing quite well because they recognize the importance of marketing and can do it. And then there are superb consultants who are also superb marketers who can name their own price. Which group would you rather be in?

This chapter will enable you to:

- Determine your value proposition.
- Identify your buyer.
- Establish routes to reach that buyer.
- Achieve conceptual agreement.
- Create a proposal which will close business.

DETERMINING YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION

There are three critical factors to embrace when attempting to market professional services: (1) What's the market need? (2) What are your competencies? and (3) What is your passion?

What Is the Market Need?

This is the essence of marketing. There must be a pre-existing need—for example, sales development or leadership improvement are always needed—or a need you can create such as satisfying employees *before* satisfying the customer. Since OD is an often nebulous and inexact concept, it is vital to create a clear value proposition.

A value proposition is *always* a benefit for the potential client and *never* a description of your methodology. For example, here are good and bad value propositions:

Good

- Improve retention of core talent
- Decrease time-to-market of new products
- Merge acquisition and parent cultures
- Improve customer response time

Poor

- Perform exit interviews
- Assess marketing/sales relations
- Run focus groups for new people
- Create customer survey

You can embrace existing market need or else create new market need (which is what Akio Morita did at Sony when he created the Walkman™ because no one knew they needed it until he educated them).

You must become proficient in articulating your value proposition in terms of a client outcome. Here is mine: “We improve individual and organizational productivity and performance.” (The only legitimate response to this rather vague statement is, “What does that mean?” I reply: “Well, tell me something about your business, and I will be more specific.” You cannot learn while you are talking, and the more you talk, the more the other person will tend to “deselect” you.)

What Are Your Competencies?

Competencies are those combinations of skills, experiences, and behaviors that make you proficient in a given area. If you do not have sufficient competencies, then the good news is that you can always acquire more. But what are you good at, and what would you like to become good at?

In terms of marketing (as opposed to content), Exhibit 8.1 lists the traits for a “rainmaker” (namely business developer/marketer) that I have discerned over the years. They may surprise you.

What Is Your Passion?

Without passion, there is nothing but tedious work. Market need and competency must be fueled by passion. Isolate those competencies and needs you most favor and are most passionate about, and focus on them.

Exhibit 8.1. The Rainmaker Attributes

Strategies for Marketing

The Rainmaker Attributes

- **Intellectual breadth**
 - Able to discuss a wide variety of issues
- **Sense of humor**
 - Able to ease tension, maintain perspective
- **Industry conversancy**
 - Able to relate to and identify situational issues
- **Superb communication skills**
 - Able to command a room or a meeting
- **Presence: *Sogomi***
 - Able to be accepted as a peer of the buyer
- **Framing skills**
 - Able to quickly describe problems and opportunities
- **Innovation**
 - Able and willing to raise the bar, seek new paths
- **Resilience**
 - Able to accept rejection and reject acceptance
- **Life balance**
 - Able to view life holistically

For example, I will not do any “downsizing” work whatsoever, because I am passionately *against* it, since I consider downsizing to be a heinous act implemented to compensate for executive error. I am passionate about developing leadership, so I actively seek out work in that area.

If you refer to Figure 8.1, you will see four possibilities:

1. Need and capability without passion create drudgery. You are a hired hand with little motivation and no “ownership” of outcomes.
2. Market need and passion without competency makes you a snake oil salesperson, selling your potions but without the real medicine needed to cure the ills.
3. Capability and passion without market need make you a dilettante, offering aesthetic solutions to problems no one cares about unless you can convince them otherwise.
4. The combination of these elements makes you an effective marketer.

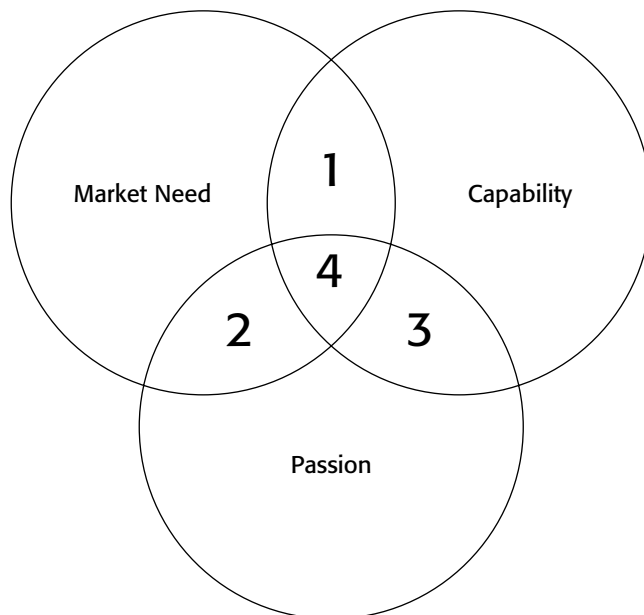


Figure 8.1. Three Areas and Four Conditions for Value

If you have these elements in place, then you need only respond to the following questions—and the good news is that marketing is difficult but not complex—to arrive at your market strategy:

1. *What is my value proposition?*

What outcomes do you provide for the client? Consider another way to ask this question: *After you walk away, how is the client better off? How has the client's condition been improved?*

2. *Who is likely to write a check for that value?*

This is what I call the “economic buyer” or the “true buyer.” He or she has the budget to authorize, approve, and launch your project. In large organizations there are scores (or even hundreds) of economic buyers. In small organizations, there may be just one or two.

3. *How do I reach that buyer?*

A key problem in marketing is that too many consultants go directly to point 3 without understanding the first two points. But the only way to arrive at point 3 is after establishing the first two realities.

IDENTIFYING AND REACHING THE ECONOMIC BUYER

There are two types of “buyers” in organizational settings:

1. *Economic buyer*: Possesses the power and authority to approve a check for your services and to fund the project.
2. *Feasibility buyer*: Provides opinion and analysis of the project’s appropriateness in terms of culture, scope, credentials, content, and other relative clients.

Now hear this: Most consultants fail at marketing because they spend too much time with feasibility buyers—*who cannot say “yes” but can say “no”*—and not enough time (or no time at all) with economic buyers who can say “yes.” That is why the attributes mentioned above are so important. *You must be able to relate to economic buyers on a peer basis.* Your content and OD skills are not sufficient for that. You must have business acumen and conversancy.

When you encounter feasibility buyers—“gatekeepers” and “filters”—you must endeavor to go around or through them to the economic buyer. You can do this in three ways, in descending order of effectiveness.

1. *Appeals to rational self-interest.* Try to convince the feasibility buyer that it would be dangerous to proceed even with a tentative plan or preliminary proposal without hearing from the true buyer’s lips exactly what his or her expectations are. Explain that your experience about this is unequivocal: The buyer must be brought into the discussion, however briefly, as early as possible, and certainly preliminary to creating a proposal. Attempt to form a partnership with the feasibility buyer to accomplish this.
2. *Guile.* Use some device to get past the feasibility buyer. Here is my favorite, and quite honest, alternative: “Ethically, I must see the person who has the fiduciary responsibility for the project, since I need to understand exactly what his or her expectations are before deciding whether to bid on this work.” Another: “It is unfair of me to expect you to market on my behalf, especially if there may be adverse reactions. Let me take that responsibility.”
3. *Power.* Ignore, circumvent, or blast through the gatekeeper. Although this will create bad relations, you are not going to get the business in any other way. Send a letter, email, fax, or phone message informing the buyer that you have enjoyed working with the gatekeeper but must have twenty minutes of his or her time before submitting a proposal. Provide your contact information and hope for the best.

If you content yourself with people who are willing to see you but cannot help you (for example, cannot say “yes”), you will fail as a marketer. A strong value proposition will capture the ear and attention of an economic buyer *if you can reach that person*.

When people are empowered only to say “no,” that is what they will inevitably say. Find the person who can say “yes” or “no,” which at least gives you a fighting chance.

ESTABLISHING THE ROUTES TO THE ECONOMIC BUYER

The best way to market is to create a “gravity” that draws people to you. This changes the entire buying dynamic. Instead of having to prove how good you are, you instead engage people who are interested in what you can do for them. This is why branding, reputé, and word-of-mouth are so important. After all, no one enters a McDonald’s to browse. The buying decision has already been made before entering the store. Figure 8.2 lists a variety of ways to create gravity, and these are discussed in the following sections in more detail.

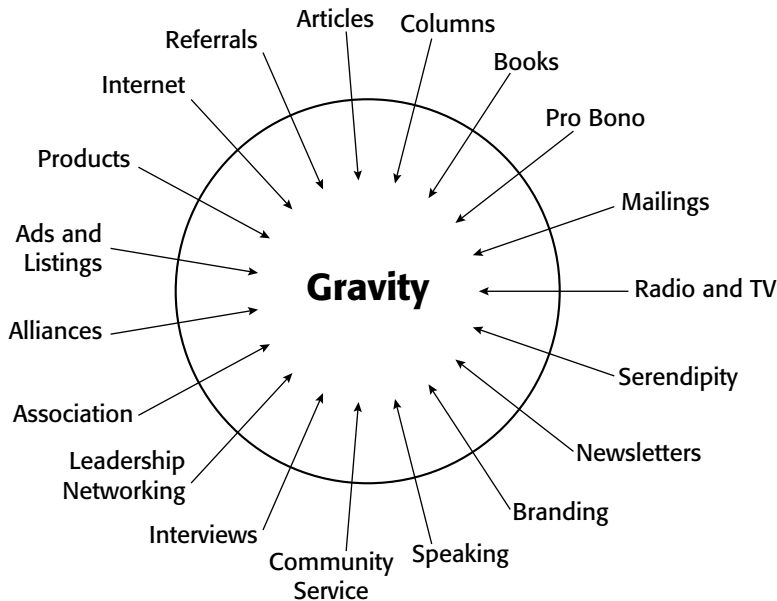


Figure 8.2. The “Gravity” Concept of Marketing OD Services

Pro Bono Work

Pro bono work for marketing purposes should have the following characteristics:

- A cause or objective in which you believe and wish to support;
- Relatively high-profile non-profit or charity;
- Public events and media coverage;
- Significant potential buyers or influencers are volunteers and/or key exhibitors (for example, the editor of the local newspaper, the general manager of the electric company, the senior vice president of a major bank); and
- Involvement will be interactive, and not individual.

Seek out a leadership position or fill a difficult position in the organization. Typically, fund raising, managing volunteers, and publicity are vitally needed and tough to do well. You want a high-visibility position and one in which you can rub elbows with your potential buyers and influencers. Take on the dirty, difficult, and desultory jobs, but do them extremely well. Make the reports at the meetings, give interviews to the media, and shower credit on your colleagues.

When the time is right, suggest to the executive you have worked with or the publisher you have supported that it might make sense to have lunch some time and compare notes about your two organizations. Pro bono work like this automatically builds relationships and allows others to see your abilities on neutral turf. That is why you should do the tough jobs and do them well. Excellent organization ability, strategies, management of others, fiscal prudence, and similar traits translate well into the needs of your pro bono colleagues.

Pro bono work is especially powerful for those living in fairly major markets and who wish to reduce their travel and work closer to home. I have done work for everyone from the League of Women Voters to a shelter for battered women to local theater groups.

Basic Rule: You should be engaged in at least one pro bono activity each quarter.

Commercial Publishing

A commercially published book can provide a strong credibility statement. For successful consultants endeavoring to reach the next level, this may be the shortest route.

Early in my career, I published books that addressed the issues I wanted to be hired to consult about: innovation, behavior and motivation, and strategy. Later in my career, I published books that capitalized on my established expertise: marketing, consulting, and speaking professionally. An entirely new career

was launched for me when I published *Million Dollar Consulting*, which established me as a “consultant to consultants.”

What part of your existing practice would you like to propel forward, or what new aspect would you like to create?

Writing a business book is not like writing a novel. You need a topic, ten or twelve chapters, and a half dozen key points supported by facts, stories, and anecdotes in each chapter. If you do not believe me, pull any ten random business books off the shelf and take a look. Create a treatment for the book, which should take about a week or two, and get it off to an agent or a publisher.

Another aspect of commercial publishing involves articles and interviews in the popular and trade press. You should be circulating article query letters and manuscripts regularly. Get used to the rejection. It happens to everyone. Successful consultants, in particular, with a raft of client experiences and case studies, should be able to create powerful, vivid pieces that, in turn, will draw interested readers to want to know more.

Try to include an offer to contact you in your articles of research studies, visits to your website, faxed responses to questions, and so on, enabling readers to continue to connect with you in more and more personal ways.

Whether you enjoy writing or dread the thought of it, you are lax if, at this point in your career, you are not publishing on some regular basis.

Basic Rule: You should set a goal to publish one article per quarter, meaning that you should be proposing four articles per quarter in different publications. (Another goal might be to create a book treatment in the next ninety days and send it to a publisher or agent.)

Position Papers

I often refer to these as “white papers.” These are powerful tools that can be used for:

- Content in your press kit;
- The basis for an article to be published;
- The basis for booklets;
- Web page content;
- Handouts at speeches; and/or
- Giveaways for inquiries.

Position papers are two-to-six-page discussions of your philosophy, beliefs, findings, experiences, and/or approaches. *They are not and should never be self-promotional.* Instead, they should provide credibility through the impact of their ideas and the applicability of their techniques.

Try to provide as many pragmatic and immediately useful ideas as possible. The best position papers are applicable, not esoteric. The reader should come away from them saying, “I would like to apply this, and I would like to hear more from the author.”

Position papers are one of the absolutely most economical, high-impact, and versatile aspects of the gravitational field. Right now, you probably have sufficient experience and ideas to create several dozen. Create some short ones that are “plain vanilla” and straightforward and some longer ones with graphs and charts.

Basic Rule: Create one white paper every month.

Radio and Television Interviews

You should be doing radio and even television appearances at any point in your career. They are relatively easy to do, since there is a constant need for fresh voices and faces to provide expert commentary on issues ranging from management fads to business etiquette to how to retain key talent.

As with the entire gravitational field, do not evaluate media interviews in terms of number of “hits” or new business. Regard them strategically as an ongoing part of your major thrust to create recognition and higher levels of credibility. Some radio appearances are worthless in terms of short-term business, but you never know who will hear you and pass your name on or what other media professional might then invite you to a more appropriate setting.

Radio interviews should be done, with rare exception (for example, National Public Radio and some major syndicated shows), from your home and over the phone. Television shots are done in the nearest local affiliate. For a memorable interview (most TV shots are only five to eight minutes, while some radio interviews can last for an hour), follow these rules:

- Provide the interviewer and/or segment producer with detailed background about you, including pronunciation of your name, and key “talking points” or questions to ask.
- Research the topic so that you can quote a few dramatic statistics and anecdotes. The media love pithy sound bites. In fact, practice short responses to all questions so that more questions can be accommodated.
- *Always* have two or three points in mind that promote you that you can work into responses no matter what the question. Do not rely on the host to promote you, no matter what the promises. Example: If the question is, “Alan, what is your opinion of large scale downsizing and its impact on our society?” then answer this way, “One of the reasons I am asked to work with executives from top-performing organizations is that they want me to help them *retain* key talent, not throw it away. So

let me answer from their perspective. . .” If you have written a book, then say, “As I point out in Chapter Four of my newest book, *Good Enough Isn’t Enough*. . .”

- Obtain a tape. Usually, asking the station in advance will do it, but always back it up with another taken from the actual airing by a friend. Splice these tapes together for a “highlights” reel of your media work, which will sell more sophisticated media outlets and just might get you on national TV. The tape is also quite impressive with prospects.

Radio and television work requires a promotional investment for ads and listing, but it is well worth it when you have reached the stage where your experience and accomplishments make you an “authority.”

Basic Rule: Appear in a minimum of one major listing source with at least a half-page ad annually.

Advertising and Passive Listings

“Passive listings” are those that appear in certain “buyer’s guides,” trade association resource lists, and similar literature. They are relatively inexpensive, can be surprisingly effective, and can be startling in terms of calls coming out of the blue. For consultants who want to stay “in the neighborhood,” the local phone book’s business section is a viable tool because some people actually look under “management consultant” or “business consultant” for sources.

Exhibit 8.2 lists some trade associations that produce listings that appeal to the human resources and training communities and that produce leads throughout the year.

Basic Rule: Find the three or four listings that best reach your highest potential buyers, and invest in a major presence annually.

Speaking

Early in people’s consulting careers, I advocate that they speak wherever and whenever they can to improve credibility and visibility. However, for the experienced consultant, professional speaking is not only a key gravitational pull but is also extremely lucrative.

Most consultants are lousy speakers because they become wrapped up in their methodology and the content of their message. But the fact is that audiences need to be captivated and even entertained a bit if they are to accept any message more easily and readily.

Exhibit 8.2. Trade Associations

American Society for Training and Development

1640 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-683-8100

Probably a “must” for those focusing on training and related human resource issues. Publishes *T & D*, a monthly magazine. Hosts national events and local chapter meetings. Produces a buyer’s guide.

Society for Human Resource Management

1800 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-548-3440

The society for human resource executives and managers, provides extensive benefits and offers, and publishes the monthly *HRMagazine*. Hosts national events and local chapter meetings. Produces a buyer’s guide.

Training Magazine

50 South Ninth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55402
612-333-0471

OD Practitioner

OD Network
71 Valley Street
Suite 301
South Orange, NJ 07079-2825
odpsubmit@sdnetwork.org

Organization Development Journal

Organization Development Institute
11234 Walnut Ridge Road
Chesterland, OH
440-729-9319
DonWCole@aol.com

This is an excellent publication in the OD field, with controversial articles and critical reviews. It accepts freelance submissions (no payment) and ads and produces a buyer’s guide.

Moreover, the keynote spot at major conferences or in-house company meetings provides a terrific platform for hundreds (and sometimes thousands) of potential buyers and recommenders to establish the beginnings of a relationship with you at one time. This is not the place to go into the details of developing a professional speaking career, but we can examine a few of the key steps you should take since the synergy with consulting is so powerful.

- As a keynote speaker or concurrent session speaker, you should continually cite your experience and other organizations with which you have worked so that the audience can think about how you might be helpful to them. *Always make it clear that you are a consultant who happens to speak at such meetings and not a speaker who also consults.*
- Provide handouts with your company's name and full contact information.
- Obtain a participant list of everyone in your session.
- Come early and stay late so that you can network with the organizers, senior management, participants, exhibitors, and others.
- Charge a high fee for your speaking, just as you would for your consulting. I suggest a three-part fee of increasing amounts for keynotes, half-days, and full-days.

I used to speak for free as a method to publicize what I do. Then I realized that not only were others being paid, but that the speakers doing the most important spots were always the highest paid. Today, it is not unusual for a client to say, "I would like you to address our annual meeting, then let us explore how you can work with us to implement the theme."

Here is an excellent resource if you want to find out which associations are holding meetings, who the executive director is, what the themes will be, who will be in the audience, and what the budget is (can you ask for anything more?!):

National Trade and Professional Associations of the United States
Columbia Books, Inc.
1212 Washington Ave., Suite 330
Washington, DC 20005
202/898-0662

Basic Rule: You ought to be speaking at least once a month in front of groups that include potential buyers.

Website and Electronic Newsletters

At this stage, your website should be state-of-the-art from a marketing standpoint, not necessarily a technical one. It is not the bells and whistles that matter but the "draw" and appeal for potential customers. I find I often tell

prospects to “be sure to visit my website” only to hear “That is where I just came from.”

A high-powered website should follow these tenets:

- Sufficient search engine presence using appropriate generic and specific key words to drive people to the site;
- A user-friendly initial page—with immediate appeal and options for the visitor;
- Easy navigation and no “traps” that force visitors to hear more about your methodology than they would ever need to hear;
- Immediate value in the form of articles to download; links to related, high-quality sites; tools and techniques; and so forth;
- An opportunity to contact you easily at any time;
- Products to purchase that you preferably own; and
- A compelling reason to return and to tell others about the site.

By posting an article each month (still more utility provided by the position papers discussed earlier), new lists of techniques, and other value-added additions, you create a site *useful to the visitor*. No one hops in his car to read highway billboards, and no one is interested in visiting sites to hear people talk about themselves. Develop and upgrade your site with the potential buyer in mind. (And visit the sites of your colleagues and competitors to understand what they do well and how you can do even better.)

Electronic newsletters are wonderful means by which to reach more buyers, since readers routinely pass excellent newsletters along to colleagues as a favor. Start with your current database, create a sign-up spot on your website, and offer the newsletter in your signature file on your e-mail.

An excellent electronic newsletter should:

- Be brief—on average, no longer than a single screen;
- Be non-promotional—and simply carry your contact information at the bottom;
- Enable people to subscribe and unsubscribe easily (which is also required by law);
- Contain high-value content that is immediately applicable for most readers;
- Go out at least monthly and regularly on the same day. Consistency and constancy are everything; and
- Be copyrighted.

One of the people in my mentoring program began with a modest list and soon had thousands of subscribers to his sales skills newsletter, which addressed “sales acceleration.” He closed a piece of business with a bank in Toronto that he never would have even spoken to without someone in the bank finding the newsletter and realizing that the bank’s loan officers needed this kind of sales help.

Commercial list servers can automatically deliver the newsletter and add and delete subscribers for less than \$50 per month.

Basic Rule: You should have a newsletter of some kind—either a monthly electronic one or at least a quarterly print version.

Word of Mouth, Referrals, and Third-Party Endorsements

All of us need to keep fueling the “buzz” that surrounds our names and our approaches. I have found that consultants become blasé about endorsements and testimonials after a while, but they are our stock-in-trade.

In every engagement, ask the client for a referral, a blurb for a product you are creating, to serve as a reference, and to provide a testimonial letter. If you do not ask, they generally do not happen.

Write letters to magazines and newspapers that rely on your credibility for the point you make, pro or con, relative to a recent article. Stand up at business, social, civic, and professional meetings to make your point. Take controversial and “contrarian” stands if you must.

Once you have an established reputation, it is far easier to maintain the momentum of word of mouth, which is a powerful lead source. But we often do not bother any longer, which is ironic, since it is now easier than ever. And this leads into other parts of the gravitation field. It is likely, for example, that some of your high-level buyers can place you in front of the trade associations to which they belong as a featured speaker at the next convention or meeting. Are you pursuing these connections?

Basic Rule: Your current, active clients should be providing a minimum of one testimonial and three highly qualified referrals every month.

Trade Association Leadership

At this point in your career, when you may feel that you are not getting anything out of professional associations and trade associations (and justifiably so, since most members will be at a lower level), it is time not to abandon them but to use them differently. It is time to take a leadership position.

In the first case, the association and its membership can use your expertise and experience. In the second, it is a good way to “pay back” the profession that has been so kind to us. But third, the visibility will be a tremendous source of gravity.

You do not have to take on time-consuming national duties. You can simply serve as an officer at the local or chapter level, head a committee, organize an event, or sponsor an initiative. Whatever it is, your status within the industry will be enriched. I find that many of my referrals come from other consultants who feel they cannot handle the assignment and hope that I will either reciprocate some time or involve them in the project, both of which I am quite happy to do.

Since very few capable people ever seek these offices, it is almost guaranteed that you can be as responsible and as visible as you choose.

Basic Rule: You should at minimum belong to the Institute of Management Consultants and be known to your local membership, presenting a session at least once a year at a scheduled meeting.

Teaching

You will establish an entirely new circle of references and contacts through teaching part-time at a university, college, or extension program. And you are now in a position to do so with a minimum of difficulty.

You can claim the title of “adjunct professor” in most cases and arrange to teach an evening a week. Or you can work through an organization such as the Institute of Management Studies, which provides day-long sessions around the country through local chairpeople. (It is located in Reno and San Francisco.)

The ideal is to teach at the graduate level, where you will be challenged by students and receive a diversity of opinion that you might not experience in business life. These positions add immeasurably to your ability to become published, gain higher levels of credibility, and receive references from the university (and, in some cases, from the students).

You can almost always find a junior college or trade college to start out if you are uncertain and want to test the waters easily—or do not possess the requisite doctorate for work at a senior institution. For seven years I was on the extension faculty at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland and received several pieces of business as a result.

Basic Rule: At least teach as a guest lecturer three or four times a year at local institutions or by contract at national sites.

Alliances and Networking

I have placed these two together for discussion purposes since alliances are often the result of effective networking. Interestingly, and short-sightedly, experienced consultants sometimes feel that their networking days are behind them. But that is only if you see networking as a tactic instead of a marketing strategy—and strong aspect of gravitation.

Among those who constitute networking potential for you are

- Buyers
- Media people
- Key vendors
- Mentors
- Endorsers
- Meeting planners
- Recommenders to buyers
- Bankers
- Key advisors
- High-profile individuals in your business
- Trade association executives
- Community leaders

Networking is far easier than ever with the advent of email, voice mail, and other communication alternatives, but nothing is as effective as the face-to-face interaction that allows for personal chemistry to develop. If possible, networking should be done in person. It should then be followed up or reinforced through other communications avenues.

Here is a sequence for networking, whether at a trade association meeting, civic event, business conference, recreational outing, or nearly any other activity that you know in advance you will be attending.

1. Learn who will likely attend the event. Obtain a participant list, a brochure, the names of the committee members, or make an educated guess. Prepare yourself for whom you are likely to encounter and create a “target list” of the best prospects. For example, if you know the local business page editor is attending a charity fund raiser, you may want to make his or her acquaintance so that you can eventually suggest an article. If the general manager (and a potential buyer) for the local utility is at the dance recital, you may want to try to identify him or her and begin a casual conversation during intermission.
2. Begin casual conversations during the gathering, both to identify those targets you have chosen and to learn who else might be there who could be of help. For example, you might want to introduce yourself to another consultant whose web pages you think are excellent to explore whether she might make her web designer’s number available to you or approach a local designer because you would like to understand how he might work with you even as a novice.
3. Introduce yourself without describing anything about your work and simply listen. If in a group, which is likely, do not attempt your personal networking. *Wait until you can find the person alone later and approach him or her one-on-one, preferably where you will have a few minutes in private. That is all you need.* Do not talk to someone while your eyes work the rest of the room. Talk only as much as required to get the other person talking. You want to hear about him or her, his or her views and preferences.

4. When you are able to spend a few minutes one-on-one, offer something of value based on what you have heard. For example, if the person is a potential buyer who has mentioned the problem she is having with attracting and retaining good people, suggest a book that you would be happy to pass along or a website that you will send by email that has articles on the subject. If the person is a graphic artist, ask permission to give his or her name to some people you know who need literature designed. The key here is to provide value to the other person.
5. In the event you are asked what you do, practice providing very succinct responses. Here is a dreadful response:

“I am a consultant who focuses on the interactions of teams, especially cross-functionally, raises sensitivity to synergies possible in greater collaboration, and implements processes to enhance team connectedness. I use instruments such as. . .”

Here is a terrific response:

“I assist clients in improving individual and organizational performance.”

If the other person says, “That is a bit vague. How do you do that?” then you reply, “Well, if you tell me something about your organization and the issues you are facing, I will show you how the approaches may apply specifically to you.”

6. Exchange a card or somehow gather the other person’s contact information so that you can send the promised material or information. At a minimum get a phone number and email address. DO NOT provide brochures, materials, or any other gimmicks or “stuff.” No one wants to lug around material at any kind of event, and this stuff usually winds up in the nearest garbage can.
7. Immediately, the next morning at the latest, deliver what you promised. If you are providing the other party as a resource to someone else, then copy that person on the email or correspondence, or mention to her that you have given her name to the individuals you had mentioned.
8. In a week or so, follow up to see if the material was helpful, the reference worked out, the prospects called, and so forth. Ask if there is anything further along those lines that might be helpful. Then, summarize or reaffirm your offer of further help with a letter accompanied by your promotional material and literature. Suggest to the other person that you thought he or she might want to learn a little more about you and what you do.
9. In a few weeks, send still more value in the form of a contact, potential customer, or article of interest.

10. If the other party replies with a “thank you” for your latest offer of value, then get back to him and suggest a brief meeting, breakfast, lunch, or other opportunity to get together at his convenience. Simply say that you would like to learn more about what he or she does and also get his or her advice about what you do. If he or she has not responded with a “thank you” of any kind, then wait one more week, call to see if he or she received the additional value you sent, and then suggest the meeting as described above. (An active response simply enables you to shorten the waiting time.)

Basic Rule: You should be networking at some event at least twice a month, and you should establish at least one useful contact from each one.

ESTABLISHING CONCEPTUAL AGREEMENT

Whether you reach out to people or they approach you due to “gravitational pull,” you must achieve conceptual agreement on three basic issues prior to submitting a proposal. Most practitioners submit too many proposals too soon in the marketing process. Conceptual agreement means that you and the economic buyer agree on:

1. *Objectives.* What are the outcome-based business objectives to be achieved through this project? There are usually no more than a handful in a cogent project. Keeping them tightly described avoids “scope creep” (the gradual enlargement of projects as clients keep asking for more and more tasks to be accomplished) through the focus on very specific, mutually agreed-on goals.
2. *Measures of success.* What are the metrics that will indicate that you have made progress and/or reached the goals? Agreeing on these means that your proper contribution will be noted and that the proper time to disengage has arrived.
3. *Value to the client.* What is the worth of what you are accomplishing? By stipulating to the value of the project, the client is focused on value and not fee and can make an appropriate ROI determination. If you are discussing fees and not value, you have lost control of the discussion.

Figure 8.3 shows the role of conceptual agreement in the overall marketing process.

You can see two factors in Figure 8.3. First, conceptual agreement is the heart of the process. Second, the proposal should not be submitted until after conceptual agreement is gained, since it is merely a summation and not an exploration. Let us conclude, then, by considering powerful proposals.

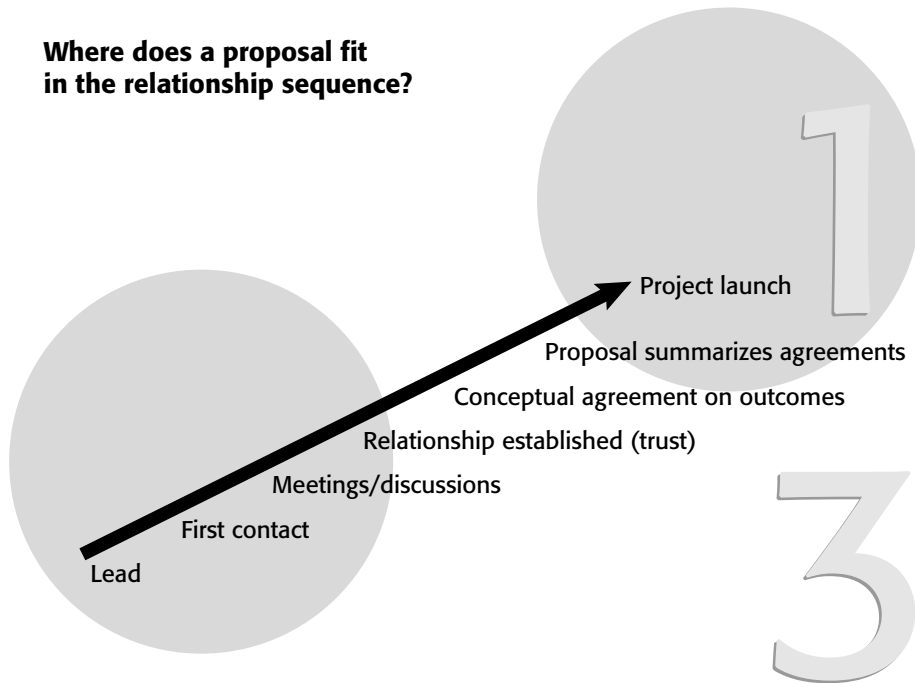


Figure 8.3. Conceptual Agreement as the Key to Closing New Business

CREATING PROPOSALS THAT CLOSE BUSINESS

Let us begin with the parameters of what proposals can legitimately and pragmatically do and not do. Proposals can and should do the following:

- Stipulate the outcomes of the project;
- Describe how progress will be measured;
- Establish accountabilities;
- Set the intended start and stop dates;
- Provide methodologies to be employed;
- Explain options available to the client;
- Convey the value of the project;
- Detail the terms and conditions of payment of fees and reimbursements;
- Serve as an ongoing template for the project;

- Establish boundaries to avoid “scope creep”;
- Protect both consultant and client; and
- Offer reasonable guarantees and assurances.

Proposals cannot and/or should not do the following:

- Sell the interventions being recommended;
- Create the relationship;
- Serve as a commodity against which other proposals are compared;
- Provide the legitimacy and/or credentials of your firm and approaches;
- Validate the proposed intervention;
- Make a sale to a buyer you have not met;
- Serve as a negotiating position;
- Allow for unilateral changes during the project;
- Protect one party at the expense of the other; or
- Position approaches so vaguely as to be immeasurable and unenforceable.

THE NINE STEPS OF GREAT PROPOSALS

Here is the sequence that I have perfected over the years. It is not sacrosanct, meaning that you may choose to add two more steps, delete one, or otherwise modify it to your best interests. However, if you follow my general sequence, and you have gained conceptual agreement prior, I can guarantee that you will take less time writing proposals and gain a higher degree of acceptance the very first time. You cannot beat those benefits.

1. Situation Appraisal

What: The situation appraisal consists of one or two paragraphs that reiterate the nature of the issues that brought you and the prospect together.

Why: This allows you to start the proposal on a basis of prior understanding and enables the prospect figuratively (and sometimes literally) to nod his or her head in agreement at your opening paragraphs. Psychologically, you are starting on a series of small “yeses.”

How: Simply define the current issue with as much brevity and impact as possible. Do not state the obvious. Focus on the burning issues.

Example: Here is a bad example: “Fleet Bank is the eighth largest commercial bank in the U.S., headquartered in Boston, and continually seeking growth

through mergers and acquisitions of institutions providing synergy to the bank's strategic goals.”

Your buyer is aware of this. It sounds like something from the annual report. Here is a far better example for the purposes of your proposal: “Fleet has recently merged with BankBoston, which has created both expected and unexpected cultural problems among the Private Clients Group and within the Human Resources function. The new organization is seeking to create a new culture in these two units which represents the best of the strengths of each former organization, and to do so without disruption to client management and retention. In addition, superfluous positions must be eliminated while providing ethical and legal protection to employees in the form of transfer, reassignment, and/or outplacement.”

The second example demonstrates why you were contacted, what issue must be resolved, and why it is of significant import.

2. Objectives

This was the first of three elements in your conceptual agreement.

What: The objectives naturally follow the situation appraisal in order to move from the general to the specific. The objectives are the business outcomes to be achieved as a result of your intervention with the client.

Why: The specific business outcomes are the basis for the value that the client will derive and constitute the *raison d'être* for the project. Unless business outcomes are achieved or enhanced, there is no real reason to invest in any change. Also, clear objectives prevent “scope creep” later, enabling you to explain to the client that certain additional (and inevitable) requests are outside of the objectives established.

How: List the objectives, preferably with bullet points, so that they are clear and strongly worded. Objectives should be fairly limited, since you can only accomplish so much with any given intervention, or else they are simply “pie in the sky” wishes and not practical business objectives.

Example: A list of business-based outcomes might look like this: “The objectives for the project will be:

- “Determine the leanest management team required to speed decision making and reduce overhead.
- Determine the best candidates for those positions and recommend them based on objective criteria to ensure the finest possible leadership.
- Improve new business acquisition by creating and separating a new business development team.
- Improve current response levels by investigating customer needs, anticipating future needs, and educating service staff accordingly.”

3. Measures of Success

This was the second of three elements in conceptual agreement.

What: These are the indicators of what progress is being made toward the objectives and how to tell when the objectives are actually accomplished.

Why: Without measures or metrics, there is no objective way to determine whether your intervention is working, or worse, if there is huge success, whether you have had anything to do with it! The metrics enable you and the buyer to jointly determine both progress and your role in achieving it.

How: Measures can be both quantitative and qualitative, the latter being acceptable so long as there is agreement on whose judgment or values are being used to assess results. (For example, if several people all agree that the office aesthetics should be improved, it is far better to also agree that one of us will be the determinant of that, rather than trying to gain agreement among several people on what is, basically, a subjective matter.) They should be assigned so that every objective has effective progress indicators to evaluate success.

Example: Measures are also best written in bullet point form, with precise reference back to prior discussions with the buyer. “As discussed, the measures for this project will be

- Current client base is at least maintained for three months with less than 5 percent (industry average) attrition.
- Client base begins to grow at a greater rate than our historical rate beginning six months from now.
- New management team and structure are in place within thirty days.
- Any managers or employees without a position after restructuring are reassigned or outplaced within thirty days, with no grievances or lawsuits filed.
- Staff survey on morale shows improvement from current levels in six months.
- Customer surveys reveal increased happiness with response levels and ability of the service team to handle concerns within six months.”

4. Expression of Value

This is the third of three elements of conceptual agreement.

What: This is the description of improvement, enhancement, and success that the organization will derive as a result of a successful project.

Why: It is vital for fee acceptance that the buyer be intimately and emotionally connected with the benefits to the organization (and to the buyer) so that the fees that appear later in the proposal are seen as appropriate and are even regarded as a modest investment for the perceived value return. Otherwise, the fees will be seen as costs and will be attacked to try to reduce them. *Note: Costs*

are always subject to attempts at reduction, but investments are almost always justified if the return is perceived to be significant and proportional.

How: You may wish to enumerate the value in a narrative or in bullet points. I prefer bullet points because they keep things unambiguously simple and direct.

Example: The value should be expressed in business-related, bold terms, per your prior discussions: “The value that the organization will derive from the successful completion of this project will include but not be limited to:

- Overhead costs and administrative expenses will decline by approximately \$600,000 annually through the reduction of direct salaries, benefits, and certain support activities.
- A growth in the customer base of average private client assets will equal additional assets of about \$1 million for each 1 percent gain.
- Reduction in the attrition rate to the industry average will result in assets not lost of about \$1 million for each 1 percent retained.
- The ability to anticipate customer needs and suggest applicable additional products should result in additional revenues of \$400,000 annually, growing at a rate of at least 5 percent.
- Reduction in unwanted turnover of top performers will improve morale, create better succession planning, and improve client relationships since customers will not be losing their ‘familiar faces.’”

5. Methodologies and Options

What: This is the section where you provide the buyer with an overview of the varying ways you may address the issues. *Note:* *These are not “deliverables,” which many consultants confuse with outcome-based objectives.* A “deliverable” is usually a report, training class, or manual, and has very little intrinsic value.

Why: In presenting the buyer with options, you are creating a “choice of yeses” so that the buyer moves from “Should I use Alan?” to “How should I use Alan?” This is an extremely important nuance, and one that you control. Proposals with options have a much higher rate of acceptance than those that are simply “take it or leave it” binary (accept or reject) formats.

How: Explain to the buyer that there are several ways to achieve the objectives, that all of them will work, but some options provide more value than others. Therefore, the buyer should have the flexibility to decide on what kind of return is most attractive in relation to the various investments. (And I want to emphasize that you still have not discussed fees in any manner yet. Patience.)

Example: Here is an example of three options provided for the project we have been examining thus far.

Option 1: “We will interview all management and supervisory members of staff of the combined organizations, conduct 360-degree assessments for senior

management, monitor customer calls and response times, and recommend a new, leaner management staff with specific personnel staffing alternatives, methods to speed response time, and identify both people and organizational structure for a new business acquisition team, including goals and performance measures.”

Option 2: “We will implement option 1 above, and also interview a select number of randomly chosen clients to determine their service experiences and preferences, create an evolving organizational structure that will safeguard the status quo while preparing for anticipated client demands, and implement a mail survey for all employees of the department, which we will design, distribute, and administer to obtain inclusion of all employees.”

Options 3: “We will implement options 1 and 2 above, and also examine industry standards and other institutions to formulate a ‘best practices’ standard to beat in the marketplace, run focus groups to validate the data gathered in interviews and mail surveys, and interview clients who have left the bank to determine what might be done to prevent such occurrences in the future and/or attract them back to the bank through the new business acquisitions unit.”

Note that the options are separate and stand alone, and that any of the three will meet the objectives as stated. However, options 2 and 3 provide more value in the form of more valid data, more inclusion, more focus on business retention and acquisition, and so on. These *are not phases* or steps that run sequentially. Nor are they needs analyses, which unduly delay any project.

By offering the buyer a choice of “yeses” in the form of increasing value, you tend to migrate up the value chain toward more expensive fees. I call this the “Mercedes-Benz Syndrome.” Buyers expect to get what they pay for.

Always provide stand-alone options for your buyer to consider, and you will increase the rate of proposal acceptance exponentially. It is not necessary to detail how many focus groups, how many interviews, or how many people trained, because with value-based billing, numbers of days and numbers of people are irrelevant. The client might ask you to include another ten people or you may decide you need four fewer focus groups, but it has no bearing on fees. The value of the results is all that counts.

6. Timing

What: This is an estimate of when the project should probably begin and end.

Why: Both the buyer and you need to know when services will be performed, when results are likely, and when disengagement is probable.

How: Provide a range of time, since nothing is completely within your control, and always use calendar dates, not relative dates (for example, “30 days after commencement”) because you and the client might have different perceptions of starting dates and other milestones. But the calendar is in concrete terms.

Example: Provide timing for each option. “For all options, we estimate a March 1 starting date. Option 1 should be completed in 30 to 45 days, or between April 1 and 15; option 2 should be completed within 45 to 60 days, or between April 15 and May 1; option 3 should be completed within 60 to 90 days, or between May 1 and June 1.”

7. Joint Accountabilities

What: These are the responsibilities of the client and you to ensure that the project is successfully undertaken and completed.

Why: One frequent cause of consultants being accused of not doing a good job is that the client actually did not support the project as agreed on or did not supply resources in a timely manner. This is the part of the proposal that prevents that potential disaster.

How: State simply the client’s responsibilities, your responsibilities, and joint responsibilities. These will depend on the nature of the project and should be specific to each one. For example, an executive coaching project, an IT project, and a recruiting project will have very different accountabilities.

Example: Given the ongoing scenario:

- “Fleet/BankBoston will be responsible for making employees available for confidential interviews, informing them of the project, and providing a private area to conduct the interviews; for providing information about the business and past performance indices to evaluate competencies; for adhering to the payment schedules established for this project; for client names and contact information for interviews; for reasonable access to senior management for ongoing progress reports, discussions, and problems; and for coordinating work flow and priorities to allow the project to meet its time frames.”
- “The consultants are responsible for all interviews, focus groups, surveys, and other interventions called for in this proposal; we will sign all appropriate non-disclosure documents; we carry comprehensive errors and omissions insurance; we will ensure minimal disruption in work procedures and adhere to all schedules; we will provide updates and progress reports at your request; and we will immediately inform you of any peripheral issues that emerge that we think merit management’s attention.”
- “We will both inform each other immediately of any unforeseen changes, new developments, or other issues that impact and influence this project so that we can both adjust accordingly; we will accommodate each other’s unexpected scheduling conflicts; we agree to err on the side of over-communication to keep each other abreast of all aspects of the project.”

8. Terms and Conditions

What: This component specifies fees, expenses, and other financial arrangements.

Why: This must be established in writing in case the buyer changes or company circumstances change as other changes occur. But most important, this is the first time the buyer actually sees the investment options after basically being in agreement with your entire proposal thus far. Stated simply: You want to pro-long the “head nodding” in agreement right through the fees section.

How: Cite the fees clearly and in an unqualified manner. Cite expense reimbursement policy in the same way, also stressing what *is not* going to be billed. Provide in this area any discount you offer for advance payment. This section needs to be short, crisp, and professional.

Example: Using our current three options above:

Fees: The fees for this project are as follows:

Option 1: \$58,000

Option 2: \$72,000

Option 3: \$86,000

One half of the fee is due on acceptance of this proposal, and the balance is due 45 days following that payment. As a professional courtesy, we offer a 10 percent discount if the full fee is paid on commencement.

Expenses: Expenses will be billed as actually accrued on a monthly basis and are due on receipt of our statement. Reasonable travel expenses include full coach airfare, train, taxi, hotel, meals, and tips. We do not bill for fax, courier, administrative work, telephone, duplication, or related office expenses.

Conditions: The quality of our work is guaranteed. Once accepted, this offer is non-cancelable for any reason, and payments are to be made at the times specified. However, you may reschedule, postpone, or delay this project as your business needs may unexpectedly dictate without penalty and without time limit, subject only to mutually agreeable time frames in the future.

9. Acceptance

What: This is the buyer’s signoff indicating approval to begin work.

Why: No matter how trusted a handshake or an oral approval, conditions in client companies change frequently, and you have to have a signed agreement to enforce your rights.

How: Include this as the last item in the proposal, with room to sign and return one of two copies. Execute your copy ahead of time to speed up the process (in other words, don’t wait for the buyer to sign, then sign yours, then return the copies again). This circumvents the need for a separate contract, involvement of legal, involvement of purchasing, and all the other land mines that lurk beneath the ground. Also, by specifying that “a check is as good as a signature” in the verbiage, you are saying that paying you the deposit deems that all terms have been agreed on.

Example: These are fairly standard, and can be inserted in any proposal. “The signatures below indicate acceptance of the details, terms, and conditions in this proposal, and provide approval to begin work as specified. Alternatively, your deposit indicates full acceptance, and also will signify approval to begin.

For Summit Consulting Group, Inc.:

Alan Weiss, Ph.D.

President

Date:

For Fleet/BankBoston:

Name:

Title:

Date:”

SUMMARY

We have discussed the following: (1) Determine your value proposition; (2) Identify your buyer; (3) Establish routes to reach that buyer; (4) Achieve conceptual agreement; and (5) Create a proposal that will close business.

Marketing is the first of the phases to plan and facilitate change. The following chapters will take you through the pre-launch and launch phases of an OD intervention and beyond. However, unless you market effectively there will be no projects.



Pre-Launch

David W. Jamieson

When a consultant initially enters into and engages a client system for the purpose of facilitating change, there are a number of early outcomes that must go well. The activities of the pre-launch phase thus serve as the platform for all subsequent OD work. The quality and clarity of the foundation (agreements, expectations, relationships, and feelings) that are established at the outset will help or hinder subsequent work phases. Often, challenges encountered later in change work can be traced to missed or flawed outcomes during this initial intervention phase. Much is at stake in the beginning of any change effort. It is common to encounter:

- Minimal visible support in the organization;
- Managers and employees who feel vulnerable;
- Differing and biased perspectives about what is working, what is not working, and what needs to be done;
- More “unknowns” than “knowns”;
- Mixed motives for seeking a consultant’s help (desire to change, financial trouble, need for a scapegoat, and so forth); and
- A past history of bad change experiences.

In the beginning, it is usually not clear what the consultant will need to do, who he or she will need to work with, how he or she will conduct the process,

how fast it will need to occur, or what the results should look like. However, within this context, consultants must work with their clients to establish rapport, develop credibility, validate the issues and needs, contract for the work, and begin developing working relationships within the organization.

All consulting engagements, whether internal or external, problem-focused or potential-focused, require a sound beginning regardless of philosophical orientation, style, or approach. Any consultant has to contract for the work, build relationships with clients, and understand both formal and informal aspects of the organization. While internal consultants may have more knowledge of the client and the organization, they can also be enmeshed in the culture and see the world as the clients do. They should not make early assumptions about what needs to be done or what has to be clarified initially. External consultants generally have to do more to become familiar with the organization and contract financial arrangements. However both must establish a sound platform during pre-launch.

THE DILEMMA OF PRE-LAUNCH

The pre-launch phase rarely falls neatly, distinctly, or sequentially between the marketing and closing activities and the assessment and diagnosis work. In fact, some elements discussed in this chapter can occur while obtaining the work and continue throughout the engagement. Likewise, preliminary diagnostic scanning is necessary when entering an organization in order to understand it, validate issues, confirm visions, and hypothesize initial plans. *For the purpose of this chapter, pre-launch begins when a consultant clearly has a client with a desire to do work, and when the activities associated with marketing, selling, and closing have been completed. It concludes when the consultant and client have clarified the nature of the change effort, their working relationships, their expectations, and their contract, and when they are ready to proceed with more extensive diagnosis or other initial activities.*

The phrase “pre-launch” does not fully convey the nature of the kinds of work discussed here. While it is true that there is a predominant focus on some of these elements in the beginning of any engagement, some of them actually begin during marketing, and some will need further attention as the engagement unfolds. While marketing, consultants are learning something about the organization and its presenting issues and opportunities and must establish their competence and credibility and create the first stages of relationship(s) with one or more people. Additionally, as they move into launch and an ongoing implementation, the consultant will learn still more about the organization and continue to refine the diagnosis and design needed action. As new clients develop

within the organization, a consultant will once again need to establish competence/credibility, build relationships, enter new groups, and contract for work and working relations. When new issues arise during interventions or the scope of the work changes, continuing discussions will be required to clarify new expectations or to re-contract if the work changes. So, even though the elements of pre-launch have to be done well up-front to establish the right foundation, the cyclical nature of organization development requires entry and contracting throughout the engagement.

Another dilemma with pre-launch is how the work of OD has changed over the years, especially in regard to how turbulent and often chaotic organization environments have become and how continuous and disruptive change has become. In the early years of OD, the concept of planned change was useful in that one was taking on change in a systematic, planned approach to effect some desired change, and the environment was relatively placid. Today, most change is too complex to be planned and the environment is anything but placid! The inherent complexities, uncontrollable variables, unanticipated events, and speed of environmental change will undoubtedly affect modifications in outcomes and any change plans (Jamieson, 2003).

While planned change may never have been completely relevant in complex systems, it was the essence of OD for many years. This led to the use of phased models, implying separate and distinct stages. It also led to the importance of Lewin's change model of "unfreezing, changing, and refreezing." Some pre-launch activities would ordinarily create some "unfreezing," but most organizations today are already in rapid, continuous change, chaos and uncertainty and quite "unfrozen."

So as Burke (2004) has recently emphasized, much of the work of implementing change today is about managing reactions of people and organizations, balancing multiple interventions simultaneously, interaction of complex variables, unintended consequences, and adaptation—or creating the positive future needed to survive in the ambiguous, turbulent environment envisioned (Watkins & Mohr, 2001). So a consultant can't plan change or work in sequential phases, yet still must accomplish certain outcomes involving entry and contracting throughout the engagement. They just can't all occur up-front!

THE ESSENCE OF PRE-LAUNCH

The essence of marketing is to *sell* something (work, an idea, an approach, or the client's interest in proceeding), which clearly involves the use of pre-launch elements, such as establishing credibility, building the relationship, getting oriented to the client's world, and understanding the organization's issues and needs. On

the other hand, the essence of pre-launch is to *enter* the organization, building a platform for engaging in change work with the client, and to *contract* for work, methods, relationships, and exchanges. *The consultation really begins here.* Everything the consultant does to obtain pre-launch outcomes is an *intervention*, affecting some change in the client system (Bruce & Wyman, 1998). Schein (2004) has recently emphasized that first contacts, early questions, discussions, and meetings are the beginning of intervention and provide diagnostic information and system change even while pre-launch outcomes are being pursued.

In pre-launch, we will need more understanding of the organization, its visions, issues, and needs; clarification of values related to the work; identification of clients and sponsors; understanding of what will help or hinder change; agreement on work tasks and methods; and relationships characterized by mutual openness, trust, and influence. Achieving these outcomes in pre-launch is critical to the success of the change effort. To conduct an effective project and use resources effectively—both the consultant’s and the client’s—the consultant must ensure that he or she is working on the “right” path and is working within the appropriate boundaries with the right relationship, using the correct methods, working within the specified time, and eliciting the proper support. Since resources such as time and money are valuable, it is the responsibility of both the consultant and the client to avoid misusing them by conducting a sound pre-launch.

THE ELEMENTS OF PRE-LAUNCH

In building the foundation for working together on change, certain issues have to be addressed and certain agreements have to be made during the pre-launch. Much of this material comes from classic works that have stood the test of time. Few have written new material on the essence of pre-launch work. The issues and agreements can be organized into the following seven outcomes that have to be realized at the outset as well as at other key junctures during the engagement:

1. Identifying the client(s) and sponsor(s).
2. Becoming oriented to the client’s world.
3. Establishing the consultant’s competence and credibility.
4. Developing an open, trusting, and aligned relationship.
5. Completing a preliminary diagnostic scan.
6. Contracting for the work, working relations, and exchange.
7. Introducing the engagement and consultant(s) to the larger organization.

Identifying the Client(s) and Sponsor(s)

The consultant should clarify as early as possible who the client(s) will be. It is not always possible to know immediately who all the relevant players in the client organization will be or who will have to be involved, but those who are known and those who are possible key players should be the consultant's early focus of attention (French & Bell, 1999). Of course, the consultant may find that there is an individual client, a group client, or even multiple clients. The consultant may also find that whoever is the client at the outset of the OD intervention is replaced by subsequent clients as the intervention progresses (Cummings & Worley, 2001). At different times the consultant may even find a primary client who is directly involved in the work and secondary clients who are influenced by the work results. It's important to clarify client(s) because consultants require contracts with each of them, and their involvement, responsibility, and perspective are critical and often different from other participants.

Burke (1994) offers another perspective on identifying clients. He suggests that the relationship and/or interface between individuals or units comprise the client. Thus, identifying the interactions and interrelationships that are contained in the issues or are the central focus of a desired future would identify the relevant players. This concept is supported from the classic work on consulting as intervention by Argyris (1970): "To intervene is to enter into the ongoing system of relationships, to come between or among persons, groups, or objects for the purpose of helping them" (p. 15).

The importance of client identification is further illustrated by Schein (1997), who defined the following six basic types of clients in complex systems:

1. *Contact clients*: The individual(s) who first *contact* the consultant with a request, question, or issue.
2. *Intermediate clients*: The individuals or groups that *get involved* in various interviews, meetings, and other activities as the project evolves.
3. *Primary clients*: The individual(s) who ultimately "own(s)" the issue being worked on or the desired future being developed; they are typically also the ones who *pay* the consulting bills or whose budget covers the consultation.
4. *Unwitting clients*: Members of the organization or client system above, below, and laterally related to the primary clients *who will be affected by interventions but who are not aware that they will be impacted*.
5. *Indirect clients*: Members of the organization who are aware that they will be affected by the interventions but who are *unknown to the consultant* and who may feel either positive or negative about these effects.

6. *Ultimate clients*: The community, the total organization, an occupational group, or any other group that the consultant cares about and *whose welfare must be considered* in any intervention that the consultant makes. (p. 202–203)

For many in OD, the health and vitality of the whole organization, its various subsystems, and its individual members are the primary concern, thus defining the “client” in the broadest sense.

It is also possible to distinguish *sponsors* (those who initiate and often pay for the work, but have minor participation) from *clients* (those with direct or indirect participation and impact). However, it is best when anyone who is initiating or paying is also participating, and consultants often need to ensure those involvements.

Although no two interventions start or progress in the same way, the first step is usually a meeting or phone conversation with one person from the organization. The second step often is a meeting with a small group of key sponsors, a management team, or an employee committee. These group members may or may not continue as clients, but they could remain as engagement sponsors. Depending on how the set of interventions is designed, a new group, such as a design team, may become the client. The consultant may also be asked to work jointly as a co-consultant with others from inside or outside the organization or department. These co-relationships can become problematic, however, as the role can range from being a helper, to an equal partner, to the “real” client. The consultant must clarify roles and relationships carefully if placed in such a situation.

Some consultants contracted with a company that was one of three owned by a parent company. The consultants believed that their clients were the president and the senior staff. Not long after the intervention began, the president of the parent company began to make telephone calls to the consultants for information about the client organization and to ask how well the president and senior staff members were working with the consultants. It was no longer clear to the consultants who the client was, so they called a meeting with the two presidents. The consultants were able to clarify in the meeting that the primary client was the company in which direct intervention was occurring but that the parent company was, indeed, a secondary client or sponsor. An arrangement was made for the consultants to meet monthly with both presidents to update them on the intervention.

Clients and sponsors can have different perspectives, work styles, and levels of influence. Sometimes the consultant may need to work with people who cannot

make necessary intervention-related decisions, requiring the involvement of other decision makers. The consultant may sometimes listen too much to one group and not enough to others. The consultant's direct clients may not be in agreement with a key sponsor. If all the players are known, all viewpoints should be included; if (unknowingly) the consultant is not in contact with all the key players, the consultant may embark on inappropriate courses of action or be derailed by powerful groups or persons who were excluded. Thus, one important goal during pre-launch is to identify and create alignment in the contracting among all the clients and sponsors.

In a project start-up, the initial contact was with a member of the executive staff who conveyed the background and interest in major change work based on new leadership and vision. He extended an invitation to meet with the executive staff to hear what they wanted, had been doing, and were confused about. It was agreed to meet with a larger leadership group (about seventy) in an "educational/introductory" session. Another meeting with the executive staff to contract for the longer-term project, including a design team and an internal resource, followed. In sorting out this situation, it worked out well with the design team as the primary client (worked with most directly), the internal resource as a co-consultant, and the original contact became a sponsor (particularly administrative), as were three other executive staff members. Two of the executive staff members were on the design team, operating as clients. In this case, the new leader was also a client, since he had the vision and the driving force behind the change and his expectations had to be embedded in the work that was done, even though that work was accomplished primarily through the design team.

Becoming Oriented to the Client's World

People in organizations operate from their own perceptions of reality. Many things influence their perceptions, including their own experiences; their organization's history and culture; their organization's work technology and processes; their beliefs and assumptions about their organization, the industry, and the organization's competitors; and their beliefs about how they should perform their work. The consultant must understand and appreciate how the clients perceive their world.

Becoming oriented to the client's world involves asking questions about it, observing it, and reading about it. Some key questions that the consultant might explore include:

- What is happening in the client's environment (for example, issues involving regulation, competition, increased or decreased customer demand, changing customer profiles, and the economy)?

- What statements are made in the client organization's annual report, state-of-the-organization messages, recent studies, or their website?
- How is the industry structured?
- Who are the competitors?
- What are the organization's strategy, core competencies, and competitive advantage?
- What does the organization do particularly well?
- What crises and/or achievements has the client experienced?

In addition to the client's external context and history, consultants should also familiarize themselves with the characteristics of the client system, including the organization's work, structure, technology, culture, and people. This is a significant part of what Margulies and Raia (1978) called "mapping." Because organizations are systems, their parts and interconnections must be understood and change must be viewed in its largest context. The following questions can help ascertain that context:

- What other departments, functions, or people will the change influence?
- What can help or hinder the change?
- What leverage points affect the change?
- What alignments are needed to make change work?
- What does the organization produce or do?
- How does the organization make its products or provide its services?
- How is technology used?
- How is the organization structured?
- What challenges/issues does the organization typically have to deal with?
- What are the organization's greatest strengths?
- What values and behavioral norms operate in the workplace?
- Who are the key players in the formal or informal social network?
- What was the client's previous experience with other consultants and change efforts?

When becoming familiar with the client's world, the consultant must know what else the organization is doing, working on, or changing. The change effort has to be integrated and coordinated with the efforts of different units. It must be positioned and linked to what is already or will be occurring.

The owner of a successful, growing service business contracted with a consultant to look at her company's future prospects, facilitate strategic planning, and develop senior management. After the consultant had collected data, designed a process that worked well in terms of planning and team building, and conducted the intervention, the participants, including the owner, expressed satisfaction with the work, plans, and future commitments. A few months later, the owner sold the company to a competitor. The consultant and the other participants felt blindsided and betrayed since this option was never even discussed.

Becoming oriented to the client's world provides the consultant with a foundation, a way of understanding the client's language, fears, desires, frustrations, and present state. The foundation gives the consultant a basis for introducing alternative thinking, different frameworks, and new ideas. It demonstrates that the consultant cares, and it helps him or her to connect with people through their reality. This connection with the client's reality can be very powerful since, as Shepard (1985) has said, consultants should "start where the system is." This foundation can also help the consultant to talk about change or desired future states because it is grounded in the organization's current reality; thus the consultant does not have to be corrected so often that he or she loses credibility.

While working with a utility company, an OD consultant found it helpful to have someone explain the current drive to develop alternative energy sources and the trend toward deregulation. She was able to use this information to support needed change in the culture toward innovative, risk-taking, entrepreneurial behavior.

In the pre-launch phase, the consultant will not have detailed information about the client organization. Subsequent assessment activities, discussed in Chapter Ten, will fill in any gaps and deepen information about the organization and its dynamics, needs, and issues.

Establishing the Consultant's Competence and Credibility

The competence and credibility of the consultant rest in the eye of the beholder: the client(s). The client has to perceive the consultant as competent and credible, *for their organization and change situation*, for the consultant to be influential. Consultants depend on influence since they have no formal power or authority. Influence derives from the social power (French & Raven, 1959) they receive from clients that is based, in part, on their developing competence and credibility in the clients' eyes.

Clients may have different criteria in mind when they assess a consultant's competence (for example, experience in organizations like theirs, knowledge of

a specific methodology, or years of experience). For a more detailed discussion of consultant competencies, see Freedman and Zackrisson (2001) or Eisen, Cherbeneau, and Worley's chapter in this book.

The client is also vulnerable during a change effort and is rightfully concerned about receiving the appropriate help. Lundberg (1997) even suggests that "help" in the context of consultation can be defined as *client anxiety reduction*, which often starts with a positive perception of the consultant's competence and credibility. On the other hand, the client's anxiety is increased when the consultant's credibility is questionable—either in performing the necessary work or in working effectively with the client. While it is important for the consultant to know the client's world, the client will find it equally important to learn about the consultant's background, experience, and values. The client should also know how consultants acquired their expertise, what they have done that is related to the change effort, what they know that is relevant to the intervention, and how they feel about the possibilities for success. Burke (1994) adds that clients generally assess whether they can relate well with the consultant, whether the consultant's previous experience is applicable to the present situation, and whether the consultant is competent and can be trusted.

In an entry situation, a client was particularly impressed and put at ease when she learned of the consultant's previous work in the same industry. They proceeded to discuss some common industry issues and quickly were into discussing the client's specific issues.

In another situation, the consultant was asked to identify some of the clients he had worked with before. He consciously chose to describe a variety of types of organizations in different industries. The client then commented about wanting someone with varied industry experience who could bring a different perspective and new ideas because management was "too insular."

The consultant's knowledge, skills, experience, values, and work style must fit the OD intervention and the client's needs. The consultant must be appropriate for the work and client situation (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1986). The consultant is just as responsible as the client in determining an appropriate match (Greiner & Metzger, 1983). Few clients are sophisticated enough to understand differences in expertise and specialties. It is an ineffective and unethical use of resources for a consultant to work on an OD intervention for which he or she lacks the necessary competence. An OD intervention that is outside or beyond a consultant's competence can best be handled under the guidance of someone more experienced or in a team arrangement. In this way, the requisite skills are available to the client, and the consultant can learn and thereby build competence.

Consulting competence may come from various areas. It may result from expertise in a particular content area required for the intervention, such as total

quality management or work-process redesign. Competence also may result from the consultant's expertise in process design and facilitation, such as the ability to involve people, run large groups, generate new ideas, or reach consensus. It also may be based on the outcomes of the consultants' previous work, their understanding of the client's situation, or their writings or teachings.

Authenticity, honesty, and confidence contribute to a consultant's credibility. Consultants may not have worked with many clients before, but they may have compelling ideas about how to approach the client's situation. They may even have conducted a similar intervention before that did not work well, but from which they learned valuable lessons that could affect the success of the current change effort. The consultants' credibility can also be enhanced when they describe their strengths and limitations with the clients, voice their concerns, and express confidence or enthusiasm about the engagement.

In one situation, the consultant was honest about not having performed a particular type of work before. The consultant shared the approach she planned to use and asked for the client's approval and commitment to the change effort. The consultant's honesty engendered client trust and permitted important collaboration between them.

Credibility is associated with more than just having the right knowledge and competencies. It also stems from the consultant's ability to relate to the client and to complete activities leading to a successful change effort. Credibility grows from the consultant's ability to organize action, such as what steps to take and how to sequence them. It reflects how clients feel about the potential for success and takes into account their ability to work well with the consultant. Ultimately, the success of an OD intervention will depend both on what is done and on the effectiveness of the client-consultant relationship.

In one client situation, a consultant found it necessary to assume a leadership role in the first meeting. She pulled out a piece of paper and drew a simple model so she could discuss with her clients the relationship among the concerns that the client organization was experiencing. These clients were confused and wanted to feel that they were receiving expert help, and the consultant was able to provide this by guiding the clients to a better understanding of the problem(s).

Competence and credibility can easily be underplayed or overplayed. If the consultant devotes too much time to displaying credentials, talking about past successes, or naming bigger clients, some clients may become intimidated or put off. On the other hand, the consultant's competence, credibility, strengths, and experiences must be conveyed to build client confidence and comfort.

Lippitt and Lippitt (1986) add that we have to remember to demonstrate expertise, establish credibility, and share relevant experience without giving a sales pitch, creating dependence, or setting expectations of solving the client's problem.

Developing an Open, Trusting, and Aligned Relationship

Developing an effective working relationship is essential for a consultant to gain client trust, build support from power brokers, and ensure appropriate consultant influence. It is also important because it is through the relationships that much of the consultation actually occurs (Jamieson, 1998). The client-consultant relationship is also key to the work in that it provides an understanding of the culture and provides continual data on the progress of the work (Schein, 2004). Old (1995) describes the nature of the needed relationship as "partnering." The client-consultant relationship must be built on a foundation of mutual openness, confidence, and trust (French & Bell, 1999). Confidence comes from each party's perception of competence and credibility, as discussed earlier. Openness is important to the relationship because the client and the consultant have to share all information affecting the change effort. This includes important information about the organization and the personal concerns, fears, and opinions of key clients, sponsors, and the consultant.

Trust is also essential. The consultant must feel that his or her skills are being used properly with the right motives; clients must feel that their proprietary or confidential data will be properly handled. The client must also believe that the consultant is really working in its best interests. A foundation of openness and trust is important because, over the course of the OD intervention, the consultant and the client must rely on each other and work to achieve an unimpeded flow of information so they can each make informed decisions.

Major barriers to openness and trust can stem from a client's negative past experiences with other consultants, from the organization's current culture, and from the client's vulnerability during the OD intervention. These barriers can impede the client's ability to enter an OD intervention in an open, trusting way. For this reason, consultants have to take initiative in showing support, sharing realistic concerns, expressing reservations or optimism, modeling openness and authenticity, talking honestly about what has worked and what has not worked, and discussing their working relationship. Consultants are always role models and should operate congruently and model the behaviors they want to establish in the relationship. However, barriers can also stem from "who" the consultant is and his or her "self" strengths and issues (Jamieson, 2003; Tannenbaum & Eisen, Chapter Twenty-Five in this book). Fears, personal needs, values and unresolved emotional issues all translate into what one is able to say and do, behaviorally.

In creating openness and trust, the consultant will find it helpful to discuss the following with the client:

- Expected time lines;
- Real barriers or challenges;
- Personal hopes;
- Helpful and hindering behaviors;
- Possible roadblocks;
- Alternative ways for the client to think about what is possible;
- Possible risks in the change effort; and
- Personal commitments and values as they relate to the change.

One consultant found it useful to alert a top manager about issues that could surface about his role and its contribution to the situation. This lead-in enabled the leader to share his concerns about his contribution and to express a willingness to change.

In another initial meeting, the consultant challenged the client's description of the presenting problem and implied solutions. She helped the client to think differently about the possible interrelationships among causes of the present state and opened up his possible paths to change. She was hired on the spot. He appreciated her openness, courage, and thinking.

Openness and trust also emanate from a foundation of alignment (seeing things the same way) and honesty (saying what is real). To establish such a foundation, the client and consultant must maintain a continuing dialogue about what is meaningful, significant, compelling, or frightening. Openness and trust grow from sharing experiences. The client and the consultant should talk about specific issues as they arise. They must also talk about what forces support the success of the OD intervention, what forces will hinder the intervention, what motivations underlie the change effort, and what they find exciting about the desired future.

Values are also an important part of achieving alignment. The consultant has to know which of the client's values are relevant to the change effort—about people, work, success, diversity, and so on and about what the client is changing for or changing to—and how compatible these values are with those of the consultant (Jamieson & Gellermann, 2005).

Those entering a change effort rarely do so from a value-free perspective; rather, everyone operates with desired methods and results in mind. OD consultants often bring to a change effort their own perspectives, which are loaded with such value-based principles as a high regard for employee involvement,

employee empowerment, and respect for human dignity. Although the consultant's values should not singularly drive the OD intervention, the client and consultant may not work together effectively if their values are incompatible. Without some alignment, unhealthy conflict is likely to result over the intervention's goals and means, and that conflict may influence decisions and affect the results of an OD engagement.

One client was interested in improving the effectiveness of his department. However, when the consultant suggested group meetings with employees at different levels to get their input, the client was adamant that the consultant only needed to talk to the managers. There were clearly incompatible values related to participation, manager roles, and systems thinking.

Clients often experience mixed feelings (including desire, fear, inadequacy, and vulnerability) about a change effort. Consciously or unconsciously, these feelings can lead the client to resist closure on contracting. Consultants can either be helpful in dealing with these feelings or aggravate them. In addition, if clients find it difficult to understand or work with consultants, additional barriers are created. Feelings of satisfaction and comfort during OD interventions are affected by how clients want to be included and informed, how they want to receive inputs from consultants, and what consultants want from their clients. Many of the feelings experienced by clients and consultants are associated with their feelings of vulnerability, interpersonal needs, availability to one another, their priorities, and their levels of commitment to the change effort.

Margulies and Raia (1978) have also stressed the importance of the consultant-client "fit" and described the quality of the relationship as dependent on their value systems, the consultant's competence and ability to "help" the client with the perceived challenge, the client's experience with other consultants, expectations about the consulting role and process, their personalities and interpersonal styles, and the compatibility of their needs and objectives. More recently, Massarik and Pei-Carpenter (2002) describe the client-consultant relationship interconnecting "selves" with the amount of overlay defining the congruence of styles, needs, objectives and values.

In one consulting relationship, the client was very controlling and directive and acted as if the consultant was one of his employees (whom he also treated inappropriately). Normally, a consultant would straighten this situation out, re-contract, or quit. However, this consultant was putting up with it. On deeper discussion with a consulting colleague, it was determined that this consultant still had some authority issues hindering his challenging the client and that financially he needed the work. In this case, their needs and styles played into each other, blocking the potential for growth or improvement.

In developing open, trusting, and aligned consultant-client relationships, the consultant's ultimate value is in maintaining a boundary position (Cummings & Worley, 2001) with marginality and objectivity (Margulies & Raia, 1978). Becoming intimately involved with the culture of an organization or group, yet remaining apart from it, provides the kind of detachment and objectivity required for effective consulting. It involves balancing the ability to understand and empathize with the client system while avoiding becoming so acculturated that the consultant mirrors the same biases and subjectivity as the client. The consultant's ability not to be absorbed by the culture (French & Bell, 1999) and to remain free from the organizational forces that might distort his or her view of the organization and its issues should not be compromised in the process of developing a quality client-consultant relationship.

Friendship is often an issue in developing quality client-consultant relationships. Some consultants have grown so close, personally and socially, with a particular client that they have lost neutrality, objectivity, and marginality in the eyes of other clients in the system. On the other hand, some consultants have managed to remain effective with the client system while maintaining a friendship with the primary client, by openly discussing the situation, keeping boundaries very visible, and behaving in accord with all contracts.

The client and consultant do not have to agree on everything at the outset of the change effort, but they do have to be candid, confront their differences, discuss any implications, and clarify how they will proceed.

Completing a Preliminary Diagnostic Scan

In a preliminary diagnostic scan, the consultant and client are “scouting” (Kolb & Frohman, 1970), which involves developing a general understanding of:

- The current state (presenting issues and needs, the culture, the basis they have for developing their vision);
- The potential sources of resistance and support;
- The apparent power and political system; and
- A perception of the organization's readiness, commitment, and capability.

The Current State

In the pre-launch phase, the consultant attempts to learn enough about the client and their change desires to contract effectively for the initial work. It is important to approach this aspect of consulting with a spirit of inquiry and neutrality, accessing one's ignorance (Schein, 1997) and avoiding any inappropriate

assumptions or premature conclusions about the situation or what to do. It is best to treat hunches as hypotheses at this point. It is also important for consultants to be aware of and to control their own diagnostic orientation and biases to avoid creating self-fulfilling prophecies (Lippitt, Watson, & Westley, 1958). Consultants should seek information from more than their initial contact. They may find it helpful to hear from or about people who have various stakes in past problems or new desired futures.

When a project is deficit-focused, the consultant might, for instance, seek information to answer such questions as:

- What is the issue or the different interpretations of the issue?
- What is the apparent cause(s) of the challenge?
- Why does the present state exist?
- What are the likely consequences if the issue(s) are not resolved?
- What would success look like?
- How do people feel about the current situation?

However, many projects take a positive, developmental stance to help the organization move toward an exciting new future vision. Then it's important to consider other questions, such as:

- What has made us great so far?
- What do we have that will help us reach our vision?
- What is going well in the organization?
- How can these strengths be leveraged?
- What are the likely possibilities if our strengths can be further developed?

Whenever possible, the consultant should obtain this information directly from those closest to the situation. At a minimum, consultants should be able to question credible sources for their perceptions about how the people involved in the problems or future vision would answer these questions.

After an initial meeting with the head of a division, a consultant asked to talk informally, at no charge, with a handful of key players, after which he would meet again with the head person to discuss the project and his “fit” with the proposed work and client, and then explore contracting. Another approach is to do phased work—to do the same, but charge for the initial work.

In a preliminary scan, consultants should not strive to obtain great detail; rather, they should seek to understand the issues and possibilities generally and the relationships among them. In part, consultants are trying to achieve clarity and elevate their confidence about what to work on and how, while serving as an organization mirror (Bruce & Wyman, 1998), sharpening clients' understanding. Consultants are also trying to establish the validity of the current state (Cummings & Worley, 2001) and determine the commonality of perceptions or distinctions among different viewpoints.

Sometimes consultants are trying to scope the situation in order to design a diagnostic approach. At other times they are trying to scope the possibilities and strength of resources to plan an appreciative process. They want enough knowledge of the organization's issue(s), resources, and desires to enable the two parties to make informed choices about proceeding with the engagement (Cummings & Worley, 2001). In this process they should talk to a few key people or meet with key stakeholder groups. Consultants may have to facilitate discussions so as to surface real strengths and issues and challenge beliefs. Consultants may also review studies, memos, or other documents that relate to the issues, needs, and viewpoints. Consultants may find it helpful to observe some regular meetings or to tour work areas to see the operations, interactions, and culture at work. Investing a little energy in the preliminary scan will help consultants to contract for, and place the OD intervention on, the right path.

Touring the work facility of a small design and manufacturing company where creative artists, engineers, and construction people needed to collaborate helped to explain their status issues (very different offices and work space) and some of their conflict (physical distances affecting psychological distances).

Support, Resistance, Power, and Politics

When performing the diagnostic scan, consultants should also note who appears to support or resist the change effort and why they feel the way they do. Identifying supporters and resisters helps to crystallize motives and personal agendas. Supporters and resisters may also dramatize the real hurdles to be encountered or identify key considerations in designing the content and process of the change effort.

While scouting in a large department with numerous specialists, a consultant discovered some very different perspectives on the presenting problem and some very logical feelings of resistance. In a subsequent meeting with the initial client, the consultant was able to provide a more accurate description of the "starting point," which expanded the client's view of the situation and led to contracting for a different initial phase of work to deal with the differences and build consensus for any change.

It is also important to identify potential leverage points for change (Burke, 1994) by understanding the organization's power system (the people who have influence or authority over key systems and processes, rewards and incentives, and people) and its political dynamics (Greiner & Schein, 1988). They must find out who has significant influence, how decisions are made in the organization, and who has expertise pertinent to the change effort. Consultants must also learn about the motives, perspectives, and values of those in power in the organization to understand the political dynamics inherent in its culture (for example, coalitions, dependencies, tradeoffs, deals, and incentives).

Powerful people attain their status through formal and informal means (for example, position, information, expertise, intimidation, access, or amicability). Consultants must learn about the power/political dimensions of the organization and gain access to key people in appropriate ways during early stages of work. Greiner and Metzger (1983) refer to this aspect of consulting as "meeting the power structure." A consultant's knowledge of, and connection to, the power structure can be used in positive ways to help leverage change (Cobb, 1986; Cobb & Margulies, 1981; Greiner & Schein, 1988).

In one consulting situation, an OD intervention was terminated when a pending invoice was rejected because a new chief financial officer (CFO) had not been involved in the early stages of the intervention. The client and the consultant had proceeded without paying attention to a key change in the power system and, in this case, the emergence of a new perspective on the value of the work being performed.

In another intervention, the human resource client got into trouble with the head of data processing by launching an OD intervention on people issues for implementing technological change without first obtaining the support and approval of the high-powered head of data processing. Even the organization's president, who initially supported the OD intervention, overlooked the importance of involving this power player. The head of data processing discredited early work in the intervention, and it was terminated after the initial phase. In this case, the consultant should have tested the political system rather than relying on the client's belief that everyone necessary supported the OD intervention.

Readiness, Commitment, and Capability

When performing the preliminary scan, consultants should assess the organization's readiness (motivation to change), level of commitment (attitude and energy toward change), and the capability of its members (their knowledge and skills needed for the change effort). It is also important to know the extent of resources (money, people, technology) available to support the change effort (Burke, 1994). Knowing the commitment of key stakeholders is important because it helps consultants determine whether the organization

is ready for change or if other steps will be required to create the necessary impetus. Commitment can be viewed as levels of energy applied toward or against change. People can be against the change direction, somewhat neutral about letting it happen, passively for it, or wanting to make it happen (Beckhard & Harris, 1987). Assessing the commitment to change by those involved in the issues—even as “best guess” perceptions—helps the consultant ascertain how much readiness building is needed and the strength of the change champions.

After beginning down a path toward a change program, a consultant and client were informally collecting data about readiness and commitment. To their surprise, they discovered a lot of neutrality and passive support. Clearly, such attitudes would not support a large and significant change process. Everything was put on hold until the chief executive client could have some individual and team meetings to gain alignment or change in thinking about what was needed for the future.

The capability of organizational members is measured by their knowledge and experience with change and change processes and their level of required skills, such as their ability to participate, work productively in groups, function in an open way, think creatively, and demonstrate flexibility. Change could be utterly new to some organizations, participation could be counter-cultural, and the people may be highly rigid. However, other organizations may be accustomed to change, their members may have undergone extensive training in interpersonal communication and small-group management, and these organizations may have employees who seek variety and innovation. A consultant who is familiar with an organization’s change competence can more easily determine how much education or skill building should be included in the intervention strategy and how to use the organization’s human resources during the change.

A preliminary diagnostic scan will often move the client from wanting a simple training solution to wanting a more complex reexamination of the organization’s work structure or culture or a participative assessment/planning process. Alternatively, when present-state descriptions are presented by the client, they may be full of attributions and can be seen more accurately only by surfacing the real causes of why a system is not working, why products are of poor quality, why services are fraught with delays, or why the organization is stymied from reaching its potential. The consultant may also find that some form of education or readiness building is essential prior to launching because of the level of capability or the real potential for resistive people to sabotage a change effort.

When determining whether a good match exists to work with a specific client, consultants may also wish to consider these questions:

- Can I work with this client?
- Do I have the right competencies?
- Will this client keep agreements?
- Can this client be honest with him- or herself, others, and me?
- Is this client open to bad news, new ideas, and change?
- Are the client's motives, commitments, resources, and values appropriate?
- Are the client's expectations realistic?
- Do I believe we can be successful?

The results of skipping or short-cutting the preliminary diagnostic scan and the later more in-depth diagnostic activities can be disastrous. Without a good understanding of the “reality,” the subsequent work can be off-target, designed too narrowly, or end up as “a hammer looking for nails.” If a consultant hurries to begin the intervention, resistance may be elevated, necessitating unnecessary remedial work. The consultant must, therefore, help the client pinpoint real needs and intentions. Only then is it possible to contract appropriately and design diagnostic and action strategies effectively.

Contracting for the Work, Working Relations, and Exchange

The information that has been learned about the client so far provides a foundation for the contracting process and data for identifying the content of the work and psychological contracts (Boss, 1985). The word *contract* is often thought of only in formal and legal terms, but in OD it can be formal, informal, oral, or be in a letter of agreement or in a legal form. However, the term is actually quite appropriate given its original roots—*tractus*: to draw something along; *con*: together with someone else (Bruce & Wyman, 1998). Contracting means establishing and clarifying expectations about the change effort, the working relationship(s), consulting support needs, and financial or other arrangements. The process of contracting must be a primary focus in pre-launch, but will be continuous in some respects and reopened as conditions change.

Block (2000) refers to contracting as an explicit agreement about what the consultant and the client should expect and how they should work together. That agreement results from discussions in which the wants, offers, and concerns of the client and the consultant are clarified. Differences are negotiated and agreement is reached. Weisbord (1973) defines contracting as an explicit exchange of expectations, clarifying for the consultant and client what each

expects to obtain from the relationship, how much time each will invest, when, and at what cost, and the ground rules under which the parties will operate.

Contracting is intended to allow good decisions to be made about how to carry out the change process (Beer, 1980) and sets the tone for the entire OD intervention (Block, 2000). It establishes the clarity needed to have an effective working relationship and avoid subsequent surprises or problems that derail projects. With whom consultants should contract will depend on who is identified as the different types of client(s), sponsor(s), and other key player(s) in the power system. Consultants may sometimes need to perform primary contracting for all aspects of a change effort and working relationships with some client(s), but auxiliary contracting for parts of the change effort or limited relationship needs with other client(s).

Contracting for the Work

The consultant should start the OD intervention by agreeing with the client about the initial understanding of the situation, desired results or intended outcomes, measures of success, the value proposition for the work, and the options, methods, timing, and accountabilities anticipated. As part of these discussions, the consultant and the client should be sure to establish critical success factors (what it will take to be successful) or organizational effectiveness criteria that can later be used in evaluating success (Smither, Houston, & McIntire, 1996). All too often, the measures are vague or left out, resulting in disastrous conflicts later. Critical success factors and effectiveness criteria can include objective, measurable outcomes, such as reduced turnover, higher margins, or quality improvements, and more subjective attitude or behavior outcomes, such as more participation among a group's members, improved morale, or shared perceptions of what is valued and rewarded. Caution may be needed, however. There is no guarantee of improvement in human systems work; often, there is no way to show that the changes emerged from the intervention and there is no control over external factors that can negatively impact the change, such as an unfriendly takeover or downturn in the economy. The consultant should keep in mind the mutual nature of the contracting process and change. *No matter how well the consultant does, there can be no change or improvement without the full support and committed participation of the client organization.* Boss (1985), Lippitt and Lippitt (1986), and Schein (1988) have all stressed the importance of emphasizing the *joint responsibility* of clients and consultants during contracting.

Developing consensus on the strategy and methods of the change effort will produce more detailed information on the project boundaries, work tasks, and data requirements; with whom to work directly; whom to include in various ways; where the OD work will take place; in what sequence activities should happen; when the work should be performed and at what pace; how technology

will be used in data collection or ongoing communication; deliverables to be produced; and approximately how long the change effort will take. The consultant should be sure that flexibility is incorporated in the contractual language because, at the time of contracting, there are still many unknowns and it is impossible to know how many and what type of interventions will be used. Even though there may not be a separate assessment/diagnosis phase, it is still important to contract for how data will be generated and used. For interventions to be effective, they still require valid and useful data, free and informed choice, and internal commitment (Argyris, 1970). So the work will always require some forms of data generation leading to action taking.

The result of this part of contracting is often a plan that may be more specific and detailed for the immediate next steps, such as diagnosis or preliminary education, and more general for the subsequent cycles of design, intervention, and implementation. It is often helpful to include key decision points in the change plan for client-consultant review or modification. Sometimes contracting for the work is actually broken into phases, such as education, diagnosis, design, and implementation work, or preparation, design, and execution of a large-scale event.

In one organization, the initial work contract was structured to include a design group drawn from a wide cross-section of the organization that would identify all the relevant stakeholders, select people for invitation, and prepare all the communications and pre-work materials to be sent to the invitees for a fairly comprehensive, multi-day, diagnostic and planning meeting. The executive team would be included along the way and at the meetings. The design group would also compile the work from the large stakeholder meeting and determine communication and feedback mechanisms to share with and involve the rest of the organization.

Contracting for Working Relations

The most in-depth relationship contracting occurs with the consultant's direct client(s). In contracting with direct client(s), consultants must address the full range of relationship issues and develop a working relationship. Trust and openness are issues of central importance. In addition, consultants will find it essential to clarify what roles they will play for the client, what they should expect from each other, how they should work together, how they should plan together, and how they should reach critical decisions.

In developing working relations, the consultant and client are contracting primarily for the psychosocial aspects of the relationship and creating an interpersonal relationship for changing the client's organization (Bruce & Wyman, 1998). This includes—but is not limited to—roles and expectations, commitments,

needs for involvement, information needs, access, control, work styles, and the ground rules or principles that will be used as the consultant and the client work together. Unless there is mutual understanding and agreement about the process, there is significant risk that one or both of the parties' expectations will not be met (Bellman, 1990). It is reasonable to expect that roles and needs will change during the life of the project through client growth, transfer of skills, and growing mutual confidence and trust. This type of contracting requires recycling, the consultant and the client asking for what they want or need (Block, 2000; Boss, 1985), and each having self-awareness and clarity of his or her motives and values (Burke, 2002; Smither, Houston, & McIntire, 1996). "Self as an instrument of change" (Jamieson, 2003; Tannenbaum & Eisen, Chapter Twenty-Five of this book) is particularly accentuated in contracting since the outcomes are completely dependent on what each person is capable of putting on the table, knowing what's personally important to stand firm on, and how each honors agreements.

In one situation, a client and consultant developed a contract that included a weekly meeting for updating and decision making; a monthly meeting with the top team to present progress; no written reports; client-consultant access at any time for emergencies, otherwise during work hours; both would be visible in project events, but the client would handle other internal communications (related divisions, the board, and so forth); neither required a lot of detail in their discussions; a quarterly review of what had changed in the project, how they were working together, and any changes to their contract; the client asked for "brutal honesty" and challenges; the consultant wanted administrative support for the project and monthly billing with thirty-day payments.

Consultants have numerous orientation, role, and style choices based on who they are and what the client system requires (Jamieson, 1998). These are also part of establishing expectations and fitting with the client. For example, they might position themselves in the foreground, more central in the change work and visible in the client system, or more in the background, working through the client(s); more oriented to educating the client and building their capability through the transfer of knowledge and skills or more protective of their skills and expertise; more task or process oriented (Margulies & Raia, 1972); or rely more on the client's knowledge and experiences versus the consultant's own. Consultants can be more or less directive, supportive, confrontive, or facilitative (Jamieson, 1998; Lippitt & Lippitt, 1986). They can serve as experts, pairs of hands, or collaborators (Block, 2000). As Harrison (1970) put it, the change agent is continuously confronted by the dilemma of whether to "lead and push, or to collaborate and follow." These choices create very different dynamics in

the client-consultant relationship and can meet very different client system change needs and client and consultant personal needs.

Harvey and Brown (2001) identified five consultant styles based on the emphasis they put on effectiveness or goal accomplishment, relationships, morale, and participant satisfaction:

1. *Stabilizer*: Low emphasis on both effectiveness and satisfaction; trying to keep from rocking the boat; low profile.
2. *Cheerleader*: High emphasis on satisfaction and morale; smooths differences and maintains harmony; non-confrontive.
3. *Analyzer*: High focus on goal accomplishment; rational problem solving; operates from expertise.
4. *Persuader*: Focus on both dimensions; optimizes neither; low risk; motivated to satisfy differing forces.
5. *Pathfinder*: Seeks high degree of effectiveness and satisfaction; collaborative problem solving; challenges organization.

When consultants contract their roles and relations with the client, it is instructive to keep in mind what one study identified as the client's view of the ideal consultant: the person listens, but does not sell; fits into the organization and embraces its mission and culture; teaches the internal staff and helps them achieve independence; provides good customer service; protects confidentiality; challenges assumptions; is a recognized expert; provides perspective and objectivity; and celebrates with the internal staff (Bader & Stich, 1983).

It is equally important to clarify the primary client's role. For example, is the client a project manager, a co-consultant, or a decision maker? The implications of these role choices are critical. The more consultants act as experts on substantive content issues, the less effective they will be on managing process (French & Bell, 1999) and the more they intrude some on a needed client role. If the client acts in a co-consultant role, he or she loses some of the power and context of being the decision maker.

Sponsors and key power players may want roles with different levels of involvement. Some may join in the change effort; others may be interested observers. Generally, contracting for these relationships involves determining how much sponsors and key power players wish to participate; how much information they want to receive; what information they want to receive; how much faith they have in the consultant's ability to pursue the objectives they seek; and how much information, support, and involvement the consultant wants from them. The consultant will have to keep the power players informed and obtain their input.

If consultants know that other people will be involved in the change effort later, they may find it helpful to brief them on what will be happening, determine how to keep them informed, estimate when and in what ways the change effort may impact them, and discuss, if appropriate, what they can do to prepare for participating in the change effort.

In one OD intervention, the direct clients consisted of a group of senior managers. The sponsor was an executive vice president, and there were about six other key power players. The consultant defined the direct clients' roles as compiling and analyzing data, and he defined his role as educating the organization, providing input options, being on call for assistance, and facilitating review and integration meetings. They agreed on what type of information to share. Agreements were also reached about the value of timeliness and the ground rules for meetings. The sponsor agreed to attend the periodic review and integration meetings, wanted frank discussions with the consultant about the OD intervention's progress, and requested a written report at the end of the intervention. In a meeting, the other power players were informed of the project's purpose and their roles. Their initial inputs and advice were sought. They were also reassured about confidentiality and told that the sponsor would keep them informed and share project results with them.

Once the OD consultant's and the client's roles have been discussed, their working process and expectations can be clarified. Will the intervention be jointly planned or planned chiefly by the consultant or the client? Will meetings be client-led or consultant-led? The consultant and the client also will need to clarify how often they will meet, what information will be communicated, how they will communicate (for example, phone call, email, fax, presentation, or memo), and when the consultant and the client will be accessible.

In one project, a client was expecting a written report from the consultant. The consultant, however, had prepared an oral presentation, complete with overhead transparencies and a handout. Shortly thereafter, the client began to quarrel with the consultant over billed time because the client did not believe that the consultant was using his time appropriately. There was obviously lack of clarity and agreement about how the report should be presented and how time was to be used.

People's work styles also must be considered, especially in joint and collaborative relationships. Some people require very detailed designs and discussions; others work well with general outlines. Some people require everything to be data-based; others work well from intuition, a concept, value, or vision.

Other style issues that have to be considered include how quickly each key person learns and works; whether each person works better alone or with others; and how tolerant each is about ambiguity, flexibility, and risk taking. Sometimes, work

styles are compatible and relationship contracting is easy. When the consultant's and the client's work styles are not compatible, clarity and compromise may be necessary to minimize tension and frustration.

Principles or ground rules for working together often originate from work styles, involvement, and information-sharing discussions. Agreements such as "It is okay to call me at home if we need to talk" or "We will tell each other everything and avoid surprises" provide both parties with an understanding of what is acceptable and effective. Other principles might relate to anticipating problems, listening, equality, timeliness, how facility or reservation matters will be handled, or how each party can grow and develop in the OD intervention. No matter what each includes in contracting, the consultant and the client will have to clarify and agree on how they will work together in a trusting, productive, and rewarding relationship.

In some contracts, the client and consultant agree to have follow-up meetings after key steps in the OD intervention, to discuss and enhance learning about the conceptual base of the OD intervention and to discuss specific situations or emerging problems. In other situations, clients and consultants have held monthly breakfasts, weekly meetings, and periodic three-way meetings with sponsors. Consultants and clients also have used written status reports or presentations at executive staff meetings.

The consultant should also discuss the termination options (both unexpected and planned) with the client during contracting and include considerations such as:

- Who can end the OD intervention or consulting relationship? How?
- What circumstances will breach their contract or cause a termination?
- How will transfer of expertise and planned termination occur?
- What does each party owe the other party if a termination occurs?

Consultant Support Needs

In some OD engagements, consultants need support services. These can be described as any help needed to see the OD intervention or change effort through to a successful conclusion. These services often include clerical help or other administrative assistance. Some important questions that the consultants should ask about support services are as follows:

- Who will provide the support services?
- How/through whom will they be obtained?
- What will support services consist of?
- When will the consultant be able to use the support services?
- Who will pay for them? How?

Support services may be supplied by either the client or the consultant. Some consultants may want media support for their presentations or their reports. Sometimes the OD intervention requires that the consultant be onsite frequently, which may necessitate office space or clerical help. Many interventions require members of the organization to supply and/or analyze data. Still other OD interventions involve travel and lodging arrangements. The questions related to these latter issues might include the following:

- Who will arrange and pay for travel and lodging needs?
- What class of service is involved?
- Will travel and lodging needs be paid for directly by the organization, invoiced, or handled in some other manner?

If questions about support are left unanswered at the outset of the OD intervention, they may result in misunderstandings or lead to a situation in which support tasks are not carried out and aspects of the engagement are handled poorly.

In one situation, the client provided a support person. He was designated as part-time for the OD intervention and was to handle all administrative and logistical matters for the OD intervention team, which included the consultant.

In another situation, the client and the consultant had not clarified support service requirements, and a misunderstanding occurred. The client did all the word processing on some materials and then deducted the cost from the consultant's invoice. Better contracting would have avoided this incident.

Consultant-Client Exchange

The last aspect of contracting involves what is being exchanged and how it is to be exchanged. Most engagements involve financial payments, but it is possible to barter for exchanges, such as the use of developed materials, an exchange of services, or consultation for equity. When financial arrangements are used, the client and consultant must reach agreement on the following issues:

- What is the consultant's rate(s)?
- What consulting expenses are covered?
- What time is billable (for example, will travel time be billable and at what rate)?
- How is time calculated (for example, nearest quarter hour, hour, half-day)?
- How much time and money is estimated for the OD intervention?

- When should the consultant's invoices be sent?
- How should the invoices be prepared?
- What information should the invoices contain?
- Who should the invoices be sent to?
- What is the estimated timing for payments?
- Will late fees be charged?

There are often sensitivities and misunderstandings related to the money, so it is extremely important that the client and the consultant be clear about the billing and payment procedures, and often these should be documented in writing.

In one situation, a consultant arranged an exchange that included a lower fee and ownership of all materials developed. In another, the consultant and client bartered for an exchange of services—the consulting help in exchange for the development of a computer system tailored for the consultant's firm. One project required invoicing that separated consulting from training work since they would be paid out of different budgets.

Both parties should discuss any changes that will affect the financial arrangement, such as using up budgeted amounts faster than anticipated or unanticipated budget cuts by the organization. The consultant and client should also discuss, periodically, the relationship between what is being accomplished in the change effort and the expenditures. When the cost-benefit relationship does not seem correlated, the client's concerns may grow: People do not want to spend substantial sums of money without witnessing visible progress toward their goals!

In one consulting situation, the consultant found it helpful to explain to the client why more billable consulting days would occur earlier in the intervention rather than later and that the early bills would be larger than subsequent ones. Because the client was informed, the consultant's first invoices did not surprise her.

Throughout contracting, there is a constant need to pay attention to ethical issues in order to establish the right boundaries, relationship, and work methods. Earlier, White and Wooten (1983) summarized the types of ethical dilemmas in OD: misrepresentation and collusion, misuse of data, manipulation and coercion, value and goal conflicts, and technical ineptness. Later, Page (1998) added client dependency. It is common in OD to ensure that participation is voluntary, that participants are protected from harm, that information collected from individuals is kept confidential, that individual data are owned by individuals, and that the organization owns non-confidential and non-anonymous

data (Smither, Houston, & McIntire, 1996). Consultants should not say they can do things that they cannot, require clients to depend on them too much, or collude with one part of an organization against another part. Egan and Gellermann (Chapter Twenty-One) suggest that ethical dilemmas in OD are created through the conflict between competing rights, obligations, and interests. Keeping these in mind will help to improve the quality of OD contracting and practice.

With contracting, consultants need to remember that there are so many different systems and clients that contracting is almost always a process of customizing to fit each situation. Both parties must meet their individual and mutual needs in order to be satisfied. The contracting process must not interfere with their working together effectively. In fact, it should enhance it. Contracting is a complex, human-interactive process requiring sensitivity, skill, and flexibility.

Introducing the Engagement and Consultant(s) to the Larger Organization

Introducing the OD engagement and the consultant(s) can be difficult. The consultant must know the organization's culture and systems in order to know how to present the intervention properly. If people are not informed about the intervention before the consultant arrives, they might resist it. Who introduces the intervention and how it is done affect its credibility. If the wrong person introduces the OD intervention or uses the wrong method of communication, the intervention will begin poorly.

In one communication that was not designed or monitored by the consultant, a client sent out a memo announcing the start of an OD project that referred to the consultant as an "efficiency expert" and the project as "improving the efficiency of their operations." There were obviously some different understandings in the contracting!

An introduction can benefit from the use of more than one medium. It may include a notification to everyone, followed by small-group sessions. The rationale for the intervention should be clear: what is being started and why. The involvement of key members of the organization in the introduction helps others to see the work as important, cross-organizational, and not "owned" by one person, group, faction, or department. The consultant, client, and sponsors can all have roles in the beginning of the OD intervention. Part of the introduction should be in writing in order to have a clear statement without multiple interpretations (Greiner & Metzger, 1983). Today, technology can be used effectively. For example, the project introduction and rationale might be posted on the company website or intranet, and comments could be emailed or posted to a specially designated chat room.

Consultants can also meet key people informally before the introduction to build comfort and rapport while minimizing feelings of concern. Providing personal as well as professional information about themselves at the outset of an intervention can also help portray them as human beings. These techniques help build the consultant's credibility and the larger client's confidence.

How various parts of the organization will be involved or affected by the intervention should determine how much time and effort should be devoted to its introduction. Some people should just be informed; others should be involved in two-way forums to be sure they understand the intervention and know what to expect. The consultant should know how the organization usually introduces information, but if its method is ineffective, the consultant may want to differentiate the change effort by creating a new introduction process.

At the onset of a fairly large engagement, the people who would be affected were invited to a large presentation in an auditorium. This was led by the president and the top team. It included an introduction to the consultant, who also described the process and what people could expect. This large-group introduction was followed by small-group meetings in each department to answer questions and clarify their participation, the intended outcomes, and the rationale for the change approach being used. These department meetings were facilitated by the consultant and head of each department.

CONCLUSION

Numerous difficulties arising in OD interventions can be traced to flaws in the pre-launch phase. Difficulties can stem from misunderstanding the organization, ignoring issues associated with the power structure, disagreeing about work methods, not reaching agreements on consulting rates or time commitments, or clashing work styles. These setbacks and issues can be avoided if a consultant takes care to address them early on.

Consultants must work carefully in surfacing organizational issues or in starting down a new path with a client. At the same time, they should work to instill trust and match their personal styles to the expectations of multiple players. Starting OD projects takes on great significance because change is inherently risky and both parties face a considerable amount of risk, uncertainty, and ambiguity. Consultants can be lured by feelings of competence, unworthiness, or dependency to engage in agreements that are not appropriate or in their best interest. Change can engender feelings of vulnerability, guilt, or inadequacy in clients, intensifying emotions in ways that complicate helping relationships.

The concept of "self as instrument" (Jamieson, 1991, 2003; Tannenbaum & Eisen, Chapter Twenty-Five) is central to understanding OD consulting and is

confronted throughout pre-launch. OD consultants are change agents who have to rely on their thoughts, feelings, strengths, and weaknesses throughout their work. Quade and Brown (2002) take this concept to a new level in discussing the importance of being “conscious consultants” who enlarge the awareness of who they are, their own styles and ways of thinking, working, and interacting, and who actively track and change implicit models and assumptions in their work. In each engagement, one is using self and growing self.

The consultants’ authenticity and skills are central to establishing effective working relationships that contribute to successful change. Consultants cannot be too needy or too greedy, too passive or too controlling. They have to remain marginal to the system yet remain close enough to the change effort and the people to obtain valid data and to instill trust and confidence.

The work that consultants do is affected by how quick they are to judge, criticize, or conclude. Communicating, listening, and probing effectively will increase their understanding and ease client fears. Confronting others appropriately and giving timely and effective feedback will increase their clients’ clarity about issues and their authenticity in approaching problems and solutions. How well consultants adapt to their clients’ cultures may determine the success of their interventions. Moreover, OD consultants’ front-end work—entering and contracting—will be greatly improved by their ability to elicit hope, facilitate discussions, work collaboratively, and empathize and assert their points of view.

In the final analysis, *consultants can see only what they have prepared themselves to see and do only what they have developed themselves to do.*

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Launch

Assessment and Action Planning

D.D. Warrick

Few processes are more intriguing in OD than assessment and action planning, and few processes can stimulate and result in more change. In this important phase of OD that we are calling “Launch,” valuable information is gathered and analyzed, and a collaborative approach is used to evaluate the information and plan actions that provide a sound strategy for making organizations, groups, or individuals successful. Assessment and action planning are among an OD practitioner’s most important skills and are also among the most unique, interesting, and value-added aspects of OD. Consider, for example:

- The energy and hope that is generated when organizations are actually interested in what employees have to say;
- The potential disasters that are avoided when an organization or team has a clear sense of reality about what is really going on versus having an illusion of doing well while the organization is regressing;
- The value of an assessment that provides important information that results in a merger, inter-organization effort, or cross-cultural project being successful;
- The elation and value that come from discovering through an assessment that efforts to change and transform an organization are working and from learning why they are working; and

- The satisfaction that comes from possibly saving a career by providing multi-rater feedback to a leader who is floundering and now sees options that might help identify what is needed to succeed.

These are only a few of the many ways that Launch can have a significant impact on the success of organizations, teams, and individuals. However, as with any high-payoff effort, risks are involved as well. What if the assessment is poorly designed and produces misleading, confusing, inaccurate, or inflammatory results? What if the data are ignored or used for harmful rather than helpful purposes? What if the real issues are dismissed or explained away and the whole OD process becomes suspect? What if the action planning process becomes so complex and time-consuming that people lose interest and little is accomplished?

Thus, we have a high payoff and very interesting and engaging process that, if not skillfully done, can result in more harm than good and that can make or break the OD process. This is why assessing organizations, groups, and individuals and guiding action planning that focuses on a sound strategy for success requires a considerable amount of skill. It is a necessity for OD practitioners to become proficient in these important aspects of OD. This chapter is designed therefore to provide the fundamentals of assessment and action planning—combined into the single phase called *launch*—so that a high degree of success can be expected in this phase of the OD change process.

THE PURPOSE OF THE LAUNCH PHASE

While assessment and action planning may be used informally in the Pre-Launch phase of OD and more formally in the Launch phase, they are, in fact, used in various ways throughout OD efforts. The purpose of the launch phase is

1. To discover a broader perception of reality (as reality can never be completely known) and, based on that perception of reality, to develop action plans that include sound strategies for helping organizations, groups, and/or individuals succeed. Knowing how reality is perceived by various individuals makes it possible to change and improve almost anything or at least to know that change and improvement are not needed or are not likely to succeed or to be possible. Without knowing how reality is perceived, issues that must be addressed and changes that must be made may be overlooked, wrong assumptions and poor decisions made, considerable time and resources invested in treating symptoms rather than root real causes, and cures attempted that are worse than the diseases. It has been said that a fool is a person who

continues the same behaviors while expecting a different result. This is often the case in organizations because of a lack of good assessment and action planning.

2. To understand the strengths (major assets and what is working) and opportunities for improvement (what is not working or could be improved) of organizations, groups, and individuals and what it will take for each to succeed.
3. To collect relevant information for use in designing, managing, and monitoring the change process and improvement efforts. Monitoring progress is especially an important and often overlooked assessment function, as corrections can be made if it is known that the desired progress is not being made.
4. To gather valuable information that will be helpful in developing new organizations and groups.
5. To give the appropriate people an opportunity to be involved in offering their perceptions of reality and planning change.
6. To motivate change in a number of ways:
 - By creating hope and expectations that improvements will be made and that what is working will be acknowledged and maintained;
 - By allowing people to share observations, opinions, feelings, and ideas that may have been overlooked or ignored;
 - By seeding the organization for change, assessment and action planning involve people in the change process, start them thinking about present realities and future possibilities, make it possible to build confidence and trust in the change process, and often motivate change when ideas are stimulated by completing a survey or participating in an interview;
 - By providing a strong incentive for change if assessments are used before, during, and/or after change since the results will show if improvements have been made.
7. To evaluate the success of OD efforts and plan future actions before, during, and after assessments to provide excellent information for evaluating the results of OD efforts. This purpose, of course, favors well-planned and executed OD efforts and exposes those that are not. It should be pointed out that other variables may affect the results and may need to be taken into account in interpreting the results. While post-OD assessments can provide important information for evaluating and learning from OD efforts, they also provide valuable information for planning future actions.

A MODEL FOR ASSESSING ORGANIZATIONS AND PLANNING ACTIONS

A model for assessing organizations and planning actions is presented in Exhibit 10.1 and discussed in more detail later in this chapter. The model can be used for working with whole organizations, groups, or individuals and is intended to provide guidelines rather than rigid steps. The potential impact of this critical part of the OD process is often under-realized because of a lack of understanding of how to plan and guide assessment and action planning activities effectively.

In applying the model, several considerations should be kept in mind:

1. The potential uses of the assessment and action planning processes go far beyond traditional OD literature, and many of these uses may require considerable innovative thinking in how to approach them. For example, while much of the OD literature deals primarily with existing organizations and groups, the processes may be used in forming new organizations, groups, and alliances; in preparing for and integrating merged organizations; and in working on social, political, or international issues or with geographically dispersed or culturally diverse groups.
2. Technology has opened up many new alternatives for assessing organizations, groups, and individuals and for guiding the action planning process. Examples include electronic questionnaires, real-time messaging, conferencing, and action planning without geographical constraints, and others.
3. In assessing organizations and doing action planning, there is always the ideal and the reality with which to deal. Approaches and methods may have to be modified to fit the realities, such as practical, resource, political, or technological considerations. For example, it may be desirable both to survey and interview people, but the leaders are willing only to allow interviewing. A skilled OD practitioner can usually work within the boundaries given, but there may be times when the boundaries will not provide valid results, and the client must be told so.

Every possible effort should be made to make all phases of the OD process, especially the assessment and action planning activities, as clear and simple as possible, and to keep in mind the focus on improving both organization health *and* effectiveness. In a recent survey of the top leaders in the field of OD (see Chapter Six), the most popular OD definition is still Richard Beckhard's (1969, p. 9), which defines the purpose of OD as increasing organizational effectiveness and health. OD efforts sometimes die of their own weight because they have become too complex and time-consuming, and others lose sight of the



Exhibit 10.1. Organization Assessment and Action Planning Guidelines

Organization Assessment

Planning

1. Involve the right people in the project.
2. Clarify the desired goals and outcomes of the assessment.
3. Agree on what and who will be assessed.
4. Choose methods.
5. Determine how to best collect data.
6. Determine how to analyze and report the data.
7. Determine how to feed back and utilize the data.
8. Agree with leaders on the process and how the results will be utilized and coach the leaders on their role in making the assessment successful.
9. Develop planning milestones.

Data Collection

10. Assure that anyone involved in performing the assessment is properly trained.
11. Prepare the organization for the assessment.
12. Perform the assessment.

Data Analysis

13. Develop a strategy for analyzing and presenting the assessment results in a user friendly way.
14. Prepare a simple-to-understand and use presentation of the findings.

Data Feedback

15. Design a feedback strategy for determining who gets what information how and when.
16. Prepare the appropriate people on how to use the results for helpful and not harmful purposes.
17. Decide on when and how to connect the feedback to action planning.
18. Prepare people for how to understand and utilize the data in helpful and positive ways to diffuse anxiety and ensure that the process will be a beneficial and useful one.

Action Planning

Involve Key Stakeholders

1. Involve those who are in the best position to understand and utilize the assessment and lead needed changes.
2. Ensure that someone will lead the change effort and, if needed, develop a change team to plan and manage the change process.

Evaluate and Prioritize Relevant Data

3. Develop a process for evaluating, prioritizing, and making the assessment information manageable and useable.
4. Clarify the focus of change efforts (whole organization, group or intergroup, individual, structural, technological, etc.).
5. Consider the level of desired change (fine-tuning, incremental, or transformational).
6. Focus on present realities and future ideals and possibilities and explore alternatives for achieving greater success.

Agree on the Changes to Be Made

7. Agree on the actions to be taken, recognizing that it is better to do a few things well than many things poorly.
8. Evaluate the change from a systems perspective, considering the implications of the changes and the alignment needed.

Develop a Change Strategy

9. Identify any forces working for or against the desired change.
10. Explore strategy alternatives.
11. Develop a change process based on a sound change model.
12. Develop a process for monitoring and managing the change process.

Clarify Roles and Follow-Through Responsibilities

13. Clarify the roles and follow-through responsibilities of all involved in the change process.
14. Commit to keeping the change process as clear and simple as possible and to improving both the health and effectiveness of the organization.

importance of a health/effectiveness balance in OD strategies and in achieving organization success.

DEVELOPING AN ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLANNING PHILOSOPHY

Significant and sometimes radical changes in the environment in which organizations must compete and changes in the field of OD itself make it important to develop a sound philosophy for assessing organizations and planning actions. Philosophies may run, for example, from a more deficit or problem-centered philosophy (focusing on weaknesses and what is wrong and broken and how to fix the problems) that characterized some of the early OD efforts, to a more positive appreciative inquiry type of philosophy that focuses on stories of best practices and experiences, discovering the life-giving properties present when organizations are performing optimally, to philosophies that incorporate both views. The positive approach has many forms but is rapidly growing in publications and research by appreciative inquiry proponents. The AI perspective is clearly articulated in Chapter Twenty-Two by David Cooperrider, one of the founders of the appreciative inquiry approach.

While it would be difficult to find supporters for the deficit or problem-centered approach to the exclusion of other approaches, a healthy and continuing debate exists about whether a balanced approach that looks at both the positives and negatives is most appropriate or if an appreciative inquiry type of approach should become the exclusive approach of OD practitioners. Some OD practitioners are concerned about a one-size-fits-all strategy, and others have become very strong advocates for the exclusive use of an appreciative inquiry approach. In either case, every OD practitioner needs to become a student of these various philosophies and to develop a sound and defensible assessment and action planning philosophy as it will significantly influence the approach used.

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING ORGANIZATIONS AND WHAT IT TAKES TO BUILD THEM

Underlying any effort to assess organizations and plan actions and strategies that will lead to an organization's success is an understanding of organizations and what makes them successful. In other words, an OD practitioner must know what to look for and what it will take to build a successful organization so that action plans will be driven by the right kinds of information as well as sound principles for building healthy, high-performance organizations capable of succeeding in today's changing times.

Understanding Organizations Before Trying to Change Them

Organizations are much like people. They have beliefs, values, attitudes, habits, and strengths and weaknesses. Like people, they can be very different. Some are exceptionally focused, healthy, productive, vital, innovative, quick to adapt to change, willing to learn and grow, and great places to be. Others are confused, unhealthy, dysfunctional, rigid, slow to learn and grow, resistant to change, and great places to avoid. Some organizations live by simple and straightforward principles and are easy to understand, and some are complex and difficult to understand and are somewhat schizophrenic with multiple and conflicting personalities. Also, like many people in today's fast-moving and unpredictable environment, organizations can go from champ to chump and success to failure in a short time if they don't keep improving and adapting. All of this is said to emphasize the importance of understanding organizations before trying to change and improve them so that the strategies fit the unique characteristics, needs, and circumstances of each organization. Otherwise, strategies are likely to fail or underachieve what is possible.

In trying to understand organizations, it is helpful to have a model or framework that can be used in knowing what to look for. Models can also be used in designing an assessment strategy, developing interview questions and questionnaires, and in organizing and presenting information in a useful and understandable way. Several such models are described below:

1. *The Diagnosing Organization Systems Model* (Cummings & Worley, 2001, p. 88). This is perhaps the most comprehensive of the models for understanding organizations. It is a systems model that looks at Inputs, Design Components (often called Processes in other models), and Outputs at the Organization, Group, and Individual levels. Inputs consist of the things that affect the operation and performance of organizations, groups, and individuals, such as the general environment, market conditions, capital, technology, human talent, organization design, and so forth. Design components describe the processes in organizations that affect the performance of organizations, groups, and individuals. This is the area where OD practitioners focus much of their attention. For example, at the organization level, the focus may be on organization strategy, technology, structure, measurement systems, human resource systems, and culture. At the group level, the focus may be on task structure, goal clarity, team functioning, group norms, and group composition. Cummings and Worley chose Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model (Hackman & Oldham, 1975, pp. 150–170) to describe individual processes, such as task identity (doing a complete job), skill variety (job involves a variety of skills, talents, and activities), autonomy (job provides substantial freedom and

self-discretion), task significance (importance of the job), and feedback about results (quality of feedback on performance).

2. *The Six Box Model* (Weisbord, 1978). Weisbord identified six organizational components that can be used to understand organizations. The components are organizational (1) purposes, (2) structures, (3) relationships, (4) rewards, (5) leadership, and (6) helpful mechanisms. These six components influence and are influenced by the environment in which the organization functions.
3. *The Organization Dynamics Model* (Kotter, 1976). Kotter's model focuses on seven major organizational components to understand organizations. These are (1) key organizational processes, (2) external environment, (3) employees and other tangible assets, (4) formal organizational arrangements, (5) social systems, (6) technology, and (7) dominant coalition (top management).
4. *The Organization Health Model* (Warrick). Most organization models use similar criteria but may have different ways of describing, clustering, and presenting the criteria. The Organization Health Model is a practical model designed to help OD practitioners know what to look for in understanding healthy and unhealthy characteristics in organizations.

Criteria for Building Healthy, High-Performance Organizations

Action plans backed by the knowledge of how to build healthy, high-performance organizations capable of succeeding in today's new organization are sure to have a far greater impact than action plans simply designed to address issues identified in organization assessments. Many efforts have been made to study best-run organizations and to identify what separates these organizations from the rest. For example, it would be good to review the research of Ashkenas, Ulrich, Jick, and Kerr, 1995; Collins, 2001; Collins and Porras, 1994; Freiberg and Freiberg, 1996; Hamel and Prahalad, 1995; Pfeffer, 1994 and 1998; Slater, 2001; and *Fortune* magazine's annual list of America's Most Admired Companies, The Global Most Admired, and The 100 Best Companies to Work for.

While every organization is different, there are many consistent themes in research and in experts' views on successful organizations. For example, the best typically perform far above the industry average and tend to focus on both building a great organization *and* on getting great results, while the rest have a plan for neither or become preoccupied with only one or the other, such as getting great results, while neglecting the other areas. The principles that tend to characterize the best often reflect common sense, which is not so common, and a simplicity to doing things right, which is seldom practiced. However, while it is very important for an OD practitioner to be familiar with the fundamental

principles that tend to characterize successful organizations, it is also important to realize that the application of these principles may differ from organization to organization, that some organizations find unorthodox ways of succeeding, and that unusual circumstances, such as rapid changes in economic or market conditions, or significant events, such as the terrorist acts on the World Trade Center, can derail or cause temporary setbacks to even the best.

Several models are presented to stimulate thinking about what organizations need to do to be successful in these changing times. While these are simple descriptive models, they contain a wealth of information about the fundamentals of organization success.

1. *Built-to-Last Model* (Collins & Porras, 1994). The long-running best-selling book *Built to Last*, by Collins and Porras, provides valuable insights into what long-term top-performing companies, such as GE, Hewlett-Packard, Johnson & Johnson, Marriott, Merck, Nordstrom, and Wal-Mart have done to remain successful.
2. *Good-to-Great Model* (Collins, 2001). Another best selling book, *Good to Great*, by Jim Collins is based on extensive research on eleven companies in a sample of 1,435 that were able to go from getting good results to getting great results and were able to sustain those results for at least fifteen years. The eleven companies attained exceptional results, averaging cumulative stock returns 6.9 times the general market in the fifteen years following their transition from good to great. Some of the companies represented in the study were Circuit City, Fannie Mae, Gillette, Pitney-Bowes, and Walgreens.
3. *The Fundamentals of Building Successful Organizations Model* (Warrick). The principles shown in Exhibit 10.2 were compiled from evaluating the literature on best-run organizations, asking over one thousand executives and MBA students what it takes to build a successful organization, and over thirty years of experience in working with many types and sizes of organizations.

ASSESSING ORGANIZATIONS

Prepared with an understanding of the purpose of the assessment and action planning process, a big-picture model of what the process could look like, a sound philosophy to guide assessment and action planning decisions and methods, and ideas about how to understand organizations and build successful organizations, the OD practitioner is now ready to begin the assessment process. As



Exhibit 10.2. Fundamentals of Building Successful Organizations

1. Lead the Way
 - Good leadership is the major key to success.
 - Top-level leaders have a passion for excellence and are humble, competent, visible, approachable, trustworthy, straightforward, and skilled at providing vision, direction, and inspiration. They walk the talk.
 - Top-level leaders are close to the organization and function like a united, focused, results-oriented top leadership team.
2. Develop a Strategy for Succeeding and Get Everyone Using the Same Play Book
 - The vision, mission, core values, and strategic goals are clear, energizing, and known throughout the organization.
 - The strategy includes a strong emphasis on both people and performance.
 - Everyone knows how he or she can contribute and is empowered to do so.
3. Structure the Organization for Results
 - The right people are in the right places doing the right things.
 - Everything is aligned to support the goals and values.
 - Simple, flat, non-bureaucratic, adaptable, responsive design that is effective, efficient, and results oriented.
 - Processes, systems, technology, and practices make it easy to get things done.
4. Build a High-Performance Culture
 - Values-driven culture that encourages excellence and frees people to be their best.
 - Culture encourages teamwork and being self-directing.
 - Culture values disciplined action and entrepreneurship.
 - Culture encourages being open and straightforward, treating people with respect, and doing what is right.
 - High level of trust.
 - Culture values innovative thinking.
5. Develop Value-Added Managers
 - Managers at all levels are expected to add value, get results, and make things happen.
 - Managers are empowered to get the job done and are expected to do the same with their people.
 - A strong emphasis is placed on the continuous development of the leadership and management skills of present and potential managers.
6. Take Care of Your People
 - Having a committed, motivated, and well-trained workforce is a top priority of the leaders.
 - People at all levels are treated with value.

- Efforts are made to attract, retain, develop, and fully utilize committed and talented people who are a good fit with the organization.
 - Efforts are made to make working conditions and the work environment a plus rather than a minus.
7. Take Care of Your Customers
 - Being customer driven to both internal and external customers is a high priority.
 - Employees from top to bottom are encouraged to know their internal and external customers and their needs.
 - Building good relationships with present and potential customers is valued.
 - The organization has a reputation for treating customers well.
 8. Build Teamwork
 - Teamwork is encouraged and developed at the top, within teams, between teams, and outside the organization with groups key to the success of the organization.
 - There is a one-team mentality with minimal barriers between groups.
 - Involvement and collaboration are a way of life.
 9. Never Stop Learning, Improving, and Building a Great Organization
 - A strong emphasis is placed on continuous learning, improvement, and development at the individual, group, and organization levels.
 - Many opportunities are provided for people to share ideas and make improvements.
 - Complacency and maintaining the status quo are not options.
 10. Keep Score and Get Results
 - Measures of excellence are simple and clear and allow the organization to know where it stands regarding performance, human resource indicators, culture, customers, and other important measures.
 - Decisive decisions are made to make needed adjustments to get the best results without damaging the culture or compromising the core values.

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shown in the model in Exhibit 10.1, there are four major steps in the assessment process. While this chapter is designed to provide an overview of the assessment process, there are many good sources that provide the details. Three excellent sources are David Nadler's (1977) classic, *Feedback and Organization Development: Using Data-Based Methods*, Church and Waclawski's (1998) *Designing and Using Organizational Surveys*, which provides a comprehensive analysis of the positives and negatives of methods using technology such as emails or websites, and Watkins and Mohr (2001), *Appreciative Inquiry*, which addresses assessment from an appreciative inquiry perspective.

Planning the Assessment

A well-planned assessment can provide valuable information that can be used in making organizations, groups, and individuals successful. It can confirm what is being done right and may also uncover blind spots or potential opportunities that, when addressed, result in significant improvements or even a turnaround situation. A poorly planned assessment, however, can demoralize people and cause division. Therefore, it is very important that someone with experience and expertise lead the planning process. This is not the place to try to find the cheapest consultant! The stakes are too high.

The size and scope of the assessment, level of expertise of the person or persons leading the assessment process, and the commitment needed to make the assessment successful will determine who and how many should be involved in the planning process. A known, trusted, and experienced internal or external OD practitioner may be able to plan an assessment with minimal involvement. However, many efforts require considerable involvement in establishing goals, agreeing on what and who will be assessed, choosing methods, deciding on how to collect the data, and fulfilling the other steps in the planning process.

Planning Tips

- It is particularly important in planning the assessment to agree with the appropriate leaders on how the results will be utilized and to coach them on how they can help or harm the assessment process.
- Assessments can become colossal failures if leaders are not committed to doing anything with the results or if they misuse the results. Some leaders have been known to simply file the reports. Others have been known to chastise employees in general or some in particular for the poor results or to make hasty decisions that greatly damage the credibility of the assessment process and may discourage any future assessments.
- A lack of milestones can result in missed deadlines and commitments and undermine the credibility of the assessment. Particularly damaging is the failure to feed the results back and involve people in action planning in a timely manner, which dilutes the value of the data and confidence in the entire OD effort. Fresh data that are delivered and utilized as quickly as possible are far more motivating than stale data that are neither delivered nor utilized in a timely fashion.

Data Collection

Technology has made it possible to collect and analyze data very quickly. However, every situation must be analyzed to determine the most effective and realistic way to collect data. For example, while a wealth of information can be collected and quickly analyzed through questionnaires, people may be more

open in face-to-face interviews and communicate things that cannot be picked up in questionnaires.

The most frequently used methods of data collection are available information (an organization's vision, mission, values, strategic goals, organization charts, turnover rates, and so forth), using questionnaires and interviews (individual and group), and observations. Ideally, both quantitative and qualitative data are preferable. Quantifiable (most quantifiable data are still subjective) data, which typically are collected through questionnaires, make it possible to know the magnitude of an issue. An average of 2.5 on a 7-point scale, with 7 being the highest favorable score, has a far different meaning from a 6.5. However, quantitative data will not always tell you what is behind the numbers. Qualitative data are generally collected through one-on-one or group interviews that make it possible to pick up information and impressions that explore a wide range of issues, including what is behind the issues.

Data Collection Tips

- Making data collection as user friendly and non-time-consuming as possible is important.
- Whenever possible, it is usually important to have a top-level leader or respected professional notify participants in an assessment ahead of time regarding the purpose and importance of the assessment. Some credibility is lost when participants are caught off-guard when assessments suddenly appear.
- If both questionnaires and interviews are used, ideally it is better to collect the data from the questionnaires before doing the interviews so that the interviewers will know ahead of time what to ask and where to probe. In practical terms, this is rarely possible because of the time it takes to collect and analyze data.
- Interviews should consist of core questions that are asked of all so there is consistency in the process and the flexibility to go with the flow.
- With rare exception, anonymous questionnaires will produce far more valid results than those that are not.
- When interviewing is not feasible, well-designed open-ended questionnaires can capture some of the valuable information normally gained from interviewing. However, open-ended questionnaires also make data collection and analysis far more time-consuming for the OD practitioner.
- If open-ended comments are to be used in the reported findings, which is often the case, it is important to note this in the questionnaire, as some people may feel that their confidence has been betrayed. It is also important to decide ahead of time whether to summarize key thoughts from open-ended comments if a large sample size makes the comments

too numerous for people to read it and whether to report comments verbatim or to provide modest editing to eliminate inflammatory comments and capture thoughts in a more constructive way. (I prefer the latter, as I have seen unedited comments cause considerable division and conflict.) The appreciative inquiry approach does have an advantage in this regard, as the information gathered is positive and uplifting.

- Interviewing in a conference room is to be preferred over interviewing in offices, as it takes time to go from office to office, and there are many distractions in offices.
- Never use a tape recorder in interviewing! Tape recorders can be intimidating, and they double the amount of time required of the OD practitioner, as everything must be listened to twice. Most professionals take their own version of abbreviated notes in interviews, although another alternative is to use a laptop computer. However, some people being interviewed may also find this distracting.
- Online questionnaires are less likely to experience contamination from participants sharing ideas about the questions than are printed questionnaires, but they are also likely to get a smaller response rate for a variety of reasons, such as some people not being proficient at computers and others being tired of spending so much time with computers. A good source for online questionnaires is www.zoomerang.com.
- The highest response rates come from the collective approach, where opportunities are offered multiple times during the day for groups of people to complete questionnaires electronically or on paper. However, the individual approach, where respondents can complete questionnaires at their own discretion by a prescribed due date, is less complex and labor intensive to organize and manage and provides greater privacy and more time for respondents to think through their responses.
- Training may be necessary to provide consistency in the collection of data. This is particularly true of the appreciative inquiry approaches because of the uniqueness of how data are collected and analyzed.

Data Analysis

The OD practitioner or practitioners leading an OD process usually compile, analyze, and prepare a report of the assessment results. Technology has made it possible to automate the compilation and analysis part of an assessment, and with large numbers of people being assessed, this is almost a necessity for efficient assessment. The data go in and a report comes out, complete with attractive charts and graphs. However, no matter how dazzling the technology and

resulting report may be, of much greater importance—regardless of how the data are analyzed and presented—is that the analysis should provide valid and useful information and that the information should be presented in a way that is brief and easy to follow and utilize. Some question whether this can be done solely by machine or without an experienced expert or experts doing the analysis. Nevertheless, the point is that this part of the assessment and action planning process is extremely important, and a poor analysis or presentation of the results will lead to a low use and/or misuse of the assessment.

Data Analysis Tips

- A good analysis should involve both deductive and inductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning from an OD perspective comes from evaluating and making conclusions about data based on general theories and models. This requires OD practitioners to be knowledgeable about OD and what makes organizations successful. Inductive reasoning comes from evaluating data based on what emerges from the data itself and using one's experience in working with organizations to interpret the data.
- Multiple sources of data, such as data from questionnaires and interviews, make it possible to cross-validate data. In other words, look for data that support one another.
- Experienced OD practitioners analyzing data not only look for trends and patterns rather than isolated data that show no consistency with other data but also have the experience to know when someone sees something important that others do not see.
- A seasoned person analyzing data will know when some information is best shared personally or left out of formal reports where the information could be inflammatory rather than helpful.
- If sophisticated statistical methods are used in the analysis, good judgment determines how much the statistics are used by the analyst and how much are used in reporting the results that may confuse the recipients.
- The main body of reports should be kept brief and arranged so that the major findings are summarized, easy to understand, and can be used for action planning. For example, a report could begin with a summary of important assessment demographics, the major numerical results, the highest and lowest rated items, and a summary of major strengths and opportunities for improvement based on an analysis of all sources of data. This could then be followed by the actual results and open-ended comments for each question in appendices.

Data Feedback

If and how data are fed back can have a significant impact on the success or failure of OD efforts. For example, leaders may not like what they see or have little interest in feeding the data back and therefore forego the feedback process altogether, or may delay the feedback so long that the data lose their relevance or motivating potential. When any of these events happens, there will be a loss of credibility and trust in the OD process *and the leaders*, which may discourage people regarding future change efforts. On the other hand, feedback properly handled can energize people, create momentum for change, and ensure that organization members trust and own the data.

The feedback process must be designed for each unique situation, but typically includes some version of the following steps:

1. A strategy is developed by the OD practitioner in collaboration with the appropriate people about who gets what information, how, and when.
2. If appropriate, training is provided for those leading feedback sessions so that there will be consistency in philosophy, methods, and outcomes in each session.
3. The top-level leader involved will usually be briefed on the findings and coached on behaviors that tend to help or hinder the feedback process and what the feedback process consists of.
4. The feedback then is usually presented to the primary group it is intended for or cascaded down the organization, starting with top management. Each group receives the information that is appropriate for it to see and respond to. There are exceptions where a “bottom-up” approach is used, with recommendations eventually formulated to present to top management.
5. While some feedback sessions at this point are designed simply to brief people on the results, most follow a presentation of the results with some phase of the action-planning process. For example, a group may be used to evaluate, validate, and prioritize data and brainstorm alternatives and then pass this on to an action planning group, or they may serve as the action planning group and develop specific actions.

Data Feedback Tips

- Data feedback should be a positive and helpful experience and not a negative and harmful experience. Early OD efforts often focused predominantly on what was wrong and how to fix it, took somewhat of a confrontational, in-your-face approach, and took great pride in doing so. Being confrontational, getting people to “spill their guts,” and involving

people in all kinds of experiential learning became the badge of courage for some OD practitioners. These approaches gave OD a reputation in many circles for being a “touchy-feely,” confrontational approach led by emperors without clothes, who were so engaged in their own approaches that they did not realize how they, their approaches, and the field of OD were being perceived by many. However, contemporary OD focuses more on understanding present realities and future ideals and how to reach the ideal step by step. It is a much more positive and energizing approach and recognizes that there are helpful, not just potentially harmful and undiplomatic, ways to deal with reality and tell the truth. There is also, of course, the appreciative inquiry approach, which focuses entirely on the positive.

- Prior experience or training is, of course, important for all involved in the feedback process. However, it is also important to provide at least a brief amount of training at the beginning of feedback sessions to relieve anxiety about the findings and how they will be used, to assure people that the process is intended to be used for helpful and not harmful purposes, and to understand how to interpret and best utilize the information. For example, it may be helpful to point out that it is important to look for patterns and trends rather than some isolated finding.
- Those who want to undermine OD efforts can do so quite skillfully by trying to discredit some aspect of the assessment process. They know someone who did not understand how to complete the questionnaire and others who were too intimidated to be truthful, and they can name many variables that influenced the results or may challenge the statistical or sample methods used. This can be overcome by telling participants in feedback sessions that the data are a starting point for them to decide what is important. This minimizes criticisms and the need to justify every detail of the assessment process.
- It is important for people to have feedback on the whole organization and to have opportunities to contribute to increasing the success of an organization. However, feedback becomes much more meaningful when the data can be broken down to pertain directly to groups involved so that they can contribute and take ownership for things that directly affect them and that they can directly influence.
- While quantitative and qualitative data are both important and each has its advantages and disadvantages, quantitative data have an advantage in motivating change. Executives know how to relate to numbers and are less likely to dismiss such information. For example, when they see that morale received a 2.3 rating on a 7-point scale, it is more likely to get their attention and motivate change than learning that interviews

revealed a morale problem. The most powerful motivator is quantitative data that is supported by qualitative data.

- Whenever possible, it is helpful to have a knowledgeable person in the organization review feedback reports before distributing them or sharing the results. Minor errors, such as wrong names for groups or misspelled words or numerical errors, can raise doubts about the accuracy of the results.

Assessment Methods

One of the many interesting aspects of assessing organizations is that a variety of methods can be used to find out what is going on and what is possible. Each method has advantages and disadvantages. For example, interviews and questionnaires are the most frequently used methods, but both have advantages and disadvantages. Interviews make it possible to collect a wide variety of data, find out what is behind issues, and see and dialogue with respondents, but may suffer from interviewer bias. However, they also can be time-consuming and expensive if a consultant is used and large numbers of people are interviewed. Questionnaires make data quantifiable, but may suffer from respondent bias and are not likely to reveal what is behind the numbers. A summary of the major advantages and disadvantages of various assessment methods is shown in Exhibit 10.3, and a brief discussion of the methods follows.

Exhibit 10.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Organization Assessment Methods

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
<i>Examining Existing Data</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past and present published information • Brochures • Vision, mission, values, goals statements • Organization charts • Available data on profits, sales, turnover, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information already exists • Generally easy to access • Quickly familiarizes the person doing the assessment with the organization • Efficient and inexpensive • Relatively objective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reality between what is stated and what is may differ • Some existing information may be difficult to access • Gives only a surface view of the organization

Method***Interviews***

- Structured (specific questions designed to elicit specific responses)
- Non-structured (open-ended questions)
- Individual
- Group
- Face-to-face
- Phone or electronic

Questionnaires

- Used to gather data on whole organizations, groups, or individuals, or a specific focus
- Quantifiable
- Open-ended questions

Advantages

- Makes it possible to collect rich, valuable, in-depth information
- Can be used for a wide range of assessment purposes
- Makes it possible to probe and elaborate on information and pursue new lines of questioning
- Can build empathy, trust, support for OD efforts

- Make it possible to quantify and objectively analyze results
- Can survey and involve large numbers of people
- Numbers and a sense of magnitude can be strong motivators for change
- Relatively inexpensive
- Can seed the organization for change
- Can compare before and after results

Disadvantages

- Can be time-consuming and expensive if large number of respondents involved
- Subject to interviewer bias and influence
- Interpreting and summarizing information from interviews can be difficult
- May not give a sense of magnitude or importance of information collected
- Risks inconsistencies in interviewing style and interpretation of the results if more than one interviewer involved

- Misses qualitative data especially if open-ended questions not included
- May not reveal what is behind the numbers
- Lacks the flexibility of interviews
- Subject to respondent bias, especially if respondents lack knowledge pertaining to some questions
- Interpreting and summarizing data may require a high level of expertise

Exhibit 10.3. *Continued*

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
Observations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal (specific things to observe and information to collect) • Informal (observing, talking, attending meetings, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization behavior, processes, and systems can be observed first-hand • Can obtain a better feel for the culture of the organization or group • Real-time data • Flexibility in terms of what is observed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not always easy to arrange and can be distracting to those being observed • Possible observer bias in interpreting what is observed • Can be expensive and time-consuming for the value received • May be difficult to analyze what is observed
Live Assessments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collected and analyzed live at meetings and workshops • Data collected and analyzed in real time electronically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interesting, engaging, real time, and provides fast turnaround and use of information • With skilled facilitator can be used with large groups of people • Quickly involves people and builds commitment to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May miss valuable information that comes from a variety of sources over time • Dependent on having key people present or commitment may be lost • Somewhat risky in the event that unforeseen things can happen that undermine the process

Examining Existing Information. This part of the assessment begins when an OD practitioner first gets involved and starts learning about an organization. It serves as a first step in the assessment process, even though it often precedes a formal assessment. It could include, for example, studying past and present information available on the organization, including information published by or about an organization, such as an organization's history; reputation; past and present success; and brochures or publications that may describe the organization's vision, mission, core values, strategic goals, organization chart, and products and services. It could include information on turnover rates, absenteeism, or even prior assessments. The goal of this search for information is to become a knowledgeable student of the organization.

Interviews. Interviewing is a most interesting and important part of OD. A skilled interviewer could go into most organizations, spend a day talking to key people, and probably have a reasonably good idea of the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and have some preliminary ideas about what it would take to move the organization to a higher level. According to Cummings and Worley (2001, p. 116), interviews are the most widely used method for collecting data in OD. Interviewing offers many advantages for collecting information because of the ability to see people face-to-face, probe for clarification and possible alternatives, and build personal credibility and trust. However, it can also be time-consuming and expensive.

Interviews can be classified as structured or non-structured, individual or group, and face-to-face or non-face-to-face. Structured interviews contain prepared questions asked in a particular order that are designed to elicit responses in specific areas. Unstructured interviews consist of open-ended questions followed by probing based on what the respondent says. Most OD practitioners use a blend of the two, with prepared questions designed to cover a number of specific areas and the flexibility to go with the flow as the interview unfolds. Interviews can also be done with individuals or groups or a combination of both. Respondents are likely to be more open in individual interviews, but group interviews, of course, make it possible to reach and involve far more people. While most interviews are done face-to-face, when this is not possible, there are still other options, such as telephone, teleconference, videoconference, or synchronous (or even asynchronous) chats on the Internet. Exhibit 10.4 offers some guidelines on conducting interviews, and Exhibit 10.5 provides a list of possible interview questions.

Questionnaires. Questionnaires can be used to understand whole organizations and groups, as well as provide valuable information in forming organizations and groups. They can also be used to address specific areas, such as organization structure, culture, and communications, the leadership or interpersonal skills of leaders, and how people are dealing with intercultural issues, or for evaluating what the driving issues are, such as a lack of teamwork and cooperation between groups. Ideally, questionnaires should be easy to understand; brief enough to motivate people to complete them, yet comprehensive enough to solicit valuable information; and based on a theory or model that makes it possible easily to understand and utilize the results.

Observations. Data can also be collected by observing organizational dynamics. This can be done in a formal way with specific things to observe or information to collect, such as observing a top management meeting and evaluating roles, relationships, and group dynamics, or informally by walking around or spending time with individuals and groups.

Exhibit 10.4. Interviewing Guidelines

1. Provide a comfortable and private place where there will be no interruptions. There should be few barriers such as a desk between you and the interviewee.
2. Introduce yourself and ask for the name, department, and job of the interviewee. You may also want to know the name of the interviewee's immediate supervisor. Briefly describe the purpose of the interview. Point out that you are looking for trends and will not report any information that would identify the source without permission from the interviewee. Ask for permission to take notes. Interviewing provides a good opportunity for you to personally build credibility and to promote the program you are involved in.
3. Try to be as natural, warm, and as friendly as possible and do not over-react to what is said. Over-reactions will stimulate or hamper continued discussion on a subject. An alert body posture and good eye contact are important.
4. You should be aware that the questions you ask and comments you make are likely to be reported to others after each interview.
5. If a survey is also being used, it is best to administer the survey first so the results can be used in developing questions for the interview. It is also helpful to use questions that will serve as a crosscheck with the survey and reveal the subjective data behind the numbers.
6. Take notes so you can remember what was said. Skip quickly over unimportant items. Your objective is to (1) identify major strengths and opportunities for improvement; (2) solicit supporting information; and (3) ask for possible solutions to opportunities for improvement. Learn to take notes without losing eye contact with the interviewee.
7. Make sure that you encourage the interviewee to talk about strengths and creative ideas. Dwelling primarily on weaknesses is likely to produce guilt and discouragement.
8. Objectivity is extremely important! You must record what is being said—not what you were primed by others to believe ahead of time or what you want to hear. Check out your perceptions thoroughly if you have any doubts about what is being said.
9. You can end an interview at any time by asking, "Is there anything else that you think I should know?" Don't prolong an interview when a person has little to say. When you finish, thank the interviewee for his or her time.
10. Summarize the interview at the conclusion of the day according to the following format: (1) major strengths; (2) major issues along with their supporting facts and possible solutions; and (3) miscellaneous information.



Exhibit 10.5. Sample Interview Questions

1. What words or phrases would you use to best describe your organization at this time?
2. If you were to rate how successful your organization is at this time on a 10-point scale with 10 high and 1 low, what number would you choose?
3. If you were to rate morale on a 10-point scale, what number would you choose?
4. On a 10-point scale, rate your organization as a place to work. How well does your organization treat employees? How would you describe the working conditions such as pay, fringe benefits, facilities, and the things you need to do your job well? What words or phrases would you use to describe the culture or work environment here?
5. Describe your leader and how well-regarded he/she is in your organization. How would you describe his/her management style? What are his/her major strengths and weaknesses? What could he/she do to be more effective? If important, do the same for other senior leaders.
6. How clear are the vision, mission, values, and goals of your organization?
7. In your opinion what are the major strengths of your organization? What are the major weaknesses or opportunities for improvement? What are the major concerns you have or hear other employees talking about?
8. What is going well in your organization? What is not going well or could be improved?
9. If you could only choose three things your organization could or should do to become more effective or successful, what would they be?
10. Now do some creative, bold, breakthrough thinking and list a few additional things your organization could do to go from good to great or become a one-of-a-kind organization.
11. Is your organization structured for results with the right organization design and the right people in the right places?
12. What does your organization do to provide training and professional development for leaders and employees?
13. How client-centered and service-oriented is your organization? What would your clients likely say about your organization?
14. What words or phrases would you use to describe the culture or work environment here?
15. How effective is your organization at communicating with employees, keeping them informed, and encouraging open communications?
16. How good is the organization at teamwork at the top, within teams, and between teams?



 Exhibit 10.5. *Continued*

17. What are some of the major frustrations or obstacles you face in getting things done?
 18. How are changes typically made in your organization?
 19. What kinds of behaviors are rewarded and are discouraged in your organization?
 20. Does your organization do a good job of providing training and professional development opportunities?
 21. If you were to rate how free you feel to be open on a 10-point scale with 10 representing very open and 1 very guarded, what number would you choose?
 22. What does your organization do to encourage innovative thinking, new ideas, and improvements?
 23. How does a person get ahead in your organization?
 24. What does the organization do to value, recognize, and reward people for their contributions?
 25. What are some of the major motivators and de-motivators in your organization? What would motivate you more?
 26. What do you consider to be the major issues facing the future of your organization?
 27. Is there anything else you would like to comment on?
-

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Live Assessments. A high interest and fast way to collect data is to do so live in workshops or meetings, or even electronically by linking tele- or audio-conferencing with the technology to collect and tabulate data, and to make decisions instantly, even though the participants may be dispersed worldwide. This method is particularly used in large-group meetings where data are collected, fed back, organized, and used for decision making and action planning. Many of these types of meetings, such as The Search Conference, Future Search, and Real Time Strategic Change are described in Bunker and Alban (1997) and in Holman and Devane (1999).

A method that I developed that is simple to use and often causes significant shifts in thinking and motivation to change is shown in Exhibit 10.6. I first pass out and briefly discuss the Culture Model shown in the exhibit, which bases culture on the emphasis the group being evaluated (whole organization, team, etc.) places on performance and people. Then I have the participants take a 3 by 5 card and write the first letter of the culture that is most characteristic of the target group (A for autocratic, L for laissez faire, P for paternalistic, and H for high performance). The cards are collected and given to someone to sort and compute the number and percentage in each group. This takes about five minutes. The results are then reported and discussed. I have seen this simple

process literally shock leaders into action after discovering that 80 percent of the participants identified the dominant culture as autocratic. This in fact occurred in an organization that was rated one of the top 200 places to work by *Fortune* magazine.

Brief questionnaires can also be administered and tabulated live, either electronically or by hand. For example, have each team member complete a questionnaire on how the team is functioning, shuffle the questionnaires so that each team member receives a questionnaire at random (or produce the results electronically, if the technology is available), and have team members read off the results for each item and then discuss the findings.

ORGANIZATION ACTION PLANNING

Action planning in OD is the collaborative process of systematically planning a change effort using sound strategies, change models, and change principles. When done effectively, it can energize and mobilize people, and significantly improve the impact of a change or improvement and accelerate the time needed to accomplish the desired actions. When done ineffectively, action plans will generate little commitment and have a low probability of being implemented and may, in fact, create unintended negative side effects.

Understanding Action Planning

Even though action planning is an integral part of any OD effort, surprisingly little has been written about the details of action planning. Action planning first appeared in the pre-OD days of Kurt Lewin in his action research concept. The process, which is basically a process for gathering data, organizing and feeding data back, and using the data to explore ways to improve, is described in detail in Chapter Two.

Beckhard and Harris (1977, p. 28) offer one of the most detailed descriptions of action planning. They describe it as a process of developing strategies and action plans to manage the transition between present and future states. They list four steps in the action planning process:

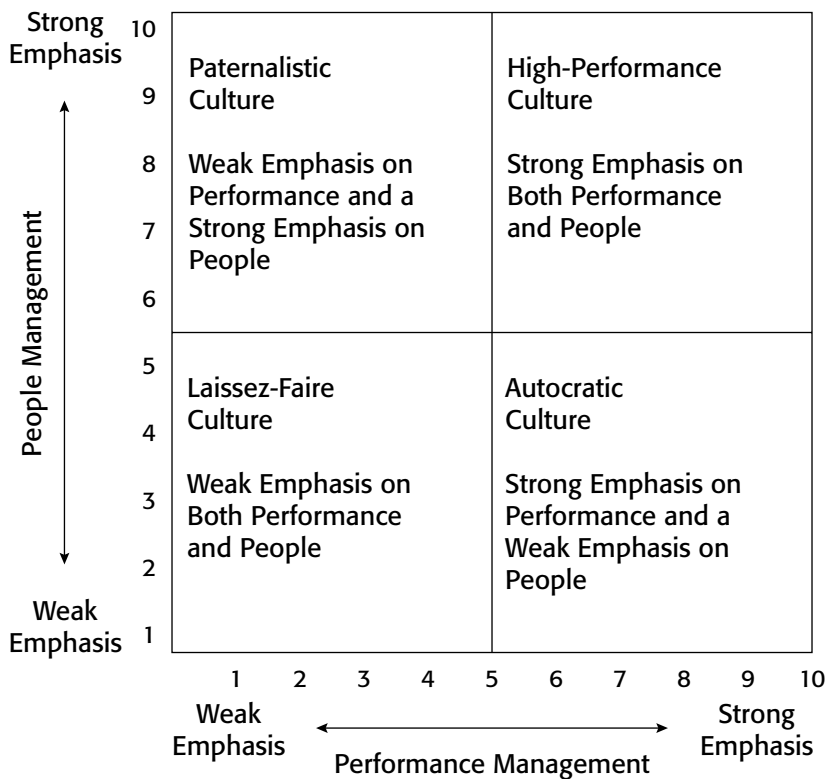
1. Determine the client's degree of choice about change (How much control do clients have in deciding whether to change and how to change?).
2. Determine what needs to be changed.
3. Determine where to intervene.
4. Choose intervention technologies.



Exhibit 10.6. Culture Assessment

Instructions

The model below portrays four organization cultures based on the emphasis an organization places on performance and people. The term "organization" can be used to describe the group being evaluated, such as a whole organization or team. An organization's culture is made up of the beliefs, values, practices, and "feel" of the organization. Research indicates that organization culture has a significant influence on the performance and behavior of people. Most organizations have a *dominant culture* (the most pervasive culture) and numerous *subcultures* (cultures that differ from the dominant culture). Study the model and descriptions below and check the culture that best represents the dominant culture of the whole organization or group you are evaluating. You can use the numbers to plot which culture is most representative if you choose. Then take a 3 by 5 card and print in a large letter the first letter of the culture you checked (A, L, P, or H). Have someone collect the cards and report how many are in each culture and the percentage of each.



1. **AUTOCRATIC CULTURE.** The organization places a strong emphasis on performance and a weak emphasis on people. The leaders are preoccupied with performance and push for greater and greater results while showing little regard for the concerns or needs of people. Decisions are made primarily at the top and employees do not feel empowered, valued, or free to communicate openly and be innovative without possible consequences.
2. **LAISSEZ FAIRE CULTURE.** The organization places a weak emphasis on performance and people. The leaders rarely lead, the goals of the organization are unclear, and minimal direction, guidance, and accountability are provided. There is little pressure for results, coordination, or cooperation, and people work with considerable freedom but little purpose and eventually become frustrated with the lack of results or direction.
3. **PATERNALISTIC CULTURE.** The organization places a weak emphasis on performance and a strong emphasis on people. The leaders go out of their way to keep people happy and involve people but do little to push for results, hold people accountable, or address people issues. Problems are smoothed over to avoid possible conflict and the permissive environment results in some people taking advantage of the organization with few if any consequences.
4. **HIGH-PERFORMANCE CULTURE.** The organization places a strong emphasis on performance and people. The leaders expect a high level of results but also genuinely care about the people and look for ways to fully utilize, empower, and develop the potential of their people. The work environment has a good balance between being very goal- and results-oriented and being a friendly and fun place to work, where communication is open, innovation is encouraged, and teamwork and cooperation are a way of life.

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Beckhard and Harris also provided guidelines for developing an activity or process plan (pp. 51–52). Their seven guidelines for developing a process plan are as follows:

1. The activities should be clearly linked to the goals and priorities of the identified change.
2. The activities should be clearly identified rather than broadly generalized.
3. Discrete activities should be linked.
4. The activities should be time-sequenced.
5. Contingent plans should exist in case unexpected forces develop during the change process.
6. The change plan should be supported by top management.
7. The plan should be cost-effective.

David Nadler (1977, pp. 156–158) listed six characteristics that are important for successful action planning meetings:

1. *Motivation to work with the data.* People must feel that working with the data will lead to positive results.
2. *Assistance in using the data.* Someone, usually an OD practitioner, needs to be familiar with the data and how to interpret and utilize them.
3. *A structure for the meeting.* An agenda, usually planned by an OD practitioner or collaboratively developed with the involvement of an OD practitioner, should provide a useful process for dealing with the data and for planning actions.
4. *Appropriate membership.* The right people should attend the meeting. This could include, for example, those who most need to buy into the action planning process and who can best contribute to planning relevant actions.
5. *Appropriate power.* Membership should also include one or more persons with the power to make needed changes.
6. *Process help.* A skilled facilitator, usually an OD practitioner, is needed to guide the process and observe how the group is working.

The Action Planning Process

The action planning process shown in Exhibit 10.1 includes five steps:

1. Involve key stakeholders.
2. Evaluate and prioritize relevant data.
3. Agree on the changes to be made (actions to be taken).
4. Develop a change strategy.
5. Clarify roles and follow-through responsibilities.

Much of the action planning process is just good common sense. This is true of the entire OD process, just as it is of good leadership and of building a successful organization. However, common sense is not so common and often requires a high level of expertise to discover and implement. In just about every endeavor in life, whether we are talking about OD practitioners, leaders, athletes, musicians, teachers, or parents, those who are highly skilled make what they do seem almost effortless. This is definitely the case with action planning. When done well, it makes sense and has a natural flow to it. However, to do it well requires a clear understanding of at least the five steps presented above.

Involve Key Stakeholders

Stakeholders include people at all levels of an organization and occasionally people outside an organization who are influenced by and/or can influence or contribute to the success of change efforts. When key stakeholders are involved in the action planning process, the plans tend to be sound and realistic, and those involved tend to have a strong commitment to assuring the success of the planned actions. When key stakeholders are not involved, commitment may be lacking from those who can make or break changes, time and planning required to convince key players to support the actions can be excessive, and the plans are often well-intended but faulty because those involved may lack the wisdom and insight of those close to the action. Therefore, the first step in the action planning process is to evaluate who should be involved in various action planning efforts. It is assumed that the OD practitioner guiding the OD effort will facilitate or be involved in the selection process and most action planning efforts.

In deciding who should be involved, consider the following:

- *Givens*: Start with the givens, that is, people who would be expected to be involved.
- *Expertise*: Who possesses the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to successful action planning?
- *Position, power, and influence*: Who has the ability to mobilize necessary resources and make change happen?
- *Track record*: Who has been involved in past successful change efforts?
- *Structure*: Who has responsibility for approving changes and who will be impacted most by the changes?
- *Ideal involvement*: Explore the ideal and plan for the real while compensating as much as possible for gaps.

Either before or after decisions are made on involvement, a *change agent* or *change champion* should be appointed to assure that someone will have responsibility for leading any change effort and, if necessary, appoint a *change team* to assist the change agent or change champion in planning and managing the change process. *Change agent* is another name for an OD practitioner. A *change champion* is a person at any level of the organization who is skilled at championing needed change and who in the action planning process is assigned the responsibility for assuring that planned actions are accomplished. A *change team* is often assembled to assist the leader of a change or improvement effort in planning and managing the change or improvement process. A change team is a team of representative people assigned to work with a change agent or change champion in helping plan and manage the change process and assure that planned actions are accomplished.

In some cases the change agent (OD practitioner) involved will lead the action planning and follow-through efforts, including leading a change team when one is involved. However, in most cases the change agent will facilitate and help guide the action planning and follow-through efforts and coach a change champion who is formally appointed to lead follow-through efforts. The actual names assigned to roles, such as change agent, change champion, and change team, will vary with different organizations depending on the names that best fit the culture of the organization.

Involvement Tips

- Keep involvement strategic and simple. By involving the right people with the right skills and influence at the right time, by carefully planning and facilitating the action planning process, and by working to keep the action planning process simple, plans can be developed and commitment developed rather quickly.
- Over-involvement can be just as damaging as under-involvement. While widespread involvement tends to build commitment and may be possible to achieve quickly in large-scale meetings, not everyone has to be involved in everything to build commitment and get things done. Over-involving people can be time-consuming and costly, sometimes reducing rather than improving the quality of decisions, and can slow down the decision-making and change process.
- As much as possible, always have at least one high-level decision maker involved. Having someone present who can give immediate perspective and can make or pave the way for quick decisions greatly accelerates the decision-making and change processes.
- Whenever possible, connect the feedback and action planning processes. This raises the interest and energy level of those involved and creates a natural flow from feedback to action planning.

Evaluate and Prioritize Relevant Data

It takes a skilled OD practitioner to facilitate action planning meetings where data can be evaluated, prioritized, and turned into action plans. This is true of working with a small group like the top management team and is particularly true in facilitating large-group meetings that may include hundreds or even thousands of people representing many different groups and perspectives. Even highly experienced OD practitioners will have to do some or perhaps a great deal of planning to make an action planning meeting run smoothly. Some of the issues that must be considered in preparing for action planning follow:

- Who will facilitate the meeting or meetings (more than one facilitator may be required)?
- How much time is available in total and how much time will it take for each part of the process?
- Will the meeting include training, data feedback, and action planning or be totally devoted to action planning?
- What kind of a meeting room is necessary and what type of equipment is required?
- What will be done to prepare the participants to understand the big picture of the OD effort and to work effectively together?
- How will the data be presented and what processes or decision-making techniques will be used to evaluate and prioritize the data?
- Is the desired outcome of the action planning meeting to leave with completed plans or to allow a follow-up group to put the finishing touches on the plans?

The data used in action planning may be simplistic or sophisticated, and the process used to evaluate and prioritize data may range from easy-to-use and understand processes to far more complex processes. However, whatever the methodology used, the approach should be tailored to the particular audience and purpose selected. It is also important to clarify the focus of change or improvement efforts (whole organization, group or intergroup, individual, structural, and technological) and to consider the level of desired change (fine-tuning, incremental, and transformational). Once this is done, the evaluation and prioritization processes are likely to follow some variation of (1) discovering present realities, (2) considering future ideals or possibilities, and (3) evaluating and prioritizing alternatives for change.

Evaluation and Prioritization Tips

- Make sure that the process used makes sense to those involved, is easy to follow and execute, and keeps interest in the process at a high level. Impressive methods for analyzing and presenting data can have a temporary “wow” effect but may also lose the group if they are too complex or time-consuming.
- The action planning process can be greatly accelerated by brainstorming ideas and giving the ideas to a smaller follow-up group or a person to synthesize, organize, prioritize, and present the information to the larger group for refinements, rather than trying to involve all participants in everything. On the other hand, there are some issues where it is important to involve all group members in each step of the process.

- Sometimes it is helpful to identify high-impact changes and just-do-it changes. High impact identifies something significant that may take time and effort to accomplish. Just do it identifies something that merely takes a decision and minimal effort to accomplish.

Agree on the Changes to Be Made

The key to choosing actions that will make a difference and have a high probability of being successful is to choose a “few” actions where the need, energy, or incentive to accomplish the action is high and to assure that changes are considered from a systems perspective. This approach usually takes skillful coaching and guidance from the OD practitioner to keep people focused, stress the importance of doing a few things well rather than many things poorly, and to understand the importance of systems thinking.

In regard to choosing a few actions, the action planning process tends to generate an abundance of ideas so the temptation is to over-commit on what can be accomplished. This raises the probability of failure no matter what follow-up process is used. It is important to consider that people are often already over-committed and have difficulty doing what is presently on their plates without adding more. Therefore, be selective in committing people to additional actions.

Systems thinking means considering the big picture implications of actions chosen and the need to assure that current systems (anything in place that would support or undermine the success of a desired change or improvement) that would affect the desired outcome are aligned for support. For example, a change in structure may have significant cultural, interpersonal relations, and group relations implications. In the same way, present systems, such as reward systems, may not be aligned to support the desired change and may need to be adjusted.

Agreement Tips

- If a group gets stuck on agreeing on the changes, it may be helpful to appoint a follow-up group to evaluate the choices and come back with recommendations.
- The process can be accelerated by appointing a leader for each action chosen who is responsible for working out the details of how the action will be accomplished and putting together a team if necessary to help plan and accomplish the desired change or improvement. This spares the group of having to be involved in the details of planning each action to be taken.

Develop a Change Strategy

Developing a change strategy for implementing the desired change is as important as the actual changes because *how* change is accomplished will determine *whether or not* change is accomplished. Even the right changes implemented the wrong way will fail and may have far-reaching consequences for present and future change efforts. *This important part of the action planning process can significantly increase the probability of success, not only of the action planning process but also of the entire OD process.* It cannot be emphasized enough how essential this step is in action planning. It is the part of action planning where OD makes the most unique and strongest contribution, and yet it is also the part that is often left out altogether! In deference to skilled OD practitioners, even if they do not formally include developing a change strategy into their action planning, they are likely to informally incorporate it into action plans based on their knowledge and experience. This is especially true of actions that do not require a full-scale change strategy.

One way to begin developing a change strategy is to do a *force-field analysis*. This is a technique developed from the work of Kurt Lewin that analyzes the forces working for change and the forces working for maintaining the status quo or resisting change (Lewin, 1951). In its simplest form, this involves listing the forces working for and against the desired change and then planning ways to increase the forces for change and reducing the forces against change.

In an example of using force-field analysis, let's say that the desired change is to develop transformational leaders at the top who are skilled at leading, championing change, and transforming organizations. The forces for change could include the support of the CEO, the apparent lack of skills of the top-level leaders in transformational leadership, as indicated by an assessment of the leaders rating themselves and managers rating the leaders, a sense of urgency to transform the organization to make it more competitive, and the availability of an OD practitioner who is skilled in developing transformational leaders. Forces working against change could be that the leaders are overloaded and are reluctant to invest the time and commitment needed to becoming transformational leaders, half of the leaders do not understand transformational leadership or the need for transformational leaders and do not want to change the skills they have spent many years developing, and that the financial resources available to invest in the change are limited. The team doing the action planning would then explore ways to increase the forces working for change, such as encouraging the CEO to become more actively involved in supporting the change. They would also consider ways to decrease the forces working against change, such

as presenting the CEO with the payoffs of finding the resources needed to support the change and doing a better job of educating the leaders on the need for the change and the potential payoffs. It is always more effective to reduce the forces operating against change than to increase the power of the forces supporting change.

The next step is to plan the change. Ideally, you need four things to plan a change:

1. *A change model.* Figure 10.1 shows a change model by the author (see Warrick, 1995, p. 98, for a discussion of the model).
2. *A checklist of the stages of change and steps in the change process in the selected model.* This can be used as a guideline in thinking through and planning the change. Exhibit 10.7 provides an example based on the model shown in Figure 10.1.
3. *A list of change principles to assure that the change plans follow sound change principles.* An example of change principles is shown in Exhibit 10.8.
4. *A planning form that provides a systematic way to plan the change.* You will find an example of a planning form in Exhibit 10.9.

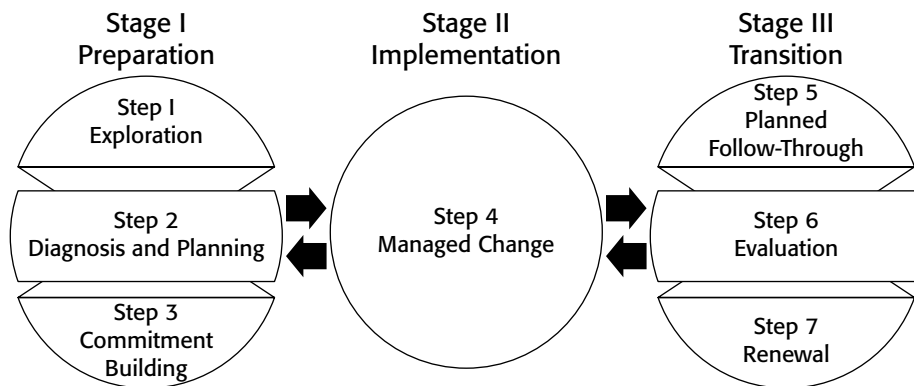


Figure 10.1. The Planned Change Process



Exhibit 10.7. Change Management Checklist

STAGE I—PREPARATION

Exploration

1. Identify a need or opportunity for improvement or change.
2. Involve one or more change champions, change agents, a change team, or some combination of each in a preliminary needs assessment and consideration of alternatives for change.
3. Clearly identify the key stakeholders and explore ways to involve them in planning and managing the change process.
4. Build support and seed the organization for change (develop advocates, share information and ideas, etc.).
5. Contract for change by involving the appropriate people in designing and negotiating a change strategy that provides a clear vision of what has to be done.

Diagnosis and Planning

6. Develop a plan for gathering the necessary data and information needed to clarify present realities and future ideals, and how to achieve the ideals.
7. Implement the diagnosis.
8. Utilize the results of the diagnosis for problem solving, action planning, and modifying the change strategy.

Commitment Building

9. Clarify the roles of the key players in the change process (change leaders, change agents, change champions, and change teams) and involve each as much as would be appropriate in the design and implementation of the change program.
10. Communicate the change vision to the appropriate people who can impact or will be impacted by the changes, educate them on the change process, involve them when appropriate in the change process, and address their concerns and suggestions.

STAGE II—IMPLEMENTATION

Managed Change

11. Educate and train the key players in the paradigms (thinking patterns and models) and skills needed to implement the changes.
 12. Select and implement the appropriate strategies and changes.
 13. Manage resistance to change.
 14. Build in reliable feedback mechanisms to monitor and manage the change process and make necessary adjustments.
 15. Keep people focused on the vision.
-



 Exhibit 10.7. *Continued*

STAGE III—TRANSITION***Planned Follow-Through***

16. Assure that enabling structures are aligned to facilitate and reinforce the desired changes. A team could be appointed to carry out this important task.
17. Assure that the change is accomplished, supported, and sustained.
18. Reinforce, reward, and communicate successes, learn from mistakes or failures, make needed adjustments, keep people informed about program progress, and integrate changes into the culture.

Change Evaluation

19. Conduct a follow-up diagnosis and use the results to evaluate the program, improvements, and opportunities for further improvement and what can be learned from the change process.

Renewal

20. Develop a renewal plan for maintaining the gains, planning future actions and improvements, sharing what has been learned with other parts of the organization, monitoring progress, and being prepared to respond quickly to the need for new directions.
-

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 Exhibit 10.8. Change Management Principles

1. Staying the same or relying on past successes is a formula for complacency and eventual failure.
2. Quick-fix solutions rarely last. Successful change takes time.
3. You must create a compelling reason for change to motivate change!
4. The incentive to change must be greater than the incentive to stay the same. Perceived incentives (positive or negative) must outweigh the reasons and excuses for not changing.
5. The change process (how change is accomplished) is equally as important as the change product (what is targeted for change). Even the right things done the wrong way are not likely to succeed.
6. Always appoint a change agent or change champion, and, where appropriate, a change team to manage the change process and make change happen.
7. The focus of change should be on (1) present realities; (2) future ideals; and (3) how to move step-by-step toward the ideals. Dwelling on the past is energy draining and time wasting. Leave the past behind.

8. All situations are not the same. Change strategies should be tailored to (1) the unique characteristics of the organization and realities of the situation; (2) level of change desired (fine-tuning, incremental, transformational); and (3) the desired end results.
9. Involvement in the change process increases understanding, commitment, and ownership. However, involving the wrong people or involvement over-kill will create resistance to change or take change in the wrong direction.
10. Positive change is more effective than negative change and results-oriented change is more effective than activities-oriented change. You can motivate people more with honey than with vinegar.
11. Go where the energy is. Look for windows of opportunity where there is a felt need or enthusiasm for change.
12. Strike while the iron is hot! Opportunities for change disappear quickly and the momentum for change wanes fast as time elapses.
13. Focus on a few high-impact changes until they are successfully accomplished, and communicate your successes and progress. Success builds confidence and momentum for change. Over-committing builds frustration, resistance, and failure.
14. Think state-of-the-art common sense, simplicity, and balance. The most effective changes are simplified to common sense, rely on trust and judgment rather than impersonal and lifeless procedures, and have the feel of balance.
15. Some resistance to change can be expected. However, continued resistance must be dealt with or the change process will be undermined and the leaders sponsoring the changes will lose credibility.
16. The more that is at stake, the greater the resistance to change and the need to carefully manage the change.
17. Provide people with the skills needed to successfully adapt to change. Significant changes in thinking, acting, and relating are sometimes required for change to succeed.
18. Think alignment. Systems, processes, values, and reward systems must be aligned to motivate and reinforce desired changes.
19. You get what you reward and deserve what you tolerate. People will respond to whatever is measured and rewarded and will continue in inappropriate behaviors that are tolerated.
20. The probability for successful change can be increased by (1) creating a clear and understandable vision of the change and change process; (2) increasing the incentives for change and consequences for not changing; (3) building in accountability for change; (4) valuing and reinforcing efforts to change and a willingness to innovate and experiment; (5) removing obstacles to change; (6) involving the key players early on and those most affected by change; and (7) frequently communicating the vision and progress.



Exhibit 10.9. Change Planning Form

Present Situation and Reasons for Changing:

Desired Change and Who Would Be the Best Person to Champion the Change:

Change Goals: What goals or outcomes would you ideally like to accomplish with the changes?

Reality Check: What forces would be working for and against the desired change?

Forces Working for Change
(advocates, compelling reasons
to change, timing, etc.)

Forces Working Against Change
(opponents, reasons for resistance,
obstacles, etc.)

STAGE I—PREPARATION

What needs to be done to prepare the organization for change, such as building support, assessing reality, educating and training people, planning, etc.?

STAGE II—IMPLEMENTATION

What needs to be done to successfully lead and manage the implementation of the desired changes?

STAGE III—INTEGRATION

What needs to be done to ensure that the changes last and are working successfully, to assure that the organization is aligned to value the changes, and to learn from the change process and share the learnings?

Following the four steps provides a systematic way to plan changes. This process can be quickly learned by change agents, leaders, and others involved in planning changes. In fact, the ideal situation is for an organization to develop its own model, checklist, principles, and planning form that can be used throughout the organization and make the change planning process a way of life. *It of course should be understood that change is seldom linear and simple, so adjustments will have to be made in any change plan as conditions change. However, having a sound plan is a far better option than approaching change without one.*

A last step in developing a change strategy is to make plans for monitoring and managing the change process. This, too, is an important step in action planning that is often left out. Here is why it is so important. It is estimated in various studies that 70 percent or more of organization change fails. This occurs primarily because those initiating and guiding changes are rarely trained and skilled in leading and managing change. Thus, changes that could have been highly successful with the proper planning and guidance are derailed somewhere in the change process. To make matters worse, those leading the change are often the last to know that there is a derailment because there are no built-in feedback mechanisms for monitoring and managing the change process. This can result in change issues that could have been easily resolved often going undetected for months—and sometimes even years—until a major blow-up occurs. This is particularly the case when changes are initiated by a CEO or top-level manager who may be out of touch with the realities of the organization, and when those affected by the change are experiencing the consequences of a change gone wrong but who have no way of making this important information known.

These issues can all be managed by having a skilled OD practitioner involved in the planning and implementation of changes and by building in useful feedback mechanisms for monitoring and managing the change process. Feedback mechanisms could include, for example:

- Periodic surveys or individual or focus group interviews or feedback sessions;
- Key people appointed and given the responsibility for monitoring changes;
- Involving people affected by change on change teams responsible for managing changes;
- Involving leaders more closely in the change process so they know first-hand what is working and what is not working;

Tips for Developing a Change Strategy

- Encouraging an organization to have an OD practitioner help them develop their own change model, principles, and process provides an opportunity to build commitment to the importance of planning changes around a sound change strategy and for institutionalizing using it by the change model, principles, and process as a guide in planning all significant changes.
- Leaders and change champions throughout the organization should be trained on the importance of developing a change strategy and on how to plan changes.
- OD practitioners may be reluctant to build periodic progress checks into OD efforts because of the added costs that may be involved. However, educating those sponsoring OD efforts on the importance of this step will usually result in funding any extra costs.

Clarify Roles and Follow-Through Responsibilities

The final step in the action planning process is to assure that follow-through roles and responsibilities are clear. Exhibit 10.10 shows the typical roles that must be covered in change efforts. It is important to keep in mind that—depending on the scale of the change and the training and skills of available resources—one or more persons may play multiple roles and not all roles are needed for all changes. In fact, the roles required and the persons fulfilling the roles may change throughout a change effort. It is also important to keep in mind that, while this step can be done quickly when the roles and actions to be taken are clear, it may also require a dedicated effort over the course of several sessions when the roles are not clear, and efforts must be made to persuade people of the importance of their roles and coach or train them to be successful in their roles.

In evaluating the roles that need to be filled, consider that a *change agent* (OD practitioner) should be engaged in action planning when a specialist is needed to guide the change effort or to serve in an advisory capacity. Change agents can be internal or external to the organization or a combination of both. A *change leader* is a person in a leadership position whose involvement and support are important in achieving the desired change. A *change champion*, as mentioned previously, is an internal person who is responsible for championing the change effort and who works with a change agent or has enough training or natural skills to lead a change effort. When a leader also assumes the role of change champion, the change effort is greatly accelerated. A *change team*, as you may recall, consists of the appropriate combination of change agents, change champions, change leaders, and key stakeholders who are responsible for planning, managing, and championing the change effort. Some members may be regular attendees at change team meetings and others, such as leaders or change agents, may be involved when needed. A *change supporter* is a person who supports a change effort by being as involved as needed and by

Exhibit 10.10. Roles in Successfully Managing Change

Change Agent: A person who is a specialist in managing change and developing high-performance organizations, teams, and individuals.

Change Leader: A person in a leadership position who can significantly influence the success or failure of a change effort and provide the support and the leadership necessary for change to succeed.

Change Champion: A person who initiates and champions needed changes. An organization needs to develop change champions at all levels of the organization. However, it is particularly important to have change champions at the top.

Change Team: A team that is responsible for planning, managing, monitoring, and championing a change effort.

Change Supporter: A person who supports needed changes in attitude and actions, offers valuable assistance in accomplishing change, and encourages the change agents, leaders, and change champions.

Note: The same person may play multiple roles in some situations, several people may occupy a role, and while at least one Change Champion is always needed, Change Agents may or may not be needed depending on the nature of the change.

encouraging the front-line players in change efforts. What roles are needed and what they are called depends on the needs and culture of the organization. However, whoever is involved in leading the change effort must ensure that the roles that are needed are adequately covered and that a good balance is achieved between too much and too little involvement and too much and too little delegation when considering those who have roles. It is also important to keep the change process and involvement as streamlined and results-oriented as possible, while avoiding any tendencies to create a change bureaucracy that impedes rather than facilitates change.

THE HIGH IMPACT OF ORGANIZATION ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLANNING

I hope that by now it is apparent how important the potential impact is that organization assessment and action planning can have on the OD process. Skills in these two important areas of OD would have to rank near the top in importance of skills that OD practitioners should have. Clearly, this is an area where OD makes a unique contribution. It is also an area that can be invaluable to the success of organizations, groups, and individuals, as knowing reality and what is possible make it possible to change and to know what must be changed, and developing action plans based on sound OD change models and principles makes it possible to achieve a high degree of success in making needed changes.

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Implementation and Continuing the Change Effort

W. Warner Burke

The word *implement* has two definitions—the noun, meaning an instrument, tool, or utensil, and the verb, meaning to enact, execute, or to make happen. Both meanings are applicable in an intervention. An intervention in an organization—for example, changing the organization’s structure, its hierarchy, and who makes which decisions for what purpose(s) and how—is an instrument or tool that will enact and accomplish a state or goal—or to use another example, an intervention to flatten the organization’s hierarchy and chain of command so that decision making will be more decentralized. Thus, implementation is typically a group or series of interventions in the “workings” of an organization, its operations, its processes, and its ways of doing things so that the system will *move* toward a particular change goal.

In a sense the implementation phase is the core of an organization change effort. It is the movement and *transition* to another state of being and operation. It is what Beckhard and Harris (1987) referred to as the *transition state*—that is, between the present and future states.

To call the implementation phase the core of organization change suggests that this aspect of the change effort has a very high importance. This phase is the hard work of change. The launch phase prior to full implementation often generates excitement about the change effort. During the launch phase, organization members will frequently say something like, “Finally, we’re going to change this backward place. It’s about time!” Or another person might ask, “Wow, do you think they (senior management) really mean it this time?” A

skeptical question to be sure, but one often associated with a sense of anticipation and hope nevertheless.

With the implementation phase and the hard work of putting into place the key activities that are intended to change the way things are done, reality sets in. This reality means raising critical questions, such as choosing the *right* interventions—team building, training, coaching with, say, 360-degree feedback, modifying the reward system. Let us say, for example, that in a particular organization change effort a primary goal is to increase the degree of teamwork significantly—to flatten the hierarchy and rely much more on self-directed groups. Then, at least two interventions will be used, a structural change and a move toward much more group activity. These interventions may indeed be appropriate, but if not coupled with another intervention, they are not likely to be effective in the long run. The additional intervention should be a change in the reward system to de-emphasize, at least to some degree, individualized rewards and emphasize strong rewards based on team performance.

In addition to determining and executing the *right* interventions for implementing the intended change, two other significant consequences of implementing change must be addressed—resistance and unanticipated consequences.

DEALING WITH RESISTANCE

The frequent lament of change agents is their having to deal with people in the organization who are resistant to the change effort. But there is a reaction to change that is *worse* than resistance, and that is *apathy*. It is very difficult to try to convince people who fundamentally and simply do not care one way or the other that change is necessary. But how do you “manage apathy”? There is nothing to manage. At least with resistance there is energy. At least those who are resistant care about something. Moreover, people who resist change in organizations are not likely to be resisting the change itself. Resistance is more apt to be a reaction to a sense of loss and/or a feeling of having little or no choice.

Resistance as a Sense of Loss

Resistance often stems from believing that with the change, organizational members will lose something of value to them personally and in general. Especially at the outset of change, they lose the known and tried as they move into the unknown and untried. Moving to a new job as a result of an organization’s change is an example of this sense of loss.

Another form of loss is the feeling of having little if any choice, that the change is being imposed. While it may not be universal, people’s resistance to imposition comes close to it. In fact, psychologist J.W. Brehm (1966) constructed a widely accepted theory based on this phenomenon of resistance, which is

known as “psychological reactance.” The point is that, when people feel as if their freedom is being taken away, their immediate reaction is an attempt to regain that freedom. This reaction can take extreme forms, such as when a smoker is told he *must* stop smoking. Research has shown that, when this occurs, the smoker will either continue to smoke as usual or just as likely increase the rate of smoking (Brehm, 1966). As has been stated before:

“The degree of ease and success with which an organization change is introduced is therefore directly proportional to the amount of choice that people feel they have in determining and implementing the change.” (Burke, 2002, p. 93)

Types of Resistance

Not all kinds of resistance to change are the same. For the change agent, it is important to discern the differences; otherwise, inappropriate action may be taken in dealing with the resistance. The distinctions provided by Hambrick and Cannella (1989) are useful in this regard. They distinguish among three forms of resistance—blind, ideological, and political.

With respect to *blind* resistance, there are a few people who simply have a knee-jerk reaction to change, regardless of what it may be. With these organizational members, it is best to reassure them and to let time pass without putting pressure on them to “get on board.” Often these people simply need time to get used to the idea.

It is entirely possible, if not probable, that intellectually honest people can disagree about organization change, which is an *ideological* difference. Some may genuinely believe that the proposed change is ill-timed, will simply not work, and/or will cause more damage than improvement. The change agent’s strategy here is to gather more data, more facts to bolster the case for change, and to attempt once again to persuade those in this category of resistance. Intellectually honest people can be influenced, but they must be convinced. Building one’s case with further documentation and sound reasoning can help.

With respect to the third form of resistance, which is *political*, the strategy for coping is different. Political resistance means that certain organizational members may feel that with the change they will lose something of value to them personally, such as one’s power base, position, and role in the organization, status, size of budget, corner office, even personal compensation. In these instances, the change agent becomes a negotiator, that is, trading something of value for a different value: for example, giving up one’s corner office, size of budget, and present status for a new job that has lower status currently but based on projected performance would lead to a position of even greater power and status in the organization within a couple of years, if not sooner. So the change agent’s argument is one of short term versus long term in the trade for one set of valued benefits for another set.

These forms of resistance occur mainly at the individual level in the organization. At the group level, resistance can take the forms of (a) “turf protection”—pushing hard to keep one’s unit and organizational territory intact; (b) closing ranks—establishing a common enemy (perhaps the change agent) and attempting to keep their part of the organization as is; (c) changing allegiance and/or ownership—opting to become a separate entity within a sister organization—for example, a joint venture, or a “spin off” by an LBO (leveraged buy out); or (d) demanding new leadership, a common reaction, in the hope that the new leader will save them from this organization change mess.

And, finally, at the larger system level, the forms of resistance may include (1) lethargic responses (what was to be a revolutionary change becomes an evolutionary change, if there is a real change at all); (2) the case where many people feel no sense of urgency about the change (“We’re doing fine! What’s the rush?”); (3) a wait-and-see attitude (“This too shall pass. We will simply wait them out. Besides, another CEO will come along soon.”); (4) diversionary tactics; for example, the change is not the real work (“We need to get back to work.”) or the argument that the timing for this change is absolutely wrong; or (5) simply not following planned change. After all, without “follower-ship” there is no leadership. Here the point is that, without leadership, the intended change simply will not be realized.

These different forms of resistance at the individual, group, and larger system levels are not mutually exclusive; they overlap. In any case, they represent some of the most prevalent ways of resisting organization change. For more detail on these forms of resistance, see Burke (2002), and for a list of thirty-three hypotheses as to why organizational members may resist change, see O’Toole (1995).

DEALING WITH UNANTICIPATED CONSEQUENCES

Change management, the term used by many consulting firms today, sounds as if a change agent can plan what is to happen with organization change and then make it happen by following that plan. Organization change does not occur quite that simply. One can, of course, plan organization change and proceed to follow and implement that plan. But organization change, by definition, involves many people, and people rarely behave according to plan. Their behavior is not all that predictable. For example, those who were expected to be champions of the change in fact resist it, and some who were expected to resist it turn out to be supporters. Thus, much of the implementation phase is a process of dealing with organizational members’ *reactions* to the interventions intended to bring about the change. These reactions are difficult to predict and represent consequences to the interventions that were not intended, not planned for, and not predicted. Time and effort are therefore needed to fix problems that arise that

were not part of the original plan. Over time, then, it seems as if we are “looping back” to fix something before we can get underway once again with the change effort. But as long as the change goal(s) remains clear—that is, if we know ultimately what we are trying to achieve—the overall change effort can eventually be successful. For more regarding these aspects of organization change, see Burke (2002).

To summarize this section on unanticipated consequences of change, let us consider the paradox of planned organization change. The paradox is that we plan organization change in a linear, step-by-step, or phased way of thinking, yet the process of change itself is anything but linear. Not always, but as a rule, organizational members seek equilibrium, similarity, consistency, and the like. When change is introduced, this equilibrium is disturbed and people frequently experience what they consider to be chaotic conditions. The goal with respect to organization change is in a sense to reach a new state of equilibrium, essentially what Lewin (1947) meant by *refreeze*, his third stage of organization change. Having reached this new state of equilibrium, leaders of the organization must then make certain that organizational members do *not* remain there for very long. As Pascale, Millemann, and Gioja (2000, p. 6) have warned, equilibrium “is a precursor to *death*,” meaning that, as a living system, the organization is then less responsive to changes in the external environment, which places it at maximum risk for ultimate survival. It is important to remember that *the goal of any organization is to survive.*

THE “HOW” OF ORGANIZATION CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION

At the outset of this “how to” section on organization change implementation, it should be emphasized that, for system-wide change to be successful, multiple interventions are required. Regardless of how sophisticated a particular intervention may be (for example, Six Sigma), relying on it alone will not result in large-scale organization change. In a study some years ago of organization development efforts, researchers (Burke, Clark, & Koopman, 1984) found that the attempts at change that more often led to failure were implementations that relied on a single intervention, and that the one used most often was structure change. In a more recent review of seven successful organization change efforts, they all relied on *multiple* interventions (Burke, 2001). So what are these interventions that can be used as the levers for organization change implementation?

To say that there are many interventions in the domain of organization change and development is an understatement. Over a decade ago, Fagenson and Burke (1990) studied fifty-five interventions and activities in the field of OD. In French and Bell’s (1995) fifth edition of their OD textbook, at least fifty-five interventions are mentioned. The most up-to-date list of interventions

(sixty-seven) is in Massarik's *Organization Development and Consulting* (Massarik & Pei-Carpenter, 2002, p. 120). Grouping and classifying this large array of interventions in some reasonable manner is therefore useful. But before classifying them, let us first consider ways to think about them.

Argyris (1970), in *Intervention Theory and Method*, stated that an effective intervention would need to meet three primary criteria: (1) valid and useful information, (2) free choice, and (3) internal commitment. By *valid and useful information*, he meant "that which describes the factors, plus their interrelationships, that create the problem for the client system" (Argyris, 1970, p. 17).

According to Argyris, the information the change agent has collected from and about the client accurately reflects what people in the organization perceive they feel (believe?), what they consider to be their primary concerns and issues, what they experience as complexities and perhaps accompanying frustrations of living within and being a part of the client system, and what they would like to see changed. Argyris went on to specify that, if several independent diagnoses lead to the same intervention, the data the practitioner has gathered are valid.

For all practical purposes, this first primary task of an interventionist—obtaining *valid and useful information*—responds to an actual and felt need for change on the part of the client. If the practitioner obtains valid information, it will reflect a need for change in the organization. If the practitioner responds to that need, he or she will have done so by providing valid and useful information (Burke, 1982).

By *free choice*, Argyris (1970) means that "the locus of decision making [is] in the client system" (p. 19) and that the client is provided alternatives for action. No particular or specified action is automatic, preordained, or imposed. Argyris states:

"A choice is free to the extent the members can make their selection for a course of action with minimal internal defensiveness; can define the path (or paths) by which the intended consequence is to be achieved; can relate the choice to their central needs; and can build into their choices a realistic and challenging level of aspiration. Free choice therefore implies that the members are able to explore as many alternatives as they consider significant and select those that are central to their needs." (p. 19)

By *internal commitment*, Argyris means that the client owns the choice that is made regarding change and feels responsible for implementing it. Organization members act on their choice because it responds to needs, both individual and organizational.

French and Bell (1995) provide practical guidelines for helping the change agent to structure activities and interventions in effective ways. They suggest structuring activities (interventions) so that:

- The relevant people are present;
- The intervention is (a) problem or opportunity oriented and (b) oriented to the problems generated by the clients themselves (similar to Argyris, as cited above);
- The goal is clear and the ways to reach the goal are clear;
- There is a high probability of successful goal attainment;
- The activity consists of both experience-based learning and conceptual/ cognitive learning;
- The climate for the activity is supportive and fosters no defensive behavior;
- Participants learn how to solve the problem and at the same time learn better how to solve problems in general—this is what Argyris and Schön (1978) mean by single- and double-loop learning;
- Participants learn both about the content of the issue and the process of how best to work on it;
- Participants are engaged fully, that is, including both thinking and feeling, and can participate accordingly.

With respect to classifying the many interventions in organization change and development, early attempts were rather superficial. Burke and Hornstein (1972) listed only six categories: team building, managing conflict, survey feedback, techno-structural, training, and the all-purpose “miscellaneous.” At about the same time, Schmuck and Miles (1971) devised a more complex scheme for classifying interventions—the “OD cube.” Their categories were (1) diagnosed problems: for example, goals, plans, communication, culture, role definition, and so forth; (2) focus of attention: for example, team or group, individual, total system, and so forth; and (3) mode of intervention: for example, training, data feedback, coaching, team building, and so forth. Blake and Mouton (1976) also developed a “cube” based on (1) units of change (organizational levels), (2) kinds of interventions, and (3) focal issues.

Perhaps the most useful classification is the one devised by French and Bell (1995). Their classifying scheme was quite straightforward—that is, types of interventions according to target group (see Exhibit 11.1).

What could be added to the French and Bell (1995) typology is the target group “interorganizational,” that is, interventions designed to bring together two or more organizations in some manner to enlarge and enhance the present system. Such interventions include mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, strategic alliances, partnerships, and consortia. For more detail on these forms of interventions, see Burke and Biggart (1997). And for more detail on the various types of interventions for implementing organization change, see Burke (1994, 2002), Cummings and Worley (2005), French and Bell (1995), or Smither, Houston, and McIntire (1996).

Exhibit 11.1. French and Bell's Typology of OD Interventions

TARGET GROUP

- Interventions designed to improve the effectiveness of INDIVIDUALS

- Interventions designed to improve the effectiveness of DYADS/TRIADS

- Interventions designed to improve the effectiveness of TEAMS and GROUPS

TYPES OF INTERVENTIONS

- Life- and career-planning activities
- Coaching and counseling
- T-group (sensitivity training)
- Education and training to increase skills, knowledge in the area of technical task needs, relationship skills, process skills, decision making, problem solving, planning, goal-setting skills
- Grid OD phase 1
- Work redesign
- Gestalt OD
- Behavior modeling

- Process consultation
- Third-party peacemaking
- Role negotiation technique
- Gestalt OD

- Team building —Task directed
—Process directed
- Gestalt OD
- Grid OD phase 2
- Interdependency exercise
- Appreciative inquiry
- Responsibility charting
- Process consultation
- Role negotiation
- Role analysis technique
- "Startup" team-building activities
- Education in decision making, problem solving, planning, goal setting in group settings
- Team MBO
- Appreciations and concerns exercise
- Sociotechnical systems (STS)
- Visioning
- Quality of work life (QWL) programs
- Quality circles
- Force-field analysis
- Self-managed teams

TARGET GROUP

- Interventions designed to improve the effectiveness of INTERGROUP RELATIONS

- Interventions designed to improve the effectiveness of the TOTAL ORGANIZATION

TYPES OF INTERVENTIONS

- Intergroup activities —Process directed
—Task directed
- Organizational mirroring
- Partnering
- Process consultation
- Third-party peacemaking at the group level
- Grid OD phase 3
- Survey feedback
- Sociotechnical systems (STS)
- Parallel learning structures
- MBO (participation forms)
- Cultural analysis
- Confrontation meetings
- Visioning
- Strategic planning/strategic management activities
- Grid OD phases 4, 5, 6
- Interdependency exercise
- Survey feedback
- Appreciative inquiry
- Future search conferences
- Quality of work life (QWL) programs
- Total quality management (TQM)
- Physical settings
- Large-scale systems change

From W.L. French & C.H. Bell, Jr. (1995). *Organization Development: Behavioral Science Interventions for Organizational Improvement*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, p. 165. Reprinted with permission.

RESEARCH REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION

We will first consider some issues regarding research on organization change and development, and, second, some of the major results of research in this arena.

Research Issues

The overriding issue regarding research in the arena of organization change and development is *purpose*—that is, whether the research effort is for evaluation (*Did it work?*) or for knowledge generation (*What is truth?*). In other words, is

the research for the benefit of the client or the researcher? If we rely on the traditional scientific method, then we control and manipulate some independent variables, make some interventions, and see whether any difference occurred in relation to certain dependent variables. For instance, we decide to use team building as an intervention and collect information (dependent variables) to see whether it made any difference. We might use a questionnaire to ask team members if they feel more satisfied with and committed to the team, and we might determine if the team's work performance increased after the team-building effort occurred. Even if our data showed increased satisfaction, commitment, and work performance, it would be difficult to demonstrate that the team-building intervention had *caused* these outcomes unless we had also collected data from a matched control group—for example, a similar team for which no team building had been done—unless we had collected data from both teams before *and* after the team-building effort, and unless we had collected these two sets of data at essentially the same time.

Another critical factor in this evaluation effort would be the people who collect and analyze the data. Numerous studies have shown that the researcher can affect the outcome (Rosenthal, 1976), which raises the question of objectivity. To be scientific, or objective, the researcher should be someone other than the team-building consultant or the organization members involved. Argyris has argued, however, that the more scientific the evaluation is, the less likely it is to be relevant to and therefore used by the client. He states that traditional scientific methods of evaluation (his term is “mechanistic”) “tend to create primarily dependent and submissive roles for the clients and provide them with little responsibility; therefore, the clients have low feelings of essentiality in the program (except when they fulfill the request of the professionals)” (Argyris, 1970, p. 105).

To illustrate—rather dramatically—the challenges of employing the scientific method in an organizational field setting, consider the study by Blumberg and Pringle (1983). Their studies of interventions include job redesign and participative management in a mine. Following the proper methods of science, these researchers had a control group and an experimental group of miners. The control group, however, found out about what was going on with the experimental group and resented it, feeling that the latter had the unfair advantage of improving their quality of work life. The control group of miners, being unionized, then proceeded to vote to stop the entire process. And they succeeded. The change effort stopped abruptly. We will never know whether the interventions worked, and we will never have the advantage of knowing the efficacy of these interventions from whatever learning did occur. The important lesson that the researchers learned was about attempting traditional research in a field setting.

Beer and Walton (1987) have suggested that moving in the direction of what is labeled as “action science” (Argyris, Putnam, & Smith, 1985) is a better choice. As noted before:

“This means moving away from typical positivistic assumptions regarding research in organizations and toward a process that (a) involves the users in the study, (b) relies on self-corrective learning, say, trying certain assessment methods, and then modifying them along the way as trial and error yields knowledge, and (c) occurs over time, not episodically. As Beer and Walton noted, the literature about this kind of choice regarding organization change research has begun to grow.” (Burke, 2002, p. 125)

Work by Carnall (1982), Morgan (1983), and Legge (1984) represent some of this growth.

Research Results

There has been early evidence that organization change and development interventions do work. French and Bell (1978) selected nine studies that they considered to be supportive. These studies were conducted from 1964 to 1974 and included interventions such as grid OD, participative management, team building, and the use of multiple interventions. In a later and very careful review of seventy-two studies of OD interventions, Porras and Robertson (1992) found overall that (a) more than 40 percent of these studies had positive outcomes, that is, the interventions led to significant change in the intended direction; (b) about 50 percent of the studies showed little or no change; and (c) a small percentage, ranging from 7 to 14 percent, led to negative outcomes. Porras and Robertson classified the many different interventions they studied into four broad categories: (1) *organizing arrangements*: for example, establishing new committees, task forces, or quality circles; (2) *social factors*: for example, team building; (3) *technology*: for example, job redesign; and (4) *physical settings*: such as modifying an office layout from a closed to a more open space. These researchers drew the following conclusions from their extensive review:

“The fact that lack of change in the dependent variables occurred more frequently than any other change can potentially be explained in one of three ways. First, and most pessimistically, it could simply be that OD, in general, is not very effective, with desired results being achieved less than half the time. Second, it could be that the interventions used in these studies cannot achieve results consistently. The problem may not be with any specific intervention, but that too frequently only one intervention, or interventions of one type, was used. Only six cases existed in which a multifaceted, multi-category program of intervention took place. The lack of positive change may have been the result of the lack of comprehensiveness of the change effort.

“Finally, it could be that beta change was involved in the measurement of many of the dependent variables. As previously discussed, beta change involves a psychological recalibration of the instrument used to measure a stable dimension of reality (Golembiewski, Billingsly, & Yeager, 1976, pp. 135–136). In other words, as a result of the OD intervention or interventions, organizational members’

perceptions of various aspects of their work environment can be altered so that the measures used to assess these characteristics do not maintain their calibration over time. Consequently, while the characteristics being measured may in fact undergo change, such change may not be demonstrated because of the psychological recalibration of the measure. An apparent lack of change can thus mask an actual change in the variable measured.” (Porras & Robertson, 1992, p. 786)

The good news from the Porras and Robertson study is that little or no harm was done by using the interventions that were investigated.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As stated at the outset, implementation is the difficult part of OD. But not the *most* difficult. Sustaining the change effort once underway is more difficult than implementation as such, certainly early implementation in the overall change process.

The difficult aspects of implementation include dealing with (a) resistance, and remember that there are different forms of resistance (blind, ideological, and political), and (b) unanticipated consequences, those reactions to interventions that are not in the plan because we simply did not think about them in advance.

Also bear in mind that standards exist for effectiveness of implementation, that is, in the form of an intervention—the three criteria from Argyris: valid information, choice, and commitment—and that no single intervention by itself is sufficient for effective OD.

Finally, as research demonstrates, understanding the outcomes and effectiveness of these outcomes regarding our interventions is not obvious. The researcher’s behavior can affect outcomes, and there is usually the question of exactly *what* was affected by our interventions—just perceptions or actual attitudes and values? Research does show that interventions do have organizational effects. We must be diligent about being as clear as we can about the depth of these effects.

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Evaluation

Gary N. McLean and Steven H. Cady

As described in Chapter Two, evaluation is a major step in OD; however, it is one piece of the model that is frequently omitted or cut short. This chapter clarifies what evaluation means in OD and describes the importance of evaluation for OD consultants and their clients, barriers to evaluation, issues to consider when planning an evaluation, and evaluation competencies. Instruments and techniques used for evaluation are explored, along with examples.

EVALUATION DEFINED WITHIN A SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE

“Evaluation is a set of planned, information-gathering, and analytical activities undertaken to provide those responsible for the management of change with a satisfactory assessment of the effects and/or progress of the change effort.”

—Beckhard & Harris, 1977, p. 86.

A commitment to planned evaluation should be made early in the OD process, preferably in the pre-launch phase. Planned evaluation allows those involved to gather and examine data and to judge the value of the OD process on a continuing basis, with the purpose of improving the process or deciding whether to continue it.

Workplace realities rarely facilitate the application of pure research methods, so OD evaluation “is likely to be more action centered, value based, collaboratively

contexted, experientially rooted, situationally responsive, praxis oriented, and self-reflective than the current image” of research (Evered, 1985, p. 439). Carefully planned evaluation pays attention to both soft (attitudinal) data, such as job satisfaction, and hard (quantitative) data, such as employee turnover rates.

The target of an OD evaluation may be the total organization or system, the organization’s relationship with the external world and other organizations (transorganizational interaction), individual development, interpersonal development, intra-team and inter-team development, or role development. These targets for evaluation are an expansion of those shown by Schmuck and Miles (1976) on the z-axis of their OD Cube. (See Figure 12.1.)

Evaluation may target either the processes in use during the change effort (see Figure 12.2, the x-axis of the OD Cube by Schmuck & Miles, 1976) or the outcomes of the change effort (see Figure 12.3, the y-axis of the OD Cube).

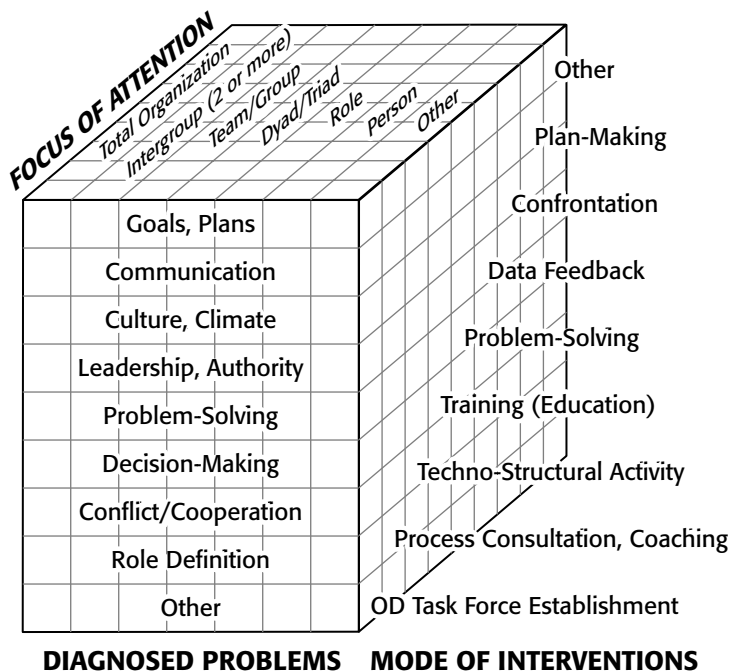


Figure 12.1. The OD Cube

From R. Schmuck & M. Miles (1971), *Organization Development in Schools*. In M Miles & R. Schmuck (Eds.), *Improving Schools Through OD: An Overview* (pp. 1-28). Palo Alto, CA: National Press Books. Used by permission of the publisher. The OD Cube was originally published in *Organization Development in Schools*, p. 8, 1971. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company. For subsequent development of the OD Cube, see R. Schmuck & P. Runkel (1985), *The Handbook of Organization Development in Schools* (3rd ed.). Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

In whatever context the evaluation occurs, the focus of the evaluation must be on how the OD process has impacted the total organizational system.

When a continuing evaluation effort is made, the following outcomes are likely:

- When management requests information to prove the value of the expenditure for OD, quality data are available or are in the process of being collected.
- Participants are more likely to have a positive attitude about OD and about the organization because they have been involved in the evaluation.

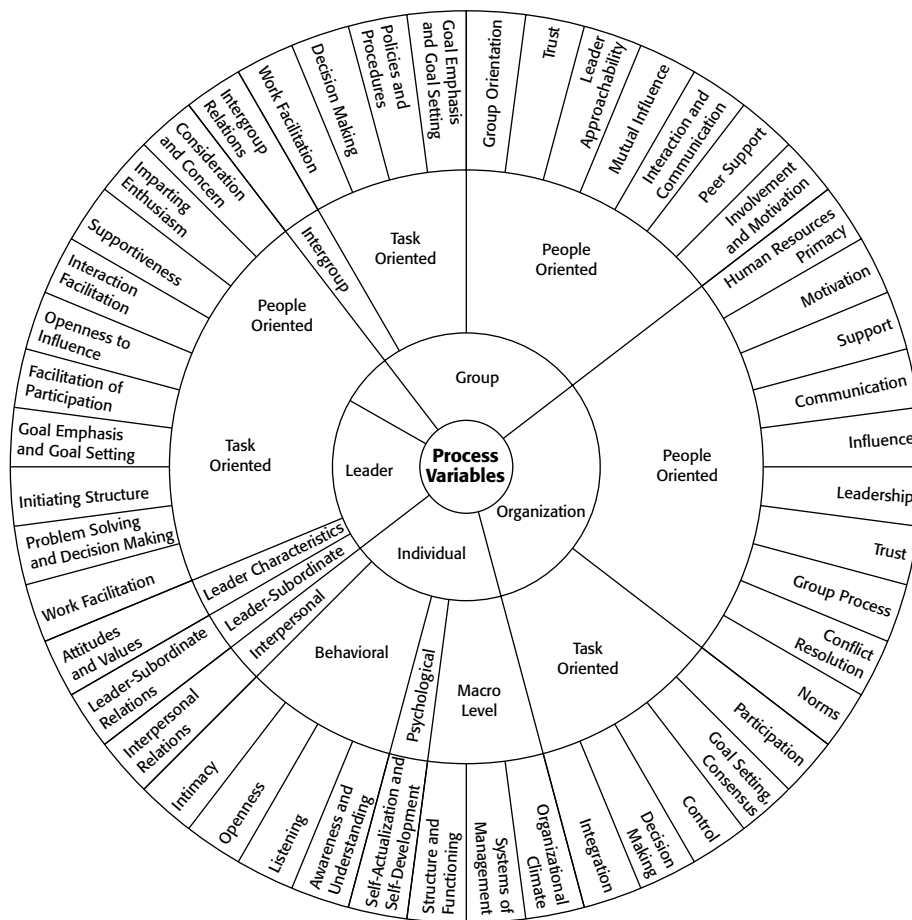


Figure 12.2. OD Research Variables—Process

From J. Porras & P. Berg (1978, August). *The Impact of Organization Development*. *Academy of Management Review*, p. 252. Used by permission of *Academy of Management Review*.

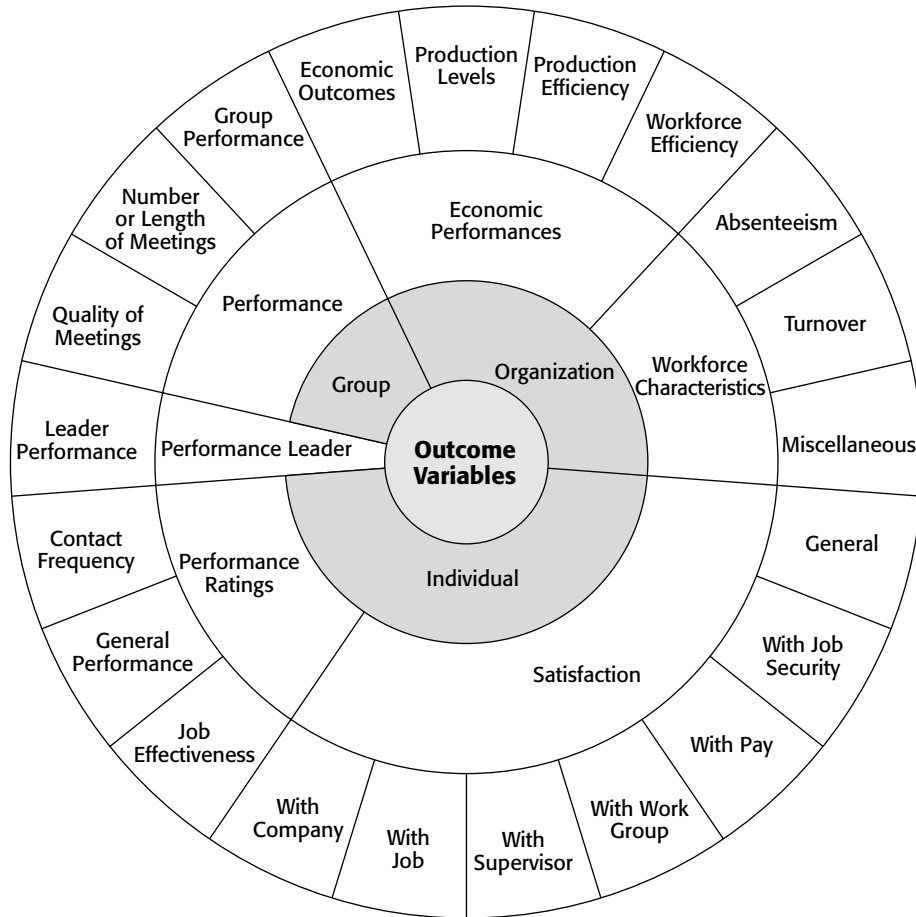


Figure 12.3. OD Research Variables—Outcomes

From J. Porras & P. Berg (1978, August). *The Impact of Organization Development. Academy of Management Review*, p. 253. Used by permission of *Academy of Management Review*.

- The OD endeavor is likely to be more efficient and effective.
- There is likely to be increased quality and productivity in accomplishing organizational objectives.
- If there are additional OD needs identified that arise from a lack of organizational support for the changes created by the intervention or any other source, they may be identified and addressed.

Figure 12.4 depicts an evaluation model that may be followed when conducting a planned evaluation of an OD intervention.

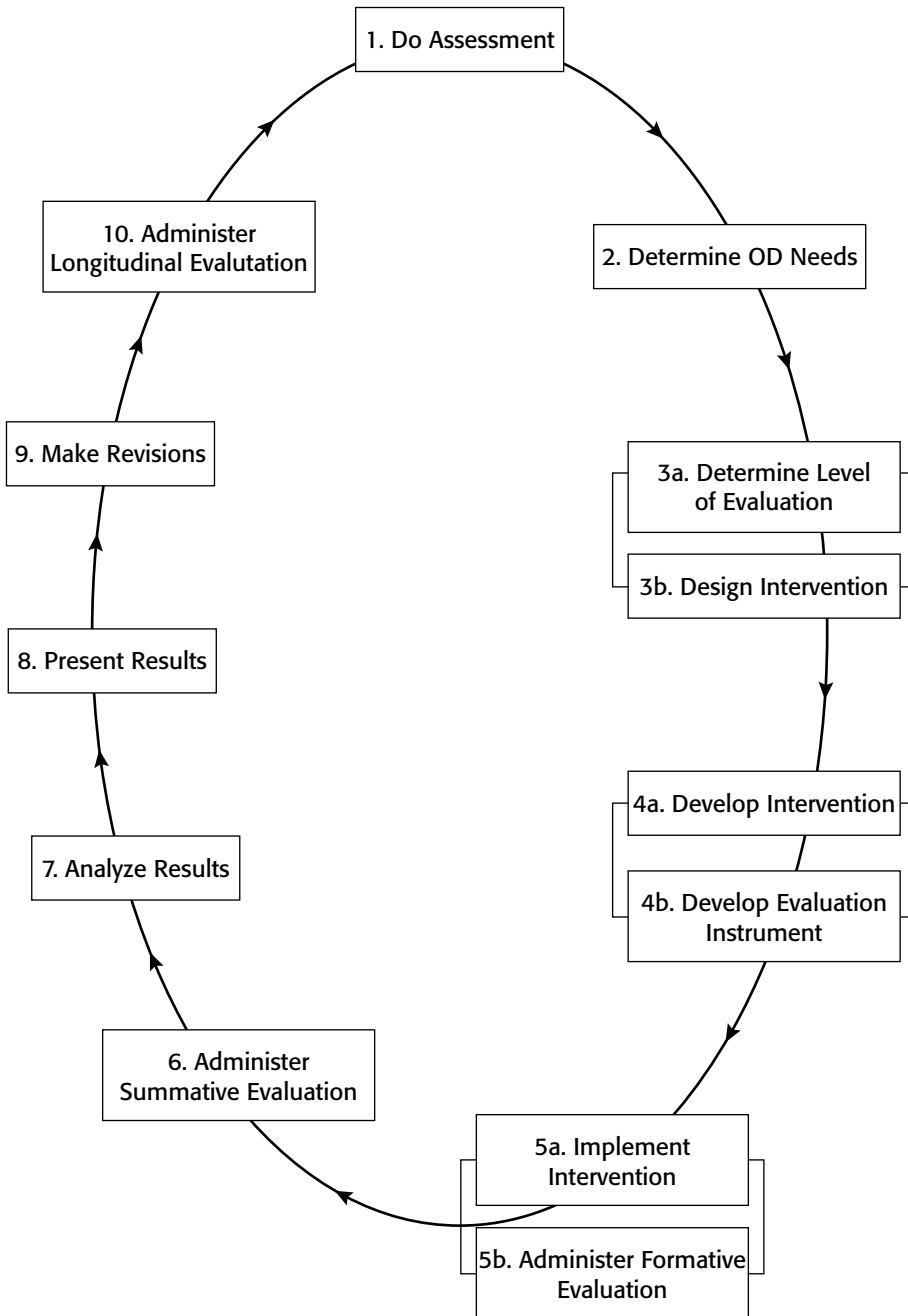


Figure 12.4. Organization Development Evaluation Model

IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATION

If you don't know where you are going, any path will get you there. And if you don't know where you are, you'll never know where you are going. The process of evaluating is truly about determining whether the path you are on has been the most efficiently executed and effective path for the system you are in. In turn, this will influence how you move forward into the future. The fundamental premise is self-awareness. A system of any size—from one person to a whole organization—will be most amenable to change when it has all relevant data. The more that the people in a client system are able to understand themselves, the greater the likelihood that they will take ownership in determining how to best move forward.

Within this context, the key change agents are more able to influence the system with data that demonstrate success and failure. Action learning focuses on important outcomes—What was planned? What happened? What was learned? What will be done next time? One critical step to creating learning is addressed in the question: *What happened?* Success and failure are concepts critical to creating a learning organization, and this is where the consultant as intervener comes into the picture. By providing the system with avenues for having a better understanding of itself through rigorous evaluation, the system will begin to change its thinking paradigm. When the system begins to change its thinking paradigm, the learning has begun. There is no other more powerful way to create change than through learning rooted in the shifting of how we think. This learning is what will lead to new and sustainable organizational habits that result in long-term health and prosperity.

WHERE EVALUATION FITS IN THE INTERACTION WITH CLIENTS

As indicated earlier, it is important to establish the evaluation processes during the pre-launch phase. In this way, what is important for the client, the consultant, the participants, and the process can be established before the process is begun. With a plan in place, continuous improvement in the OD process, based on identified evaluative feedback, can occur.

Evaluation can occur at three points in the OD process: during the process (formative), at the conclusion of the process (summative), or at some time after the process has ended (longitudinal). The most important of these times is *during* the OD process—formative evaluation. To discover that something could have been done differently or that the process did not create the intended

outcomes after the process is over does not allow for adjustments or modifications along the way.

WHO SHOULD DO THE EVALUATION?

This decision, too, should occur during the pre-launch phase. There are three common answers to the question of who should perform the evaluation: the client organization, the consultant, or a third party. Many factors will influence where the responsibility for evaluation will rest. Given the preference for formative evaluation expressed earlier, the responsibility for evaluation will fall equally with the consultant and the client. Regular, ongoing evaluation will provide feedback continuously, if so designed, and will allow the consultant and the client to partner to maximize the potential in the OD process. For summative and longitudinal evaluation, there are pros and cons for each potential evaluator. These are summarized in Exhibit 12.1.

KEY MEASURES IN OD

When taking a systems approach to measuring in OD, we advocate the inclusion and integration of six key dimensions: performance, morale, emotion, critical customer service behaviors, organization climate, and personal characteristics (Cady & Lewis, 2002). Each component falls into one of two categories of measurement, soft or hard. *Soft measures* are perceptual in nature. That is, the scoring of soft measures is based on an individual's judgment or opinion. For example, an employee is asked to respond in a survey to the statement, "I am satisfied with my job." The employee chooses a number on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree with the statement (equal to 1) to strongly agree with the statement (equal to 7) (Rea & Parker, 1997). *Hard measures* are observable and can be objectively counted (that is, not based on opinion), often based on behavior or units of some kind. For example, the number of units sold or made is a hard measure.

Taking a systems approach to evaluation is important in encouraging members of an organization to understand how their actions and behaviors (soft measures) influence important bottom-line outcomes (hard measures). A system model can be used to provide meaningful ongoing feedback at all levels, to diagnose departmental or organization-wide performance issues, and to identify appropriate interventions that will positively impact performance. We will now review the six key measurement dimensions mentioned earlier that should be considered when taking a systems approach to evaluation.

Exhibit 12.1. Advantages and Disadvantages to Possible Evaluators

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Client Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not an additional cost to the organization • Will be present to the organization long after the specific OD process is over • Knows the culture of the organization better than an outside party can • Knows what is important to the organization and, thus, what needs to be evaluated • Because of responsibility for participating in planning the OD process, can build evaluation into pre-launch phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be too closely associated with the organization to see what is necessary in the evaluation • May fear that the outcome of the evaluation will cause them to lose credibility if they were responsible for the contract • May not have time to do evaluation effectively because of other projects • May not have the necessary competencies to carry out the evaluation
<p>Consultant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knows the OD process and its intended outcomes as well • Should have the necessary competencies to carry out the evaluation • Because of the responsibility for participating in planning the OD process, can build evaluation into the pre-launch phase • Gives the consultant the opportunity to modify processes used or provide adequate compensation for mistakes made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds to the project's costs • Unless a long-term involvement is envisioned, the consultant may not be around to complete the evaluation • May not be viewed as objective as there is an incentive to make the evaluation look good (for affirmation of client's choice) or for additional needs to surface (for additional work) • May create a sense of client's dependence on the consultant
<p>Third Party</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewed as more objective because not involved in any other way in the OD process • Usually more expert because of the ability to specialize in evaluation • Has nothing to lose or gain in the outcome of the evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly, an additional cost • A third party may not want to take on such a limited component of a project • Is not integral to the project, so may not know either the process or the outcomes to be assessed • Is probably not in a position to influence improvements in the process or in improving the ODs consultants processes • Guarantees that the evaluation will not be formative

Measurement Dimension 1—Profitability and the Bottom Line

When discussing the bottom line, many people think of profitability first. In this chapter, profitability is part of a broader definition of performance that is based on a balanced approach to assessing the bottom line. There are three performance measures, the first of which is profitability. Profit is one measure of performance that has dominated throughout the history of economic ventures, and it remains a central focus today. However, there is growing recognition that

profit is not the only indicator of the real bottom line (for example, Kaplan & Norton, 1996). For non-profit organizations, consider cash flow as a measure that replaces profitability for a for-profit organization.

There are other measures, along with profit, that provide a more balanced approach to assessing the bottom line. That is why the word *performance* is used in place of bottom line. In addition to profit, there are internal and external performance measures, such as customer retention, organizational learning, new products developed, and many more.

Measurement Dimension 2—Morale

Measures of morale are soft by nature. That is, asking the employees or customers their opinions regarding a variety of issues assesses each measure. Measures of morale address attitudes and intentions from both the employee and customer perspective. An attitude is a bi-polar affect regarding some target (for example, I like it or I don't like it). Attitudes focus on such things as job satisfaction for employees and product/service satisfaction for customers. Intentions are cognitive choices made with regard to pending action or lack of action (for example, I will do this or I will do that or I will do nothing). Intentions focus on such things as intention-to-leave a job or intention-to-return to buy a product/service again. As mentioned earlier, these measures tend to focus on a degree of agreement or disagreement on a Likert scale.

Measurement Dimension 3—Emotion

Emotions are similar yet distinct from morale. Emotions encompass glad, sad, mad, afraid, and ashamed. There are also the emotions of excited, peace, and numb. These emotions tend to be related to discrete events and are reactionary in nature. The reason that they are considered similar to morale is that they are known to influence morale directly. For example, a failed performance by an employee (for example, a lost sale) can lead to anger and guilt. These emotions can subsequently lead to an exaggerated low level of job satisfaction and a heightened level of intention-to-leave. Over time, these levels of satisfaction and intention-to-leave can return to the original levels prior to the failed performance. That is, emotions generally have a temporary influence on morale, not a permanent one.

Measurement Dimension 4— Critical Customer Service Behaviors

Customers have certain expectations when receiving products and services. There are all sorts of support required and questions to be asked. In the process, the customer can define a set of employees' behaviors that add value to the product or service. These behaviors are applicable across industries, yet must

be customized to fit a particular industry (service or product). There are five critical employee behaviors that can lead to higher levels of customer satisfaction and retention: response time, personalized attention, professionalism, expertise, and comforting.

Measurement Dimension 5—Organization Climate

There is a considerable amount of research and numbers of survey measures that are directed toward a better understanding of those factors that directly influence task performance. These task-dependent measures fall into three variables: job climate factors, teaming behaviors, and leadership behaviors. *Job climate* factors are directly related to the work being done and include environmental support, personal capabilities, and reward systems. *Teaming behaviors* are the critical behaviors team members should exhibit that lead to a high-performing team. Teaming behavior measures include the following: anticipates and fulfills team needs; manages own personal contribution; displays a positive attitude; and effectively communicates. *Leadership behaviors* are those critical behaviors that leaders should exhibit to create a high-performing team. Leadership behaviors include the following: supporting, informing, monitoring, recognizing and rewarding, empowering, and clarifying.

Measurement Dimension 6—Personal Characteristics

There are two types of personal characteristics, each of which contains different measures. First, there are biographical characteristics that are considered hard measures and are usually found in most personnel files. *Biographical characteristics* include such things as age, race, gender, tenure, and function. The second type of personal characteristic is personality. *Personality* refers to more stable behavioral traits that people exhibit. For example, there are a variety of personality models, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), the Big Five (extraversion, emotional stability, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience), and other non-dimensional measures, such as locus-of-control and pessimism. While these tend to be very popular in use, their validity is suspect.

TYPES OF EVALUATION

There are many ways to perform an appropriate evaluation. In planning an OD evaluation, it is important that an agreement be reached in the beginning about what is important and how it will be determined, whether the outcome has

been achieved or not. As described earlier in this chapter, it is important to decide who will conduct the evaluation. Outcome measures must be identified. A time frame—formative, summative, and longitudinal—must be determined. And then the appropriate tool or approach must be chosen.

Formal/Informal

A formal approach to evaluation will be decided among the parties involved in the OD process. Informally, however, all of the parties involved will be constantly looking at ways to improve their roles in the OD process. Sometimes this may be apparent, as when a consultant might simply ask a client contact how things are going. Often, however, the informal evaluation process will not be apparent. It may consist of continually observing how people are responding and participating, checking on available statistics that might reflect on the desired outcome measures, and even watching stock prices. The concern with informal evaluation is that the results are not shared and are not systematic. As a result, partnering between consultant and client loses synergy, and results that surface are biased by happenstance observations rather than systematic ones. It also makes great sense in summative and longitudinal evaluation to repeat whatever was done in the assessment stage. Since that process was successful in identifying the focus for the OD process undertaken, it makes sense to use the same approach in evaluating the outcomes of that process.

Thus, the recommendation of the authors is that a shared, systematic perspective be selected from among the many formal modes of evaluation that are available. There are many ways in which such approaches could be classified. We have chosen to classify them as quantitative (also called hard) and qualitative (also called soft). These will be detailed further in this section.

Quantitative

A preference still exists in business to have quantifiable data, and many of the traditional approaches to evaluation in OD rely on quantifiable data. These data come from a variety of sources—surveys (both simple and complex), measurable outcomes (such as discussed earlier in this chapter—both in terms of meeting pre-specified goals and pre-process and post-process comparisons), and benchmarking (especially with competitors) are the primary approaches used.

Surveys

These can be as simple as a basic satisfaction survey (often referred to as a happy sheet) to a somewhat more complicated feedback form (for example, an assessment of how meetings are going) to multi-rater feedback to a very complex culture survey of the organization.

The basic satisfaction survey is probably the easiest to construct and use and, thus, is frequently used. Items to be measured might include participants' satisfaction with the OD process (activities, materials, consultant, facilities, and so on). Sample items are presented in Exhibit 12.2.

A somewhat more complicated survey, although based on the same concepts as the satisfaction survey, is one that focuses on a specific function within the organization—for example, how well executive team meetings are going, level of customer satisfaction, product innovation, and so on. See Exhibit 12.3 for an excerpt from a survey frequently used by one of the authors.

Multi-rater assessment is another survey form that is often used when the OD focus is on an individual or a small group of individuals. This is often referred to as 360-degree feedback. When completed in a survey form, it provides quantitative data. There are many issues with this type of approach, especially when used inappropriately to determine salary and promotion potential (see McLean, 1997). A prime concern with the use of such an instrument is that research shows that different groups of reviewers provide different feedback, naturally, as people are observed by different groups of people in different contexts.

Finally, the most complex form of survey is the climate (or culture) survey. This is usually a comprehensive review of the factors in the organization that affect the climate (or culture). A controversial issue that frequently surfaces with surveys is whether to use a customized survey (developed by the consultant or a team in the client organization) or a commercial, standardized survey. See Exhibit 12.4 for a comparison of the two approaches.

Exhibit 12.2. Sample Items from an OD Process Satisfaction Survey

Evaluation of Team Building OD Process

In responding to the following questions, circle the number that corresponds with the following scale:

5 = Very Satisfied; 4 = Satisfied; 3 = Neutral; 2 = Dissatisfied; 1 = Very Dissatisfied

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. How well the need for team building was originally identified | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. How appropriate the retreat facilities were | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. How effective the team-building activities at the retreat were | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |



Exhibit 12.3. Survey to Determine Satisfaction with a Team Meeting Process

Team Meeting Assessment

Circle the number to the right of each item that matches your assessment of how well the team is currently functioning. Use the following scale:

5 = Strongly Agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree

Planning

1. The right people are on the team.	5	4	3	2	1
2. An agenda is distributed before meetings.	5	4	3	2	1
3. Supporting papers are distributed before meetings.	5	4	3	2	1
4. The agenda items are timed.	5	4	3	2	1
5. The agenda contains expected outcomes.	5	4	3	2	1
6. Visual aids are available, including flip charts, markers, tape, sticky notes, etc.	5	4	3	2	1
7. Room arrangement maximizes interaction.	5	4	3	2	1
8. Participants bring distributed materials to meetings.	5	4	3	2	1
9. Presenters are prepared when scheduled.	5	4	3	2	1
10. Agendas adequately reflect meetings.	5	4	3	2	1

Doing

11. Meetings start on time.	5	4	3	2	1
12. Everyone is present on time.	5	4	3	2	1
13. Meetings focus on improvement rather than providing information.	5	4	3	2	1
14. Minutes are taken at all meetings.	5	4	3	2	1
15. Telephone calls do not interrupt meetings.	5	4	3	2	1
16. Discussion is focused on outcomes; it does not ramble.	5	4	3	2	1
17. Each team member fully participates when competent to do so.	5	4	3	2	1
18. Team members do not dominate discussion.	5	4	3	2	1
19. Each agenda item ends with a clearly developed action step.	5	4	3	2	1
20. Blaming does not occur among team members.	5	4	3	2	1

Exhibit 12.3. *Continued**Doing*

21. Team members do not interrupt each other.	5	4	3	2	1
22. I feel free to express my opinions without fear of reprisals.	5	4	3	2	1
23. Decisions are made on a consensus basis.	5	4	3	2	1
24. All team members accept responsibility for the quality of team meetings, providing feedback during the meeting on ways to improve meetings.	5	4	3	2	1
25. Risk taking during meetings is encouraged.	5	4	3	2	1
26. Meetings end on time.	5	4	3	2	1
27. Meetings end early if the agenda is completed.	5	4	3	2	1
28. The group leader uses good facilitation skills.	5	4	3	2	1
29. Conflict is encouraged.	5	4	3	2	1
30. Conflict is handled in a healthy way, focusing on facts and "I" statements.	5	4	3	2	1
31. Team members listen to each other.	5	4	3	2	1
32. Team members listen to new ideas without responding with "Yes, but."	5	4	3	2	1
33. Team members build on one another's new ideas.	5	4	3	2	1
34. The agenda consists of items at an appropriate level, delegating detail to appropriate employees.	5	4	3	2	1
35. Team members trust each other.	5	4	3	2	1
36. Team members respect each other.	5	4	3	2	1
37. Agenda items for the next meeting are identified before the end of each meeting.	5	4	3	2	1
38. Appropriate problem-solving tools are used during meetings.	5	4	3	2	1
39. Sufficient resources are provided for the team's action steps to be carried out.	5	4	3	2	1
40. The next meeting date is set prior to adjournment.	5	4	3	2	1

Checking

41. Every meeting is evaluated by the team.	5	4	3	2	1
42. Suggestions for improvement are made.	5	4	3	2	1
43. Team members provide positive feedback to each other.	5	4	3	2	1
44. Team members provide constructive feedback for improvement to each other.	5	4	3	2	1

Acting

45. Minutes are distributed to all participants within two days.	5	4	3	2	1
46. Team members carry out their assignments related to action steps.	5	4	3	2	1
47. Additional agenda items are provided to the team leader in time to include on the distributed agenda.	5	4	3	2	1

Overall

48. [Our leader] provides good leadership to the team.	5	4	3	2	1
49. I look forward to our team meetings.	5	4	3	2	1
50. I am generally satisfied with our team meetings.	5	4	3	2	1

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Exhibit 12.4. Comparison of Advantages for Customized vs. Standardized Surveys

Customized Surveys	Standardized Surveys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be adapted to the vocabulary of the organization • Can be focused to the specific variables of interest to a particular OD process • Owned by the organization when developed • Less costly over time • Participants feel more ownership in the survey and evaluation processes • Because results cannot be compared with other organizations, the focus is on organizational improvement, not comparison with how others are doing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readily available without developmental time • More likely to have appropriate psychometric measures (reliability, validity) • Unlikely to change over time, so comparison can be made across time • Likely to have been used in multiple contexts, providing comparative data (though this may not be what is wanted) • Will often look more professional (though this is not necessarily so) • May already be available in web-based format

Measurable Outcomes

As specified earlier in this chapter, there are a number of measures that are generally available in most organizations that could be used to determine the impact of the OD process on these outcomes. For example, it would be relatively easy to determine whether a predetermined sales level had been achieved, whether there had been an improvement in the number of complaints filed, whether attendance has improved, and on and on the list could go. All of these are quantitative items that are relatively easy to measure. The major difficulty in their use, of course, is determining the cause of the improvements. So many things can cause changes in these measures—the weather, the external economy, an increase in the advertising budget, changes in personnel—in addition to the OD process. It is almost impossible to determine that any specific change was caused by the OD process.

Comparison with Competitors

Preferably, when benchmarking is done, it is a comparison of processes used. In practice, companies often look at outcome measures, for example, productivity measures, quality measures, market share, return on investment, and so on. These, too, are quantitative measures. Looking only at differences in numbers is not particularly useful, because the important information (how the outcomes were obtained) is not known. These comparative measures are also not always easy to obtain. When industry groups collect such information for benchmarking purposes, membership in that industry group is usually all that is needed to gain access to the information. When industry groups do not collect desired measures, however, the information can be very difficult to acquire. Publicly owned businesses may be required to have such information on file because of Security Exchange Commission requirements. Privately owned businesses, however, may be very reluctant to share such information.

Cost/Benefit Analysis

Another quantitative approach to evaluation is a comparison of the costs of the OD process compared with the perceived or anticipated benefits. This approach requires a group of knowledgeable individuals within the client organization to estimate the financial benefits from the process and compare these against the costs, both explicit and implicit. If this return rate is greater than alternative investments, then the investment in the OD process is (or was) worthwhile.

Psychometric Requirements

There are three basic principles of measurement: validity, reliability, and practicability. These provide credibility and meaning to information derived from measurement. Unfortunately, because the first two are technical in nature, often

client- or consultant-developed instruments do not pay attention to these requirements. Unfortunately, this occurs occasionally with commercial instruments as well. When using an instrument, questions about these principles should be asked.

Validity ensures that the instrument measures what it is intended to measure. Although there are many types of validity, the two most important for OD evaluation are face validity and predictive validity.

Face validity refers to the perceived accuracy and appropriateness of the instrument with respect to the stated outcomes. Ultimately, such validity will be determined by whether the organization's indicated needs are met by the OD process. The results should make sense to those knowledgeable about the organization and OD and should match the information sought by stakeholders or decision makers.

Predictive validity is the ability of one measure to predict performance on some other measure. It requires the collection of data during the intervention to be correlated at a later date with results data gathered on the job. If there is predictive validity, there should be a high correlation between formative measures and workplace measures.

Reliability means that the instrument would obtain the same results if used several times. Reliability is associated with consistency and accuracy. It is easier to determine reliability than it is to determine validity. An instrument must be reliable if it is to be valid.

A nonnumeric approach that will improve reliability—but not show whether the instrument is, in fact, reliable—is to complete a pilot study with a small sample of employees prior to full-scale administration of the instrument. The OD consultant should check responses to identify where misunderstandings might exist, ask those completing the instrument where they encountered difficulties, and then revise the instrument based on the responses.

A test-retest procedure consists of administering the instrument to a pilot group and then administering it again to the same group after a brief interlude (perhaps a week). The correlation of the two sets provides a measure of stability. Another approach is to determine subscores for odd-numbered questions and even-numbered questions for each respondent and obtain a correlation between the two sets of scores. The closer the correlation is to 1, the higher the reliability. Finally, Cronbach's alpha and factor analysis are additional statistical measures that can be used for reliability determination. (For more information on calculating reliability, see Fitz-Gibbon & Morris, 1987.)

Practicability means that the instrument can be completed within a reasonable amount of time with tools that are readily available. Administering the instrument to a pilot group is an excellent way to determine the clarity of items, consistency of interpretation, time needed, and administrative detail needed.

Qualitative

There are also a number of approaches to evaluation that do not result in numeric data, yet the information can still be very useful. In fact, qualitative data may provide the evaluator with more depth of understanding about the processes and how they are being perceived. In addition, they can often be implemented “on the fly,” providing immediate feedback.

Informal Group Processes. Many useful, informal evaluation processes can yield intuitive or qualitative data. Among others, these can include:

- Polling members of a large group by having them raise their hands to indicate their levels of satisfaction, showing five fingers for very satisfied and only one finger for very dissatisfied.
- Doing a “whip” (having each member speak in turn) to obtain verbal feedback ranging from testimonies to constructive criticism.

Interviews. An interview guide can be used to ensure that exactly the same questions are asked in the same order with all interviewees. For a structured interview, the guide would be quite detailed. An unstructured interview—although less precise—allows the interviewer to follow new trains of thought. The guide for an unstructured interview may contain just a few questions, such as the following:

- “What is going better for you in your job now, compared with the way it was before the intervention?”
- “What is not going as well for you in your job now, compared with the way it was before the intervention?”
- “If you could make just one change in what we are doing now, what would it be?”
- “What else would you like to share with me?”

Focus Groups. A variant of an interview is a focus group. In essence, a focus group is a group interview. The same questions as suggested for interviews can be used for focus groups. A focus group is particularly useful when you want people to build on others’ comments. The downside of a focus group is that it can contribute to “groupthink,” the tendency for a dominant voice to influence others to think in the same way, regardless of whether that really reflects how they think.

Observation. Observing changes that have taken place (or are taking place) in the workplace can provide indications of progress, resistance, and learning. There may be occasions when videotaping an event (for example, a team meeting) can provide a useful tool for assisting in the observation process. Observing in two areas of an organization, one of which has participated in the OD process and the other which has not, can also be helpful.

Anecdotes. Ask the steering committee of the OD process, the client, or members of the client organization for subjective responses to key issues—on a daily basis (at the micro level) or as a monthly/yearly review (at the macro level). Stories are a common way for people to share what is really important to them.

REPORTING THE OUTCOMES OF THE EVALUATION

Having data is not enough. Data and the corresponding results can be compelling to the person conducting the evaluation and to no one else. The aim in reporting results is accessibility. When the results from an evaluation are truly accessible, people understand the data in a way that empowers each person to take action. There are a variety of ways to report data:

- *Charts and Graphs*—pictorially presented data that give the viewer a comparative appreciation for the numbers. Charts and graphs show how the measures compare to each other and aggregated measures such as the mean and standard deviation (an indication of the variation in the data). Means and standard deviations can be reported from the existing data or other relevant data from such stakeholder groups as another department, competitors, industry, and society.
- *Scorecards*—a summarized or key set of measures that is important for everyone to see and track over time. These measures are often able to be seen on one page and address such things as satisfaction, productivity, learning, and profit (for more detail, see Kaplan & Norton, 1996).
- *Metaphors*—a story or picture that captures the meaning of the data and relationships among key variables. Data can be put into a storyboard that captures the key relationships in the form of a story that integrates metaphor with charts and graphs. An example of this approach as applied to major corporations can be found at Root Learning (www.rootlearning.com).
- *Predictive Models*—a picture that shows the relationships among a variety of key measures that flow to important end-result outcomes. This concept was popularized by Sears, which developed the concept of the employee-customer-profit chain (Rucci, Kirn, & Quinn, 1998).

Each method above can support existing change initiatives and can lead to change being initiated. As will be discussed next, the idea of creating a systems view of the organization requires drawing from all the tools for reporting outcomes described above. Creating a systems approach is the best way to truly change behaviors.

USING EVALUATION TO CHANGE BEHAVIORS MOVING FORWARD

The most compelling way to change behaviors is to give an objective assessment of the behavior and other related factors. That is, a systems approach is the best approach to creating sustainable change in organizations. Developing a predictive model in an organization is important in ensuring that the organization takes the necessary action. One principle of Gestalt theory is that, when a system fully understands itself, it will know what to do next (Emery, 1978).

The act of noticing the self is the most powerful tool for change. We advocate creating a systems model that puts the pieces together and paints a very descriptive picture of the organization. This type of modeling provides diagnostic feedback at the individual, department, site, and organizational levels. The system modeling process is grounded in theoretical development concepts and field research methodology. These are important components in creating a whole system predictive model for an organization. The steps are summarized below.

Step 1: Evaluate Existing Models and Measures

The goal in this step is to map the explicit and implicit relationships. Mapping the perceived relationships is important for future steps. Most people have an innate need to express and hypothesize. For example, someone may believe that, as the organization's employee job satisfaction increases, the turnover rate will decrease. This is a hypothesis, because it is proposing a relationship between two variables. Clarifying existing hypotheses gets people involved in exploring additional relationships and other performance-related questions (for more information, see Hedrick, Bickman, & Rog, 1993; Keppel, 1982). There are five key questions to ask:

- What types of data are being collected?
- What are the location, retrieval mechanisms, and quantity of stored data?
- How are the data being collected?
- Why are the data being collected?
- What are the expected relationships among the variables?

Detailing existing models and measures will, without a doubt, stir up cognitive dissonance and resistance with key stakeholders. A rigorous examination and use of information can be intimidating to organizational members, including leaders (Harrison, 1994). This step will indicate the pace and method with which you should proceed. In some cases it might be advisable not to proceed. The leaders of the organizations or unit utilizing this process must embrace the

reality that there will be positive and negative findings. This process is based on the value of truth and objectivity. While the truth can set you free, developing and maintaining performance management systems requires more effort and discipline than many existing managers practice. Going by intuition is quicker and not easily verified. It also lends itself to political maneuvering. That is, a disjointed performance management system with unreliable measures empowers leaders to make quick decisions and move their agendas forward without much justification. The decisions can be supported by anecdotal evidence that may or may not be reliable.

Step 2: Enhance Existing Models and Measures

Based on the analyses conducted in the previous step, a new set of questions should surface and a better idea of the whole performance system should begin to emerge. The three prongs of sound thinking are instrumental in developing a more thoughtful and testable model and can be easily framed as questions. Prong one—what do you currently know about “X”? Most people will go on a hunch by using easily accessible information. It may be effective, but it will not be helpful in more complex decisions and modeling like the approach being proposed here. Prong two—what do the experts, research findings, and theories say about “X”? Some people will review expert research findings. This will get at important research and relevant theoretical issues. However, it lacks the necessary practical implications associated with benchmarking. And, prong three—what are best and worst in class doing with regard to “X”? Benchmarking may be a valuable tool, but it must be assessed with the unique knowledge that exists in the organization (prong one) and expertise outside the organization (prong two). The three prongs of sound thinking should be conducted completely and in the order described. The questions presented above can be posed in a variety of forms and are presented as examples to get you started. The results for people using an exercise like this are confidence in the decisions made, better decisions, and an appreciation for sound thinking.

Step 3: Install and Initiate Data-Collection Process

The process by which data are gathered and stored can be overwhelming. The focus of this step is on getting the most reliable, relevant, efficient, and accurate data. It is important to consider where to house the organization’s data. Many organizations keep their information decentralized. In some cases, information is kept from other parts of the organization. Creating a whole system model requires that all information be centralized. There are exceptions to this prescription, but it should be explicitly addressed and agreed on. While data warehousing is centralized, the collection process can be decentralized. Because there are various ways to measure something, the previous steps should be used to choose the best measurement protocol. As for the timing of data collection, decisions have to be made about frequency, date, and time.

Step 4: Diagram the Predictive Model

Diagramming the predictive model requires conducting statistical analyses and visually mapping the significant and meaningful relationships. Examining relationships in the whole system model requires at least two questions to be answered. First, what relationships are significant? As relationships are shown to be significant or not significant, the model's validity becomes apparent and the opportunity for refinement becomes clearer. For those relationships that are not significant, the variables in question may need to be revised or removed.

Second, how important and meaningful is the significant relationship? This is determined by statistical tools that provide information as to the amount of variance explained by the predictors in the performance variables of interest. Meaningfulness also refers to the degree of impact a predictor variable has. That is, as the predictor variable moves (that is, up or down), what degree of change does it create in the outcome variables? For example, a 3 percent increase in employees' perceptions of environmental support may lead to a 2 percent increase in critical customer service behaviors, thus leading to a 3 percent increase in customer intention-to-return. This 3 percent increase in customer intention-to-return may then lead to a 4 percent increase in actual customer retention and a 2 percent increase in sales. This example indicates that a relatively small change in a predictor variable can translate into a large leap in performance.

Step 5: Use the Feedback Process to Initiate Action

Feeding back the results from performance modeling can be productive and challenging. The objective is to facilitate a healthy and constructive discussion that leads to action. Figure 12.5 presents a simple model that can be used to facilitate the discussion. It is based on clearly separating the facts of the situation from judgments and emotions.

To begin, identify the relevant facts. Facts are objective, measurable, and observable information. Second, draw judgments (also called conclusions) from agreed-on facts. Judgments are value-laden opinions (that is, good and bad) related to the relative importance of the information. The modeling process provides facts related to causal relationships among the soft and hard measures. These facts can be helpful in evaluating longstanding judgments that have existed in the organization. With empirically based facts, the judgments are more objective and the emotional ramifications can help to build consensus. Therefore, it is important to clearly connect facts to judgments. Next, it is important to share the emotions that are surfacing as the facts are shared and judgments are formed (happy, sad, mad, fear, and guilt). Using the performance model to facilitate the sharing of emotions can be helpful in eliminating the static that often interferes with interpersonal communication. Finally, after coming to consensus on judgments regarding the facts, ask the following question: "What do you choose to do?" This is the step that promotes action and accountability.

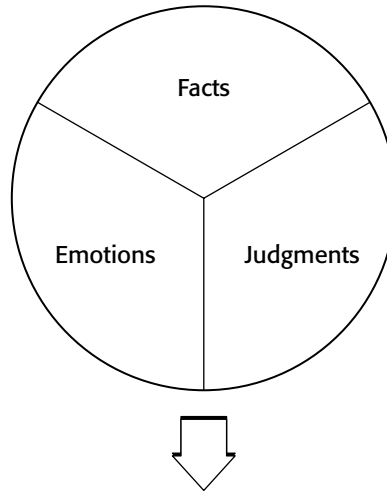


Figure 12.5. Components for Facilitating a Healthy Feedback Session

We recommend that the model in Figure 12.5 be presented at the beginning of the feedback session as part of the ground rules. Use the model explicitly as a tool for keeping discussion focused and constructive.

BARRIERS TO EVALUATION

It is difficult for any professional to seek input on the quality of his or her product or service and the level of his or her expertise. For this reason, some consultants and clients create barriers—real and imagined—to planned evaluation. The following are some factors that discourage evaluation.

Lack of Money

The decision makers of a client organization may believe that the benefits of an evaluation do not warrant the expenditure for the OD consultant to conduct the evaluation. They may believe that the funds would be better spent on additional interventions. In our experience, this seems to be the major barrier to OD evaluation.

Lack of Time

An OD consultant may find that commitments to other clients create time conflicts that will not allow him or her to conduct an effective evaluation. In the

same way, the decision makers of an organization may be impatient to move on and not want to take the time to conduct an evaluation.

Organizational Politics

The contact person within the client organization may have taken a significant risk in contracting with an external consultant or in championing the hiring of an internal consultant. An evaluation may lead to the conclusion that the intervention was not successful, thereby confirming the poor judgment of the contact person in deciding to use an OD consultant or in selecting the particular consultant.

Consultant Reputation

An OD consultant may be reluctant to conduct an evaluation. If the evaluation is positive, it may be thought that the consultant influenced the assessment of his or her own work. If the assessment is negative, the client organization—as well as the consultant—may feel that a lack of expertise is indicated. This could jeopardize the consultant's role within the contract and the client organization and could affect his or her reputation in the OD field.

Lack of Measurable Variables

Some interventions produce outcomes that are not easily measured. If this is the case, the difficulty of the evaluation task may lead the client and the consultant to avoid it.

Lack of Competence

Many OD consultants have more training and experience in conducting interventions than they do in conducting evaluations. Therefore, they may feel more comfortable conducting interventions than they do conducting evaluations, so they tend to emphasize the former and avoid the latter.

Fear of Being Blamed

If fear exists within the organization, lack of cooperation may stem from fear of being blamed. There also is an inclination within U.S. culture to use evaluation to blame someone. Our experiences in school exemplify the negative nature of evaluation. If the outcome of an OD effort is not everything that was desired, evaluation may create an opportunity to blame someone—if not the consultant, then the manager, the supervisor, the change-team members, or the employees.

Perceived Lack of Value of Evaluation

Previous experience or lack of understanding of the value of evaluation may create a perception that evaluation is not necessary and that it does not add value to the intervention.

“Results Are Obvious!”

Sometimes, the client simply perceives that the outcomes of the OD process have been so obvious that it is not necessary to conduct an evaluation. If people are responding very positively to the process, or if there have been improvements that are obvious to everyone, then it may, in fact, not be necessary to conduct a more formal evaluation.

COMPETENCIES FOR CONDUCTING EVALUATIONS

Certain competencies are required to conduct an OD evaluation. Internal and external OD consultants should be able to carry out the steps that are described below.

1. *Create an Evaluation Plan.* Create an appropriate, comprehensive evaluation plan that will link outcome expectations with outcome measures.
2. *Initiate Ongoing Feedback.* Expectations of the client for the consultant and of the consultant for the client should be established during the contracting stage, and a plan for ongoing feedback concerning the client-consultant relationship should be established. Regular meetings should be scheduled, and informal feedback discussions should be encouraged throughout all levels of the organization.
3. *Select the Method of Evaluation.* The method of evaluation will be determined by the objectives of the intervention and the factors discussed previously. The OD consultant must have expertise in using a wide range of quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods.
4. *Establish a Feedback System.* A feedback system should be developed to monitor the change effort continuously, both during the intervention (formative) and after the intervention (summative). Processes and outcomes both can be evaluated at both times.
5. *Develop and Use Valid Instruments.* A consultant must know how to create, administer, and evaluate valid, reliable, and practical instruments.
6. *Ask the Right Questions.* A consultant must ask the correct evaluation questions. In order to do this, the consultant must know not only the details of the intervention and the people and process likely to be affected, but also how to ask questions that elicit further information.
7. *Analyze and Present Data.* A consultant must know how to analyze the data generated by the evaluation and how to present it to the client and others in the organization so that it is clear, credible, and useful.

8. *Integrate Feedback and Make Corrections.* Once the data from an evaluation are presented, the consultant has to work with the client and/or change team to apply the learnings from the evaluation to improve the OD effort.
9. *Transfer Skills to the Organization.* A major goal of an OD effort is to transfer OD skills to the client organization so that it can use them in the future. Evered (1985, p. 426) suggests that this competence involves enhancing the ability of an organization to be self-reflective. The following list, based on Evered, describes attributes of a self-reflective organization:
 - The capacity to examine its own assumptions and to raise pertinent, critical questions about its own functioning and reason for being;
 - The willingness to continually ask how to know whether it is performing adequately;
 - The ability to continually assess its own health, including its own criteria for health;
 - The willingness to explore, to test by trying things out, and to transform itself continually;
 - The encouragement of both intra-organizational and boundary-spanning (for example, outside the organization) dialogue;
 - The tolerance of dissent, criticism, and self-doubt; and
 - The continual search for improved ways of understanding its own nature (core learning).
10. *Acknowledge Failure and Reinforce Progress.* Effective evaluation allows a consultant to study failures and learn from his or her mistakes. A consultant also should recognize progress and make sure that all those involved know what results have been achieved in order to motivate them to continue the change process.
11. *Create Appropriate Closure.* It is important that there be appropriate closure of a current project before the consultant and the client/change team proceed to the next cycle or project. Achieve closure by reviewing progress with the client and verifying that original expectations have been addressed.

SUMMARY

When appropriately applied, the evaluation phase of an OD project can be a very effective component. Without evaluation, no one learns how to improve the OD process, and important lessons go unlearned. A cost/benefit analysis

will almost always show that evaluation has a positive cost benefit. With the advice contained in this chapter, consultants and clients will be able to evaluate an OD process more effectively.

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Separation

W. Warner Burke and Ann Van Eron

The last step or phase in the OD consulting process is *separation*. This final phase is important but is rarely conducted in a careful, planned manner. Few consultants or researchers choose to write or speak about this phase of the OD process. While not atypical, the following synopsis of an actual OD effort provides an illustration of a consultant's managing the final phase rather poorly.

CASE EXAMPLE

The OD consultant had worked with his client for about nine months conducting the usual steps. Data had been collected via interviews from a majority of management and key staff personnel. The data were reported back to the CEO and his direct reports, followed by a similar summary of the interview results to the larger system. The OD consultant's diagnosis was that most of the data collected were symptoms and that the major underlying cause was the existence of two "camps" within top management who vehemently disagreed with one another as to how the company should be managed and what business strategy was best regarding the future. The consultant held an open discussion concerning the two-camp issue with the CEO alone and then with the entire top group of executives. The group verified that the consultant's diagnosis was correct and that action should be taken to do something about this serious conflict.

The CEO was very supportive of participation, that is, he wanted consensus within his top team. As a result, he was immobilized by the seemingly intractable differences of opinion, particularly regarding strategy. The OD consultant provided coaching with suggestions for action steps. Changes within the top group needed to be made. But no action was taken. Time went by, with the CEO continuing to be in a “frozen” state. The OD consultant became exasperated.

The CEO did eventually modify the organizational structure somewhat and fired a key executive, but the OD consultant believed that these changes were largely cosmetic and would not lead to the fundamental changes that were needed for significant improvement in organizational performance.

The OD consultant had other clients at the time who were more demanding, and, therefore, he allowed this client to drift away rather than pursuing potential options for change and working on his relationship with the CEO. Separation in this case occurred, not due to a planful process, but rather as a function of time passing and inadequate motivation on either the consultant’s or the client’s part to try harder or to agree in a deliberate way to discontinue the relationship.

While real and not necessarily unusual (see Burke, 1991, for more detail), we are *not* recommending this case example as an exemplary one for the separation phase. The fact that a careful and planful separation phase is not common is no reason to overlook the importance of this final phase in OD practice.

Separation is not easy, and, in any case, we should be clear that separations occur more often as a consequence of, say:

- A change in leadership due to retirement, a new and perhaps sudden assignment, or leaving the organization for “greener pastures.” For example, one of us had been a consultant to a large, global corporation for well over three years and had worked closely with the CEO and head of HR. Both of these gentlemen retired at about the same time. The succeeding CEO, who had been with the corporation for a number of years, made it clear to the consultant that he would no longer be needed. In the eyes of the new CEO, the consultant had been “too close” to the retired CEO and the HR executive, and he needed to establish his own direction and bring in a new consultant who would not be seen as “linked to the old regime.” Although not planned by the consultant, separation occurred nevertheless.
- Acquisition or merger where new leadership takes over and perhaps changes many of the old ways of doing things, including changing consultants.
- Sudden change in organizational priorities due to an unforeseen crisis, for example, the Bhopal disaster, Enron’s financial “errors,” or perhaps some sudden change in technology that drastically affects the business.

These examples represent frequent unplanned separations and, therefore, are rarely under the control of the OD consultant. We will now address the separation phase in a more conscious and planful manner.

THE SEPARATION PROCESS

Done properly, the separation phase will be linked back to the contracting phase. What did the initial contract (probably revised a number of times along the way) call for? For external consultants, the contract covers the work to be done, of course, and is usually accompanied by specifications regarding time and money. This process may be less defined for internal consultants, since they are often considered to be “on call” much of the time. Yet internal OD consultants can conduct their practice in much the same way as externals, that is, moving through the phases from entry and contracting to separation. It’s just that separation for internals is more like ending a project but not ending a relationship with the client.

In any case, separation is planned as a function of the content in this contracting phase. Good contracting on the part of the OD consultant consists of agreements of who does what when and the specification of “deliverables”—the work to be performed—and how long everything is expected to take. So here is where the separation phase begins, that is, when the work has been completed to the client’s satisfaction.

The Cycle of Experience developed by the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland identifies the separation phase to be a critical part of the change or consulting process (Gestalt Institute of Cleveland, 2003). Closing—identifying what has been achieved and what remains undone—supports learning and integration (Mackewn, 2003). Moving toward closure and separation doesn’t imply that the work has been unsatisfactory, but that it is time to move on. By closing the engagement, there is space for new awareness and mobilizing energy for new beginnings. Closing must happen with the client as well as independently by the consultant. Consultants must pause and reflect on what went well, what is unfinished, and what was learned.

The separation process begins with the contract phase of OD consulting by identifying what the “deliverables” will be. Once these deliverables are achieved, then ending the consulting project and client relationship is in order. But, as noted already, separation is difficult. After all, we as OD consultants get into this business because we love to help, to be needed. We may wittingly, but more often unwittingly, foster dependence.

DEPENDENCE

A part of the value system and folklore of OD is that effective consultants work themselves out of jobs. It is important for OD consultants to transfer their skills to clients and to identify resources in client organizations to carry on change efforts. At the same time, consultants must avoid becoming dependent on their clients as a means to meet their needs for work, money, or affiliation, because these needs can lead to unnecessary change efforts and wasted resources. Consultants should respond to actual needs in client organizations rather than to their own needs.

As consultants embark on the separation process, they should be aware of their “need to be needed” and refrain from encountering or encouraging dependence (Bell & Nadler, 1979). To avoid dependence, consultants have to train those in client organizations to continue their own change efforts.

In practice, one project with a client often leads to other projects. An effective consultant develops a good working relationship with his or her client and identifies new opportunities within the client organization. At the same time, the OD consultant should continue to transfer his or her skills to organizational members so that they are capable of facilitating their own change efforts.

The notion of dependence in the OD relationship has its origin in the assumption that the consulting relationship is equivalent to the relationship between a therapist and patient. Although both are helping relationships, the situations are quite different. The client for an OD consultant is often an organizational system, and the OD consultant tends to work with many people from the client organization and with the interfaces between people and units. This mitigates personal dependence issues with the consultant. On the other hand, a prolonged project can create some dependence on the consultant. That is why appropriate training of organizational members is so important to effective separation.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES

The client and the consultant can experience a sense of loss that may result in depression and dependence as a positive working relationship comes to a close (Block, 2000; Kelley, 1981). In some societies, endings often initiate anxiety, discomfort, sadness, or depression. Therefore, some people may avoid terminating relationships. They may postpone completing projects by beginning new projects or by procrastinating in completing assignments.

The client and the consultant may have shared important experiences and are likely to have developed a mutual interdependence. It is important that the consultant initiate a discussion to address and deal with the emotions associated with disengagement. Otherwise, these feelings may not go away (Kelley, 1981), and they could lead to anger or an unproductive extension of the consulting process (Dougherty, 1990).

In a healthy but terminating OD relationship, the client may miss the confidential, candid, and stimulating discussions he or she had with the consultant. Both the client and the consultant can experience the loss of friendship. The consultant may also sense a loss of challenge.

The process of jointly determining the appropriate time to terminate the relationship allows the client and the consultant an opportunity to share their feelings and perspectives. An open discussion about the discomfort in separation is important and healthy. The consultant and the client will find it valuable to understand the stages and the behavioral outcomes of the mourning process for long-term relationships. Bridges's (1980) book on transitions presents one view of this process.

The consultant may express concern about the well-being of the client. In addition, discussing future possibilities for working together can ease the stress of termination (Dougherty, 1990) and can validate the friendship.

DETERMINING NEXT STEPS

After the client and the consultant have reviewed the initial agreement or contract and determined the results of the change effort, they can then identify any remaining tasks and determine whether to continue the services of the OD consultant. The client and the consultant should develop an outline of next steps and decide who will be involved in these. If the goals of the change effort were not realized, the consultant and the client will have to redefine the challenge or desired state and/or generate new intervention options. Even if the goals of the effort were realized, there still may be additional or related work for the consultant. In this case, the process moves to one of exploring needs and contracting anew. Alternately, the consultant and client may decide that additional work is not required at this time, but they may still wish to retain some type of relationship.

One way to stay in touch with clients is to contract for a different relationship as the OD consultant departs. We have coached clients after the completion of change initiatives on a regular basis or for quarterly check-ins to assess progress. Even when a formal arrangement is not made, it is useful to touch base with clients to renew friendships and engage in dialogue regarding initiatives and developments. When a successful separation is made, it is not uncommon for clients to call even years later for another engagement. After we assisted a client with a large cultural change effort, she called for assistance with an even more complex cultural change process when she moved to a

different organization five years later. Because time had been spent to evaluate and successfully separate, the client had positive feelings about the work and we were able to start a new process in an efficient manner. We were able to recall our learnings from the first project and build the structures and support needed to be successful. In addition, we had a basis of trust.

A consulting project with a different organization was successful, but the client became very busy and time was not taken to effectively separate. A few years later the client was grateful when the consultant stopped to visit and they then were able to adequately close when he had more time and energy. It is likely he did not call for additional projects because he felt awkward about the ending. Some ways to stay in touch and maintain a relationship include sending periodic notes and emails, visiting the client when nearby, encouraging the client to call anytime, helping clients find resources, suggesting articles and books, providing recommendations for opportunities that may be of interest, such as conferences, and calling to ask to use the client's name as a reference for other projects (Biech, 1999).

It is useful for all involved to pause and appreciate the successes and challenges associated with the project. We continually remind people to pause and reflect, even briefly. With the fast pace of organizational change, it is easy for people to become burned out. Building in the structure of pausing, learning, and celebrating along the various milestones of a change initiative make final separation a more natural part of the change process.

The consultant should plan to fill the emotional gap that he or she experiences when a major project is completed. It is not uncommon for consultants to experience depression after successfully completing major projects. Many OD consultants immediately begin new and challenging projects; others plan relaxation time. It is helpful to acknowledge that low feelings are natural and to learn how to manage them (Kelley, 1981).

SUMMARY

We'll conclude with a more successful case of separation. One of us worked with a client to change the organization's culture. The project involved working with the organization's leadership team to develop a vision, strategy, and implementation plan. Part of the process was supporting the executive leadership team's development and providing executive coaching to the CEO and his direct reports. The consultant assisted the leadership team in developing and communicating the vision, values, desired behaviors, and plans to the large organization. After implementation teams were in place and the organization was experiencing the benefits of the OD process, the consultant began to reduce her role and support those in the organization taking on more of the responsibility to ensure implementation.

The consultant had several meetings with the CEO to review the original contract and dialogue about their achievements—what went well and what was unfinished. Both agreed that the initiative had been successful in building the case for the need for change, building a strong leadership team (where the opposite had been the case), enhancing morale, and generating excitement and commitment for the changes being made. They regretted that perhaps too much energy was focused on a leader who did not support the change and that it had taken some time to find strong internal OD support. Both the client and consultant shared what they learned from working together. The reflection allowed the client and the consultant to appreciate their efforts and accomplishments.

The consultant and client then focused on identifying next steps. A plan was made to transition facilitation of the team meetings to the CEO and the internal OD leader. The internal OD leader agreed to follow the structure and format for the meetings that the consultant had introduced. The consultant coached the internal OD person. The OD leader agreed to follow up on the development plans of the leaders the consultant coached. The consultant and the OD leader met with those she coached to review goals and actions. Some of those being coached continued with the consultant for an additional period. A clear transition was made to having the internal OD person facilitate executive leadership team meetings. Together, the consultant and the leadership team reflected on their successes and learning. The leadership team also identified next steps for the team going forward. It was agreed that the consultant would meet with the leadership team once a quarter for the rest of the year to check in on progress on the actions and how the group was functioning.

The clients and consultant recognized the emotional component of separation. Some members of the team were sad about the transition. The consultant provided empathy and support. The consultant experienced both satisfaction with the project, as well as sadness in reducing her involvement and connection with members of the organization. It was useful to identify the mixed feelings and find support; the consultant talked with colleagues about her experience of loss.

The consultant followed up with the team and leader to check in on progress. In addition, the consultant periodically called members of the organization to check in. She later resumed coaching with some members who moved on to other roles. Over time, the consultant was invited to work on a number of projects by those she worked with, both for the same organization and for other systems.

Taking the time for reflection about fulfillment of the contract and the process, recognizing the emotional component of separation, agreeing on next steps, saying good-bye, and following up enable the client and the consultant to benefit from this last phase of the OD process.

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PART THREE



LEVELS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Part Three is focused on levels of change. That refers to the scope of the change effort. It is, after all, important to talk about how much change is occurring—or how many people are affected by it. This Part consists of the following chapters:

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| Chapter Fourteen | Taking Organization Culture Seriously,
by Edgar Schein |
| Chapter Fifteen | Person-Centered OD Interventions, by Udai Pareek,
John J. Scherer, and Lynn Brinkerhoff |
| Chapter Sixteen | Team Building: Past, Present, and Future,
by W. Gibb Dyer, Jr. |
| Chapter Seventeen | Interventions in Large Systems,
by Thomas G. Cummings and Anne E. Feyerherm |
| Chapter Eighteen | Whole System Transformation: The Five Truths of
Change, by Steven H. Cady and Kathleen D.
Dannemiller |
| Chapter Nineteen | OD Through Interlevel Dynamics, by David Coghlan |



Taking Organization Culture Seriously

Edgar Schein

Culture as a concept impacts organization development (OD) in two fundamental ways. First, it is increasingly evident that practitioners of OD must learn to deal with the cultures and subcultures of client systems. This requires conceptual models and intervention skills that realistically deal with what culture is and how culture works.

Second, OD as an occupational community has developed a culture and subcultures within itself and must learn what its strengths and weaknesses are. Of particular importance is the recognition that the subcultures within OD may be in conflict with each other but may not be aware of it. In this chapter I present a working model of culture and then analyze these two OD issues.

WHAT IS CULTURE AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

The simplest way of thinking about culture is to liken it to personality and character in the individual. As we grow up, we learn certain ways of behaving, certain beliefs, and certain values that enable us to adapt to the external realities that face us and that give us some sense of identity and integration. As a group or organization grows and succeeds, it undergoes the same kind of growth and learning process. The initial beliefs and values of the group's founders and leaders gradually become shared and taken for granted if the group is successful in

fulfilling its mission or primary task, and if it learns how to manage itself internally. The group's culture consists of its accumulated learning, and if the group builds up a history, the beliefs, values, and norms by which it has operated become taken for granted and can be thought of as shared assumptions that become tacit and non-negotiable.

When we take this model to the level of organizations, the same logic applies, but with additional elements. The young organization develops shared beliefs, values, and norms based on what its founders brought with them, what the people they hired have brought, and what worked in solving problems of survival, growth, and internal integration. However, as organizations grow and age, they also develop subunits, in which the learning process described above occurs as well, since they have different tasks and different issues of internal integration. An organization will, therefore, eventually develop both an overarching culture along with subcultures that will vary in strength and degree of congruence with the total organization culture.

The strength of a given culture or subculture will depend on several factors:

- The strength of the convictions of the original founders and subsequent leaders;
- The degree of stability of the membership and leadership over a period of time; and
- The number and intensity of learning crises that the group has survived.

The stability of the leadership and membership is the most critical in that high turnover, especially of leaders, would keep the organization from developing a shared set of beliefs and values.

The content of a given culture is generally the result of the occupational culture of the founders and leaders of the group or organization. Since the mission or primary task of an organization is to create products or services that its societal context wants and needs, successful organizations usually reflect some congruence between the core technology involved in the creation of the products and services and the occupational skills of the founders and leaders. Thus, a computer company tends to have been founded by electrical engineers, a chemical company tends to have been founded by chemists and chemical engineers, and a bank or financial institution tends to have been founded by people trained in the management of money. There will be many exceptions, of course, such as IBM, which was founded by a salesman, but ultimately there will be congruence between the core technology and the core occupations of the founders and leaders.

An occupational culture can be thought of then as the shared, taken-for-granted beliefs, values, and norms of an occupational community based on their formal training and practical experience in pursuing the occupation. In the

traditional professions, such as medicine or law, these beliefs, values, and norms are codified and formalized, including codes of ethics designed to protect the vulnerable client from professional exploitation. As new occupations such as OD have evolved, they have sought to professionalize themselves by developing formal educational and training programs for future practitioners and by developing codes of practice and ethics designed to reassure clients and set standards.

The process by which this happens is the same as in the growth of other group cultures. OD founders and leaders, such as Kurt Lewin, Lee Bradford, Rensis Likert, Ron and Gordon Lippitt, Eric Trist, A.K. Rice, Tommy Wilson, Harold Bridger, Elliot Jaques, Doug McGregor, Chris Argyris, Richard Beckhard, Herb Shepard, Warren Bennis, Bob Blake, and Bob Tannenbaum—to name a few of the first generation of forerunners—have shared certain beliefs, values, assumptions, and practices that they have taught to successive generations.

However, as this long list of OD leaders indicates, the process of forming consensus around occupational norms takes longer and is more complex because the client systems respond differently to different practices that come from the same occupational community. And in this way an occupation spawns subgroups and subcultures in the same way that a given organization does. For example, the Tavistock group was built around A.K. Rice, who developed very different theories and assumptions about how to work with groups and organizations from the Lewinian group that developed in Bethel, Maine, or the Human Potential group that evolved in California around Bob Tannenbaum and John and Joyce Weir.

Even the OD group working in Bethel eventually divided over the issue of whether to stay focused on leadership training and community building or to become more individually oriented. Within ten years this group had divided into at least two factions—those wanting to continue to work with organizations and managers and those who saw in sensitivity training the potential for therapy for “normal” individuals and who allied themselves with the human potential movement.

The field of OD today is, therefore, considered to be more of a confederation of subcultures trying to become a single occupational community rather than a profession in the more traditional sense. It is missing a core content, however, which would be embodied in a formal training program and licensing process, and there is little consensus on what is an appropriate or inappropriate form for working with client systems. The same statement applies to the larger field of consultation, especially management consultation, where it is obvious that consulting companies and individual consultants are quite diverse in what they advocate is the “correct” way to deal with clients and what they think the goals of consultation should be.

In making an analysis and critique of OD practices, I am not indicting the whole field, but I am trying to set a standard that is undoubtedly already held by many OD practitioners. The critique is warranted, nevertheless, because

published accounts of what OD practitioners advocate are still, in my view, both scientifically and practically out of line with what we have come to learn about the cultures of our client systems.

Certain practices that I observe, hear about, and read about show a complete lack of understanding of how culture works in the organizations in which these practices are pursued and, furthermore, imply a complete lack of self-consciousness about the degree to which those practices reflect a given sub-culture of a given set of OD practitioners, rather than an accepted consensus in the larger OD community.

IS OD STILL HOOKED ON DIAGNOSIS AND DATA GATHERING?

This analysis and critique is directed at the models of consultation that take it for granted that, before one makes an intervention, one should make some kind of diagnosis of what is going on. That diagnosis is typically based on several things: (1) the consultant's insights based on prior education and experience, operating in the form of mental models that structure expectations, predispositions, stereotypes, and communication filters; (2) the consultant's personal style and preferences in the sense that those preferences will predispose the consultant initially to perceive the new situation in a way that is comfortable for that person; (3) the here-and-now "online" interpretation of spontaneous reactions by the client to whatever the consultant does, and the consultant's reactions to what the client says and does; and (4) formal or informal activities by the consultant in the form of questions, surveys, or observation periods designed to elicit data (most models talk about a *stage* of data gathering) that are then interpreted by the consultant as a basis for deciding how to intervene.

It is my belief that the first and second factors, the consultant's theoretical biases and personal style, are inevitable and ever-present sources of whatever diagnostic insights the consultant possesses. It is also my belief, in this case based on my own experience, that the third factor, the immediate "online" interpretation of here-and-now events as the consultant and client interact, is the only valid basis for diagnostic insights. And by implication, it is my belief that the fourth factor, the active diagnostic activities that consultants engage in for gathering data are, in fact, interventions in disguise that, if not treated as interventions, change the system in unknown ways and, thereby, invalidate whatever is found by the interviews, surveys, or observations in the first place. In other words, formal diagnostic processes launched by the consultant through surveys, assessment processes, tests, or interviews are neither scientifically valid nor good practice.

When we engage in any kind of interaction with another person or group, whether in the role of a consultant, friend, casual acquaintance, or stranger, we are in a process of dynamic, mutual influence that simultaneously reveals data

to be interpreted and learned from and changes the situation as a result of the interaction. Even if we take a completely passive listener's role, like the psychoanalyst sitting in a chair behind the patient on the couch, our silence is still an intervention that influences the patient's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. When therapists talk of *transference* and *counter-transference*, they are talking of the reactions both in the patient and in the therapist, through their ongoing interaction.

For some reason, in the OD field, many practitioners have deluded themselves that they can engage in data gathering prior to intervention and have, thereby, created a monumental fantasy completely out of line with reality, that is, that data gathering *precedes* intervention.

Let me illustrate. A CEO calls me to help him figure out what some of the cultural realities are in his organization and how to institute more of a culture of teamwork. I express some interest since this is my field, so I have already intervened by altering his expectations about my potential involvement. He invites me to visit the organization and talk to some of his colleagues. Some proponents of OD theories and models would argue that I should accept this invitation and gather data to decide how to proceed and whether or not to take on the project. It is my assertion that this would be totally inappropriate. Why?

First, I do not know what the CEO's motives are in bringing me in as a consultant. Second, I do not know what the CEO means by "culture." Third, I do not know what problem is motivating the CEO to explore this area. And fourth, I have no idea what the CEO has told the organization and, therefore, have no idea what the impact would be from my showing up there to gather data. What then should I do?

I should intervene with the intention of having my intervention produce some data that might help me to figure out where to go next and how to build a relationship with this CEO that would be trusting enough for me to find out what is really going on. My intervention goal is simultaneously to build a relationship and to learn more (gather data), but note that I start with intervention, not with diagnosis. So I inquire, get interested, and try to communicate to the CEO that I will work with him but will not take the monkey off his back. I will not visit him unless we can talk out what he has in mind, why a visit would be helpful, and how it would be arranged. All of the initial interventions are geared to building a trusting relationship with him, not for its own sake but in order to facilitate accurate communication between us. If it turns out that the project really involves a vice president and her group, the CEO and I have to decide jointly how to involve her, how to present me to her, and how to build a sense of joint ownership of what we do next. These steps need not take a great deal of time, but the relationship building should be the focus of the initial interventions.

What I am arguing against in the strongest possible terms is consulting theories that start with some notion of up-front "contracting" followed by a period of data gathering or scouting in preparation for some kind of intervention.

Eventually the field of OD will have to disassociate itself from the field of assessment, especially quantitative assessment, where such techniques are advocated as preceding the building of a relationship with clients that permits valid concerns to be worked on. Assessment will eventually be a different field but will never work if culture is not taken into account.

IS TOO MUCH OD BASED ON INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING MODELS?

This critique is directed at two groups of OD practitioners—those who are helping with individual assessment, 360-feedback, and coaching, and those who try to fix organization-level problems by interventions designed for individual counseling.

I am told that some of the most sophisticated coaching involves interviewing the client's role network without giving any thought to the potential impact on the network.

Only experimental psychologists trained in pre-Milgram days would treat others as simply sources of data without analyzing what it means to them to be asked to give opinions about a colleague, or what might happen if they choose to compare notes and create consensus opinions where none existed before. Only organizationally naïve consultants would assume that you can create the conditions for colleagues to give honest and useful feedback without understanding more about the politics and culture of the organization in which this is taking place.

A more disturbing issue is the question of who is paying for the coaching, the organization or the individual, and what the implications are if the organization is paying. Is the coach supposed to influence the client toward organizationally valued behavior? Will the organization accept a coaching process that leads a valued executive to decide to leave the organization? Does the coach have to report to higher management if he discovers in the client certain traits that clearly go against company values? Who owns the data from the 360-feedback process, and are the colleagues who provide feedback warned about who will or will not see the data?

My fear is that the answers to all of these questions are based on maximizing the supposedly scientific accuracy of the data and what is good for the individual client, with virtually no consideration of organizational implications.

The same issues apply, of course, to the ever-popular survey process. It has always amazed me that survey projects intended to improve morale and connectedness between management and employees tell the respondents that their answers will be kept completely confidential. Isn't this a confession that management assumes that employees would not give honest opinions unless they were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality?

The use of surveys and assessment tools, especially in the area of culture and climate, has a second problem—the assumption that a lot of individual responses can be amalgamated into a picture of something that is organizational. Many OD

practitioners, especially those coming from quantitative sociology or psychology, assume that one can build valid conclusions from adding up the responses of samples of employees. I think it is naïve to assume that, if we guarantee anonymity, we will then get the truth. The scared employee will still try to be positive, the angry employee will still exaggerate on the negative side, the alienated employee will be a non-respondent, and the survey analyst will use sophisticated statistical tests to prove that 40 percent of a group, that is itself a sample of 25 percent of the total population, reacting a certain way, is or is not something that management should pay attention to.

After management and the survey analysts have reached certain conclusions, they pay lip service to OD values by sending the data back down through the organization by requiring every supervisor and his or her group to meet and go over the data that have been provided from the master database. It is even possible that, under certain conditions and in certain cultures, this process now starts some useful discussions at the employee level, but the message is very clear that it is management that is deciding what and how to discuss it.

Would it not be better if supervisors got together with their employees in the first place, either in open discussion, or with survey data gathered from that group right after it has been gathered?

My view is that this kind of session *can* happen in residential team-building labs. If morale improvement, teamwork, and problem solving are the goals, the method should reflect those goals, and employees should be involved from the outset. The individual respondent method gives management a lot of numbers that they do not know what to do with and consultants a lot of money for providing potentially useless information.

But that is not the worst of it. The survey stimulates thought, gets discussion going among employees, sets up expectations that management will listen and fix things. In the traditional survey method that I am criticizing, management does not have to make any up-front commitments so there is a great danger that morale will get worse while management tries to figure out what to do.

DOES OD MISAPPLY NATURAL SCIENCE MODELS TO HUMAN SYSTEMS?

One set of criteria for deciding how to intervene in the organization at the outset derives from the assumption that consultants are “scientists” who have to gather valid information in order to make valid diagnoses so as to give valid advice. What is hidden in this generalization is that the word “scientist” has different meanings in different subcultures. If we adopt the natural science model, we start with the assumption that it is essential to ask questions that minimize the respondent’s bias, that give minimal cues as to the consultant’s own opinion, and that

can be asked in a standard format so that responses can be compared and combined. But is this possible? Can one gather objective data in a human relationship? Or are cultural predispositions, prior expectations, and preconceptions always operating and, therefore, always biasing not only what the respondent will tell you but also what you are capable of hearing? The most dangerous source of bias is lack of mutual involvement. If the consultant plays a minimal role as an intervener, being just an objective data gatherer, there is a good chance that the client will feel like a guinea pig or a subject of study and will give only the most minimal and self-protective responses possible.

A further assumption of the natural science model is that the respondent and the data gatherer are independent entities so that “objective” data can be gathered. An alternative assumption that I believe fits the work with human systems much better is that the consultant and the client must form a relationship out of which can come new ideas and new data. But those data reflect the relationship, not the client as a unique and independent agent. In fact, most theories of therapy, such as modern psychoanalysis and gestalt therapy, assume that growth comes out of transference and counter-transference, not out of insight on the part of the patient.

From this point of view, the entry of the consultant into the system is the first intervention and the system will never be the same. This is consistent with most traditional theories of OD. We have somehow overlooked in some of our OD subcultures the fact that the Heisenberg principle applies to all systems, so why would we assume that we can study systems without changing them? I agree completely with Kurt Lewin’s dictum that you do not really understand a system until you try to change it.

WHAT SHOULD OD’S STANCE BE VIS-A-VIS SUBCULTURES? WHAT IS ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH?

Having been critical of some OD practice, let me now shift to a more positive view. How should OD evolve as an occupation? What basic mental models should it operate from? If OD consultants care about the developmental part of that label, they want to have a concept of organizational health.

Organizations are dynamic systems in a dynamic environment. My preferred model of health is, therefore, a systems model of the coping process. What does a system have to do to cope with a perpetually changing environment? There are five critical processes to be considered, and each of them provides some mental models of what the consultant should pay attention to strategically.

First, the system must be able to sense and detect changes in the environment. The organizational therapist can intervene by observing or inquiring whether or not the organization is in touch with its relevant environments.

Second, the system must be able to get the information to those subsystems that can act on it, the executive subsystems. The sales force or the purchasing department may detect all kinds of environmental trends, but if senior executives devalue the opinions of those employees, they will not be able to assess and cope realistically. The organizational therapist can intervene by *inquiring* whether appropriate channels of communication exist and whether relevant information circulates.

Third, if the information requires changes in one or more subsystems, if new products have to be developed, if manufacturing processes need to change, or if refinancing is required, can the system change in the appropriate direction? Is there systemic flexibility? Can the system innovate? Many an organization knows exactly what it must do to survive, has sufficient insight, but is unable to make the necessary tradeoffs to create real change, just as many individuals prefer to live with their neuroses because of secondary gain and the difficulties involved in relearning. The organizational therapist can intervene by inquiring about present transformational processes and help the client to design and facilitate major transformations.

Fourth, the system must have the capacity to export its new productions. This issue should focus the therapist on the whole sales and marketing function to inquire about whether changes made actually are effectively externalized.

Finally, the system must close the cycle by observing accurately whether its new products, processes, and services are achieving the desired effect, which is again an environmental sensing process.

Of course, this is a perfectly good model of an individual human, seen in systemic terms. What makes it more complex in organizations is that the subsystems develop their own cultures that often are in conflict or at least out of alignment with each other. All organizations are subject to schizophrenia or multiple personalities as they age and grow. The subcultures form around units that have enough independence to do their own learning and that exist in different environments, such as geographical units or functional units. All organizations also have what you might think of as three fundamental subcultures that must be aligned:

1. *An operator culture, the line organization that delivers the basic products and services.* This would be production and sales in businesses, nursing and primary care in hospitals, the infantry in the army, and so on. These units are always built around people and teamwork and are embedded in the organization.
2. *An engineering or design culture, the research and development function and/or the design engineering function.* This culture is not embedded within the organization but in the larger occupational community that constitutes their profession. It is their job to design better products

and processes, which often means engineering the people out of the system through automation, because it is people who, in their view, make mistakes and foul things up. These are the design engineers in business, the experimental surgeons in the hospital, and the weapons designers in the military. Their solutions are often expensive, which reveals the third critical culture.

3. *The executive culture, the CEO, whose primary job is to keep the organization afloat financially.* The CEO culture is also a cosmopolitan culture that exists outside the organization in that the CEO is most responsive to the capital markets, to the investors, to Wall Street and the analysts, to the board of directors, and, paradoxically, to the CEO's peers. CEOs believe their jobs to be unique and feel they can only learn from other CEOs.

A NEW ROLE FOR OD CONSULTANTS

I have mentioned these three subcultures because I believe they redefine the job of the organizational therapist and OD consultants in a fundamental way. Instead of helping the operators and trying to get the engineers and the executives to pay more attention to the human factors, which is typically what we do, why not help the engineers to be better designers and help the CEOs be better money managers? Instead of pitting the operator culture against the other two, which our value premises often lead us to do, why not define our job as getting these three cultures to communicate with each other so that everyone recognizes that all three are needed and must be aligned with each other?

We sometimes tend to forget that society advances through design improvements and that, without good fiscal management, organizations and the jobs they provide disappear.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, to take culture seriously, we must start with understanding the occupational culture in which we are embedded and that we take for granted. Having understood that, we can then examine the cultures and subcultures of our client systems and decide whether or not there is enough value congruence to proceed with the project. If we pass that test in our own minds, we can proceed to help the client by intervening in a helpful, constructive way to build a relationship with each part of the client system that will reveal cultural strengths and weaknesses on the path to helping the clients with whatever problems they want us to help with.

Our growing awareness of organizational cultures and subcultures will ensure that all our interventions are jointly owned with the client so that whatever further actions are taken are feasible within the existing culture and take advantage of its strength. If we encounter elements of the culture that are hindrances, then we will work realistically with our client to launch the much more difficult and time-consuming process of changing that element, always being mindful of using other elements of the culture as sources of strength for the change program.

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Person-Centered OD Interventions

Udai Pareek, John J. Scherer, and Lynn Brinkerhoff

Cutting-edge OD practitioners are creating powerful new personal development approaches “standing on the shoulders” of Kurt Lewin, the grandfather of applied behavioral science. But they have gone beyond his breakthrough theories of the 1940s, which awakened the world to the power and role of the *system* within which a person lived and worked. Lewin’s principles were a timely counterbalance to the attraction to personal therapeutic models of Freud and Jung and to behavioral psychologists like Skinner.

Of crucial importance was Lewin’s classic formula of a person’s relationship to his or her environment, $B = f(P \times E)$, where behavior (B) equates to the function (f) of the person (P) multiplied by (\times) his or her environment (E). His formula implies that individuals are not isolated entities “behaving” in a vacuum; rather, they interact with and are shaped by what is going on around them. As many OD practitioners know—sometimes from painful experience—attempting to change a person’s attitudes or behavior in isolation from the environment may limit long-term success. Like alcoholics who go away to get “clean,” often to relapse on returning to their family system, individuals in organizations “sent away to be changed” usually revert to their former patterns of behavior on re-entry to the work situation. Lewin’s advice still applies: instead of trying to change the individual, it’s better to focus on changing elements in the *larger system* that would more likely modify their behavior permanently.

Early practitioners of OD took this principle to heart. They consciously leaned *away* from what they saw as therapeutic interventions for individuals. Instead they focused on areas Lewin believed had the greatest leverage for influencing individual change: teams, departments, and larger organizational units—the larger system of the organization. Today, creative OD consultants have found ways to “get the whole organization in the room” (Bunker & Alban, 1997). But ironically, although personal development is not the primary intent of these large-scale, system-focused interventions, anecdotal reports suggest that individuals experience profound attitude and behavioral change from system-focused activities.

More recently, however, many OD practitioners have realized that, in focusing on the whole *system*, the necessary and valid attention on the *individual* may have suffered. Therefore, it is time to reconsider the individual, the very present but under-valued element in the classic OD formula, within the larger context. Barry Johnson (1992, p. 4) describes polarity as an issue to be managed, creating a situation in which a position taken in one position requires an opposite position to be managed. As Barry Johnson (1992) has said, “What we have here is not something we should get ‘positional’ about. This is not an *either/or*, but a polarity to be managed, a *both/and*. In a polarity, the more we focus on one pole or position, the more important the opposite pole or position becomes” (p. 4). So the question for an OD consultant of whether to focus on the individual or the system has only one answer: Yes.

In this chapter, we explore what cutting-edge OD practitioners are doing today to integrate individually focused elements into their interventions. In the context of OD, “personal development” refers to any activity or intervention whose primary intent is to increase the self-awareness and effectiveness of the individual or individuals involved. Such person-centered OD interventions, to be discussed in this chapter, include the following:

- Training programs that include elements aimed at individuals, conducted either in-house or off-site, as part of an OD intervention;
- Mentoring, which focuses on career planning and performance counseling and is usually carried out by someone from within the client system; and
- Coaching of individuals by someone from inside or outside the client system.

One important reason for OD consultants to have access to high-quality personal development technology is to enhance their own lives and practices as well.

THEORETICAL BASIS FOR PERSON-FOCUSED INTERVENTIONS

Effective personal development interventions focus on individuals working in their organizational contexts. Many theorists have contributed to person-centered work, including Freud, Jung, Erickson, Berne, Bion, Skinner, Pavlov, McClelland, Lewin, and Drucker.

Freud, Jung, and Erickson are well-known for their contributions to psychology and psychoanalysis, which reveal the existence and importance of a person's inner world. Erickson was especially important for his delineation of the stages of development in a person's life. One of his major conclusions was the now-well-accepted notion that the human being is on a dynamic journey, not just living in a static state—which is fundamental to personal development work in OD.

Berne was the founder of Transactional Analysis (TA), which many consultants used extensively in their OD projects in the late sixties and seventies. TA provided a simple way for people to see the inner workings of their minds and to apply what they learned at work (Jongeward, 1976). A more recent frame on Transactional Analysis, called Emotional Intelligence (see Goleman, 2003), represents a simple but powerful model that can assist people at work to distinguish which human reactions are that of a mature adult or more child-like, which can provide guidance in how best to intervene with their colleagues. EQ, as it is called, like TA before it, provides the consultant with a vocabulary for working with the emotional dimension of personal development in more hard-nosed environments.

Bion, whose work included the study of group processes in the 1940s, helped create the Tavistock Institute in England with other practitioners of social psychiatry. In collaboration with Ron Lippitt and Ken Benne, he developed the “training group” or T-group, used in the NTL (National Training Laboratories) in the United States. T-groups were one of the first person-centered OD interventions used and are still important, although much less so than in the 1960s and 1970s (see Bradford, Gibb, & Benne, 1964).

Skinner, Pavlov, and McClelland provided the basis for many skill-training, behavior-modification, and motivational-arousal interventions, creating a subset of OD called performance management (PM), which involves analyzing and adjusting the reward-punishment system in an organization to motivate individuals to do the right thing well every time. As the saying goes, “If you want to change behavior, change the consequences.” Lewin, a predecessor of OD, is well-known for field theory, employee-involvement interventions, and the power of democratic processes. He essentially pioneered the field of applied behavioral science, the theoretical framework out of which OD grew as the practical application (for more information, see Marrow, 1984).

Peter Drucker, a long-time management expert, has stated that he no longer tries to teach managers how to manage others; rather he focuses on teaching them *self-management*. This requires personal development (Drucker, 2001).

THE THREE LEVELS OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Regardless of the intervention being used—training, mentoring, or coaching—personal development will occur at one or more of the three levels described below: the work content area, the functional/transferable area, and the adaptive area (see Figure 15.1).

The Work Content Area

By definition, work content means the capabilities a person must have to be effective in a particular job or role in an organization, but which are not transferable. These abilities would be *visible* to virtually anyone who watched the person work, because people are what they do. For instance, to be a dentist, a person needs to know how to drill and fill cavities. If that dentist goes to work as a manager inside an insurance company, that specific skill would not be required or useful. In an organization, work content skills tend to be related to particular departments. What it takes to be a star performer in information technology, for instance, may not help a person if he or she is transferred to human resources or marketing. Many individual development efforts in the workplace focus “above the waterline” in the pyramid shown in Figure 15.1, since the skills are more directly connected to a person’s effectiveness on the job. Technical training, a huge commitment in many organizations, is aimed at this area. We all know people, however, who have mastered the work content skills for their jobs, yet fail dismally as members of the organization. There is more to individual effectiveness than this level of skill. Work content skill-development is necessary but not sufficient for maximum individual effectiveness.

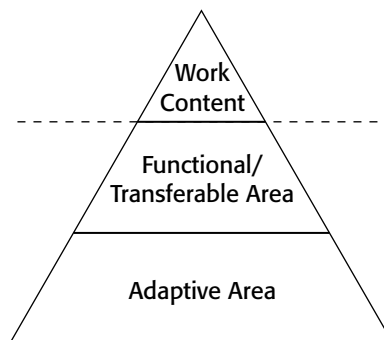


Figure 15.1. Three Levels of Personal Development

The Functional/Transferable Area

Just beneath the work content area in the pyramid are capabilities that apply to more than one specific job or role. These are functional or transferable skills such as:

- Listening;
- Speaking in front of groups;
- Managing conflict;
- Making decisions;
- Leading meetings;
- Planning; and
- Managing projects.

If an employee moves from IT to HR or marketing, these skills accompany him or her. Stephen Covey's *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (1989) represents this kind of personal development in the organizational context. The best training, mentoring, and coaching interventions will have concrete deliverables in the functional skill area. While some education and translation may be necessary, clients can usually see the connections between these skills and getting the job done. Only the most linear and hidebound leader will not recognize the relevance of functional skills. Most experienced OD consultants are well-schooled in the design and delivery of coaching and training initiatives in functional skills, and train-the-trainer certification programs for them abound. (See ASTD at www.astd.com or *Training* magazine at www.trainingmag.com for examples.)

The Adaptive Area

There is another level, however, that is fundamental to the other two, which is the most hidden and most powerful area of personal development. The adaptive area refers to the habitual ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving that a person developed as a youngster growing up in his or her family of origin (Kerr & Minno, 1999). How did they learn to adapt to what was happening around them and how will they modify these thoughts and behaviors for greater personal impact? Here is a sampling of skills in the adaptive area used to assess and train leaders and managers in client systems:

- Receiving constructive criticism non-defensively;
- Relating to authority (figures and structures);
- Being fully present in any given moment;
- Having self-awareness;

- Reacting with courage, grace, and honesty in conflict situations;
- Being self-correcting; and
- Responding when they have control—or don't have control.

Obviously, the adaptive skills are deeper in the causal chain of human behavior. In fact, it might be more accurate to view what lies in this domain as *unconscious automatic tendencies*, rather than as *skills*. The adaptive area explains *why* a person does what he or she does in the functional and work content areas. These characteristics are more about who a person *is* than what he or she thinks or does. Most adaptive tendencies are so embedded in people's psyches that they may not be aware of when they are using them. They may think they are just being themselves. People who knew a person well when they were younger could watch him or her at work now and see the child they once knew.

People don't normally think *about* the adaptive area—but think *from* it. Fortunately, rather than being on automatic, or leaving to chance whether or not what they are doing is right for the situation, they can become aware of their adaptive tendencies and begin to exercise some *choice* in how they respond to certain situations.

It is a rule of work life that people get *hired* for their work content and functional skills—or how good they are above the waterline—and *fired* (or promoted) for their adaptive tendencies—or how good or poor they are below the waterline. The most effective people at work are those who are willing to try things and explore, through training, mentoring, or coaching, what is going on in their adaptive area. OD consultants aspiring to include personal development interventions in their practice would be well-served to get involved in ongoing work in their own adaptive area. (See www.scherercenter.com for information about a personal development approach, You ARE the Intervention, based on this concept.)

THE INTERPERSONAL BENEFITS OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT¹

Identifying and addressing personal development opportunities in an OD effort has benefits not only for the client(s) being worked with directly, but for all those the client(s) interact with as well. After all, most accomplishments in the workplace occur within a *relationship infrastructure*, a human system, within which employees, managers, and leaders enter into an ongoing series of interpersonal encounters.

“If you want to awaken all of humanity, then awaken all of yourself. Truly, the greatest gift you have to give is that of your own self-transformation.” This may sound like advice from a current business best-seller. Actually, it comes

from the brilliant mind of Lao Tsu, 6th Century B.C. philosopher (quoted in Novak, 1994). Stephen Covey (1989), a more recent philosopher, says, “Private victories must precede public victories.” They both understand the direct and unavoidable connection between mastering the outer world and mastering your own inner world. To have earned the right to attempt to influence others, OD consultants need to be “doing their own work” of self-development. *Then* it is appropriate and possible to assist in the development of clients. OD consultants who attempt to change others without addressing their own development will be experienced as manipulators.

At the very bottom of self-mastery is mastering fear. Working with a client’s fear is often a huge factor in the success of any OD effort—fear of the unknown, fear of change, fear of failure, fear of looking bad. There are a million fears that grip people in the workplace. Marshall Goldsmith (2000), one of the better-known executive coaches, asserts that when clients become afraid and highly stressed, they lose access to their own humanity and become survival-oriented. This leads to de-humanizing those they are afraid of, stripping them of their humanity, reifying them, turning them—and themselves—into *objects*. The result: a failed relationship between two human beings, failed because at least one of them has forgotten that everyone involved is a human being. Only human beings are capable of creative problem solving.

THREE PERSON-CENTERED INTERVENTIONS IN OD: TRAINING, MENTORING, AND COACHING

We offer a deeper look at the three personal development modalities: training, mentoring, and coaching, all of which can be used to foster any or all three areas of personal development as shown in Scherer’s pyramid. We begin with the most widely used OD intervention to have an impact on personal development—*training*. Even though the work content area (that is, technical) is the focus of most training, a masterful OD practitioner can also direct development of functional and adaptive capabilities.

Training: Using a T-Group

One of the oldest person-centered OD interventions, and still one of the most powerful, is the T-group, which was developed virtually by accident by Lewin himself.² The purpose of a T-group is to provide participants with intense personal experiences designed to help them examine their ways of interacting with others, their styles of self-presentation, their basic life positions, their values, and other issues. Participants work in small groups of eight to twelve people for periods ranging from three days to two weeks. In OD’s early years, T-groups

were a widely used technology for team building and were aimed primarily at changing attitudes and values. Practitioners and OD pioneers like Bob Tannenbaum soon realized, however, that one of the unintended consequences of the T-group was a powerful personal development experience for participants—and facilitators.

Adopted and exported to the West Coast in the early 1950s by personal growth facilitators like Jack Gibb (1978), Will Schutz, and Carl Rogers (1980), the T-group quickly became the technology of choice for people looking for a developmental breakthrough. In the process, the T-group eventually was offered to the public at large, rather than remaining just a means of OD intervention, thereby divorcing it from its original organizational context. (NTL-LABS [www.ntl.org] is the organization that has maintained and passed on the T-group, offering Human Interaction Laboratories around the world.)

In the hands of a well-trained facilitator, the T-group is a powerful, although somewhat risky, person-centered OD intervention. In terms of individual development for the workplace, it can help people, as Geoff Bellman says, to bring more of who they are to what they do.

Why a T-Group Works in OD

The first thing a T-group participant finds is that the OD consultant/facilitator *does not actually facilitate*—at least not in a way that can readily be seen as useful by participants (Golembiewski, 1977). Participants must interact with each other without an agenda and without guidance from their facilitator, other than for processing observations. Generally, the only agenda is: “We are here to learn about self and others.” The facilitator states a few norms of group behavior—such as speaking for yourself, listening, practicing authenticity, staying in the present, and respecting others—then only monitors and comments on what he or she sees happening. This creates an ambiguous situation for the group, which must develop of itself. How each participant responds to this absence of structure reveals a great deal—about each person, about groups, and about human nature in general. The T-group’s discussion centers on the present moment, and there is no authoritarian hierarchy since the OD consultant refuses to be drawn into that role. Each participant is afforded equal opportunities to experiment with new behaviors in an open, trusting climate that evolves after several days of intensive work. The end result is a shift in how participants view themselves and others. This shift goes deep because what is affected is the adaptive level, the person’s core belief system—not conscious thoughts, but rather those embedded childhood assumptions about self, others, and life. A psychological shift takes place at the deepest level, and participants find themselves behaving differently in functional skill areas as well (Scherer, 1980).

Cognitive Dissonance and T-Groups

As Lynton and Pareek (1990) have shown, one reason the T-group works to change participants' attitudes and behaviors is the result of *cognitive dissonance*. Cognitive dissonance exists wherever there is a perceived difference between what is and a key belief about what *should* be happening. It has been said, "Cognitive dissonance is what happens inside you when you see your worst enemy drive off a cliff in your new car." Because of the absence of traditional emotional and conceptual supports, participants are confronted with several kinds of dissonance or internal discord, which must be reduced. This dissonance manifests in four ways:

1. Between the participants' expectations of the consultant/facilitator and the consultant's actual behavior. Consultants avoid all participant attempts to seduce, force, or otherwise get them to conform to their expectations to provide more familiar structure or facilitation.
2. Between a participant's self-concept and his or her actual laboratory behavior.
3. Between the participants' expectations of the group's reactions to what happens and the group's actual reactions.
4. Between the image that a participant wishes to project and the image that others in fact perceive.

Dissonance between beliefs and reality leads to a discomfort that is often felt by T-group participants as a kind of chaos, which becomes an uncomfortable void that they must fill with their own created reality. This act prompts learning to occur. But then, according to Scherer (1981), chaos is the birth canal for all personal development. Something has to give. The participant either has to disbelieve what he or she is experiencing or let go of a belief or assumption about what he or she thinks should be the case. This dissonance makes the T-group an intense and disturbing experience, which is exactly why T-groups produce such high rates of learning retention. Research findings from the U.S. Bureau of Research place T-group retention rates at 75 percent, compared to 55 percent for visual material, and 35 percent for lecture presentation (Lynton & Pareek, 1990).

The key point to remember here is that, whether a consultant is designing a training program or setting up a coaching or mentoring relationship and wants deep learning to occur, one proven approach is to make sure that there is cognitive dissonance in the experience. The consultant or facilitator must find a way to confront participants with whatever gaps are present between their concept of things and reality (for example, how trusted others perceive things). This requires that both participants and the OD consultant be highly skilled at offering and receiving feedback.

T-Group Limitations

T-groups do have their limitations, however:

- You can't lead others where you haven't been yourself;
- Not every organization is ready for T-groups;
- T-groups seem to work best with a minimum of eight and a maximum of twelve participants—which raises the cost-effectiveness question, especially in large systems;
- An effective T-group requires at *least* three days' duration; and
- T-groups conducted with people from the same organization engender a heightened, perceived—and, in some cases, actual—personal and organizational risk for participants. For example, “I let Tracy see me in a more vulnerable and real way today in my T-group, and she's going to be sitting across from me in the staff meeting next Monday. What will happen then?”

As indicated above (Lynton & Pareek, 1990), people who have been to T-groups on their own *have* been able to retain and apply a surprising amount of learning on their return to the organization, regardless of the lack of larger system involvement.³ Even with these caveats, the T-group deserves to be understood and respected, and its principles applied in person-centered OD interventions because it has great power to shift the attitudes and behaviors of individuals in an organizational setting.

Personal Development Principles Derived from the T-Group

Regardless of the type of personal development intervention you may be planning, you would be well-served to consider the following principles that characterize a good T-group:

1. Invite participants to come up with their own learning objectives.
2. Create a design that allows participants to *discover* things, rather than telling or showing them.
3. Make the environment a safe place to be, but also a place where participants know they will be confronted with their developmental areas.
4. As trainer or facilitator, minimize your role as much as possible, only providing what the participant(s) can't provide themselves.
5. Create a supportive climate, where defensiveness is reduced and supportiveness is enhanced.

Jack Gibb (1978) describes two types of group climates this way:

<i>Defensive Climates</i>	<i>Supportive Climates</i>
Evaluation	Description
Controlling	Visioning
Strategy	Spontaneity
Neutrality	Empathy
Superiority	Equality
Certainty	Provisionalism

Mentoring and Coaching: One-on-One Personal Development

While training in all its various forms continues to be the delivery system of choice for most person-centered OD work, a rapidly growing number of individuals and organizations are turning to one-on-one approaches to save time and money—and to achieve maximum depth of insight and transformation. One-on-one developmental relationships have had a long history, dating back to Biblical times, as when Moses turned to his father-in-law, Jethro, for help (see Exodus 18: 13–27). Although we don't know exactly what happened in this one-on-one encounter, here is a possible updated scenario of this Biblical conversation:

“I can't handle it any more!” Moses says to his trusted father-in-law.

“What's the problem?” Jethro asks.

Says Moses, “I've just got too many people coming to me for decisions and advice. All day long . . . It's all I do now. It's driving me crazy! What can I do?”

Jethro replies, “Well . . . How about this? What if you set up some of your best decision-makers to be responsible for a hundred people, and a few of your *very* best to be responsible for a thousand people . . . that way, some handle all the little stuff, others handle the not-so-little stuff, leaving you to take care of the really big stuff . . .”

“Hey!” says Moses. “I like that!” and he did what the two of them had created together.

There is a lot about *mentoring and coaching* embedded in this hypothetical exchange.

- Moses is hard-working—you might say even driven—and is experiencing some strong *dissonance* between his idea of how this wilderness trip was supposed to go and what was actually happening.
- Jethro is older, more experienced, knows his way around, and is someone Moses respects. They had sufficient *bandwidth* for this conversation.

- Apparently Jethro had confronted a situation like this before—or at least Moses believed Jethro had the *emotional distance* and clarity to see a new solution.
- Trapped inside his *old paradigm*—the one that came out of his promise to Yahweh about getting everyone to the Promised Land all by himself—Moses couldn't see his way to a solution for his current distress.
- Moses asked for help. The feedback and coaching were *requested*. This opened Moses' heart and mind to receive Jethro's idea.
- Jethro first affirmed what would *not* change in the situation. He is rooted in reality, not in pie-in-the-sky positive thinking. “Yes, Moses, these people are going to keep coming to you—or someone—for a long time.”
- Jethro then suggests something for Moses' consideration. He doesn't try to force or sell his idea. It is a *suggestion*, not a command. When a good coach or mentor offers an idea, he does not use positional power with the client (if he has any), but rather relies on the power of the idea itself.
- Moses *acted* on his father-in-law's coaching. He set up the organization suggested by Jethro and saw it through.

Mentoring

The word “mentor” comes from the name of the Greek man, Mentor, in whose care Odysseus left his son Telemachus while on his ten-year return voyage from the Trojan War, as told by Homer in the epic *The Odyssey*. In Odysseus' absence, Mentor not only helped the boy become a competent young man but also saved his life. This relationship, in which an older or more experienced person assists a younger or less experienced individual in his or her development, is a model for what we now know as mentoring. Mentoring has become a widespread means of providing personal development in OD.

Today's organizations realize that mentoring programs are quite effective for addressing such issues as diversity, developing current and future leaders, retaining high performers, and reducing the time and financial cost of training/learning. Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee (1978) were instrumental in defining the mentoring process. Their concept of a mentor includes such roles as teacher, sponsor, counselor, host, guide, exemplar, developer of skills and intellect, and supporter.

Mentoring integrates characteristics of parent-child and peer-support relationships. According to Levinson et al. (1978), young people who do not have mentors during their formative years are disadvantaged in terms of their psychological and career development. Young people often search for and discover appropriate mentors on their own, but enlightened organizational leaders are paying more attention to mentoring and making it an official part of the leadership and management developmental process. Young managers with high

potential are often the first to be given mentoring experiences. Generally, a young manager is assigned to a mentor who is senior in position and age and who sometimes occupies a position that is several hierarchical levels above that of the protégé. Mentors are not necessarily selected from their protégés' departments but are selected for their interest, availability, and mentoring competence. This would include the image of their competence and empathy among colleagues, and their ability to provide appropriate emotional support. One mentor should not have more than five protégés, say Levinson et al.

Research supports the perceived value of a good mentoring program. The American Society for Training and Development reported that 75 percent of executives surveyed cited mentoring as being one of the key factors in their business success. *Business Finance* magazine reported that 77 percent of companies credited mentoring with increased employee retention and performance (see mentor@mediapro.com).

What a World-Class Mentoring Program Looks Like

In the typical workplace mentoring program, a relatively new manager or employee is invited to take on the role of protégé and seek out someone in the organization he or she admires who is more experienced and could be a mentor. Mentors help their protégés navigate the organization's culture, including its political, operational, technical, and even interpersonal dimensions. They also listen to their protégés' personal and job concerns, help them search for solutions to on-the-job problems, share their own experiences, respond to their protégés' emotional needs, without creating inappropriate dependency, and cultivate longlasting, informal personal relationships. Here is a short list of what mentors do with and for their protégés:

- Increase the protégés' personal and interpersonal effectiveness by providing feedback about their behavior on the job and assistance in analyzing their interpersonal competence;
- Review the protégés' progress in achieving work objectives, especially project management;
- Identify concerns in and around the protégés that are hindering their progress;
- Assist in generating alternatives and a final action plan for dealing with identified concerns;
- Model the best behavioral norms;
- Champion the protégés for special projects, paving the way for their advancement;
- Assist the protégés in setting goals for continual improvement;

- Protect the protégés from the unseen consequences of potentially threatening political turmoil;
- Provide support to the protégé while he or she implements action plans; and
- Do whatever they can to help the protégé realize his or her potential.

Generally speaking, the mentor focuses on the protégé's career and movement up and through the organization. In the best mentor-protégé relationships, however, personal development becomes the emphasis, as the mentor offers feedback not only in the above-the-waterline aspects of career and job performance, but also below the waterline, to address functional and even adaptive skill areas as well. This requires a mentor who is trained in coaching, and a relationship with sufficient bandwidth to support the deeper work.

The Risks of Going Deep in Mentoring

Ironically, the deeper the personal development goes in a mentoring relationship, the more risky it becomes. Above-the-waterline conversations are safer for both parties. Neither really wants the protégé to reveal too much that might shake the mentor's confidence in him or her. This results in a certain limitation on the relationship, usually unconsciously, which restricts what can and cannot be discussed. If the protégé reveals too many vulnerabilities—crucial to development at the adaptive level, for instance, where the deepest learning takes place—it might affect the mentor's support and sponsorship. The typical mentor, who must also think about his or her own reputation in the organization, wants to be seen as backing winners. These factors, which are at work in many mentoring relationships, tend to invite the need for something deeper, freer, where the protégé can let it go, confident that nothing shared will come back to haunt him or her later. This deeper work, necessary for many professionals at various points in their careers, is what coaching is all about.

This also explains why below-the-waterline coaching is best provided by someone who is *not* in the protégé system.

Coaching

“Coaching is an ongoing professional relationship that helps people produce extraordinary results in their lives, careers, businesses, or organizations” (www.coachfederation.org). In the words of workplace coach and co-author, Lynn Brinkerhoff, “Simply put, coaching is a relationship designed to assist the client in bringing out the best they have in them and applying it in their lives.” Through the process of coaching, clients deepen their learning, improve their performance, and enhance their quality of life. In each meeting or phone call—

many clients and coaches never meet each other face-to-face—the client determines the focus of conversation while the coach listens and contributes observations and questions. This kind of interaction leads to greater clarity and moves the client into action. Coaching is intended to accelerate the client’s progress by providing greater focus, awareness, and increased options. Coaching concentrates on where the clients are now and what they are willing to do to get where they want to be in the future.

There are two basic paths to personal development coaching, corresponding to the two Medieval spiritual development methods: the *via negativa* (the negative road) and the *via positiva* (the positive road). Both work. The *via negativa* is what would be called gap analysis today. The client is assisted in looking deeply at where he or she is now, where he or she wants to be at some point, what is standing in the way, and what steps would get him or her where desired. The *via positiva* view looks at where things are working already and how the client can enhance or build on that existing capacity.

The *via negativa* view focuses on what is missing or not working; the *via positiva* view uses what is present when the person or situation is at its best.

Both approaches work—and work equally well. Johnson (1992) would say that what we have here is a polarity to be managed, not a good thing to be supported (the positive approach) and a bad thing to be invalidated (the gap-analysis approach). There are times when a masterful coach will want to have access to both.

We start with the *via negativa*, since it has been around the OD consulting field the longest and is still the path most intuitively taken. Lewin’s Force-Field Analysis showed that, if you pushed on “driving forces” in a change project, what usually happens is that the “restraining forces” simply increased to match our pressure. Lewin asserted that we will get more movement ultimately by reducing (or reversing) a restraining force, something most of us have experienced first-hand. This success in change efforts has led OD people to focus on the restraining force side of the equation, analyzing and addressing what is going against the change. What follows is a gap-analysis coaching process that has been used to coach individuals in a variety of organizational settings (Scherer, 1986).

STRIPES: A Breakthrough Coaching Process

These seven coaching dimensions, using the acronym STRIPES, can be addressed in order during a coaching session. Even better, a consultant could simply listen to the client, taking notes in the appropriate area, noticing which areas are receiving the most attention. Eventually, they will see which dimensions need to be explored further to promote the client’s breakthrough. The dimensions are described below:

- S What is SO? What is the situation now? (In as much vivid detail as possible.)
- T What is the TARGET or TRANSFORMATION? What will things be like when they are perfect? (Again in vivid detail.)
- R What are the REASONS you are not there now? What RESOURCES are present, supporting your intended breakthrough? (This is basically a force field of the situation.)
What are the RATIONALIZATIONS that are keeping things stuck?
- I What are the major ISSUES that you know will have to be addressed? (What have been the “dead horses on the table” that have been difficult to admit or discuss?)
- P What POLARITIES are present and not being managed well? (Where are you positional about something, holding it as an either/or when it might be a both/and? What are the potential benefits of the position you have been resisting or avoiding?)
- E What will be EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS? (How will you recognize that movement is taking place? What will be the first signs?)
- S What is a FIRST STEP you could take which, itself, would be a small breakthrough? (When will you take that step?)

Coaching as Appreciative Inquiry

For the *via positiva*, we use appreciative inquiry, a relatively recent addition to our OD technology, as an example. AI, as it is known, is based on a philosophy and practice that engage the client in an inquiry about *what is working*. (See Chapter Twenty-Two for more on AI.) An AI coach works in ways that are a sharp contrast to the traditional problem-solving or expert model of coaching.

Some guiding principles of AI follow:

- *Words create worlds*: For example, the word “issue” is replaced with a more neutral or even affirmative label, “topic.” What is focused on becomes reality. Reality is created in the moment an experience is “named” in the act of perceiving it—and there are multiple realities, brought into existence by the language used to describe what is happening.
- *Inquiry creates change*: The very first question begins the change process and influences the client in one way or another. AI questions are open, invite rapport—not report—and provide space for the person to swim around in a topic he or she may not have thought about before.

- *Life provides an endless opportunity for learning:* Once someone enters the AI process, everything that happens to him or her can become “grist for the mill” of learning.
- *Image inspires action:* Developing a strong, visceral image of a passionately desired future helps the person to want to start living it.
- *The more positive the coach’s questions, the greater the willingness to take action, and the longer lasting the change:* The most powerful questions call forth and affirm the positive core of the person, for example, “What do you value most about what you are able to contribute when you are at your best?”
- *Wholeness brings out the best in people:* People make the most progress when what they are doing integrates all aspects of their lives, bodies, minds, and spirits.
- *The past is a powerful source of wisdom and energy for the future:* People are more ready to journey into the future (the unknown) when they carry forward the best parts of the past (the known).
- *Choosing liberates personal power:* Personal development, AI style, is all about choice. The clients choose what to focus on, their image of the future, and their options for getting there.

The appreciative inquiry process is very simple and moves the client from the past to the future in a powerful way. The general steps, in sequence, are

1. DISCOVER—The client is invited to take an in-depth look *back* at what has worked in the past and *forward* to hopes and wishes for the future. Prior to this step, the client is helped to be very specific about the situation he or she wants to see changed. For example:

AI Coach: “You say you want to do a good job leading this layoff and you are scared. OK. Imagine that the layoff is over. What are one or two specific outcomes of the layoff that would make you proud and amazed?”

AI Client/Leader: “Every employee who had to leave left feeling respected and ready for the unknown, and those who survived are ready and excited about moving ahead with the company.”
2. DREAM—Building on the best of the past, the client translates his or her greatest hopes and wishes for the future into a statement. Written in the present tense, as though the future is actually happening, the statement needs to stretch and challenge, be exciting and something the person really wants. “If everything in this situation were perfect, what would be happening?”

3. **DEFINE**—Working together, the client and the consultant pinpoint exactly where the focus of the intervention will be, targeting specific behaviors that will need to shift.
4. **DESIGN**—This is the **HOW**. The client is asked to help design the interventions for making that future happen. What will be done? Who are key people who must be involved? Long-time AI consultant and coach Barbara Sloane guides her individual clients to interview key stakeholders themselves, using the AI questions, to find out how they are perceived from those who know them best. “Based on what you have experienced from me recently, when I am at my best, what am I doing and/or not doing?” With these data in hand, the client then selects the topics to focus on and decides where to begin.
5. **DELIVER**—The client is coached to get started, to go out and actually do what was just designed, putting energy into those key relationships and improvising as necessary, as the desired future becomes the present.

The Cutting Edge of Executive Coaching: Deep Empowerment for Personal Transformation

Coaching as traditionally practiced is a relatively straightforward process. Using either the gap analysis or the appreciative inquiry approach, the coach meets with the client—either on the phone or in person—and gets him or her involved in moving from where he or she is to where he or she wants to be. This may happen in a single session, or, as is most often the case, over a period of time and several sessions.

There is a potential tragedy, however, in traditional coaching. Given the open mind and heart of a client asking for coaching and the potential for transformation, a great deal of coaching “leaves money on the table,” meaning that the client could have been assisted in going much further. As the old adage goes, “A guide cannot take the student where the guide has not been.” Traditional problem solving and even much of what passes for personal development is more like papering over an old wall, adding to what is already there in the participant. Occasionally this is enough. Usually it is not. For instance, if a consultant were to coach a dictator who comes for help to better communicate, the consultant may simply have helped make the dictator more effective at leaving the same trail of victims. He or she may have missed an opportunity to help the dictator confront reality and choose another way of living and leadership.

Or take a highly effective and much-loved manager who is starting to collapse mentally and emotionally under the weight of a tendency to over-commit. As the coach, a consultant could get the manager to delegate more burdensome tasks to lighten the load. But, like acne on the teenager who reduces the pimples (the symptom) with a powerful cream only to have them pop up somewhere else, the

client will be back in the same state again until he or she identifies the root cause of the inability to say “no” and opens him- or herself to a new way of being. What he or she is *doing*—by saying yes all the time—is exhibiting behavior driven by some aspect of his or her *being*. The coaching challenge is how to help the client work back up the causal chain to what will transform his or her fear of saying “no.” This will require the consultant and client to go deeper.

Traditional training gives people new skills or increases an existing skill. It improves what is there by adding skills or capabilities to those a person already has, which is not necessarily a negative thing. In fact, training is something every human being should be involved in all the time. The goal is incremental improvement through skill development.

Deep, empowering, transformational education and development goes a huge step further. Education comes from the Latin verb *educere*, which means to draw out or to bring out something latent. When consultants are involved in educating or developing clients, they are not adding to what is there, rather they are calling forth something that is already there, from a deeper level—drawing out something the client may not even have known was there. Thus, the client is assisted in becoming more of who he or she already is.

These first two levels of coaching can be looked at as helping someone who is learning how to drive a car. Training is learning how to go faster in first gear. Transformational education and development is like shifting into second gear. It changes the learning experience considerably. A person can do a lot more things in second gear than in first. Transformation through coaching can lead to personal development at an altogether different level, leading the driver to consider questions like, “Where am I trying to go?” and “Why am I still in this car?”

FEEDBACK: A CORE INGREDIENT IN PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Feedback is a fundamental element in every training program or mentoring and coaching relationship. But a person doesn’t have to be in a program to get feedback. In every healthy organization, informal feedback occurs continuously, in all kinds of ways, and usually addresses above-the-waterline work content issues—things like how well a report went, or the accuracy of an email, or measurements of a person’s productivity. There is a tacit opening and expectation that someone will give you feedback on your performance. It comes with the job. When subordinates have achieved a level of competence and motivation in their jobs, the manager’s appropriate role becomes one of supporting from behind the scenes and giving feedback. To paraphrase Charlie Seashore, feedback is information about past behavior, delivered in the present, in a way that allows it to influence future behavior.

The kind of feedback we highlight next, however, is a little different from the on-the-job variety. In a personal development activity or experience, whether in a training program, mentoring, or coaching, feedback is quite often aimed below the waterline at levels a little closer to home, for example, the functional or adaptive areas. This requires true openness for the feedback from the recipient, as well as a depth of relationship sufficient to bear the dissonance created.

Regarding this level of feedback, Seashore observes that without feedback, how could anyone test the reality of his or her perceptions, reactions, observations, or intentions? If someone wants to share his or her feelings about something that has happened, what other way is there but feedback? If you want to influence someone to start, stop, or modify a behavior, how else but through feedback? In short, feedback is a potentially critical dimension that is present every time anyone interacts with anyone else, about anything.

Mark Yeowell, founder of the Global Integrity Leadership Group (www.gilgroupinc.com), has used the term “interpersonal bandwidth” as a useful way to describe the level of trust and respect that exists between two people or groups. When offering work content feedback, a person can get away with minimal-to-moderate trust and respect levels—a fairly narrow bandwidth. But when engaging in exploration of deeper functional and/or adaptive issues—say in a T-group—a person needs maximum trust and respect, or the largest bandwidth possible. So the first task in engaging participants in providing significant feedback is to make the investment of energy to create sufficient bandwidth. Once that is established, even poorly worded or partially formed feedback can be received as useful or even life-changing.

Giving and Receiving Feedback Effectively

Interpersonal feedback involves at least two people: one who gives feedback and one who receives it. The main purpose of feedback is to help the recipient increase personal and interpersonal effectiveness.

Giving Feedback Effectively. The effectiveness of feedback depends on the behaviors and responses of both the feedback provider and the feedback recipient. One who gives feedback, such as an OD consultant, can increase its effectiveness by ensuring that feedback:

- Is descriptive rather than evaluative (“X happened, which confused me” versus “That’s ridiculous”);
- Is focused on the behavior rather than on the personality of the recipient (“When you did XYZ. . .” versus “You’re a very controlling person”);

- Concerns behavior that is modifiable (“Making a funny sound in your throat” versus “That limp of yours. . .”);
- Is specific and based on data wherever possible rather than general and based on impressions (“Yesterday, the way you handled XYZ. . .” versus “You’re never nice to my friends”);
- Is based on data from the provider’s own experience rather than on hearsay (“I noticed XYZ. . .” versus “Stacey said that you XYZ”);
- Reinforces positive new behavior and what the recipient has done well (“Opening your presentation with that overview seemed to create a receptive listening. . .”);
- Suggests rather than prescribes improvement avenues (“I wonder what would happen if you did XYZ?” versus “Next time, do XYZ”);
- Is continual rather than sporadic;
- Is based on need and is best when requested by the recipient;
- Is intended to help rather than wound;
- Satisfies the needs of both the provider and the recipient;
- Lends itself to verification by the recipient;
- Is well-timed; and
- Contributes to the rapport between the provider and the recipient and enhances their relationship (“I want us to have an honest relationship and so I am willing to take the risk”).

Receiving Feedback Effectively. The effectiveness of feedback depends as much on how it is received and used as on how it is given. If the feedback disconfirms an expectation of the recipient (for example, concerning his or her self-image), dissonance is created. According to dissonance theory, disconfirming an expectation stimulates psychological tension, which sets up a moment of truth where learning can happen. The feedback recipient may reduce dissonance by reacting in either a defensive or an open/confronting manner.

When people feel threatened by the feedback they receive—for example, if they are criticized or blamed or are given negative feedback that they do not agree with—they tend to build a defense to protect themselves. However, using defensive behaviors to deal with threatening feedback is like using pain-killing drugs that reduce awareness of pain but do not address its cause. Defensive behaviors create an illusion of having dealt with a situation but do not change it. Hence, defensive behaviors reduce anxiety but do not resolve the conflict felt by the feedback recipient. Excessive reliance on defensive behaviors is likely to produce a “conflicted self,” however.

On the other hand, if an open/confronting behavior is used, conflict is reduced. Over time, the feedback recipient forms an “integrated self.” Of course,

defensive behavior is not always negative, and on some occasions may be warranted, for instance, when the giver of the feedback intends real harm. But if both people involved in giving and receiving feedback are interested in maintaining a relationship of trust and openness, then defensive behavior undermines that goal, rendering feedback ineffective.

In order to benefit from feedback, a recipient's examination of the defensive behaviors he or she uses when receiving feedback can be helpful. Then the individual can prepare a plan (preferably with the help of others) for reducing defensive behaviors and adopt confronting behaviors.

Open/confronting behavior helps a person to build relationships and collect more helpful feedback. The way in which a person receives and uses feedback also influences the way in which others give it. The recipient may test ideas and experiment with new behaviors on a limited basis, seeking more feedback to find out how others view his or her self-improvement efforts. This kind of effort can set in motion a self-improvement cycle, leading to increased interpersonal effectiveness.

If feedback is given in the spirit of a trusting and open relationship, and if it is received in the same way, it can become a powerful instrument of change. But if feedback is not properly received, it can disrupt interpersonal relationships and undermine group development.

While the degree of "bandwidth" established before engaging in detailed feedback is vital, it is still likely that the recipient will experience some reaction to the feedback being delivered. The key is for the giver to ensure that his or her motives are pure. As Charlie Seashore puts it, "When giving or receiving feedback, the central issue is congruence, which means acknowledging, understanding and delighting in what is happening inside you during the exchange" (Seashore & Weinberg, 1997, p. 191). The consultant might ask, "Are you offering this feedback because you care and want to contribute to this person's growth, or are you trying to get this person back for something he or she did or said to you?" A recipient of feedback may want to ask, "Is this person caring about me right now, and is he or she taking a risk by sharing his or her truth? And even if I do not like what I am hearing, what part of this message is valid for me?"

Finally, Seashore poses and answers a key question: "Why is feedback so universally important? Our environment is constantly changing, so we can't survive unless we adapt, grow, and achieve with others. But unless we can do magic, we need information about how we performed in the past in order to improve our performance in the future" (Seashore & Weinberg, 1997, p. 8).

INSTRUMENTATION: A HELPFUL FOCUSING "LENS"

For an individual to experience significant personal development, whether through training, mentoring, or coaching, it helps if he or she sets clearly defined goals or objectives early on in the process. Of great assistance in this

regard is some kind of diagnostic assessment instrument. It can be as simple as a checklist (see Exhibit 15.1) of a few items of interest to the individual with a scale for each item, allowing the person to do a self-assessment and then to collect data from peers, subordinates, and other colleagues. This is referred to as an inter-rater evaluation™. Quantifying perceptions in this way makes it easier to formulate personal development targets for improvement, although informally developed instruments may be lacking in both reliability and validity.

The SAFI Process: How to Use Instruments Effectively

For person-focused interventions, the Self-Awareness through Feedback from Instruments (SAFI) is a very powerful process (see Pareek, 1984). In using SAFI, participants take the initiative and use the scores they receive to find ways to increase their interpersonal effectiveness. Since they control the use of the data, there is a perceived higher degree of safety and therefore honesty in the process. There are nine steps in the SAFI process.

1. *Completion of the instrument*—Participants complete an instrument that has been standardized by experts.
2. *Conceptual input*—Participants read the theory associated with the instrument. This step familiarizes them with the instrument's conceptual framework. If an OD consultant is available, he or she can clarify the concepts underlying the instrument.
3. *Prediction*—Based on what the participants understand about the theory and meaning of the instrument, they predict their scores to reflect their own self-perceptions and their understanding of their own styles and behaviors.
4. *Scoring*—Participants score their completed instruments according to the procedures provided by the instrument's author.
5. *Interpretation*—Participants write down the interpretations and implications of their scores.
6. *Feedback*—Participants check the instrument feedback with other significant people whom they trust, such as managers, peers, and subordinates. They then collect factual evidence to confirm or question their interpretations and reconsider the implications of their scores.
7. *Action planning*—Participants decide to improve aspects of their personal styles or behavior and prepare plans to experiment with new styles or behave differently.
8. *Experimentation*—Participants implement their action plans, keeping detailed notes of satisfactory and frustrating experiences. An OD consultant, if one is available, provides guidance.



Exhibit 15.1. Sample Executive Development Assessment

Executive Development Intensive

Pre-Work Assessment

Tom is about to participate in an Executive Development Intensive. Part of that experience involves receiving anonymous feedback from six to eight colleagues on how they experience him in his role as leader. He has selected you to contribute to this “database.” Please circle the number beside each of the following leadership dimensions that best represents *how you have experienced him recently*—and fax directly to John Scherer at [555-555-5555]. Results will be collated and an anonymous summary presented to Tom. Thank you for your thoughtful contribution to Tom’s development.

1 = Almost Never 2 = Seldom 3 = Occasionally 4 = Frequently 5 = Almost Always

- 1 2 3 4 5 Makes tough decisions
- 1 2 3 4 5 Has the courage to do the right thing
- 1 2 3 4 5 Exhibits self-confidence (saying or doing things he might not have done before)
- 1 2 3 4 5 Has the ability to hear what people are really saying
- 1 2 3 4 5 Is authentically “present” for interactions
- 1 2 3 4 5 Has a sense of who he is and what makes him—and other people—tick
- 1 2 3 4 5 Recognizes and resolves conflicts in a timely fashion
- 1 2 3 4 5 “Speaks the unspeakable”
- 1 2 3 4 5 Has the ability to understand and work with different management styles
- 1 2 3 4 5 Persuades others or enrolls them in ideas
- 1 2 3 4 5 Has a positive attitude about himself
- 1 2 3 4 5 Has a positive attitude about colleagues
- 1 2 3 4 5 Has a positive attitude about the workplace
- 1 2 3 4 5 Catches himself when he’s “hooked” (emotionally reactive)
- 1 2 3 4 5 Is able to see his work as a vehicle for personal and professional development
- 1 2 3 4 5 Is a strong contributor to his work team and the organization
- 1 2 3 4 5 Works with a greater sense of purpose
- 1 2 3 4 5 Sees possibility in people and situations
- 1 2 3 4 5 Is effective with less effort
- 1 2 3 4 5 Turns conflict into positive change
- 1 2 3 4 5 Is able to integrate the “hard” and the “soft” aspects of a situation or problem
- 1 2 3 4 5 Knows how to relax when he needs to

Developed by John Scherer, 2002, for use with executive coaching clients.

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9. *Follow-Up*—After a time lapse, the participants complete the instrument again to determine whether there is a significant change in their scores. They elicit feedback from others whom they trust about any behavioral changes that have been observed.

(For additional guidance on the use of this instrument in a personal development intervention, see Pfeiffer & Ballew, 1988.)

CONCLUSION

First, doing person-centered work inside an OD intervention requires being aware of and managing a polarity. It is essential for the OD consultant to understand that it is impossible to do an intervention aimed at the *system* without also impacting every *individual* very personally. In the same way, when carrying out an individual intervention, such as coaching, the consultant must realize that the intervention will, even in a small way, impact the system—and trigger the organization’s self-protecting “immune system.”

Second, each person-centered intervention has strengths and weaknesses. For instance, training individuals can produce major change in a participant but, if it goes as deep as it is capable of going, the person may find re-entry to be very difficult. Mentoring is the easiest to introduce and requires the least “bandwidth,” but it is also limited as to how deep it can go because of the authority-laden relationship between the mentor and the mentee. Coaching, at least the kind that develops someone “below the waterline” in the adaptive skill areas, requires a very mature, centered, non-positional, well-trusted consultant.

Finally, the OD consultant of the future needs to have all three personal-development “arrows in the quiver”—training, coaching, and mentoring—and be eager to explore theories and models from outside traditional OD. We must allow ourselves to work with less tangible—but no less real—dimensions of human existence. Perhaps we are where physics was in 1905. Could we be operating with what is akin to Newtonian (mechanical) principles, which “work” at most levels, while resisting what would be akin to quantum (relational) principles? In OD, especially in the world of personal development, we are simply not able to sufficiently explain what happens inside and between people using our traditional models. The system-oriented OD principles of our founders, which were revolutionary at the time, will have to be accompanied by new, yet-to-be-discovered principles, based not on cause and effect, but on more subtle forces and principles that involve the unpredictable and indomitable human spirit. The next generation of person-centered OD practitioners *must* emulate the pioneering spirit of our founders and do what they did: go beyond what is taken for granted. When they do, they will be standing on the shoulders of smiling and appreciative giants.

Notes

1. The classic *Interpersonal Dynamics* (1969) by Warren Bennis, Ed Schein, et al., includes contributions by Carl Rogers, Jack Gibb, and other giants on whose shoulders we stand in the interpersonal domain.
2. The story about the birth of the T-group is worth reading, since it came into being as part of an early OD intervention Lewin and his colleagues were carrying out in a Northeastern school system to reduce racism. (See Bradford, Gibb, & Benne, 1964.)
3. Much has been written about training. For a more in-depth discussion refer to Lynton and Pareek (1990) and to treatments found in Rothwell and Kazanas (1992) and Rothwell and Sredl (1992). Also, check out www.astd.org, the website for The American Society for Training and Development and www.trainingmag.com, the site for *Training* magazine, to find out who is doing what in the training area.

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Team Building

*Past, Present, and Future**

W. Gibb Dyer, Jr.

Teams and their relationship to organizational effectiveness have been a hot topic in the management literature and popular press in recent years. Self-managed teams, virtual teams, cross-functional teams, and other types of teams have been popularized and studied as to their role and impact on organizations. Moreover, the field of organization development (OD) has historically focused on helping such teams improve their effectiveness. In many ways, the field of OD developed out of an interest that OD scholars and practitioners have had in teams and team dynamics, which can trace its roots to the early experiments with “training-groups” or “T-groups,” which were largely sponsored by National Training Laboratories (NTL).

My father, William G. Dyer, was part of what might be called the “group dynamics-humanistic psychology” movement in the 1960s that focused on the use of T-groups to enhance individual and organizational effectiveness. The basic T-group was composed of eight to twelve strangers who met with a professional trainer over a week or two to gain insight regarding their own behavior and the behavior of others. In those early days, many T-group professionals, like my father, believed that the T-group was the vehicle for improving the lives of individuals and organizations. However, in the late 1960s, Campbell and Dunnette (1968) reviewed the various studies that had documented the impact of

*This chapter is dedicated to my father, William G. Dyer, who taught me the importance of building effective teams—especially the family.

T-groups. They concluded that T-groups seemed to have some impact on improving the interpersonal competencies of individuals, but there was little evidence that T-group training had a significant impact on team or organizational performance. In light of these findings, my father and others began to look for new approaches to improve team performance that would build on what was learned from the T-group experience, while modifying the approach to help intact work teams function more effectively. After some experimentation, a new model of team development, called “team building,” emerged. My father noted the reasons for the shift from the T-group to a team building model:

“As practitioners developed more experience in applying the T-group methods to work units, the T-group mode shifted to take into account the differences of the new setting. It became clear that the need was not just to let people get feedback, but to help the work unit develop into a more effective, collaborative, problem-solving unit with work to get out and goals to achieve. Slowly the methodology shifted from the unstructured T-group to a more focused, defined process of training a group of interdependent people in collaborative work and problem-solving procedures.” (Dyer, 1977, p. 23)

While T-groups are still used today in some instances to improve team performance, we will turn our attention in the rest of this chapter to describing how OD consultants currently help team performance through (1) understanding team context, structure, and dynamics and (2) utilizing proven team-building interventions. After covering these two areas, I will briefly discuss the skills and abilities needed by the team-building consultant and the role of team building in the organizations of the future.

UNDERSTANDING TEAM DYNAMICS

A basic understanding of group and team dynamics is essential for OD consultants to engage effectively in team-building activities. Initially, it is important to have a normative framework from which to critique the functioning of a team. Douglas McGregor (1960, pp. 232–235), in *The Human Side of Enterprise*, provided eleven dimensions to critique team effectiveness:

1. *Atmosphere and relationships*: What kind of relationship exists among team members? Are relationships formal and reserved or close and friendly?
2. *Member participation*: Does everyone participate in team activities and interactions?

3. *Goal understanding and acceptance*: How well do members accept the goals of the team and are committed to them?
4. *Listening and sharing information*: Are people willing to listen to each other and share important information, or are they afraid to share their ideas for fear of looking foolish or being punished?
5. *Handling conflicts and disagreements*: Are conflict and disagreement tolerated and used to improve the group or are they avoided, brushed aside, or flamed into conflict?
6. *Decision making*: How are decisions made? How many members participate in making decisions and have an opportunity to provide input?
7. *Evaluation of member performance*: What kind of feedback do members receive about their performance? Do they receive personal attacks and criticisms or frank, frequent, and objective feedback?
8. *Expressing feelings*: Do people feel free to express their feelings openly on more than just task issues?
9. *Division of labor*: Are task assignments clear and are they willingly accepted?
10. *Leadership*: How are leaders selected? Are the leadership functions shared, or is the team dominated by one person?
11. *Attention to process*: Is the team conscious of its own operations? Can it monitor and improve its own processes?

To a large extent, the role of the team-building consultant is to help teams improve along these dimensions. Furthermore, the ability of the team to improve its performance is generally the function of the organizational context for the team, the structure and development of the team, as well as the processes that drive the team dynamics.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

For consultants to help teams improve their performance, they need to have some understanding of the organizational context in which teams function. Understanding the organizational context will help OD consultants better appreciate the issues and concerns of team members and avoid blind spots that can make them appear uninformed and, thus, undermine their credibility. There are several contextual factors that need to be understood. The first factor is the nature of the task that the team has to perform. Is the task to make decisions, monitor some operation or activity, or actually perform the work of the organization? Does the task

require high levels of cooperation and coordination of team members, like members of a basketball team, or little coordination, more like a golf team? The consultant has to understand clearly the task (or tasks) that the team has to perform in order to critique the functioning of the team.

The second factor is the type of work team. Teams differ to the degree that they have the ability to determine their goals and the methods to achieve them (Thompson, 2004). There are basically four types of teams: (1) the manager-led team is the traditional team in which the manager determines the goals and activities of the team; (2) the self-managing team is one in which the manager or leader determines the overall purpose or goal for the team, but team members have the authority to develop their own methods for achieving team goals; (3) the self-directing team determines its own objectives and the means to achieve its goals; this type of team is given the authority and responsibility that allows it to change quickly to meet a changing environment; and (4) self-governing teams not only have the power to determine their own goals and objectives but also have the ability to determine the organizational context and allocate resources to the organization as a whole. Boards of directors are typically this type of team.

In helping a team improve its performance, understanding the extent to which the team has autonomy and authority to determine goals and the means of achieving those goals is highly important. In some cases, the role of the team-building consultant may be to help a team evolve from one form to another. For example, there has been significant emphasis on helping teams move from manager-led teams to self-directed work teams.

TEAM COMPOSITION AND STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

The consultant also has to be aware of the composition of the team and its stage of development. Composition includes team size as well as the knowledge, skills, and abilities of team members. Teams need to include, or have access to, the requisite skills and knowledge required to accomplish the task. Research on team functioning has recognized that teams that are too large are often unwieldy and perform ineffectively. Teams that are too small have too few human assets to accomplish the task. While there is no absolute “right” number of team members for any given task, the consultant should be able to inquire as to the appropriateness of the size of the team, as well as determine whether there are certain skills and knowledge lacking in the team that inhibit the team from achieving its goals.

Those who study teams note that they develop in fairly predictable ways. While there are various theories of team development (for example, Gersick, 1988), I have found Bruce Tuckman’s (1965) stage model to be the most helpful to me in diagnosing team dynamics. Tuckman indicated that teams go through the following stages:

- *Stage 1, Forming*—getting to know one another. This stage is noted by some caution, confusion, and tentativeness on the part of team members.
- *Stage 2, Storming*—team members begin to differentiate into subgroups based on various characteristics (for example, age, education, race), and team members realize that they don't agree with one another on some of the issues facing the team. Conflict and confrontation characterize this stage of development.
- *Stage 3, Norming*—after conflict and confrontation, the team begins to develop rules for determining who does what and how the work will be performed. The new team norms allow the team to manage the conflicts between them and achieve some level of cohesion.
- *Stage 4, Performing*—the stage where the team members begin to collaborate with one another and achieve a level of cooperation that allows them to perform at a high level. Conflicts still exist, but tend to focus on the task, rather than on interpersonal issues. Moreover, the team at this stage has developed mechanisms to manage conflict successfully.
- *Stage 5, Adjourning*—this describes the stage where the team disbands because the team has completed its task or team members choose to go their own way or are given other assignments.

Other research on team development by Ralph Katz (1982) has demonstrated that teams increase their performance substantially during the second and third years of their existence. Teams with little time together need time to work through early stage issues before they can perform at a high level. Conversely, Katz found that the teams that stayed together longer than four years tended to get stale and lose their creativity and energy.

To understand the underlying cause of certain team dynamics, OD consultants should be aware of the stage of team development and the tenure of team members before starting team-building activities. For example, it is important to realize that some conflict occurs as a natural part of team development and therefore should be anticipated by the consultant. The consultant may also look for signs of stagnation in those teams that have been together for long periods of time or anticipate some role confusion and tentativeness in newly formed teams.

TEAM PROCESS

Edgar Schein (1988, 1999), in his writings about process consultation (PC), presents what I would consider the important team process issues that consultants must to be aware of in order to do effective team building. Thus, I encourage the reader to review his books on the subject, for process consultation is an

important approach to team building. Although PC will not be covered in depth in this chapter, I will draw on Schein's work and that of others to summarize briefly the key team processes.

One of the most important processes in teams is communication. Schein indicates that consultants should ask the following questions about communication in the team:

- Who communicates? How often? For how long?
- Who communicates to whom?
- Who talks to whom? Who interrupts whom?

The answers to these questions will help the consultant determine who in the team has power and influence, determine coalitions within the team, and determine whether or not the team communication patterns facilitate or hinder the accomplishment of team goals.

Decision making is another important process. Schein notes that there are several patterns that teams follow to make decisions:

- Decision by lack of response (“plop”). Team members make suggestions or present ideas, and no other team members follow up to build on the suggestion or idea. The suggestion merely “hangs” over the group, then “plops” to the floor, and the team moves on to other issues;
- Decision by formal authority or self-authorization. Someone in the group takes it upon himself or herself to make the final decision;
- Decision by minority of team members;
- Decision by majority rule: voting and/or polling;
- Decision by consensus; and
- Decision by unanimous consent.

The decision-making process ranges from the team requiring all of its members to be in agreement, which takes significant time but can lead to higher levels of commitment, to a process where the team leader makes all the decisions, a process that is likely to be much less time-consuming, but which calls into question the need for the team and its varied opinions and assets. Consultants working with teams should identify the decision-making processes of the team to determine whether the team decision-making style is appropriate given the task and the situation (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982). Teams with structured tasks, short time frames, and composed of relatively “immature” team members (lacking in experience, judgment, or skill) may find a more authoritarian decision process appropriate. With complex tasks requiring the input and commitment of all team members, a consensus approach is more likely to be successful.

Pressures for conformity to the team may also influence the decision-making process. Irving Janis (1982) notes that certain teams develop a decision-making pattern called “groupthink,” where dissent is stifled and conformity to team norms is rewarded. Teams experiencing groupthink fail to examine all the alternative courses of action, are quick to sanction dissenters, and see their actions as inherently moral, above reproach. Examples of teams experiencing groupthink are President Kennedy’s team planning of the Bay of Pigs invasion and NASA administrators whose actions led to the Challenger disaster (and it also appears to be the culprit behind the more recent Columbia mishap). In these cases the key decision makers were insulated from important information and ideas that might have changed the decisions to invade Cuba or launch the Challenger. Moreover, team members involved in these decisions felt strong social pressure to keep quiet, even though they had significant personal misgivings. The lack of healthy discussion and debate led to a failed invasion and the loss of the space shuttle.

Another similar dynamic is what Jerry Harvey (1974) calls the Abilene Paradox. Harvey discovered that teams may take certain actions that none of the team members actually prefer. Because the team members don’t want to rock the boat, they fail to share their true feelings. For example, Harvey described a team that continued to support a seriously flawed R&D project because each team member felt that the other team members were supportive of the project—even though each of them, when asked individually, had serious misgivings about the project’s future. However, because each team member felt that the other team members wanted the project to proceed, each censored his or her true feelings. Pressures to conform are powerful team dynamics that often determine how effectively the team will perform.

Conflict is also a prominent feature of most teams. Conflicts can be categorized as relationship conflicts, task conflicts, or process conflicts (Thompson, 2004). Relationship conflicts are based on differences in interpersonal style or social issues that are not work related. Task conflicts refer to those conflicts regarding the nature of the task and how it is to be performed, while process conflicts revolve around differences regarding the methods and strategies used to accomplish the task. Relationship conflicts are almost always detrimental to team performance, for they divert energy and attention away from the important work of the group. Task and process conflicts, on the other hand, if managed properly, can actually enhance team performance, for such conflicts can motivate the team to search for better solutions to its problems.

One of the most common problems in teams is not the presence of conflict but its absence. Whether team members learn that conflict is to be avoided because of its potential negative consequences or whether conflict is suppressed by team leaders, the lack of conflict may signal a significant problem for the team. Often, as a consultant, my role is to stimulate rather than reduce team conflict.

Finally, pioneering work by Kenneth Benne and Paul Sheats (1948) suggests that team members play certain roles that they define as either task roles or maintenance roles. Task roles involve such things as initiating team action, informing team members of important information, clarifying ideas and suggestions, summarizing key points, and giving the team a reality check as to the validity of its ideas. Maintenance roles focus on maintaining good relationships in the group. These roles concern harmonizing to handle conflicts, developing compromise solutions, and helping the group achieve consensus. Encouraging others to give input and serving as a gatekeeper to facilitate communication are also deemed to be important maintenance roles. Effective teams are composed of team members who accept and ably perform both task and maintenance roles. Other roles, labeled blocking roles, stymie team performance. Some team members can be highly aggressive and attempt to dominate the team or block decision making. Others want to avoid any type of conflict, while others might want to “goof off” and play the role of comedian. Keen observers of team dynamics can determine what roles team members are playing (and team members can play multiple roles) and thus gain insights into what might be done to create, enhance, or change the roles of team members.

Armed with good theory regarding how organizational context affects team performance, how team composition and developmental stage may play a role in the performance of a team, and how team processes affect team outcomes, the OD consultant is now prepared to engage in the art (and science) of team building. The team-building consultant must be well-versed in team theory, for it will do a team little good for the consultant to focus on team processes if the team is composed of the wrong people for a particular task. Moreover, it may be unproductive for the consultant to focus on changing team composition if process issues are paramount.

TEAM BUILDING IN ACTION

Before beginning any team-building activity, the question should be asked: Is team building needed? Exhibit 16.1 is a checklist that can help to answer this question.

If the consultant knows the team well, he or she can fill out the questionnaire. If not, team members either individually or collectively (depending on the level of trust in the team) can answer the questions. Teams that recognize that they have a need to improve their performance will respond better to team-building activities than teams will that feel they are forced to “do team building” by their superiors.

If team building is needed, the next question to ask is: Who should conduct the team-building session: the team’s manager or a consultant? Exhibit 16.2 will help to answer this question.



Exhibit 16.1. Team-Building Checklist I

Problem Identification: To what extent is there evidence of the following problems in your work unit?

	Low Evidence		Some Evidence		High Evidence
1. Loss of production or of work-unit output	1	2	3	4	5
2. Grievances or complaints within the work unit	1	2	3	4	5
3. Conflicts or hostility among unit members	1	2	3	4	5
4. Confusion about assignments or unclear relationships between people	1	2	3	4	5
5. Lack of clear goals or low commitment to goals	1	2	3	4	5
6. Apathy or general lack of interest or involvement of unit members	1	2	3	4	5
7. Lack of innovation, risk taking, imagination, or taking initiative	1	2	3	4	5
8. Ineffective staff meetings	1	2	3	4	5
9. Problems in working with the boss	1	2	3	4	5
10. Poor communications: people afraid to speak up, not listening to one another, or not talking together	1	2	3	4	5
11. Lack of trust between leader and members or among members	1	2	3	4	5
12. People do not understand or agree with decisions	1	2	3	4	5
13. People feel that good work is not recognized or rewarded	1	2	3	4	5
14. People are not encouraged to work together in better team effort	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring: Add up the score for the fourteen items. If your score is between 14 and 28, there is little evidence that your unit needs team building. If your score is between 29 and 42, there is some evidence, but no immediate pressure, unless two or three items are very high. If your score is between 43 and 56, you should seriously think about planning the team-building program. If your score is over 56, team building should be a top-priority item for your work unit.

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Exhibit 16.2. Team-Building Checklist II

Should you use an outside consultant to help in team building?
(Circle the appropriate response.)

1. Does the manager feel comfortable in trying out something new and different with the staff?
Yes No ?
2. Is the staff used to spending time in an outside location working on different issues of concern to the work unit?
Yes No ?
3. Will group members speak up and give honest data?
Yes No ?
4. Does your group generally work together without a lot of conflict or apathy?
Yes No ?
5. Are you reasonably sure that the boss is not a major source of difficulty?
Yes No ?
6. Is there a high commitment by the boss and unit members to achieve more effective team functioning?
Yes No ?
7. Is the personal style of the boss and his or her management philosophy consistent with a team approach?
Yes No ?
8. Do you feel you know enough about team building to begin a program without help?
Yes No ?
9. Would your staff feel confident enough to begin a team-building program without outside help?
Yes No ?

Scoring: If you have circled six or more “yes” responses, you probably do not need an outside consultant. If you have four or more “no” responses, you probably do need a consultant. If you have a mixture of yes, no, and ? responses, you should probably invite a consultant in to talk over the situation and make a joint decision.

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If a consultant is needed, then the next step is to decide what team-building activities are appropriate for the team in question. Often I find that it is important to gather data from members of the team before designing the team-building session. Thus, I often conduct interviews with team members, asking them questions regarding the organizational context, team composition and development,

and the processes in the team. I also ask them to describe those barriers that they feel are inhibiting the team from achieving its full potential. In some cases where it is difficult personally to interview all team members, I have had members of the team fill out the questionnaire in Exhibit 16.1. After the consultant gathers the data, he/she meets with the team and presents the major themes/issues found in the data. The team then is able to respond to the data and add to, clarify, or modify the findings. Once the key issues have been identified by the team, the consultant then helps the team brainstorm ideas to solve the team's problems. The consultant encourages all team members to participate and lists all of their ideas so they can be scrutinized by the team. The consultant should encourage the team to reach consensus regarding those activities and actions that are most likely to improve team performance. The important team issues, plan of action, and assignments for each team member are recorded (generally by one member of the team designated as "scribe") and disseminated to the team after the meeting. Future follow-up meetings and milestones to track progress should also be included in this report that serves as the road map for the team's development. All team-building sessions must include a process for recording information and decisions and then providing this information to team members.

In some cases, however, rather than gathering data beforehand, the consultant might conduct what is called a team diagnostic meeting as the initial team-building activity. A team diagnostic meeting begins with the consultant meeting with the team to identify those issues and problems that are affecting group performance. To start the team discussing issues and to categorize the data, I often ask team members to list things that the team should stop doing, start doing, and continue doing to improve performance. After the three lists are generated, the team members can then begin to identify the most significant concerns facing them. The team then develops a plan of action to solve its problems. Another approach is to use Lewin's (1951) force-field analysis to generate data and take action. Team members are asked to identify those forces (behaviors or other factors) that are restraining team performance as well as those forces that are driving high performance. Once the team identifies the driving and restraining forces, team members can then begin to develop plans to eliminate restraining forces or add driving forces as necessary to move the team in a more positive direction. Thus, the group diagnostic meeting is used to both generate data about the team and its functioning and to develop plans to improve its performance. Team diagnostic meetings generally work well with teams that have fairly high trust among team members and that are able to communicate effectively and make joint decisions. Thus, before conducting the meeting, the consultant might meet briefly with the team leader/manager and a few team members to inquire as to whether the team is able to generate data and solve problems without prior data gathering by the consultant.

My favorite, and typically most successful, team-building activity is what is called role clarification (other approaches similar to this are labeled role negotiation or role analysis technique). Role clarification follows these steps:

Each person in the team, in turn, will be the focal person. The focal person describes what is expected in his or her job. This typically includes the focal person's formal job description along with other informal assignments and responsibilities. The other members of the team can then ask clarifying questions if they don't understand some aspect of the focal person's job.

The team members are then asked if they agree with the role the focal person is playing on the team. If there is disagreement, the source of disagreement should be discussed by the team. In some cases there may have to be some negotiation among team members about their roles. This is particularly true in cases where roles and responsibilities of team members overlap. The assumption behind these first two steps is that a team will not function effectively if team members don't understand and support the roles of other team members.

Step three involves the focal person talking to each team member directly and identifying what he/she needs from that team member to perform his/her job effectively. Team members can then either agree to give that support or not. In the case of disagreement, negotiation between the focal person and the team member may need to take place. The consultant facilitates the negotiation.

The final step in the process is for the team members to provide any additional input to the focal person regarding what they can do, or what the focal person might do, to help the focal person function more effectively in his/her role.

From my experience, teams of five to eight people take thirty to forty-five minutes per person to do this activity. Thus, significant time must be set aside to do this type of team building. The description of each focal person's role, along with agreements made by team members regarding how they will help the focal person (and vice versa), must be recorded and disseminated to the team after the session. I have found that this activity often gets to the core of the concerns facing the team. Moreover, it gives team members the opportunity to express their feelings about their roles and how others on the team either support, or fail to support, them. It also encourages team members to develop concrete agreements to help each other and to resolve their issues.

TRAINING AND TEAM BUILDING

Another role consultants often play as part of most team-building programs is as trainer. Effective teams have to be able to monitor and correct their own functioning and processes. However, without good theory to do so, the team will not be able to do this. Thus, I will often spend time before the actual team-building session with the team presenting many of the ideas described earlier

in this chapter about team dynamics. In particular, teaching team members how to communicate in a supportive manner, to problem solve effectively, to manage conflict, and to use appropriate decision-making processes is often the key to helping the team improve its performance. Schein (1988) encourages teams to learn the basics of process consulting and even to appoint someone in the team as a process consultant to help keep the team on track and alert the team to any process issues that are affecting it.

I have also found that training teams on effective meeting management can prove extremely important. Most team leaders don't know the basics of how to run effective meetings. The basic structure of a meeting includes (1) determining the purpose of the meeting and the desired result from the meeting; (2) identifying the appropriate people to attend the meeting; (3) setting the agenda with input from team members and disseminating the agenda before the meeting; (4) structuring the agenda and decision making so that the team focuses on the important issues and avoids tangents; and finally, (5) summarizing and recording the decisions made at the meeting to make sure all are aware of what was decided. I have found the training video *Meetings, Bloody Meetings* by the Monty Python comedy team and Whetten and Cameron's (1995) discussion of meeting management to be particularly useful in training teams in effective meeting management.

Inter-Group Team Building

Team building may also prove to be quite useful in helping teams to collaborate with other teams whose cooperation may be needed to accomplish the organization's goals. I remember working with several teams whose job it was to lay high-voltage power lines. Unfortunately, due to conflict between the teams, some teams forgot to inform the other teams which wires were hot. Such a lack of communication could lead to serious injury or death (and the conflicts between the teams did result in an investigation by the company that led to my engagement as a consultant to resolve the conflicts between the teams). The basic steps in inter-group team building are described next:

The consultant, meeting with the teams separately, persuades them to agree to engage in a process to improve relationships between the teams. Each team is assigned to a separate room and asked to answer the following questions:

1. What are the attributes or qualities of the other team (or teams)?
2. What are the qualities of your own team?
3. How do you think the other team will describe your team?

After answering these questions, the teams come together, and representatives from each team present their team's answers to the three questions. While listening to the other team, no questions, other than clarifying questions, can

be asked by members of the other team(s). Debate, arguments, rebuttals, or justifications are not permitted.

After the presentation of the teams' perceptions, the consultant summarizes the key points and then helps to clarify misperceptions and helps each team understand the other's point of view. This is generally done by the consultant asking questions of the teams to better understand the origins of the misunderstandings. Either together, or separately, the teams are then asked to come up with solutions to the problems of inter-team coordination and cooperation. The consultant then facilitates the discussion and negotiations between the teams as the teams come up with a joint agreement regarding actions to improve teamwork between them.

A written agreement is produced and then periodically reviewed by the teams and amended as needed.

AFTER TEAM BUILDING IS OVER: WHAT'S NEXT?

Much of the research on team building suggests that teams that do a one-time team-building session but fail to create any follow-up activities to reinforce what they've learned quickly regress to their previous behaviors. For over twenty years, Wayne Boss (1983) has tracked the performance of teams that have engaged in team-building activities. He has discovered that those teams in which the team leader conducts personal management interviews (PMI) after a team-building session continue to maintain or improve in their performance and that the new behaviors take hold and persist. The basic PMI session involves the manager or team leader meeting with each member of the team on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. During these sessions the team leader reviews with the team members the agreements that they made during the team-building activities and at the previous PMI. Typically both the team leader and the team members make commitments during the PMI to take certain actions to improve their own as well as the team's performance. The team leader then asks each team member to discuss his or her own performance and how the team is functioning. Problems are identified and joint problem solving takes place. The PMI ends with the team leader and team member developing agreements concerning what needs to be done before the next PMI. These agreements are then copied, with the team leader and team member each keeping a copy to remind them of their commitments. I have also found that consultants should encourage follow-up meetings with the entire team, where the consultant meets with the team to review its progress, identify problems, and encourage the team in its change efforts. Team building, without some follow-up mechanism, is often a waste of time and energy, and it may even cause some problems for the team by creating unrealistic expectations for change among team members.

SKILLS OF THE TEAM-BUILDING CONSULTANT

To be an effective team-building consultant is not easy. It requires a fairly broad skill set and the aspiring team-building consultant must put together a development plan to acquire the requisite skills to do this type of work. The knowledge and skills that I find most helpful as a team-building consultant are as follows:

Knowledge of group theory and process. Consultants need to be well-grounded in the theory of group/team development and dynamics. Without such a theory base, the consultant will be unlikely to pick up on some of the important and sometimes subtle nuances of the team he/she is attempting to help.

Good process skills. The consultant will often be required to facilitate communications and decision making, mediate, and help negotiate agreements. Thus the ability to facilitate group process is critical.

Self-awareness. Team-building consultants must understand who they are and what their values are, since those values are often brought to the surface during a consultation. Consultants must be comfortable with dealing with strong emotions and conflict. I do team building in teams that often include family members where yelling and crying are not uncommon. If I'm not comfortable in allowing people to express their feelings openly, then I'll likely undermine the process.

Effective role modeling. Consultants have to be able to model the behaviors they are trying to encourage their clients to adopt. Thus, the ability to communicate in a supportive way, to avoid defensiveness, and to show team members that an attitude of inquiry and appreciation for others leads to more positive results than do other, more destructive attitudes and behaviors is important for consultants.

How do you gain these skills? It's not easy. While my own experience was one of receiving mentoring from my father, you may be able to find a shadow consultant versed in team building to help you as you begin to work with clients. I also found that taking courses in group theory and participating in a T-group were very helpful for me personally in learning about teams, and the T-group was an important vehicle to help me learn about myself.

In my own training, I was fortunate to be Ed Schein's teaching assistant at MIT for his course on process consultation. It was my job to videotape a student team each week performing some task and then, using Schein's process consultation model, help the group debrief what happened in the team during the exercise. I found that actually watching teams function and then attempting to apply group theory to what I was watching was extremely valuable. Thus, I encourage all those who want to be team-building consultants to watch teams as often as possible—particularly the teams of which they are members—and apply their knowledge of team dynamics to what they observe in those teams.

For my students, I have them watch movies such as *12 Angry Men* or *Flight of the Phoenix* to give them an opportunity to observe a group and identify and critique the group dynamics.

In addition to developing these skills, here are a few practice tips:

1. Before conducting the team-building session, clarify with the client the desired outcomes from the team-building engagement.
2. Build into the engagement a process for following up after the initial team-building sessions are completed (for example, PMIs).
3. Make sure all agreements/decisions made during the team-building session are recorded and disseminated to all team members.
4. Do your homework. Gather enough data to know the organizational context for the team, its composition, and how long the team has been together.
5. Interview at least two or three team members before designing the team-building session so you can decide what type of activity to use. The level of trust in the team and the kinds of problems facing the team will help you to determine what activity will likely have the greatest impact.
6. Be prepared for surprises. Team-building activities rarely go exactly as planned. You may want to revise your approach and methods as you work with the team.

THE FUTURE OF TEAM BUILDING

What is the future of team building? There is no question but that teams will continue to be an important vehicle for doing work in organizations well into the future. Moreover, the theories and methods regarding teams that came from pioneering work almost a half century ago will likely still remain the foundation of what we know about teams, recognizing that incremental knowledge is continuing to be added. What is not known, however, is how team-building theory and practice will work in new settings and circumstances in the future. For example, we currently have many virtual teams in organizations, where the team is not co-located but must coordinate its activities via electronic and other forms of communication. We also find that, with the increasing numbers of mergers and joint ventures, team building across companies and across cultures will become more important. With the growth of entrepreneurial firms and family businesses worldwide, we will need to understand better how to help family teams or teams that have been together for only a short period of

time and are working in highly demanding environments. While certain modifications may have to be made in our theory and practice to meet these new conditions, I believe that the theory and methods described in this chapter will serve as the foundation for our efforts to improve the teams of the future.

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There are many team-building sites, but one that I like, and which is highly informative with additional links, is www.teambuildinginc.com.



Interventions in Large Systems

Thomas G. Cummings and Anne E. Feyerherm

In today's rapidly changing and highly competitive environments, organizations continually seek ways to adapt themselves to their environments and to design themselves to achieve high performance. Interventions in large systems help organizations implement changes that satisfy these demands. For example, change programs may involve the redesign of an organization's structure to make it leaner and more flexible, efforts to change how an organization relates to key suppliers and customers, or the establishment of a reward system that closely links pay with gains in business-unit performance.

This chapter details a coherent set of actions, which generally proceed from diagnosis and action planning to implementation of changes in large systems, such as the total organization or its major divisions. It defines interventions in large systems, describes their characteristics, presents examples of these change methods, and identifies the competencies needed by organization development (OD) consultants to carry them out.

DEFINITION OF LARGE-SYSTEM INTERVENTIONS

The purpose of an OD intervention in a large system is to make significant change in the character and performance of an organization, a stand-alone business unit, or a large department. The *character* of an organization includes the pattern of exchanges between the organization and its environment and the

design of the organization's internal structures, processes, and procedures that produce desired products or services. The *performance* of an organization is measured by its productivity, market share, return on investment, and employee satisfaction and retention.

An organization's character directly affects its performance. Specifically, when exchanges between the organization and its environment are effective and its internal-design features fit together and reinforce strategic behavior, performance is likely to be high (Mohrman, Mohrman, Ledford, Cummings, Lawler, & Associates, 1990; Worley, Hitchin, & Ross, 1996).

Figure 17.1 illustrates these two major components of organizational character: organization-environment relations and internal-design components. The figure relies heavily on open-systems theory, which views organizations as embedded in a larger environment (Cummings & Worley, 2001). The environment provides an organization with inputs (such as raw materials) that are converted by transformation processes (such as manufacturing and assembly) into outcomes (such as products and services). The environment also provides feedback to the organization about how well it is performing. The organization's transformation processes include several interrelated design components. A key concept in open-systems theory is *congruency* or *fit* among the components. They must fit with one another to attain the most effective results (Hanna, 1988; Mohr, 1989). Interventions that include more of these components increase their chance of effectiveness (Macy, Bliese, & Norton, 1994).

The open-systems model applies to different levels within an organization, as well as the whole organization. It is an appropriate model for a large-system change effort because its components must be viewed with the total organization in mind. The environment must provide the organization with needed inputs; the design components must promote effective and efficient performance; and the feedback system must provide knowledge of results.

A large-system intervention attempts to improve the two key aspects of an organization's character: the organization-environment relationship (how appropriate the inputs are for the organization) and the internal-design component (how well the design components match each other). An intervention directly influences the organization's character which, in turn, affects organizational performance. Examples of large-system interventions are described later in the chapter. First, the two areas are defined further.

Organization-Environment Relationship

The *organization-environment relationship* is defined as the fit or symbiosis between an organization's inputs and design components. The key inputs include strategy and environment.

Strategy defines how an organization will use its resources to gain a competitive advantage in the environment (Chaffee, 1985; Hill & Jones, 2004). It

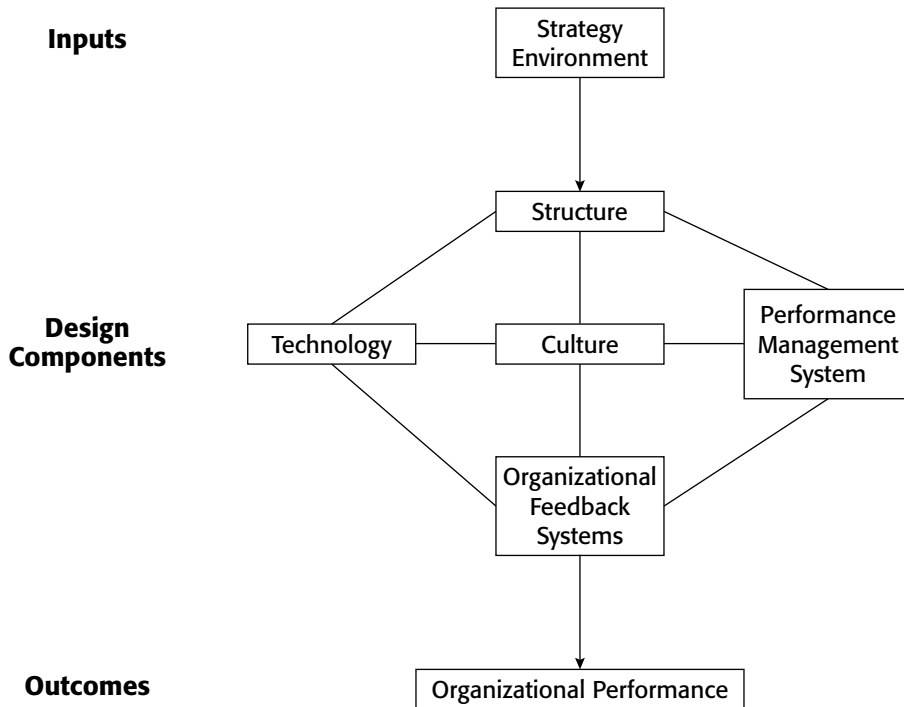


Figure 17.1. Model of a Large System

includes choices about which functions the organization will perform, which products or services it will produce, and which markets and populations it will serve. By its nature, strategy defines the relevant environment within which the organization chooses to compete (Porter, 1985).

Consequently, the *environment* consists of external elements and forces that affect an organization's ability to attain its strategic objectives. The environment includes suppliers, customers, competitors, and regulators. It also includes cultural, political, technical, and economic forces.

Environments range along a continuum from static to dynamic (Emery & Trist, 1965). At the dynamic end of the range, the environment changes rapidly and unpredictably, such as might be found in many high-technology industries. It requires organizational strategies and designs that promote fast and innovative responses; the organization's design should be organic with flexible design components (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). At the static end of the continuum, the environment changes slowly and predictably such as

might be found in many regulated industries. It calls for a more formalized structure that supports standardized behavior and responses. OD consultants, along with the organizational members, must assess an organization's environment in order to plan a large-system intervention.

Internal-Design Components

In addition to the organization-environment relationship, an organization's performance depends on the alignment among its design components. The following five design components are shown in Figure 17.1: technology, structure, organizational feedback systems, performance-management systems, and culture.

Technology includes the methods an organization uses to convert raw materials into products or services. It involves production methods, equipment, and work flow. Total-quality processes, such as statistical process control, are also part of technology.

Structure is the way in which an organization divides tasks into departments or groups and coordinates them for overall task achievement. Alternative structures are departments differentiated by function (such as engineering, manufacturing, and sales), by product and service (such as detergents, food, and paper), or by a combination of these (a matrix). Structures can also be based on business processes (such as product development, order fulfillment, and customer support).

Organizational feedback systems are the methods an organization uses to gather, assess, and disseminate information relevant to organization performance. Management information systems help an organization ensure that each subunit's activities are consistent with its objectives. Performance-review systems serve the same function with employees and teams.

Performance management systems focus on selecting, developing, and rewarding people. These systems help shape employees' behavior and activities within an organization. For example, reward systems induce people to join, remain, and work toward specific objectives. They provide employees with incentives for achieving the organization's goals.

Culture includes the basic assumptions, values, and norms shared by organizational members (Schein, 1985). It guides and coordinates members' decisions and behaviors by providing a shared understanding of what actions are required for successful performance. Because culture is so pervasive and central to an organization's design and can significantly impact success or failure of strategic change, it is central among the design components shown in Figure 17.1 (Abrahamson & Fombrun, 1994; Cameron & Quinn, 1999).

Research suggests that organizations achieve high performance when all five design components fit with one another and mutually reinforce behaviors needed to achieve the organization's strategic objectives (Galbraith, 1973). For example, when an organization's strategy and environment call for standardized

behavior, its design elements should emphasize formality and efficiency, such as those found in traditional bureaucracies. Conversely, when an organization's strategy and environment demand innovation and change, its design elements should promote flexibility and experimentation, such as those found in high-involvement organizations.

CHARACTERISTICS OF LARGE-SYSTEM INTERVENTIONS

Large-system interventions have a number of common features that distinguish them from other OD interventions. These characteristics are as follows:

- They are triggered by environmental jolts and internal disruptions;
- They provoke revolutionary or transformational change;
- They incorporate new organizing paradigms;
- They are driven and led by senior executives;
- They require an organizational learning system; and
- They involve multiple organization levels and large numbers of members.

Environmental jolts and internal disruptions can be compelling reasons for large-system change. Such interventions generally occur in direct response to at least three kinds of disturbance:

1. Industry discontinuities such as dramatic changes in legal, political, economic, and technological conditions that shift an organization's ground rules;
2. Changes in a product's life cycle that require different business strategies; and/or
3. Internal organizational dynamics such as changes in size, strategy, or leadership (Tushman, Newman, & Romanelli, 1986).

These disruptions jolt an organization at a fundamental level, and if they are identified correctly during diagnosis, they can provide the strong "felt need" necessary to embark on large-system change.

Large-system interventions involve revolutionary changes that dramatically reshape an organization. Such changes generally transform all of the organization's design components. Although evolutionary changes that fine-tune an organization can also occur during large-system interventions, the primary focus is revolutionary change (Greiner, 1972; Tushman & Romanelli, 1985).

Most large-system interventions attempt to restructure organizations. The goal is to create commitment-based organizations that are better suited than the old compliance-based organizations to adapt to rapidly changing conditions. Commitment-based organizations have many mutually reinforcing elements, including the following:

- Lean and flexible structures;
- Information and decision making diffused throughout the organization;
- Decentralized teams and business units accountable for specific products, services, processes, or customers;
- Participative management and teamwork;
- Strong customer orientation; and
- Total-quality concepts and practices.

An organization's senior executives must lead and take an active role in large-system interventions (Kotter, 1996). Change leadership generally involves the following three critical roles (Tichy & Devanna, 1986; Tushman, Newman, & Nadler, 1988):

1. *Envisioner*. Someone who articulates a clear and credible vision of the new organization and its strategy and generates pride and enthusiasm.
2. *Energizer*. Someone who demonstrates excitement for changes and models the behaviors linked to them.
3. *Enabler*. Someone who allocates resources for implementing change, uses rewards to reinforce new behaviors, and builds effective top-management teams and management practices.

The innovation and problem solving necessary for large-system change require considerable organization and personal learning (Mohrman & Cummings, 1989; Quinn, 1996; Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth, & Smith, 1999). Learning helps to manage the uncertainty involved in a major change effort by bringing new information to the organization and by providing a constructive element of control. Unlearning old ways is equally important as people's traditional values, worldviews, and behaviors are challenged and replaced with new ones. Because members spend considerable time and effort in learning how to change themselves, organizations must create processes, procedures, and norms that support a learning orientation for the whole organization.

Large-system interventions require heavy involvement and commitment from members throughout the organization. Consequently, OD consultants attempt

to involve everyone or at least a cross section of the organization when planning and implementing large-scale change. Ideally, this involves getting all or a majority of organization members in the same room at the same time. As members of the system directly communicate and interact with one another, they begin to understand the issues confronting the system and to devise better responses to them.

An increasingly popular method for bringing members together for large-system change is *large-group interventions* (Bunker & Alban, 1996; Owen, 1997). These include such techniques as “conference boards,” “future searches,” “open space technology,” and “appreciative inquiry,” each having its own proponents and rhythm. The basic philosophy underlying large-group interventions is that, in order to change a system, one must have the “whole system” in the room at the same time. While pragmatically this may sometimes be impossible to accomplish, at least representatives of all relevant stakeholders should be included. This technology has been used in organizations to bring people together to discuss plans for plant closures, strategies for creating innovative products and methods, restructuring organizations, and a host of other issues that potentially involve all organizational members (Barros, Cooperrider, & Chesterland, 2000; Coghlan, 1998; Purser, Cabana, Emery, & Emery, 2000; Watkins & Mohr 2001).

EXAMPLES OF SELECTED INTERVENTIONS

Organization development interventions that are applicable to large systems generally fall into two categories: those that create changes in the organization-environment relationship and those that reshape the internal-design components of an organization. Examples of both interventions are presented in the following sections.

Organization-Environment-Relationship Interventions

Two interventions that are used to restructure organization-environment relationships are open-systems planning (OSP) and network organizations.

Open-Systems Planning. This large-system intervention helps organizations assess their larger environment and develop strategies for relating to it (Krone, 1974). It results in a clear strategic mission for the organization and options for influencing the environment to support that mission.

Open-systems planning treats organizations as open systems that must interact with a suitable environment to survive and develop. Members’ perceptions play a key role in this relationship (Covin & Kilmann, 1990). Members can choose to ignore or attend to the environment’s various signals. They can either be aware of their filters and biases or ignore them, which will determine

whether unconscious and unexamined assumptions rule their reactions. Members' responses, in turn, affect how the organization interacts with the environment (Cummings & Srivastva, 1977).

To develop a coordinated and effective response to the environment, members must be willing to consider multiple perspectives and, from them, develop a commonly shared and accurate view of the environment. An example of an inaccurate view occurred when automobile manufacturers in the United States did not recognize or acknowledge the American public's interest in product quality in the 1980s. This enabled the more quality-conscious Japanese automakers to gain a strong foothold in America.

Open-systems planning helps an organization adapt to its environment as well as proactively influence it. An active stance goes beyond responding to the environment to include influencing it in desired directions.

Open-systems planning is typically carried out in six sequential steps (Jayaram, 1976).

The first stage is to identify environmental domains that affect an organization's strategy. These domains include key customers, regulatory agencies, competitors, and suppliers. Then the demands placed on the organization's current functioning by each domain are specified. The second step is to assess how the organization currently responds to environmental demands, which in turn will help determine how effectively the organization is relating to its environment.

The third step is to help members identify the organization's mission, its underlying purpose, and its distinctive competencies. OD consultants can encourage members to go beyond the organization's official statement of purpose and to clarify how well its mission currently relates to the environment. Based on this analysis, members may decide to change the organization's mission to one more appropriate to external conditions.

The fourth step is to create a realistic future scenario that describes environmental demands and how the organization is likely to respond to them. When creating this scenario, the consultant should assume that the organization will continue to respond to the environment much as it has in the past.

The fifth step is to create an ideal future scenario that describes the environmental demands that will confront the organization and the most desirable responses to them. The consultant will have to review the first three steps and ask members what they think an ideal scenario would look like. Members should be encouraged to brainstorm and consider innovative possibilities.

The sixth step is to compare the organization's present situation with its ideal future and prepare an action plan designed to move the organization toward the desired future.

Other OD methods consistent with open systems planning include integrated strategic change (Worley, Hitchin, & Ross, 1996), scenario planning (Ringland, 1998; van der Keijden, 1996), and transition management (Beckhard & Harris,

1987). There are differences in these techniques, of course, but all rely on (a) an assessment of the environment, (b) recognition and subsequent modification of the organization's responses, and (c) visioning or creation of a desired future.

Network Organizations. A consultant can use concepts of networking to help an organization join in partnerships with other organizations to solve problems and perform tasks that are too complex and multisided for single organizations to handle alone (Cummings, 1984; Gray, 1989; Snow, 1997). Such multi-organization partnerships are used increasingly to respond to the complexities of today's dynamic environments (Rycroft, 1999). Examples include joint ventures, research and development consortia, public-private partnerships, and customer-supplier networks (Achrol, 1997; Chisholm, 1998; Halal, 1994). Network organizations tend to be loosely coupled, nonhierarchical, and under-organized. Consequently, they require OD interventions that help members recognize the need for such partnerships and develop mechanisms for organizing their joint efforts.

OD interventions to create and develop network organizations generally follow four stages that are typical of planned change in under-organized settings: identification, convention, organization, and evaluation.

In the *identification* stage, a consultant identifies potential network members. The organization or person who begins a networked organization generally takes the lead. The main activities during this stage are determining criteria for membership and identifying organizations that meet them. Leadership is key in the early stages to get the network off the ground and organized. Often a network of leaders emerges that mimics the characteristics of the network (Feyerherm, 1994).

In the *convention* stage, the consultant brings potential members together to assess the feasibility of forming a network organization. At this point, the potential members evaluate the costs and benefits of forming and determine an appropriate task definition. Key activities in this stage include reconciling members' self-interests with those of the network collective and working through differences.

In the *organization* stage, the network takes shape. Members organize themselves for task performance by creating key roles and structures. Legal obligations and member rights are determined at this point.

In the *evaluation* stage, the consultant gives the members feedback about their performance so they can start identifying and resolving problems. The members assess how the network is working and how it can be improved.

Internal-Design-Component Interventions

This section describes four interventions that reshape the internal-design components of an organization so they fit better with one another. These interventions are sociotechnical systems (STS), structural design, reward systems, and high-involvement organizations.

Each intervention emphasizes different design components. Sociotechnical systems involve technology and performance-management elements; structural design addresses structure and technology; reward-system interventions include performance management and feedback systems; high-involvement organizations emphasize change in an organization's culture and, consequently, affect most design components.

Sociotechnical Systems (STS) Interventions. STS is based on the premise that a work system is comprised of social and technical parts and is open to its environment (Cummings & Srivastva, 1977; Trist, Higgin, Murray, & Pollack, 1963). Because the social and technical elements must work together to accomplish tasks, work systems produce both physical products and social/psychological outcomes. The key is to design work so that the two parts yield positive outcomes; this is called *joint optimization* (van Eijnatten, Eggermont, de Goffau, & Mankoe, 1994). This contrasts with traditional methods that first design the technical component and then fit people to it. This often leads to suboptimal performance at high social costs.

In addition to joint optimization, STS is also concerned with the work system and its environment. This involves *boundary management*, which is a process of protecting the work system from external disruptions while facilitating the exchange of necessary resources and information (de Leede, kees Loose, Verkerk, 1993; Pasmore, 1988).

OD consultants use the following guidelines to design sociotechnical systems (Barko & Pasmore, 1986; Cherns, 1987; Taylor & Felton, 1993):

- Work is organized in a way that is compatible with the organization's objectives. This often leads to a participative process that promotes employee involvement in work design.
- Only those minimal features needed to implement the work design are specified. The remaining features are left to vary according to the unique technical and social needs that arise in the work setting. This provides employees with the freedom necessary to control technical variances quickly and close to their sources.
- Employees who perform related tasks are grouped together to facilitate the sharing of information, knowledge, and learning. This typically results in self-managed work teams.
- Information, power, and authority are vested in those performing the work to reduce time delays in responding to problems and to enhance employee responsibility.
- Workers are trained in various skills so they have the necessary expertise to control variances and the flexibility needed to respond to changing conditions.

Structural-Design Interventions. Structural-design interventions focus on the structure of an organization (Galbraith, 1973). They involve dividing the organization's tasks into specific groups, units, or processes and then coordinating them to achieve overall effectiveness. This results in four basic organizational structures: functional, self-contained units, matrix, and networked. When selecting a structure for an organization, OD consultants consider the following four factors: environment, size, technology, and goals (Daft, 2004).

The functional structure is hierarchical. Different specialized units, such as research, engineering, manufacturing, and marketing, report upward through separate chains of command and join only at the organization's top levels. This structure offers several advantages: It reinforces specialized skills and resources; it reduces duplication of scarce resources; and it facilitates communication within departments. The major disadvantages of a functional structure include a short-term focus on routine tasks, narrow perspectives, and reduced communication and coordination among departments. The functional structure works best when the organization's environment is relatively stable, the organization is small to medium in size, and it is engaged in routine tasks that emphasize efficiency and technical quality (McCann & Galbraith, 1981).

The self-contained-unit structure is organized around a product line, geographical area, customer base, or a common technology. Each self-contained unit includes all relevant skills and processes within its boundaries. Hence, employees with all the needed functional expertise are internal to the unit. The major advantage of this organizational structure is that the key interdependencies and resources within each unit are coordinated toward an overall outcome. The major disadvantage is that there is heavy duplication of resources and expertise. The self-contained-unit structure works well in large organizations facing dynamic environments and having multiple products and customers (Mohrman, Cohen, & Mohrman, 1995).

Matrix organizations are designed to take advantage of both the functional and self-contained-unit structures by imposing a lateral structure of product or program management onto the vertical, functional structure (Joyce, 1986). Consequently, some managers report to two bosses. Functional departments focus on specialized resources, and product teams concentrate on outputs. A matrix structure works best in a large organization that faces an uncertain environment, has high technological interdependencies across functions, and has product specialization and innovation goals. This structure offers the advantage of managing interdepartmental interdependencies and allowing for skill diversification and training. Its primary disadvantages are that it is difficult to manage and control, and employees face ambiguous roles and inconsistent demands (Larson & Gobeli, 1987). These problems can be overcome by changing employees' mindsets and skills to promote lateral relations and

coordination rather than hierarchical command and control (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1990).

A networked structure consists of separate units that are either internal or external to an organization. Each unit specializes in a business task or function and is held together by ad hoc (internal) or contractual (external) arrangements. Internal networks consist of temporary project teams that use specialists from throughout the organization. This results in a flat, information-based structure that has few levels of management (Drucker, 1989).

Externally networked structures are similar to network organizations described previously, such as joint ventures, research and development consortiums, and licensing agreements across national boundaries. Networked structures have emerged in response to dynamic environments that demand complex technologies or services. They are highly flexible and enhance the distinctive competence of each member organization (Charan, 1991; Miles & Snow, 1986). The major disadvantages of a networked structure are that it is difficult to manage lateral relationships across many organizations and difficult to sustain member commitment to the network over time (Galbraith & Kazanjian, 1986).

Reward-System Interventions. These OD interventions focus on rewarding desired behaviors and work outcomes and are increasingly seen as integral parts of the organization (Lawler, 2000). Because people generally do those things for which they are rewarded, rewards can powerfully shape work behavior. Rewards can be both tangible and intangible, and can be given at a variety of levels, from individual to team to business unit. Rewards are especially effective when they satisfy basic needs, are viewed as equitable, and fit individual motivations. Reward-system interventions attempt to satisfy these conditions and to assure that rewards reinforce appropriate work behaviors and outcomes (Kerr, 1975).

Reward-system interventions generally involve three kinds of rewards: pay, opportunity, and benefits. Money can have a profound effect on employees' behavior. Traditionally, pay is based on job classification and seniority. Although this reinforces allegiance to a particular job, it may not promote the high levels of flexibility and performance needed in today's business environment. An organization may find that alternative pay systems such as skill-based pay and pay for performance may be more appropriate for its situation. In skill-based systems, employees are paid based on the number of skills they have mastered or jobs they can perform. This is an appropriate system if an organization needs a flexible labor force with high skills and if it wishes to reward growth and learning. Performance-based pay ties rewards directly to measurable performance outcomes that employees can impact. Many organizations reward team or business-unit performance, which in turn reinforces teamwork and cooperation.

Rewards based on opportunity traditionally include promotions. Given the current trend toward downsizing, however, promotions are less plentiful in

today's organizations. Instead, organizations are using opportunities for increased learning, task-based empowerment, special work projects, and wider job experiences as motivators and rewards for exemplary performance.

Rewards that focus on benefits can help an organization attract and retain talented employees. Benefits include early and flexible retirement, pre-retirement counseling, maternity and paternity leaves, childcare, educational funding, investment plans, and flexible work hours (LaMarke & Thompson, 1984). These benefits are sometimes administered through cafeteria-style plans that give employees some choice over benefit options (Lawler, 1981). This method helps to tailor fringe benefits to individual needs, thus increasing the motivational impact of such rewards.

Reward-system interventions may influence an organization's other design components. For example, an organization may need to change its information system if rewards are based on team performance. Similarly, an organization may need to modify its training and appraisal systems if it uses skill-based pay to reward employees. A reward-system intervention can also extend beyond the workplace to affect employees' families and lifestyles.

High-Involvement-Organization Intervention. OD interventions aimed at creating high-involvement organizations generally involve several internal design components of the organization, including work design, rewards, and information systems. A key emphasis of this change effort is a shift from a command/control organization to one based on commitment (Walton, 1985). High-involvement organizations seek to diffuse power, knowledge, information, and rewards throughout the organization. They derive from a fundamental belief that people are an organization's most important asset, and, consequently, they should be more involved in work-related decisions (Lawler, Ledford, & Mohrman, 1989).

High-involvement organizations include multiple design elements that mutually reinforce employee involvement. These include self-managed teams, dispersed information systems, flexible structures, social and technical training, egalitarian practices, skill-based pay, pay for performance, and participative goal setting (Lawler, 1986).

High-involvement organizations have traditionally been found in new manufacturing facilities, where the design of the organization can be created anew with few existing constraints. However, the concept is gradually increasing among other types of organizations (Lawler, Mohrman, & Ledford, 1998). When an existing organization seeks to modify its practices, change is more difficult. The organization must change most of its design components. This can require considerable time and resources as members break existing work habits and learn new ways of working and relating to one another (Hanna, 1988). However, the rewards can be significant in achieving competitive advantage (Pfeffer, 1995).

RESEARCH ON LARGE-SYSTEM INTERVENTIONS

In this section we briefly review some of the key research that underlies large-system interventions. It is not meant to be an exhaustive survey of the relevant research, but to provide exemplars of the kinds of studies that guide large-system change.

Models for Large-System Change

- Chapman (2002) offers a general framework for planned change processes that is structured around three core issues: the nature of organizations, appropriate strategies for leveraging change, and change-agent roles. She then applies this framework to describe the work of fifty consultants across a large number of organizations.
- Manning and Binzagr (1996) offer six methods of intervention that include participative design, open space, and the conference model. They also discuss common values and assumptions that underlie these large-scale interventions. These include things like people in the system have the capacity to self-organize, perception becomes the reality, and the organization is seen as the “whole system.”

Large-System Interventions

- Ashkenas, Ulrich, Jick, and Kerr (1995) describe how organizations, such as General Electric, become more flexible and responsive by reducing the number of boundaries separating functional units, hierarchical levels, and external relationships. These so-called “boundaryless organizations” enhance coordination and information flow across the firm as well as with key segments of the environment.
- Singer and Duvall (2000) report on how Harley-Davidson replaced a traditional hierarchical structure with self-managed teams. They acknowledge that cooperation between the teams and management is complex and multi-dimensional. They detail the extensive training on skills and expectations required to support the new structure in a union environment.
- Ashton (2000) describes how KI Pembroke combined self-directed teamwork, learning systems, empowerment, and rewards to implement a high-involvement organization that clearly links to business goals.
- Attaran and Ngyen (2000) show how Chevron created the right structure and activities to support self-managed teams that were organized around the work process and held accountable for results by their customers. The teams required training, support from leadership, clear strategic intent, and patience.

- Welbourne and Gomez-Mejia (1995) show how reward systems, such as gain-sharing, can contribute to the success of team-based structures.
- Dyck and Halpern (1999) document a total organization STS effort for Celestica, a 15,000-person spinoff from IBM. They had a steering team, a central design team, a resources team, twenty-one design teams, numerous study teams, and a “swarm” team to accelerate start-up processes. They also held a multi-day session on vision, which, combined with the above structure, helped achieve their goals of reduced cycle time, higher productivity, increased job satisfaction, and better quality.
- Emery (1995) provides a challenging critique of the current state of STS and how it has been diluted and changed since its origins. This is a must-read for anyone interested in establishing a participative management system by using STS.

Complexity Theory as a Lens for Large-System Interventions

- Styhre (2002) shows how complexity theory is applicable for designing organization structures. He is especially interested in the processes of self-organizing, self-motivation, and learning that emerge when complexity theory is applied to large-system change.
- Axelrod (1999) edits a collection of discussions that took place during the fourth annual Colloquium on the Application of Complex Adaptive Systems to Business. Primary characteristics of complex systems are learning and adaptability, spontaneous self-organizing, and emergent phenomena from interactions from agents in the system. A theme of paradox between freedom and control was seen as an avenue for creativity at the “edge of chaos.” The discussants also noted that organizations must create conditions for greater connectivity between their members and significant people external to the supposed system. Examples from organizations were briefly outlined.
- Brodbeck (2002) examined the notion of complexity theory as having merit in organization design that would encourage processes of self-organizing, learning, and self-motivation. Three businesses were investigated to determine whether those processes can emerge if structures are developed using tenets of complexity theory.

CONCLUSION

Interventions in large systems are ever more prevalent in organization development. They enable organizations to make significant improvements in performance through changes in how they design themselves and relate to their environment.

Such large-scale changes may be essential for organizations to succeed in today's competitive environments, which change rapidly and unpredictably. Interventions, such as open-systems planning and sociotechnical systems, can help organizations become leaner, more flexible, quicker, and more responsive to changing demands and opportunities. Perhaps equally important, interventions in large systems can enable organizations to achieve and sustain competitive advantage by helping them learn how to change themselves continually.

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Whole System Transformation

The Five Truths of Change

Steven H. Cady and Kathleen D. Dannemiller

The current scientific worldview held by chaos theorists, and by other leading thinkers such as Margaret Wheatley and Frijtof Capra, focuses on systems thinking or systems theory. They emphasize that we must no longer see the world as a machine with isolated, separate parts needing to be “fixed.” Rather, we must recognize that each part is connected to a greater whole.

Wholeness literally means, “healing.” The etymology of “whole” and “healing,” according to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, is the Middle English *hool*—healthy, unhurt, entire; and the Old English *hAl*, which is akin to the Old High German *heil*—healthy, unhurt. “Whole” is more than “all of something”; it is a healthy balance, unity, and completeness. When the term “wholeness” is applied to a system, we refer to the regularly interdependent parts as forming a unified whole, interacting according to the influence of related forces.

Transforming a system into a unified whole is the process of changing from one configuration or expression into another by all parts of the system. In order for true transformation to take place in an organization, it must function as a “whole.” If it hasn’t achieved wholeness first, it will separate into disconnected pieces and will be unable to become whole after the separation. Thus, what we mean by the term “whole system transformation” is more than simply a change that affects the entire system; it means that the entire system is involved in creating itself anew. The focus then moves from imposing change on a system or organization to enabling or allowing the system to transform itself. This type of

transformation requires the participants in the system to be self-aware. When the individuals in a system are self-aware, they are able to understand what it is and what it needs to be. There is an appreciation of all of its parts and how they relate to each other and to the outside environment. The result is a healthy system that knows what to do next and is capable of acting quickly.

Bob Waterman, author of *In Search of Excellence* and *The Renewal Factor*, illustrates the workings of whole system transformation in a Japanese banking organization during a consultation by his company:

“I was part of a team working with the Sanwa Bank in Japan, now one of the largest banks in the world. It’s unusual for anyone from the outside, let alone a foreign consulting firm, to be working with a Japanese company. Fortunately, the problem—a substantial market share loss—was fairly easy to solve intellectually. After a few months we were ready to go to the board (called the *jomus*) to present our analysis and recommendations.

“But a couple of strange things were going on at Sanwa. At the beginning of the project we had asked for a full-time Sanwa team to complement our own team. Joint consultant and client task forces are more effective than solo consultant teams. The client members know their way around the organization and where the facts are buried; and, too, they are there after the outside consultants have left. After a long negotiation in which we thought Sanwa management had agreed with us, we figured that two or three of their people would join forces with us the next day. Twenty showed up.

“‘What’s this?’ we wanted to know. ‘Your study team,’ they explained. We protested that what we had meant by a team was smaller—certainly not twenty people. They said we had done such a good job of explaining the need for a client team that they thought they would do it right. We couldn’t understand why this otherwise bright group of executives insisted on such a large team when it was obvious that the problem solving would have been more efficient with a smaller one. But they were paying the bills, so we lurched forward with our unwieldy gang of twenty.

“After two months we presented our results. The team of twenty reacted with horror. They explained that before we talked to the *jomus*, we should discuss our findings with a fairly large group of people around the bank. They started a list that grew to several hundred people. We told them that would take a few months, reminded them of the project’s cost, and suggested again that we simply report our solution to the board and get on with restoring market share. They reminded us that they were paying the bills and suggested we do it their way.

“Several months later we finally made the presentation to the *jomu-kai* (the board leadership). It lasted only an hour and was mainly ceremonial. By then all of the *jomus* were well acquainted with what we were going to say.

“Then something amazing happened. About two days after the presentation their market share started to rise! We had never seen results that fast. (In fact,

as anyone who has consulted will tell you, getting results at all is sometimes a surprise.)

“Involving twenty people on the team had nothing to do with problem-solving ‘efficiency.’ Our talking to hundreds more after we had the ‘answer’ to the market share problem had nothing to do with crisp decision-making. Both processes had everything to do with getting something done.

“By the time we made the final presentation to the *jomus*, a significant part of the entire Sanwa organization had already been involved in the project. All those study-team members, all their friends in the bank, and all the people we talked to subsequently understood that market share was of prime concern to top management. They knew what the study team thought was the root of the problem. But most important, they had the chance to engage in the problem themselves. They could, and did, vigorously express their own views on the cause of the problem and solutions to it. They could, and did, contribute to the team’s thinking. There was deep wisdom in Sanwa’s insistence that we conduct the project in a way that at the time appeared to me to be inefficient, burdensome, and more than a little foolish.

“When Andy Pearson was still president of PepsiCo, he said, ‘We have 120,000 employees stashed in various places around the world, and I frankly have no idea what the hell they’re doing.’ Throughout the Sanwa project, with hundreds of people involved, we had no idea what they were all doing. In any sense of the word control, the project seemed out of control. But in a broader sense the thing was under control. The market share went up. Give up control, in the narrow sense, to get control, in a broader sense.

“Later, one of the members of the team of twenty commented about presenting the results to the board early. ‘Good show business, bad consulting,’ he said. It says a lot about why ‘implementation is a bitch’ for so many American and European managers. We are so busy grandstanding with ‘crisp decisions’ that we don’t take time to involve those who have to make the decisions work.” (1987, p. 88–90)

This story demonstrates the power and excitement of involving the organization as a “whole” rather than working with a very small segment of the banking organization, as Waterman’s consulting group expected to do. Whole system transformation occurs when there is a much broader involvement and ownership of issues and responsibilities across an organization, such as Waterman experienced with the Sanwa Bank. His story represents the kind of whole system transformation we are talking about. And quite possibly, the principles of whole system transformation, which are discussed later in this chapter, were operative in the bank organization’s transformation and successful resolution of its market share loss problem. But first, it may be helpful to trace the evolution of organization development, which grew out of the social movements of the mid-20th Century, and the development of whole systems thinking.

THE ORIGINS OF OD IN RELATION TO WHOLE SYSTEMS THINKING

It was during the 1960s and the tremendous social transformation that OD was born out of the developments in social psychology and the behavioral sciences. The National Training Labs of Bethel, Maine, were founded and began to teach people how to engage in this new process, which was called organization development. Whole systems thinking had emerged in both Europe and the United States, particularly in philosophy, science, and organizational change. Barbara Bunker and Billie Alban (1997) illustrated this development in *Large Group Interventions*.

German-born American social psychologist Kurt Lewin, who had fled the Nazis, had brought Gestalt psychology to the United States in the late 1930s. According to Bunker and Alban (1997), he was concerned that psychology might lose relevance to social problems. It was his introduction of field theory in which human behavior is seen as being influenced by a dynamic field of forces that helped to create experimental social psychology as a new discipline.

Another significant contributor to the organizational change movement was Ron Lippitt, described by Art Kleiner (1996) in *The Age of Heretics*, a history of the 20th Century social movements, as being one of the heretics from the dominant institutions who in the late 1950s saw the value of human relationships and community. It was Lippitt's belief that there was a void of the human spirit in which corporations could not perform. This view went against the attitudes of institutions at that time. Further, Lippitt was one of the founders of NTL, who studied with Kurt Lewin, implementing his action processes within the developing field of OD. Lippitt saw the world as a whole system and began using his own concepts to help cities and organizations become what they yearned to be.

Lippitt, like other organizational consultants of the 1950s and 1960s, had studied with Lewin and used his processes with organizations. Lippitt studied with Lewin at MIT and joined several other Ph.D. students of Lewin's to initiate the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan, as well as to create the National Training Labs. Ron Lippitt believed that there was an important dynamic that could be released from people in organizations by combining their yearnings for the future of the organization. Ron Lippitt brought a creative genius in the design of processes focused on uncovering the preferred future that ultimately leads to energy creation (Bunker & Alban, 1997; Kleiner, 1996).

In the early days of NTL, organization development (OD) was born, and was named by people like Dick Beckhard and Peter Vaill. OD had definite strategies that were primarily based on small group behavioral science theory and actions. At the time, the traditional method of bringing about whole system change was

top to bottom, with senior management and a hierarchical process sending down “the word” on changes through the organization. Such a process tended to bring about sequential incremental change, which by definition is a slower type of change involving only a small number of people making the decisions with the rest of the system being forced to make the changes. However, when change involves a large group of people, across hierarchical levels, all seeing the same thing at the same time, it creates wholeness. It is a more rapid change because people live what they see. When everyone sees change at once, they begin to live it . . . at once.

In the 1980s, the whole system methodology began to take hold on the fringes of OD. Its processes were based on open systems theory, with alignment around a strategic direction broadly shared by senior management and the whole system. Response to the data that the system came to know about was rapid. As soon as the whole system shared the data, change began to occur. In such changes, simultaneous organizational shifts occurred. Some practitioners began to invent “out of the box,” methods grounded in the small group theory and interventions that currently existed. These were the beginnings of whole system transformation in OD.

In our research on whole system transformation in the development of OD, we have studied its seven key founders and thought leaders: Ronald Lippitt and Ed Lindaman (“Preferred Futuring,” founded in 1969), Fred Emery and Eric Trist (“Search Conference,” founded in 1960), Marvin Weisbord and Sandra Janoff (“Future Search,” founded in 1982), Kathleen Dannemiller (“Whole Scale Change,” founded in 1982), Harrison Owen (“Open Space Technology,” founded in 1985), Richard and Emily Axelrod (“The Conference Model,” founded in 1991), and David Cooperrider (“Appreciative Inquiry,” founded in 1987). It is important to note that these eleven OD consultants have based their methods on the work of Emery and Trist of the Tavistock Institute in London, Kurt Lewin’s groundbreaking research on leadership, as well as on Ron Lippitt’s whole community thinking and other behavioral science theories that were developed and tested at NTL in the 1950s and 1960s.

With the help of graduate students at Bowling Green State University and The Pennsylvania State University, we interviewed both the founders and the followers of each of these founders who had studied with them for over ten years and were themselves experts. In addition, we have content-analyzed the published work on these methods (that is, affinity diagramming). Through these processes, we searched for the commonality of the founders’ methodologies that might explain the collective wisdom underlying these processes. We identified five common elements and truths of whole system transformation that we believe have sustained the success of all of the founders’ processes. We call these elements because each has a key focus (that is, system, purpose, journey, theory, and values). We broaden each element into a truth statement that

captures the essence of the models and practice of the founders. They are truths because each one depicts what the founders did collectively in their work. These truths are not necessarily explicit . . . they form an emergent framework that is based on observing them through their writing and the application of their methods. What we suspected—and have now confirmed—is that these truths explain the sustainability and robustness that emerge in the process of transforming a system into wholeness.

THE TRUTHS OF WHOLE SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

Entrepreneurial spirit and innovativeness was an innate quality of the founders and a skill important to their continuing work in transforming systems. The larger implications for you as an organizational leader, consultant (internal or external), and change agent is that if you draw from these five basic truths, you can invent your own tools and technologies—and indeed you must invent your own in order to really transform the systems in which you interact. The field of OD is ripe for invention and reinvention.

Figure 18.1 presents a visual overview of the relationship among the truths. As we examined the various methodologies, we found the founders explicitly published and described how they view a system, create purpose, and design journeys. Theory is an important supporting link between system, purpose, and journey. And at the core of each founder’s work are values, driving the development and application of the methodology.

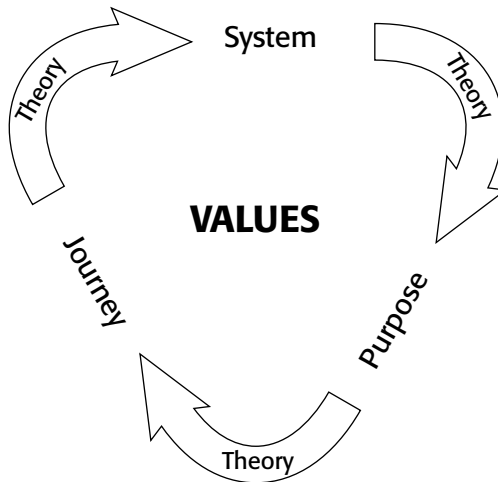


Figure 18.1. An Integrated View of the Five Truths

What is your model for transformation? As you read through this chapter, determine what you believe and know for each truth and consider writing up your own approach as a white paper. Use these truths to help you speed up the process. Pull from all the methods you know . . . explore other methods, get outside the box, and then come up with an approach that you call your own.

System

Transformation connects all things within and around the system. A system is comprised of a set of parts or components that are related or interconnected in such a way as to form an organic whole that focuses on performing a function. Thus, applied to organizations of people, the term “system” means that it is composed of two or more people, and perhaps other elements, connected for the purpose of performing a function.

Our view of systems thinking is to see patterns in the organization as a whole, instead of just looking at (and fixing) the parts. We believe that real change comes from seeing and working to reinforce or change system patterns. The emphasis is on the interaction more than on the analysis of each component. All systems are alive and connected to a larger system, because living components are involved in the system. The impact of change on each component and subcomponent of the system will be different.

The people who practice the work of whole system transformation have a profound appreciation for the power of systems. There is a strong respect for the potential disaster that can occur from not listening to the system. In the Westernized world, it seems that we have limited systemic awareness. We are products (outgrowths) of the industrial revolution from which we were trained to problem solve, fix what is broken, and almost certainly focus on getting rid of the people we believe are responsible for the problem. We are often surprised when the problem reappears, with different leaders, different actions, and different intentions. The reason is by optimizing a part (fix it), we suboptimize the whole (make things worse).

It is the people within the system who must also choose change if the whole is to change. It was Eric Trist (1981) who challenged theories of the industrial revolution by proposing that change can't be forced and that new ways to shift paradigms of many people must be invented. It was this principle that influenced Marvin Weisbord (Weisbord & Janoff, 1995) in the creation of his approach to system-wide change.

Whole system practitioners believe that the only way we can bring about organizational change in the 21st Century is to look at the whole system. Piecework solutions cannot resolve complex system-wide problems. Real wisdom and synergy come from the interconnectedness of people through shared information. There is undeniable power in thinking whole system and in being a whole system as we think. Bringing together various microcosms (cells) of the

whole organization will enable the organization to see itself as a whole and therefore be able to change in real time, holistically (Dannemiller Tyson Associates, 2000).

Purpose

The transformation is clearly purposeful. “If you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there,” says the Cheshire Cat in *Alice in Wonderland*. In other words, if you don’t know where you’re going, you literally won’t know when you get there. And this is why having a clear purpose is so important. Purpose is defined as a positive difference that occurs through the transformation. The question is, what will be different in our world because we embarked on a transformational journey that indeed transformed our organization and our lives? Or to put it another way, how will the system be different? Why should we change? A purpose statement is typically a one-sentence summary of the main outcomes to be addressed. It is broad enough to allow for flexibility and innovation, while providing focus and direction for the identified outcomes.

For example, Harrison Owen (2000) describes the two fundamental principles of the open space process: passion and responsibility. Passion engages people, while responsibility ensures tasks are completed. There is a theme or question that sets the stage for bringing people together. The focusing theme is what we will frame as the purpose for their transformation. This focused theme is what drives the journey of the transformation in the open space process. Similarly, David Cooperider and Diana Whitney (1999) discuss the purpose for the use of appreciative inquiry as cooperatively and systemically searching for the best in terms of people, organization, and world. It is purpose that drives what is useful. They are very clear that change must be grounded in purpose. In the same way, Dannemiller and her colleagues (Dannemiller Tyson Inc., 2000) draw heavily from Ron Lippitt’s work in which the power of purpose can be seen in their action learning roadmap. It begins with a clear statement of purpose describing every numbered step in their roadmap. Each action is “on purpose,” starting with a series of questions like “What is the purpose?” “Who needs to be involved?” and “What conversations need to take place?” Any step taken without a clear statement of purpose is a “throwaway line”—meaning, why bother? It is our job to ensure that everything we do achieves the results for which we are aiming.

A common theme to the founders is that purpose for transformational change should reflect the desires of the people in the organization in order to motivate and inspire everyone. If it does, everyone will think, “Yes, that is it; that is what we need!” and will be willing to work hard to make it happen. A compelling purpose for transforming the organization will call every person to begin to come together.

Journey

The transformation is a dynamic journey. The next truth, journey, speaks to the fact that whole system transformation is comprised of more than just an event. It is a purposeful system-wide journey of change. The journey is characterized by key actions, important questions, critical decisions, and ways to evaluate progress at each step along with way. A transformation journey is an ongoing process, not a one- or two-day strategic planning session. A strategic planning session, however, can be a very important step on the transformation journey.

Each of the founders of whole system transformation sees this journey as a well-designed roadmap, articulated clearly in terms of the purpose and the results-oriented outcomes of each step as well as the requirements between steps. The result is a roadmap that describes the purpose-driven processes needed, as well as the flow of work across the system. When the steps in the journey are clearly delineated and believable, there will be no unintentional turnings or wasted detours—rather the change will be a concise and flexible process that enables rapid deployment.

It is equally important to state the outcomes or specific results to be achieved. The transformation process is best served when there are agreed-on measurement criteria for various points in the process. How will we measure success in three months? Six months? A year? If people can agree on criteria for measuring success before they start the work, chances are strong that they will succeed.

Within a journey there can be “accelerator events.” Such an event is intended to induce a paradigm shift that serves to speed up the process of change through whole system understanding, support, and direction for the next steps in the transformation journey. Usually accelerator events include a representative sample of the whole organization (called a microcosm) in the planning process, as compared to traditional expert strategic planning. In order to achieve successful actualization of a strategy, leaders of the organization have a clear vision of where the strategy will lead the organization. In addition, everyone in the organization, regardless of his or her role, is involved. This type of event can bring a plan to fruition by giving everyone in the organization the opportunity to interact with a draft strategy initially, rather than when the strategy is pushed down through the organization. The accelerator event allows the organization to become one mind (everyone sees and accepts the same data) and one heart (everyone is connected by a common desire) and then able to create a powerful, system-wide action plan to achieve its goals.

Another key aspect of a transformational journey(s) is based on the work of Lev Vygotsky and Kurt Lewin, called “action learning.” Each step of the journey informs the next step of the journey. Hence, a journey is planned in process while it is in fact unfolding—the planning is dynamic. After each step, the following action learning questions are asked:

- What did we plan to do?
- What did we actually do?
- What actually happened?
- What did we learn?
- What will we do next in our journey based on what we learned?

This process is never-ending. People in an organization learn to ask the right questions by developing a common database at each step. They are then able to create a shared vision of the organization's future. Also, the people of the organization will be more likely to agree on change goals and specific actions to achieve those goals. A good method to follow is J. Edward Deming's (2000) action learning Plan-Do-Check-Act technique. This approach emphasizes the continuing, never-ending nature of process improvement. The cycle is really a simple feedback loop system, as follows:

PLAN—A plan is developed to improve a process.

DO—The plan is tested in a small field test.

CHECK—The results of the test are assessed.

ACT—If successful, the plan is implemented.

The process then begins again and the cycle is repeated. The repetition of the PDCA cycle, with each cycle producing improvement, leads to *continuous improvement*. The process traces an ever-deepening spiral into the mind and heart of both the organization as a whole and the individuals within the organization. Consistent across the founding methods is the notion of rapid changes in a whole system, and that enables clients to create further substantive change by:

- Working together to clarify and connect their own multiple current realities;
- Working together to unite system-wide desires in a common picture of the future;
- Working together to reach agreement on the action plans that will move that organization toward the picture of the future;
- Working together to build processes, structures, and relationships that keep the organization moving forward; and
- Working together to align organizational leaders and employees capable of implementing the changes together.

For example, Cooperrider and Whitney (1999) speak to the change as life itself rather than an event. The journey they include in their appreciative inquiry methodology is what they call the 4-D's:

1. *Discover*—mobilize a systemic inquiry into the positive change core.
2. *Dream*—envision the organization's greatest potential for positive influence and impact on the world.
3. *Design*—craft an organization in which the positive core is boldly alive in all strategies, processes, systems, decisions, and collaborations.
4. *Destiny*—invite action inspired by the days of discovery, dream, and design.

Similarly, Dick and Emily Axelrod (2000) describe journey in terms of engaging large numbers of people in system-wide changes that are connected by conferences and walk-throughs encouraged by supporting mechanisms. Each step in their model describes a step in the journey of change.

Theory

Transformation is guided by theory. The next truth is the notion that the founders ground themselves in the building blocks of theoretical frameworks. Each of the founders and all of their followers honor the work of the people who went before them, who developed theories. As stated by Kurt Lewin, "There is nothing as practical as a good theory" (Kleiner, 1996, p. 31). In short, when a growing body of evidence has supported a theory, it is robust. That is, the method or technique leads to predictable results in a variety of situations. When you "poke" the system (intervene), you want to be able to predict the "ouch." When you can predict the "ouch" from the intervention, you have a robust intervention. Therefore, it is imperative that you be intentional in the chain reaction you set off. If you know the possible reaction to an intervention, you will be doing the kind of work that will lead to transformation success.

Transformation journeys are the products of robust theories as demonstrated in the founders' work. They instinctively knew that robust theory had to be the foundation for every design decision on their journeys (interventions, steps, accelerators, etc.). The founders believed that the use of robust theories would give them the highest possible chance to be successful in their own work. If their work were based on robust theory, success could be predicted. Since the founders were working with whole system interventions, predictable results were needed. Because the impact is instantaneous, there is no time to go back once a particular step or technique has been introduced into the system.

The founders had a tendency to write, communicate, teach, and share their ideas with the world. Eventually, the founders had followers. Their methods

became more commercialized and in many cases protected. Then the founders found themselves with followers. It was the followers who really wanted more documentation in order to sell the methods to potential clients. This led to the books and other methods necessary to get the word out about the work and to help facilitate understanding and learning.

Underlying each founder's work is a generic model, based on theories that had been tested extensively by their predecessors in the field. There are models, flow charts, acronyms, and such—all geared toward making the ideas more user-friendly. Often the founders combined tested OD theories with theories from other fields thought to be particularly compelling (that is, the scientific world).

The following demonstrates how consultants based their work on the theory of their predecessors. Harrison Owen describes his invention of “Open Space Technology” as follows:

“Open Space Technology was not the product of careful design. It occurred simply because I was tired of organizing meetings only to discover that the best-loved part was the coffee breaks, the only part I had nothing to do with. The immediate inspiration was social organization in tribal West Africa, where I discovered that everything of importance and utility occurred in a circle. Every indigenous population of which I am aware made the discovery a long time before I did. Retrospectively as we try to figure out why Open Space works, the answers generally come from research dealing with self-organization, complex adaptive systems, ‘dissipative structures,’ and the like. The associated names are not generally found in the literature of management or even behavioral science and include the likes of Stuart Kaufmann (biologist), Ilya Prigogine (chemist), and Murray Gel-Mann (physicist), to name a few. At the level of popularization, we should include Meg Wheatley.” (2000, p. 241)

And Marv Weisbord and Sandra Janoff (1999), discussing “Future Search,” say:

“[It] is based on solid, proven theories about how people can best develop plans in groups. . . . Our main sources of inspiration come from parallel innovations on both sides of the Atlantic. One is Ronald Lippitt and Eva Schindler-Rainman's large-scale community future conferences in North America during the 1970s. Another is the pioneering work of Eric Trist, an Englishman, and Fred Emery, an Australian, in developing the Search Conference. From Lippitt and Schindler-Rainman we learn to get the whole system in the room and focus on the future and not on problems and conflicts. From Trist and Emery we learn the importance of thinking globally before acting locally and of having people manage their own planning. We share with all of them a commitment to democratic ideas and their embodiment of the ‘action research’ tradition of the famed social psychologist Kurt Lewin.” (1999, p. 53)

Peg Holman and Tom Devane (1999) quote David Cooperrider in *The Change Handbook*, which is based on his appreciative inquiry methodology. Cooperrider states that his methods are founded on “Social Construction Theory,” “Anticipative Imagery Theory,” and “Narrative Theory.”

Dick and Emily Axelrod (2000) identify the following theorists who influenced their work:

- Ludwig Von Bertalanffy—General Systems Theory
- Fred Emery and Eric Trist—Socio-Technical Systems and Participatory Democracy
- Marv Weisbord and Sandra Janoff—Future Search
- Robert Fritz—Structural Tension
- Ron Lippitt—Preferred Future
- David Kolb, Malcolm Knowles, and Howard Gardner—Learning Theories
- Chris Argyris—Action Research
- Margaret Wheatley—Integration of Chaos Theory and Leadership
- J. Richard Hackman, Jack Gibb, Leland P. Bradford, and others [at NTL]—the whole field of group dynamics
- Murray Vowen—Family Systems
- Ivan Imber-Black and Meladoma Patrice Some—Ritual

Kathleen Dannemiller describes the primary theoretical basis for her whole-scale methodology as being “Process Consultation, Strategy Development and Implementation, Community Building, and Socio-Technical Systems Theory.” Many of the values and principles came from the laboratory method of learning developed by Ron Lippitt and others at the National Training Laboratories. Another source was Eric Trist and the Tavistock Institute. More recently, Margaret Wheatley and others have advanced “Field Theory, Chaos Theory, and Systems Thinking,” putting them before the public eye in a popular form. Rick Maurer has reframed resistance in a way that is also very helpful to us.

Many of the founders learned from common predecessors. The main common truth is that each learned from solid researched studies. They combined that with their own experience and the case examples from applying their work. The end result is a robust framework. It is important to note that each of the founders mentioned above drew from theories that are different or more influential than others.

Values

Transformation is shaped by values. Each of the founders of whole system transformation methodologies that we studied is profoundly and consistently driven by values. It is not historically surprising to find that many of their values are

similar across different methods. Many of the five founders studied and lived at the National Training Labs in Bethel, Maine, beginning in the 1950s. These key founders are committed to empowering people to shape the organizations they live in. These common values are primarily personal and interpersonal. The key founders and their followers live and breathe these values in everything they do, in both their personal and professional lives.

An important part of this truth should be pretty obvious. If we want to make a difference in people's lives within their own organization, we as consultants must live our values with every breath we take, every word we utter, and every design we use. When we are intervening in a system—and we always are—it is particularly critical to live our people values at every step. Some of the values that are consistent among most or all of the founders are as follows:

- Move people from passivity to activity;
- Create a maximum mixture of viewpoints;
- Get each one to see what everyone sees;
- Work is based on a basic belief of democratic principles; and
- Live from your heart.

Just as the founders practice values that are shared, all leaders and change agents who develop their own methodology will have some common values. They might also have values that distinguish them from other practitioners. OD consultants should use the truth of values to assess what qualities they bring to the table in addition to the values that they practice while consulting on whole system transformation for organizations.

CONCLUSION: A MESSAGE FOR THE FUTURE

Organizations tend to form in a biological manner as a result of the shared identity of [their] founding members; this identity emerges as a result of openly sharing information and the creation of authentic relationships and common yearnings.

—Michael Arena (2002)

What happens when a system becomes whole? What are the benefits? We believe the system knows the right thing to do and moves fast in doing it. Everybody matters in this universe, everyone has a place, and everyone has a meaning. And in that connectedness, healing occurs. What are possibilities that are achievable if we work as a whole system? What do we gain by integrating divided parts of an organization? And why is it particularly important in these times to be able to achieve system-wide success?

As organizations evolve, they tend to shift into a more mechanistic mode of thinking in response to their operating environment. We often see this happening at a time when a founding leader (such as Steve Jobs) is replaced. The board will often pick a successor who will be more “orderly,” less “entrepreneurial and uncontrolled.” Frequently, these pressures result in the loss of the originating identity of the organization, however. Our challenge is not to attempt to alter the environment, but rather to uncover, release, and unleash the shared organizational identity that has existed from the beginning.

We cannot think globally without thinking whole system. The notion of “find and fix” was for the last century; this century the idea is to “see the need for change and help make it happen.” The truths presented in this chapter provide an array of hues to incorporate into the underpinnings of a new generation of leaders, consultants, and educators in OD. You can use these colors as the foundation for beginning a successful transformation and include your own experience and attributions in order to move ahead.

As you look to the future in terms of research and collaborative thinking on whole system transformation, go outside the box and broaden your domain of interest. There are new thinkers emerging, methods from diverse fields being developed, and whole new applications being explored. A broader framework is in order—one that truly capitalizes on what each of us and all of us know . . . and reaches out to these new and emerging areas of interest.

It is extraordinarily important to stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before you, utilizing what has been learned as a basis for what you will do in the future. It is equally important to leap from those shoulders into the 21st Century to create your own truths, your own “truths for change.” Yours will be the shoulders from which the 22nd Century practitioner, scholar, and student will leap.



Note from Steve Cady

Kathie Dannemiller passed away on December 26, 2003. She was and continues to be one very important love of my life . . . mentor, friend, and provocateur. I would like to share a short story that is the essence of Kathie and relevant to the title of this chapter. Kathie wanted to use the word “truths” and I fought her on it. I felt it was arrogant to suggest that we know the truth. Kathie was adamant, “They are truths . . . they are what they are and that is why they are truths.” I, however, prevailed and we agreed on a different focus and title. Today, as I finish the rewrite on this chapter, I realize that she was right and have changed the title back to “truths.” We are not arrogant for stating these as truths; rather we are honoring the work of the founders by seeing the wisdom in their work. Hence, these truths are true and I am so glad Kathie is still with me today . . . prodding in whispering ways. Thanks, Kathie.

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OD Through Interlevel Dynamics

David Coghlan

Managing people in organizations requires that the dynamic relationship between an individual and the organization, effective functioning of teams, coordination of interfunctional departments, and the competitive strategy of the organization be viewed as a behavioral system. One approach to understanding the behavioral dynamics in systemic terms is through the construct of levels of analysis (Burke, 2002). While we use the term levels to describe positions on a hierarchy (worker, supervisor, manager, senior manager), we can also use levels to describe increasing complexity—individual, team, interdepartmental group, organization, industry sector, and so on. These are levels of complexity because an industry sector is made up of organizations, which in turn are made up of individual departments and function, which themselves comprise teams or individuals.

Rashford and Coghlan (1994) link levels in terms of how people participate in organizations and link them to provide a useful tool for managers and OD consultants. In their framework, the least complex approach, from the point of view of the individual, is the bonding relationship that the individual has with the organization in which he or she uses membership and participation to meet personal life goals. At the same time, the organization enlists the skills of the individual to contribute to organizational goals. A more complex approach to participation exists in establishing effective working relationships in a face-to-face team. An even more complex involvement is the interdepartmental group or divisional interface where teams must be coordinated to do complex tasks

and maintain a balance of power among competing groups. Finally, the most complex, from the point of view of the individual, is the relationship of the total organization to the external environment in which others are competing for scarce resources to produce similar products or services. The key task for any organization is its ability to adapt to environmental forces driving for change in a discontinuous manner. The four levels provide a useful view of complex organizational realities.

Viewing organizations through levels of analysis is only one part of the picture. The other part refers to how each level is related to each of the others, frequently referred to as *levels of aggregation*. There is an essential interlevel element in that each level has a dynamic relationship with each of the other three (see Figure 19.1). This relationship is grounded in systems dynamics, whereby the relationship each level has with the other three is systemic, with feedback loops forming a complex pattern of relationships (Senge, 1990). Dysfunctions at any of the four levels can cause dysfunctions at any of the other three levels. A person on the team may express stress as dysfunctional behaviors affect a team's ability to work effectively, which in turn affects the individual's ability to cope and ultimately the bonding relationship with the organization. A team that is working ineffectively can hinder the interdepartmental group's effectiveness, which may depend on the quality and timeliness of information, resources, and partially completed work from that team. If the interdepartmental group's multiple activities are not coordinated, the organization's ability to compete effectively may be affected. In systemic terms, each of the four levels affects each of the other three levels.

Viewing organizational levels as simply "levels of analysis" without taking interlevel dynamics into consideration misses the point about the systemic relationship the individual has with the team, the team with the interdepartmental group, the interdepartmental group with the organization in its external environment, and each with one another. There is a dynamic systemic relationship

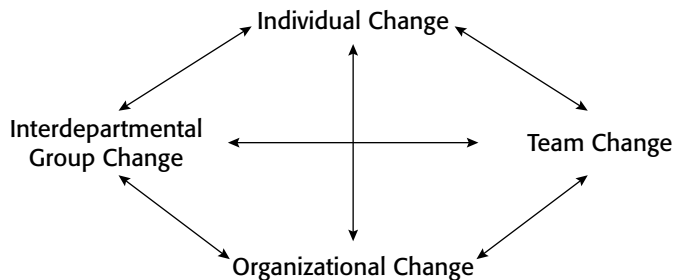


Figure 19.1. Systemic Interlevel Change

between individual bonding, team functioning, intergroup coordination, and organizational adaptation.

INTERLEVEL DYNAMICS IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

For a large system to change, individuals have to unfreeze and change, team members have to apply themselves to the change agenda, the interdepartmental group must generalize the change, and the organization must adapt in its external environment. The change process involves reactions to the change issues by individuals, teams, and groups; information sharing, problem solving, and decision making by individuals and groups; and negotiation for resources by interfunctional teams at the interdepartmental group level in order to renew the organization. Accordingly, the change process comprises a series of movements across the four organizational levels as individuals and teams deal with the change issues and negotiate them with other individuals and teams.

PHASES AND LEVELS OF CHANGE

Rashford and Coghlan's (1994) four well-known psychological reactions to change—denying, dodging, doing, and sustaining—map the sequences whereby learning and change move through an organization from the first person who initiates the question of change to the whole organization (Coghlan, 1996). In a domino effect, the hierarchy of the organization, after recognizing the need for change, intervenes in the change process. People confront the data, assess it, and respond to it, perhaps by first denying and then dodging. At the doing stage they take the information to the team for analysis and acceptance. Team members are confronted with the information and may also deny and dodge before acceptance and action. Reaction at the interdepartmental group level leads to intergroup negotiation on what to change, how, what subsystems are affected, and to whose benefit. When the change has been initiated at the interdepartmental group level and is affecting products or services in the external market, the key individual who has been leading the change goes into a sustaining mode and looks for ways to maintain the change in the organization's structure. That person also critiques the adequacy of the change in meeting the original or emergent needs.

Denying and dodging are natural reactions to the unexpected news that change is needed. They describe more explicitly the specific reactions in the unfreezing process as experience is disconfirmed and anxiety is felt (Schein, 1999). Because change involves a movement from what is familiar and accepted, it usually has threatening and stressful elements. Therefore, the initial

reaction to change to be expected is that change is not necessary, and that people may adopt an avoidance or dodging stance. As Schein points out, the critical issue for movement is the creation of psychological safety so as to minimize paralyzing anxiety. The doing and changing stages are complementary, as are the refreezing and sustaining stages. Schein's notion of relational refreezing, where change is sustained across significant relationships, can be understood in terms of the four organizational levels in systemic harmony, sustaining a change and making it work. In other words, there is a harmony between the organization's change in relation to its external performance, the balancing of resources, information, and power across the interdepartmental group, the work that teams have to do, and the bonding relationship between employees and the changed or changing organization.

In summary, the phases of change through the four levels provide a framework for determining one fact rarely considered in organization development—namely that *in organizational change people learn and change at different paces*. Because they have access to information, CEOs are likely to have a sense of the need for change before others lower in the hierarchy do. A sales team may realize the need for change from interaction with customers and then have to persuade the top management team. Rashford and Coghlan (1994) illustrate that, when one party is aware of the need for change and begins initiating change, another party may be caught unaware and typically responds by denying and dodging. While the phases may appear linear, they are not. The process of change through a large system is a complex iteration of steps to and fro, forward and backward, progress and regression (Burke, 2002).

Managing the time lag as a change moves through an organization is critical. A snapshot of an organization taken at a specific point in a change process would typically show that some groups in the organization are actively promoting the change agenda, some groups are beginning to feel the impact of the change, other groups are tentatively responding to it, and there are others, perhaps, whom the change has not yet touched (see Figure 19.2). A view of the change process in terms of the flow of change through organizational levels adds a necessary sophistication to the management of the transition period and to creating commitment (Nadler, 1998). Such a dynamic view of organizational levels is key to organizational learning and is useful in managing large group dynamics.

INTERLEVEL DYNAMICS IN ACTION

Coghlan (1997) describes the case of a plant of a pharmaceutical supplies company that was working through a five-year transformation program. In many ways this plant was a product of the traditional industrial model inherited from the 1950s and before. There was a strong trade union culture with militant

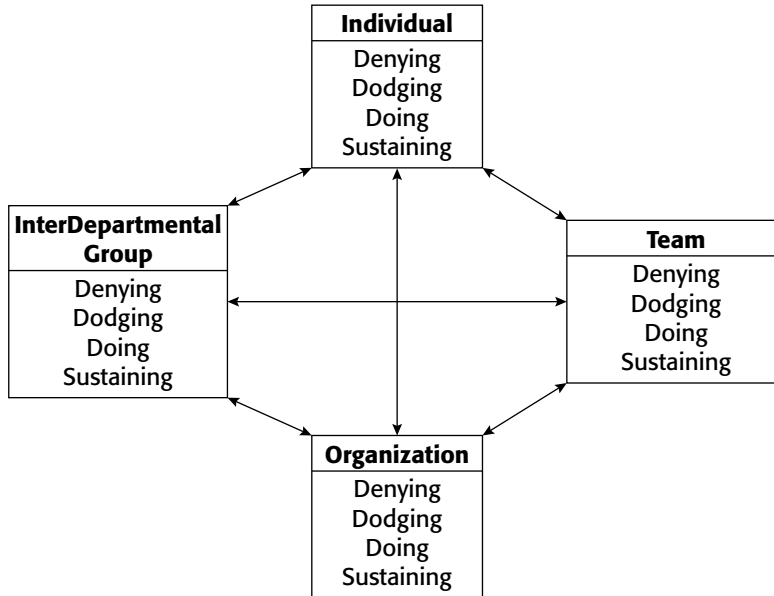


Figure 19.2. Phases and Levels of Change

relationships between unions and management on issues like changes in work practice. Several trade unions competed for members. There was a tradition of strict demarcation of job and role. The managers' style, particularly that of front-line supervisors, tended to focus on control and discipline. The plant itself was inefficient and losing money, but corporate managers did not want to close it, for to do so would have been costly. So they installed a new plant manager with a directive to turn the plant around and make it profitable within five years. The new manager initiated a total quality management (TQM) program. As the TQM program developed and took root, espoused attitudes changed. The future success of the plant depended not only on changed output, structures, and behaviors, but also on attitudes and central assumptions about what working in the plant meant, how work was done, and how people worked together. The plant manager decided that the plant needed OD interventions to supplement the TQM program and other changes he had initiated.

Over eighteen months an OD consultant worked with the plant management team, the production teams' front-line managers, and the administrative services team, respectively, in day-long offsite meetings. The goal was to instill team thinking and team skills. Each meeting focused on (1) the team's goals, what they were, and how they were decided; (2) procedures in allocating the

work to achieve the goals; (3) processes for communicating information, conducting meetings, solving problems, making decisions, managing conflict; and (4) the relationships between the members (Nadler, Spencer, & Associates, 1998). Focus was also given to relationships and work flow issues with other teams.

For some teams these meetings were the first time they had been afforded the opportunity to take time offsite to discuss and review company and team-based issues. In the initial stages of the team-building sessions, the teams tended to generate engineering hit lists—that is, engineering issues they had to resolve, and slipped easily into discussing these. Through the interventions of the OD consultant, they began to learn how to review process issues and develop a sense of teamwork. They reviewed procedures for problem identification and resolution and set up processes whereby procedures and roles could be reviewed. They examined their perceptions of their roles as team members and as managers of others. They began to realize that, as managers, they needed to initiate building a sense of teamwork with their own shifts by rethinking their roles. Between team-building sessions with the consultant, some teams set goals that they did not keep and so, in reviewing, learned to examine how it was that some things did not happen.

In these team meetings, several key areas of learning were identified. First, the team discussion and review of process issues provided those team members who hitherto had little prior exposure to an emphasis on process or a learning experience of working on a team. Second, members could apply learning how to work with their managers and peers on management teams to working with their subordinates on their own teams. Third, the single-loop learning of applying a team model to their own working situation led to double-loop learning about the nature of the front-line manager's role. In one session a front-line manager asked, "Does this mean I have to ask my people how they are? I have never done that before"—a question that sprang out of his realization that his assumptions about his role were being transformed before his eyes. His manager replied that he himself had never done it either until a few months previously when he had brought that front-line manager into his office, sat him down, and asked him how he was. What was happening here was that the individual front-line manager's assumptions about his role were changing through his participation in the team process. The front-line manager, and others like him, then enacted his newly understood role with his own subordinates in his own production team.

This change and learning did not happen easily or in any single session. Over an extended time period, through the approach and actions of senior management and reinforced by the team-building meetings, many of the front-line managers began to understand the need for a cultural change in the organization and its implications for their own roles and operating assumptions. The team dynamics affected individual assumptions and opened up the possibility of double-loop learning.

Toward the end of the eighteen-month period, the plant manager casually commented how contented he was that the change process was now well-established. He said that a year ago he had given a great deal of time and energy to the change process—coming in early and leaving late. Now he considered that he didn't have to do that any more; in his view the change agenda was well-embedded and there was no going back. Spontaneously, his team turned on him and retorted that now they were coming in early and leaving late, putting a great deal of energy into the change process, and were uncertain about the outcome. The plant manager's comments showed that he had switched from *doing* to *sustaining*, while his team was at the *doing* stage. The front-line manager who found his role changing was expressing denial through his incredulity about what he was now being asked to do.

In viewing this case from the perspective of how change moved through that organization, we can see that the change was initiated by the plant manager (individual level). He initially brought assumptions of what needed to be done, both attitudinal and behavioral, to achieve the desired productivity and survival outcomes to his management team (team level). In time the members of the management team understood what it was all about and took it to their respective teams (interdepartmental group level). Within the production teams the team process influenced the front-line supervisors to understand what was being asked of them (individual level), which in turn reinforced the team processes of these teams and the senior management team (team level). In this manner, the change agenda, which involved a significant changing of assumptions, moved through the hierarchy, from senior individual to management team to middle manager to middle-level teams and so on. At the same time, in terms of levels of complexity, the change process moved to and fro, from individual to team, reinforced by team and back to individual, so that the progress of organizational change was a complex iteration of individual and team learning and change, with each being a cause and effect of the other.

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, I have taken the traditional construct of levels of analysis beyond its usual application to focus on levels of aggregation as the systemic interdependence and interrelationship of the individual, the team, the interdepartmental group, and the organization. The Thoul plant case illustrates the important role of interlevel dynamics in the process of learning and change. The interlevel dynamics from individual to team and back, and from team to team and back, brought out both the current mental models in individuals and the groups with which they identified (front-line managers, senior managers, and so on) and helped shape changes that were required in the thinking. Individual change took

place through the teams of which individuals were members. Team change came about through a focus on team process and reinforced individual change. The change moved in an iterative manner from individual to team, team to individual, and team to team. Levels of aggregation and interlevel dynamics form recursive systems at the core of systemic learning and change processes. Such interlevel processes do not receive explicit attention in the change and learning literature. My aim has been to share some OD work so that the systemic nature of interlevel dynamics may be further explored.

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PART FOUR



SPECIAL ISSUES IN OD

Part Four focuses on special issues in OD. It consists of the following chapters:

Chapter Twenty	Global Organization Development, by Gary N. McLean, Karen J. Davis, Mila N. Baker, and Juana Anguita
Chapter Twenty-One	Values, Ethics, and Practice in the Field of Organization Development, by Terri Egan and William Gellermann
Chapter Twenty-Two	Bringing Every Mind into the Game to Realize the Positive Revolution in Strategy: The Appreciative Inquiry Summit, by Frank J. Barrett, David L. Cooperrider, and Ronald E. Fry
Chapter Twenty-Three	Human Systems Dynamics: Competencies in a Complex World, by Glenda H. Eoyang
Chapter Twenty-Four	Technology and Organization Development, by Soren Kaplan
Chapter Twenty-Five	The Personhood of the Consultant: The OD Practitioner as Human Being, by Robert Tannenbaum with Saul Eisen

Chapter Twenty-Six	Adding to the Complexity of Personal Change, by Kristine Quade
Chapter Twenty-Seven	Practicing Internal OD, by Allan Foss, David Lipsky, Allen Orr, Beverly Scott, Terrence Seamon, Julie Smendzuik-O'Brien, Anna Tavis, Dale Wissman, and Catherine Woods
Chapter Twenty-Eight	Our Work for the Times in Which We Live, by Margaret Wheatley



Global Organization Development

Gary N. McLean, Karen J. Davis,
Mila N. Baker, and Juana Anguita

Consider this story about working with change in a global world:

A team of consultants was subcontracted by a multinational telecommunications company headquartered in the United States to assist with the implementation of an employee suggestion program and to manage the change process. The company had sales offices in several countries, but their employee base was concentrated in manufacturing facilities located in the U.S., Mexico, England, and Thailand. Believing that business benefit and potential cost savings would be gained, an employee suggestion plan was to be instituted globally, awarding incentives based on an individual's level of compensation. This would be a major change for the company. As the consulting team began its work, the members raised a number of concerns:

- That there were issues related to the change in the company that would have to be addressed for successful implementation.
- That the program allowed for suggestion incentives only by individuals, not for team-based suggestions. The consultants believed that this decision would likely present a problem. While U.S. companies are traditionally viewed as being individualistic and often have great success with individual incentive-based programs, this company's manufacturing plants

were located in countries with highly collectivist views and would probably not be as responsive or supportive of such an individualized plan.

- That the incentive program was based solely on material items as suggestion motivators versus training supervisors to encourage suggestions from workers. Even in the United States, there have been significant amounts of research supporting the findings of Herzberg that workers are more motivated by intrinsic rewards, such as achievement or recognition, than by extrinsic rewards of money or material goods.
- That differential incentives were based on compensation. For example, the maximum “prize” that could be won in Texas was a pick-up truck. Whereas, just a few miles away across the Mexican border, the highest prize an employee could win was a jacket.

In spite of the concerns raised, the company decided to move forward with the original plan. They were reluctant to take the necessary time to address the changes and the system implications. Soon after, each concern was manifested.

This case illustrates the complexity of working in many different cultures and also serves as a reminder that interventions that might have been successful in the past may not be as successful in today’s multicultural, multi-contextual environments. It is also a reminder that the OD practitioner/consultant does not set policy or make decisions in client organizations. Rather, the best that consultants can do is to build awareness of culture and context issues, facilitate processes, and raise difficult questions that they hope client organizations will take seriously. Finally, this example illustrates how difficult it is to address fundamental change issues and barriers to success when the solution or process changes are perceived as the most critical task at hand.

In this chapter, we first outline a vision for global OD work. Next, we explore the context for global OD—why and why now? Then we discuss theories and the need for methodologies that will influence how an OD practitioner must think about work in a culture different from his or her primary culture. Next we consider factors influencing the success of an OD practitioner working in a different culture and ways that OD processes differ in different parts of the world. We conclude with competencies needed to perform effective OD in another culture.

One of the distinctive characteristics of practicing OD is the art of asking questions—knowing the right question and knowing when to ask the question. That is one of the core competencies that differentiates us from others (Beckhard, 1999). So we begin by asking: What questions, about doing global OD work, do we need to ask ourselves, our colleagues, our organizations, and our world at this time?

As you read this chapter, consider the significant change throughout the world that has occurred since the first edition of this book was published. For example, for years sub-Saharan African countries had only unilateral trade. They did not conduct trade within the continent. They exported many raw materials, but all their finished goods were imported from outside Africa. Today, those same countries, through SACU (South African Customs Union), are developing trade routes and trading between countries, a remarkable advance and one with dramatic impact on the communities, people, governments, and organizations in Africa. This is an example of positive change. Unfortunately, many changes have not been positive for our world society. Such changes, however, have led to a new world order and worldview—a world order that until recently was reflected only in written form but has now been realized in behavior change. This new worldview presents an enormous opportunity and need to reshape our fundamental ways of thinking and understanding how we live together. If OD practitioners wish to have an impact on this new and emerging world, then our thinking and comprehending about our values and purpose will have to shift and evolve as well.

OUR VISION: A GLOBAL WISDOM SOCIETY

To focus our thinking and address a new world order and worldview, we provide a definition and share a vision of OD as a foundation for building a “global wisdom society.” An early definition of this evolving concept is a society that values all cultures and traditions and skillfully utilizes multiple ways of knowing for the greater benefit of all life (Institute of Noetic Sciences, 2002). We define global OD as a way of thinking, understanding, and acting/being in the world consistent with the ideals, values, and competencies of a global wisdom society.

Richard Beckhard (1997), one of the originators of the term “organization development,” stated, “There is no longer organization development; there is only global organization development.” In recent years, the focus has been on adapting our current OD practices to global settings; however, we suggest that the time is now for global wisdom to guide our global OD practices. Regardless of where in the world we are practicing OD, it has to be within a global frame of reference. Whatever we do at a local level impacts and has a relationship with the larger world. As OD practitioners we have the choice to do this consciously, intentionally, and responsibly. Our mindset dictates our actions. When we ensure this occurs we become global OD practitioners, whether we practice in our home culture or worldwide in a culture other than our own. The credo for organization and human systems development has stated that “our ultimate client is the global community” (Gellermann, Frankel, & Ladenson, 1990).

Senge (2003) suggests, “Realizing desired results in a global society requires both learning and leadership, and above all it involves creating/imaging a vision of the future, which also evokes the implicit difference from what currently exists” (p. 1). With the vision of a global wisdom society and one world, our practice of global OD should strive to co-create global wisdom organizations that embrace the following:

- Holding a systemic perspective and always looking at the wholeness, the interrelatedness, and the harmony and balance of living systems and the universe. This includes nurturing the wholeness (health, integrity, full wholesome life, spiritual/psychosocial development) of the organization and all its stakeholders. The “self”—the individual—is a system; for every “outside” there is an “interior,” and there are “outsides” and “insides” for groups (the collective) and individuals (Owen, 2004; Wilbur, 2000). A systemic perspective also encompasses twin citizenship (Handy, 1994), the capacity to hold views of local and broader context and take action in spite of seeming paradoxes.
- Operating out of a deep understanding of and respect for natural systems and cycles, earth wisdom (WindEagle & RainbowHawk, 2003), human needs, and future generations. As noted by Mitchell (1996), living systems are self-organizing, intelligent, creative, learning, trial/error, interconnected, participatory, interactive, and evolutionary. There are multiple ways of knowing (means to wisdom and right action) (IONS, 2002), and there must be an integration of linear and non-linear ways of operating. Some say that we have all the wisdom of the universe within us.
- Trusting the dynamics of self-organizing and collective consciousness as well as co-intelligence, the capacity to evoke creative responses and initiatives that integrate the diverse gifts of all for the benefit of all (Atlee, 2003). This includes building an internal human and organizational capacity to create structures that fit the moment and can evolve spontaneously. In our everchanging/evolving world, learning, inquiry, and openness are important, as are a sense of awe and wonder, curiosity, and a deeper appreciation for all life and for each other and the universe.
- Applying our learnings from the new sciences. This encompasses creative chaos, strange attractors, complexity, and quantum theory’s probabilities of interconnections/relationships rather than probabilities of “things” (Capra, 1996; Wheatley, 1999). We live in a quantum world.
- Being in the business of ethically serving society and earth in life-affirming and sustainable ways, including being in harmony with natural ecological and global environmental systems. There is stewardship of the whole. It embraces operating with a portfolio of human capital knowing that the

greater good is served and goals are met when everyone's effort is nurtured and utilized. Everyone is leader and everyone is follower. The ideals of wisdom and right action are appreciated even more than the accumulation of wealth, power, and personal pleasure.

CONTEXT FOR GLOBAL OD

As a result of the many cultural differences that businesspeople encounter around the globe, there is no "one best way" for practicing OD. Rather, our perspective is to respond to an OD situation as appropriate given the context. It is not necessary to choose an either/or approach; rather it necessitates a both/and perspective. The ability to deal with ambiguity and different perspectives is a primary requirement for successful work in a global context. This is easier for people from some cultural backgrounds than it is for others. In cultures encouraging right/wrong answers in schools, learning to deal with ambiguity and differing perspectives can be extremely difficult. Stereotyping is an illustration of this concept.

One stereotype, for example, is that U.S. businesspeople are very task-oriented, while Latin Americans are more relationship-oriented. Therefore, if two businesspeople, who fit into these stereotypes and who are from two different cultural contexts, meet to consider a business relationship, the U.S. American (note that everyone living in North, Central, and South America is an "American") probably will be frustrated by the Venezuelan's leisurely approach to dinner, which delays conversation about their potential business. On the other hand, the Venezuelan will also be frustrated with the U.S. American's pressure to get right down to business without first establishing a personal relationship. Both parties risk loss of business if neither can adjust to the other's cultural style of doing business.

Another important factor that supports the business need for understanding how other cultures function is the tremendous costs involved in sending people on expatriate assignments that prove unsuccessful because the assignee cannot adjust to the new culture or those in the host culture cannot adjust to the new assignee. This U.S. American-Venezuelan business interaction illustrates a problem that occurs when individuals, especially leaders, are unaware or unprepared to deal with cultural assumptions, norms, or perspectives. Organizational behaviors or "operating practices" are often unwritten and are only transmitted to others when asked. Observation without judgment becomes critical.

Differences in OD practices emerge as more cultures come into contact with each other in this era of globalization. However, there has been little rigorous research to guide our practice in these areas. We are too often left with many more questions than answers. In responding to these questions, the authors will

draw on the research that is available as well as on our extensive experience doing global work in more than sixty countries.

Thinking systemically is also critical for understanding a global wisdom context. While we have an obligation as global OD practitioners to think systemically, not one of us alone is capable of fully understanding the systemic implications of our work, whether local or global. Many good intentions have unintended consequences. Since we are more likely to understand our own culture better than other cultures, and since local contexts are more likely to be more homogeneous (although, in today's world, far from homogeneous), we perhaps can understand the systemic implications better in a local context than in a global context.

So what can we do to improve our ability to think systemically? Begin with collaborative listening (listening from your own perspective and then deeply listening from the perspective of the other person), and use partnering—with an inside/outside OD practitioner (depending on whether you are inside or outside of the organization) of a different gender, of a different age, of a different culture and language, of a different functional background, and so on. The more perspectives and voices that can be heard, the more likely we are to understand the potential impact of whatever action is taken within a systemic context. Next, align with key decision makers so that we understand how they are thinking and what their potential reactions are likely to be. Recognizing that we cannot control others, we must at least look to where ultimate decisions are likely to be made so we can put our OD work in a context that is most likely to have the desired systemic impact and positive outcome.

GLOBAL OD METHODOLOGIES

OD practitioners are often sought by organizations (as one aspect of OD work) to help improve organization effectiveness and create organizations and communities that work (Block, 1996). A challenge for the global OD practitioner is to address two critical questions related to this task: (1) How do I begin to understand and then translate to the client what may work (and for whom) in multicultural environments? (2) How is value defined, created, and sustained within a multicultural or transcultural organization or community given the possible incongruence between a business imperative and a broader social, cultural, or environmental reality? Success in doing global OD work is dependent on the practitioner's ability and interest in raising such issues in a way that real work can be accomplished and positive outcomes (for all involved parties) maximized. This section looks at past and future methodologies that address these questions and inform and guide practice.

Hofstede (1984, 1991), Hall and Hall (1990), and Trompenaars (1993) have been leading theorists in describing work values and culture context across cultures. Since their work first appeared, the world has changed significantly and is now a very interdependent, culturally diverse world, especially within organizations where most OD practitioners work. A shift toward greater external influence and impact from government, economic, and political systems and broader involvement of stakeholder groups has led many OD practitioners to call for a reformulation of the prominent theoretical approaches to global OD work. In addition, significant challenges are being made to the prevailing theories because of cross-border and transcultural integration problems, international mergers, joint ventures, alliances, and the emergence of a knowledge economy. In spite of the issues raised, the theories are still widely quoted and widely used, and ongoing research continues to affirm the core findings.

The work of the Halls focuses primarily on communication (words, things, and behaviors) and emphasizes the importance of contexts (a low-context culture communicates explicitly with words, while a high-context culture communicates implicitly through environmental cues). Other factors they emphasize include space, time, and message flow.

Hofstede's seminal work focuses on norms of social interaction and work-related values orientation within nation states. He originally focused on four variables: *Power Distance* (the degree of formality between people with different levels of power); *Individualism/Collectivism* (the degree to which individuals put their own goals ahead of the group's); *Uncertainty Avoidance* (the degree to which people avoid risk taking when outcomes are not certain); and *Masculinity/Femininity* (the degree to which people follow the stereotypical female roles of nurturing and support). Hofstede has added a fifth dimension that focuses on *Dynamism* (the extent to which an organization or individuals take a long-term view). His research deals with the boundaries within those nation states, and, while those boundaries are now very permeable, the results continue to show differences among nation states. The nation state and single culture organization is shifting, however, so the applicability of his findings may well shift in the future.

Trompenaars' work is oriented more toward the practitioner. He conducted his initial research on the impact of doing business in forty countries. He focused on three cultural features: relationships with people, attitudes toward time, and attitudes toward the environment.

OD practitioners must learn to work effectively in all these environments. Eisen, Steele, and Cherbeneau (1990) conclude that OD practitioners have to be proficient at tying together theory and practice in ways that correlate with competitive advantage and sustainability. There is also a call to action among many practitioners for new, more comprehensive global OD methodologies that treat

culture as an enabler to interaction and a guiding factor in bringing clarity and focus to communication between individuals. New methodologies have to facilitate organization learning in creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge and then modifying it in a way that reflects insight and new practices. One example of a key engine of learning is the multicultural team (Hamel & Prahalad, 1996), and new global OD methodologies can reposition and raise the level of importance of multicultural and transcultural team building to an organization's success. New methodologies are needed to focus on organization design and structures that are flexible, adaptable, portable, and easy to change, as are new methodologies to manage scale and large complex change. New methodologies must address current business challenges that do more than help organizations be profitable. They must help organizations be socially responsible and ecologically sound as described by the Triple Bottom Line concept (Elkington, 1999). Developing such methodologies will move us toward a global wisdom society.

In addition to developing and using appropriate methodologies, the OD practitioner has to be familiar with a broad range of tools and techniques when working across cultures. He or she must recognize that the most important skills are in being prepared and comfortable in adapting current tools or developing new tools and interventions based on the organizational context and culture. As the early OD pioneers taught, successful OD intervention is about philosophy, understanding, and the application of working within a human system, not merely an ability to successfully use a tool or technique.

NEW AND RE-EMERGING METHODOLOGIES AND TOOLS

OD tools and methodologies have generally not been designed exclusively for use in global settings, although many of the current tools have been adapted and are successful in such contexts. *Future Search* (Weisbord & Janoff, 2000) methodologies are used throughout the world with success. *Team-building* interventions are used in many parts of Latin and South America. In Korea, aggressive *adventure training* is often used by companies as part of OD. In Japan, and now in Thailand, a widely used approach to OD is the *walk around* (Akaraborworn & McLean, 2000), where employees use a form of team-based, competitive adventuring, with feedback following the exercise.

Open Space Technology (Owen, 1997) has been used worldwide with success in all types of settings/industries, including businesses, communities, governments, NGOs, and so forth. It is grounded in individual passion and responsibility and evolves as self-organizing groups that dialogue and often take action (Holman & Devane, 1999).

Appreciative Inquiry is an affirmative approach to change that enables full-voice appreciative participation that taps the organization's positive change core

and inspires collaborative action that serves the whole system (Holman & Devane, 1999). Cooperrider, one of the pioneers in this approach, has written extensively on AI techniques in various settings and contexts (see Chapter Twenty-Two in this book.).

Technology is also changing the way in which OD is done in a global context. (See Chapter Twenty-Four.)

OD work has to do with creating or holding the space where people can talk/act with each other about what is important to them, to their organizations, and to our world. The difficulty, of course, is that what space people want and can work with effectively is determined by their culture. There is a human tendency to make things more complex than they are. The use of organization development principles is ancient and highly developed, yet rather simple and basic. So our challenge is to find ways to create this space that are compatible with how people function within their cultures, especially when multiple cultures come together. Robust and sound methodologies and tools can be enablers to this process.

CRITICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING SUCCESS

Ethical Issues and Ethical Dilemmas

Ethical conduct and guidelines serve as an anchor helping organizations maximize their effectiveness and achieve desired results. The OD field has always shown concern for the ethical conduct of practitioners (Rothwell, Sullivan, & McLean, 1995). The Organization Development Institute (ODI) and Organization Development Network (ODN) collaborated in the 1980s and published guidelines for their members. There have been other recent collaborative projects with IODA (International Organization Development Association). The Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD, 1999) and the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (McLean & DeVogel, 2002), both of which contain many OD practitioners and academics, also have developed ethical guidelines. The case below illustrates how global OD practitioners can be faced with ethical dilemmas.

A large multinational corporation invited an OD consultant to meet with a new expatriate manager in Barcelona, Spain. The manager had just assumed responsibility for a business unit in Madrid that was being relocated from the U.K. She would be moving from Barcelona to Madrid, but she was originally from Denmark. This was the consultant's third engagement with the organization but it would be the first assignment outside the U.K. Management emphasized to the consultant the importance and urgency to achieving the business unit goals. Significant changes in staffing and decisions related to job duties had to be made

quickly. The new manager had a solid track record for rapid change. The consultant wanted to make certain she began to understand the cultural context as well as the business context that this manager would experience. The consultant also wanted to ensure the first meeting would be positive and would start the process of building trust with the manager.

Ethical issues and dilemmas in global OD are concerned with how practitioners perform their work with organization leaders and members in environments in which there are multiple perspectives on ethical behavior. They are often heightened when there is a sense of urgency mandated from authority. What actions should the consultant take to ensure success? The first step begins with using your specialized training in organization diagnosis to understand the cultural and business environmental context. Transcultural and multicultural organizations can be significantly impacted by economic, political, and social forces. This is an important factor to consider before entering the client system. Organizations often have highly specialized political and social systems that make it difficult to use many of the OD conceptual or theoretical models developed in the United States. Preparation will be critical.

From the time you begin to make your travel arrangements and complete the itinerary until the end of the initial meeting, it is important to observe what is said and what you are asked to do. Close observation of behavior and recognizing that all client systems are different and that they respond differently to different situations will be key to early success. Observing behavior will also increase understanding and awareness of tensions and anxieties that will accompany the changes required of this business unit. Effective communication, especially collaborative listening, is critical during the initial client meeting. It allows the practitioner to enter the client system and contract with the client in a way that demonstrates understanding of the scope of the work assignment, the change necessary, and the context for the work.

A host of potential ethical issues exist in the practice of global OD, and recent events have heightened the urgency for having accountability for ethical conduct within OD professional practice. Examples of cross-cultural ethical and legal issues include the following:

1. Relocation of employees, work hours, type of work, and job elimination.
2. Use of others' intellectual property in many countries (for example, not all countries honor copyrights and patents—is this piracy or good business?). Computer software, prescription drugs, and music discs are most vulnerable.
3. What some might define as bribery and corruption (for example, payments made to persons in power and payments made to expedite actions) are accepted business practices in other parts of the world.

4. The sale of dangerous products or materials (environmental pollutants, diseased livestock, and weapons of mass destruction) is often a part of commerce.
5. Environmental degradation—such as toxic emission from factories, radiation from nuclear plants, and destruction of forests—is a frequent outcome of doing business.

These activities raise ethical concerns in some parts of the world, while those who are responsible for such outcomes often argue that such actions are essential for survival and, therefore, are ethical. Understanding the importance of these issues inside an organization will be critical to success of the global OD practitioner's work.

Coercion, safety, child labor, intentional misrepresentation in negotiation, and misuse of data are typical examples of ethical dilemmas that require attention and action but, by and large, do not have universally ethical responses. This is an area of considerable significance for the global OD practitioner and poses a critical question for consideration: *Are there universal ethics or values?* This question has long been debated. Tom MacLean, in the novel, *China White* (Maas, 1994) said, "The world's a hell of a lot more gray than black and white" (p. 12). Kidder (1995) discussed "The Ethic of Right vs. Right," emphasizing the dilemmas that exist within this gray area and the ambiguity that exists when trying to come up with universal values. He constructed four difficult dichotomies:

- *Justice versus mercy*: Fairness, equity, and even-handed application of the law versus compassion, empathy, and love.
- *Short term versus long term*: Immediate needs or desires versus future goals.
- *Individual versus community*: Us versus them, self versus others.
- *Truth versus loyalty*: honesty or integrity versus commitment, responsibility, or promise keeping. (p. 13)

It is this ambiguity that makes ethical decision making in the global context so difficult. How do we deal with these tensions?

Handling Dilemmas

The OD practitioner can use pragmatic concerns and observation to open discussion and reveal feelings and intuition about dilemmas. Understanding the internal processes used to create value and build market or political superiority is also important. Personal ethics of the leadership is a key factor in how ethical dilemmas are handled. There may be a dominant authority, but, quite

often, there are many leaders and perspectives that influence behavior. Partnering with a trusted colleague can be an effective tool to better understand and develop appropriate action in an ethical dilemma.

Weick (1995) discusses the social origins of ethical presumptions and how to understand them in a cultural context. The global OD practitioner becomes a “values alignment advocate” by keeping the question and challenge of ethical dilemmas before leaders as they strive to balance the alignment of core values with local cultural values. Practitioners assist leaders in building an infrastructure that guides and questions actions and possible consequences. This can create value and bridge practice with global wisdom. The Ladder of Inference (Senge, 1994) is an effective tool to use in this situation. The Triple Impact Checklist and Matrix (Baker, 2002) is another effective tool. Leaders complete the checklist prior to deciding on a course of action; they then use the matrix to discuss scenarios and help guide decision making.

In some circumstances, ethical misconduct is used to gain competitive advantage, such as the manufacturing plant that develops safety standards that fail to provide adequate protection for workers and creates conditions that threaten worker health. This is not an uncommon occurrence and is a dilemma that should not be overlooked.

Global OD practitioners must be creative and prepared to assist organizations help themselves to foster a greater sense of responsible action in the path toward a global wisdom organization and to find a potential approach for handling ethical dilemmas.

Social Responsibility

Beginning conversations on social responsibility can be a first step toward a global wisdom organization and a key factor in influencing success. There is considerable difference in perspective on social responsibility between countries, and many countries are unaware of those differences and how they impact others. As the global economy grows, there will be a heightened awareness of issues that have significant impact worldwide. We have seen this in the misrepresentation at Enron in the United States, actions at Parmalat in the U.K., and prescription drug piracy in China.

Until recently, in the U.S. free enterprise system, social responsibility has been viewed as the function of government, not business. Multinational corporations operate in many countries that do not have an open or free enterprise system. In such environments, political systems often intervene in economies and alter the free exchange that occurs in competitive markets.

Assessing effectiveness against the triple bottom line is one way OD practitioners can demonstrate their concern and commitment to social responsibility. The triple bottom line concept takes into account three parameters—economic, social, and environment—and is designed to find win-win solutions

for performance and business results in each parameter. Some OD professionals think that, in order to be successful, they have to spend most of their time and energy focused on the financial and rarely look at the interdependent nature of all three. This thinking is consistent with some in the United States, who challenge the tenets of triple bottom line. Many other organizations, however, are adopting the concept and incorporating it into their policies. Some are holding themselves accountable by producing sustainability reports that can be monitored by the public. For the OD practitioner, we have an opportunity to be diligent and attend to the values, issues, and processes that must be taken into account in order to minimize harm resulting from our interventions.

In 1999, Kofi Annan, U.N. Secretary-General, called on businesses to choose to unite the powers of markets with the authority of universal ideals. The U.N. Global Compact (2003) was established in 2000 with the strategic goal “to encourage alignment of corporate policies and practices with internationally accepted values and objectives.” The Compact encompasses nine principles in three core areas (human rights, labor, and the environment) to which a number of organizations and businesses in the world have committed. The U.N. Global Compact can be helpful in guiding the work of the OD practitioner as well.

OTHER FACTORS INFLUENCING SUCCESS

Concept of Globalization

In today’s world, the concept of globalization has become almost a cliché. A cell phone made in Korea, clothing manufactured in Bangladesh, a customer service call answered in India for a U.K.-based company, or any other product or service we use from around the world—all of these and more are signs of the globalizing process that we face daily. The concept and the word “globalization” is perceived quite differently around the world as it affects governments and organizations as well as political, economic, and social systems. Each of these systems must figure out how to work more effectively in a global context and consider its susceptibility to stereotyping or the imposition of other cultural values.

To be global, a company must also create a corporate culture and value system that allows it to move its resources anywhere in the world to achieve the greatest competitive advantage. Being global requires a mindset and skills that extend far beyond the current scope of most organizations. Rhinesmith (1996) emphasizes the importance of people whose global mindset and behavioral change are largely what globalization is about. For many, developing the right people is what “thinking globally” really means (Donlon, Darwent, Cabral, & Grub, 1996).

Regarding other global issues, Friedman (2000) proposes human welfare and social justice as essential to a “new system of moral values.” To this, we add

“earth sustainability” and truly considering the triple bottom line (economic, social, and environmental). Also, to Friedman’s concept of globalization of capital, we might consider adding globalization of spirit.

But globalization means more than just this. It also refers to a mindset in which the business functions from a geocentric rather than an ethnocentric perspective. Figure 20.1 (Tolbert, McLean, & Myers, 2002) describes the difference in perspective.

Humanism and Profitability: A Both/And Opportunity

Following is an excellent example of a “both/and” opportunity, how a business can provide better working conditions without compromising profit. We believe that organizations can improve their business case by establishing humanistic policies and processes. It is not a case of being “either” humanistic “or” bottom-line focused.

For a number of years, one of the authors was actively consulting in Bangladesh, where many textile mills exist. Some of these mills were run like sweatshops. Cotton fibers floated freely in the air; lighting was poor; drinking water was unsafe; hygienic toilets did not exist; breaks were infrequent and erratic; and the food was barely consumable. The most successful mills, however, were ones that were run with humanistic values. In these mills, employees were given their meals and frequent, regular breaks with snacks; they worked in clean, hygienic environments; they had bonus incentives equal to half of their salary; and they were transported to and from work. In the factories where humanistic values prevailed, quality and productivity were both higher, and the factory owners benefited from the humanistic perspective.

The argument here is not that humanistic values always lead to higher bottom-line results. Instead, we are suggesting that an organization’s perspective does not always have to be either humanistic or bottom-line focused. Both can be accommodated. Although profitability may be impacted in the short term, we strongly believe that a humanistic perspective will have a greater payoff in the long term.

OD at the National/Community Level

There is often a major difference between the focus of the practice of OD in the United States and in other parts of the world. In the U.S., the focus is business; in other parts of the world, the focus tends to be broader and more external. In these countries, OD is often thought of and practiced in relation to its influence on the society and country. The focus is frequently more on grass roots levels, such as NGOs, local communities, governments, religious organization, and not-for-profits.

The community is a major focus in many African and Latin American nations. Also, McLean and McLean’s (2001) research identifies the community

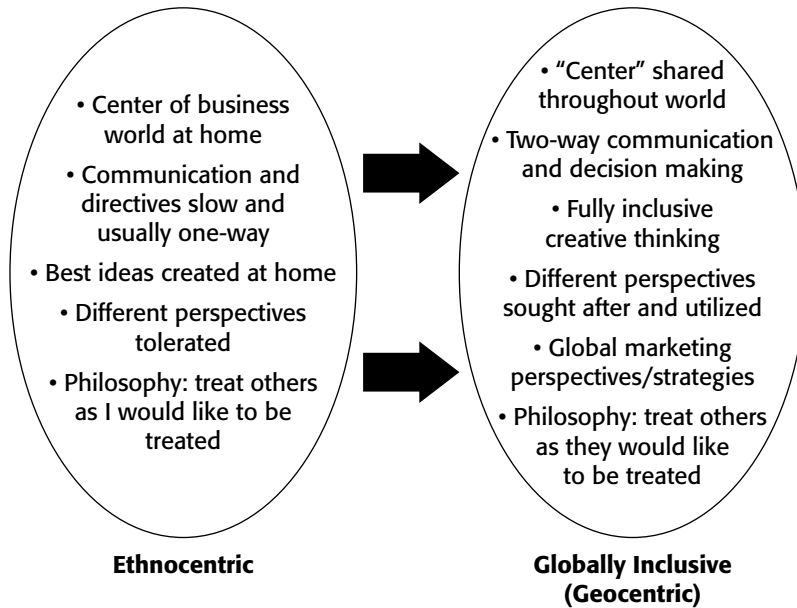


Figure 20.1. Corporate World View

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as a major focus for OD work in Thailand. Cho and McLean (2002) explore the focus of OD within the South Korean context as a component of a national initiative to change the nature of the country. McLean, Karimov, and Asankanov (2002) describe the needs assessment of a U.S. State Department OD project in Kyrgyzstan that is designed to make major changes in how the K-12 school system operates country-wide. These are just a few highlights of how the typical targets of OD interventions, specific organizations, are being expanded to include nationwide and community development.

U.S. companies still focus primarily on business profits and less so on social responsibility and justice, although recent events such as terrorist acts may have shifted that focus slightly. In a situation like terrorism, OD is seen within the broad societal picture, not just in the business picture. In countries other than the United States, the primary purpose for organizations is usually to be of service to others and society, rather than for their own purposes or profits. Certainly, in many countries, decisions about employment are made from a societal perspective rather than an economic perspective. Hence, competition and capitalism are not emphasized as much as human needs and relationships are in other countries.

Effect of Terrorism on OD Practice

The OD Institute, headquartered in the United States, has long had a program that includes a focus on using OD skills to help mediate conflicts throughout the world and attempting to use OD to bring peace to trouble areas in the world. OD teams have been sent to such conflict areas as Northern Ireland, Bosnia, and South Africa. Such an approach is very consistent with the value system outlined earlier in this chapter.

The threat of terrorism has caused more people to be concerned about the safety of international travel and living in countries in which they feel they are more vulnerable. Also, the security measures for entering and leaving a country have increased. As a consequence, with fewer people willing to travel, and yet with a growing demand to conduct business in a global context, there is pressure on the OD field to develop tools and processes that work well at a distance. For example, the advent of virtual teams is increasing the need for OD practitioners to design and implement intervention strategies that work from a distance through technology.

Role of Technology

How will we access technologies to benefit our clients and ourselves? This is an area that has not been emphasized traditionally in OD. As a result, many OD practitioners may find the use of technology, as demanded in today's world, challenging. (See Chapter Twenty-Four on technology.) There is a need for a whole new generation of OD professionals to help us in the field to come to understand better how we can utilize technology to enhance our work.

For example, how many OD consultants today use software that will allow instantaneous input from a group? How many use the Internet for dialogues or open space techniques? Large-scale interactive events, especially in a global context where individuals are not allowed to travel because of visa problems or costs, might well be conducted using asynchronous or synchronous chats on web pages. Future search conferences could also be conducted using the computer. Organizational assessments, multi-rater feedback, and Delphi techniques (individual responses to questionnaire items are compared with the group responses, allowing individuals to change their responses, if desired, to come closer to the group response) are all examples of effective use of technology in the practice of OD. Because of the ease of ITV (interactive television) and the widespread use of the Internet, it is now possible to bring together people from around the world at one time to interact in real time, without the need to be physically present in the same place. Virtual teams are becoming more common. Teleconferencing and videoconferencing are now well-established ways in which meetings and team building can be conducted.

A prime example of how technology can be used in addressing broader societal issues can be seen in the "Listening to the City" project, where over 4,300

people participated together giving instantaneous feedback electronically to proposals for rebuilding the World Trade Center in New York City and seeing immediate summaries (America Speaks, 2002).

The challenge of technology for all of us is a valuable one. It reminds us that we must not simply rely on the way it has been done in the past; rather, we must constantly be looking for new ways to do our work now and in the future. As technology continues to make our world smaller, we must be prepared to respond to the challenges that are thus created in doing our OD work.

Selecting Consultants

Multinational corporations are becoming more mindful of how consultants are selected. Because of increased diversity in some organizations, OD professionals can be selected based on their nationality, religion, gender, language, or cultural perspective. With increasing nationalism, for example, Spanish language skills may be essential and preferred for work in the Spanish-speaking regions of Latin American. It may be difficult for a non-Muslim from the United States to work in Malaysia. And while there is substantial research to suggest that gender has not been an issue in global OD work, this might be changing with increasingly conservative views within some (Muslim) countries.

Power and the Role of Transnational Corporations

There are those who see transnational (or multinational) corporations as the new governments and the new educational systems. Since they operate in so many countries, and since the mega-corporations have so much impact on the personnel, resources, and economic policies of countries, some claim that they have more power than individual governments. It would be relatively easy for an OD professional to get caught up in the power potential that resides in working with a mega-corporation in a global context. Knowing one's own values, understanding how one views power, and recognizing individual limits will all serve an OD professional in this situation well. Discussing issues that arise with other professionals can be a powerful way to keep from being seduced by the power potential resident in the situation. Partnering with others, at least some of whom are not part of the project or of the parent organization, can also help an OD professional to keep his or her values clear. But recognize also that, no matter how well the OD professional does, and how true he or she is to the values of OD, others in the organization will ultimately make the decisions. And these may not always be for the good of the organization, the host country, the host country employees, or even of the person making the decision.

OD can help with the struggle to define what it means to be transnational. Increasingly, there is a vision of becoming "global," although what this means for certain companies is not often clear. One organization in which one of us worked identified globalization as its goal. It decided that this meant that it had

to do everything the same way in all of its operations throughout the world. It adopted a software package to integrate all of its functions and required its use throughout the world. In this particular software package, there was insufficient space in the currency fields to accommodate currencies from countries in which there are many zeros (for example, Polish currency that might have 2,000,000 zlotys per U.S. dollar). The problem with such an approach, obviously, is that standardized software does not allow for differences that exist in currencies, labor laws, tax laws, and so on.

So what role does OD have in transnational organizations? In addition to all of the “usual” OD roles, it also has the role of helping management understand the difference between globalizing its practices and standardizing them, without allowance for cultural or country differences. Once again, this requires that OD professionals in such a context be attuned to systems thinking and be sensitive to what the culture of a particular country may require companies to do differently from what they do in their home country.

Mergers, Acquisitions, and Joint Ventures

Mergers, acquisitions, and joint ventures present special problems when they occur in a global context. When a U.S. company decides to enter a joint venture with a company in the People’s Republic of China, what are the obligations for both companies, and what are the roles for the OD professionals? At the very minimum, it is critical to perform a cultural inventory or cultural assessment—not just of the two countries, but of the two companies as well. Cultural due diligence is a critical factor in mergers and acquisitions and important in the OD practitioner’s role and success. Identifying cultural components and putting them on the table allows both companies to decide what they can both accept, what they both think needs to be changed and how, and whether they think what exists can be accepted or what has to be changed to be acceptable to both companies.

Adaptation to Local and National Cultures

Adaptation is necessary whenever a company moves into another country or even into another community. Again, OD professionals can help the company to assess the local or national culture to determine how policies, procedures, and practices may have to be modified. The OD professional may have to decide what traditional OD approaches can and cannot be used in that culture or location.

National Policies

National policies can be influenced by OD professionals, even though they do not normally think of this as their role. Governments are increasingly looking to people who have OD backgrounds. In 1997, for example, much of Asia was hit with a currency crisis that caused severe problems for many countries. When

Korea, which has traditionally had an unemployment rate of less than 2 percent, experienced a dramatic increase to 10 percent, there was no fallback unemployment system such as those that exist in countries such as the United States, which has had a consistently higher unemployment rate (Moon & McLean, 2003). So in the Korean situation, the International Monetary Fund stepped in and demanded a significant number of changes, many of which can be best addressed with typical OD approaches. These included the restructuring of company boards of directors, the breaking apart of some of the large chaebols (conglomerates), greater government distance from the process of providing loans to the chaebols, and other measures. One of the interesting responses was to rename the Ministry of Education as the Ministry of Human Resource Development and Education, in order to provide a more seamless lifelong educational system to help workers and industries address longstanding problems of transition from one stage of education to another, including industry training.

COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS FOR GLOBAL OD

A consultant was called to design a team process intervention for a multinational Australian mining company in a joint venture construction project involving Chileans, North Americans, Japanese, and British, among others. The bulk of the workforce was comprised of locals. Each subcultural group has learned its own set of behaviors, ways of expressing emotions, and particular ways of relating, both to foreigners and locals. Those who wield the real power within the project belong to a subculture within the prevailing culture. The presenting problem was a concern of management regarding the inability to get timely results and to meet agreed-on quality standards. There was a high risk that the company would soon have to pay large fines for failure to meet deadlines.

The work atmosphere was observed to be negative due to poor communication, virtual avoidance of contact between the general work force and the client (management), and an absence of emotional warmth and graciousness in interpersonal interactions. The underlying currents encountered were very strong and expressed by many workers.

Mining is a very specialized multinational industry in which many people habitually come together with diverse backgrounds, cultures, and experiences. A mine, for example, may be located in one country, while its owners come from another, and its technical experts come from yet another part of the world. Consultant competency is paramount to success in this environment. An end-of-project review highlighted the critical competencies that led to success of the project. They will be explored in the following section.

Two apparently contradictory yet coherent attributes characterize OD and make it particularly interesting in this era of globalization and a new world

order. On one hand, OD has the distinction of being undergirded by a set of humanistic values that contribute to its sense of permanence and underlying stability over time. At the same time, OD processes must remain flexible and highly adaptive in order to respond to the demands and challenges occurring in a rapidly transforming global marketplace. Within our new worldview we now seek to renew our thinking and our practice. In many ways, OD as a field reflects the paradoxes of self-organizing systems. In organizations, we struggle against the environment, seeing it as a source of disruption and change (Wheatley, 1999). Rather than trying to isolate ourselves, global OD practitioners can seize opportunities to join in the environment for the betterment of all.

By nature OD is always growing and adding to its current base of knowledge and practices. OD practitioners must remain on the cutting edge as the field endeavors continually to find effective ways to satisfy client needs. In light of this, it is more necessary than ever that OD practitioners grow in their own capabilities by developing a set of competencies that has as much to do with the individual person as with the broader world in which he or she is living.

This new set of competencies must take into account the following, even if greater anxiety and lack of experience about how to deal with them exists: broad-based knowledge, innovative ideas, intelligent risk taking, the management of uncertainty and ambiguity (nothing is more certain than that there will always be uncertainty), being alert to new opportunities, and the willingness to try out new things in unfamiliar cultures.

The earlier statement of competencies by Wigglesworth (1995) and the refining and development of such OD competencies, as Saul Eisen and Bob Tannenbaum have done in Chapter Twenty-Five, provide a guide to the formation, training, and implementation of what, today, may not yet constitute part of our repertoire of conduct within the profession.

Never before have we been in the midst of so many paradoxes. We increasingly find ourselves interacting with foreign cultures and subcultures about which we may know little, including their language. All too often our good intentions lead to unintended consequences. Managing paradoxes becomes a core and fundamental benchmark to becoming competent as a global OD practitioner. We may not know how to relate effectively with people from other cultures, how to carry on productive dialogue with them, and how to align ourselves to achieve a common objective. However, of necessity, we must learn how to achieve those ends.

More than our relationship with other cultures must change. The concept about change that people have must also shift. Are we talking about fundamental change or just incremental change? We learn from pioneers that the “real” OD approach is about fundamental change (Beckhard & Pritchard, 1993). In many cultures or subcultures there are deep traits acting against this. It is like an “organizational impatience” where people want to have immediate results

and, thus, all “one-minute” techniques are welcome. This is a force against profound and non-reversible change.

So the challenge is what to do with “immediatist” cultures that do not want to spend so much time and money for the change process. Is the notion, and speed, of time changing? Do we have to discover new forms for changing the essence? Must we work through to a quick awareness, like some shock experience and, if so, what happens with our values?

Thus, understanding environment context and keen observation of behavior, especially the interaction of culture and history, are essential for global OD. Practitioners of OD are not always aware that such issues are at play when they select their methods of intervention and begin to apply them in different cultures. Yet, such awareness was critical in the mining project (mentioned above) because of what was at stake: the promise of enormous socioeconomic benefits that the project’s successful outcome held for the country in terms of employment, along with widespread community and national development.

In our judgment, the only way for people to learn effectively about how to work well with other cultures is by living and working together with them. Personal contact is necessary if there are to be better negotiations, a timely exchange of information, and the effective creation of healthy work relationships.

Communication is essential in order to achieve a human and personal touch in dealing with other cultures and in all work relationships. Storytelling is an art form that can be used for bringing people closer together. It can be used to communicate experience through movement and gestures that reveal the elements and images of story to a specific live audience. It involves the effective use of language, vocalization, and physical connection. Through stories we remember who we are. Through storytelling, people share experiences by using past histories and accumulated wisdom, beliefs, and values. Through stories we explain how things are, why they are, and their purpose. Stories are the building blocks of knowledge, the foundation of memory and learning. Stories tie us to our humanness, and they link the past, present, and future by teaching us to anticipate the possible consequences of our actions. Both consultants and clients need to grow in the art of storytelling.

Communication is also language. A common complaint from many countries is, “Why don’t foreigners, and especially North Americans, make an effort to learn the local language or even spend a longer time in the country? They wait for others to make the effort and come to them.”

One way to overcome language barriers in the midst of conflict is to use relevant communication techniques (Schein, 1998). In the case of the mining group, Open Space Technology was used as the first step to help bring about the expression of ideas and feelings. Our role as OD practitioners who are competent in “soft skills” can be a tremendous asset in the psychosocial crisis generated by international, global, and transnational businesses. As important

as the hard competencies of experts are, they often are less important than the use of soft skills when an agreement has to be reached or a project goal has to be achieved. OD practitioners raise their level of contribution by designing interventions that demonstrate how value is created from the acquisition of soft skills.

Competencies that will be demanded of the OD practitioner are the same as those that we will need to develop in our global clients, since both are intimately tied to the development of people, organizations, communities, and cultures as a global wisdom society. As OD practitioners, we have to go one or two steps further in our own competency development by:

1. Being aware of the personal and professional changes required.
2. Broadening our knowledge about the implications of working cross-culturally whether or not we are currently working in that context. Sooner rather than later, and almost without realizing it, we will be affecting or being affected by other cultures.
3. Learning and relearning to see other world perspectives, leaving aside our own judgments and stereotypes. Understanding our own mental models, as suggested by Senge (1995), is one way to do this. Another way is to be strong in economic, social, and environmental competencies, which means education, empathy, and curiosity, and less oriented toward financial profit. Developing systems thinking is fundamental so there is greater awareness of the interdependence and impact of our actions on the organization and on others.
4. Accepting, respecting, and making the effort to understand other values and customs. The development of empathy never has been more important for consultants than now.
5. Testing the instruments and inventories that we use and adapting them to different cultures.
6. Communicating not only the successes of our intervention, but also the failures. That is, after all, when we will learn the most.
7. Trusting in oneself. The capacity to trust someone else is logically preceded by the capacity to trust in oneself. The capacity to trust in oneself is one of the basic competencies any person must have to be successful in life. Healthy trust implies the presence of honesty and transparency. Nevertheless, in some cultures there exists a strong fear that others might discover our weaknesses, which, in turn, often causes us to violate our own espoused value of being honest. Too often we do not want to admit to our own errors because we are fearful that, in realizing that we are not perfect, others might lose respect for us.

Such a risk of losing the respect of others is a very hard thing with which to live, especially in some countries that tend to be characterized by weak egos and low self-esteem. This convergence of cultures in a given project may constitute a major obstacle to obtaining the desired results.

OD is a way of thinking, understanding, and acting/being in the world rather than an intervention, product, technology, or model. As Bob Tannenbaum has said, "OD is a way of life" (Tannenbaum, 1978). *For the OD professional, "the self" is the basic tool and wisdom in any context, global or otherwise.*

CONCLUSIONS

Practicing OD in a global context is challenging, fun, and exhilarating. Since what to do and how to do it is almost never obvious, we find ourselves buried in ambiguity most of the time. Thus, this work is not for everyone. Those who find ambiguity emotionally draining or who cannot understand how people can function in the midst of ambiguity will not enjoy doing global OD work. But for those who enjoy the richness of other cultures, who experience satisfaction from working in the midst of ambiguity, and who are committed to continuous improvement in themselves and in their own understanding and practices of global OD, we cannot imagine anything more intrinsically rewarding than being involved in global OD. Further, everything that has been said about working in other countries also applies to working within the multi-cultures of one's home country. Yet, by spending time in other countries and cultures, we as OD professionals come to know ourselves and country better, and thus become more effective in our own country of origin.

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Values, Ethics, and Practice in the Field of Organization Development

Terri Egan and William Gellermann

The past two decades have seen a number of formal and informal dialogues, discussions, and debates about the nature of organization development (OD) and the values, ethics, and practices on which it is based. A recent article on the future of the field of OD (Worley & Feyerherm, 2003) suggests that, in contrast to a certain clarity around values that characterized the early days of OD, we are currently experiencing a period of confusion and ambiguity—leaving practitioners in the position of having to rely on their individual ethical frameworks rather than on an agreed-on set of ethical standards.

THE MEANING OF ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Before examining questions related to establishing values and standards of ethical practice, it will help to reflect on the history of OD to give perspective for thinking about what we mean by OD. To do that, we begin by retelling a slightly modified version of a story told by Bob Tannenbaum several years ago in introducing a plenary address to an annual OD Network conference.

“A woman went into an ice cream store and said to the clerk, ‘May I have a quart of chocolate ice cream?’ The clerk replied, ‘I’m sorry, lady. We don’t have any chocolate ice cream.’ She paused and then said, ‘Well. How about a pint of chocolate ice cream? Can I have that?’ And he replied, ‘I’m sorry, lady. We just

don't have any chocolate ice cream!' Again, after another pause, she asked, 'Well. How about a chocolate ice cream cone? Can I have that?'

"The clerk thought a moment and then, with a bit of impatience in his voice, said: 'Lady. How do you spell the van in vanilla?' And she said, 'V A N.' Then he asked, 'And how about the straw in strawberry?' And she said, in a hesitant tone of voice, 'S T R A W.' Then he asked, 'And how about the stink in chocolate?' And she replied adamantly, 'There's no Stink in chocolate!' And he responded, 'Lady! That's what I've been trying to tell you!!!'"

After the laughter subsided, Bob then said, "There is something I have been trying to tell our profession—and I'm going to try one more time. *OD is not about our kit of tools. OD is about the way we lead our lives!!!*"

In our view that is an extraordinarily important way of thinking about the nature of OD, since, on reflection, it contrasts with many of the prevailing views of what "organization development" means. For us the words, "the way we live our lives" focus on the way people within organizations live their lives—and it also extends to the way "we" (human beings throughout the world) live our lives. The first way of thinking is consistent with the focus on developing organizations and the second way is consistent with the emerging, expanded view of our "field of practice," namely the field of "Human Systems Development."¹

One way of thinking about its meaning is based on the concept of "alignment," namely "*energy moving in the same direction.*" For an organization, that means that all of the organization's members are motivated to serve a shared purpose and vision or, at least, purposes and visions that are complementary. In other words, their motivations are moving them in the same direction. For example, the Johnson & Johnson Credo illustrates one way an organization can contribute to creating the conditions under which people are all motivated to move in the same direction. That credo begins, "We believe our first responsibility is to the doctors, nurses, and patients, mothers and fathers, and all others who use our products and services." In contrast, Coca-Cola's mission (purpose) begins "We exist to create value for our share owners on a long-term basis." In our view, the J & J mission is more likely to evoke motivation throughout the organization that is aligned in a common direction than the Coca-Cola mission. We do not mean that Coca-Cola's mission of "long-term shareholder value" is not important, but only that it is less likely to energize motivation in a shared direction than J & J's mission, which makes service to customers primary.

THE MEANING OF HUMAN SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

Although the mental leap from organization development (OD) to human systems development (HSD) can seem large, the conceptual leap is relatively clear. Namely, when OD is conceived of as the process of facilitating alignment among

all organization members, then HSD involves the process of facilitating alignment among all system members. For example, alignment of all members of the global community is conceivable. The means of achieving global alignment may be beyond our present ability, but activities of the United Nations can conceivably be steps in that direction. Among other things, movement toward creation of a Global People's Assembly (composed of representatives of "the people") as part of The United Nations as a complement to the General Assembly (composed of representatives of governments) would be an example of HSD.

In view of the fundamental similarity of OD and HSD, we find it clarifying to conceive of them separately and simultaneously (as OD/HSD). And in view of our earlier discussion, we view the practice of OD/HSD more as *facilitating the process of OD/HSD* than as the development process itself. In other words, according to this view, *OD/HSD practitioners do not "do" OD/HSD; rather, they facilitate it.*

OD/HSD FACILITATION: A PROFESSION OR A FIELD OF PRACTICE?

Over the years of OD/HSD practice, conflict has emerged over the issue of whether or not "we" are a profession. Some have resisted our becoming a profession on such grounds as concern about standardization, barriers to entry, and a shift to valuing the interests of the profession above those of our clients (which has emerged in the history of many other professions, such as law and medicine). On the other hand, some have urged our becoming a profession on such grounds as improving the quality of our practice by establishing procedures for certifying qualification, standards of competence and a code of ethics, and procedures for enforcing both competence and ethical practice.

We prefer a third alternative based on a view suggested by Dick Beckhard, one of the founders of OD practice. In Dick's opinion, we are a "field of practice" and not a profession (personal communication). With that view, it is possible for us to collaborate in developing standards of competence as well as values and ethics and to support one another in establishing practice consistent with those standards. (See Chapter Five for the field's effort to develop the standards of competence.) But we are more oriented to *supporting one another* in practicing in accord with such standards than to *enforcing compliance* with such standards.

Also, although we may choose not to view ourselves as a "profession," we can view ourselves as "professionals," by which we mean simply that our practice in the field of OD/HSD is a way of earning our living and not something we do "just for the fun of it." As professionals, we also acknowledge our responsibility to the field of practice, but without subordinating ourselves to a profession.

VALUES, ETHICS, AND OD/HSD'S FIELD OF PRACTICE

Although “values” and “ethics” are widely used terms, their meanings are not widely shared, although people tend to assume shared meanings. For our purposes here, “values” are “standards of importance” and “ethics” are “standards of good/bad or right/wrong behavior based on values.” For example, respect, integrity, authenticity, honesty, truth, profit, shareholder value, and stakeholder value are values. These values can be expressed through such ethics as “Respect yourself and others,” “Act with integrity and authenticity,” “Be honest,” “Be true to yourself,” “Seek to maximize profit and shareholder value,” and “Seek to maximize stakeholder values.”

As noted earlier, OD practitioners are currently experiencing a period of confusion and ambiguity about their shared values. Concurrent with escalating uncertainty about OD values, we have entered a period marked by a growing crisis in public confidence directed at one of our largest domains of practice—publicly held corporations. As a series of ethical scandals has unfolded, a parallel concern has emerged about the role of practitioners in supporting, or at a minimum overlooking, ethical misdeeds. The role of the professional organizations as mediators between the interests of the public at large and the interests of practitioners again becomes important.

While the debate in various professional organizations continues about the extent to which the field is or should be based on an established code of ethics, the day-to-day challenges of developing an ethical practice as an OD practitioner offer a rich opportunity for self-discovery and development. In fact, the current tension and ambiguity at the level of practice in the field as a whole demands a more rigorous examination of our individual values and ethics and how they relate to our practice. In the absence of such personal clarity, we run the risk of drifting toward a form of rationalized choice based on unexamined self-interest.

The purpose of this chapter is to help you review current thinking on values and ethics in the field of OD. We will do this by (1) providing frameworks to help you understand your place as a practitioner in the context of values and ethics relevant to the practice of OD; (2) summarizing some common dilemmas encountered by OD practitioners; (3) suggesting ways of strengthening your own development as an ethical practitioner in such situations; and (4) summarizing resources that can aid in the above.

As OD practitioners we are rarely presented with clear-cut value conflicts. Our dilemmas are created through the conflict between competing rights, obligations, and interests. Donaldson and Dunfee propose that, “Managers are situated in a web of (sometimes) conflicting loyalties and duties. . .” (1995, p. 87). One can argue that OD practitioners, particularly internals, are similarly embedded in a web of potentially conflicting relationships. Similar to our need

to deal with the uncertainty and ambiguity that characterize organizational life, as ethical practitioners we must be comfortable spending time in the uncomfortable tension created by these webs of competing values. The resolution of this tension can only occur after careful thought based on clarity about our own values and ethics and the boundaries of our field of practice.

OD: IN SEARCH OF CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Although we think our concepts of “values,” “ethics,” “OD/HSD field of practice,” and “role of OD practitioners within that field” are relatively clear, we also think it is important to recognize the diversity of practitioners’ views generally. Although we consider OD and HSD inseparable, we will focus on OD in our review of other discussions, since the expanded view of HSD has not been generally adopted.

Tension over seemingly incompatible values in the field of OD is highlighted in a study by Worley and Feyerherm (2003), who interviewed twenty-one pioneering OD thought leaders regarding the past, present, and future of the field of OD. In their discussion of the field’s boundaries, the authors identify two camps: the traditionalists and the pragmatists. Traditionalists support the field’s traditional humanistic values, while pragmatists are concerned with integrating the strong process competencies that defined the early stages of OD with more systematic approaches to strategy and organizational design. While traditionalists worry that the pragmatic approach may sell out to power and influence in large corporations, pragmatists are concerned about the relevance of the human process approach.

Worley and Feyerherm propose a boundary for OD that they claim reconciles the two camps by transcending debate and offering the possibility of a “both/and” rather than an “either/or” view of the field. They define OD as “intended change in the system, intended increases in the capacity of the system to manage change in the future, and intended improvements in systems effectiveness” (2003, p. 110–111). While this definition provides a meta-criterion for sorting what is included and excluded in the practice of OD, it does little to resolve the debate and confusion over values and standards. In fact, the authors go on to identify a lack of clarity around ethics and values as a threat to the development of the field.

So we are left with the question, “To what extent are the largely humanistic traditional values that characterized the early stages of the field’s development still important for today’s OD practitioners?” In practice, the evolution of a profession or field of practice and ethical practice within that field are largely social constructs (Cottone, 2001)—and this reality is reflected in several ongoing initiatives designed

to codify, clarify, and provide practitioners with standards for ethical practice in the field of OD.

DISCUSSIONS ABOUT VALUES AND ETHICS IN THE FIELD OF OD

At least three ongoing processes—sponsored by the Organization Development Network, the OD Institute, and the Clearinghouse for Information About Ethics and Values in Organization and Human Systems Development—have offered practitioners the opportunity to shape the discussion on values and ethics in the field of OD. The outcomes and processes of these initiatives have generated a remarkably similar set of values and ethics. The presenting problem seems to be less lack of clarity and more a result of the fundamental struggle to optimize across an incredibly broad range of stakeholders and interests. For example, the most recent version of “A Statement of Values and Ethics by Professionals in Organization and Human Systems Development” (Gellermann, Frankel, & Ladenson, 1990) says:

“Our purpose is to promote a widely shared learning and discovery process dedicated to a vision of people living meaningful, productive, good lives in ways that simultaneously serve them, their organizations, their societies, and the world.” (p. 372)

This definition presents endless opportunities for ethical dilemmas and values conflicts. The resolution of these differences, we believe, is not in abandoning the fundamental values of the field, but rather in recognizing that ambiguity is part of the process—and the struggle for personal clarity is a worthy and necessary struggle.

At first blush, it may appear impossible to reconcile humanistic values with economic profit. However, several conditions—a renewed interest in the topic of corporate social responsibility, the development of economic models that include a triple bottom line, and the radically optimistic notion that business is potentially an agent of constructive world change—suggest that they are not fundamentally incompatible. Also, Collins and Porras (1994) report in *Built to Last* a study from which they conclude it is a myth that companies exist solely for profit-making. “the most successful companies exist first and foremost to make profits.” They found that the “best” companies (identified in a survey of CEOs) are guided by a cluster of values and a sense of purpose beyond just making money. And, paradoxically, those companies were significantly more profitable than a more purely profit-driven set of comparison companies. More recently, the Business as an Agent of World Benefit project sponsored by the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University has

documented thousands of cases where individuals and organizations have made a positive difference (Neville & Cooperrider, 2002).

OD Network Conversations

Answering the call for a more explicit statement of professional standards, the Board of Trustees of the Organization Development Network, one of the largest organizations of professionals in the field, initiated a series of discussions among practitioners on the topic of values and ethics in the field. Over a dozen focus groups with nearly one hundred people were convened at different geographic locations to discuss various scenarios as they related to OD. In an interim report, Griffin and Minors (2002) summarize some of the key findings. These statements offer the reader a recent snapshot of what is on the minds of fellow practitioners.

- Clear contracting is an essential part of high-quality OD, with shared responsibility for communicating expectations and values.
- Good OD focuses on the big picture, is strategic, long-term, and fosters taking a systems approach. We look for patterns and balance. We avoid “toolbox” approaches.
- There is no agreed-on way of evaluating a practitioner’s competency. We value competence enough that many of us seek a certification process.
- Commitment to organization results is an important element in our credibility.
- Speaking the language of our customers enhances our credibility with decision makers.
- Self-awareness and self-development are long-held values for OD practitioners, including the ability to maintain objectivity and the willingness to continually grow.
- OD practitioners deal with complexity, diversity, integrating values into their work, and being authentic.
- We value valid data as a foundation for action and data-based diagnosis.
- Holding self apart, maintaining objectivity, understanding own biases and not letting them interfere, looking at assumptions, and pursuing self-development are key for OD practitioners.
- The client/consultant partnership requires strong relationships. OD practitioners work *with* clients, not *through* or *around* them.
- Good OD practice requires good diagnostic skills, examining assumptions, looking beyond presenting problems.

- Ambiguity, paradox, and managing dilemmas are key elements in OD practice today.
- Our values (as well as our culture and perspective on complexity) inform the processes and interventions we choose, which affect the results we get.
- One of our roles is to help clients explore their values as well as the gaps between values and practice.
- We value involvement; we strive to assist stakeholders in developing a feeling of ownership of their organizations' problems and solutions.
- It's important that we are able to be present and authentic in our dealings with clients.
- The issue of client readiness is important to us. We should not raise issues based solely on our own values, but balance those with the client's ability to address the issues.
- We value diversity within the systems with which we operate. We seek to ensure that minority opinions are heard and to enable discussion of diversity issues.
- We value the integration of organizational, group, and individual needs, rather than working to adjust the individual to the organization or vice versa.

A Code of Ethics for the Field

The OD Institute has developed an “International Organization Development Code of Ethics,” which offers a somewhat more concise statement of values and ethics for OD professionals. This statement has gone through twenty-two revisions and was developed through a process similar to the participative process used to develop “A Statement of Values and Ethics by Professional in Organization and Human Systems Development” (described in the following section). The Code reads:

“As an OD professional, I acknowledge the fundamental importance of the following values both for myself and my profession:

1. Quality of life—people being satisfied with their whole life experience; health, human potential, empowerment, growth and excellence—people being healthy, aware of the fullness of their potential, recognizing their power to bring that potential into being, growing into it, living it, and, generally, doing the best they can with it, individually and collectively;
2. Freedom and responsibility—people being free and responsible in choosing how they will live their lives;

3. Justice—people living lives whose results are fair and right for everyone;
4. Dignity, integrity, worth, and fundamental rights of individuals, organizations, communities, societies, and other human systems;
5. All-win attitudes and cooperation—people caring about one another and about working together to achieve results that work for everyone, individually and collectively;
6. Authenticity and openness in relationship;
7. Effectiveness, efficiency and alignment—people achieving the maximum of desired results, at minimum cost, in ways that coordinate their individual energies and purposes with those of the system-as-a-whole, the subsystems of which they are parts, and the larger system of which their system is a part;
8. Holistic, systemic view and stakeholder orientation—understanding human behavior from the perspective of whole system(s) that influence and are influenced by that behavior; recognizing the interests that different people have in the system’s results and valuing those interests fairly and justly; wide participation in system affairs, confrontation of issues leading to effective problem solving, and democratic decision making.”

Few would disagree with these standards. The question remains: How are these values put into practice within the various organizational and institutional contexts that characterize the field of practice for OD practitioners? This is where the importance of ethical standards, clarity around one’s own ethical framework, and the opportunity for reflective practice come into play.

An Annotated Statement of Values and Ethics by Professionals in Organization and Human Systems Development

According to Gellermann, Frankel, and Ladenson (1990), developing a shared position about the values and ethics of the field provides a common frame of reference for practitioners and can be used to raise consciousness about the impact of individual practice on the field. More specifically, the purpose of the statement is to (1) increase professional and ethical consciousness and our sense of ethical responsibility; (2) guide us in making more informed ethical choices; and (3) help professionals function more effectively. The statement development process started in the early 1980s and has included more than six hundred people from over twenty-five countries in the discussion. The ethical guidelines are summarized in the following outline:

1. Responsibility to ourselves
 - a. Act with integrity; be authentic and true to ourselves.
 - b. Strive continually for self-knowledge and personal growth.

- c. Recognize our personal needs and desires.
 - d. Assert individual interests in ways that are fair and equitable.
2. Responsibility for professional development and competence
- a. Accept responsibility for the consequences of our acts.
 - b. Develop and maintain our individual competence and establish cooperative relations with other professionals.
 - c. Recognize our own needs and desires and deal with them responsibly in the performance of our professional roles.
 - d. Practice within the limits of our competence, culture, and experience in providing services.
 - e. Practice in cultures different from our own only with consultation from people native to or knowledgeable about those specific cultures.
3. Responsibility to clients and significant others
- a. Serve the long-term well-being of our client systems and their stakeholders.
 - b. Conduct ourselves honestly, responsibly, and with appropriate openness.
 - c. Establish mutual agreement on a fair contract.
 - d. Deal with conflicts constructively and minimize conflicts of interest.
 - e. Define and protect confidentiality in our client relationships.
 - f. Make public statements of all kinds accurately, including promotion and advertising, and give service as advertised.
4. Responsibility to the OD/HSD profession
- a. Contribute to the continuing professional development of other practitioners and the profession-as-a-whole.
 - b. Promote the sharing of professional knowledge and skill.
 - c. Work with other professionals in ways that exemplify what the profession stands for.
 - d. Work actively for ethical practice by individuals and organizations engaged in OD/HSD activities and, in case of questionable practice, use appropriate channels for dealing with it.
 - e. Act in ways that bring credit to the OD/HSD profession and with due regard for colleagues in other professions.
5. Social responsibility
- a. Act with sensitivity to the consequences of our recommendations for our client systems and the larger systems within which they are sub-systems.
 - b. Act with awareness of our cultural filters and with sensitivity to multinational and multicultural differences and their implications.
 - c. Promote justice and serve the well-being of all life on earth.

- d. Withhold service from clients whose purpose(s) we consider immoral, yet recognize that such service may serve a greater good in the long run and therefore be acceptable.
- e. Act consistently with the ethics of the global scientific community of which our OD/HSD community is a part.

Ethical guidelines are behavior standards oriented toward the pursuit of what is good/right and avoiding what is bad/wrong in a particular domain. For our purposes, that refers to the OD/HSD field of practice. Ultimately we strive for an understanding that lets us resolve ethical dilemmas in alignment with our professional and personal values.

Developing the Ability to Think and Act Ethically

Gellermann, Frankel, and Ladenson (1990) present a model for ethical decision making with the objectives of (1) increasing sensitivity to ethical issues; (2) developing an ability to identify possible ethical actions; and (3) developing the ability to act in ways that are consistent with one's analysis. The model is grounded in the notion that our thinking about ethics is a combination of reason and intuition informed by an ongoing, iterative process of action and reflection. With practice we can become "fluent" in making ethical decisions. Given that previous research suggests that practitioners rely primarily on intuition as a means of making decisions (DeVogel, 1992), the importance of integrating reasoned consideration into the process is self-evident. In this model, ethical competence is a function of the extent to which we have done the following:

- "Informed our intuition" with a clear understanding of our own beliefs, values, and ethics, and potential ethical challenges;
- Reflected on our experiences in a way that we create a knowledge base for future action; and
- Practiced using our values and ethics in a way that makes them available when we need them; that is, we have accustomed ourselves to a process for making ethical decisions.

Embedded in this notion of competence is that we develop our capacity through reflective practice so that, to some extent at least, it is an unconscious process.

The model begins by acknowledging that we live within a continuous stream of consciousness and that our ability to make ethical decisions is based on our sensitivity to situations in which our ethics are important. When we become aware that we are in such a situation, the flow of the mental process evoked by that recognition can be conceived as follows:

Step 1: Situation or dilemma analysis

- a. Are your ethics violated?
Which ethic(s) are violated?
Is violation clear or unclear?
Is violation ethically justifiable?
- b. Are your values in conflict?
Which values?
What is the relative importance of those values?

Step 2: Ethical analysis

- a. Analyze your situation
What is your vision of desired results?
What facts and assumptions are guiding your thinking about how to move in that direction?
- b. Review your situation or dilemma analysis for possible change
- c. Choose to maximize positives over negatives
- d. Any ethics violations?
Which ethic(s) are violated?
Is violation clear or unclear?
Is violation ethically justifiable?
Can you improve your choice?

This then lays foundation for . . .

Step 3: Decision

Step 4: Action

Step 5: Reflection (to develop your future ability)

There is a story about a man in New York who was on his way to a concert. He asked another person, “How do you get to Carnegie Hall?” and the person replied, “Practice! Practice! Practice!” The same principle applies to developing one’s ability to make ethical decisions.

It is not enough to assume that, when faced with an ethical dilemma, you will be able to act ethically. In fact, you may not even recognize that you have a dilemma, particularly if you have not reflected on your ethics—your standards of good/bad or right/wrong behavior. Or, without preparing yourself, you may rationalize your decision based on your immediate, apparent self-interest. You can prepare yourself to recognize situations involving ethical dilemmas and to make decisions based on your ethics by “practicing” in advance of the need to decide.

One way to prepare is to reflect on your values and ethics—and one way to do that is to review “An Annotated Statement of Values and Ethics by Professionals in Organization and Human Systems Development,” which was referred to in an earlier section. (To obtain a copy of the statement, go to www.odethicsclearinghouse.org and download the “Statement Development Package.”)

As noted earlier, that statement reflects participation by more than six hundred people from more than twenty-five countries. It provides food for thought in reflecting on what *your* values and ethics are, along with several other related concepts, such as what is meant by “the ethical justification of an unethical act.”

Individual Factors That Influence Ethical Judgment and Practice

The values of authenticity and integrity are fundamental to our quest for ethical practice. Self-knowledge is a cornerstone in developing ethical practice and impacts our ability to reason and act effectively in relation to ethical dilemmas, particularly consciousness of the mental model we use in approaching such decisions. Of particular importance is understanding how we can get in the way of our own best intentions to act ethically.

Recognizing an ethical dilemma requires ethical sensitivity. Yetmar and Eastman (2000) identify the role of ethical sensitivity as a trigger for the ethical decision-making process. Jones' (1991) concept of moral intensity suggests that ethical issues enter into our consciousness at varying levels of salience. This is aligned with Kurland and Egan's (1999) thinking about organizational justice, which proposes that people are more likely to have a concern for justice and fairness when they experience negative outcomes. When that concern is triggered, sense-making begins, and an examination of individual behavior and organizational processes begins. This implies that, as OD practitioners, we must be aware of how our personal filters influence our ability to recognize, reason, decide, and act.

The socially constructed nature of ethical reasoning offers an additional barrier or leverage point for developing one's own ethical competence. For example, Kohlberg (1984) contended that the majority of adults determine what is ethical as a function of conformity to the expectations of relevant social groups, fulfilling one's obligations to the social system, the law (unless it conflicts with fixed social duties), and the well-being or common good of the group.

The implications of this framework are clear: cultural and professional norms are a powerful influence on an individual's ethical judgment and, by extension, behavior. This dynamic underscores the importance of continued dialogue in the profession and the opportunity to discuss issues with fellow practitioners, particularly with those who have viewpoints that differ from one's own. Our aim is to encourage practitioners to move beyond compliance with a code to acting based on standards to which they have freely committed themselves and that, ideally, will be in general alignment with those of other practitioners.

Another implication of this perspective is related to understanding how one's own needs motivate cognition. Conventional reasoning suggests that to the extent one is overly identified with and invested in any particular social group one tends to use the standards and values of that group as a reference for decision making—often at the expense of alternative perspectives and legitimate claims by other stakeholders.

Understanding one's own motivational basis may provide valuable insights into potential barriers or leverage points in developing ethical competency. At what level is your desire for inclusion and belonging impacting your ability to exercise your own ethical competence? Similarly, fear-based needs such as the fear of failure, being wrong, rejection, and emotional discomfort (Wilson & Wilson, 1998) can have a powerful influence.

Mitroff (1998) suggests that our ability to define an ethical issue and analyze the interests of various stakeholders is constrained by our often unconscious assumptions about the relevance of their position. We are more attuned to issues and positions that are in alignment with our own interests and limit our search for alternative courses of action by traveling the path most often followed, the one consistent with meeting our own needs. This reinforces the importance of developing and practicing a personalized model of ethical decision making that breaks through hardened, habituated neural pathways.

Ethical Challenges for Global Practitioners

Globalization as a trend impacts the development of a statement of values for the profession as well as individual practice. Increasingly there is a need for practitioners to understand areas where their personal values may conflict with the values of the culture in which they are working.

Recently, scholars in the area of business ethics (Robertson & Fadil, 1999) proposed a relationship between national culture and ethical behavior. Focusing primarily on Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimension of individualism versus collectivism as a measure of cultural variation, the authors suggest that managers from individualistic cultures will reason at levels different from managers from collectivist cultures. By extension, ethical decision making may also be impacted by national culture. For example, the authors suggest that individualistic cultures may be less ethically oriented than collectivist cultures. While the evidence for this assertion is quite limited, it poses at least two questions for practitioners. First, to what extent is your ability to reason shaped by the basic assumptions of your national culture? Equally important, to what extent do you understand how your theories of practice may need to be adjusted to be appropriate outside of the culture in which they were developed?

Common Ethical Dilemmas

White and Wooten (1986) group ethical dilemmas facing OD practitioners into five general categories: misrepresentation and collusion, misuse of data, manipulation and coercion, values and goals conflicts, and technical ineptness. And a recent study of the frequency of ethical dilemmas perceived by Canadian OD practitioners (Page', 1998) added client dependency.

In the Page' study, two vignettes for each category of ethical dilemmas were presented to practitioners, who were asked to evaluate the extent to which the situations occurred and to offer explanations to justify the occurrence of unethical

behavior. The percentage (two numbers corresponding to two separate vignettes) who reported the dilemmas as occurring at least occasionally is reported as follows: misrepresentation and collusion (56 percent, 88 percent), misuse of data (53 percent, 13 percent), manipulation and coercion (59 percent, 63 percent), values and goal conflict (42 percent, 56 percent), technical ineptness (56 percent, 55 percent), and client dependency (46 percent, 85 percent). The most commonly selected explanation for the occurrence of these dilemmas was attributed to the consultant's own personal sense of morality, followed closely by implicit or explicit rewards. These findings support the importance of developing one's own ethical decision-making competence as well as continuing the dialogue about ethical standards in the field.

DeVogel (1992) surveyed OD consultants to determine the frequency of occurrence of certain categories of ethical dilemmas. The percentages reporting that dilemmas in each category occurred at least occasionally were as follows: illusion of participation (71 percent), skip the diagnosis (65 percent), inappropriate intervention (61 percent), stretch the limits of my competence (58 percent), coercion (57 percent), political pressure (57 percent), informed consent (56 percent), client has misled the consultant (54 percent), misuse of information (50 percent), violate confidentiality (47 percent), priority of interests (46 percent), role expectations (44 percent), and conflict with co-consultant (43 percent). The majority of subjects relied on internal processes and discussion with other people as their primary approach to decision making. The author also reported that, as noted in an earlier edition of his book, "The majority of respondents described their decision-making processes as intuitive and feeling-based rather than rational" (DeVogel, 1992, p. 465). This suggests the importance of providing practitioners with an opportunity to develop and practice their own decision-making framework, an approach to developing one's own ethical competence described earlier.

Additional resources for thinking about specific ethical dilemmas are in the book by Gellermann, Frankel, and Ladenson (1990). Supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation, they solicited descriptions of dilemmas experienced by practitioners (using announcements in professional publications). They then asked several experienced practitioners to describe how they would respond to each situation, both in writing and in discussions at professional meetings. Those situations provide a resource for stimulating your own ethical reasoning and the practitioner responses provide a means for reviewing your reasoning.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we would like to repeat, for emphasis, that we place higher value on a process for developing shared values, ethics, and standards of competence with which practitioners can freely align themselves than on a process based on enforcing compliance with standards. It is clear to us that our preferred

process is much more likely to inform practitioners' actual practice. Our hope is that this article will be a contribution to that process.

Note

1. One of the places where "Human Systems Development" emerged as a way of thinking about our field was in meetings called by Herb Shepard, one of OD's founders. Participants were representatives of the major OD-oriented practitioner organizations (such as the OD Network, OD Institute, International OD Association, and Academy of Management OD Division). Their purpose was to find ways of improving collaboration among those organizations. At their first meeting, Bill Gellermann (one of the co-authors of this chapter) asked for their support of a process for developing a statement of values and ethics for OD professionals that the group did endorse. (That process and the statement that emerged from it are discussed later in this chapter.) At their second meeting several months later, the group, which had initially called itself "The Interorganization Group," changed its name to "The Human Systems Development Consortium" because several representatives reported that they had a significant number of members for whom the term "Organization Development" was not appropriate, such as people working with countries, communities, and regions.

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Online Resources

- Business as an Agent of World Change BAWB: www.weatherhead.cwru.edu/bawb/
- Ethics Resource Center: <http://ethics.org>
- OD/HDS Clearinghouse: <http://odethicsclearinghouse.org>



Bringing Every Mind into the Game to Realize the Positive Revolution in Strategy

The Appreciative Inquiry Summit

Frank J. Barrett, David L. Cooperrider, and Ronald E. Fry

The pace and scope of change facing organizations seem to defy our grasp. Organizations that are on top today have no guarantee where they will be tomorrow. They face strategic shifts in industry, technological innovations, emergence of new competitors, and changes in legal requirements. Discontinuous changes and radical overhauls impact everyone—they require more, not less, coordination of activities. They affect every element of the organization, from reshaping internal relationships to the way jobs are designed, the structure of reporting relationships, reward systems, information systems, and relations with customer and suppliers. This is strategic change that is beyond incremental fine-tuning and adaptation. Nothing is left untouched. Little wonder, then that Nadler (1998) claims that executives are facing the challenge of “reshaping the entire enterprise.”

If we are going to reshape the entire enterprise, we need to abandon the machine metaphor that has spawned so many bureaucratic designs. It’s time to consider new organizational models—a model that appreciates the need for members at all organization levels to be able to think, plan, innovate, and process information. Drucker (1989) has suggested that the 21st Century leader will be like an orchestra conductor. However, an orchestral metaphor—connoting pre-scripted musical scores and a single conductor as leader—is limited, and implies a separation between thinking and doing reminiscent of Taylorism. Given the degree of turbulence and the need for ongoing transformation, we suggest that organizations need to operate more like jazz musicians improvising. Like jazz bands, organizations need to be designed for maximizing learning and innovation. When jazz

bands strike a groove, they are simultaneously acting and learning. Organizations, when operating in the groove (to borrow a musical phrase), are like jazz players—diverse specialists living in chaotic, turbulent environments; making fast, irreversible decisions; highly interdependent on one another to interpret equivocal information; dedicated to innovation and the creation of novelty. Jazz players do what managers find themselves doing: fabricating and inventing novel responses without a pre-scripted plan and without certainty of outcomes; discovering the future that their action creates as it unfolds.

This raises another question. If we want to create flexible, adaptive systems capable of improvisation and spontaneous transformation, how do we begin to reshape our organizations? Have our change methods kept up with the depths of strategic shifts required? Do our models and theories of strategy formation and change management allow us to reshape the entire enterprise? Our purpose in this chapter is to explore one method of strategy formulation that seeks to involve the entire system in designing the future—the Appreciative Inquiry Summit. This method combines the better of two important movements in the field of organization development—large group interventions and appreciative inquiry—to forge a new format for strategy formulation in organizations. As we will show below, this is a process that involves the entire system in the evolution of strategy and strategic change. It's time to take the final step in freeing ourselves from the shackles of Taylor's scientific management; it's time to end the separation of thinking and doing, the gulf between planners and workers.

We will begin by reviewing a few of the basic assumptions of traditional approaches to strategy and outlining the trends that are subtly undercutting this traditional approach. In the next part of this chapter we highlight five subthemes that mark this shift, drawing from a variety of fields to show a convergence that is emerging in how we approach the formulation of strategy to bridge the gulf between planners and implementers. In the final section of the chapter we discuss one innovative approach to strategy formulation—the Appreciative Inquiry Summit—that seeks to embody these shifts that we outline. We will present a brief sketch of the summit design logic and flow of activities to show how these events have the potential to revitalize the strategy process in a way that is consistent with these five trends.

A REVOLUTION IN STRATEGY: BRINGING EVERY MIND INTO THE GAME TO RESHAPE THE ENTIRE ENTERPRISE

In his final letter to the stakeholders at GE, Jack Welch made an amazing statement. In order for GE to succeed, he wrote, the company needs to create “a culture that breeds an endless search for ideas that stand or fall on their merits,

rather than the rank of their originator, a culture that brings every mind into the game.” We have seen a plethora of programs that have made attempts in this direction—quality of work life programs, total quality management, and re-engineering are a few examples. These are attempts to give participants a sense of contribution to and responsibility for the welfare of the whole system. While these programs have made some contributions to the way implementation and quality improvements are introduced, what we have not yet witnessed is a proposal to revolutionize and democratize the way that strategy is formulated in organizations. Efforts to create participative decision making, employee involvement, and so on, have challenged many sectors of the firm, with the exception of one—the corporate board room. Strategy decisions continue to be the exclusive right of top management. We are hearing calls for a strategy process that invites multiple stakeholders to participate in the future destiny of the firm, to create policies and programs that benefit the entire system. What is needed is a process that invites every voice into the inner circle of strategy formation and promotes broader cooperation, bold idea generation, committed action planning, and rigorous execution of these ideas. In the last section of this chapter, we propose the appreciative inquiry summit as a process that takes Welch’s notion seriously—bringing every mind into the game, actively soliciting ideas regardless of the rank of the originator.

As we explore below, we have taken seriously Marvin Weisbord’s call to “get the whole system in the room.” A few of us who have been involved with the development of appreciative inquiry were inspired by this proposal and we too began to design events that included large groups. We experimented with large group events in organizations from private and public sector, including The United Religions Initiative, GTE, Nutrimental, Roadway Trucking, and the U.S. Navy. One of the most important developments in our approaches to organizational change has been the challenge to the aforementioned assumption about strategic planning. Is it possible to do strategic planning with sixty people? How about 250? 350? 1,000?

While we are still in the experimental stages of the AI summits, we are witnessing the power of whole system positive change. Consider examples such as the following:

- A trucking company in a highly competitive market, trying to find every possible way to save margins. And imagine a dock worker, trained in the use of the Porter Five Force Model (Porter, 1980), diagnosing the market trends and competitive forces that challenge his plant. The company has opened the financial books and disclosed the economic trends that are usually the exclusive property of top executives. This company knows that this dock worker is committed to improving the competitive advantage and creating value for the company. In fact, based on his analysis

of the competitive market, he comes up with an innovative suggestion that will save millions of dollars.

- The U.S. Navy is experiencing radical changes in the structure and needs of families and personnel needs of their sailors. Imagine a spouse of a sailor who is stationed overseas leading a task force that reconsiders the billeting policy for the entire Navy.
- A secretary for a multinational food corporation analyzes market data and leads a focus group to consider whether the company should shift to organic foods.

What do these three vignettes have in common? These three organizations—Roadway Trucking, The U.S. Navy, and Nutrimental Foods—engaged in a revolution: large group positive change. This revolution challenges one of the most sacred cows in management—the strategic planning books that assume only those trained in MBA programs are able to understand this esoteric, complicated world of strategy. However, our experiments in large scale positive change have led us to ask whether it is time to challenge this holy grail: Why shouldn't a line worker have access to company balance sheets; a secretary create a process for helping to set the strategic direction of the firm; a family member of an employee help to create the family support policies of an organization? In this chapter, we will explore strategy designs that include such voices and designs in which we involve the entire system in crafting the future.

CHALLENGING THE TRADITIONAL APPROACH TO STRATEGY: THE END OF D-A-D

Most of the strategic management theories we have inherited start with the assumption that the strategy formulation process occurs at the strategic apex and operates like a waterfall: top managers formulate corporate goals that guide business unit strategies that then guide tactical strategies among functional units (Hamel & Prahalad, 1989). This theory assumes a dualistic framework that separates planners from doers. For years there has been a widely accepted dichotomy between strategy formulation and strategy implementation: never the twain shall meet. Implementation is often distant in time and place from the site, often a boardroom, where plans were devised. The top managers have access to significant market data; they gather information, deliberate on the situation, and do a SWOT analysis. This separation of planners from implementers stems from Fredrick Winslow Taylor's scientific management. We call this the DAD model: senior managers Decide, Advocate, and Defend. The experts *decide* and hand decisions down to middle levels, who are responsible for executing at lower

levels. Now the planners have to *advocate* or sell the decisions to others in the system. At this point, internal stakeholders who were not privy to the trends and financial data that the top managers deliberated on begin to question and challenge the decisions. The strategists who are invested in the rationale of their own decisions then must *defend* the policies and the logic. The problem with the DAD model is that, at this point, when you're in a defensive posture, learning is blocked. Education theory has demonstrated that defensiveness drives out learning. When strategists are preoccupied with defending a position, they are less open to learning from new perspectives at the very moment when learning is most needed.

This top-down model of strategy making is no longer appropriate for organizations seeking to be competitive. We are witnessing a subtle revolution in the field of strategy that marks a shift, a model that does not rely on the dualistic separation of strategic apex and the rest of the system, one that allows for ongoing inquiry and learning. Strategy, from this perspective, is *ongoing transformation* that involves the entire system. This subtle shift begins with the assumption that *organizations are most innovative and adaptive when everyone is thinking and acting strategically*. This revolution expands the leadership capacity of the whole system—everyone is connected to, and committed to, the entire enterprise. The focus of strategy, in our view, should not be the outcome—the so-called “strategic plan.” Rather, the process of reflection, considering options and scenarios, deliberating on market information, dialoguing among diverse stakeholders, joining other partners in committing to courses of action—these processes are the transforming catalysts in the strategy process. With this in mind, we will explore this shift along the following dimensions:

- From Deficit Orientation to Appreciative Inquiry;
- From Small Groups to Whole Systems;
- From Strategic Goal Setting to Strategic Visioning;
- From Strategic Planning to Strategic Learning; and
- From Strategic Thinking to Strategic Relating.

When this shift has occurred, when all voices are included in the “inner circle” of strategy—when every mind is in the game envisioning, learning, relating strategically—the enterprise flows and “hits a groove,” like jazz bands improvising.

FROM DEFICIT ORIENTATION TO APPRECIATION

The traditional approach to organizational change has been rooted in problem solving. The basic assumption that informs diagnostic models (French & Bell, 1984) has been that, to help systems improve, it's necessary to first diagnose

the problems that are at the root of breakdowns. At the surface, this approach seems appropriate—to improve performance, look for the gaps, address the problem areas, and introduce solutions. Interventions, following this model, often ask members to focus on what is occurring when their department or organization is problematic, under-performing, dysfunctional. This first instinct—to ask about problems—is so automatic it barely seems to warrant questioning. (“What is the biggest problem you face around here? What has kept you from doing a good job? What is the biggest customer complaint?”) We have learned to pay attention to the kind of conversations that these questions trigger (see Ludema, Cooperrider, & Barrett, 2000). Problem-focused questions invite people to elaborate further on disappointments, gaps, unmet expectations—the root causes that lead to breakdowns. Mini-theories emerge that link dysfunctional symptoms with causes; stories proliferate about troublemakers and problem tendencies. No wonder that often there is a tendency for people to live with diminished expectations; systems learn to foster a “learned hopelessness.” We have come to call this “low morale.”

As we have argued elsewhere (Cooperrider, Barrett, & Srivastva, 1995; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2000), a problem-solving mentality is limited in furthering innovation. Dwelling on problems is inherently conservative, furthers a deficiency orientation, creates a social hierarchy of experts, contributes to broad cultural and organizational enfeeblement, and creates further separation between stakeholders, who become experts in smaller parts of the problem (see Barrett, 1995). Diagnosis of past problems does not unleash the creative imagination that would lead to innovative breakthroughs. Further, as we will address more fully in the next section, problem solving hinders holistic awareness of dynamic systems: It furthers a mechanistic approach to inquiry that hinges on the belief that problems can be isolated, broken down into parts, repaired, and then restored to wholeness.

Organizational interventions that seek to cultivate innovation need to become unlocked from conventional assumptions regarding diagnosis and problem solving. Appreciative inquiry is a strength-based approach to transforming human systems toward a shared image of their positive potential. Beginning with the unconditional positive question (Ludema, Cooperrider, & Barrett, 2000), through guided conversations, called “appreciative interviews,” members discover the best of their shared experiences and tap into their capacity for cooperation. The art and practice of crafting positive questions supports a system’s capacity to notice and anticipate positive potential. Efforts to discover and elaborate the positive core—the past, present, and future capacities of the system—are more likely to lead to innovation and transformation.

Inquiry and change are related, integral, whole activities. When we place the word “inquiry” after the word “appreciative” we emphasize the committed, open-ended search, the mutual interdependence and collaboration in seeking

those lifegiving forces that we value. For many of us raised in an industrial world of problems that seem to have technological solutions, the world might seem stripped of a sense of wonder and awe. To some it might seem irrelevant or worse—absurd or naive—to pause, reflect, and open ourselves to the depth of inquiry. To appreciate the potency of “inquiry” means valuing the notion that new understanding emerges when we begin our questioning from a different starting point, one in which we welcome the unknown as an opportunity for new discovery. It means suspending our confidence in old certainties and standing in a place of wondering. This is why the two words—appreciation and inquiry—belong intimately together. When we make continuous attempts to discover the lifegiving properties of organizations, ask about the root causes of success, and what is happening when organizations are operating at their best. Then we stand open to generative possibilities that might otherwise escape notice.

As we will see in the design of the summit, appreciative inquiry seeks an inclusion of a widening circle of multiple voices, creating opportunities and forums for surfacing inspirational stories, the voicing of new vocabularies of possibility, new conversations, and voices of hope and inspiration. The aim of engaging an entire system is to break out of a problem-centered diagnostic framework and unleash a vocabulary of positive possibilities that challenge the status quo; to generate new knowledge that expands the “realm of the possible”; to help members of an organization envision a commonly desired future. Such “futures,” based on hope, a positive anticipatory image, and linked to actual experience of being at one’s best, are naturally compelling and attractive. They attract energy and mobilize intention. Taken together then, appreciative inquiry refers to:

“a collaborative effort to discover that which is healthy, successful and positive in organizational life; AI involves attending to current successes and past strengths, listening for peak experiences, exceptional moments, intriguing possibilities with the aim of discovering what is happening when the human system is operating at its best. Beginning with the assumption that every human system already has features of health and well-being, appreciative inquiry is a deliberate, systematic search for those distinctive stories, metaphors, dreams, musings, wishes that embrace a spirit of vitality and potency. It involves searching for the antecedents, catalysts, and supporting factors that embolden and promote the enduring spirit, the central strengths and competencies that contribute to the exceptional potential and vitality of the whole system.”

FROM SMALL GROUPS TO WHOLE SYSTEMS

Throughout the 20th Century studies in social psychology have supported the notion that the ideal group size is eight to twelve. Many credit the birth of the field of organization development with the awakening to the power of small

groups to effect change. Lewin's (1951) groundbreaking work for the Office of Naval Research concluded that "involved participation" in small group decision making was critical to changing housewives' willingness to buy alternative meat products. Later studies continued in the same vein. Baumgartel's (1959) study at Detroit Edison concluded that "intensive, group discussion . . . can be an effective tool for introducing positive change in a business organization." Coch and French's (1948) research in a clothing factory found that quality improved when small groups were able to discuss how to improve work methods. Taken together, these famous early studies gave birth to the field of action research and with it the unquestioned assumption that small groups are the best vehicle for supporting positive change. This assumption has been taken for granted in the field of strategy: the common sense notion is that strategy should be formulated by a small group (from ten to twelve) of top managers.

Marv Weisbord (1993) claimed that deep and longlasting change is more likely if you get the whole system in the room. Not since Kurt Lewin's fruitful contribution has a single sentence had such resonance throughout the field of organizational change. We have seen an exploding interest among change agents in experiments in large group interventions. The Search Conference (Emery & Purser, 1996), The Conference Model (Axelrod, 1992), Future Search (Weisbord & Janoff, 1995), Whole Scale Change (Danemiller Tyson Associates, 2000) are but a few of the developments in the last decade. In our experiments facilitating appreciative inquiry summits, we have worked with groups ranging from sixty to one thousand for three to four days. In our experience designing and facilitating summits, we have witnessed a transformation occur when the "whole system" is assembled in the room. Various voices are gathered together in real-time conversation; each individual is invited to share his/her perspective and hear about others' experiences and views, unleashing new action possibilities that might have gone unimagined.

As we will discuss below, in the design of the appreciative inquiry summit, we also encourage the inclusion of external stakeholders, such as customers and suppliers. We hypothesize that the design decision to include multiple and diverse voices is the crucial catalyst that leads to a change in mindset, because people have access to an integral image of wholeness that transcends well-learned routines. Habits are interrupted; expansive and inclusive scenarios are proposed. The more that we can design a process that privileges every voice, that allows participants to see the emergence of the whole relational fabric of the firm, the more participants are pulled to contribute their best thinking. At a basic level, it is simply harder to maintain negative stereotypes of co-workers or the customer or the supplier when these parties are in the room, talking about their concerns and needs and the constraints they face. Participants engaged in generative conversations that focus on what would benefit the

whole enterprise are able to experience directly a common sense of purpose and direction.

When multiple and diverse voices are invited to participate in the *ecology* of the firm, they have glimpses of a holistic, integrated web, the dynamic unfolding of the enterprise. Our borrowing of the term “ecology” here is deliberate—it stems from “eco,” that comes from the Greek word “aikos,” meaning household. The summit dialogue is an invitation to consider the mutually shared “household.” Participants are able to consider the life-sustaining stewardship of the system, a perspective that inspires an expansive thinking and multiple ways of knowing—imagining, feeling, talking, and acting. It is no accident that the ecology movement uses a vocabulary of “sustainability.” Seeing and living “whole systems” is a catalyst for personal and organizational transformation because participants ask themselves: “What is my personal relationship to this living system and how is it sustained?” Often people shed the biases that kept them from noticing how much they depend on one another. Unlike change programs that are rolled out, in which a few at the top inform the many at the bottom, in the AI summit change is unfolding in real time. The rationale for decisions is available to all parties because they are witnesses and participants. We have seen what happens when a critical mass of people have the opportunity to make changes they feel are needed; necessary changes are now seen as everyone’s work rather than some “flavor of the month” that has caught management’s attention.

FROM GOAL SETTING TO STRATEGIC VISIONING

Henry Mintzberg (1994) debunks popular approaches to strategic planning as overly analytic. Too often, in fact, strategic planning becomes an exercise in feasibility assessment. Managers accept or reject strategies based on appraisal of resources, on how feasible a project is, how precise the metrics, or how clear the risk assessments (Hamel & Prahalad, 1989). In this sense, strategic planning is limited to what is knowable in the present. These planning methods might be appropriate for incremental improvement. However, with a feasibility orientation, planners do not stretch beyond what seems to be “reasonable” limits to redefine the boundaries of what they experience as constraining. Plans reflect assessments of present problems and “challenges” as future concerns are framed in terms of today’s opportunities and obstacles. Mintzberg hinted at an alternative to rational goal setting: In order to be effective, he claims, strategy should involve intuitive glimpses of possibility.

In the same light, Hamel and Prahalad (1989) have argued that it is important to bring the future back into the present; the focus is not “How will next year be different from last year?” but “What must we do differently next year

to get closer to our strategic intent?” We have come to appreciate recently the role of imaginative competence—the capacity to create a vivid image of a hopeful future. We call this the *anticipatory principle*—the development of imaginative capacity to form possible images of future states. In the field of psychology, motivation theorists emphasize the role of “future time perspective.” Studies of adolescent students, for example, demonstrate that those students who have positive images of a long-time horizon are more motivated and outperform those students who have a shorter time perspective and a lack of hopeful future image. (See Lens & Nuttin, 1984.)

The anticipatory principle begins with what seems to be a counterintuitive hypothesis: If you want to change a human system, change the future. This suggests that perhaps the most potent vehicle for transforming human systems is our ongoing projection of a future image. The collective image of the future preselects what there is to notice in the present and guides action. The philosopher Martin Heidegger discusses how we are always already creating anticipatory futures. We are always projecting a horizon of expectations that brings possible future pathways into the present, and then we proceed to live “as if” it were already happening. Conversations at the summit are powerful because they are future-oriented and alter expectations regarding what is possible; members anticipate expansive scenarios of positive futures. Historian Frederick Polak (1972) discusses the power of entertaining positive images of the future:

“At any moment, there are hundreds of images of possible futures being generated within each society and thousands for the planet as a whole. In any cultural epoch, only certain images of the future out of that much wider pool develop enough cultural resonance to affect the course of events. There is a selective empowerment of certain images, which ‘explode’ later, like time bombs, into the realized future. The images of ideal island societies providing for the welfare of all their inhabitants, coming out of literature inspired by 15th and 16th Century voyages of discovery, created such a time bomb for modern society, producing the completely new phenomena of the welfare state in the West.” (p. 116)

Elise Boulding (1988) understood the power of future imagery and warned that a world of technocratic problem solvers may be truncating our capacity to create positive images. Often, in this age of high technology and Internet speed, for every messy problem there seems to be an eventual technological solution. We have come to over-rely on technology and have become too passive as we wait for elite experts to invent solutions. It is important that we recover our “image literacy,” our capacity to imagine positive futures. Boulding reminds us that most of us have learned to ignore this image-making capacity of strategic visioning: “Children do it all the time, but it is called daydreaming, and they are punished for it” (1988, p. 86).

Simply creating a strategic plan and handing it down for others to implement risks that employees will fail to identify with goals. Strategic visioning, on the other hand, involves widening the inner circle of voices to include the entire system in dialogue about possible futures. Hamel connects this to his call for ongoing innovation and involving the entire organization in “leading the revolution.” Perhaps, then, we should consider anticipatory imagination as a strategic resource and core competence. Continual renewal demands a method to mobilize all voices in envisioning and anticipating, involving all employees in entertaining discontinuous innovations, products and services that exceed customer expectations, new business processes, and new business models. In such contexts, when parties have a voice in suggesting positive futures, they have unusually high commitment in seeing that agreed-on actions are implemented fully.

Strategic visioning is a call to reclaim our image literacy, to create conversations that look different from goal-setting conversations. Visioning forums are not designed to diagnose past problems or solve old conflicts. Rather, they are conversations that unleash the collective imagination to talk about positive futures and innovative possibilities; they are deliberately designed to elicit ideal scenarios, to encourage parties to think beyond “more of the same,” to imagine products and services that have the power to alter customers’ expectations, to consider new business models, and to imagine radically new strategies. When engaged in strategic visioning, members notice latent customer needs and imagine ways to respond; they imagine new markets, emerging technology, opportunities for profitability and growth. Creative and intuitive ideas are able to flow because the conversations are permitted to take place away from current premises. As we will explore below, creative visioning is a core activity in AI summits, particularly during the second phase, in which participants are encouraged to imagine the best of possible worlds, to imagine the impossible. There is a difference between imagining the organization that one would like to see in the future as opposed to changing the one that exists today.

FROM STRATEGIC PLANNING TO STRATEGIC LEARNING

Most strategy books emphasize prescriptive steps in the planning process. Steps guide planners to define purpose, write values, create vision and mission statements, communicate goals, plan actions, provide metrics to measure progress, and so on. Often these are activities organized and led by planning departments of senior staffers, armed with tools such as SWOT analysis and Porter’s five forces model, divorced from the day-to-day operations of the organization, cranking out vinyl-bound reports outlining operational and financial details, competitive positioning, and future markets.

The revolution in strategy that we see emerging is one that values inclusive dialogue over rational planning, active experimentation over analysis. Brown and Eisenhardt (1998) and others have demonstrated that, while ongoing incremental improvements are essential, they may not be enough. High-performing organizations operate at the edge of chaos, improvising and learning as they go. Johnson and Huff (1998) discuss the necessity of everyday innovation. Five-year plans are of little use when adaptation must occur on the spot. When operating at the edge of chaos, we can expect complicated behaviors; we cannot rely on established rules or routines to guide responses. Strategic planning becomes strategic learning when improvised actions suddenly open up streams of previously unconsidered possibilities. This is no doubt why Mintzberg (1994) has pointed out that what's important in strategy is not just the plan itself, but the learning that occurs while dialoging and deliberating. This reminds us that strategy formulation is a discovery process. What makes strategic formulation transformative is that, as participants consider various scenarios, they are inventing and discovering possibilities simultaneously.

Strategic learning implies the power of discovery as a strategic resource. Often organizations, especially command-and-control hierarchies, try to eliminate surprise. However, since surprises will never go away, we need to ask a different question: What is the most advantageous way to approach organizing so that surprise and discovery are invigorating rather than noxious? Here Hamel (2000) makes an important distinction between knowledge and insight. Access to data and information does not lead to insight about how to creatively apply this data or how to act in innovative ways. What are the sources of insight and discovery and why do we assume that they are relegated to insiders and trained analysts? A line worker has insights about improving manufacturing costs per unit; a manufacturing worker can imagine small changes that will improve time to market, find ways to improve quality, and decrease number of defects per product output; a truck driver can suggest ways to improve delivery time and throughput; a design worker can find new ways to delight the customer; a secretary can consider new sources of revenue streams and reconsider business models. If these dialogues are expanded to include all of these voices, this will boost insight, discovery, and strategic learning throughout the system.

If we approach strategy making as a learning process, then conversations would be designed to encourage "out of the box" thinking and experimenting with new ways of approaching old problems and would include voices that might customarily be excluded. As we will see below, in summits, activities are designed so that diverse groups self-manage dialogue and allow time for brainstorming and considering wild and risky ideas while withholding judgment. Members often discover new trends that experts have been trained not to notice; they sometimes overstep the boundaries of familiar business models.

FROM STRATEGIC THINKING TO STRATEGIC RELATING

Studies of the strategy process often focus on cognitive bias of the strategy makers. The emphasis is often on tools to improve strategic thinking. We have two problems with this. First, the tools themselves might not serve to expand and enrich thinking. Second, there is an overemphasis on individual sense making and individual cognition that overshadows the importance of relationships and strategic conversations.

This individual frame of reference proposes that, when making strategic change decisions, managers construct a simplified model of complex reality—the mental model—which serves as the basis for strategic decision making. There is a natural affinity to link strategy and cognition through a framework of sense making—it is here that people try to make things sensible to themselves and others. A sense-making framework holds that executives notice those elements in the environment that are most salient to or offer support for extant mental models. Stimuli that are inconsistent with these favored mental models will typically not be recognized (Kiesler & Sproull, 1982). Starbuck and Milliken (1988) explain that managers' beliefs regarding what is important will tend to push into the background information that might indicate the need for new mental models, thus making this information less likely to be acted on. Mental models that do not match the changing environment may prevent managers from noticing events and developing understandings about those events, thus causing delays in adaptation (Barr, Stimpert, & Huff, 1992). How managers respond to events is often determined by whether they interpret them as opportunities or threats. Staw, Sanderlands, and Dutton (1981) argue that the perception of an environmental event as a threat restricts the number of alternatives that managers consider for action. This threat-rigidity effect means that interpreting an event as a threat distorts information-processing because data consistent with a conservative or threatening interpretation is emphasized. This could lead to decision-making pathologies, such as restricting action, rigidity in strategy formulation, and failure to adapt. This suggests, following Caldreis (2002), that the SWOT instrument that strategists so often use might be cognitively biased to overemphasize threats, leading to a restriction on action possibilities.

We are witnessing a subtle shift that calls attention away from individual thinking in favor of facilitating strategic relationships and supporting creative conversations. Drucker (1989) reminds us that it's central that the entire system become a change agent. This is consistent with Bennis's (1997) notion that what matters now isn't individual empowerment but collaborative advantage. The job of strategic leadership more than ever is to facilitate healthy, productive, creative relationships. In particular, this means coordinating relationships

across boundaries. Too often we see situations like the following: new product concepts from research and development are transferred to engineering, and from engineering to manufacturing; functional loyalty develops as personnel who have long identified with their functions might resent “outsiders” telling them how to do their jobs. Engaging in innovative strategy making involves breaking through these mental models and functional loyalties by creating provocative conversations and breaking old rules, even including some of the sacred cows. If someone is expected to take the risk of challenging a sacred cow, it’s important to have a strong sense of the relational fabric of the firm; it’s also important to have robust and rich relationships to encourage risk and reward success more than punishing failure. In this sense, as Hamel (2000) argues, strategy making is a subversive activity. If we expand the leadership capacity to include everyone in the inner circle of strategy making, if we assume that everyone can think and relate in a way that furthers the strategic interest of the firm, we are inviting members to consider multiple voices, to think in holistic terms, to take the entire system into account. Taken together, this would involve a shift to the entire system thinking and acting holistically. This means, as Hamel has argued, that the process needs to be democratic to mobilize the sensibilities of the entire system, including those who are often ignored—not just the headquarters, but people on the line and in the field. This is an argument for the democratization of strategy—a corporate bill of rights, if you will. It is every employee’s inalienable right to share in the destiny of the firm, to dialogue about abandoning those practices that are unsuccessful and exploiting the ones that are successful.

Appreciative inquiry summits are designed to create a context to bridge functional gaps, encouraging new and unlikely partnerships. Customers and suppliers interact with line workers in strategic dialogues; service providers and customers forge new relationships; alliances are formed around networks of interest rather than conventional bureaucratic boundaries.

THE APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY SUMMIT: TWO EXAMPLES

In the previous section, we outlined five trends that mark a shift in the way we approach strategy formulation—appreciative focused conversations, the whole systems approach, activities that cultivate strategic visioning, learning, and relating. We would now like to discuss one approach to strategy formulation that supports each of these elements. Here we will briefly summarize the design of the appreciative inquiry summit. (For a fuller description, see Ludema, Cooperrider, & Barrett, 2003). The appreciative inquiry summit is built on the 4-D cycle of appreciative inquiry: discovery, dream, design, and destiny. (For a

fuller description of this 4-D cycle, see Barrett & Fry, forthcoming; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2000; Watkins & Mohr, 2001; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). We organize the four days of the summit around these four phases, which we explore below.

The first task is to decide on a clear and compelling strategic focus for the summit. This is an essential task, because the strategic topic guides the activities over the next four days. We recommend a pre-summit meeting in which a steering group, a diverse microcosm of the system usually made up of fifteen to twenty key stakeholders, decides on the title that will guide inquiry into strategic options. At the center of the 4-D cycle is the affirmative topic. The wording of the affirmative topic should address the core strategic issues faced by the organization. The topic should be clear and task-oriented, yet open-ended enough so that it invites inquiry into strategic issues. Just as in jazz bands in which minimal structure allows maximum autonomy and diversity (see Barrett, 1998), the summit topic strategically provides just enough structure to invite crucial generative conversations.

Topic choice is a crucial grounding activity and should be framed in positive terms. It is important to avoid the natural tendency to think in terms of eliminating what is wrong or fixing problematic areas in order to improve performance. Eliminating what's wrong is not the same as strengthening and creating the performance indicators that we want to see. Investigating causes of high turnover and absenteeism won't provide much insight into creating a culture of high enthusiasm; asking why customers are dissatisfied with service will not help you discover what leads to breakthrough customer delight; fixing problems in process flow won't help create breakthrough service.

PhoneCo

PhoneCo, a fictional name for a global telecommunications company, had experienced unprecedented growth over a five-year span, but suddenly experienced a downturn and felt that the energy and focus were beginning to wane. Profits were down, and energy and commitment were waning. When the company leaders first addressed this issue, they considered a survey that would uncover the causes of low morale and lack of enthusiasm. After an introduction to appreciative inquiry, we encouraged the steering group to consider this “problem” from an appreciative perspective. They talked about what PhoneCo was like when they experienced themselves and others operating with high commitment and sense of purpose. The steering group, made up of seventeen representatives from various levels and functions within PhoneCo, forged a topic that addressed the core strategic issues—they discovered, through their conversation, that empowered leadership and impacting others' lives through technology were crucial catalysts for high commitment. With this in mind, they decided on the following topic to guide a four-day organization-wide conversation:

Inspired and Passionate Leadership: Transforming the Way People Conduct and Live Their Lives

- Making a difference
- Exceeding our own and customers' expectations
- Pride in our work

This topic became the theme that guided the four-day summit. Since this is a global organization, considerable planning went into the event. Invitations went out to 260 representatives from all divisions of the company, representatives from every rank and level, including the CEO, the executive board, and production workers. The event included representatives from thirty-six different countries. This topic became the focus of stories and conversations over the next four days.

U.S. Navy

Perhaps a high-tech organization in the telecommunications industry can experiment with such a high-involvement strategy, but what about a traditional, command-and-control bureaucracy? In the spring of 2001, leaders of the U.S. Navy were concerned about an alarmingly low rate of retention: an unusual number of people were leaving the Navy after only one tour of duty. At first the leaders assumed that the summit would be focused on studying the morale breakdown, fixing the problem of high turnover, and eliminating the retention problem. When Admiral Vern Clark, Chief of Naval Operations, read about appreciative inquiry, he formed a steering group (ESG) and asked the members to consider the summit method. At the ESG meeting, the members began to tell stories about what was happening when they felt committed and engaged in their work, when members felt a high sense of purpose and committed to the organization. After a series of guided appreciative interviews, an important theme emerged: Members felt most committed when they were empowered to take risks; when they had opportunities to grow and develop and were supported to do so; and when they were part of collaborative teams. These themes then became the topics that guided the summit. The title of the first Navy summit:

Bold and Enlightened Leadership at Every Level: Forging an Empowered Culture of Excellence

- Supporting learning, growth, and development
- Great teams
- Innovation and bold risk taking

This topic then guided the conversations over the next four days as members sought to discover the factors and root causes that contribute to an experience of empowerment and experiences of learning, growth and development, innovation,

and bold risk taking. Thirty strategic action groups were proposed, including one that introduced 360-degree feedback at various naval commands. Following this event, seven different naval commands initiated summits to address strategic issues.

DESIGNING A SUMMIT TO MAXIMIZE WHOLENESS, STRATEGIC VISIONING, LEARNING, AND RELATING

When designing summits, logistical considerations are important. We recommend a minimum of four consecutive days. It is important to hold the event in large, arena-type spaces and to create small groups of eight to ten participants that deliberately maximize diversity. We encourage participants to engage in dialogue, not problem solving. Everyone is encouraged to help address tasks, but also to take responsibility for their own utterances, actions, perceptions, and feelings. For each discussion, task members are encouraged to assume roles—discussion leader, time keeper, recorder, and reporter—and to rotate them so that everyone has a chance to hold space for the group process. Members do not stay in the same groups for the entire summit, but are occasionally assembled into various stakeholder groups—departmental groupings, customers, suppliers, and others. However, the principle of self-managed dialogue is encouraged in each case. In the Navy summit, for example, we included members of every community (aviation, surface navy, submariners, supply, and so on); as much as possible we included representatives from all levels of the hierarchy, from enlisted to vice admiral, and covering every functional community.

Day 1. Discovery Phase: Elaborating the Strategic, Positive Core

The first and most important activities are designed to discover all the factors and forces that are operating when the organization is contributing to the firm's strategic intent. This is an inquiry into the past that is quite different from most inquiries. Usually when engaged in strategic planning, groups are tempted to immediately talk about the future and to propose goals and visions for the future. We have discovered that inquiry that begins by tapping into past and present strengths, one that collectively seeks to discover core competencies, will seed richer and more generative dialogue when, on the second day of the summit, attention turns toward the future. We begin with one-on-one appreciative interviews in which participants are asked to recall stories in which they experienced exceptional moments associated with the positive topic—such as innovation, creativity, empowerment, or teamwork. The purpose of the discovery phase is to search for, highlight, and illuminate those factors that give life to these topics when they are operating at their best. Relationships are forged as diverse individuals from various sectors of the firm tell one another stories about

moments when they have felt most alive, when they felt a sense of purpose and exceptional meaning. As we build consensus into the positive core of the system, it is important that all participants have the opportunity to talk about their experiences and hear from others. The stories that are told during this first morning session become the groundwork for the rest of the four days. The themes, ideas, hopes, and values are referred to throughout the meeting. Khalsa (2002) calls this the “holographic approach”—the themes for the entire conference are embodied in this first conversation; high-point stories disclose crucial information that will inform visioning, designing, and formation of strategic action groups. Everyone has equal voice from the beginning; the discovery activities quickly generate a sense of connection among participants and create the appreciative foundations on which the work will be built.

These positive conversations create the context for creative ideas, broad and flexible thinking, and openness to the generation of diverse ideas. Inquiry into the root causes of success serves to dislodge old certainties, as participants dig deeper to discover the factors and forces that contributed to exceptional moments. In the PhoneCo Summit, for example, participants talked about times that they witnessed or experienced passionate and inspired leadership in the past; they told stories about experiences in which they surpassed their own or the customer’s expectations; they discussed innovations they had witnessed or experienced. These stories generated a rich database that then became the basis for articulating and elaborating the positive strategic core, the factors and forces that contributed to these exceptional moments. PhoneCo participants dug deeper into the stories to articulate the core competencies that are at the root of their success, the factors and forces that they want to continue to enliven and support. The group articulated fifty core factors, including elements such as respect for the individual, delighting the customer, and connecting people.

Day 2. Dream Phase: Imagining Strategic Futures

After sharing stories of exceptional moments and analyzing root causes of success, all participants are able to see the core factors that have contributed to strategic success—the products offered, the markets served, the profit sources, the technology successes, organizational image or branding, sales and distribution strengths. Conversations now naturally turn toward envisioning the desired future. The task in the second phase is to create space for participants to boldly imagine the ideal future in all of its fullness *as if* it were alive and flourishing already. These are the activities that encourage the future envisioning discussed previously. Weick (1979) extols the virtues of future perfect thinking. Creating public space for imagining the ideal future activates the anticipatory capacity of the system; this activity ignites rich scenarios and seeds “wild” ideas. New ways of seeing are allowed to emerge; alternative perspectives are given voice to consider “dream” scenarios. Based on the stories that

were surfaced during the discovery phase, perspectives have been triggered and new vocabularies are now used to envision organizational life in a constructive and positive way. The important consideration at this stage is to create an atmosphere that supports creative imagining. Creative people operate best under conditions of positive affect; under conditions of stress, creativity suffers. Therefore, groups are encouraged to approach this with a spirit of playfulness and curiosity. We ask groups to present their visions through skits and performances. Often these are not only fun and enjoyable, but also provocative and inspiring.

At the Navy summit, we had assumed that participants, who were accustomed to this command-and-control culture, might have trouble expressing visions playfully through skits. We were taken aback by the energy and creativity they expressed. For example, a young enlisted sailor and a senior officer performed a skit in which they imagined that the Navy no longer distinguished between officer and enlisted; another group enacted a skit in which they imagined the Navy encouraging sailors to have access to advanced education through distance learning programs, receiving advanced degrees. One group enacted a skit in which St. Peter, at the gates of Heaven, gives officers awards of grace for supporting junior people to take unusual initiatives and innovative risks that lead to exceptional learning, growth, and development. The losers were condemned to spend eternity in Washington, D.C. Another group even imagined the Navy winning an award from *Fortune* magazine for “Outstanding Employer of the Year.” Such unusual enactments stretch the imagination to consider the core organization design principles that would support the organizational dream.

Day 3. Design Phase: Creating the Organizational Architecture That Supports Strategic Actions

The design phase is concerned with bringing a new organizational world into being. The language of design connotes the language of art and architecture. When architects design a structure, they are laying out the foundation upon which they build superstructures. They know that they are designing the physical structures that will allow participants to carry out their lives, their relationships, and so on. The design phase of the summit also invites participants to act like architects, to articulate the organizational values that become the foundation, the form that will invite and give shape to, constrain, and facilitate organizational actions. Marv Weisbord (1993) contends that every organization is perfectly designed to get the results it is currently getting. In the dream phase, people began to imagine new dimensions, outcomes, and results. The design phase addresses the question—“What kind of organizational forms, policies, structures will support our boldest desires and highest wishes, the dreams we have been imagining?”

The design phase introduces the elements that become the foundation from which revolutionary strategies emerge and that support flourishing actions and projects. We have been inspired by the work of Dee Hock and the approach to chaordic organizing, which claims that purpose and principle are the genetic code of any healthy organization (1999). If members can agree on core beliefs and purpose, then the organization becomes a “vital, living set of beliefs.” In the design phase, participants create the principles and purposes that represent their highest aspirations in the form of *provocative propositions*. These are statements of principle and purpose that express bold possibilities, statements that inspire, stretch, and challenge. Provocative propositions state core beliefs, link principles and structural elements, and connect high-leverage strategies, processes, and systems to the positive core. We encourage members to write statements in the affirmative and stated in the present tense as if it is happening now. The statements link beliefs with organizational design elements from job design to information systems. In this phase we have seen propositions that articulate principles and beliefs regarding career structures, reward systems, forums for decision making, conceptions of market structures, new ventures, and supply chains. Below is an example of a provocative proposition crafted at the Navy Summit:

“We, as leaders, are empowered to make decisions at the optimum local level and encouraged to be intelligent risk takers. We are taught how to make decisions and are provided the training, resources, and authority for the task. This nurtures, inspires, and supports competence at all levels. Every action taken develops leadership and furthers mission accomplishment. We are committed to understanding the possible outcomes of our decisions and providing positive feedback. This demands inclusive decision making and shared knowledge.”

Design in this sense is different from the way we think of decision making. Decisions are rational and “realistic” in the sense that they address the “way things are.” Design attitude invites participants to think about creating the space and structures that allow the making of decisions, the emergence of actions, and so forth. We have increasingly found that the design phase is one of the most potent in creating long-term differences in organizational futures.

Day 4. Destiny Phase: Creating Strategic Action Groups

In the destiny phase of the summit, participants propose actions and commit to concrete projects that revitalize the positive core, bring the ideal future to life, and support the principles and purposes articulated in provocative propositions. This is an exercise in collective brainstorming, one that supports emergent change and maximizing opportunities, much like jazz players engaged in improvisation. We have used various methods, including open space technology (Owen, 1992) and collective mind maps (Weisbord & Janoff, 2000), to help people to collectively

brainstorm actions and projects. After numerous actions are proposed, others are invited to volunteer and join the group that most interests them to discuss how they can work together to realize the strategy of the firm. Actions are assessed and prioritized, overlapping ideas are combined, groups are formed, and project proposals created.

At the PhoneCo summit, thirty-five actions were proposed and later combined into eighteen umbrella strategic action groups. The strategic action groups included topics such as inclusive communication throughout the firm, attending to evolving customer needs, creating mentoring program, and keeping a small company spirit. Groups had between ten and twenty-two volunteers. They included division presidents, middle managers, and line workers; representatives from R&D as well as manufacturing; and employees from Taiwan worked with colleagues from Holland. Over the next twelve months, the groups continued to meet virtually and face-to-face and initiated several new ventures.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM AN APPRECIATIVE APPROACH TO STRATEGY MAKING

In this chapter, we argue that it is important to move beyond traditional models of strategy making to support system-wide inquiry into the positive core, the affirmative competence of the system. It is worth exploring, in more depth, the factors that support the emergence of an appreciative learning culture, one that supports continual experimentation.

1. Positive Change Begins with an Affirmative Displacement of Routine

Embedded in problem-solving routines is a theory of change. It is a deficit-based approach to change that proposes that the best way to enact effective change is to accurately map and understand the deficient, the breakdowns, the disappointing performances, and to seek out the underlying causes. This deficit orientation is implicit in our earliest models of planned change. Beginning with Kurt Lewin's (1951) three-stage model of "unfreezing-change-refreezing," the assumption is that change must begin with some form of disconfirmation of the present state. More recently, the widely known work of John Kotter (1996) proposes that, in order for transformation efforts to succeed, leaders must disconfirm present behavior and create a sense of urgency, even if they have to manufacture a crisis.

We put forth an alternative to this widely accepted paradigm. Disconfirmation, by itself, is not adequate and is often detrimental to stimulating creative action. Under conditions of threat, imaginations shrivel, responses become more

rigid, and people have a constrained notion of what's possible. In our experiences with appreciative inquiry, and in documented AI interventions (see Fry, Barrett, Seiling, & Whitney, 2002; Hammond & Royal, 2001), we have found that when people engage in a search for life-giving moments, exceptional moments of meaning, moments that surpassed expectations—these moments expand the creative imagination and create bonds between people. This finding has been supported by research in the field of positive psychology (for a review, see Sekerka & Cooperrider, 2003). Positive feelings are not just pleasant experiences. Positive emotions broaden and expand the thought-action repertoire and support personal strength, well-being, and resilient responsiveness (Fredrickson, 1998). When people experience positive emotions, they are more creative (Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987); they are more flexible thinkers (Isen & Daubman, 1984); they are more open and receptive (Estrada, Isen, & Young, 1994); and they are able to think in broader, more expansive terms (Isen, 1987). In our experience, every time members are given the opportunity to share best-past stories and experiences, there appears a collective willingness, if not excitement, to build from the lessons embedded in these stories.

2. The Journey of Transformation Begins with the Unconditional Positive Question

Because we enter and approach situations with questions continuously, questions are our windows into organizational life. The moment we start to ask questions, even the moment we start to wonder about some social phenomenon, we already change the “targeted” social system. Every question begins a conversation that creates, maintains, or transforms a way of talking. We set the stage for what we will discover: We call attention to the presence of a topic, trigger stories that posit causes and antecedents, and project likely outcomes or endpoints. Often our diagnostic questions are so automatic that they escape our notice. We begin by asking about gap analysis, analysis of failures, defensive routines, bureaucratic breakdowns, and turf battles.

AI is, in the simplest and most direct sense, the art and practice of crafting positive questions. Instead of wondering about the root of conflict or turf battles, we might begin by asking: “When was a time that you were surprised by someone making a cooperative offer to you?” or “When was a time that this group experienced mutual support and cooperation?” When asking an unconditional positive question, we invite and tell a different story about ourselves: Generative categories and life-giving theories emerge. Unconditional positive questions cultivate a spirit of discovery, inquiry, curiosity, and fascination that lead to greater creativity (Ludema, Cooperrider, & Barrett, 2000). For that reason there is nothing quite so practical as a good question. The organizational world is filled with boundless mystery. When we are able to approach organizing with the kind of innocent wonder and openness to surprise, we discover a

world brimming with vitality. Beginning inquiry with an unconditional positive question is a small change that makes a large difference.

Questions evoke whole new worlds of possibilities. What we have found in our own lives is that we too move—emotionally, theoretically, relationally, spiritually—in the direction of what we persistently ask questions about. Inquiry intervenes in two ways: It intervenes “in here” as well as “out there.” In other words, questions have a double import. The conventional view suggests that, to do good inquiry, it’s important to come to the experience with certain qualities—intellectual curiosity, awe, openness to surprise, the ability to value—qualities we associate with the spirit of inquiry. It is rare, however, that we come to organizations with this kind of childlike mind. At the beginning of inquiry, when we are called to address some problem or crisis, we rarely begin with the experience of wonder. What we increasingly realize is that the questions—the appreciative, life-centric questions—hold the key to the doorway into wonder. It is not so much a question of trying to romantically recover the state of being a child. This mindset can begin quite pragmatically in ordinary circumstances of discovery, conversation, and the deepening of relationship, endowed by the positive question. Here is the crux of the matter. Inquiry itself creates wonder. It is not the other way around. When we are really in a mode of inquiry, doorways into appreciable worlds are opened up around us. Entering into those worlds—those seemingly intractable conversations—would not be possible without the question. The feeling of wonder is the outcome. We know that we are doing inquiry when, at the end of the day, we feel more spirit.

3. Elaborating the Positive Core Involves Expansive Circles of Inquiry

Collins and Porras (1994) argue that consistently high-performing systems understand the need to value continuity, to preserve the organizational core that connects the past with compelling images of the future. System-wide appreciative inquiry interventions take this suggestion another step by proposing methods for discovering and renewing the positive core. AI interventions are essentially relational interventions: They begin with one-on-one interviews in pairs and then expand outward to include multiple voices in expanding circles.

There is a rhythm to the building of appreciative learning cultures. As new words and new networks of meaning emerge within the context of relational exchanges, fresh alternatives for action become possible. Inviting parties to talk about what they value most about their past and what they hope for in their future leads to energy for action. We have found that, once unleashed, these conversations have a natural momentum: When someone begins to care about an idea or person, one naturally wants to know more, to explore further. Passionate stories about exceptional actions intensify meaning; these magnified stories invite people to experiment and entertain scenarios of a better world.

People experience an open orientation toward the future and move beyond previously imagined constraints.

4. Practicing Affirmative Competence Expands the Improvising, Self-Organizing Capacity of the System

Many change programs are framed as linear and sequential in which those with the vision “hand off” plans to implementers. An emergent, iterative, improvisational approach to organizing is needed, one in which members act on the spot when the situation requires. Creative improvising involves an affirmative competence, a capacity to see possibility in the face of obstacles, a willingness to experiment with no guarantee of outcomes, a view of errors as learning opportunities that might seed unexpected ideas. Appreciative interviews tap into the capacity for spontaneous, adaptive self-organizing; they trigger a centrifugal process of attunement; members are able to “live” systems awareness, to see what’s needed on the spot, to respond to what a situation requires rather than run ideas up the chain of command for approval. Appreciative processes seed synchronicity as people self-initiate, respond extemporaneously to emergent demands, commit to and invite further engagements. Change is seen as an ongoing part of everyone’s job, rather than an interruption of “real” work.

Most significant innovations have humble beginnings. It is often only in retrospect, after a breakthrough innovation is complete, that we look back and identify fortuitous moments, early proposals that seemed “crazy” at the time. One reason that appreciative interventions have positive consequences that support improvisation and creativity is that members pay attention to small beginnings. Improvisation leads to sustained innovation when we support the nascent moments of mutuality, the small promises and mini commitments. It is important to remember that humans have the capacity to defy anticipations, to initiate the unexpected, to begin the unprecedented. There is miraculous potential in new beginnings—something is initiated that cannot be predicted based on anything that has happened before. Appreciative interventions support improvisation because they create holding environments of curiosity and wonderment.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In this chapter we sought to link the advances of appreciative inquiry with models of strategy making. Traditional views of strategy formulation have assumed that strategy is the exclusive right of those top executives or planning departments of specialists trained to understand competitive markets, the skills of financial analysis and accounting. We began by citing Jack Welch’s provocative claim that a firm will flourish when every mind is brought into the game. In order to realize the revolution, it is important to democratize the entire strategy-making

process. Strategy formulation and implementation must reunite. In this chapter we notice various trends that propose a different emphasis—uncovering positive strategic core, bringing diverse groups together to experience holistic enterprise, cultivating dialogues that emphasize strategic visioning over goal setting, learning over planning, and relating over thinking. We proposed one method that embodies these five themes—the appreciative inquiry summit.

Clearly, we are still in our infancy in experimenting with these events and we still have much to learn. With this in mind, we hope that this chapter furthers the important dialogue between people in the fields of organization development and strategy.

For additional information about appreciative inquiry—intended to extend your knowledge in case you are one of many interested in finding out more—see Exhibit 22.1.

Exhibit 22.1. A Sampling of Research Related to Appreciative Inquiry

- The original article that described appreciative inquiry as a theory-building method was published in 1987 in Cooperrider, D.L., & Srivista, S., *Appreciative inquiry in organizational life*. See Woodman, R., & Pasmore, W. (Eds.), *Research in organizational change and development: 1991* Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, pp. 129–169. However, appreciative inquiry began in the early 1980s at Case Western Reserve University with the doctoral research of David Cooperrider and his thesis advisor, Suresh Srivastva. The first studies were not purposeful interventions, but research into peak experiences of doctors—physicians at the Cleveland Clinic, articulating a theory of what CCF looked like when operating at their best. The study is reprinted in Cooperrider, D., Srivastva, S. (1990). The emergence of the egalitarian organization. In S. Srivastva & D.L. Cooperrider (Eds.), *Appreciative management and leadership: The power of positive thought and action in organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- This story is retold in light of the early “discoveries” regarding the interventionist potential of research and formation of positive questions in Cooperrider, D., Barrett, F.J., & Srivastva, S. (1995). Social construction and appreciative inquiry: A journey in organizational theory. In D. Hosking, P. Dachler, & K. Gergen (Eds.), *Management and organization: Relational alternatives to individualism*. Aldershot, UK: Avebury Press.
- For a further articulation of generative potential of theory as positive intervention, see D. Cooperrider & F.J. Barrett. (2002). An exploration of the spiritual heart of human science inquiry: A methodological call of our time. *SOL Journal*, 3, 56-62.
- The first deliberate use of appreciative inquiry to consciously intervene into a social system was the February 1985 use of an appreciative inquiry and generative metaphor intervention. See F.J. Barrett & D. Cooperrider. (1990). Generative metaphor intervention: A new approach to intergroup conflict. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 26, 223–244.

- The first “large group” AI intervention, in the spring of 1985, was facilitated by David Cooperrider and John Carter and involved Touche Ross Canada. The case is summarized in C. Elliot. (1999). *Locating the energy for change: An introduction to appreciative inquiry*. Winnipeg, Canada: International Institute for Sustainable Development.
 - For an articulation of theoretical principles of AI, see Cooperrider, D., & Whitney, D. (1999). *Appreciative inquiry: Collaborating for positive change*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
 - Many of the early theory development articles are reprinted in Cooperrider, D., Sorenson, P., Whitney, D., & Yaeger, T. (2000). *Appreciative inquiry: Rethinking human organization toward a positive theory of change*. Champaign, IL: Stipes.
 - Recent books that explore AI methods include the following:
 - Gibbs, C., & Mahe, S. (2003). *Birth of global community: Appreciative inquiry in action*. Cleveland, OH: Lakeshore Publishers.
 - Ludema, J., Whitney, D., Mohr, B., & Griffin, T. (2003). *The appreciative inquiry summit*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
 - Watkins, J., & Mohr, B. (2001). *Appreciative inquiry*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
 - Whitney, D., & Trosten Bloom? (2003). *The power of appreciative inquiry*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
 - For an edited book of case studies of appreciative inquiry interventions from private sector, public sector, and governmental organizations, see Fry, R., Barrett, F.J., Seiling, J., & Whitney, D. (Eds). (2002). *Appreciative inquiry and organizational transformation*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Books.
 - Cooperrider, D., & Avital, M. (Eds.). (2004). *Constructive discourse and human organization*. Advances in Appreciative Inquiry Series, Volume 1. Oxford: Elsevier Science. (This new series by Elsevier Press documents cutting edge AI theory and cases.)
 - For a comparative empirical study, see Bushe, G.R. (1995, March). Appreciative inquiry as a team-development intervention: A controlled experiment. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 31, p. 13.
 - Achievements in Practice:
 - In 1997, the American Society for Training and Development bestowed its prestigious Culture Change Project Award on GTE for its diverse and system-wide application of AI to aid in the transformation of that culture.
 - In 1997 the Catalyst Award for “best place to work in the country for women” was given to Avon Mexico for its innovative use of appreciative inquiry to develop healthy cross-gender relationships in the workplace and helping to end a disturbing history of gender discrimination and harassment.
 - Roadway Express’s use of AI is covered in K. Hammonds. (2001, July). Leaders for the long haul. *Fast Company*, 48.
 - For one excellent resource for appreciative inquiry developments see the AI Commons website hosted by Case Western Reserve University, updated on an ongoing basis. <http://ai.cwru.edu/>
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Human Systems Dynamics

Competencies in a Complex World

Glenda H. Eoyang

EMERGING THEORY AND PRACTICE

Practitioners in organization development and management are learning from the new sciences of complexity. Sometimes called chaotic, self-organizing, non-linear, complex adaptive, or emergent, these new sciences give voice to the intuitions and experiences of persons who work competently to support change in human systems. Around the world, individuals and teams are exploring—in theory and in practice—how to apply lessons from these new sciences to their engagements with human systems.

Today their approaches are as diverse as the individuals who practice and the environments in which they work:

- An HR manager at a development bank in Saudi Arabia considers the role of Islamic principles of purposefulness, values, and intention in establishing coherence in human systems.
- A school administrator builds generative collaborative relationships to provide health services to children when challenges are increasing and funding is decreasing.
- A master facilitator brings insights about complex human dynamics to support decision making and action among teams in business, government, and nonprofit environments.

- An official of family court supports the emergence of new patterns of relationships that help kids develop into healthy and happy adults.
- An international pharmaceutical company applies human systems dynamics principles to understand and influence the use of its products by patients, caregivers, and professionals.
- An international financial services company incorporates complexity competencies into its leadership development programs.
- A consulting team in Canada integrates emergent project management with “open space technologies” to help businesses realize their shared visions in record time.
- A government official in Columbia establishes an infrastructure for community peace and justice.
- A new venture capital firm uses insights about human systems dynamics to foster collaboration among high-tech start-ups and sources of funding.
- An expert in information technology leads an effort to design and implement the next generation of Internet technologies for educators and researchers.
- Healthcare professionals, including CEOs, physicians, and nurses, use principles of complexity and human systems dynamics to improve both clinical and financial outcomes.

All of these professionals and many more around the world use the principles of complexity every day to respond to the emerging needs and dynamics of human systems. They draw from the age-old wisdom of effective leaders. They learn from the discoveries of 20th Century scholars and practitioners in organizational sciences. They derive metaphors, tools, and methods from the study of complex dynamics in physical sciences, information theory, and mathematics. They bring these various threads together into a single, emerging field of knowledge—human systems dynamics (Eoyang, 2003).

What do these students of human systems dynamics (HSD) have in common? How can you, as a professional, develop competencies to do this work? How can the OD field establish standards and developmental pathways to help others explore this exciting and innovative territory?

The answer is, “Nobody knows.” We don’t know because the field is in its infancy, and we’ve only begun to explore what’s possible. We don’t know because each of these environments and each practitioner brings unique gifts and challenges to the table. We don’t know because we are all so busy doing the work and building our own conceptual models and suites of tools that we have no time to articulate and share what we’ve learned with the larger

community of practitioners. Perhaps we will never know because the field of complexity application is as complex as the systems it works within.

What we can do is to use the principles of self-organizing systems, which we've learned from complexity theory and practice, to reflect on ourselves as individuals and as a cohort of OD professionals. Within this context, I will try to share with you my emerging learnings about what it means to engage in the self-organizing development of myself as a practitioner, my clients' productive systems, and this field at the intersection of the complexity and social sciences that we call human systems dynamics (HSD). Toward that end, I will explore two questions: (1) What is a complex adaptive system? and (2) What does it mean to work as a change agent in a complex adaptive system?

WHAT IS A COMPLEX ADAPTIVE SYSTEM?

Complexity is a diverse field that includes threads from mathematics, computer science, meteorology, fluid dynamics, and a host of other fields of research (Kelly, 1994). In my own work, I've found the concepts from one to be most applicable to behavior of human systems—complex adaptive systems (CAS). A CAS is defined as a collection of semi-autonomous agents that interact in unpredictable ways and generate system-wide patterns over time. A team is a good example of a CAS in human systems. The team members are the agents. Each comes with unique perspectives, skills, and interests. Through a variety of means (meetings, documentation, email, voice mail, informal chats), the agents interact. Over time, the team generates patterns of group behavior that can be observed in its work, the personal relationships of members, and the members' individual growth and development. Sometimes those patterns are highly productive and sometimes they are not, but always some pattern emerges that is identifiable as the “team” behavior apart from the contributions of individuals. This human system, and many others that meet these criteria, can be considered complex adaptive systems (Eoyang, 1997).

These complex adaptive systems demonstrate similar behaviors, regardless of the nature of the agents or the context of their engagements. Similar patterns of behavior appear in fluid dynamics, ecology, economics, and human physiology as well as human social and organizational systems (Pascale, Millemann, & Gioja, 2000). Among the characteristic behaviors are

- *Self-organization.* The pattern in the whole emerges from the internal dynamics of the system. It is not imposed from some objective outside influence. Organizational culture, for example, emerges from the complex interactions of the people within the system, not from a management edict that defines “what it's like around here.”

- *Sensitive dependence on initial conditions.* A very small change can generate enormous effects. Sometimes this is called the “butterfly effect.” The metaphor derives from the flap of a single butterfly wing that can change systemic patterns in parts of the system that are remote in space or in time. Rumors are wonderful examples of the butterfly effect in organizations. A comment overheard at the water fountain can mushroom into a crisis of confidence or action.
- *Dynamism.* A CAS is always in motion. A single snapshot of the agents at any point in time is insufficient to represent the system’s emerging existence. Even when a CAS appears to be in a stable state, its internal interactions continue to emerge over time. A locked-in bureaucratic environment maintains its stability because the individual people and processes generate action that discourages deviation and reinforces compliance.
- *Nonlinear causality.* In these highly interdependent systems, one thing causes and is simultaneously caused by another thing. A causes B at the same time that A is caused by B. Trust is a good example of nonlinear causality in human systems dynamics. You behave in such a way that I trust you, and I trust you because you behave in such a way. This causal circle makes it quite difficult to see which comes first, the behavior or the trust.
- *Fractal structures.* Similar patterns are repeated at various levels and parts of the complex system. The repetition gives coherence to the whole, like the geometrical patterns of fractals or biological patterns of broccoli when the part is a miniature version of the whole. Lived organizational values provide such scaled patterns in human systems. Competitive individuals exist in competitive teams. Competitive teams emerge in competitive corporations. Competitive corporations thrive in competitive industries and economies. Because of this replicated structure, different levels of organizing (individual, dyad, team, organization, and community) exhibit similar patterns and can be affected by similar interventions.
- *Path dependency.* Each complex system is unique. It has a complex combination of current patterns that emerged from a unique history. For each system, the future will emerge out of the complex dynamics of the current moment. In this way, history is of major significance in the dynamics of human systems. Patterns of the present will be understood in terms of, although they were not predetermined by, the dynamics of the past. For example, an organization may craft a thrilling vision, but its ability to make the vision a reality lies in its current capacity and its patterns of performance that have emerged in the past.

These characteristics of complex adaptive systems are obvious in the organizations with which I work. Every organization and each project exhibits these patterns of behavior. When I ignore them, my expectations may be clear and my plan may be certain, but the system's behavior will deny me every time. In some circumstances, I may avoid attending to these patterns for a short period of time or with a small subsection of an organization, but ultimately my best-laid plans will be ineffective because the interactions of the whole are much more powerful than my well-planned interventions. On the other hand, when I acknowledge these natural dynamics, explore them, and work in concert with them, my path is unpredictable, but the outcomes are usually productive and satisfying to my client and me.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WORK AS A CHANGE AGENT IN A COMPLEX ADAPTIVE SYSTEM?

In Chapter One, a change agent was defined as “a person who attempts to alter some aspect of an organization or an environment.” As a responsible professional, what is my role as a change agent in a system where outcomes have more to do with the internal dynamics of the system than with anything I might assess, implement, or evaluate?

It does not mean selecting one tool or approach and using it with all my clients. It does not mean that I can call a single event an intervention. It does not mean that I (or leaders or anyone else) know what's right for a system today and tomorrow. It does not mean that I can make useful, detailed, long-range plans. It does not mean that I can promise specific outcomes to clients within specific time frames. It does not mean that I can reach a level of professional competence and stop learning and growing. It does not mean that there's a set sequence of developmental stages that are predictable and controllable. It does not mean that I can help a client system transform without also being transformed.

It *does* mean that I will participate as a self-organizing agent in the emerging dynamics of a complex environment in which my clients live and work (Olson & Eoyang, 2001). To do this work effectively, I must be able to think about, talk about, and act within self-organizing dynamics of human systems. I must be conscious of the conditions that affect self-organizing processes and work with others to shape those conditions over time. I must be a learner. As a learner I am responsible for the complex self-organizing dynamics of myself as a professional. As I learn and engage with others, I also accept responsibility to help shape the conditions for emergent patterns for larger human systems of which I am a part.

My research in theory and practice has shown that there are three conditions that shape the speed, path, and results of self-organizing processes (Eoyang, 2001). It is significant that I say these conditions “shape.” They do not determine the dynamics because many other factors also intervene. These three conditions do, however, influence what happens as the internal dynamics of the system form their dynamical patterns. This model for the condition for self-organizing is called the CDE Model, and it emerged from my own exploration of the theory and practice of human systems dynamics. It reflects the conditions that are necessary and sufficient to influence the speed, path, and outcomes of self-organizing systems. Although these conditions pertain in any CAS, they take on different manifestations depending on the context. For example, when I plan a party, I have to have a place (container) to hold the action, a diverse group of guests who bring interesting personalities and experiences (differences), and opportunities for the guests to interact (exchange) in meaningful ways. In the current context of competencies for OD practitioners, we can see these same conditions in the categories outlined by Christopher Worley, Roland Sullivan, and William J. Rothwell elsewhere in this volume. They call them categories of OD competence—being, knowing, and doing.

Being the Container

The first category (being) defines the “self” that is self-organizing. It establishes the identity of the system and distinguishes what is “inside” from what is “outside.” In the CDE Model, it is known as the container (C) for the system. In the work of the OD practitioner, the functional container is the consciousness of the self—who and what one is. In the language of Chapter Five, this is “being.” To work in emergent systems successfully, the OD practitioner uses competencies of being to establish for him- or herself a coherent whole. Through the complex dynamics of the system, the individual is reflected in the greater whole and makes it possible for the whole system to reflect this individual’s coherence. The self-organizing pattern depends on the ability of the OD practitioner to be present and complete in the moment of engagement.

In my own journey, I am continually reminded that my personal presence is a powerful influence on the system, whether I intend it or not. If I’m distracted or unprepared or over- or under-dependent on the people and situations around me, I am incapable of serving my clients to good effect. My “being” forms a foundation for the other competencies that make me an effective agent of change. The approach to existence that I find most helpful, and the one that I observe most often in fully competent colleagues, is simple: I am a learner. This means that I take a stance of inquiry and curiosity and see myself as one who is engaged in the productive processes of inquiry and learning. Competencies related to being can be represented by a very large number of observable traits, many of which are embedded in the lists of general OD competencies

that appear elsewhere in this volume. Some that are substantially relevant to practice human systems dynamics include the capacity to be:

- Curious about how complex human systems work and why they work as they do;
- Humble about the capacity for a client system to organize itself and one's capacity to understand complex processes either in general or in particular;
- Generous with one's self and others as personal praxis emerges over time; and
- Comfortable with ambiguity, uncertainty, and lack of control.

Knowing the Differences That Make a Difference

The second condition for self-organizing in human systems establishes the necessary creative tension by articulating differences (D) within the whole that are significant. They constitute (or should constitute) the emerging pattern for the whole system. Significant differences are represented in "knowing" competencies. An effective CAS consultant must be able to recognize, name, and help others see the differences that make a difference to the productive work of the whole. He or she must know enough about human systems dynamics, the work of the client, and the capacities of engaged individuals to be able to focus attention on the differences that can generate the most effective system-wide patterns.

Because I am a learner, I continually expand my own knowledge about relevant differences that affect my emerging personal praxis in the field. I need to know about what other scientists and mathematicians in the field of complexity are learning, even though the field of complex dynamics is advancing at an incredible rate. When I entered the field in the late 1980s, I could stay abreast of much of the diverse activity in the field. Now, the information explosion is so great that I must pick and choose information about the differences that are most relevant to me. In addition to my own reading, I also stay connected to a network of other learners who share their findings with me. Such shared learning allows my repertoire of complexity models and significant distinctions to continue to expand.

Knowledge about the field is important, but I also have to explore emerging differences that affect my clients' situations. At a first encounter with a client and at each subsequent step, I learn the differences that make a difference in helping them move from their current patterns to new and more desirable ones. Knowing the relevant differences helps me support self-organizing of productive system-wide patterns. Many of the broad categories of knowledge that are relevant to OD

in general are focused on discerning and influencing significant differences. Some of those most closely related to HSD work include the following:

- Fractals (Briggs & Peat, 1989);
- Self-organizing processes (Prigogine & Stengers, 1988);
- Boundaries (Eoyang, 1997);
- Scaling (Talbot, 1992);
- Emergence (Johnson, 2001);
- Sensitive dependence on initial conditions (Zimmerman, Lindberg, & Plsek, 2001);
- Bifurcation path to chaos (Briggs & Peat, 1989);
- Self-organized criticality (Bak, 1996);
- Scale-free networks and power law (Barabasi, 2002);
- Computer simulation models (genetic algorithms, cellular automata, agent-based models) (Casti, 1997);
- Catastrophe theory (Guastello, 1995);
- Simple rules (Olson & Eoyang, 2001);
- Biological models of co-evolution and complexity (Cohen & Stewart, 1994);
- Time series modeling and attractor reconstruction (Poole, Van de Ven, Dooley, & Holmes, 2000); and
- Fitness landscapes and fitness parameters (Kauffman, 1995).

Additionally, there are options for using the concepts of complexity in HSD applications. Many practitioners and researchers have developed tools and techniques to support change agents; information is available to support new explorations and experiments; and learning networks are emerging to support shared learning (www.hsdinstitute.org).

Doing the Work to Build Transforming Exchanges

Container (being) and differences (knowing) are only two of the three conditions for self-organizing competence of the HSD professional. The third, and final, condition connects parts of the emerging system together in relationships that have the capacity to transform both the participating agent and the emerging patterns of the whole. We call these change-driving connections “transforming exchanges” (E). For the OD practitioner the primary exchange—that without which nothing happens—is captured in the competencies of “doing.” It is when we act that we build the possibility for new patterns to be generated in the self-organizing dynamics of our own and our clients’ systems.

The ability to establish transforming exchanges is the most obvious of the OD practitioner's competencies. We all know that a qualified OD practitioner must be able to establish meaningful connections with clients, colleagues, and sponsors. We have long lists of interventions that help client communities establish transforming exchanges among themselves and with us. Some of the most common include large group technologies, training, coaching, meeting design and management, team building, inter-team contracting, experiential exercises, dialogue, online and print communications. Of course, all of these are important. No practitioner can be successful without some competencies in one or more of these modalities. On the other hand, the outstanding practitioners I know do not claim to be equally qualified in all of them. They know what they do well, and they know when they need help. They do not try to act beyond their competencies, but they bring in colleagues with complementary areas of expertise. In short, they learn about the client's needs, they do what they do well, they learn to do new things, and they depend on others to do what they cannot. These doing competencies are outlined for general OD in other parts of this book. Specific ones related to HSD include the following:

- Recognize and describe patterns of emerging dynamics;
- Use a variety of tools and techniques to influence self-organizing processes and to choose among them to fit with the clients' needs and constraints;
- Respect the client system's historical patterns and emerging dynamics as critical to future possibilities;
- Recognize patterns that appear across scales (individual, dyad, team, division, organization, industry, community) and work at multiple scales as necessary to facilitate the self-organizing processes;
- Describe complex human systems dynamics in ways that are meaningful to clients and colleagues; and
- Ask probing questions and listen to and interpret the answers received.

THE LEARNING CONTINUES

The three conditions that constitute the CDE Model (container, difference, and exchange) work together as a complex adaptive system. The three sets of competencies that shape these conditions for OD practitioners (being, knowing, and doing) interact in complex ways to generate self-organized patterns of competence. Each of the competencies influences and is influenced by the others. Identity shapes and is shaped by what one knows and does. Knowledge derives from

the interactions of being in a place and time and acting in the local context. Effective action emerges in a place and time when the conscious consultant brings his or her knowledge into real-time decision making and action taking. The process of learning captures the complex dynamics of simultaneously being, knowing, and doing.

In summary, I think of the complexity-based OD practitioner fundamentally as a learner. My consciousness of myself as a learner establishes who I am in this work and provides a container for the self-organizing processes for myself and my clients. My curiosity about critical distinctions in the work articulates my identity as a learner with regard to the things I know about complexity and my clients' circumstances and forms the differences that make a difference to move my practice forward. Finally, when and what I do is driven by my ongoing learning about what I can do well and about how to do new things to help my clients reap the real-world benefits of their self-organizing processes.

The competent practitioner of human systems dynamics never exists in a single state. He or she is constantly participating in dynamical processes of learning and growing and changing. A list of competencies for professionals in HSD has to be based on fundamentally dynamic assumptions. There is no finite set of competencies that represent the field because the list continues to move forward. There is no one who embodies the perfect HSD practitioner because each of us should be working perpetually toward perfection. As with other self-organizing systems, the goal is to move continually toward a state that makes the most productive and effective use of the opportunities and resources at hand. We must be good learners.

I believe that the list of competencies for a practitioner in the complexities of HSD will never be complete, so the preceding list is not intended to be exhaustive. Also, I believe that it is perfectly possible to be an effective practitioner in HSD with a subset of these competencies, so the competencies on this list are not necessarily required. In my opinion, the only competency that is both sufficient and necessary in HSD is a commitment to continuous learning about theory and practice in the field. With that said, I hope that the list of HSD competencies outlined here will provide some insight and guidance for practitioners who are looking for ways to shape their own HSD learning journeys and those of others.

Many other competencies can (and I assume will) be added to this list. It is certainly not definitive, but it reflects my current understanding of the fundamental competencies that distinguish among those who only know how to talk about human systems dynamics and those who are able to use their knowledge to work effectively in organizations. My fervent hope and reason for sharing this perspective on human systems dynamics is that others will join the journey. The more each of us learns, the more we will all learn, and our competencies as individuals and as professionals will continue to evolve.

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Technology and Organization Development

Soren Kaplan

The author of this chapter is the co-founder of iCohere (www.icohere.com), a software and consulting organization in the business of designing and implementing technologies to enable online communication, collaboration, and community. Although he is an organizational psychologist who formerly led an internal consulting group at Hewlett-Packard Company and who has worked with a variety of Fortune 500, government, and non-profit organizations, the perspective he presents here is not a technical one. Rather than provide an inventory of the tools and technologies provided by specific companies today (which would become outdated immediately), the focus here is on how technology can be used to enable purposeful social processes that can lead to positive change for individuals, groups, and organizations.

With the stunningly rapid adoption of communications and collaboration technologies throughout business, non-profit, educational, and governmental organizations, organization development (OD) practitioners are increasingly asking the following questions:

- What are the different applications of technology in OD?
- How can technology support OD's core values?
- How can practitioners use and provide technology to advance the field?
- In what ways can technology support individual, group, and organizational change?

These questions and other related issues are emerging as central to the future of OD. The literature already recognizes that virtual teams (Lipnack & Stamps, 1997), network organizations (Chisholm, 1998), value networks (Allee, 2002), communities of practice (Wenger & Snyder, 2000), learning communities (Kaplan, 2002), and other organizational models have emerged as a result of technology creating new ways to connect individuals, groups, and organizations. As technology becomes even more ingrained into the fabric of the organizations in which we work, using the Internet and web-based tools to facilitate productive group processes, manage change, and foster learning will become a necessary and natural part of being an effective practitioner. We are at the cusp of a new era in OD. The promise of technology is immense. In the years to come, the effective—and transformational—use of technology in OD will likely become a discipline in its own right, rather than a special topic on the edge of the field.

This chapter provides a framework for understanding the potential role of technology in organization development. *Technology* is defined here as any software tool or Internet-based application that allows for communication, collaboration, and other processes that support OD interventions. A number of case studies and examples illustrate approaches for integrating technology into OD. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the future of technology and OD, a future in which technology does not have to be described as a special tool or optional add-on but rather as a natural part of the change process itself.

THE NEW IMPERATIVE

For the purposes of this chapter, the history of technology in OD starts in the 1980s when dial-up modems were first used to build collaborative social networks. The Meta-Network (www.tmn.com) is one of the first examples of a group of people coming together using computer technology in the OD tradition. This network of people from academia, consulting, and corporations used networking technology to connect together through online bulletin boards to discuss and generate new ideas related to living systems theory, Japanese management, and technology itself. Another seminal virtual community was the Well (www.well.com), a self-described “online gathering place” that emerged in the mid-1980s. As one of the first online communities, the Well became a model for demonstrating the principles of facilitating online discussions and how online collaboration could be linked to face-to-face meetings (Hafner, 2001). Many of the people who participated in these early online networks established norms, roles, and processes for conducting dialogue and work with friends and colleagues who were distributed around the world.

The 1990s saw the proliferation of various groupware and collaboration software tools. Email became ubiquitous, carrying with it new opportunities and possibilities for communication. In the latter 1990s, web-based collaborative software emerged. New tools for group collaboration, online learning, and knowledge management became widely available. With the World Wide Web, people from around the world could communicate and access shared files and information from anywhere at any time through a standard web browser.

Today, organizations of all kinds recognize that, in order to be effective, to deliver value to their customers, consumers, and partners, they must support collaboration, knowledge sharing, and continuous learning. Concepts like the “boundaryless organization” (Ashkenas, Ulrich, Jick, & Kerr, 1995), the “value network” (Allee, 2002), and “network organizations” (Chisholm, 1998) represent new discussions of how to organize in today’s interconnected world.

Global interdependence is now the norm. Connecting people to other people for the purpose of sharing knowledge and creating learning opportunities is the new imperative. Internet-based technologies provide the means for accomplishing this. More and more researchers and OD practitioners recognize the growing importance of technology for the field. In a survey of twenty of the profession’s most recognized OD practitioners, the impact of technology was identified as one of the top three emerging trends in the field (Church, Waclawski, & Berr, 2002). The world of online collaboration is still unfolding, especially when it comes to utilizing such technology in a values- and process-rich domain like OD.

For OD practitioners, it is challenging enough keeping abreast of how various technologies are changing the face of organizations themselves; understanding how existing interventions might be enhanced by technology and sorting through the options for using emerging technologies poses an even greater challenge. Most importantly, as the potential of technology in OD becomes widely recognized, practitioners will need to understand how best to harness the power of technology and the Internet to facilitate specific individual and group processes. Whether redesigning processes to include technology or creating new approaches altogether, designing interventions that utilize collaborative software tools will become a necessary competency for practitioners in the years to come.

SUPPORTING THE VALUES OF OD

For technology to support OD, communication and collaboration tools must align to the values of the field while supporting the kind of group processes that characterize OD approaches. To a certain extent, technology is neutral—when

used in the spirit of collaboration, the motivations, values, and personalities of its users shine through it, whether coming across email, a videoconference, or within an online workspace.

Certain technologies, especially web-based communication and collaboration tools, possess a number of inherent attributes that expand the possibilities for engaging individuals and groups in ways never before possible. Specifically, technology can:

- Connect people together across a community, organization, or broader system who might not otherwise have the opportunity to interact, either as frequently, or at all;
- Provide an expansive, shared context for people to communicate and share information, stories, and personal experiences in a way that builds understanding and empathy and, as a result, creates or deepens respect and appreciation for diverse opinions, capabilities, and perspectives;
- Enable dialogue between people who come together to explore new possibilities, solve challenging problems, and create new mutually beneficial opportunities;
- Introduce collaborative processes to groups and organizations where existing structures and norms inhibit the free flow of ideas and exchange of information;
- Stimulate self-reflection through serving as a vehicle for authentic communication, mentoring, and coaching;
- Capture and diffuse new knowledge that expands awareness of a larger system of human interdependence and enlivens the consciousness of a broader *raison d'être*; and
- Help people organize around purposeful actions that enable and expand the flow of positive thought, feeling, and energy into a changing world—to proactively create organizations that provide purpose and value to their stakeholders.

With the Internet, global dialogue becomes possible. People can join together across time zones and social, economic, political, and cultural divides. When used in the service of positive change, technology becomes a natural support system for the very interventions that OD practitioners use every day—and even opens up new possibilities for introducing new approaches and methodologies. Developments in collaborative technologies have now progressed sufficiently that the opportunity now exists to use technology to extend the impact of OD practice far beyond what was possible just a few years ago.

THE PROMISE OF TECHNOLOGY

Hewlett-Packard (www.hp.com), a global organization with about 100,000 employees, is the world's leader in printing and computing products and services. Knowing that innovation is critical to the future of the company, HP's central R&D group in Palo Alto, California, sponsored an initiative to explore the future of the printing industry.

The first step involved identifying the different workgroups within the company responsible for selling and supporting current printing technology and related supplies as well as those focused on developing future products and services. From the LaserJet group in Boise, Idaho, to the All-in-One multifunction printer group in San Diego, California, to the Inkjet Business Unit in Corvallis, Oregon, to the Large Format Printing Group in Barcelona, Spain, to the Paper Handling group in Guadalajara, Mexico, over twenty different groups were invited to participate in a strategic planning forum at HP's corporate headquarters.

Early on, it was recognized that this meeting represented a unique opportunity to connect groups together that rarely, if ever, shared information, let alone business strategies. At the time in HP, business units were highly decentralized with each unit responsible for its own profit and loss, business strategy, and development plans. As such, each group was asked to prepare a poster-sized representation of its product lines, its markets, and a summary of what the group believed would be the future direction of its technology. Each group prepared a ten-minute presentation based on its poster to share with the larger group.

On entering HP's corporate auditorium, meeting participants were greeted by a montage of colorful posters. Positioned wall-to-wall around the room, this collective view of the printing industry contained the essence of a company-wide vision of the future.

While quite powerful, this view was nevertheless founded on fragmented perspectives that naturally reflected the silos within which they belonged. Some groups were working on the same technology but efforts weren't coordinated. Others were approaching similar markets but in ways that provided conflicting marketing messages to consumers. One thing was apparent—by coordinating efforts it would be possible to create and move forward on strategies that would greatly enhance organizational effectiveness and competitive differentiation. And this was done. After the meeting, an informal network emerged with various technologies (email, collaboration software, shared network drives) supporting sustained communication and collaboration.

Beyond the readily apparent need for greater coordination and collaboration, an incredible insight was achieved by a number of the meeting's attendees. If you looked at HP's company-wide revenues and profit, over 50 percent of the

financial success of the company came from printing supplies, including inkjet cartridges, toner, and printer paper. This being the case, the question was asked: “What business is HP in?” Was HP a computer company, a printer company, or something else? That “something else,” if revenues were the indicator, would suggest that HP might actually be a “supplies” company. Going one step further, if the lion’s share of HP’s revenue came from ink and toner, perhaps that suggested that HP was actually a “chemical” company? And if so, what were the implications for its marketing communications campaigns, risk-mitigation strategies, business strategies, product portfolio strategies, and environmental policies? The original topic—the future of the printing industry—now implied a greater responsibility and importance than could be comprehended prior to the meeting.

This story illustrates two important points. First, the groups at the strategic planning forum ultimately represented a *community of practice*, a collection of business professionals with common individual interests and goals: to advance the practice of printing and printing technology. Although at the conclusion of the meeting, each participant returned to his or her own geographically distinct workgroup, a common affiliation and purpose was recognized, new relationships established, and a network for future communication and collaboration was established to sustain the community’s energy. A substantial literature is emerging that describes the importance of supporting, through technology, communities of practice within and across organizations (Wenger & Snyder, 2000).

The second point is that, without the ability to connect HP’s printing groups together, the transformative thinking and insights (the fact that HP might actually be in a “different business” than originally thought) would not have been as likely to occur. Through creating connections between geographically disparate groups, new discussions became possible—discussions that were grounded in a systems view of the company and that led to breakthroughs for the organization. As a new organizational form, communities of practice may initially emerge without technology—technology, however, may be used to support or even catalyze these communities in organizations, making possible the kind of collective insight that occurred at the HP meeting on a sustained basis—and which would otherwise either be extremely difficult or even impossible to sustain without supporting technology.

SUSTAINING AND EXPANDING ENERGY AND ACTION

A further illustration of the promise of technology is how the tools and methodologies associated with appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987) may evolve in years to come. According to Cooperrider and Whitney (1999), appreciative inquiry (AI):

“Is about the co-evolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the relevant world around them. In its broadest focus, it involves systematic discovery of what gives ‘life’ to a living system when it is most alive, most effective, and most constructively capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. AI involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system’s capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential. It centrally involves the mobilization of inquiry through the crafting of the ‘unconditional positive question’ often involving hundreds or sometimes thousands of people.” (p. 3)

(For additional information about appreciative inquiry, visit <http://connection.cwru.edu/ai/>)

In practice, obtaining answers to unconditional positive questions often involves conducting a cascading set of interviews that may number in the thousands. The stakeholders involved in the change conduct interviews themselves, and, after each interview, the interviewee is provided with the protocol to conduct additional interviews. Appreciative inquiry interviews are typically part of a larger change process and are either preceded or followed by other interventions.

A widely used AI intervention is the appreciative inquiry summit, “a three- to five-day event. . . [with] four elements known as the 4-D cycle: (1) Discovery, describing the best of the organization’s past and present; (2) Dream, a focus on the best of the organization’s potential future; (3) Design, a movement toward framing bold initiatives for change; and (4) Destiny, the forming of action groups for post-summit work.” Because stakeholders across the whole system participate in the summit, the action groups “leave with a sense of excitement, greater trust, and engagement” (Bright & Cooperrider, 2003, p. 11). But like any event-based intervention, without a structure for continuing communication and collaboration, the action groups formed during the Destiny phase of the summit risk losing momentum and focus over time.

Figure 24.1 illustrates the relative level of energy and action that can be achieved and sustained with and without support for action groups, both before and after the AI summit. With support through an online collaborative workspace, it becomes possible to sustain the energy produced by a large group AI summit by affording the groups a structure for communicating, managing their projects, and obtaining training and coaching as they move forward with implementing change.

Exhibit 24.1 provides an example of a collaborative online environment that was developed for this purpose by iCoHere. In addition, specific online events may be used to reconvene the groups to obtain progress reports, identify overlaps and commonalities with their projects, share best practices and lessons learned, and renew commitment to moving forward.

Beyond sustaining energy and momentum through providing online collaboration tools that give structure to the change process, web-based software tools

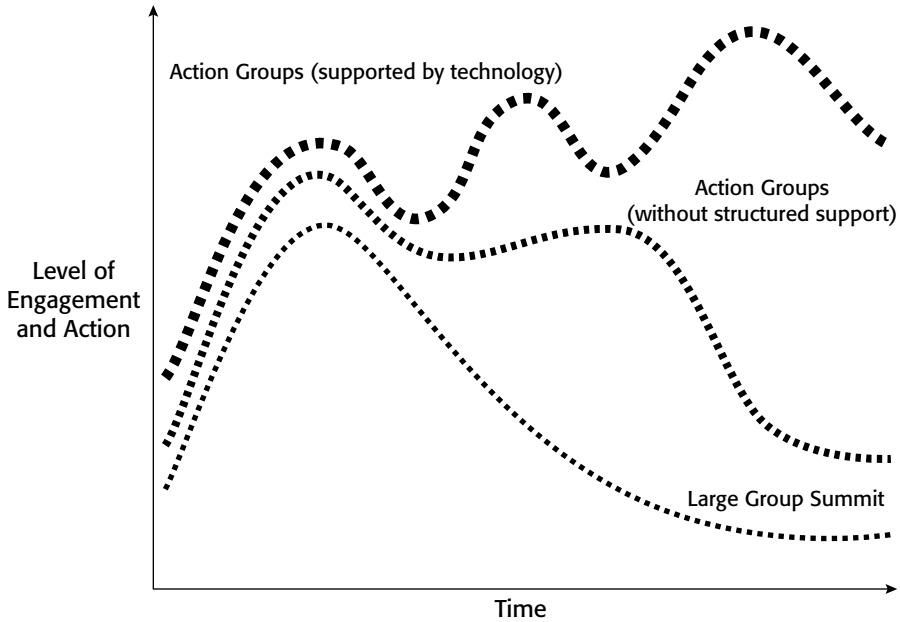
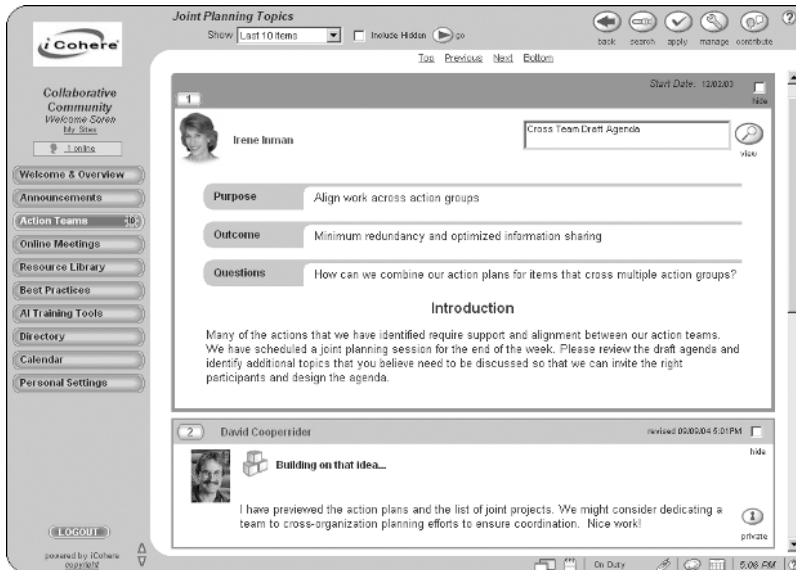


Figure 24.1. Level of Engagement and Action

Exhibit 24.1. A Collaborative Online Environment



can also help capture, organize, and analyze the thousands of appreciative inquiry interviews that are part of the overall process. Without technology, making sense of thousands of interviews, each rich with qualitative data, would be a daunting task. Through using an online interview tool, it becomes possible to provide a vehicle for any and all interviewers, from anywhere and at any time of day or night, to submit their interview data (appreciative stories) and make them instantly available to others to see. It also becomes possible to search, sort, categorize, and prioritize stories, making data analysis and summarization either an individual or collaborative group activity. And because appreciative inquiry utilizes interviews as a fundamental approach for creating change, technology extends the possibilities for broader stakeholder participation, ultimately expanding the impact of the change process.

Like appreciative inquiry, a host of other methodologies can benefit from integrating technology. Some applications involve automating specific tools like surveys and assessments, while others involve broader group process methodologies that support divergent-to-convergent brainstorming and decision making. David Cooperrider, professor at Case Western Reserve University and founder of the appreciative inquiry approach, describes his view of the potential of technology: “When I first explored the potentials of bringing appreciative inquiry and organizational best practices sharing to online communities in businesses and non-profits, I soon came to the conclusion the whole thing—of creating a vibrant, alive, relevant, user friendly virtual space—was a mirage. But no more. I have now seen the future of positive organizational learning, collaboration, and knowledge sharing. It is real. It is exciting. And the potentials are vast” (from www.icohere.com/orgdevelopment_inquiry.htm, 2004).

NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR POSITIVE CHANGE

Today, very little research exists on the role of technology in OD. One recent study (Church, Gilbert, Oliver, Paquet, & Surface, 2002) identifies three primary applications of technology in OD, including:

- Quantitative data-based assessment tools such as employee surveys and 360-degree feedback;
- Management and employee development including career development and online training; and
- Communications, connectivity, and teamwork.

Indeed, technology can enable effective data gathering and analysis, new ways of delivering training programs, and streamlined communication and collaboration between individuals and across groups and organizations. While

various technologies can ultimately help OD practitioners enhance existing approaches and processes, the question remains: How can technology be used to enable and drive truly positive change? Some might argue that, since organizational change requires individuals to personally experience deep personal transformation (Bridges & Mitchell, 2000), technology—being “impersonal”—cannot serve as the catalyst for change, but rather is simply a tool or vehicle for communication and collaboration within the overall process.

Many consultants and trainers facilitate “icebreakers” at the beginning of meetings, with the goal being to establish norms, ground rules, and an esprit de corps among participants. These warm-up activities accelerate a group’s ability to *form*, *storm*, and *norm* so that members are able to more quickly and effectively *perform* the given task at hand (Tuckman, 1965). By using web conferencing technology, online discussions, and conference calls to engage a group in structured introductions and exercises prior to a face-to-face meeting, it becomes possible to accelerate openness, sharing, and collaboration when participants come together in person. Here, technology can be considered a tool to support an existing model and process. Certainly, technology is a tool. But the deeper question is whether the inherent characteristics of technology themselves can begin to enable new possibilities for positive change that would otherwise be unlikely, extremely difficult, or substantially slower to achieve.

A Catalyst for Change

While technology may be used to support existing processes, it can also be used as a catalyst, itself, for creating change. The story of a small non-profit organization demonstrates how the introduction of technology can transform both individual and group behavior. Located in California, this six-person non-profit was led by an executive director who aspired to the highest ideals of mutual respect and cooperation in dealing with his staff and the organization’s clients.

To a remarkable degree, the group was successful in providing a positive, supportive environment for themselves and for those with whom they interacted. There was, however, a problem. The executive director, a skilled and knowledgeable man who shared and, in fact, articulated the ideals of the organization, had a tendency to become so excited about his own insights that he would make unilateral decisions and then inform his executive staff of those decisions in a manner that on the surface invited discussion and collaboration but sent a clear message that the decision was a *fait accompli*. Any attempt at raising alternate considerations or points of view was either lightly dismissed with a chuckle or more often turned aside with an energetic description of the insight that had led to his conclusion that what he was proposing was best for their clients or their staff. Because the executive staff held high ideals of cooperation and did not wish to be seen as confrontational or negative—and because they largely respected the insights and perspective of the director—they simply

harmonized with this style and let the unfolding of events demonstrate any of the weak points of his proposals.

The organization functioned successfully in this way for over a decade until a new board of directors was appointed. One member of the board lived at a distance from the organization's headquarters and from other board members and, having had experience with collaborative online tools, asked that the board and the executive committee start using a web-based workspace to develop the new hiring policies that she was responsible for articulating. The following is what happened, in the words of Helen, one of the members of the executive staff:

"What a surprise it was to use this program for our decision-making process! As we expected, Robert (the director) right away posted his ideas on how our hiring process should be revised. His post conveyed the same sense of excited certainty that he conveys when he meets with us, and several of us felt 'Why bother?' when we read it online. But then I thought about it for a while and decided I would go ahead and chance posting a slightly different view. I did and again, as I expected, Robert immediately posted a rebuff to my suggestion and I figured that was the end of that.

"But then Jonathan, who rarely speaks in our meetings, added a comment that supported the general direction of my idea. Soon two or three others of us began exploring the possibilities of doing things in this alternate way and though we work on the same floor, we found that working online gave us more breathing room to think and articulate our ideas in a helpful way instead of being reactive to Robert or to one another. Using the online workspace enabled a new kind of communication to take place—we really began collaborating with one another."

The consequence for this organization was dramatic: the flow of ideas and the process of decision making—which, solely because of the director's strength of personality and commitment to doing a good job, had *de facto* become hierarchical and unilateral—were freed from the dominance of one enthusiastic person and became a shared and far more creative process. Because Robert—despite his management style and personal blind spots—was sincerely committed to finding the best solutions for his service organization, he quickly began to recognize them as they unfolded in the online exploration. Soon he started to integrate the alternate lines of thinking into his own vision and became all the more appreciative of the results that come from taking the time to listen to others' viewpoints. Helen continues:

"Not only did we revise our hiring policy in a direction that none of us would have expected, but even more importantly, within a month or so Robert began to change his attitude and style in our weekly face-to-face meetings. Somehow, participating in our online dialogue helped him realize that there could be some exciting benefit to sharing his ideas more widely before asking us to act on them—and listening to our responses to his ideas. Before long he even began to do that in his personal interactions with us as well as in our online interactions.

The online interactions opened the door, and he was willing to walk right through it! It was amazing to see that happen so quickly.”

The experience of this organization is somewhat unique because everyone in the organization, including the executive director himself, was already committed to the ideal of cooperation and collaboration, and the director was mature enough, despite his strong personality, to quickly recognize the benefits of listening and collaborating. All he needed was an environment that would allow that to happen—and the collaborative online workspace provided the space to positively shift both individual behavior and group effectiveness.

Another example from a much larger organization is a global technology company in which mid-level managers from the United States, Germany, and Japan would meet periodically to strategize deployment of new products in their respective geographic markets. While these meetings were always amiable and filled with cooperative intent, the Japanese managers rarely contributed to the brainstorming sessions, other than expressing agreement to ideas articulated by their German and American counterparts.

To support ongoing communication between this geographically dispersed group, a collaborative platform with online discussion areas was chosen to keep some of the creative brainstorming alive between face-to-face gatherings. The Japanese managers quickly became active and full participants in these online forums. While we did not determine whether their willingness to participate more fully was due to their greater comfort with written English than with spoken English or whether it was due to cultural differences in communication styles that made the asynchronous mode of posting to a discussion board easier for them, it was unmistakable that the availability of online technology to support group dialogue fostered a level of participation among some of the managers that had emerged in face-to-face gatherings.

Enabling New Possibilities

The Science Education and Literacy Center at Rider University, under the aegis of the Bristol-Myers Squibb Center for Science Teaching and Learning, provides training for math and science teachers. Nationally, 22 percent of new teachers leave the profession during their first three years, often due to lack of support and a “sink or swim” approach to induction (Henke & Zahn, 2001). Rider University’s graduates were no exception. With such a high attrition rate, the university was faced with a number of challenging questions:

- How do you effectively support students *after* they graduate and begin teaching at schools outside of the area?
- How do you build bridges between new graduates and seasoned mentors when they do not live near one another?

- How do you capture and share the accumulating insights and practical strategies of graduates so that the next cohort to enter the field can benefit from the lessons of those who came before them?
- And how do you do all this when the teachers involved are already feeling overwhelmed by demands to develop new lesson plans, grade homework assignments, deal with concerned parents—and feel they don't have time for anything else?

To address these questions, the university created, and now facilitates, an “online community” to foster peer-to-peer and mentor-based support and learning. Those participating in the community include active teachers, pre-service teachers, faculty, school administrators, parents, and members of the community at large interested in science and mathematics education.

Teachers connect with other teachers across school districts to compare experiences and share solutions to common challenges. Mentors from the university's faculty and even outside of the university provide guidance and support. In addition, the collective knowledge of the group is captured, shared, and accessible to all, including prospective teachers who are just entering the program. The benefits of these technology-enabled collaborations are many: greater satisfaction with the center's program, stronger and more productive relationships between teachers themselves, greater teacher effectiveness, and reduced turnover in the field.

Through collaborative technologies, Rider University found a solution for addressing existing challenges while creating a powerful new way to foster personal development and organizational learning—learning that spans the whole system and provides value to stakeholders at all levels. Rider's success is fundamentally a result of the availability of new Internet-based technology, combined with thoughtful community-building strategies and process facilitation (Boots-Ebenfield, Hester, & Kaplan, 2003).

Enhancing Organizational Knowledge and Learning

According to the Institute for Research on Learning (Henschel, 2001), approximately 70 percent of what an employee needs to know for success is learned *outside* of formal training programs. In contrast to “formal knowledge” that includes written protocols, procedures, processes, and policies, informal learning occurs through “water cooler conversations” and other unstructured interactions. Informal social interactions occur continuously throughout the natural course of the day and ultimately provide the basis by which people learn, develop new skills, and grow.

The knowledge management field has labeled the product of informal learning “tacit knowledge” (Von Krogh, Ichijo, Nonaka, & Ichijo, 2000). Tacit knowledge is essentially know-how about “how things really get done around here”

and, ultimately, how to be successful in one's job and the organization. Rider University's online community, for example, provides a structure for informal dialogue between the key stakeholders of the system, which ultimately results in the codification and formalization of informal knowledge from the field. Creating and structuring opportunities for people to network, communicate, mentor, and learn from each other can help capture, formalize, and disseminate tacit knowledge and thus enhance organizational learning and effectiveness.

Technology is increasingly being recognized as an essential tool for fostering and supporting organizational learning and knowledge management. With technology, individuals, teams, workgroups, and business units have access to knowledge and resources from across the organization. By structuring opportunities for capturing and sharing real-time knowledge created during the course of the day, organizations can tap into and build upon the collective wisdom of the organization.

MODELS OF GROUP AND ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION

The model presented in Figure 24.2 helps to clarify the different ways that technology may be used to support work and relationships within and across organizations. The model is based on appreciating differences among groups and communities that lie along a *relationship/task* continuum. Although all groups include both dimensions of relationship and dimensions of task orientation, the relative importance and emphasis on each of these dimensions can vary dramatically depending on the group's purpose and focus.

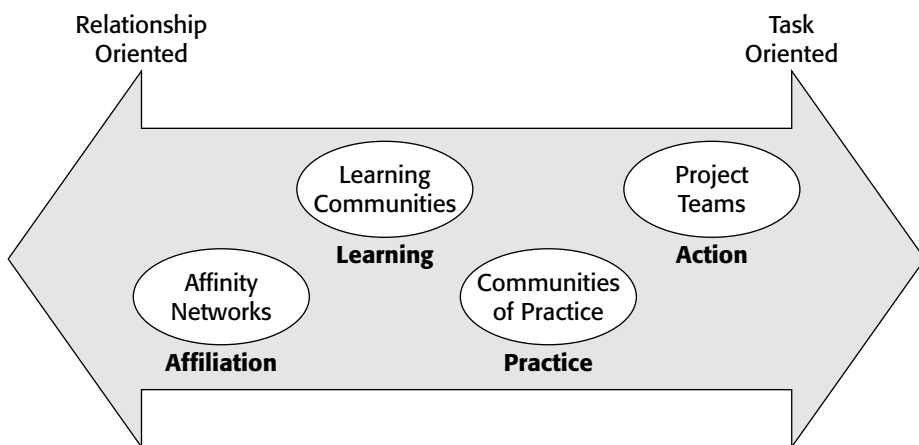


Figure 24.2. Relationship/Task Continuum

The poles of the *relationship/task* continuum are defined as follows:

Relationship: The degree to which personal affiliation with others, including networking, dialogue, and personal connection, represent the basis of cohesion of the group.

Task: The degree to which specific objectives, goals, and outcomes within a defined timeframe represent the basis of cohesion of the group

While by no means mutually exclusive, this model depicts four categories of groups that represent people who come together primarily for any one of four distinct reasons:

- *To affiliate* (affinity networks);
- *To learn* (learning communities);
- *To practice* (communities of practice); and
- *To take action* (project groups).

These groups vary in their orientations toward relationship, learning, and task—all of these groups include each, although their emphases vary. Affinity networks tend to be the most relationship-focused since their existence is predicated primarily on the common personal attributes and preferences of members. Learning communities are focused on a specific learning outcome, with relationship and task a necessary part of achieving individual and group development. Communities of practice represent a relatively equal mix of relationship, learning, and task orientation, while project groups are predominantly task-oriented, although relationships and learning are indeed important for bonding the team together.

Affinity Networks

Affinity networks are groups of people who are drawn together based on one or more shared personal attributes. Their activities are highly relationship-oriented and typically include networking, mentoring, and representing a collective voice in both organizational and external community affairs. While some organizations formally acknowledge and sponsor these groups' activities, when they do not, these networks can emerge on their own.

Professional associations and employee clubs are notable examples of affinity networks. Other examples include "employee associations," such as the ones at Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), which sponsors five employee groups including the Asian, Black, Filipino, Hispanic, and Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual associations. As a strategy to strengthen communications among and between employees and customers, PG&E supports these groups as they volunteer as translators in crises, raise scholarship money for women and

minorities, participate in community outreach, and contribute to PG&E's diversity programs.

Learning Communities

Learning communities are the most closely connected to training and development, or workplace learning and performance (WLP). Learning communities represent groups of learners who may rely on face-to-face and/or online interactions to share experiences and stories and to network and learn from each other over time (Kaplan, 2002). For WLP practitioners, learning communities are one of the best opportunities to create "blended solutions" that connect technology to traditional training and that move learning beyond the corporate classroom.

Often facilitated by a trainer or consultant, these groups may come together prior to and/or after a face-to-face event. The online community provides "context" prior to the event and then allows for mentoring, collaboration, and closure following the in-person gathering. One high-technology company, for example, recently extended its two-day executive leadership training to include, after the face-to-face training, an eight-week online forum for supporting and tracking leaders' progress toward development goals.

Communities of Practice

Communities of practice (CoPs) are groups of people who possess a common interest in sharing, learning about, and advancing a specific domain of knowledge. According to the American Productivity and Quality Center, CoPs "are groups of people who come together to share and to learn from one another face-to-face and virtually. They are held together by a common interest in a body of knowledge and are driven by a desire and need to share problems, experiences, insights, templates, tools, and best practices" (APQC, 2001, p. 8). While some CoPs revolve around specific business functions, others are focused on building and diffusing knowledge across diverse groups of employees, or even across companies.

The virtual learning community at Rider University represents a CoP focused on the support of math and science teachers. A corporate example of a CoP is SBC Communications (www.sbc.com), which provides both in-person training and an online community for almost 2,000 affiliates involved in the sales of its telecommunications services. These key partners integrate SBC's offerings into broader telecom solutions for their clients and, subsequently, require the most current sales, support, and technical resources to be successful. SBC's online community supplements the face-to-face sales and support training offered to its affiliates by providing a secure web-based environment in which partners can access information, surface problems, connect with subject-matter experts, and contribute and share best practices.

Project Groups

Project groups represent groups of people who come together to achieve specific objectives or tasks within a given timeframe. Typically responsible for a set of specific business deliverables, these groups can include virtual teams, cross-organizational programs, committees, and task forces.

The most prevalent type of project group is the virtual team. Gartner Group (www.gartner.com) forecasts that, by 2005, 80 percent of all global knowledge work will be delivered by virtual project teams (Gartner, 1999). Virtual teams are groups of people who work together but are physically apart. Their activities are often time-bound—they come together to accomplish a specific task and, when their objective is met, they disband, with members joining other newly forming project teams.

From a process perspective, the methodology for quickly and efficiently assembling, launching, building, managing, and reallocating virtual team resources is a growing capability critical for most organizations' success in the coming years. In addition, ensuring that new knowledge is captured and shared across teams is essential for enabling organizations to continue to learn from successes and failures.

Any assessment and selection of technology to support one's work should begin with an understanding of the context in which these technologies will be used. Different groups require different supporting processes and technologies. While by no means exhaustive, Table 24.1 summarizes the different types of collaborative groups, outlines the core purpose that bonds each group together, and describes the key supporting processes and technologies that should be considered for supporting the group over time.

SOCIAL AND TECHNICAL ARCHITECTURE

The concepts of social and technical architecture are derived from the principles of sociotechnical systems (Cherns, 1976). *Technical architecture* represents the technology—the specific tools, applications, websites, databases, and so on—that are used for communication, collaboration, online learning, and knowledge management. *Social architecture* includes the norms, roles, values, and group processes that support the use of and interaction with the technology.

Just as with sociotechnical systems where the greatest organizational effectiveness results when the technical system “fits” the social system, so it is true with respect to social and technical architecture—the greater the alignment between the technical and social architectures, the greater the likelihood that the technology will be adopted and used successfully in service of the defined group and organizational goals. Figure 24.3 illustrates the linkages among goals,

Table 24.1. Collaborative Groups

	<i>Affinity Networks</i>	<i>Learning Communities</i>	<i>Communities of Practice</i>	<i>Project Groups</i>
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprised of people who share common characteristics and derive value from building relationships based on their shared interests. Often involves peer mentoring and a structure to help create connections that lead to personal and professional opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprised of people who come together for a single primary purpose—to learn. Participation is usually time-bound and often involves strong guidance or facilitation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically organized around a domain of knowledge or specific content area. Comprised of people focused on sharing information and best practices to solve specific problems and achieve personal and collective results. May spawn project teams to address unique business challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A task-oriented group established to achieve specific objectives. Participation is usually time-bound.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Networking Organizations Associations Employee Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace Learning e-Learning Online Conferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributed business functions (R&D, sales, training, etc.) Cross-company practices (e.g., product development) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual Teams Committees Workgroups Task Forces Programs

Table 24.1. Collaborative Groups

	<i>Affinity Networks</i>	<i>Learning Communities</i>	<i>Communities of Practice</i>	<i>Project Groups</i>
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Affiliation:</i> Self-selection based on personal identification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Learning:</i> Shared development objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Practice:</i> Knowledge building and problem solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Action:</i> Specific goal or deliverable
Key Supporting Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating networking and relationship building • Supporting subgroups and interest group activities • Providing resources appropriate to the specific affiliation • Organizing periodic virtual and face-to-face meetings • Identifying and representing a collective viewpoint in social, organizational, or political arenas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining and providing the right mix of traditional learning methods and technology (e.g., blended learning) to meet the defined learning objectives • Customizing an asynchronous environment that supports individual and group learning • Engaging people in online interactions and facilitating dialogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing formal and ongoing sponsorship for the community • Creating a self-managing environment • Providing opportunities for linking in-person meetings to online activities • Facilitating networking and relationship building • Supporting subgroups and interest group activities • Capturing and transforming knowledge into formal and practical intellectual assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing group norms, roles, and processes • Linking specific work objectives and deliverables to group processes • Linking group processes to supporting technology • Coordinating tasks and group interactions • Monitoring performance and milestones

	<i>Affinity Networks</i>	<i>Learning Communities</i>	<i>Communities of Practice</i>	<i>Project Groups</i>
Key Supporting Technologies	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Community” focused tools including asynchronous discussion areas, chat, etc. • Basic document management • Email • Polls and surveys <p>Supporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synchronous web conferencing tools for periodic online events • Instant messaging 	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synchronous web conferencing tools • Streaming audio and video • Basic document management • Asynchronous discussions • Email <p>Supporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document collaboration • Chat • Instant messaging 	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asynchronous discussion areas • Expert search • Document management • Knowledge management • Email <p>Supporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synchronous web conferencing tools for periodic online events • Document collaboration • Instant messaging 	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project management tools • Workflow tools • Document versioning and management • Synchronous web conferencing tools • Email <p>Supporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calendaring • Instant messaging

social architecture, and technical architecture, including how OD practitioners can go about facilitating the fit between these elements by:

- Confirming the goals of the change;
- Ensuring group processes are selected that support the goals;
- Identifying specific technologies to support the processes; and
- Facilitating processes using these tools to achieve the goals.

The interplay of social and technical architecture should be a dynamic process. While at times a pre-defined group process might drive technology selection, knowing that a given tool is available can also lead to choices in process that might otherwise be overlooked. In our experience, the social architecture is ultimately far more important to the success of collaboration than the technology per se. In other words, while the technology must be easy to use and provide the basic functionality to support a given process, how groups are engaged in using the technology to achieve their goals is the most important success factor of all.

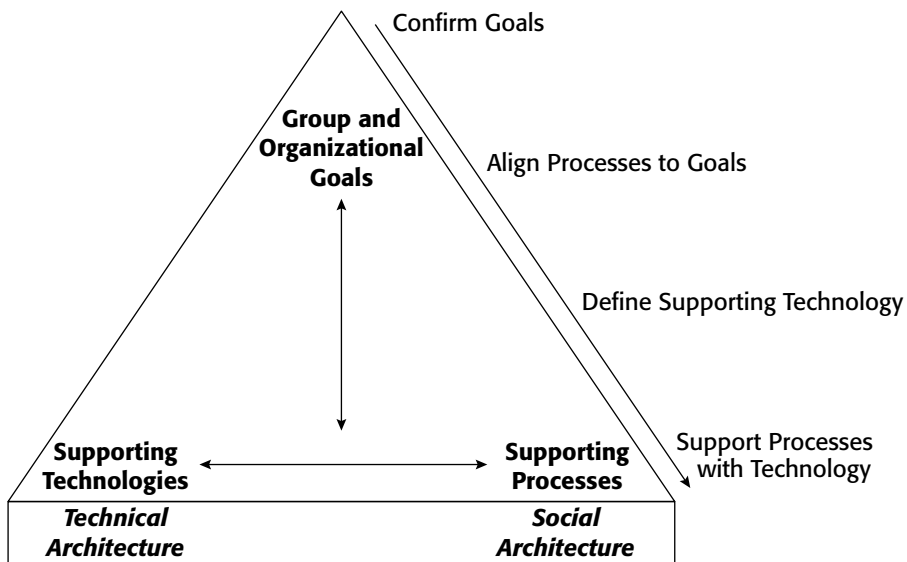


Figure 24.3. Goals, Social Architecture, and Technical Architecture

Technical Architecture

OD practitioners who recognize the enormous impact that collaborative technologies can offer to their work with clients are faced with two opportunities: the first is to move existing processes online by utilizing combinations of these new communication and collaboration tools; the second is to define entirely new interventions and approaches based on the creative possibilities that these tools present. Yet sorting through the growing body of available technology tools can be a daunting task, especially because many of these tools were not designed to facilitate specific group processes per se, but rather serve as platforms for general communication, collaboration, learning, and knowledge management.

Table 24.2 lists a number of websites where additional resources and information about collaborative tools and technologies can be found. To simplify the discussion of potentially useful technology and provide an orientation to these tools as they might serve the needs of OD practitioners, we have divided these tools into two categories: synchronous and asynchronous.

Table 24.2. Online Resources*

<i>Website</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>URL</i>
BRINT	Business technology portal	www.brint.com
Center for Collaborative Organizations	Directory of websites focused on virtual teams, online facilitation, and OD	www.workteams.unt.edu/links.htm
<i>CIO Magazine</i>	Business technology magazine	www.cio.com
Gilgordon.com	Directory of collaboration software and tool providers	www.gilgordon.com/resources/products1.htm
HR-Software.net	HR software directory	www.hr-software.net
KM.Gov	Knowledge management resources including information on communities of practice	www.km.gov
Kolabora	Collaboration technology portal	www.kolabora.com
Learning Circuits	e-Zine focused on online learning	www.learningcircuits.org
Survey Monkey	Directory of online survey tools	www.surveymonkey.com/Pricing.asp

*To obtain access to an online demonstration site that provides examples of tools for team decision support and other group processes, contact the author at soren@icohere.com.

Synchronous Tools

Synchronous tools enable real-time communication and collaboration at the same point in time. The major benefit of synchronous tools is that they are “high touch”—they provide the highest degree of interaction outside of face-to-face meetings. The primary drawback of synchronous tools is that, by definition, they require same-time participation—different time zones and conflicting schedules can create communication challenges. Table 24.3 outlines the most common synchronous tools and technologies.

Asynchronous Tools

Table 24.4 outlines some of the asynchronous tools that are available and that enable communication and collaboration over an extended period of time. These tools allow people to connect together at each person’s own convenience and schedule. Asynchronous tools are useful for sustaining dialogue and collaboration over a period of time and providing people with resources and information

Table 24.3. Synchronous Tools

<i>Tool</i>	<i>Useful for</i>	<i>Drawbacks</i>
Audio Conferencing	Discussions and dialogue	Time zones, especially when international participation is involved; inability to read body language
Web Conferencing	Sharing presentations and information	Bandwidth; may also require audio conferencing to be useful
Video Conferencing	In-depth discussions with higher-touch interactions	Cost; current limited availability of video conferencing systems
Chat	Information sharing of low-complexity issues	Usually requires typing; can feel “slow” to participants
Instant Messaging	Ad hoc quick communications	All users must use compatible system; can feel intrusive
White Boarding	Co-development of ideas	Bandwidth; may also require audio conferencing to be useful
Application Sharing	Co-development of documents	Bandwidth; may also require audio conferencing to be useful

Table 24.4. Asynchronous Tools

<i>Tool</i>	<i>Useful for</i>	<i>Limitations</i>
Discussion Boards	Dialogue that takes place over a period of time	May take longer to arrive at decisions or conclusions
Web Logs (Blogs)	Sharing ideas and comments	May take longer to arrive at decisions or conclusions
Messaging (email)	One-to-one or one-to-many communications	May be misused as a “collaboration tool” and become overwhelming
Streaming Audio	Communicating or teaching	Static and typically does not provide the option to answer questions or expand on ideas
Streaming Video	Communicating or teaching	Static and typically does not provide the option to answer questions or expand on ideas
Narrated Slide Shows	Communicating or teaching	Static and typically do not provide the option to answer questions or expand on ideas
“Learning Objects” (web-based training)	Teaching and training	Typically does not provide the option to answer questions or expand on ideas in detail
Document Libraries	Managing resources	Version control can be an issue unless check-in/check-out functionality is enabled
Databases	Managing information and knowledge	Requires clear definition and skillful administration
Web Books	Teaching and training	Not dynamic and may lose interest of readers
Surveys and Polls	Capturing data and information	Requires clear definition and ongoing coordination
Shared Calendars	Coordinating activities	System compatibility
Website Links	Providing resources and references	May become outdated and “broken”

that are instantly accessible, day or night. Asynchronous tools possess the advantage of being able to involve people from multiple time zones. In addition, asynchronous tools are helpful in capturing the history of the interactions of a group, allowing for collective knowledge to be more easily shared and distributed. The primary drawback of asynchronous technologies is that they require some discipline to use for ongoing communities of practice (for example, people typically must take the initiative to “log in” to participate) and they may feel “impersonal” to those who prefer higher-touch synchronous technologies.

While real-time communication can help foster bursts of intense participation, asynchronous technologies provide the best medium for sustaining collaboration over time (Figallo, 1998). Members can engage with others at the time and place most convenient for them. New members can join the group and quickly understand the context of where the group has been and where it is going. Knowledge is naturally captured and can be shared with others.

There are benefits to, and challenges with, both synchronous and asynchronous tools. The most comprehensive approaches blend tools to create a seamless flow among in-person, synchronous, and asynchronous online processes (for example, periodic face-to-face gatherings followed by regular virtual meetings supported with real-time conferencing tools and an always-accessible collaborative workspace).

A significant step beyond this smorgasbord of individual tools are web-based platforms that aim to provide some or most of the functionality of these stand-alone tools, but do so within a single integrated collaborative environment. The integration and synthesis of these tools creates a container that turns out to be far greater than the sum of its parts and can become the single portal for all activities of a group or change process. Going beyond the hodgepodge of individual tools can elevate the value of technology by encouraging ongoing collaborative learning and knowledge sharing.

The following features and capabilities tend to be shared among integrated, collaborative platforms and distinguish them from mere collections of side-by-side communication and collaboration tools:

Integrated Collaborative Environments

- *Integrated Functionality.* Whereas a wide variety of tools exist and may be used independently, online collaborative environments that integrate functionality serve to streamline communication and collaboration. For example, when creating a shared calendar listing for an upcoming event, one might at the same time also send an announcement to those who are invited to attend, provide a clickable button to RSVP, and attach a map and agenda for the event.
- *Consistency in the User Interface (UI).* Rather than presenting people with a potpourri of tools and user interfaces, integrated online environments

offer rich functionality and a consistent “user experience.” This consistency reduces the learning curve and allows people to communicate quickly and seamlessly using the modes that are appropriate to the issue or task at hand. This is especially important for those individuals less comfortable with using computers and related collaboration tools since one isolated, frustrating experience can lead to a general dismissal of the utility of technology itself.

- *Scalability and Configurability.* Being able to enable or disable features at any time provides the ability to roll out new capabilities as a group’s needs change. By providing a scaled rollout of functionality, people can be led through a process that allows them to learn about new features over time and subsequently receive the necessary training to use them in ways that support the activities of the community.
- *Customization.* Allowing for a high degree of customization, not just in design but also in the terminology used to describe the various administrative and leadership roles, including specific activities and processes, reinforces a distinct sense of identity and purpose.
- *Roles and Identity.* Providing a structure that defines roles and gives a distinct identity to individuals, groups, group leaders, administrators, and so on, allows people to understand how the community will be developed and managed and what their role is in driving success. This includes customizable personal profiles that incorporate photographs, website links, etc.
- *Self-Organization.* Determining and finding a balance between “facilitating” or “managing” the community versus establishing a context in which the community itself takes responsibility for its ongoing organization is one of the more challenging tasks facing the social architect of a community. Since online communities exist to serve their members and will only survive to the extent that the membership finds itself engaged in ways that have obvious value, creating mechanisms for self-organization where appropriate is essential for long-term success. Collaborative platforms typically can be configured to provide designated spaces for self-registration into special-interest groups and topic areas.
- *Activity Tracking.* By providing administrators or other community facilitators with information about who is participating in what ways, it becomes possible to encourage certain people to become more involved, just as in a face-to-face meeting in which a facilitator “draws out” those who may be reserved or “holding back.”
- *Persistence.* Because communications, documents, and the overall experience and knowledge of the group are archived and persist over time,

the group maintains a sense of shared history. Persistence allows people to obtain context for current decisions, helps newcomers assimilate rapidly, and essentially serves as the memory of the community.

- *Training and Support.* Depending on the needs of the community, there is typically a range of training and support options available. Self-service training and support includes streaming media tutorials and online help. Higher-touch training and support is available from certain providers who understand their role not simply to be software vendors, but to serve as consultants to organizations on how technology can be used and how the technical architecture can change to reflect the growth and evolution of the “social architecture” over time.

Integrated collaborative environments are essential for providing that “sense of place” that provides people with a feeling of belonging to a “home base” online. But while connecting within an integrated collaborative environment provides a strong foundation for engaging with others online, facilitating productive online interactions takes a lot more than simply turning on software. It requires a deep understanding of the needs and motivations of members, sensitivity to the appropriate social architecture that will drive participation, and awareness of the connection of measurable results to a group’s goals.

Social Architecture

As previously noted, social architecture includes the norms, roles, values, and group processes that support the use of and interaction with a given technology. Just as any good consultant will facilitate introductions, set expectations, and ensure equal participation, these same approaches can and should be applied in the online world. While differences between online and in-person facilitation definitely exist, many practitioners unnecessarily discount their skills when it comes to facilitating online meetings and building web-based communities for project collaboration, learning, or knowledge sharing. In describing approaches for defining and managing social architecture, we make the distinction between design principles and facilitation strategies. For example:

Design Principles

- *Clearly define roles*—Describe the relationship between the different roles in the community (including the sponsor, facilitator, subgroups, group leaders/facilitators, and individual participants) and outline their responsibilities and interdependencies.
- *Create subgroups*—Create subgroupings of participants who have their own online space for small group learning activities and project collaboration.

- *Support individuality*—Provide a way for participants to create personal profiles that contain their photos and salient information about their backgrounds.
- *Identify technical constraints and enablers*—Every community possesses unique attributes and aspirations. For some, using technology comes second nature, while for others, connecting online may be a significant challenge. Understanding the technical abilities, including available computing resources, bandwidth, and related knowledge is essential to creating a community-building approach that optimizes technology without overextending its utility.
- *Create a technology roadmap that links short-term objectives to long-term goals*—Rather than wait until the “perfect” technical solution is available, practitioners who understand the core technical features necessary for short-term success can start small and move gradually or quickly as the results invite. As time passes, new tools and capabilities may be introduced that further elevate the cooperative potential of the group.
- *Define a roll-out strategy that starts with the core and expands outward*—While a compelling purpose may inspire the desire to “start big,” starting with the “core” and involving selected insiders and key stakeholders may mean the difference between slow versus rapid adoption of the technology. By engaging the opinion leaders, key stakeholders, and sponsors before the rest of the community, it is possible to create “seeds” within a collaborative online environment (for example, information, communications, and other content) that create excitement and immediate interest when introduced to the larger group.
- *Establish roles and processes that support both structured and organic collaboration*—Establishing specific roles to facilitate and promote both formal and informal collaboration creates focused momentum for an online community. However, the trick lies in assessing participants’ motivations and needs to find the right balance between managing and facilitating collaborative processes versus simply creating a context for collaboration to emerge organically.
- *Link participation to measures and rewards*—Establishing measures of success and reward systems tied to reaching goals that must be achieved by using technology can motivate people to try, and then continue to work with various tools.
- *Build feedback loops for continuous learning and adaptation*—Building in communication mechanisms with sponsors, group leaders, and the users of a technology is essential for ongoing success. Feedback loops allow facilitators to do more of what works and less of what does not.

Facilitation Strategies

- *Articulate a cohesive purpose*—A purpose that aspires to transformative results will inspire people to collaborate in ways consistent with the expressed intent and objectives of the community. Enlist the sponsor to clearly articulate the purpose of the community or initiative and how technology supports this purpose.
- *Define compelling benefits at the individual, organizational, and global levels*—Grounding the technology's purpose in practical reality is essential for ensuring that all members' needs are met, short- and long-term. Being conscious to deliver specific benefits to the key stakeholders of the community over time ensures that the group stays true to purpose and focused on tangible results for all.
- *Directly involve formal and informal leaders*—Engaging sponsors, team leaders, and other influencers early in the process demonstrates support for and the value of the technology. When formal and informal leaders directly experience the benefits of the technology, and are then coached to communicate these benefits to others, participation becomes infectious and resistance is replaced by adoption.
- *Establish common values*—Establishing and aligning expectations to shared objectives, including how individuals' online contributions contribute to the greater purpose of the group, helps create an environment characterized by sharing and openness. Collaboratively defining the common values and behavior that will contribute to the overall success of the group also supports operating norms.
- *Establish operating norms*—Provide guidelines for online (and offline) etiquette and obtain agreement on the behavior that will lead to successful group and individual results (for example, everyone logs in three times a week, everyone posts one question and one response on the discussion board).
- *Define standards of conduct to create trust*—While common values will often, themselves, guide collaboration, the sponsor may establish formal boundaries for desired behavior. Espousing copyright adherence for documents, confidentiality of discussions, and other standards of conduct will help set a formal context for trust.
- *Ensure privacy*—People should be ensured that their communications and contributions will be used in the service of the larger group—not provided to or viewed by others for reasons outside the common purpose that bonds the group together.
- *Use events to drive participation*—Providing people with a reason to come together, especially in the beginning, can be critical to the development of

the online community. Online events, either synchronous or asynchronous, give people the impetus to connect together and experience the possibilities of communicating and collaborating through technology. If the experience engages them, they will come back for more.

- *Keep content fresh*—Content, including articles, presentations, white papers, online learning tools, audio, and video clips, can be used as the impetus for greater collaboration. Providing and announcing new information and resources at regular intervals contributes to the overall value of participation.
- *Recognize exemplary members and encourage those who are less active*—Like any reward system, recognition of exemplary behavior sets the standard for the rest of the community. Highlight examples of exemplary collaboration. Summarize the dialogue of the more active participants. And for those less-active members, provide them with a personal message and offer them special support.

THE FUTURE OF TECHNOLOGY AND OD

The future of technology and OD is a bright one. Never before have we had so many options for expanding the impact of our work and enabling the quality of connections that can lead to true learning organizations. And emerging technologies will continue to provide new ways for individuals, groups, and organizations, unconstrained by time zones or geographical dispersion, to communicate, collaborate, learn together, and build new knowledge.

As the Internet, web-based communication and collaboration tools, online learning, and collaborative knowledge-sharing take hold within organizations of all types and sizes, practitioners will face new opportunities and challenges. Church, Gilbert, Oliver, Paquet, and Surface (2002) suggest:

“It is critical that OD professionals are given the appropriate training in IT and technology-related areas to be able to fully understand the implications involved in their implementation and to help apply and communicate to others the importance of this direction for the future of the field (Church, Waclawski, & Berr, 2002; McDonah & Coghlan, 1999). This is one of the many reasons why various practitioners over the past few years have called for change in the very fundamentals of how they train, legitimize, and professionalize OD practitioners as certified for practice. Although the contribution of technology to OD efforts is clearly evident, the opportunities to ensure that these new methodologies and applications are applied in an appropriate and professional manner may well be the next major hurdle for the field.” (p. 507)

Beyond learning to use technology and apply such tools in a professional way, practitioners have the opportunity to establish new approaches at the intersection of technology and process. Increasingly, practitioners will be presented with opportunities to evaluate the utility of technology for supporting existing practices, replacing these practices with more effective models that incorporate technology, or creating entirely new approaches that expand stakeholder involvement and elevate the impact of the intervention through unique combinations of tools. At the center of any of these approaches remains the need to consider how the values of OD can stay a constant in our work.

If ever we as practitioners have needed to transfer our skills and capabilities to our client systems, it is now. Communication tools and technologies are used every day by virtually every function of every organization. As organizations adopt new technologies, many do not consider the social architecture that must be designed into these tools to support effective group processes and organizational learning. As practitioners become more versed in using technology, and as they introduce new tools into their client organizations, there will be a pressing need to transfer new capabilities—to give our clients the experiences, insights, and skills for using technology in ways that honor the importance of and the role of the social systems and processes that ultimately make technology work in the first place.

More and more technologies are designed and supported by people who understand behavioral science and the approaches that support healthy, purposeful group and organizational transformation. Web-based tools for conducting surveys, 360-degree feedback, mind mapping, and brainstorming are already available today. New technologies will emerge in the future that take today's technology-enabled interventions to the next level. Integrated collaborative environments will support a wider range of group processes, data gathering, mentoring, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing activities. These technologies will seamlessly integrate with the individual tools of today while offering broader communications and collaboration capabilities. Practitioners will have the opportunity to customize and morph these tools and their interventions to fit the unique lifecycles of the groups and organizations that they serve.

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The Personhood of the Consultant

The OD Practitioner as Human Being

Robert Tannenbaum with Saul Eisen

In this chapter I will share concepts, ideas, and points of view that I hope will be useful in your practice. I also have a second intention, based on my belief that, to do our work well, we must not only be knowledgeable and skilled professionals, but also self-aware as human beings. The material in this chapter encourages you to observe your own strengths and limitations, consider the emotions and biases that you may sometimes hide from yourself, and learn from noticing the feelings that arise as you work.

I can accomplish my first purpose by speaking to your head; the second by touching your heart. With respect to both objectives, my sincere hope is that you reflect on how the ideas, illustrations, and stories affect you. The method I suggest is to pay attention to the thoughts and feelings that arise as you read my words. You may want to write some journal notes to yourself along the way, or just pause to reflect on how these perspectives are relevant to you. I will also ask some questions to which you may want to respond in your notes.

Since each of us is a human being and not merely a set of concepts, I've created a character and named her Irma Watson. Irma exists only on paper, but she stands for many consultants with whom I have worked and whom I have observed over the years (this could equally be a story about a consultant named Isaac). Let her also stand for you.

IRMA WATSON

Irma Watson always cared about people and wanted to contribute what she could. She realized that she would never be able to change the world, but she wanted to find a profession through which she might do some good. Irma's experience had taught her that our lives are entwined with other people's, with the organizations in which we work, and with the larger society around us. She recognized that improvement for the individual requires improvement of the systems of which they are part.

Irma considered becoming a teacher, a counselor, a consultant, and a manager. Each had its attractions. She learned of a graduate program in organization development that seemed as though it would lead to the work she wanted, and so she signed up.

The program did not disappoint her. Her studies gave focus to what she had read, thought about, and experienced; classes offered new theories, principles, practices, values, and visions. She was part of a diverse group of talented students and also met many senior practitioners in the field, whose experience and knowledge she learned from. When Irma completed the program, she looked forward to practicing as a consultant, although she felt there was so much more to learn.

Over the following years, Irma continued learning. She learned through on-the-job experience, through collaborations with colleagues, through feedback from clients, from further reading, and from attendance at conferences and workshops. As her practice unfolded, Irma racked up her share of successes and of disappointments. Occasionally she wondered, as we all do, whether she belonged in the profession she'd chosen. Despite any doubts, though, she was convinced that individuals and the institutions they're part of can grow; despite any doubts, she knew she wanted to continue doing what she could to facilitate such growth. As year added to year, Irma continued to be a conscientious and responsible consultant, motivated by the sincere desire to help others.

Recently, however, Irma found herself troubled. Something did not seem right. She felt stressed and did not always sleep well. Her desire to help was unabated, but she did not always feel that what she offered was valued by her clients. Sometimes, in the heat of an interaction, she felt growing frustration, even annoyance, and she could become reactive in ways she later recognized as inappropriate. Some people said they had difficulty understanding her; others expressed irritation or anger; she even lost one or two clients.

Irma did not think that the quality of her skill had diminished. Instead she suspected that there were personal issues she'd been unaware of that were affecting her work. So when she saw a brochure for a program titled "The Self as Instrument," she decided to attend.

Toward the beginning of the program, the workshop leader proposed an exercise. She asked each participant to take fifteen minutes to write out a response to the question “Who am I?” Irma thought this would be easy and she began to write: woman, mother, friend, consultant, speaker. . . . Quite suddenly Irma felt tears on her cheeks. When the workshop leader asked Irma what triggered these tears, Irma replied that writing a list of nouns seemed to be the only way she could define herself. “I realized that I saw myself only as the roles I play,” Irma said.

She recognized that she had spent so much time and effort developing her skill in the roles she’d taken on in life, she actually didn’t know *who she was* separate from these roles.

THE SELF AS AN INSTRUMENT IN CHANGE

Irma’s story, while different in details, probably reflects the stories of considerably more than half of the individuals currently practicing as consultants. Through the years, they have primarily devoted their learning efforts to expand and enrich their functions related to conceptual learning and knowledge. Doing so is certainly essential in constantly improving and honing one’s professional effectiveness. And there is so much to become aware of, to study and learn, and then to integrate within one’s total knowledge base. There are new theories, principles, and research findings to which to give one’s attention. There is an ever-growing body of strategies and intervention methods of which one must become aware.

What is frequently under-emphasized in the profession (although it is often given lip service) is the *personhood* of the practitioner as a key variable in achieving professional effectiveness in practice. Head-level learning is not enough. As a consultant, you become the *implementer* of all of that learning as you try to facilitate desired change within the client system with which you are engaged. The phrases “use of self” and “self as instrument,” long used in some change professions, reflect the importance of the *being* of the practitioner in achieving effectiveness in the change process. This point was emphasized by Linder (1956), a psychoanalyst, when he wrote: “It is the analyst’s own person which is the single instrument, the only tool, with which he performs. Only on himself, and on nothing else, does he depend.” This statement also applies to all human systems change specialists.

As you interact with each client system, you must engage your awareness of self as well as all your integrated knowledge relevant to the consulting task. Both are critical to your effectiveness in practice. If you primarily bring with you cognitive knowledge, or primarily your sense of self, you will be sorely limited

as a practitioner. You will be imbalanced and not whole. This imbalance has clear relevance to your professional role, but it also has relevance to your very being.

Emerging from this balanced use of cognitive and feeling functions, there are three elements that must interact appropriately in your consulting process: *awareness*, *perception*, and *behavior* (see Figure 25.1). To select the most appropriate consulting intervention, you must have the capacity to perceive accurately and fully what is going on in the client's world. And your ability to perceive and understand your client's behavior and experience is partly based on your access to your own inner awareness and experience, including your feelings. Conversely, when your own inner world is blocked, or unavailable to you, or when aspects of your inner self are at odds with each other (especially if this struggle is out of awareness), it becomes much more difficult to perceive interaction events accurately, and your intervention choices become more limited, inappropriate, and ineffective. You are then forced to rely on formulaic approaches, concepts, and techniques. At best, you are a good technician, but there is little responsiveness to the complex unfolding interpersonal, group, and organization dynamics in the client situation.

In the case of Irma, her history of learning primarily had a cognitive emphasis. In this context, it might be said that she was well-prepared for the profession, and her accumulated knowledge had served her reasonably well—although she did have her problems, both professionally and personally. As related in the story, she wasn't always successful; she had her detractors; she experienced stress. These are normal to the consulting experience. But she increasingly had a feeling that some things within herself were getting in her way. At times she felt like an automaton, following theories, strategies, how-to-do-its that were in her head but not in her being. She felt inauthentic, lonely, and out of touch with herself. The tears that first rolled down her cheeks and the sobbing that followed were signals that her deeper, often unaccepted, feelings were rising into awareness and were no longer being repressed. She was on her way to becoming a more integral person and a more effective consultant.

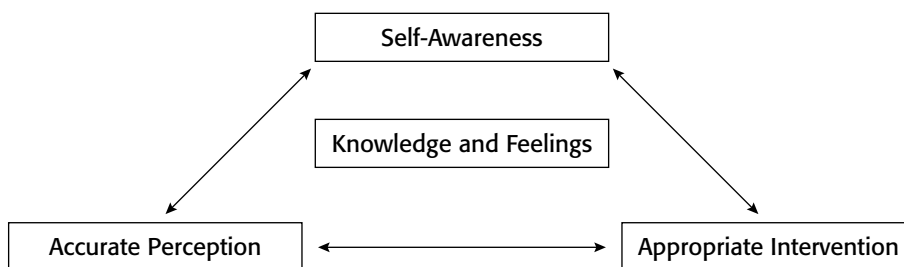


Figure 25.1. A Model of Self-As-Instrument

HOW PRACTITIONERS CAN GET IN THEIR OWN WAY

In my own practice working with consultants, I have become aware of a number of personal and often unresolved problems that can haunt these practitioners. No consultant is confronted by all of these issues, but all are plagued by at least some.

I will list and discuss a number of the major personal issues that, when unresolved by practitioners, can adversely impact their effectiveness. As each of these items primarily involves feelings, some general observations can provide a useful context for the specifics to follow.

Feelings: A Context

Having feelings is a basic aspect of being alive; feelings give color and dimension to our thoughts and actions. Without them, our experiencing of the world would be without flavor. But feelings can be powerful, exciting, or disturbing, and most people experience some problems with them. Starting in childhood, we develop the ability to ignore, and then to become unaware of, our own feelings. Sometimes we may be sad but are unaware of that sadness. Or even though we are aware of a feeling, we may be unable or unwilling to share our experiencing of it with others. For example, we may feel demeaned and be aware of it, but we put on a mask to hide the feeling from others. When we do, we are not of one piece. We do not experience ourselves as whole, and we are unable or choose not to be whole in the presence of others.

During a counseling interview with a client (a top-level executive), tears began rolling down his face. After some embarrassment, he controlled the flow. He then said to the consultant, “You know, Irma, I don’t remember crying like this since I was five years old.” Another client, in a somewhat similar situation, blurted out “You won’t believe this, but this is the first time I have ever cried.” Irma reported that she has experienced a number of other instances like these two.

No person fully knows himself or herself, although individuals differ as to the intent and depth of their not knowing. Consultants and their clients are no exception. Consider this in terms of the now-classic Johari Window (Luft, 1984). (See Figure 25.2.) As consultants, we may be called on to give clients useful feedback—information about their behavior that may not be known to them, but known to their associates and to us. We may similarly give feedback to a team or larger unit based on information we have gathered about them and their impact on others. We may simply make information public that team members tend to exchange privately, but not in a public forum where it can be worked on. In this sense, we help clients to move relevant information from their private selves into their public selves. We similarly help them to remove blind spots about their own behavior and its impact on others—either in terms of interpersonal and inter-group relationships, or in terms of functional,

	Known to Self	Unknown to Self
Known to Others	Quadrant 1 PUBLIC/OPEN	Quadrant 2 BLIND
Unknown to Others	Quadrant 3 PRIVATE/HIDDEN	Quadrant 4 BURIED/UNDISCOVERED

Figure 25.2. The Johari Window

task-related impacts. Once this kind of information enters the shared public environment, clients are empowered to do more effective problem solving or work redesign to improve their own work situations.

This describes our work with clients' Johari selves. But in order for you as a consultant to help clients with this work, your own Johari selves become involved. If your clients have dysfunctional patterns of behavior, they are likely to affect you as much as others in their organization. Your decision to communicate your observations to them requires that you share material from your own private self—not only what you observe in their interactions, but sometimes also how your client's behavior affects you, the consultant. Such interventions can feel risky to you. What is more, if you don't have a clear awareness of your inner reactions, because the experience is not in your private but your buried self, then the choice is not even available to you. What you do know is that something is eating at you; you don't like it, you don't understand it, and you don't know what to do about it. This can only make you less effective as a consultant and less whole as a person. It can sometimes put you at risk of reacting inappropriately to a client's behavior—creating possible harm to the client, the relationship, and yourself.

In using your self as an instrument of change, it is thus important that you recognize that the instrument has its limitations and needs periodic adjustment and calibration. Elements unknown to your self can strongly influence your view of data, decisions taken, the nature of your motivations, your actions, and more—with “the right hand not knowing what the left hand is doing.” In such circumstances, you are at the mercy of your not-knowing, of your being unaware.

As a consultant, your private self is a repository for elements that you choose to hide from others. Your motivations for hiding may be many, for example,

guilt, shame, embarrassment, and desire for privacy. You may hide elements that are irrelevant to the consultation. But when you hide relevant elements—particularly when you do so to protect yourself—you clearly are meeting your own needs and not those of the client. Furthermore, working with clients effectively requires being aware of subtle, minimal cues, drawing inferences, and doing sensitive hunching. The less you are plagued by inner unresolved issues, the more attention you can give to the process of better understanding and working with your client. As we will see, this is not a one-time clearing out process, but part of the ongoing work of being a consultant—and a person.

Let us consider now some of the major issues with which consultants—and others—often struggle.

Self-Esteem and Self-Worth

Very often, these two terms are used interchangeably. Years ago, a colleague, Alvin Lasko, preferred to give a different meaning to each term, and I find Al's terminology useful. To him, self-esteem should refer to positive feelings about self that are generated by inputs or rewards from others: presentations, titles, praise, prizes, favorable publicity, and so forth. When people receive such rewards, these help to bolster their egos. But they can become addicted to these rewards, wanting more and more. Over time, enough is never enough because what they really yearn for from others is love for who they are and not for what they produce or accomplish.

Many active people seem to be caught in a maddening rat race. Every minute of the day is filled; spouses and children are slighted; time for rest, relaxation, and diversion is limited; work demands must be met; it is go, go, go. At times this is experienced as madness, and many would agree that it is. What makes Johnnie run? Part of the explanation may be this need for external rewards, which doesn't really satisfy the real inner yearning—they get the temporary fix of self-esteem, but not the abiding knowledge of self-worth.

Whereas *self-esteem* is rooted in positive inputs that come from outside ourselves, *self-worth* is rooted in positive feelings that we have for our inner being. We feel good about ourselves. We like what we experience within ourselves. We sense that we are reasonably whole. If we have self-esteem, it is because others tell us that we are OK. However, if we have a sense of self-worth, it is because we know deep down within ourselves that we are OK. In the former instance, we are outer-directed; in the latter, we are inner-directed. Where do you sense you are on this continuum? How does this affect your ways of working with clients?

Insecurity About Insecurity

Low self-esteem and low self-worth are often referred to as self-doubt or insecurity. My colleagues and I would frequently use an exercise involving self-doubt with participants in our executive program and doctoral seminars, all of

whom had exemplary records of high competence and attainment. The results were counterintuitive and quite surprising. We would begin by presenting and discussing the Johari Window. Next, we would ask each participant to take out a blank sheet of paper for writing, telling them, “Include no names on papers” and “Don’t write anything that would identify you as the writer.” We asked them to focus on their own *Hidden Self*, and then to list on the sheet of paper the three most powerful or central aspects of self that they have kept hidden at least from most others. If you have not experienced this activity, this might be a good time to stop reading for a few minutes and write your own responses to this question.

After the group would finish writing, we would collect the papers, shuffle them (again for anonymity) and then read them back for all to hear. In program after program and seminar after seminar, the results were almost always the same: From two-thirds to three-fourths of the items listed would fall under the heading of self-doubt. For example: “If others knew about me what I know about myself, the jig would be up.” “When is my house of cards going to collapse? I’m really a phony.” During the debriefing conversations following this activity, some would say, “At the start of this program I thought I was the only one who doesn’t really belong here; I thought everyone was as self-confident as they appear. Now I realize most of us carry such feelings, even if we’re competent and successful.”

Yes, the masks do hide some quite unexpected realities. I believe it is important that practitioners be aware of this with respect to many of their clients—those highly competent and successful others—and also that they as consultants know they are not alone in carrying troublesome feelings of self-doubt. In today’s complex and demanding world, no one is impervious from feelings of anxiety and insecurity. But if you become trapped behind your own facade, always hiding your own feelings of insecurity from yourself and others, you become a prisoner of your own deceit, and you cannot help your clients come to terms with their own insecurities. How do you deal with your own feelings of insecurity when they arise? And how does this affect your work with clients?

Blindness to One’s Strengths

Ironically, many individuals also tend to hide some of their known-to-self strengths from others, and they also can be unaware of additional potential strengths within themselves. It has been my experience in sensitivity training groups that, even after trust has been established, many participants can more readily share their known flat sides with others than they can some of their known hidden strengths. Joseph, a typical participant, wondered, “If I tell them I am a good group leader, they may expect me to take over, and I’m not sure I can meet their expectations.” Or Maryann may think, “If I say to them that I am a sensitive person, they may think that I am a cocky person, displaying myself in front of them.”

It is one thing to be aware of one's strengths and not to be open about them. But it is another not even to be aware of some of one's talents. After all, Grandma Moses didn't begin painting until her later years. Even genius may be wasted; it is known that Albert Einstein, in an early class in arithmetic, had a teacher who belittled his performance. What if he had not become a physicist? I have been saddened to see practitioners and interns who have so much more to offer than those possibilities of which they are presently aware. How comfortable are you with acknowledging and engaging your own strengths in your client work?

Discomfort with Intimacy

As two individuals relate to one another, the question arises (often without awareness), "How close can I let myself get to this other person?" It is interesting to observe two people shaking hands. This social custom, in one instance, is acted out by hand contact with arms fairly stiff, then a bending of the elbows until the parties are relatively physically close to each other, then one of the persons disengages and puts his hand on the other person's shoulder, then they might embrace. Another instance starts out the same, but then the arms are held straight out and remain stiff. Implicitly, the message is, "Don't come any closer to me." Near or far (or something in between); that is the question. Closeness or distance can involve mental, physical, or emotional issues. Many factors can enter into the consultant's preference for or dislike of intimacy. Knowing what the factors are can give you a better understanding of yourself and more choice in your work with others. Without this awareness and choice, you may tend to interact with clients or associates in ways that are limited by your own assumptions, attitudes, or apprehensions. What concerns emerge for you as you develop an appropriate interpersonal distance/closeness with clients? How flexible are you about this with different clients or at different stages in your work with them?

Anger

In many cultures, the experience of anger within a person, and its expression or its control, involve frequent challenges for all of us, but particularly for males. Perhaps the centrality of our concern about anger stems from the possibility of its getting out of control, becoming hurtful, violent, and destructive. Most of us are fearful of anger—our own and that of others. In one of the workshops I have done many times, one exercise involves a gymnasium "horse." Participants are asked to come up to the horse, one at a time, with a length of garden hose in each hand. They are asked to imagine the horse as a person in their life (often a parent) around whom they have a lot of anger. When they get in the mood, they are asked to start beating the horse with the hoses, while at the same time talking or yelling at the "person," expressing the feelings they are carrying inside. In many cases, the beating gets more rapid and more powerful, and the words screamed move toward invective and often hatred. At the end of the

beating, many people will express surprise at the power of their own anger. “I never knew I was carrying so much inside.”

During the exercise, other participants are informally sitting around the horse, observing and experiencing, with an important exception. Typically, there are a very few who are in a fetal-like position—sitting, bent over from the waist, arms held tightly around the knees. Often their bodies shake, and they are crying. When the exercise ends and there is a sharing of what has been experienced, these individuals will report that they were terrified, that they just couldn’t take it. “I was ready to run out of the room. Now I am puzzled and embarrassed. Everything was perfectly safe; no one was in danger. And yet I cringed and shook. Where did that come from?”

Experiences like the above have counterparts in the world of the practitioner: Irma had on a number of occasions observed her client at work and was now approaching his office to give him what she knew was quite critical feedback. Her heart pounded, and her hands were sticky. She knew her client needed to hear the truth and that it would be very difficult for him to hear what she had to say. Perhaps he would become defensive or angry. As she later walked away from the client’s office, she was really down on herself. She was quite aware that she had panicked. She had wanted to be appropriately confronting, firm, honest, straight. Instead, she had watered down her message, rounded off all the sharp edges, minimized the importance of what she wanted to say, and even at times smiled when she wanted to be serious. “There I did it again! Why does this seem to happen so often?”

The experience and expression of anger is very problematic for many of us. We learn early on to avoid it when possible—to deny feeling it, avoid expressing it, except in extreme circumstances, when repeated provocation finally merits it. Then it comes out in explosive, out-of-control ways, often out of proportion to the triggering circumstance. Most people have little experience or skill with the appropriate expression of anger or the appropriate response to someone else’s anger. How comfortable are you with anger? Do you tend to avoid expressing it? And when you are on the receiving end, do you generally tend to retaliate and escalate or to accommodate and capitulate? Or are you able to respond in different ways, appropriate to the circumstance?

Tolerance for Ambiguity

For many years, the importance of effective listening has been emphasized in training programs and books directed at consultants, managers, counselors, teachers, and many other practitioners. We are told that, to be effective listeners, we should let the person being listened to keep responsibility for the content, direction of flow, and pace of the process. With a few exceptions, we should stay out of the way. However, to follow this guideline, you may encounter at least one or two typical problems:

1. Staying out of the way can be difficult if not impossible. There is such a strong need on the part of the consultant to determine the subject matter to be discussed and the time that should be given to each item, to evaluate what is said, to give advice, and so forth; in short, you experience a need to be in control.
2. The persons being listened to will at times stop talking; thus there will be periods of silence. They in fact may be quite involved with thoughts or feelings—or they may be temporarily blocked. Most often, much that is important to them may be masked by their silence. Nevertheless, you may become uncomfortable with the silence and have a strong need to say something. A silence confronts you with ambiguity where there are no cues as to what is going on. If you have a low tolerance for ambiguity, you may intervene, just in hopes that something will happen.

The need to be in control in the first instance, and the intolerance of ambiguity in the second, both impel you toward meeting your own needs, rather than making it possible for the other to be where he or she wants to be. Unaware of your own needs, yet unconsciously being driven by them, can lead you as practitioner to ineffective behavior. How comfortable are you with the complexity and ambiguity of client interactions? Do you sometimes find yourself reacting by taking charge and giving advice when your clients may just be wanting to think something through?

Awareness of One's Biases

Seeing accurately is central to a consultant's effectiveness. Much of the work of consultants requires that we accurately perceive the data available to us so that we can act appropriately in light of what those data tell us. Most textbooks and manuals give much attention to the functions of data collection and diagnosis. However, the information provided by these functions need interpretation, and this means that it must be given meaning by the consultant. You are the intermediary between new data and emergent meaning. (The concept *perception* is often used to refer to this process of giving meaning to that which one becomes aware of through the senses.) That emergent meaning, however, can be distorted by some of the lenses through which the raw material must pass. When you are unaware of faulty lenses, you can get in real trouble. Your blind spots, your biases, your prejudices can be your undoing; you will be seeing what you are programmed to see, what you want or need to see, and will not see what you do not want to or cannot let yourself see.

An example may be of help here: In our working with groups of practitioner-interns, we have at times introduced what has been called the rumor clinic experiment. To start the exercise, we ask five subjects to leave the room. We

then project a drawing of a scene inside a subway car, in which there are individuals doing different things. One person is reading a newspaper, and other individuals are variously involved. One person is a tall, handsome, well-dressed black man; the other is in working-man's clothes, is white, and has a knife in one of his hands. We ask the remaining group members to share with each other what each sees in the picture. After this, we have the first subject return to the room, look at the picture, and tell the rest of us in the room what he or she sees in it. Then we turn off the projection and bring in the second subject. We ask the first person to tell the second what is in the picture; then the second tells the third, the third the fourth, and the fourth the fifth, and then the fifth retells it to the first.

Some interesting things typically happen during this exercise. In a few instances, the first person who comes in and looks at the picture will describe it in minute detail, except for the knife in the hand of the white man. In something over 50 percent of the runnings of this exercise, at some point in the retelling of the story the instrument shifts hands from the white man to the black man. In one case, a person said, "To really understand what we see here, it is obvious to me that we have to go back in time. What clearly happened is that the black man got into the car carrying the knife, and began going down the aisle slitting the leather seats with it. The white man is the motor-man of the car. He couldn't let this continue to happen, so he took the knife away from the black man. That is what we now see."

In this exercise some individuals have to deal with conscious or unconscious perceptions that are contrary to their deeper beliefs or attitudes. Some just don't see what is there. Others change the situation in their minds. A few others build a story going back in time that makes them comfortable with what they see, as said before. Each one of us has within our unknown-to-self areas elements that can block out or distort what we receive via our senses, a meaning not consonant with what is out there. If we, as consultants, don't become aware of any distorting elements and learn to deal adequately with them, our effectiveness at work can be seriously reduced. What subtle biases do you carry about skin color, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, or social class? And when you are aware of these vulnerabilities in your own perception, are you able to correct for them, to look with a fresh eye at the situation, and to act appropriately toward the client's desired outcomes?

THE QUEST FOR SELF-AWARENESS AND SELF-UNDERSTANDING

For the practitioner, becoming increasingly aware of self presents a continuing, never-ending challenge—a commitment to lifetime learning. No one ever becomes fully whole—at least for long. There are always unanswered questions,

new versions of longstanding issues, the receipt of unexpected inputs, different ways of viewing one's world, and so much more. At times, the challenges may seem overwhelming and the processes of working through them may be painful. And yet, life would be quite dull and boring if everything were always fully in place and well understood.

There is no single pathway leading to increased self-awareness, no list of five (or seven, or ten) steps to be taken in order to arrive at the promised land; no garment that fits all sizes. What works for one person may not work for another; each person must find her or his own way. Doing so involves searching, experimenting, and testing personal hypotheses and hunches. And perhaps most importantly, it involves being open to data available to one in the world outside of one's self and also to data available to one from inside one's self. Being open requires that you not get locked into long-held views or explanations of "who I am and why I am that way." Doing so can close the door to alternative possibilities and new learning. James Baldwin (1961), in his *Nobody Knows My Name*, captured this truth exceedingly well:

"Any real change implies the breakup of the world, as one has always known it; the loss of all that gave one identity, the end of safety. And at such a moment, unable to see and not daring to imagine what the future will now bring forth, one clings to what one knew, or thought one knew; to what one possessed or dreamed that one possessed. Yet, it is only when a man is able, without bitterness or self-pity, to surrender a dream he has long cherished or a privilege he has long possessed that he is set free—he has set himself free—for higher dreams, for greater privileges."

Once Again: Feelings

In the quest for self, our feelings can often be our best companions, allies, and friends. They can tell us when there are inner conflicts, unexplored personal potentials and dark sides possibly available for confrontation, or light to be shed on some troublesome personal issues. Irma Watson's sobbing, her sense of being an automaton, her unease around not being whole nor authentic—these could be ignored or repressed, or they could be paid attention to as signals for further exploration and, hopefully, understanding.

A case at this point may be helpful in highlighting how feelings can be useful in furthering self-understanding:

Sam had, through the years, built a quite successful consulting practice. He was admired by his colleagues and valued by his clients. A commitment to personal learning had certainly contributed to his increasing professional effectiveness, but there was still so much that puzzled him about himself. One issue in particular often raised its troublesome head. Most everyone saw Sam as a gentle, understanding, considerate, and supportive person. He even had a good sense of

humor. But increasingly in his hidden self, Sam was able to accept the reality that he was also an angry man. True, he almost always was able to keep the anger under control. Occasionally, however, it would break through, most often being vented on his wife, children, and a very close friend (Doc, a clinical psychologist)—individuals whom he most loved and who loved him.

One weekend, Sam and his dear friend went to Sam's mountain cabin for a relaxing time of hiking, fishing, eating—and talk. During one of their sharing sessions, Doc mentioned his experiencing of Sam's anger: Sam's selective venting of it as well as his typical use of a mask to hide it from most others. At last Sam felt himself ready to confront this issue, and so they talked well into the early morning hours.

The interchange became deeper when Doc asked Sam whether he got mad regardless of what others said to him or did. Sam said, "Of course not." Doc next asked, "Then what does another person say or do that can hook or key off your anger?" This was a sensible question, but Sam had never thought to ask it of himself. During much give and take, Sam realized that what most often provoked his anger was when another person criticized or depreciated something he had done. He certainly didn't experience anger when he was praised or valued, nor in many other situations. Doc shared with Sam a concept that he had found useful for himself and others: if A then B—where A is the stimulus and B (in this case) is the upsurge of anger. "The learning challenge is to discover the A that hooks the B; and then, through some in-depth exploration, to try to determine the early genesis of this particular if A then B pattern." Sam, with Doc's help, remembered a demanding and demeaning mother for whom enough was never enough. Through those early formative years, Sam felt much anger toward his mother, but was not able to express it openly; instead he played the role of the "good boy" while the anger festered inside. Now, at a much later age, whenever another person puts Sam down, he experiences anger. But the cause of the anger is really the memory of his mother's behavior rather than that of the here-and-now situation.

Doc pointed out that this process they had shared was one of consciousness-raising—becoming aware of the early root of a current problem and raising it to awareness. He told Sam that, as he became more and more deeply aware of this repetitive pattern of "if A then B" and its root, he would develop the ability to deal with his anger in the here-and-now. When he experienced the surge of anger, he would be aware that its expression didn't belong in the current transaction. He wouldn't continue to play old tapes. Doc closed out the session with a friendly suggestion to Sam, "In your ongoing efforts to become more aware of who you are, your feelings can be your best friend. They often can tell you or lead you toward what you want to know more deeply about yourself."

One of the basic needs of newborn children is to receive unconditional love—love for their essence, their being. And this is what they typically receive early on. But often this parent/child dynamic gradually begins to change. The giving of conditional love increasingly enters the picture. Love is given to the child

conditionally by the parents: “If you do what I want you to do and/or avoid doing what I don’t want you to do, I will love you.” When the child does what pleases the parent, rewards are forthcoming: approval, expressed pleasure and pride, a bottle or cookie, being held, and so forth. When the child doesn’t meet the parent’s expectations, there are evidences of displeasure: irritation, frustration, anger, isolation, even spanking. As time goes on, most children receive less and less unconditional love (for which they deeply yearn) and more and more conditional love (the payoff for meeting the needs of others). They increasingly learn that they are rewarded (or punished) for what they do—and not for who they are as individual persons. So they continue trying to please others by what they produce or accomplish. They settle for second-best since they rarely get what they most desire.

Freddie, a young boy, may become involved with his new Lego® pieces and builds a bridge (a similar story could be told about a young girl). He’s pleased with his accomplishments and hopes that his father will be too. So when his father arrives home for dinner, he rushes over to him and says: “Daddy, come and see what I’ve done.” His father follows him into the den, where he examines the newly built structure. After a few minutes, he says, “Nice job, Freddie, but we can do a few things to make it better.” He then gets down on the floor and proceeds to make the improvements. Freddie is disappointed, but he swallows his feelings. He thinks, “I tried so hard, but it wasn’t good enough.”

Freddie goes on to grammar school. At the end of the term, he brings home a report card with three C’s and two B’s. His parents seem pleased, but Mother says, “You’re doing fine, Freddie, but maybe next semester you can bring home all B’s.” The boy is saddened, “Why don’t they see how hard I am trying?” The next term he brings home all B’s. Mother again seems pleased, and says, “You are making progress, Freddie. Next term we’d like to see some A’s.” And so it goes. Freddie does want to please his parents; if he could, maybe then they would love him.

The pattern continues into middle school and high school. Freddie tries to make the honor society, the football team, a part in the annual play, and so much more—establishing a record that will get him recognition and entrance into a good university. He continues to be caught up in the “enough-is-never-enough” syndrome. Freddie wonders, “Why is there always something more?” He succeeds in being selected for study at one of the country’s best universities, and the syndrome continues to repeat itself. As a result, Freddie looks forward to building a record that will get him into graduate school.

After finishing with the university, Fred is employed by a top research and development organization. But he soon learns the realities of the marketplace. To make it there—please one’s boss, be given good evaluations, get promotions and salary increases—he has to play the motivation game to get ahead, discover what the significant others want and expect from him (as well as what they don’t want and expect). Fred, like so many others, learned this game well; and he played it so successfully that after twenty years he became CEO.

This story suggests one formula for possible success and in one sense it is a viable one. Be a good boy or girl, please others, and experience the rewards. Sad, but true, this formula provides the most widely relied on motivational strategy employed in the United States and many other cultures—in parenting, in teaching, in supervising, and even in many interpersonal relationships. From the point of view of the motivator, this strategy can be a highly effective one. However, the individuals who have been raised on conditional love have paid an unbelievable human price for succumbing to this motivational system.

I have already discussed the pervasiveness of feelings of self-doubt, even among highly successful executives and doctoral students. In working in depth with these individuals, I have seen most of them caught up in this enough-is-never-enough syndrome. From early childhood, and particularly with perfectionist parents, their performance typically was not good enough. The implicit learning for them was: “I’m not good enough; there must be something wrong with me.” As a result, they hide from others their feelings of self-doubt and keep trying to prove to themselves and to others that they are OK. They, too, become perfectionists, and they, too, use the conditional motivation strategy with others.

Irma Watson reached a point in her life where she sensed that she didn’t really know who she was. Many consultants—and others—struggle with this same issue. In my judgment, the roots of not knowing oneself are to be found in the pervasiveness of conditional love. Many individuals have learned well that they are valued in life for what others want them to be and to do, rather than for their own personhood. Thus, they have become alienated from their true selves and unaware of who they really are.

It is important for practitioners to become aware of how much they have lost themselves and why. If this pattern is part of your own experience, it may be useful to explore and better understand the genesis of your own self-doubts and your current attitude about them. With this additional insight into yourself, you will also realize that those with whom you consult are also likely to be beset with feelings of self-doubt and of alienation from self. (For two excellent guides to the inner self, see *The Human Element* by Will Schutz [1994] and *Type Talk* by Kroeger and Thuesen [1988]. The former is an updated and expanded version of Schutz’s earlier work with FIRO-B. The latter is based on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.)

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR SELF

The quest for self can be challenging and rewarding; it requires a sense of commitment and determination on your part. Once you make this commitment, though, you can explore, experiment with, and choose from among a wide variety of processes, relationships, materials, and resources that can facilitate that

quest. Over time, you can involve yourself in many different personal learning experiences as your quest progresses and as your readiness for new possibilities unfolds. I will highlight a few approaches that have proved useful to others like yourself, and these may be suggestive to you for discovering others on your own.

Looking to the Past

Recapturing one's formative years—memories of people, events, thoughts, and feelings—may yield data that can be useful in better understanding who you are today and how you got here.

- Spend time with relatives and family friends who remember the early you, the social setting in which you were embedded, and your relationships with significant others.
- Revisit family pictures, old letters, diaries that may still be available, and similar family treasures. Be aware of moods, attitudes, and interactive events. For example, a family snapshot may show your mother lovingly holding a younger sister while little you are looking grim and the other way.
- Try to recall parental injunctions that were directed at you: “Clean off your plate; remember the starving Armenians.” “What will the neighbors think?” “If you say that again, I’ll wash out your mouth with soap.” Which of your internalized injunctions still impact your behavior, even though they may have no relevance to you in the present?

Looking to the Present

Many opportunities for personal learning are available to each of us in the here-and-now. The Johari Window's Quadrant 2, “Known to Others, Unknown to Self,” becomes highly relevant. Getting feedback from others who are willing to share with you their perceptions of you and your behavior can provide valuable data for reexamining self and for pursuing new leads for further exploration:

- *Build relationships and an accepting environment that make possible open and honest feedback from others to you.* Frequently, you spend time with clients, professional colleagues, friends, family, and no doubt many others who, under the right circumstances, can be open with you in a nonthreatening, helpful way. Often it is necessary for you to take off your mask and to invite them to honestly tell you what you need to know. I have at various times established a pairing relationship with another person in which we have scheduled periodic meeting times for giving and receiving feedback and understanding support from each other.

- *Support groups.* These groups can be formed to give feedback and support to each other in a setting involving a small and workable number of members. Alcoholics Anonymous through the years has established a record of great success with AA support groups designed to help participants deal with their problems growing out of alcohol and drug addiction. More recently, similar groups have been established to be of help in other human problem areas—such as smoking, weight control, coping with death, dealing with AIDS, and a number of other problems. My experience has been with informal support groups whose members are typically close friends, work associates, or individuals drawn together through some common interest. Some support groups meet on a regular schedule and have often had a life of many months or even years.
- *Sensitivity training, T-groups, encounter groups, and similar programs.* Typically, these groups are sponsored by an organization (for example, NTL and Esalen) and are usually limited in length from a few days to a week. These groups are facilitated by one or two trainers, unlike many support groups, in which the leadership function shifts from member to member, as the situation requires. Such groups, particularly after a reasonable level of trust has been built, provide possibilities for giving and receiving support and feedback and for gaining new personal insights. During a brief but often intense period of time, masks can comfortably be lowered as honesty and authenticity increase.

Looking to Non-Personal Sources

One's process of learning about self can be stimulated by inputs from sources not involving interpersonal relations in the here-and-now. In some cases, these inputs are explicitly sought by the learner; in others, they are not, frequently taking the receiver by surprise. Written, visual, and auditory materials are probably the most available sources of such stimuli. Novels, short stories, movies, and plays often involve characters who have been and/or are struggling with important life issues. Autobiographies and biographies often present a deep perspective on the personal choices and unchosen events that have shaped the lives of a wide and varied spectrum of human beings.

These and similar sources can provide vicarious human experiences through which you can live, as well as a range of roles, models, and living styles. These sources can trigger not only thoughts but also feelings, whose messages if listened to and understood can be invaluable in your quest for self.

Looking Inward to One's Self

As previously discussed, what you do not know about yourself (refer to Quadrants 2 and 4, the "Unknown to Self" quadrants of the Johari Window) can reduce (at times seriously) your professional effectiveness as well as your

quality of life. In your continuing quest for self, you can be aided not only by the external sources already mentioned, but also by internal sources. These may not normally be in your awareness. However, with commitment and patience, they can be slowly accessed and moved into consciousness, with the aid of one or more of a number of available processes. These processes provide the person with a “third eye”—an eye that can look inward, facilitating introspection, self-awareness, and understanding.

- *Journal writing.* The journal is, in effect, a place to honestly record one’s thoughts, feelings, current problems, insights, moods, attitudes, and so much more. Entries need not be made on schedule. They do not have to be written in any orderly fashion. They can be jottings, free associations, and the like. One can often be surprised by what rises into awareness through this process.
- *Meditation and prayer.* These are processes for quieting one’s mind and for becoming open to the here-and-now. They can aid in transcending limiting ideas about one’s ego, moving a person inward toward one’s essence—one’s being—and outward into a recognition of one’s integral connection with all life and all consciousness.
- *Learning from one’s dreams.* There are several good ways for working with dreams. Freud provided one; Jung, another; and Perls, yet another. Support from a trained counselor can be helpful. Relating to or examining one’s dreams can often provide a bridge from the unknown aspects of self to the known.
- *Psychotherapy.* There are many theories and systems of psychotherapy (for example Freudian, Jungian, Rogerian, Bugental’s (1992) existential—humanistic) sometimes requiring a limited number of sessions (for specific, problem-focused, brief therapy) or years of sessions (in the case of psychoanalysis). Facilitated by a psychotherapist, these processes are focused on consciousness-raising (from the unknown to the known) and to a working through to clarity of understanding and of meaning.

It is important once again to emphasize that the quest for self is never ended; it is more of a journey than a destination. For you to believe that you can work through all of your issues, that you can achieve perfection in a lifetime of learning, is indeed illusory. However, you can become more aware of the personal issues that negatively impact your professional effectiveness, as well as your personal savoring of life itself. And in gaining greater awareness, you can learn how to confront and deal with these issues more effectively. The choice to do so is yours alone. It is a matter of what you want to do with your life.

TO LIFE, TO LIFE—L'CHAIM

I cannot—nor do I want to—offer you a rose garden nor promise nirvana. The process of personal learning and deep change is slow. The path can be a difficult and lonely one to follow—one often involving disappointment and pain. But following the path with courage and commitment can also deepen, enrich, and expand your experience of and coping with life as you relate to yourself, to others, and to the larger world beyond.

Along the path of personal learning, you may become increasingly aware of the fragmentation that has characterized aspects of your life. Maybe you have experienced anger at the same time that you smiled. You may have doubted your personal worth, while succeeding at most tasks you have taken on. Possibly you loved your mate at the same time that you have yelled at him or her. Perhaps at the beginning of the journey, you were not even aware of the fragmentation, but along the path you not only have gained such awareness but increasingly have succeeded in bringing the parts together. You come to understand what the anger is about and what the masking of the smile does for you. You gain insight into why you demean yourself and are blind to your accomplishments. You experience the love for your mate ever more strongly, as you come to the realization that the yelling and screaming is displaced from another person, another time. The disconnects between body and mind, thought and feeling, head and heart, awareness and unawareness, and others begin to disappear. Rather than feeling alienated from yourself, you increasingly have a sense of becoming better integrated—more whole. The process of moving toward increased wholeness is a growth objective of any system, including the human being.

Feeling more whole, you become more real in your relationships with others. Instead of giving off confusing, inconsistent signals that only mislead others, you are increasingly experienced by them as being authentic. Moving toward greater wholeness and authenticity, you will increasingly become aware of and experience your essence. Carl Rogers has described it this way: “The individual moves toward being, knowingly and acceptingly, the process which he inwardly and actually is. He moves away from being what he is not, from being a facade. . . . He is increasingly listening to the deepest recesses of his physiological and emotional being, and finds himself increasingly willing to be, with greater accuracy and depth, that self which he most truly is” (1961, pp. 175–176).

As individuals move toward their essence, they tend to become increasingly aware both in thoughts and feelings that they are not separate entities in the world. They sense deeply that their being merges with and becomes a part of all living creatures, of nature, and of the awesome universe itself. Now, more seriously and deeply than ever before, they can confront the mysteries of spirit, spirituality, and soul—the reality of wholeness, of oneness.

PERSONAL GROWTH AND PRACTITIONER EFFECTIVENESS

The experiencing of becoming a more aware, better-integrated human being can be an exhilarating and fulfilling one in and of itself. And for you (as well as for others), it can also mean increasing satisfaction and effectiveness in your professional work. There are many aspects to this. Some I have discussed earlier in this chapter; now I will present additional ones:

- *The self as a laboratory for learning.* By practicing your “third eye” awareness during your own personal learning process, you can also develop your skill for learning much about the processes in which you are professionally engaged and about what is being experienced by the client systems with whom you are working. For example, consider the pervasive process of change. By paying close attention to your own personal experiencing (your thoughts and feelings), you can much better understand such change factors as readiness for change, resistance (feelings of threat, fear, anger, helplessness), boundary permeability (both to the inside and to the outside of a system), what can help a system to be open and receptive, and so forth. If you have experienced and understood it yourself, you will better understand it when you encounter it in other systems—in organizations as well as in other individuals.
- *Impact on others.* Knowing yourself reasonably well and being more whole, you will generate fewer confused reactions from others: “Where’s that guy coming from?” “I really don’t know what she wants from me.” As stated previously, you will perceive what is “out there” more accurately, and will be able to take action more appropriately: “This consultant is really on target.”
- *Being trustworthy.* If you are open, consistent with values, caring, not defensive, and not hurtful, others will tend to have confidence in you and trust who you are and what you say and do.
- *Understanding and accepting others.* Not having the need to stereotype others; being able to discern, to value, and to accept individual differences; and having the acuity to understand individuals in depth in spite of their masks—these and related talents stem from your clarity about yourself and your consequent ability to not be threatened by others.
- *Being positively motivated.* Persons who are emotionally torn inside must turn much of their attention inward in an attempt to deny, control, or mediate between the conflicting demons inside. Not having this need, a relatively emotionally mature individual is typically energetic and joyous, with enthusiasm and often with creativity and vision. This does not mean that you never have mixed feelings about certain situations; on

the contrary, you understand mixed feelings as normal to human experience and are comfortable with holding such dualities while moving ahead with your work.

- *Ability to move into depth.* It is often said that practitioners or counselors cannot take others further than they themselves have been able to go. Certainly there are exceptions to this, but in general it has validity. If I cannot accept my inadequacies, can I help others accept theirs? If I cannot express my feelings, can I help others comfortably to express theirs? If I run away from conflict, how can I coach others to facilitate conflict resolution? Your own work with these issues provides the foundation and empathy needed for guiding others, especially through difficult change and learning.
- *Loving others.* Genuinely caring for others—not through a facade or an act, but honestly with the heart—is a human quality that is often found missing in action. Many books and articles speak of the desirability of the practitioner, leader, teacher, or parent showing compassion, caring, or love to others whom they want to influence. It is not always mentioned, however, that the most important route to being able to love others is to first love one’s self—not to enhance one’s ego, but rather as part of a process of becoming a better human being. If you truly love your self, where that love is rooted in a sense of wholeness and of self-worth, then you can naturally, genuinely, and deeply experience and express love for others. You experience them as a part of yourself.

THE ART OF THE PRACTITIONER

Acquiring relevant knowledge and skills, gaining hands-on experience, concerning yourself with professional and personal values, and involving yourself in personal learning processes are necessary for your development as a professional practitioner, but they are not sufficient. Beyond these lies an area about which we have little understanding; to a considerable extent it is shrouded in mystery. What has made possible a Michael Jordan, a Yo-Yo Ma, and an Oprah Winfrey, as well as our most admired and valued colleagues? In our professional field, if we try to understand what has made our “stars” into masterful professionals, we encounter more differences than similarities among them—differences in education, training, skills, personalities, areas of specialty, professional and life experiences, and many more.

None of these professionals is just a sum of the parts; each is much more than genes inherited, things learned, skills developed, values embedded, or experiences

lived. Something more involves the integration of those parts into a systems wholeness. How this occurs is what is so little understood; here lies the mystery, the wonderment.

When we observe these professionals early in their careers, we often see at first technicians with a bag of tricks: “a technique I read about,” “a method I saw demonstrated,” “a successful procedure presented at a conference,” or “a strategy Joe told me worked well for him.” Some consultants do not progress very far beyond this point. On occasion (or perhaps more frequently?), they encounter a challenging problem with which they really don’t know how to deal. Faced with the anxiety that accompanies this “not knowing,” they reach for an intervention in their bag of tricks that, when made, has more to do with quieting their personal anxiety than with the here-and-now needs of the client. The intervention is primarily from the head; it is calculated, mechanical, and out of sync with the larger context. It doesn’t flow. In contrast, think of Michael Jordan dribbling down the court, putting opponents off balance, sensing the positions and movements of all players, looking one way and moving in another, eyeing the basket, and using his total body—with grace and beauty—to propel the ball toward the basket. And it falls cleanly through the hoop.

If we observe them at work, we see many of our top OD practitioners effortlessly flowing in an unfolding process with their clients. They are one piece with their well-integrated knowledge-skills-values-techniques-methods-experience-sense of self. They would probably have difficulty telling us why they made a given intervention at the time that they did, and in the way that they did. They might tell us that “It just felt right; I just trusted my gut, my intuition.” Their clients after a day’s work might say: “We made such good progress today. But we don’t really know what made that possible. Our consultant certainly didn’t say or do very much, it was like magic!”

It certainly isn’t magic; it just seems that way. It is really art. And although there is a simplicity and apparent effortlessness in their interventions, it is often hard work. At their best, these practitioners are artists. They certainly are not perfect in any respect, and they have their lows as well as their highs. But they do have high batting averages. They are not all-wise, but they have a professional wisdom. They are not all-feeling, but they are appropriately sensitive. And no matter how competent they are seen and experienced by peers, they do continue to monitor themselves, and they continue to seek new learning.

Being an artist in this work means not just being a sum of your parts, but something much more than that. Your being and its expression in action reflect this little-understood process of integration into an effectively functioning professional and person. As you move toward such integration, such wholeness, you are indeed moving toward artistry.

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Adding to the Complexity of Personal Change

Kristine Quade

Each of us has identified a primary reason we have been called to this work. In addition, we have discovered while perfecting our practice as organization development consultants that our primary reason was actually secondary. What comes to the forefront is a primary responsibility for perfecting the practitioner in order to be of useful service to our clients. There have been two important shifts in my own understanding of this responsibility.

The first shift was in coming to understand the work articulated in the prior chapter written by Robert Tannenbaum and Saul Eisen about the “personhood” of the consultant and the responsibility for being self-aware. The second shift was in 1998 at the OD Congress in Monterrey, Mexico. A question was posed to the founder of OD in Mexico, Dr. Ezequiel Nieto Cardoza. The participant asked: “How can we justify charging so much for our services?” Nieto responded, “We *are* the tool. We are the *only* tool that we bring to the client system. If we allow ourselves to become rusty, to ignore our worth and our strength, then we have nothing of value to offer our clients.” He went on to say, “We are the instrument that is unique, needing to be healthy, balanced, in order to do good work. Therefore, we must charge for this special unique instrument that cannot be replicated.”

These two shifts became the foundation for the development of the active change model (ACM) articulated in *The Conscious Consultant: Mastering Change from the Inside Out* (Quade & Brown, 2002). Utilizing the active change model to consciously develop our “personhood” provides the means to strengthen the results of our work.

The choice of “active” as a verb comes from an understanding that there is also reactive change. In *reactive* change we are in response to a situation that we perceive as outside of ourselves and beyond our ability to cope with. “It happened to me—I had no choice!” is a reaction to the outside force. We are in this reactive place when we are not aware of the choices we could make and often end up making the same choices and doing what we have always done, regardless of whether it works or not. Change is going to happen, even if we try to ignore it and hope it will go away. The situation may continue to deteriorate, or we could be surprised when the change sneaks up to surprise us. We are thus caught in the cycle of reactive change.

Active change, on the other hand, is acknowledging we can choose from possible options and take the action that is the best at that time. To discover the possibilities, we have to slow down our reaction process and expand our understanding of how we engage with ourselves or the situation “in the moment.”

Understanding that change is continuous and sometimes unwelcome, the conscious practice of change leads to an active engagement in the outcomes. The active change model has six phases: Perceive, Describe, Accept, Question, Act, and Change (see Figure 26.1). When reading through these steps, please keep in mind that this short chapter is but an outline from a larger body of work and brings the prior chapter into application.

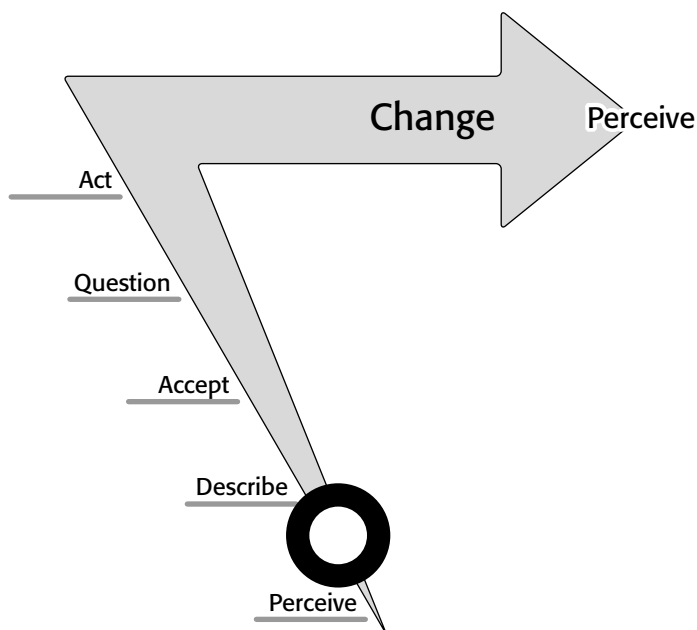


Figure 26.1. The Active Change Model

PERCEIVE

The first step in slowing down our reactive process is to be reflective about what we *perceive*. This is actually a VERY hard thing to do. By questioning our own perception, we open the door to acknowledge something that is different from reality, *as we have constructed it*, which may or may not be accurate. Among the things that get in the way of accurate perception are blocks, denial, attachment, mindset, or projection (see Figure 26.2).

Blocks

Blocks are barriers that we have erected to protect the vulnerable parts of our selves. We can either be *hiding* behind our masks; in *fantasy*, which is based on our distortions; *not willing* to expose that soft spot of vulnerability; or just *not dealing* with the issue “in the here and now.”

An example of a block might be found when encountering our own “ism” such as racism, genderism, sexism, or any others. Being a practitioner working with human systems implies that we understand all aspects of the human system and are able to work with any perspective with ease and grace. The scariest place an OD practitioner could be is discovering that “I am having ‘ism’ thoughts.” The statement implies that we may not be as neutral as we need to be and that strong judgments may be driving our reactions to data in the system. To protect ourselves from a limiting belief, there is a tendency to erect a

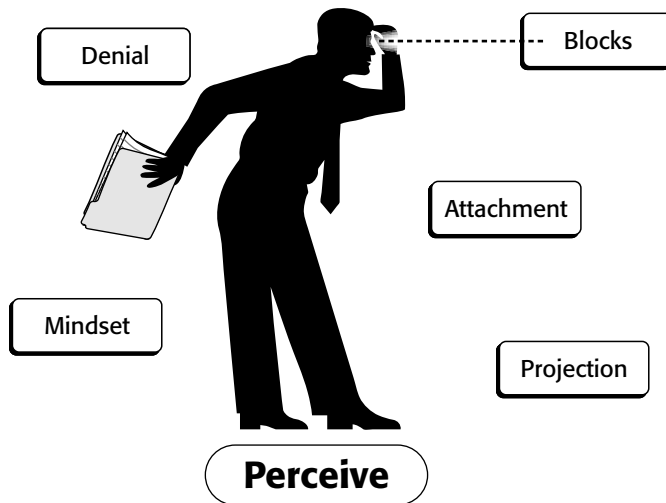


Figure 26.2. Perceiving

block that manifests itself in a statement such as, “I don’t see color, gender, age, or other differences.” Hiding behind a block gives the illusion of safety, which is actually an unconscious and dangerous place when consulting in complex human systems.

The real impact is that I have blocked myself from understanding my own personhood and therefore I have closed myself off from experiencing another person’s unique richness because of a different background, experiences, and knowledge.

An inability to explore a block results in a distorted perspective of reality. It creates a world-view based on holes or blind spots leading to reactive responses rather than conscious choices and active change.

Denial

Denial occurs when something is actually happening but we refuse to acknowledge it. The words of denial are “everything is fine”; denial acts as a protection against shame, blame, and guilt. I often hear the question, “So how is it going?” as a reconnecting question. I can choose to lie and say: “Wow, I am so busy right now, I can’t see myself coming or going,” which would create the aura that I am a busy and successful practitioner. Or I can say, “Work is slow and I don’t have any work/projects right now,” which would raise personal vulnerability. Admitting I am scared about facing this issue is to admit that I may not be fulfilling all my commitments in my current job and that I may not be appropriately valued. The lack of perceived value may keep me from asking friends for help, or developing alternatives to keep me active may be too overwhelming. Denial acts as a cloud around my head so that I don’t have to face a painful reality, especially when there are obligations and a family to support. I am essentially saying to myself that not admitting what is out there is better than facing it with courage and authenticity.

Attachment

Attachment develops when there is a belief that groupings or clusters of people or things are a certain way despite influencing external factors. We fool ourselves that we are in control and safe by saying that we understand something because we see all the components as the same. The result is that we become detached from reality. An example of an attachment belief is that people from a certain country are poor, uneducated, aggressive, untrustworthy, or whatever. If I choose to see grouping as the same, I become detached from the reality that there are actually many differences to discover and that I really don’t know what I think I know. I may have to admit that my prior belief has not served me well and that I am closed rather than open when working in human systems.

Mindset

While attachment holds us locked into a belief, *mindset* provides the opportunity to hold contradictions such as deficit- or strength-based beliefs or seeing the glass as half-empty or half-full. In *The Change Leader’s Roadmap*, Linda Ackerman Anderson and Dean Anderson (2001) say, “The mindset of the leader has a major impact on the meaning made” of information contained in a business wake-up call. In comparing the Industrial Mindset with the Emerging Mindset, we can imagine how a leader could miss clues provided in everyday incidences. (See Table 26.1.)

Mindset colors the way that we approach information and relationships, which limits how to utilize our personhood as the instrument of change.

Projection

Projection is actually “me” wrestling with “myself” or at least that part of myself that I am noticing in another. Projection is probably the most active element that stands in the way of accurate perception.

An emotional reaction is usually a clue to a projection. The emotion could be attraction, curiosity, or wonderment, which is noticing what I like in myself. Or the emotion could be anger, dislike, distrust, or judgment, which is noticing

Table 26.1. Industrial Mindset vs. Emergent Mindset

<i>The Industrial Mindset</i> “Reality as a Great Machine”	<i>The Emergent Mindset</i> “Reality as a Living System”
Separate Parts	Wholeness/Relationship
Power and Control	Co-Create and Participate
Certainty/Predictability	Uncertainty/Probability
Objective/Knowable	Subjective/Mysterious
Discrete Events	Continuous Process
Entropy	Self-Organization
Order into Chaos	Order out of Chaos
External Causation	Internal Causation
Scarcity	Abundance

From *The Change Leader’s Roadmap*, by Linda Ackerman Anderson and Dean Anderson. Published by Pfeiffer, 2001. Used with permission.

in someone else what I don't like in myself. It does not matter what emotion shows up. The point is to recognize that an emotional reaction is the greatest clue that a projection has been triggered. The deep work is to understand the source of the projection. The source of the projection could be an early childhood relationship or incident, a trauma that is unresolved, or a significant event that has yet to be integrated. When an emotion surfaces while working with a client, it is important to not disengage from the client in order to understand the projection or analyze the source. If I am able to notice my "friend, the emotion," I can form an agreement with myself that I will come back for self-study when I am not in service to the client. This clears the boundary between my work and my clients so we can proceed in a healthy way.

Knowing that an accurate perception is hindered by blocks, denial, attachment, mindset, and projection can provide a lifetime of self-study that may seem daunting. We have the gift of emotion that can act as our guide. If we do not pay attention to our emotions, we are at risk of losing our effectiveness with the client, family, or individual system. Too much is at risk for us to be hiding from ourselves.

DESCRIBE

Perceive and *describe* are two steps that are so close together that they may seem inseparable, but they are distinct. To perceive is to have consciousness of something; to describe is to name what that something is (see Figure 26.3).

When we describe something, we bring language to a perception. We may say, "I have an idea, my intuition is telling me, I am feeling an emotion—which is. . . ." Language is how we make sense out of the world.

For some of us, our preference is to describe our perceptions using the language of the five senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting. For others, there is a sixth sense, intuition. An *accurate* understanding of our senses comes from early childhood validation. If I smell cinnamon but have been told that smell is nutmeg, I may learn that cinnamon is something that it is not. The same is true of emotions. If I learn that only little children cry and that, as an adult, it is not appropriate to cry, I will learn that crying is not an acceptable emotion to have and therefore will stuff that emotion rather than be unacceptable. If I learn that acknowledging fear will cause me to be called a "fraidy cat," then I will find ways to deny my fears.

The result of these confusing messages is that we are unable to describe accurately what is going on within ourselves. We learn to distrust the language of the emotions. We therefore distrust our self-awareness. I have this wonderful image of a canvas with a face outlined as a painting-by-numbers. Part of the face is filled in with vibrant and accurate colors. Part of the picture, yet to be painted, is outlined according to the color that is to be applied "by the

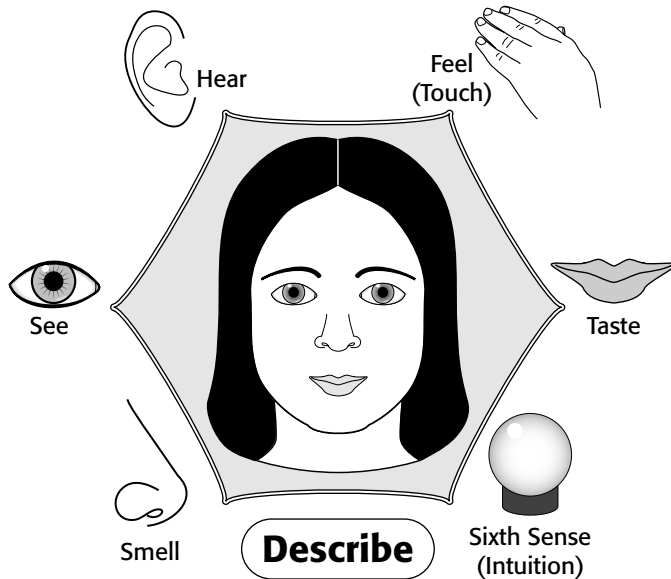


Figure 26.3. Describing

numbers.” When I look at this picture, I see a partial picture and my imagination is left to fill in the empty spots. I could hope the rest of the picture will be like the “filled-in portion” or I could fear that the unpainted part is actually ugly or representative of my undisclosed shadow. This image helps me to understand the concept of “mask making” described by Tannenbaum and Eisen in the prior chapter. For me, mask making is my way of putting on a particular face until I can find the language to describe what I am perceiving.

The down side is that, while I am wearing this mask, I am certain that others experience me as not being authentic. My tentativeness, caused by my effort to protect my self-image, gets in my way of relating to others. If I cannot describe what is going on with myself, how can the client rely on me to describe what they are experiencing?

ACCEPT

After *perceiving* and *describing*, the third step in the active change model is to *accept* “what is for what it is.” When we are in acceptance, we are not arguing about whether or not something *should* have happened. Acceptance also does not mean I like or dislike it. If I notice something, it will remain as it is, regardless of

whatever opinion I have about it. The desired state would be unconditional acceptance. Getting in the way of unconditional acceptance are blame, shame, guilt, and judgment, which are responses that help me to remain the victim or to assume I am without power to make a change (see Figure 26.4).

Blame is where I make someone else wrong for what is going on with me. The classical examples include: “This is the belief system I was raised with,” “But this is just our corporate culture—I have to act this way to survive,” or “Our company situation is the fault of the leadership team.” Blame is where I set up a reason or excuse that resides outside of me. What a perfect way to avoid taking responsibility for my current state of being!

Shame is where I make myself wrong. “I should have known better,” “If I had only done . . . things might be different,” “Wow, that was really stupid!”

Guilt is the state of holding onto the fact that I was wrong. It is a way of compounding the shame, giving it a much more lasting force. We can hold onto guilt for ages as a way of holding ourselves in a pattern that we are just not ready to change yet.

Judgment is what we are doing when we are not accepting. Judgment is where we insert the perception of right or wrong about something that already exists. Judgment triggers a struggle for control, which can only be a temporary

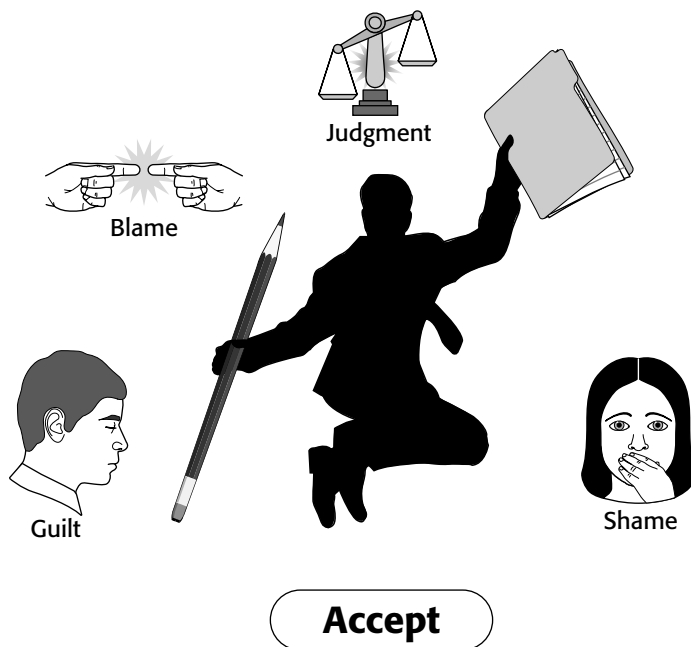


Figure 26.4. Accepting

state because the only thing we can realistically control is what is going on inside of ourselves.

Acceptance helps us leave the state of reaction and come to a state of neutrality and awareness so that we can make a choice to see the issue differently or to re-start the same issue with a different approach. Thus we are on the path of *active change*.

QUESTION

It is our responsibility to discover for ourselves what might be getting in the way of a healthy interaction with others. Being on a quest and asking good questions is a powerful skill we often practice with others. We use questions to help others find themselves. Questions open the door to possibilities. With questions, we can cultivate a greater awareness of a situation, become more creative in developing choices, and avoid getting stuck asking the same questions over and over again and getting the same answers. Questions help us reach the best action possible from the available known options.

We can learn from the answers to our questions. We can also learn from how we formulate the questions and the impact they have on us. We should notice that formulating questions actually helps us to listen, find deeper meaning, stimulate thinking, and inspire our personal development.

On the road to becoming a “master question asker” are several paths to be aware of (see Figure 26.5):

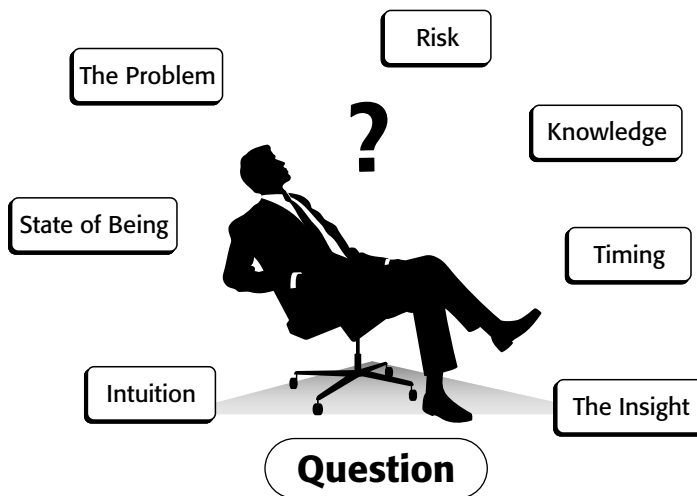


Figure 26.5. Questioning

- *State of being:* If we approach our issues as a curious and wondering person, we are in a state of being where we consider ourselves a wise and valuable investment. We want to learn about ourselves more than we want to keep the status quo. We have a way of “checking out” our assumptions. Being in a creative state, the question becomes the beginning of creation.
- *The problem:* Sometimes what appears to be the problem is actually a symptom. When the question is, “What is the solution?” we often miss the underlying possibility. If I ask myself, “Do I set myself up for failure?” I will get a yes-or-no answer. However, if I ask, “How do I set myself up for failure?” I will get closer to the core of myself that I wish to explore.
- *The insight:* By stating my own question and then really looking at it, I can explore the energy behind the question, the awareness inspired by the question, and the assumptions within the question. By consciously looking at how we are phrasing the questions to ourselves, we will be able to break beyond our perceptions of what is happening and gain insight into our personal state.
- *Timing:* Bob Tannenbaum often told me that this is the trickiest part of our own development. Right timing of questions and self-reflection depends on our ability to be in “the here and now.” It is important to understand why we are asking ourselves a question, what we will do with the answer when it shows up, and whether we are willing and able to take a risk with that answer. When we decide that now is not the right time to be asking questions of ourselves, we are actually making a choice to take no action—at this time!
- *Risk:* Good questions will stir things up and can be painful to both ask and answer. Understanding that opening what has been covered up can be the beginning of healing helps us to be courageous in asking questions. The question can be one that we have never asked ourselves before, challenges our expectations, or opens us to the unknown. The challenge is to understand whether we are avoiding the risky questions out of habit, fear, blind spots, or assumptions.
- *Intuition:* Every question is an experiment. I have learned that if I try to ignore a question that keeps coming back, my subconscious really wants me to explore this question. This persistent question may be the doorway to a profound awareness in the hidden library of information residing within myself. My use of curiosity and inner clues helps me to ask questions about what has been in my periphery.
- *Knowledge:* If what I know about myself is limiting my capabilities, I may want to find out more. It is easy for OD practitioners to acknowledge there is theory or practice knowledge needing development. It is

harder to acknowledge there may be something within myself I don't understand or fully grasp. If I can engage in friendly debate, talk to others with different views, read, or push my edges, I can encourage myself along the path of finding my own solutions, which will result in my participating in the development of me actively and consciously.

ACT

This is where personal development efforts frequently fail. Taking action means I have to step forward, take a risk, assume a position, be open for failure, go into the unknown.

We know when we ask questions, we will get answers. The internal cycle would probably look like: We receive an answer to our question. → The answer brings us a new revelation. → The new revelation is a new perception. → We describe it and accept it. We ask a new question. → A new question is an action. → We start all over.

Our response at each of stage will be based on personal choice and timing. (See Figure 26.6.) There is a choice when we say: "I understand what I need to

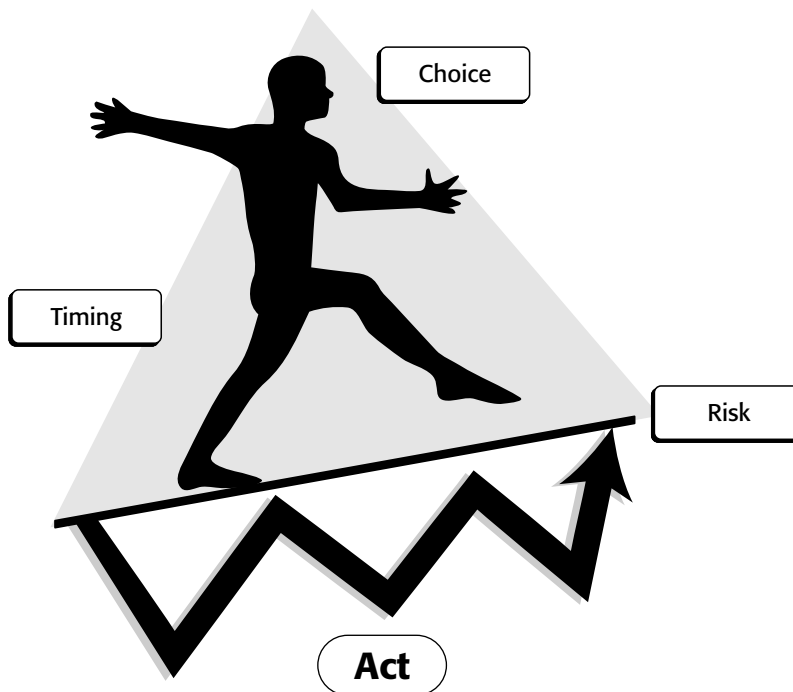


Figure 26.6. Acting

do but would like to do it later.” “I think I need to gather more data and to think about this more.” “I can see the steps that I need to take but will take them later.” “I am prepared to take action now.”

When we make a commitment to move forward based on what we know in the moment, we are practicing active change rather than being in reactive change and being in response from something outside of ourselves.

CHANGE

For a change to be active, what is internal must be brought forward into physical action before it can be complete. Without the physical manifestation, we are only working with theory. With a physical step, we can arrive at a new place and things look different to us. The circumstances will be different. We will be in a new “here and now.” (See Figure 26.7.)

REPEATING THE PROCESS

The study of the self is the greatest and most difficult subject of all. We are complex beings seeking to do complex human systems work in ever-changing conditions. Our sharpness depends on our ability to be more fluid in our change.

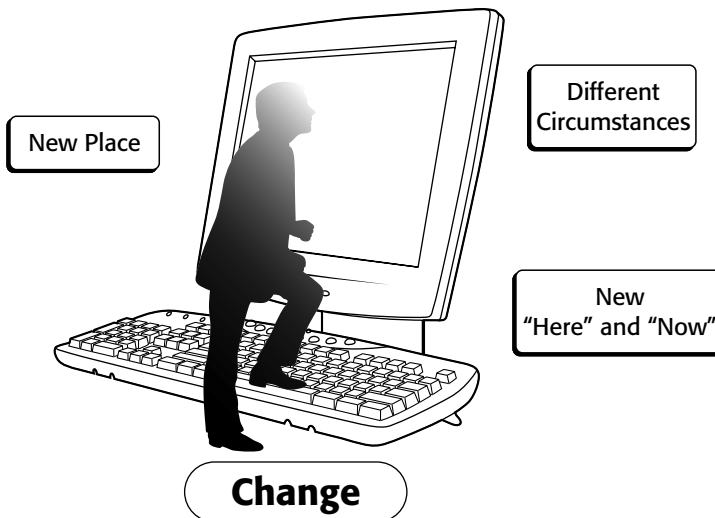


Figure 26.7. Changing

With the “active change model,” it is possible to continue the process of exploration of “the self as the instrument of change” within our own timing and capabilities and work on developing that fluidity. Our significance sometimes remains obscure until we embark on the journey of personal change. Our significance then becomes that we are able to bring more of who we are into the work that we do and are thus more available to be of service to others.

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Practicing Internal OD

Allan Foss, David Lipsky, Allen Orr, Beverly Scott,
Terrence Seamon, Julie Smendzuik-O'Brien, Anna Tavis,
Dale Wissman, and Catherine Woods

Many writers and experts in the field of OD have historically assumed that practicing OD is similar for the internal OD practitioner and external OD practitioner. Both internals and externals bring technical expertise, commitment to helping their clients, and a belief in the values and principles of the field. However, the setting and environment of the practice as an employee of the organization creates different requirements, advantages, and challenges for the internal practice of OD.

In this chapter we explore those differences, identify the advantages of internal organization development, discuss the organizational context in which internal OD practitioners operate, consider competencies needed by the internal practitioner, and offer distinctions between the practice and partnership of internal and external OD practitioners.

The authors of this chapter either have been or are now internal practitioners and bring their own experienced perspectives to describe these differences. However, to expand that perspective, twelve internal practitioners were interviewed for this chapter. These internal OD practitioners serve in a range of industries: financial services, consumer goods, information technology and software, energy, higher education, transportation services, bio-genetics, telecommunications, and government. The questions used in the interviews appear in Exhibit 27.1.

Organization development promotes the improvement, enhances the performance, and supports the integrated effectiveness of the whole organization.

Traditionally, the OD practitioner has been viewed as offering value in bringing the outsider perspective, a view or approach that was not present in the system, or a “marginal” role, which enables greater objectivity and organizational distance (see Argyris, 1970; Bennis, 1966; Browne & Cotton, 1975; Browne, Cotton, & Golembiewski, 1977; Nevis, 1987). Acting with an “outsider” perspective is more challenging for the internal OD practitioner than for the external OD practitioner. The external practitioner can offer OD services, which may bring significant change and confront structures, practices, norms, and values, as the uninvested outsider. At times, executives seeking organizational change believe that they can do it themselves without the assistance of an OD practitioner. Such executives do not view OD as critical to the success and effectiveness of the organization. Leaders who do see the value of OD often have past experience or recognize the need for support in a major change effort. They may determine that creating an internal OD function or utilizing an existing internal OD practitioner will enhance their capacity to make change and improvement effectively.

ADVANTAGES OF INTERNAL OD

What are the advantages of an internal OD consulting function? The primary value lies in the unique benefits of being inside of and part of the organization on a continuing basis with deep knowledge of sensitive issues, cultural norms, and organizational history (see Lacy, 1995; Scott & Hascall, 2002). While external OD practitioners have unique and specialized skills and knowledge, the internal practitioner has the benefit of an intimate, detailed, hands-on knowledge of the business, strategy, and context of the organization, including the power and politics, strengths and weaknesses, assets and liabilities of the organization. The internal practitioner develops a detailed understanding of the culture and the webs of relationships in the organization. Internal OD practitioners know the history of the organization and the details of what has been done in the past in a way that few external practitioners would be able to learn. They know what will work and what won't work. They develop deep, sometimes personal relationships with clients and colleagues, many of whom they work closely with over a period of years. The internal practitioner can use familiar language and jargon. Consequently, the internal has an enhanced ability to assess and utilize the right approach with a shorter ramp up time on new projects.

A second advantage of internal OD practitioners is that they have access on a continuing basis to the life of the organization. They are aware of leadership actions, staff decisions, customer issues, and business challenges on a daily basis. While an external practitioner often enters the system to implement a specific intervention within specific time bounds, the internal practitioner remains in the organization long after the “project” is completed. Because they remain

Exhibit 27.1. Interview Questions

1. The name of your company:
2. Your primary work location:

Company Information

3. How many employees work for your organization?
4. How many locations?
5. Annual revenue:
6. Industry sector:

Position Information

7. Your position title is:
8. What is your salary (including bonus)?
9. What is the title of the person you report to?
10. How many direct reports do you have?
11. Where are you situated organizationally (e.g. corporate, business unit, R&D. . .)?
12. What portions of the organization do you serve?

The Work You Do

13. What kinds of work do you get involved with? (Check all that apply. Indicate the top three that comprise the main focus of your work.)
 - a. Strategic planning
 - b. Organization assessment & design
 - c. Change management
 - d. Executive coaching
 - e. Employee training and development
 - f. Leadership development
 - g. Succession planning
 - h. Performance management
 - i. Competency modeling
 - j. Innovation
 - k. Quality
 - l. Process improvement
 - m. Customer satisfaction
 - n. Employee engagement/satisfaction
 - o. Work teams
 - p. Diversity
 - q. Other (please specify)
14. At what levels in the organization?
 - a. Senior level
 - b. Mid-level
 - c. Front-line
 - d. Non-management
 - e. Union

15. With what organizational units?
 - a. R&D
 - b. Sales and Marketing
 - c. Engineering
 - d. Operations
 - e. Corporate Staffs
 - f. Other (please specify)
16. To what extent do you utilize external resources?
17. How often do you work on projects?
18. How much of your time is spent (percent):
 - a. Networking?
 - b. Marketing?
 - c. Client projects?
 - d. Administrative duties?
 - e. Professional development?
 - f. Design time/research/project preparation?
 - g. Other (please specify)
19. What kinds of external resources do you use?

Your Organization's Commitment to OD

20. What led to the establishment of the OD function?
21. What are the current priorities for the OD function?
22. What are the longer-term (3 to 5 years) goals for the OD function?
23. Please characterize the level of support for OD in your organization.
24. What are the chief organizational challenges faced by OD?

Background Information

25. What types of industries have you worked with?
26. How many years have you worked as an OD practitioner? Of those, how many years were as an: External? Internal?

Your Education

27. What is your highest level of education? Degree in what field? Completed? Currently pursuing?

Other Information

28. What have been some of your most valuable tools/resources (books, seminars, etc.)?

in the organization, internal practitioners can see the results of the intervention and can immediately follow up with the participants to ensure agreed-on actions are carried out or adjusted as necessary. In addition, internal OD practitioners can more quickly recognize potential linkages to allied efforts in other units of the organization. External OD practitioners often are only exposed to the parts of the client organization involved in the contracted project. The impact in the organization is potentially increased when internals can provide links to other efforts, collaborate with other functional staff, or expand a solution to address hidden or undiscovered issues. Change efforts benefit from this sustainability of the internal OD practitioner who remains an active part of the organization.

A third advantage of internal practitioners is the immediate resource they provide to leadership, internal change partners, and the workforce. Many internal OD practitioners work in conjunction with HR or are readily available for other employees, managers, and functional leaders on an impromptu basis. This enables them to help build organizational commitment for a change initiative or give immediate coaching on organizational issues. This spontaneous coaching may head off a potential problem, defuse a budding conflict, or provide needed support in developing new behaviors. Other advantages suggested by some leaders also include the comfort and safety of sharing proprietary information with the internal practitioner and the potential cost savings of hiring the internal resource versus paying the fees of an external contractor.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

One key to success as an internal practitioner is gaining the trust and credibility of both leadership and the workforce. Part of this trust and credibility is based on competency and part is based on personal integrity. More than any other function, the credibility of the internal OD function is influenced by the integrity, self-awareness, and self-management of the individual practitioner (see Scott, 2000). As internal OD practitioners successfully apply their craft, it requires building trusting relationships utilizing self-awareness and self-management. Although the use of self is important for the external OD practitioner as well, greater authenticity is demanded of internal practitioners, who must build trusting relationships across all levels of the organization and maintain them throughout their career in the organization. A misperception of shared confidences or misunderstanding of behavior or agreements can quickly destroy many years of effort by the internal practitioner. Managers will judge the viability of the entire OD function by each interaction with each individual internal OD practitioner.

The internal practitioner, more than the external practitioner, must be a generalist, familiar and competent with a broad range of OD approaches and interventions. Unlike an external practitioner, who may specialize in a limited area of

OD practice, the internal practitioner has to master a wide range of potential interventions to assist in myriad organizational situations. See Exhibit 27.2 for the range of responsibilities for an internal OD function collected from the authors' interviews for this chapter.

This range also represents a potential pitfall for leaders of internal OD functions. Internal OD practitioners cannot be everything to everyone. An internal OD function must be selective in the services it provides in order to maximize the benefits of its efforts. Being busy with many interventions is not as valuable to the organization as selective involvement, where the internal OD practitioner can have the most impact across the whole enterprise. Only through conscious choice and alignment with organizational strategy and priorities can an internal OD function realistically offer the breadth of services that meet the needs of the organization.

In some cases the internal OD function may address the organizational need alone. In others, the best action might be to partner with someone from outside the client's organization unit. The internal practitioner must be a good judge of when it is most appropriate to partner, either with other functions within the organization or with OD practitioners external to the organization. If the internal practitioner makes a judgment that an external practitioner can help, it is often because the internal practitioner has already laid the groundwork within the organization and knows that the external intervention has greater likelihood of being successful. This work in the trenches is rarely acknowledged. If an internal practitioner is effective, the work of the external practitioner is far easier. A frustration for internals is that often the external consultant or consulting firm will proceed to work directly with senior leaders or with HR staff, who often have had little to do with preparing the organization for their coming, and who may have difficulty guiding the work of the external practitioners. Failure to engage the internal OD practitioner can result in less than optimal outcomes for the external's intervention.

“BUILD OR BUY” DECISIONS

How are decisions made to either establish an internal OD function or to hire external OD practitioners on an as-needed basis? Organizations that support an internal OD function have wrestled with a number of sometimes recurring questions, depending on the needs for OD at various stages in the organizational life cycle. Those questions can be categorized as follows:

Strategy—What is the organization's overall strategy? How will an internal OD function support the strategy? To what extent is it important to the organization that all of its units be consistent in areas such as vision, values, culture, performance expectations, HR practices, and so forth? How will the internal OD function help to develop and disseminate the corporate strategy?

Exhibit 27.2. Areas of Responsibility

When asked what responsibilities internal OD functions have, most organizations identified traditional OD responsibilities that include:

- Succession planning
- Training
- Performance management
- Change management
- Leadership development
- Meeting facilitation
- Team building (group process/team effectiveness)

Some organizations also included:

- Strategic planning as it related to performance management
- Organization culture
- Executive education
- New employee orientation

A few organizations mentioned one or more of the following:

- Business scenario enactment
- Organization capability assessment and alignment
- Business strategy development and facilitation
- Process improvement
- Organization effectiveness
- Process consultation
- HR measurement and research
- Strategic HR benchmarking
- Strategic HR developmental services

Finally, in some organizations, core process redesign was identified as an area of responsibility; however, this effort typically reported to the COO or CIO.

Purpose—What services will the OD staff provide to the organization? Why would internal practitioners best provide those services? How important is it to have an OD group with an informed view of the whole system and whose loyalty is to the organization with a vested interest in the outcomes? How important is it for the OD group to be aligned with the values of the organization? How continuously will OD services be required and how available would external resources be? What different competencies will be expected of the internal OD practitioners and what expertise would be most desirable to have in this staff function?

Cost—What is the cost justification for having dedicated internal resources versus variable expenses (that is, external consultants)? Is there sufficient demand to warrant full-time staff? How large would the staff have to be to

provide services that might be desired? What measures will be used to demonstrate value? If an organization's past experience with OD has been positive, the value and potential contribution of an internal OD function is appreciated as successive decisions are made to utilize or not utilize its services.

When the internal OD function has established credibility and a track record of contribution to the effective performance of the organization, OD is seen as a vital part of the organization. In these cases the OD practitioner becomes a welcome advisor to senior leadership and plays a vital role in the functioning of the organization. OD becomes as important as human resources, finance, or marketing in contributing to achievement of the organization's financial goals, meeting the demands of customers, or addressing the challenges of competition. OD is seen not as an outlying activity called on when there is a problem, but as a key resource integral to ensuring a healthy, effective, and well-run organization.

POSITIONING THE INTERNAL OD FUNCTION

One of the most important aspects of being an internal OD practitioner is to serve as a business partner within the organization. Internal consultants (Scott, 2000) and writers (Varney, 1977) have often advocated that the internal OD function report directly to senior executives. The opportunity to become a trusted advisor and partner with senior leadership is rooted in the internal practitioner's advantage of intimate knowledge of the business. To be effective as a business partner, internals must establish their credibility and take advantage of the opportunity to learn the business and strategic issues, keep abreast of changes in the competition, know government regulations, understand customer expectations, and learn as much as possible about the environment in which the organization functions. Such positioning offers several benefits:

- Access to strategic decision makers;
- Opportunity to sit at the table and influence strategy, maximizing overall scope and effectiveness;
- A chance to really understand critical business issues; and
- The opportunity to align change efforts with the organization's vision and strategy.

When the internal OD function is positioned to allow direct access to the CEO, it lends credibility, brings involvement, and provides the broadest influence within the organization. Similarly, internal OD functions housed at division, business unit, or program levels also have increased leverage when they report to the senior executive, frequently a vice president, general manager, or director. Reporting to the senior leader in the organization suggests that the

internal OD function has accountability for system-wide change. This is supported by the recent research of Sullivan and Olson (2003), in which internal OD practitioners reported on the importance of serving as the consultant to the top team and being able to sit at the table when key business decisions are made.

Employees are not typically viewed as clients, although they are a part of the organization and may be involved in or affected by a given intervention. At times, this can present a dilemma for the internal OD practitioner, who may find it difficult to advocate for the needs of employees if they are in conflict with a critical new business initiative proposed by management. In such instances, internal OD practitioners may utilize their positions of trust and credibility to increase the senior leaders' understanding of the impact on employees or to advocate for an alternative approach.

Because the organization is a system, internal practitioners must maintain relationships throughout. It is helpful to report to and be able to influence senior leaders, but at the same time, the internal practitioner must be careful not to antagonize the rest of the organization by having a relationship only with the most senior leaders. Instead, by building a broad base, the internal practitioner can gain support throughout the organization to ensure recognition of the OD function and that interventions have full support at all levels.

Unfortunately, many organizations do not recognize the value of having a strong and competent internal OD function as a business partner and often place the internal OD practitioner or function in the middle of the organization with limited access to senior leaders and limited opportunity for system-wide interventions. In practice, the internal OD function often reports to HR (Scott, 2000), although other reporting relationships exist. (Research for this chapter found that internal OD practitioners report to other units besides HR within the organization, for example, to Quality Management, Corporate Planning, or even Internal Auditing.) There are relatively few examples of internal OD practitioners reporting directly to the CEO, although this may be the preferable structure. When the OD function is housed in HR, the impact of the function is strongly influenced by both the reputation and the effectiveness of HR in the organization. The following are critical to the success of the embedded OD function:

- *An HR strategy aligned and integrated with the business strategy.* To the extent that the HR function is not aligned, the potential effectiveness of internal OD practitioners will be undermined. Similarly, if the HR function serves primarily an administrative role, handling transactional responsibilities involving compensation and benefits, or if it is viewed solely as a service function called in to implement after critical decisions are made, the potential effectiveness and influence of the internal OD practitioner will be reduced.

- *An effective tactical framework to support strategic intent.* A tactical framework that clarifies roles, responsibilities, and clients is essential for the collaborative work of HR and the OD function.
- *Interest and support for developing HR capabilities.* An organization that views HR as a cost center and seeks to minimize expenses will conflict with the leading principles in OD of learning, development, and continuous improvement. On the other hand, to the extent the organization supports these values and is willing to invest resources to maintain needed HR and OD capabilities, there will be fertile ground for HR and OD collaboration (Church & Herena, 2003).

Regardless of the reporting relationship, internal OD practitioners are often expected to partner with staff resources, most frequently with HR. Although occasional resentment occurs due to the internal OD practitioner's ease of movement across the organization and access to senior leaders, many internal OD practitioners collaborate easily and successfully with other functional experts. Reaching out to other functions to enhance the overall collaboration provides increased support for the success of projects. Internal OD practitioners cultivate relationships, recognize and utilize others' technical expertise, involve staff peers and fellow employees early in projects, create opportunities for their success, and often help them learn effective internal consulting skills. Indeed, the role of many human resource professionals has evolved, and they are using consulting skills and taking an OD systems approach in their own efforts with senior managers.

ORGANIZATIONAL LIFE CYCLE

In serving as a business partner, the focus of the internal OD practice may vary based on the needs of the organization in its stage of the life cycle. Table 27.1 shows examples of how internal OD efforts differ in purpose, form, and focus, depending in part on the stage of the organization's life cycle. In contrast to external OD practitioners, who see themselves accountable to the client with whom they have a contract, internals often see themselves accountable to the organization. This perspective requires the internal OD practitioner to focus and adjust the services provided as the organization moves through the stages of its life cycle.

Considering the stages of the organization life cycle provides meaningful insight into different adjustments required of the OD function. For example, initially an internal OD practitioner in a start-up business may need to provide a multitude of services in OD, HR, or related areas. Skills transfer becomes critical because

Table 27.1. Organization Life Cycle and OD Function

<i>Company Life Cycle</i>	<i>Start-Up</i>	<i>Expansion</i>	<i>Mature</i>	<i>Pre-Divestiture</i>
Strategic Context	Controlled chaos	Smooth integration of acquisitions	Maintain cash cow	Get ready for the buyer
OD Purpose	OD at warp speed: Help us to grow rapidly	OD as bridge building: Help us assimilate new companies	OD for retaining key assets: Help us avoid complacency and stagnation	OD for outplacement: Help us shed underperforming assets
OD Form	Structure—simple Reporting Relationship—CEO Size—typically one person	Structure—multiple levels Reporting relationship—CEO or staff executive Size—growing with organization	Structure—varied Reporting relationship—HR or other staff executive Size—constant or decreasing with organization	Structure—varied Reporting relationship—HR Size—decreasing or preparing to go with organization
OD Focus	Other responsibilities may include HR generalist areas too Organization design, leader coaching, new employee orientation, skills training, stress management	Other—likely working closely with strategic planning or corporate development Mergers and acquisitions, culture, leader transition, teams, change	Other—likely working closely with business operations and finance Customer satisfaction, employee engagement	Other—likely working closely with HR or external outplacement service providers Outsourcing, career counseling

the OD resource is stretched and limited, while leaders in the organization need immediate tools for rapid transformation. However, as the organization progresses from start-up to expansion mode, the internal OD function will likely adapt its accountabilities, grow with the business, create multiple levels of responsibility, or alter reporting relationships and key contacts. As the business matures, the focus of the internal OD function may shift to fostering employee engagement or enterprise-wide change initiatives because of the size and complexity that maturity brings. Finally, the internal OD function may be called on to facilitate divestiture of assets or reductions in the number of employees and may itself face reductions of staff within a mature business.

A key point about this evolution is that the internal OD function rarely drives these changes within the organization. Rather, the internal OD function responds as the organization changes, growing or shrinking in staff and adding or eliminating capabilities to meet the changing needs of the organizational clients. Although some internal practitioners identify issues across the stages of the life cycle and initiate or advocate potential interventions to address them, the evolution and stage of the life cycle directly influence the specific responsibilities of the internal OD practitioners involved.

BRANDING THE INTERNAL OD FUNCTION

The success of internal OD practitioners depends also on their ability to communicate to clients, from top executives to line workers, an understanding of how the OD function can add value to the organization. Branding of the internal OD function is a process of building a reputation similar to what other staff organizations do to promote their contribution to the organization. Rather than “selling” a particular intervention or approach, internal OD practitioners make a practice of meeting regularly with key stakeholders to define organizational needs and what capabilities may be required of the internal OD practitioner. They then offer services to meet those needs. Others advocate that staff functions such as OD should make a choice and risk being accountable for results (Sullivan & Olson, 2003). An approach recommended by some internal practitioners is to develop a charter, endorsed by the senior leadership, which clearly delineates the vision, mission, *modus operandi*, key products and services, and accountabilities. This charter becomes the basis for contracting between the internal OD function and the organization and can be used to select and prioritize projects.

Marketing the OD function internally takes several forms. In a small organization, word about the quality and effectiveness of an internal OD function can easily spread, gaining potentially many more clients. Like a small business, more requests come in by virtue of reputation. That reputation contributes to

the “brand” of internal OD. In small or large organizations, the senior OD practitioner may make frequent and regular contact with senior decision makers to ensure continued alignment between the strategic business needs and the capability of the internal OD function. Maintaining a conscious connection with executives is also important so that they think to contact the internal OD function when potential needs arise. In a large organization, more formal methods of marketing, such as brochures, flyers, or websites, might be necessary so potential clients know that the internal OD function exists in the organization. Specific services, such as leadership development or team interventions, are often standardized and publicized throughout the organization, especially in more mature entities, so that potential clients know what to expect from an OD engagement. Unlike external practitioners, an internal OD function markets to one organizational client and often repeatedly to the same individuals. Internal practitioners are bound to “run into” potential clients in elevators or parking lots and must be prepared to offer succinct, interesting explanations of capabilities and resources available. Finally, an internal OD practitioner may use sharing of best practices or other word-of-mouth marketing to extend the influence of the internal OD function.

COMPETENCIES SPECIFIC TO THE INTERNAL PRACTITIONER

The role, context, and positioning of the internal consulting function contribute to the success of the internal OD practitioner. However, competencies required for the internal to deliver the desired results are perhaps even more critical. Competency in the field of organization development has been defined as including skills and knowledge as well as attitudes. It is the sum total of everything needed to be a successful OD practitioner. Basic areas of OD competency include relevant knowledge of professional theories, techniques, and methods; human values; self-awareness; and performance skills (see Chapter Five).

The list of OD competencies offered in Appendix I by Worley, Rothwell, and Sullivan suggests little difference in OD competencies between internal and external consultants. For this chapter, results from those designating themselves as internal practitioners were compared to the survey population as a whole. There was virtually no difference in the two groups’ views of which competencies were important for OD practitioners.

On the face of it, this might suggest that competencies important for an OD practitioner differ little between internals and externals. The authors of this chapter who have been or are now internal practitioners bring their own experienced perspective to the identification of competencies uniquely required for success in such roles. That experience suggests that, although OD competencies may be very similar to those required by external practitioners, success as an internal OD practitioner *does* require *consulting* competencies different from

those required for external OD practitioners. To test this perspective, a small qualitative research study was conducted with internal OD practitioners, and three other studies were considered.

Table 27.2 shows the categories of internal consulting competencies and some of the descriptive behaviors developed from the results of the interviews. While the descriptive phrase might seem the same, the competency is not the same for internal OD practitioners and external OD practitioners. Internal practitioners manifest the competencies differently because the context of the internal practitioner is different from that of the external practitioner. Although other competencies may be needed, these are a starting point for discussion, and future research on the consulting competencies of internal practitioners is required.

To show how the consulting offered by the internal practitioner is influenced by the context, consider how the following five competencies named by those interviewed are critical to success.

Demonstrates Organizational Savvy. The insider's knowledge of how things get done in the organizational system is essential for the internal's success. Seeking out the history, the stories, and the informal operating rules is important for the internal to understand the organizational culture. The internal practitioner, however, gathers this information piece by piece, often over extended periods. This deep organizational knowledge of the insider results in interventions with a good cultural fit.

The internal must be capable of building relationships with senior leaders who will be principal clients and whose power, goals, and sponsorship are critical to effecting change. The internal must also build a broader network of contacts throughout the organization in order to tap into information about events, practices, and attitudes that can impact OD work. This network helps the internal practitioner to understand cross-functional interdependencies and quickly take into account the organization's complexity when customizing an intervention. Learning the organization is critical to the external OD practitioner's success as well. An external consultant may become savvy over the course of an engagement with the organization. Internals, however, must know how to maneuver within the organization and abide by all the organization's norms, protocols, customs, and formal and informal rules. They are not given the latitude to violate local customs and culture or be excused if they violate organizational norms, as externals are. External OD practitioners often rely on getting this insider knowledge from the internal practitioner when starting an engagement.

Understands the Business. As an employee in the organization, often in the middle of the hierarchy, the internal OD practitioner can be seen as just another subordinate. The ability of the internal practitioner to use an understanding of business developments and market trends to recommend strategic moves is

Table 27.2. Competencies Reported by Internal OD Practitioners as Critical to Their Success

<i>Competency</i>	<i>Behavioral Description</i>
Collaborates with Others	Ensures that interpersonal relationships with clients, peers, and others in the organization are collaborative, healthy, and team based. Seeks balanced, win-win partnerships. Emphasizes follow-up and good customer service. Humble, caring, compassionate, and capable of celebrating client's success.
Establishes Credibility	Establishes credibility and respect by doing good work, delivering value, and achieving results. Holds high ethical standards, maintains integrity through professionalism, ethics, and contracting. Provides realistic picture to client of what is achievable in the time available through clear expectations for the role of client and consultant partners, the degree of difficulty of change, and the approach used.
Takes Initiative	Assertive in taking a stand, delivering tough messages, and pushing for decisions and outcomes. Demonstrates entrepreneurial spirit. Acts to achieve results tied to the organization's goals. Understands, respects, and effectively uses power in the organization to assist clients in achieving their goals.
Maintains Detachment	Able to remain detached from the organization in order to maintain independence, objectivity, and neutrality. Able not only to be sufficiently congruent with the client organization to find acceptance, but also able to keep an external mindset to provide more balanced perspective. Avoids getting trapped into taking sides or carrying messages.
Markets the Value of OD	Helps clients and the organization understand the practice of OD and the value the practice delivers to them and the organization. Works toward clarity of roles with other staff assistance units (e.g., HR consultants, quality improvement staff, finance, or information technology consultants). Offers clear statement of organization development products and services as distinct from products and services offered by others in the organization. Also clarifies products and services as distinct from external consultants. At times manages contracts with external consultants.

<i>Competency</i>	<i>Behavioral Description</i>
Demonstrates Organizational Savvy	Understands and knows how to succeed in the organization. Builds relationships with senior leadership and develops an extensive network of contacts at all levels. Leverages insider knowledge to address organizational issues. Uses appropriate judgment, recognizing cross-functional interdependencies, political issues, and the importance of cultural fit. Recognizes the importance of systems thinking.
Acts Resourcefully	Able to use imagination, creativity, and forward thinking. Is resourceful, flexible, and innovative in utilizing methods and resources. Not wedded to specific approach. Takes advantage of windows of opportunity; most often functions with “just-in-time” approach to client needs.
Understands the Business	Knows what makes the business run as well as the key strategy. Able to think strategically and leverage support for critical strategic issues. Supports managers in aligning the organization with the strategy.

valuable to a senior client. An internal practitioner can spontaneously demonstrate how an intervention can improve organizational effectiveness or contribute to the bottom line. Advice that is offered in the context of the business’s challenges and that is customized to address specific issues is more trustworthy. Using the language of the organization and drawing from current examples and stories makes the internal practitioner’s advice more valuable. For many clients, the inside knowledge of the business and the organization is the primary asset an internal practitioner brings, an advantage over even a well-known external consultant. An external OD practitioner may know the industry; an internal practitioner knows *this* business.

Establishes Credibility. The credibility an internal consultant establishes over time by doing good work and holding high ethical standards can be easily destroyed. Since internal practitioners have only one organizational client, they have more investment in the consulting than the external practitioner, who can always move on to the next client. Internal practitioners can find themselves in a dilemma when faced with demands from senior executives to share confidential information or when asked for an opinion of another manager’s performance.

The threats of a senior executive can put the job on the line, but if the internal practitioner gives in, the individual might as well leave the organization because trust and credibility with other internal clients are undermined and potentially destroyed. Thus, it is important for internal practitioners to have agreements about confidentiality, anonymity, and the boundaries of interventions, as well as strong commitments to ethical practice. Internal practitioners know that to be most effective they must be ever-ready to lose their jobs. This requires emotional fortitude and personal and financial preparedness to take the risks.

Maintains Detachment. The two dimensions of this competency comprise a delicate balancing act for the internal OD practitioner. On the one hand, maintaining interpersonal relationships allows the internal practitioner to be accepted within the organization in order to be able to provide effective service. On the other hand, the internal faces the challenge of remaining somewhat detached and maintaining an arms-length relationship with clients in order to maintain objectivity and neutrality. This stance allows the internal practitioner to effectively serve all parts of the organization. The internal practitioner cannot afford to be viewed as taking sides or as conforming to commonly held views. This tension between the need to be accepted and the need to remain detached can be far more stressful for the internal practitioner than for the external practitioner, whose independence is taken for granted. The independence of an internal practitioner can also be a two-edged sword when managers are selecting consultants to do OD work. Even though the internal OD practitioner may have worked to maintain detachment and offer balanced perspectives within the organization, it may not be sufficient compared to the perceived independence and neutrality of an external OD practitioner.

Markets the Value of OD. There may be others within the organization whose services appear to be similar to those offered by an internal OD practitioner. Change management services and various consultations may be offered by numerous colleagues, for example, facilitators, financial management staff, internal auditors, trainers, human resource staff, quality management staff, project management staff, IT staff, and others. All of these may work with groups within the organization to effect improvements and change. This potentially large group of competing associates requires the internal practitioner to distinguish OD offerings from other services. Beyond building good relationships internally, the internal practitioner has to build and maintain a niche in the organization. One important niche that an internal practitioner frequently fills is that of offering systems thinking and methods for aligning all organizational efforts in support of key business strategies or organizational goals.

These five competencies compare favorably with other research conducted by Sullivan and Olson (2003), in which the following competencies were noted by internal OD practitioners as being most critical to their success:

- Serving as the internal consultant to the top team where one can facilitate the system-wide enterprise change as well as the decision making of the top team;
- Being at the business decision table at key levels and junctures in the organization;
- Knowing and understanding the business;
- Having a system orientation;
- Being politically savvy and the ability to be aware of power dynamics; and
- Developing open, trusting relationships with internal clients.

The first two competencies noted by Sullivan and Olson seem to relate to positioning within the organization and would suggest that the internal OD practitioner must know how to gain power in the organization. A seat near the power center is almost always immediately accorded to external OD practitioners, but internal practitioners must earn such seats. The last four competencies correspond to some of the competencies identified in the research by the authors of this chapter.

In summary, some research has shown that, while the OD competencies required of OD practitioners employed by an organization or hired as a contractor by an organization might appear to be similar, the ways in which an internal practitioner *consults* within the organization require competencies different from those required by an external OD practitioner within the same organization.

WORKING WITH EXTERNAL OD PRACTITIONERS

Whether the internal OD practitioner sits at the executive table and enjoys a productive business partner relationship with senior leaders as a trusted associate or is located within the middle of the organization reporting to a vice president or director of HR handling less systemic OD projects, it would be hard to have an entire career inside organizations without working with external OD practitioners. Externals are hired for a variety of reasons. The organization may lack a specific capability. Leaders may want a fresh eye on the organization or choose to supplement a limited OD staff. Some leaders may hire an external so

that there is less risk for the internal; it may also be easier for someone from the outside to challenge the status quo. Table 27.3 shows the advantages and challenges of the internal OD practitioner. Each of the challenges noted for the internal practitioner can be viewed as an opportunity for the external practitioner. For example, knowledge of the business is very helpful to senior leaders, but if breadth of experience is needed, an external may be an option. Knowing the cultural pitfalls can be critical, but the external, as an outsider, can sometimes more easily confront situations in the organization that have to be addressed. An external practitioner may be exactly what the organization needs. As much as internal OD practitioners can contribute to the ongoing success after an intervention from an external practitioner, it is at times helpful to have an external practitioner who has a certain freedom to act because he or she will, eventually, leave the organization.

There are a number of considerations for internals working with externals. It is important for internal practitioners to know why the external practitioner is being hired because it can be perceived as both opportunity and threat. The hiring of an external practitioner can be an opportunity for collaboration and

Table 27.3. Advantages and Challenges of the Internal OD Practitioner

	<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Challenges</i>
Presence	At hand when needed— immediate expertise	May seem to be too familiar
Context	Know the business strategy; organization; culture; and people	May lack experience and broad knowledge from different organi- zations
Cost	Cost-effective where change work is extensive	Can be viewed as overhead
Objectivity	Loyalty to the organization with a vested interest in outcome	Objectivity can be questioned; lacks neutral, outsider perspective
Credibility	Credibility based on being a personally known quantity	Perceived as lacking expertise due to being part of the organization
Access	Speaks language of the organization; knows culture	May not be able to confront, give feedback, or take risks with senior management
Sustainability	Can provide support and follow up long term	May become too engaged with the solution

the exchange of knowledge from within and outside the organization. Externals can bring a deeper focus and broader experience, and it can be a time of rich learning for the internal. In the best-case scenario, the expected roles and mission of both internal and external practitioners are clearly identified at the beginning of a change effort. Senior leaders, ideally advised by the internal OD practitioner, can clearly articulate the needs for both internal and external practitioners and participate in setting these clear expectations. In less sanguine scenarios, contracting with externals can seem a threat to the internal practitioner if these questions are not answered: Why are they being brought in? What contributions are they expected to make? If they are going to be in the organization, how can they be best used?

Much like internal OD practitioners, all external practitioners are not alike. Solo external contractors may have been internal practitioners in the past, so may understand the potential of the internal role and be more willing to negotiate the relationship. In other cases, external practitioners can dismiss or disregard the efforts of internal practitioners or bring an entire approach to a change effort that has no place for an internal practitioner. Consulting firms are often in this category. Even if employees of the firm have in the past been internal practitioners, consulting firms often develop their own approaches that do not provide for participation by internal practitioners or even value their perspectives. In either case, internal practitioners may be asked to manage the contract with an external practitioner. They should take an active role to provide senior leaders with proposals for the relationship between the internal and the external practitioner, to be clear about the competencies that exist in the internal function, and be prepared to assist the external practitioner to understand organizational realities as both seek to contribute to the effectiveness of the client system (Scott, 2000).

A CAREER IN INTERNAL OD?

Even though “consultants” are often thought of as independent business people, it is possible to have an entire career as an internal OD practitioner inside one or more organizations. In addition to having the competencies, managing the advantages and challenges, and serving in various roles, the internal must consider the type of career desired within the organization. Will the role be an “expert” consultant or a “process” consultant or both? The answer will depend on the weight given to the following factors: the strengths and individual characteristics of the internal practitioner, the needs of the organization, the relationship between the practitioner and the organization, and the characteristics of the organization (Scott, 2000).

There are many rewards from working inside an organization. Internal OD practitioners can see change become established and performance improve over time, be satisfied with the role they played, and experience the trust when new client leaders ask for help. They can gain personal satisfaction from the development of long-term relationships, having a sense of belonging and comfort as a member of a community in which they know the people and the rules, and receive the recognition as skilled professionals contributing to the organization. At the same time, all is not charisma and glamor. There is a lot of hard work in the life of an internal practitioner. For example, the internal OD practitioner who has just been hired is not likely to be working closely with the senior leaders within the next week. Reputations must be earned, competencies must be shown, and trust must be established. The role can be rewarding, not because the internal practitioner always has the sterling answer, but because it is possible to be successful and deliver improvements in spite of the organizational system that may be arrayed against OD efforts. Success as an internal is not just about competence; it is also about how the internal practitioner fits into the system. If the system is structurally flawed, the internal must work to be creative and demonstrate a skill set before it is even possible to begin to have influence.

Internal OD practitioners are like other employees in the organization: They have a job and a manager or supervisor of some kind. There may be opportunities to rise in the organization from being an entry-level practitioner through senior advisor to mentor of other internal practitioners. Whether or not the OD function has sufficient depth to have this type of career path, almost all successful internal practitioners wrestle with a different type of question—whether to continue in the practice of OD within the organization or to accept a management role. Because effective internal OD practitioners are often engaged in bringing about desired changes and improvements to the organization, their services are frequently appreciated by senior leaders. They may be viewed as “good management material.” If the internal OD practitioner takes a management job within OD, it will mean that less time is spent on the practice of OD because some time will be reallocated to guiding the OD staff and performing required administrative tasks. If the internal practitioner accepts an operational management job, however, this means the certain end of being an OD practitioner, at least in that organization. The internal practitioner can then become a senior or mid-level organizational leader with a deep appreciation of the role and contribution of internal OD practitioners, using that to drive organizational effectiveness.

An internal OD practitioner is part of the OD profession and gains insights into methods and approaches from that community of practice. But internal practitioners may feel more affinity for their organization than they do for the profession because that is the system in which they live day to day.

Last, it is important to consider the set of attitudes that a person must have to be an internal practitioner. The life of the internal is truly one of support. Often the internal does much work in the organization that is never recognized or acknowledged. The internal must be committed to successful outcomes and must be willing to step out of center stage if someone else in the organization is ready to champion necessary changes. The attitudes of humility, generosity of spirit, and a type of selflessness must exist in doing internal OD work for the organization. If an OD practitioner has a need for the limelight, the role of *internal* practitioner might not be the best career fit over the long term. Exhibit 27.3 contains ideas for how internal practitioners can thrive inside.

Exhibit 27.3. Rules for Living Inside

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- Know the business strategy, and identify needs and opportunities for which you can contribute to business results.
 - Learn to manage the paradoxes. Operate at the margins, yet know the organization intimately; build strong relationships but confront with the truth; be congruent with the client organization but do not collude.
 - Build and use the positive energy for change in the organization. Help clients see the “possible,” create visions, and articulate their desires for the future to draw others to support and participate in the process.
 - Develop broad support for projects by working with multiple levels of the organization, communicating, educating, modeling, listening, and facilitating.
 - Seek to build relationships with key managers by finding ways to meet small but important needs, serving as a sounding board, or providing them refreshing, candid perspectives.
 - Coach clients to lead change, trust in self-organization, and to communicate often.
 - Seek agreements with clients for the mutual exchange of feedback and the promotion of self-awareness and continuous learning.
 - Develop competence and credibility by keeping agreements, being accountable for results, being authentic in relationships with others.
 - Know the boundaries of your competence; avoid going out on “skinny branches.”
 - Develop the ability to initiate and build strong partnerships.
 - Be a systems thinker; identify and support linkages and interconnections.
 - Recognize and accept the client’s readiness to take the risks of change.
 - Improve continuously the internal-consulting craft, practice personal mastery as a life-long journey, and stay grounded.
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From Beverly Scott, *Consulting on the Inside*. Arlington, VA: American Society for Training and Development, 2000. Used with permission.

SUMMARY

Practicing OD inside an organization as an employee provides both challenges and opportunities that differ from those faced by the external practitioner hired for a specific project within the organization. Table 27.4 summarizes these differences.

This chapter has described the assets of being an insider with detailed, intimate knowledge of the organization, its business, and its leadership; daily opportunities to reinforce and support the implementation of interventions; and the opportunity to offer spontaneous, impromptu support and coaching.

Success for the internal is based on gaining and maintaining trust and credibility at all levels, but most especially in ultimately becoming a business partner to senior executives in the organization. Although the required OD competencies are similar for internals and externals, the context of practicing as a member of the organization demands different consulting competencies. In addition, the internal OD practitioner is expected to have the breadth of a generalist yet be able to bring capabilities that serve the needs of the organization in its current stage of the life cycle. Often those capabilities are provided in partnership with external consultants, who bring a specific expertise and an outsider perspective. A successful partnership in which the contributions of the insider and the outsider are both valued is most desirable. Although many internals leave the organization to establish their own practices, others find successful and satisfying careers within the organization as internal OD practitioners, as managers of OD functions, or by applying their knowledge and experience in a managerial role.

Table 27.4. Comparison of Internal and External Consulting Roles

<i>SIMILARITIES</i>	<i>DIFFERENCES</i>	
	<i>Internals</i>	<i>Externals</i>
Knowledge of human systems, organization, and individual behavior	Accepted as a member congruent with the “group” and with culture	Sees culture and organization with outsider perspective
Understanding the process of change	Has credibility as an insider	Has credibility as an outsider
Desire to be successful and recognized for value he or she brings to the client	Knows organization and business intimately	Brings broader experience from other organizations

<i>SIMILARITIES</i>	<i>DIFFERENCES</i>	
	<i>Internals</i>	<i>Externals</i>
Commitment to learning	Can build long-term relationships; establish rapport more easily	Can confront, give feedback, take risks with senior management more easily
Passionate about the work	Coordination and integration of project into ongoing activities	Focused involvement on a project that ends
Ability to influence and lead	Opportunities to influence, gain access, sit at the table as an insider	Once invited in as outsider, broader experience offers credibility, power, and influence
Skills to analyze needs and design interventions	Leverages and utilizes informal and formal organization structure	Can avoid or ignore the organization structure, move around organization to achieve results
Credibility or "authority"	Leads from position and character (trust) Knows the cultural norms that should not be violated Knows the history, traditions, and where "bones are buried" Can take an advocacy role May be expected to be a broad generalist As a "one client" consultant, has a lot more "skin in the game"	Leads from competence (expertise) and personality Can acceptably challenge or violate the informal rules of the culture Seen as objective and not part of the problem Brings more objectivity, neutrality Often seen as a specialist with narrow expertise If it doesn't work out here, can always move on to other clients

From Beverly Scott and Jane Hascall. Inside or Outside: The Partnerships of Internal and External Consultants. In N. Delener and C. Ghao (Eds.), *International Conference Readings Book*. Global Business and Technology Association, Rome, 2000. Used with permission.

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Our Work for the Times in Which We Live*

Meg Wheatley

I take this time with you to invite some reflections on our times. I would like you to think about what disturbs you, how you are being changed by the times in which we live, and how you can best cope with the times in which we live.

WHAT DISTURBS YOU?

Take a moment to reflect on what disturbs you about the times in which we live. If you are not genuinely disturbed by anything, then that means you are not listening and you are not learning. What disturbs you is a real opportunity for your own growth. It is also an opportunity to change the course of how you relate to others.

What disturbs you tells you more about yourself than it does about the people who disturbed you or the events that disturbed you. In fact, what disturbs you tells you more about your own beliefs than about other people's beliefs. What disturbs you shows you that you believe something that is exactly the opposite of what you have heard, what you have seen, or what you have participated in.

But one thing I am noticing in our society these days is how we are reacting to what disturbs us. The trend is to pass severe value judgments on those

*This chapter is adapted from a closing keynote at the 2003 Linkage OD Forum in Chicago.

people or those events that disturb us—and then just stop listening. We do not open dialogues with those who disturb us. Instead of looking at what disturbs us as a window on our own belief system, we close down communication. We do not want to be in a conversation with people who offend us.

And this trend exists on a national and not just an organizational level. I am very concerned that we have lost the willingness to be civil and talk to each other in the United States. What disturbs us leads to closed-down communication and disappointment in others. If you are experiencing any of this phenomenon in your organization—this sign of the times in which we live—I would like to offer you two specific techniques for dealing with it that I discovered by chance.

If you are confronted by a person who has really disturbed you because her point of view seems outrageous to you, you can simply ask this question: “So why do you think that?” As an alternative, you could ask: “Why did you state it in that way?” As you ask the question, avoid emotion. Focus on understanding the person and her viewpoint rather than just turning away. By doing this, you will begin to focus your attention on the person and her ideas.

The second technique for dealing with what bothers you has its roots in group process. It is a very simple technique. Whenever you are leading or facilitating a meeting, *ask those participating to relax—and to listen for the differences*. In other words, ask people to listen with the expectation that there will be a diversity of opinions expressed.

When you ask people to listen for differences, something amazing happens. First, it quiets the mental chatter of the people who are focusing on what they will say. Instead, they focus on how they will listen. If participants listen for differences, they relax because they are not worried about framing their own arguments. And it evokes curiosity about other people.

Try this technique. I discovered it by accident. I had no idea when I first asked people to listen for what’s different that it would lead them down the path of becoming better, more relaxed listeners. Try this at work—and even at home. It works equally well in business meetings and with a spouse or teenage child.

The thing about this technique is that it builds the expectation of surprise. It should lead not only to better meetings but to bringing people closer together. That is the great power of listening.

HOW ARE YOU BEING CHANGED BY THE TIMES?

Now the second question that I would like to ask you is this: How are you being changed by the times in which we live? I ask that because I feel that it is very important to reflect on how we are all being personally affected by great shifts occurring in the world. I am, of course, referring to increased turbulence, unpredictability, fear, and anxiety.

Dealing with Stress

To elaborate on this for just a moment, I recall seeing the cover of a recent news magazine. It shows a list of five major male illnesses. (I assume that a different issue of the same magazine listed five major female illnesses.) But the real point is that every illness that was listed is caused by, or at least affected by, increasing stress. And in organizations, increasing stress leads to higher absenteeism, turnover, and other problems.

How are you dealing with this stress, and how do you see other people dealing with it? Are you seeing evidence of it through growing absenteeism? Turnover? Illness? Back problems? Sleep disorders?

Another way to think about this is to ask yourself, How patient are you these days? How much on edge are you? How much willingness do you have to sit still in meetings and not feel like killing someone? How do you react to the annoyances you face when you are driving?

Dealing with Speed and Overload

It is quite important to reflect on how you are reacting to an increasing pace in your life. If you do not do that, you will be victimized by it. It is very important to notice these things because you cannot change them if you do not notice them.

Another way to reflect on how the pace of life is affecting us is to start reflecting on what is happening in your most intimate relationships and in your relationships with work colleagues. Consider: Is there more time to be together? Is there time to relax? Is there time for conversation? Have your relationships turned into a task focus, or do you really have time to sit and talk to others?

Let me share a personal story with you that illustrates the point dramatically. One month last year I had occasion to be off e-mail for three weeks. It is almost unimaginable to say that. I could only get away with it because Christmas was one of the weeks. But when it was clear to me that I was not going to have my computer for another week or so, I started thinking about how I did my work before e-mail. And honestly, I could not remember what I did before the days of e-mail. Seriously, I asked myself what I did then. Did I call people? Did I write letters? Did I fax people? I really could not remember. As best as I could fathom it, I must have done about four things a day instead of four hundred.

And in thinking about this, I could see how the pace of my work has increased because of electronic connectivity. I was struck by how electronic connectivity has changed the pace of life and increased the demands we face. Our culture has become the fastest in the world—and we still do not think 24/7/365 is enough.

But this speed of living is unnatural. We are now trying to compete with the speed of machines. And what is the end of that? Will we try to match the *speed of light*? We are trying to keep up with electrons. That is what is happening.

But human beings operate at a different speed from machines. We must operate at the *speed of life*. Life takes time. Anything that is alive requires time. And it is not time we can predict or play with, because it is organic time. It is Mother Nature's time. So it is like the story of the farmer who became so impatient with how slowly his crops were growing that he would go out in the field and pull them up by the roots each day just to see how they were doing. In some ways, that is exactly what we are doing right now. We are creating the conditions that are killing us, that are leading to more stress-related illnesses and to more fractured relationships.

I see that, in this bid to keep pace with the speed of light, we are losing two things absolutely essential to human life. One is that we are *reducing our openness*. We are just shutting down. Another way we react to increasing speed—and to increasing fear as well—is to *do things repeatedly*. That happens simply because there is no time to think. Just reflect on that for a moment: Where is the time for thinking? Where is the time for reflection?

Let me tell you a relevant story to illustrate this point.

I do a fair amount of work in South Africa. On one trip I was visiting a day-care center. It was just extraordinary. It was in the middle of Johannesburg and the headmistress was a wonderful South African woman trained in Montessori, a very sophisticated educator. She stood there and described their process of teaching to me. She told me that they use parent-aides as part of their daycare project. They wanted parents who were able to work with their kids, to help them with their math and reading. But the parents couldn't read, they couldn't do math. Instead of the teachers throwing their hands up in the air, they decided to create an adult literacy program. Right there they demonstrated a great capacity for noticing a problem and turning it into an opportunity to serve real needs. She went on to tell me that they have the parents come at the beginning of each week, sit down with the teachers, design the lesson plans that are to be taught, and then come together at the end of the day to reflect on what they did that day. And then they come together at the end of the week to reflect on how well the lesson plans were actually taught and whether the desired outcomes had been achieved. And then she went on to say that "Once a month, all the staff get together for a full day to reflect on what we learned that month."

After I heard what she told me about their approach, I looked at her and said, "You know, if the whole world did what you do, there would be no problems." She was shocked. She said, "You mean people do not do this?" To her it just seemed so logical. If you set a goal and do something, then you reflect on it. Right?

Think about it. When was the last time that happened in your organization? Do you actually make plans, set goals, create expectations, and then come together at the end of a project to debrief on it and reflect on it? How much time in the typical organization today is spent learning from mistakes? Alternatively,

how much time is devoted to just fighting fires and trying to escape problems as quickly as possible? Where is reflection in your organization these days? Is it increasing or decreasing?

I think this loss of time to reflect on, and learn from, experience—and from problems—is one of the great sacrifices of our times. We are losing time to reflect together.

To emphasize this point, about a year and a half ago *The Wall Street Journal* reported that more organizations were instituting policies to have meetings standing up. The headline suggested that this increased meeting productivity. So I read that article, because I am always intensely interested in anything that will improve workforce productivity. But what I learned is that, if you hold a meeting standing up, it lasts only fifteen minutes because people do not want to stand up any longer than that. The underlying assumption of the article was that speed equals productivity. So these meetings must be highly productive if they only take fifteen minutes—which women colleagues of mine tell me are “just like being in football huddles because people rush in, talk, and zoom out.”

The article implied that anything done in less time is *ipso facto* more productive. But I think there must be more measures of productivity than just time. Aren't there other, more effective ways to increase productivity in organizations than by shortening meeting times?

We have to begin to ask that question now. And we also need to think about true measures of productivity. The author of the article suggested that timesaving equated to increased productivity. But is that all there is to it? *The Wall Street Journal* article did not indicate that shorter meetings increased the quality of ideas. Nor did it indicate that shorter meetings prompted better relationships and promoted better teamwork. Nor did it indicate that shorter meetings led to growing trust among colleagues. How can anyone build trust, develop good ideas or healthy relationships in fifteen-minute football huddles? If that is the way we are leading our lives, then I think we are in deep trouble.

I believe the real point here is that we are leading our lives at a speed that is actually cause for grief. The cost is that we are losing each other. We are losing the valuable, essential time that we need to be together. We are losing the thoughtful, slow, reflective time when we can sit with colleagues to ask them how they are doing and what is going on with them.

Human beings love to be together. It is hard to believe that statement these days. We are really experimenting with a level of separation and isolation that feels destructive. As a species, humans love to be together. In fact, recent work on how humans evolved language suggests that language emerged as intimate family groups were formed. That is the theory of Umberto Eco as expressed in *The Biology of Love* (Janov, 2000). Whether the theory is true is almost beside the point because the theory is wonderful in its implications. It is wonderful because of its assumption that people have a deep need to know each other—and invented language to help do just that.

But then you look at modern organizations. We keep shortening our language and expressions. Think about how teenagers use online chat rooms. They simply select icons to indicate a thought or feeling. They do not really express themselves. They just select an icon. And so it is too often in today's organizations.

We do not have time for open-ended, unstructured discussions and time together. And what is happening to our relationships as a result of that? The more we rely on the abbreviated expressions of e-mail, the testier people become. People misread communication that is so abbreviated. The more people substitute quick e-mails for real communication, the more we sacrifice ourselves.

A few years ago people at Microsoft invented the term *facemail*. It refers to face-to-face communication. Think about that! Although we cannot live without each other, we have to coin a word to indicate what ought to be the most basic, fundamental, and expected form of communication. With that thought as backdrop, think about what speed has deprived you of in the very relationships that should nourish you at work and at home.

Dealing with Fear

There is one other troubling aspect about living in our times. That is the increase in fear.

I travel frequently, and that means I step outside our culture and step back in about once a month. And this is giving me a very good lens on the shock treatments to which we are being subjected. It seems so clear to me how much of our culture is now focused around fear. We are told to fear this, fear that, fear whatever. If I were to describe where we are, it would be that we are moving deeper into fear. I think we need to notice what happens to us during the times of fear.

Parker Palmer taught me years ago that every world religion has the same fundamental view that people should not be afraid (Palmer & Marty, 1983). And why is that? It seems to me that fear leads to the loss of our humanity, our generosity, and our willingness to be interested in others. And you may be able to track that problem in your organization.

How do people respond when they are afraid? After 9/11, fear was prevalent everywhere. During that crisis—and the unending series of crises that have followed on it—how have people reacted? Have you seen the best or worst in them? Have you seen selfless or self-serving behaviors? In a recent biography out on Lyndon Baines Johnson, the author has coined a wonderful phrase: *that power does not corrupt so much as reveal us* (Hershman, 2002). I feel the same way about crises. Any crisis situation reveals who we really are. So you can look at yourself, you can look at those you love, you can look at your organizational colleagues and ask yourself, What is fear or crisis revealing? When people are afraid, their brains shut down. They lose their memory and their ability to see patterns.

Again, I would invite you to reflect on your own organization. As people become afraid, they lose the ability to see patterns—to look at the big picture. People are losing the willingness and ability to look beyond their own work right now. As we become more overloaded, and more afraid, we drive each other to some state that is beyond exhaustion. But what people really need to do is look at problems from many perspectives, and that is simply not possible when people are overloaded and afraid.

It leads me to reflect on systems thinking. I have been focused on systems thinking for years. But right now I think that systems thinking is not possible—or at least not very easy—when people are overloaded, beyond exhaustion, and afraid.

I have also noticed that it is increasingly difficult to call people together. It simply takes longer for people to find the time to breathe together, think together, and then work through fears and a sense of being overwhelmed to reach creative ideas about how to solve problems or seize opportunities. I am curious whether you see these problems in your organization.

Another thing that happens is that, when we are afraid, we lose our desire to integrate with others. It just seems so obvious to me. When we fear, we forget about participation, we forget about people, and we forget about what people need. We just do whatever we think we need to do to survive.

I was in Silicon Valley not long ago. The glory days are over, of course. Did you know that the unemployment rate in Silicon Valley was around 27 percent mid-year 2003 and that local newspapers refused to publish that fact? And you can tell because traffic is almost nonexistent.

When they held Comdex, the big computer annual trade show, in Silicon Valley, they had banners announcing the conference slogan: “Take Charge, Take Control, Take Command.” When I saw that, I thought to myself, “Now, there is wishful thinking.” But it does express a deeply held wish by many that, as the times become more scary, we want to take back control from the events that seem to overwhelm us. Yet if we’re to truly regain any sense of control, we can only do that through slowing down, engaging more people, and thinking through how to develop intelligent solutions. But it seems we are in survival mode in many places right now. A close friend of mine, who was a very senior executive at Intel until recently, went back to visit for the funeral of his mentor. His mentor was a wonderful man who had brought in a number of mavericks and innovators in Intel’s early years. As this core of pioneers and innovators during the great days of Intel were all brought together again, they realized that today they would not be hired at Intel because they were too pioneering and too innovative. Right now the hiring profile is to find safe people who will say yes.

And so, I ask you, do you see in your organizations—or those you consult with—that power is being pulled back to the top? Or do you see that participation is growing and that trust in the people of the organization is on the increase? Which is it?

If you have heard me speak before, you have heard me say that, as risk levels increase, the only truly effective thing we can do is develop extraordinary trust in people. When things get tough, uncertain, turbulent, chaotic, the only thing we can trust is each other, our commitment, and our sense making. And where I learned this was by watching the Special Forces.

Now we have all seen how the Special Forces operate recently. But in the early 1990s I had the opportunity to visit the Special Forces. What I saw has stayed with me ever since. The leaders of the Special Forces knew that they had to send out young men who are very enthusiastic, well-trained, and well-selected into high-risk situations where there often would not be a commander present. They learned early on that, in that situation, you need to depend on the individual's intelligence. So they spend as much time teaching people to think well as in training them physically or in the use of weaponry.

I had occasion to observe the same principle when I went to visit a DuPont chemical plant, the manufacturer of fifteen very toxic chemicals. The way to create safety in that manufacturing environment is to build trust and fully engage people in making intelligent decisions. They trusted people to use their judgment and make good decisions as needed, without waiting for anyone above them in the organizational hierarchy.

So for me the lesson is clear. The way out of a difficult, chaotic, and uncertain time is to develop far greater capacity among everybody in our organizations. But I have to say I see it going the other way right now. And that is a tragedy because we will not get the security and safety that we think we need by letting all the power gravitate to the top.

As we deal with more stress and more fear in the future, we must learn that letting power go to the top is leading to doom and suicide. We cannot let that continue.

COPING WITH THE TIMES

I want to give you some ideas about how I think we might be able to cope with the times and deal with the stress, fear, and overload that we are facing.

My first idea is that *the only thing that we can really depend on is each other*. We cannot depend on plans. We cannot depend on technologies. And we cannot depend on anything except our own human capacity.

My second idea is that I believe *we need to start looking at every process we choose and ask whether it creates a stronger social fabric*. What does a proposed process, or a proposed decision, do to our relationships? You can just ask that question when you are making a decision. Ask questions like (1) Does this process we propose bring more people in? (2) Does it rely on people's intelligence? (3) Does it bring in more diversity? I do not mean just the kind of diversity we can see but different perceptions of what is going on in the world.

My third idea is to ask this: *What does this process do to help us make meaning together?* Right now, we too often do not make meaning together. We do not build community. So when we face a decision, we should ask: *Does this process allow us to make meaning together and to develop shared meaning?* I have found in my own work that, in the most difficult circumstances, if people can just come together and talk truthfully to each other, that is often enough. We do not need to fix a bad situation so much as simply get together and talk about it. And it is amazing how motivating it is to speak the truth in an organization with your colleagues. It does not matter how bad the situation is—it can be motivating if we know honestly what is going on and share that with each other.

CARING, CONTRIBUTION, AND CREATIVITY

I just came out of a board meeting in Chicago with my own non-profit institute. And we learned the importance of three C words—caring, contribution, and creativity. While I am not a big fan of catchy slogans or clever phrasing like that, I do believe it can be helpful here.

Caring

Does the process you are about to choose bring out people's caring? This word *caring* is strange. I ran across it, surprisingly, while reading about knowledge management. In several studies in knowledge management, the success of the effort hinges on *the willingness* of people to share their knowledge with colleagues. “Caring” became a critical factor in predicting whether knowledge would be shared or not.

People who feel cared for share their knowledge. That is not strange at all. If I care about this organization, then I will tell you what I know. If I feel that the leadership of the organization cares about me, I will tell you what I know. But if I feel that I am being treated like a robot or an automaton, or if I believe the organization lacks integrity, I will not share what I know. So caring and feeling cared about become fundamental in success. It is not the billions of investment on technology. It comes down to a very human need.

Contribution

People will make a contribution if they feel cared for. That is the second principle. Another way of saying this is to look at the process you are planning to use and ask “*What is the level of respect in the process for people's intelligence?*” and “*What is the expectation about what they can contribute?*” Are we just involving them because we feel that we must? Or are we doing it because we know that a process is useful only when it invites people to contribute and is respectful of them?

Creativity

When people feel cared for and they feel that their contributions matter, then they become more creative. Whether we go to school, come out of a terrible family situation, or come from a terrible national situation, if we feel respected and are asked to contribute, it is amazing how creative people can become. I have worked in underdeveloped nations where I am constantly amazed at how terrible circumstances can lead people to be creative if they feel they are cared for and feel that they are invited to contribute.

CONCLUSION

What I have offered here is intended to bring out the best in people in the worst of times. For all the overload, stress, and fear we face, if we can take the time to reflect on what we are doing and how we are doing it and we can come together and deal with the problems we face, then we will be up to the challenge.

I was just working with a nun who set up a wonderful program globally. She was feeling bad, as most people do who work globally and see how terrible the conditions are in the world for such a large part of humanity. She was trying to console some of her sisters. She acknowledged that people can become exhausted as they try to solve problems in the world. It can all seem so overwhelming.

But the point here is that you cannot afford to be too tired. You must be willing to assume leadership to relieve the fractures that exist in this world. And that principle holds as true for our organizations today as it does for those who work in underdeveloped nations. I would just ask you how willing you are to assume leadership to help people get together. Can you assume leadership in your organizations to help people slow down long enough for some reflection?

I think it is important now to know what to take a stand for these days. For me the answer is that we must be willing to take leadership to help people build stronger relationships and work together. I would ask you to look at what you are doing to see if you are participating with many of us in trying to strengthen the web of human relationships in this time.

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A SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR OD COMPETENCIES

Christopher G. Worley, William J. Rothwell, and Roland S. Sullivan

Directions: Use this assessment instrument to identify how important various competencies associated with success in OD are to your job in your organization and how much need you have for professional development. For each competency and work activity area listed in the left column below, *circle an appropriate response code in the right column to indicate how much need for professional development you feel you have in this work activity area.* Use the following scale for the right column: **1 = no need; 2 = some need; 3 = need; 4 = much need; 5 = very great need.** When you finish the rating, use it as a discussion tool with your immediate supervisor or other relevant stakeholders to identify areas for your professional development in OD and as a foundation for establishing a professional developmental plan in OD.

Need for Professional Development*No Need**Very Great Need***Competency Category: Self-Mastery***An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Be aware of how one's biases influence interaction | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Consult driven by their personal values | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Clarify personal boundaries | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Manage personal biases | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Manage personal defensiveness | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Recognize when personal feelings have been aroused | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Remain physically healthy while under stress | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Resolve ethical issues with integrity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Avoid getting personal needs met at the expense of the client | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Solicit feedback from others about your impact on them | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Competency Category: Ability to Measure Positive Change*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11. Choose appropriate evaluation methods | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Determine level of evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Ensure evaluation method is valid | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Ensure evaluation method is reliable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Ensure evaluation method is practical | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Competency Category: Clarify Data Needs*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16. Determine an appropriate data collection process | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|

Need for Professional Development

	<i>No Need</i>		<i>Very Great Need</i>		
	1	2	3	4	5
17. Determine the types of data needed	1	2	3	4	5
18. Determine the amount of data needed	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Facilitate Transition and Adoption*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

19. Help manage impact to related systems	1	2	3	4	5
20. Use information to create positive change	1	2	3	4	5
21. Transfer change competencies to internal consultant or client so learning is continuous	1	2	3	4	5
22. Manage/increase change momentum	1	2	3	4	5
23. Mobilize additional internal resources to support the ongoing change process	1	2	3	4	5
24. Determine the parts of the organization that warrant a special focus of attention	1	2	3	4	5
25. Ensure that learning will continue	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Integrate Theory and Practice*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

26. Present the theoretical foundations of change	1	2	3	4	5
27. Articulate an initial change process to use	1	2	3	4	5
28. Integrate research with theory and practice	1	2	3	4	5
29. Communicate implications of systems theory	1	2	3	4	5
30. Utilize a solid conceptual framework based on research	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Stay Current in Technology*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

31. Use the latest technology effectively	1	2	3	4	5
32. Use the Internet effectively	1	2	3	4	5

Need for Professional Development*No Need**Very Great Need***Competency Category: Ability to Work with Large Systems***An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 33. Facilitate large group (70–2,000 people) interventions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 34. Apply the competencies of international OD effectively | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 35. Function effectively as an internal consultant | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 36. Demonstrate the ability to conduct transorganizational development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 37. Demonstrate the ability to conduct community change and development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 38. Utilize a change model to guide whole system change or transformation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Competency Category: Participatively Create a Good Implementation Plan*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 39. Co-create an implementation plan that is (1) concrete; (2) simple; (3) clear; (4) measurable; (5) rewarded; and (6) consisting of logically sequenced activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|

Competency Category: Understand Research Methods*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40. Utilize appropriate mix of methods to ensure (1) efficiency; (2) objectivity; and (3) validity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 41. Utilize appropriate mix of data collection technology | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 42. Use statistical methods when appropriate | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Need for Professional Development*No Need**Very Great Need***Competency Category: Manage Diversity***An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

43. Facilitate a participative decision-making process	1	2	3	4	5
44. Be aware of the influences of cultural dynamics on interactions with others	1	2	3	4	5
45. Interpret cross-cultural influences in a helpful manner	1	2	3	4	5
46. Handle diversity and diverse situations skillfully	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Clarify Roles*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

47. Clarify the role of the consultant	1	2	3	4	5
48. Clarify the role of the client	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Address Power*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

49. Identify and engage formal power	1	2	3	4	5
50. Identify and engage informal power	1	2	3	4	5
51. Deal effectively with resistance	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Keep an Open Mind*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

52. Suspend judgment while gathering data	1	2	3	4	5
53. Suppress hurtful comments during data gathering	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Help Clients Own the Change Process*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

54. Reduce dependency on consultant	1	2	3	4	5
55. Instill responsibility for follow-through	1	2	3	4	5
56. Collaboratively design the change process	1	2	3	4	5

Need for Professional Development

	<i>No Need</i>		<i>Very Great Need</i>		
	1	2	3	4	5
57. Involve participants so they begin to own the process	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Be Comfortable with Ambiguity*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

58. Perform effectively in an atmosphere of ambiguity	1	2	3	4	5
59. Perform effectively in the midst of chaos	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Manage the Separation*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

60. Be sure customers and stakeholders are satisfied with the intervention's results	1	2	3	4	5
61. Leave the client satisfied	1	2	3	4	5
62. Plan for post-consultation contact	1	2	3	4	5
63. Recognize when separation is desirable	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: See the Whole Picture*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

64. Attend to the whole, parts, and even the greater whole	1	2	3	4	5
65. Quickly grasp the nature of the system	1	2	3	4	5
66. Identify the boundary of systems to be changed	1	2	3	4	5
67. Identify critical success factors for the intervention	1	2	3	4	5
68. Further clarify real issues	1	2	3	4	5
69. Link the change effort into ongoing processes of the enterprise	1	2	3	4	5
70. Begin to lay out an evaluation model in the initial phases	1	2	3	4	5
71. Know how data from different parts of the system impact each other	1	2	3	4	5
72. Be aware of systems wanting to change	1	2	3	4	5

Need for Professional Development*No Need**Very Great Need***Competency Category: Set the Conditions for Positive Change***An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

73. Clarify boundaries for confidentiality	1	2	3	4	5
74. Select a process that will facilitate openness	1	2	3	4	5
75. Create a non-threatening environment	1	2	3	4	5
76. Develop mutually trusting relationships with others	1	2	3	4	5
77. Use information to reinforce positive change	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Focus on Relevance and Flexibility*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

78. Distill recommendations from the data	1	2	3	4	5
79. Pay attention to the timing of activities	1	2	3	4	5
80. Recognize what data are relevant	1	2	3	4	5
81. Stay focused on the purpose of the consultancy	1	2	3	4	5
82. Continuously assess the issues as they surface	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Use Data to Adjust for Change*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

83. Use information to create positive change	1	2	3	4	5
84. Use intelligent information to take next steps	1	2	3	4	5
85. Establish a method to monitor change after the intervention	1	2	3	4	5
86. Use information to reinforce positive change	1	2	3	4	5
87. Gather data to identify the initial first steps of the transition	1	2	3	4	5

Need for Professional Development*No Need**Very Great Need***Competency Category: Be Available to Multiple Stakeholders***An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

88. Collaborate with internal/external OD professionals	1	2	3	4	5
89. Listen to others	1	2	3	4	5
90. Interpersonally relate to others	1	2	3	4	5
91. Use humor effectively	1	2	3	4	5
92. Pay attention to the spontaneous and informal	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Build Realistic Relationships*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

93. Build realistic relationships	1	2	3	4	5
94. Explicate ethical boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
95. Build trusting relationships	1	2	3	4	5
96. Relate credibly, demonstrating business acumen and conversancy	1	2	3	4	5

Competency Category: Interventions*An effective OD practitioner can . . .*

97. Convey confidence in one's intervention philosophy	1	2	3	4	5
98. Facilitate group processes	1	2	3	4	5
99. Intervene into the system at the right depth	1	2	3	4	5
100. Creatively customize tools and methods	1	2	3	4	5



FUTURE OD PRACTICE AND PRACTITIONER COMPETENCIES*

SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Purpose

Our world is changing at an accelerating rate, and in multiple dimensions. These emerging trends and forces are changing the context in which organizations function, and the requirements of their leaders for assistance from consultants. In 2003, a Delphi conference was carried out to provide a strategic perspective for the field and the practice of OD and for the continuing professional development of OD practitioners.

The prioritized outcomes of the four phases of the Delphi conference may be found at: www.sonoma.edu/programs/od/delphi/

An analytical summary of the Delphi outcomes, entitled “A Future-Responsive Perspective for Competent Practice in OD,” can be found in Chapter Seven.

*Based on outcomes of a Delphi conference moderated by Saul Eisen.

Instructions for Self-Assessment

Looking over the following list of future competencies, consider the following questions:

1. *Which items on the list of emerging competencies are most relevant and important in your own practice? Circle the scale number for each item toward the plus (+) if you believe it has a high degree of relevance or priority; toward the check (✓) if it has medium priority; or toward the minus (-) if you believe it will have little relevance or importance in your own practice.*
2. *For those items that you have marked as important, how prepared are you? Circle the scale number for each item toward the plus (+) if you believe you have a high degree of competence or mastery; toward the check (✓) if you feel adequately competent, though there is room for improvement; or toward the minus (-) if you sense a significant deficiency in your level of preparation.*

For those items that you have marked with a minus or a check, consider what professional development activities or programs would give you the required preparation. Develop concrete plans that make sense to you for engaging in that learning. Commit to those plans by writing a professional development plan for yourself that includes goals, activities, and time lines.

COMPETENCY AREAS FOR FUTURE RESPONSIVE PRACTICE IN OD

	<i>Priority</i>			<i>Competence</i>		
A. Parallel Interventions in Complex Human Systems						
1. Knowledge and skills required to design and lead complex interventions, using multiple parallel techniques that work with individuals, teams, large-group stakeholder conferences, trans-organizational and trans-domain events, in fast-cycle sustained coherent change, and based on action, reflection, and learning at each of these levels.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+
	1	2	3	1	2	3
	4	5	6	4	5	6
	7			7		
2. Ability to design and implement individual and organizational interventions that build capacity to think, make decisions, and take action systemically, that is, see the big picture; build in effective feedback loops; recognize or anticipate and adjust for unintended, delayed, and counterintuitive long-term consequences.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+
	1	2	3	1	2	3
	4	5	6	4	5	6
	7			7		
3. Knowledge of societies, communities, and social systems dynamics. The ability to convey the essence of “community” as a motivational concept. Deep understanding of the concept of “the tragedy of the commons” and how that is affected by factors such as mental models, structure, technology, and globalization.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+
	1	2	3	1	2	3
	4	5	6	4	5	6
	7			7		
4. Ability to support effective decision making for individuals, groups, teams, organizations, inter-organizations, and communities. Skills for rapid time-to-value decision-making models and methods.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+
	1	2	3	1	2	3
	4	5	6	4	5	6
	7			7		

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	Priority			Competence		
5. Strong program/project management methodology skills to manage complex business change initiatives that require firm attention to scope, cost, quality, and risk.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7			1	2	3
				4	5	6
				7		

B. Global, Trans-Domain, and Larger System Work

6. Ability to work ethically and courageously with inter-organization issues to create wider inclusive boundaries among stakeholders.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7			1	2	3
				4	5	6
				7		
7. Skill in bridge-building and alliance management, including developing trust across a wide range of constituents simultaneously.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7			1	2	3
				4	5	6
				7		
8. Awareness and skill related to working with the “larger” system, including contracting with the right persons for the right scope of work.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7			1	2	3
				4	5	6
				7		
9. Expanded knowledge of systems thinking to include a global perspective, how to build strategic alliances, and how to use large group methods when appropriate.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7			1	2	3
				4	5	6
				7		

C. Culture Work

10. Deep understanding of culture: how it influences behavior, how it develops and changes, and the connection between culture and performance.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7			1	2	3
				4	5	6
				7		
11. Understanding of culture as the core deep-structure organizing principle underlying all aspects of organizations—including hierarchies, reward systems, competitive strategies, technologies, work-flow structures, and shared belief systems.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7			1	2	3
				4	5	6
				7		

	<i>Priority</i>			<i>Competence</i>			
12. Ability to adapt to each unique cultural situation in applying OD knowledge, skills, and strategies.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Ability to join with organization participants in any change process as an intentional, evolving, collaborative reconstruction of shared ways of understanding and embodying meaning in their ways of working and being together.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

D. Self-as-Instrument, Continuous Learning, and Innovation

14. Effective continuous learning as needed to respond appropriately to emerging complex social needs and organizational dilemmas.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Commitment and skill for continuously reflecting on one's personal role as instrument of the work and doing one's personal and professional homework as needed to be fully available for the job of catalyzing wisdom in organizations and communities.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Ability to quickly scan a situation and produce innovative interventions that deal with that particular set of system dynamics.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Skill in the use of action research to learn on-the-fly and not just reapply techniques from another era.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

E. Use of Technology and Virtual Interventions

18. Proficiency in using virtual, online approaches or a blended online/onsite approach to address business challenges of geographically dispersed organizations through such means as conference calls, interactive websites, and collaborative planning tools.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Priority			Competence			
19. Knowledge of, and ability to use, practical and scalable (that is, for any-sized groups), tools and systems that facilitate systemic thinking and action, and efficient communication and collaboration.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Cutting-edge knowledge and application ability regarding computer-based information management and communication facilitation; the ability to stay current with continuously and rapidly evolving technologies and best practices in those areas.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

F. Coaching for Whole-Systems Leadership

21. Coaching skills to work with top-level managers in reformulating their management philosophies and styles.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. Ability to help leaders be congruent with emerging organizational forms that are self-organizing and in which most operational and change processes are self-managed at the periphery rather than at the core.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Skills for developing transformational leaders who are capable of championing change and transforming organizations.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

G. Dialogic Reflection and Action

24. Ability to use and promote reflection, dialogue, and exploration to understand issues, differences, and values dilemmas and not rush to find a single problem solution.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. Ability to facilitate conversations to create meaning and action—not only understanding.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Priority			Competence						
H. Accelerated Methods and Large-Group Work										
26. Skills in facilitating collaboration, decision making, problem solving, planning for the future, networking, teamwork, and team building, all with new methods that are faster and more effective; ability to train others throughout the organization to use these skills.	-	✓	+	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. Deep knowledge and skill in the design, management, and facilitation of large group interventions.	-	✓	+	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I. Purpose and Strategic Assessment										
28. Ability to identify and monitor both strategic and tactical metrics to assess whether objectives are met.	-	✓	+	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. Knowledge and skills to design and build outcomes measurement into contracts and to build client appreciation and funding for this part of the work.	-	✓	+	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
J. Multidisciplinarity										
30. Multidisciplinary skills from areas such as future studies, economic analysis, public policy formulation, and systems thinking.	-	✓	+	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. Awareness and acumen in operations, marketing, business, and finance, in addition to process skills.	-	✓	+							
K. Knowledge Management										
32. Understanding of the challenges of managing knowledge in an information-rich, fast-changing organizational environment.	-	✓	+	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	<i>Priority</i>			<i>Competence</i>			
33. Knowledge, skills, and social technologies for designing and implementing effective methods for generating and disseminating valid relevant knowledge in organizations.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

L. Appreciative Integral Change

34. Knowledge of the psychosocial dynamics of change so as to awaken and build on people's natural disposition toward development; minimizing resistance by working on the positive side of the process.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. Skills in building high-performance organizations that are also a great place to work and in articulating how this results in a win/win situation for the organization, the organization members, and customers and how a focus on both performance and people leads to competitive advantage.	-	✓	+	-	✓	+	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

A Note About the Delphi Conference Design

This Delphi conference was designed and moderated by Saul Eisen. The Delphi method generates responses to a sequence of questions that are put to a defined group of relevant experts. Their answers to each question are summarized and fed back to them, prioritized by the group, and then the prioritized list provides the context for the next question.

Panel participants in this Delphi conference represented a range of relevant expertise. Of the thirty-nine participants, twelve had experience and expertise as internal consultants, eighteen as external consultants, twenty-one as educators in OD, nineteen as managers, and four as futurists.

The sequence of questions considered by our panel were as follows:

- Phase 1 of this Delphi process provides an environment scan for organizations in a changing world. What are the most significant trends and forces that you believe will affect organizations during the next decade?
- Phase 2 considers possible implications of these trends—what significant challenges or opportunities will they create for organizations and their managers?
- Phase 3 considers possible implications for practice in organization development—what new or emerging intervention strategies and approaches will be required to respond effectively to these challenges and opportunities?
- Phase 4 considers possible implications for professional development in OD—what new or emerging competencies will be needed to implement these intervention strategies effectively?

We gratefully acknowledge the generous technical and professional support for this project provided by Lenny Lind, president of CoVision, whose WebCouncil environment (www.webcouncil.com) served as the communication medium for this Delphi project.

This self-assessment process is based on the work of Hoy Steele, a departed colleague. It is affectionately dedicated to his memory.



ABOUT THE EDITORS



William J. Rothwell is professor-in-charge of workforce education and development in the Department of Learning and Performance Systems on the University Park campus of The Pennsylvania State University. He leads a graduate emphasis in workplace learning and performance. He is also president of Rothwell & Associates, Inc. (see www.rothwell-associates.com), a full-service private consulting firm that specializes in all facets of workplace learning and performance.

Dr. Rothwell completed a B.A. in English at Illinois State University, an M.A. (and all courses for the doctorate) in English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, an M.B.A. at the University of Illinois at Springfield, and a Ph.D. degree with a specialization in employee training at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Before entering academe in 1993, Dr. Rothwell had twenty years of experience as a practitioner, serving first as training director for the Illinois Office of the Auditor General and later as assistant vice president and management development director for The Franklin Life Insurance Company, at that time a wholly owned subsidiary of a Fortune 50 multinational company.

Best-known for his extensive and high-profile work in succession management (see *Effective Succession Planning*, 2005), Dr. Rothwell has authored, co-authored, edited, or co-edited numerous books, book chapters, and articles. Among his most recent publications are the current ASTD competency study to define the workplace learning and performance field entitled *Mapping the Future* (with P. Bernthal and others, 2004), *Beyond Training and Development* (2nd ed.,

2005), *Competency-Based Human Resource Management* (with D. Dubois, 2004), *Linking Training to Performance* (with P. Gerity and E. Gaertner, 2004), *The Strategic Development of Talent* (with H. Kazanas, 2004), *Mastering the Instructional Design Process*, 3rd ed. (with H. Kazanas, 2004), *Improving On-the-Job Training*, 2nd ed. (with H. Kazanas, 2004), *What CEOs Expect from Corporate Training: Building Workplace Learning and Performance Initiatives That Advance Organizational Goals* (with J. Lindholm and W. Wallick, 2003), *Planning and Managing Human Resources*, 2nd ed. (with H.C. Kazanas, 2003), *Creating Sales Training and Development Programs: A Competency-Based Approach to Building Sales Ability* (with W. Donahue and J. Park, 2002), *The Workplace Learner: How to Align Training Initiatives with Individual Learning Competencies* (2002), and *Building Effective Technical Training: How to Develop Hard Skills Within Organizations* (with J. Benkowski, 2002). Dr. Rothwell is also a book series co-editor, with Roland Sullivan and Kris Quade, of the Pfeiffer book series, *Practicing Organization Change and Development*, and a book series co-editor, with Rita Richey and Tim Spannaus, of the Pfeiffer book series, *Using Technology in Training and Learning*.

Roland L. Sullivan experienced his first National Training Laboratory (NTL) Human Interaction Lab in 1962. Richard Beckhard, who first published the phrase “management of change,” recognized Roland to be among the first one hundred full-time change agents. Sullivan’s business purpose is to integrate economic and human realities in the transformation of corporations through the use of organization change and development (OCD). He defines OCD as whole system transformation utilizing values-based collaborative processes in the application of behavioral science wisdom to the adaptive enhancement of organizational features such as leadership, strategies, structures, business processes, and human cultures. In sum, he applies strength-focused change competencies to build with client systems extraordinary enterprises.

Sullivan did graduate work in OD at Loyola University and his post-graduate work at Pepperdine, the most known academic change program in the world. He looks forward to sharing his latest learning on the Pfeiffer website (www.practicingod.com) and his own website (www.rolandsullivan.com). Engage him for any reason at R@rolandsullivan.com.



ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

Billie T. Alban is president and senior partner of Alban and Williams, Ltd., Consultants to Organizations. In recent years, her practice has been focused on working with organizations and communities on large-scale change efforts, using highly participative methods, which increase the ownership of the new strategies, direction, and structure. Some of her clients include ITT, General Electric, Kraft General Foods, Bankers Trust, Johnson and Johnson, NASA, Mount Sinai Hospital, British Airways, Cathay Pacific Airways, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, Equitable Life, Hewlett-Packard, and INTEL. Ms. Alban has served in various staff and faculty positions at the Tavistock Institute in England, the National Training Laboratories, the Executive Development Programs and Graduate School of Management Programs for Columbia University, UCLA, Pepperdine University, and others. In addition to several publications, she edited with Barbara Bunker a special edition of the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* on large group interventions, now in its fifth printing. Her most recent book, with Barbara Bunker, is *Large Group Interventions: Engaging the Whole System for Rapid Change* (Jossey/Bass).

Juana Anguita, whose degree is in social psychology, is president of Anguita & Associates, a consulting firm in Santiago, Chile. She is founder and professor of the master's program in OD at the Universidad Diego Portales, the only such program in Latin America. She established the Leadership and OD

Institute and is an international consultant. She has written over forty articles and textbooks. She has been an OD practitioner and scholar, both nationally and internationally, for over twenty-five years. She is a mentor in Dick Beckhard's Mentoring Project at ODN. She can be reached at San Sebastian 2966 13 Floor, El Golf, Santiago, Chile; phone: 56-2-2342119; janguita@anguita.cl.

Mila N. Baker is a director at Pfizer in New York City. She has served as a member of the adjunct faculty at the University of Cincinnati and previously held senior positions in OD at the BSVHS in Jacksonville, Florida, and at Ethicon Endo-Surgery, a Johnson and Johnson Company. She has presented papers at many conferences and has written several internal publications. She is a member of the OD Network Board of Trustees.

Christina Barr, guided by her talent for integrating creativity and business acumen, founded Square One Solutions, Inc. Her firm guides and supports both individuals and organizations in creating environments where creativity and business discipline, chaos and structure, process and focus work in dynamic harmony. Ms. Barr and her team possess both the right-brain ability to solve problems and the left-brain capacity to engage in process and analysis. They apply this knowledge to integral coaching and consulting, creative and innovative modes of leadership, the development of learning organizations, and the art and practice of creating sustainable excellence. Ms. Barr has a BFA in graphic design from the University of Illinois Urbana/Champaign and an MA in organization development from the Fielding Graduate Institute. She is a Certified Integral Coach through New Ventures West and serves on the board of the Chicago Coach Federation.

Frank J. Barrett, Ph.D., is associate professor in the Graduate School of Business and Public Policy at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, where he is director of the Center for Positive Change. He is also a faculty member in the School of Human and Organizational Development at the Fielding Graduate Institute. He received his BA in government and international relations from the University of Notre Dame, his MA in English from the University of Notre Dame, and his Ph.D. in organizational behavior from Case Western Reserve University. Dr. Barrett has consulted to various organizations, including Nokia, Boeing, The U.S. Navy, Ford Motor Manufacturing Division, Bell South, Granite Construction, GlaxoWelcom, General Electric, British Petroleum, Johnson and Johnson, Price Waterhouse Coopers, BBC, The Council of Great Lakes Governors, Omni Hotels, The Cleveland Clinic Foundation, and University Hospitals of Cleveland. He has written and lectured widely on social constructionism, appreciative inquiry, organizational change, jazz improvisation, and organizational learning.

David L. Bradford is senior lecturer in organizational behavior and dean of the Executive Program on Leadership and Power at the Graduate School of Business at Stanford University. He has published *Managing for Excellence*, *Influence Without Authority*, and *Power Up: Transforming Organizations Through Shared Leadership* (all co-authored with Allan Cohen) as well as numerous articles. He was the founder and first executive director of the Organizational Behavior Teaching Society and first editor of their professional journal, *Journal of Management Education*. He is a member and has served on the board of directors of the NTL Institute. In addition to teaching and research, he has consulted for many organizations in the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors, including IBM, Levi Strauss, Raychem, Oracle for Small Business, Cisco Systems, Hewlett-Packard, Detroit Institute of Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Lynn Brinkerhoff is the vice president of HRSystemworks, a full-service HR firm, and co-founder of The Indian Institute, a non-profit organization helping to develop programs and institutions focused on the well-being of Native Americans. A graduate of the Pepperdine MSOD Program, she is a leadership coach, conflict mediator, and social venture entrepreneur, focusing for the past twenty years on researching and applying the most effective approaches to personal effectiveness. Ms. Brinkerhoff's previous work experiences include wilderness guide, dance instructor, international sales manager, and marketing executive. Her current work in interfaith ministry emphasizes the need to tend first to issues of emotional intelligence, personal autonomy, and authenticity so that one can better join with, or contribute to, the larger system. She is currently writing a book on individual development in organization development (ID in OD) with W. Warner Burke and John Scherer. She can be reached at brinkl@optonline.net.

W. Warner Burke is Edward Lee Thorndike Professor of Psychology and Education in the Department of Organization and Leadership at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York. Originally educated as a social-organizational psychologist (Ph.D., University of Texas, Austin), Dr. Burke is currently engaged in teaching, research, and consulting. He teaches leadership, organizational dynamics and theory, and organization change and consultation. His research focuses on multi-rater feedback, leadership, and organization change. Dr. Burke's consulting experience has been with a variety of organizations in business and industry, education, government, religious, medical systems, and professional services firms. Dr. Burke is the author of more than 130 articles and book chapters on organization development, training, change and organizational psychology, and conference planning; and author, co-author, editor, and co-editor of fourteen books. His latest book, published by Sage, is *Organization Change: Theory and Practice*. He is the recipient of numerous

awards, among them the Public Service Medal from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (1989), the Distinguished Contribution to Human Resource Development Award (1990), the Organization Development Professional Practice Area Award for Excellence—The Lippitt Memorial Award—from the American Society for Training and Development (1993), the Distinguished Scholar-Practitioner Award from the Academy of Management (2003), and the Organization Development Network's Lifetime Achievement Award (2003).

Steven H. Cady is the director of Bowling Green State University's Master of Organization Development Program, editor for the *Organization Development Journal*, and founder of the Passionate and Authentic Living Institute. He is committed to using cutting-edge approaches that inspire system-wide change in organizations and is actively pursuing research and practice that unleash passion at the individual and organizational levels. He publishes, teaches, and consults on topics of organizational behavior and psychology, change management, and organization development. Prior to receiving his Ph.D. in organizational behavior from Florida State University, Dr. Cady studied at the University of Central Florida, where he obtained an MBA and a BSBA in finance. He can be contacted at 419-372-9388; scady@cba.bgsu.edu.

Jeanne Cherbeneau, Ph.D., is president of Cherbeneau & Associates, an OD/HR consulting firm in La Jolla, California, where she specializes in executive coaching, leadership, change management, and strategic and succession planning. She has spent numerous years managing and consulting, internally and externally, with both profit and nonprofit organizations, in various industries, as well as educational institutions and public and private agencies. She has served as a member of Marshall Goldsmith's Alliance for Strategic Leadership (A4SL), on the board of the National OD Network, and as vice president of the Golden Gate Chapter of ASTD. She has also worked with community service organizations (president, Berkeley Rotary Club; board member, Berkeley-Albany YMCA) and educational institutions (Saybrook Graduate School). She is the author of several articles and chapters in such books as *The Promise of Diversity* and *Values and Ethics in Organization Development*. Contact her at JCherbenea@aol.com.

David Coghlan, Ph.D., is a faculty member of the School of Business Studies at the University of Dublin, Trinity College, where he teaches organization development and action research. His research interests focus on organization development, action research, clinical inquiry, action learning, reflective practice, practitioner research, and doing action research in one's own organization. He is on the editorial review board of the *OD Practitioner* and was associate editor-international of the *OD Journal* from 1996 to 2003. He has published

over sixty articles and book chapters. He has published several books, including *The Dynamics of Organizational Levels* (co-authored with Nicholas Rashford) in the Addison-Wesley OD series (1994); *Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization* (with Teresa Brannick, Sage, 2001), *Changing Healthcare Organizations* (with Eilish McAuliffe, Blackhall, 2003, 2005), and *Managers Learning in Action* (co-edited with T. Dromgoole, P. Joynt, & P. Sorensen, Routledge, 2004.)

David L. Cooperrider is professor and chair of the Department of Organizational Behavior-Weatherhead School of Management, Case Western Reserve University. He is past president of the National Academy of Management's Division of Organization Development and a co-founder of The Taos Institute. He has lectured and taught at Stanford University, MIT, the University of Chicago, Katholieke University in Belgium, Pepperdine University, Cambridge, and others. Professor Cooperrider has served as researcher and consultant to a wide variety of organizations, including Allstate, Cap Gemini Ernst and Young, Verizon, Yellow Roadway Corp., Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, McCann-Erickson, Nutrimental, World Vision, Cleveland Clinic, American Red Cross, and United Way of America. Most of these projects are inspired by the appreciative inquiry (AI) methodology for which Professor Cooperrider is best known. His dynamic ideas have been published in journals such as *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Human Relations*, *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *The OD Practitioner*, and in research series such as *Advances in Strategic Management*. He has published seven books and authored close to fifty articles and book chapters. Professor Cooperrider's most recent volumes include *Collaborating for Change: Appreciative Inquiry* (with Diana Whitney); *Organizational Courage and Executive Wisdom* and *Appreciative Leadership and Management* (both with Suresh Srivastva), and *International and Global OD* (with Peter Sorenson). He was recognized in 2000 as among "the top ten visionaries" in the field by *Training* magazine. In 2004 he received ASTD's top award for distinguished contribution to workplace learning and performance.

Thomas G. Cummings is professor and chair of the Management and Organization Department at the Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California. He has authored over sixty articles and nineteen books. Dr. Cummings is associate editor of the *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, president-elect and fellow of the Academy of Management, and is listed in *American Men and Women of Science* and *Who's Who in America*.

Katherine M. Curran, Ph.D., has been president of Resources for Creative Change, Inc., an organizational consulting firm, since 1992. Her work focuses on strategic change management, organizational politics, and executive coaching. Her for-profit client base ranges from small, high-technology

start-ups to global corporations such as 3M, Medtronic, Cargill, and Hasbro, in addition to European clients. Her public-sector work with governance transformation ranges from the federal government down to the city and county level. She holds a doctorate from The Fielding Institute and a two-year postgraduate certificate in group process and organization development from the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland.

Kathleen D. Dannemiller, passionate advocate for whole system change for more than thirty years, was founder and partner emeritus of Dannemiller Tyson Associates. Prior to her recent passing, she was a worldwide authority on the complexities of whole-systems change and how to implement these methodologies, having written numerous articles and the book, *Whole-Scale Change: Unleashing the Magic in Organizations*. Ms. Dannemiller was also a contributor to a new book, *The Change Champion's Field Guide: Strategies and Tools for Leading Change in Your Organization* (Best Practice Publications).

Karen J. Davis, a global organizational consultant for over thirty years, is on the faculty of the organization development and behavior master's program at Universidad Diego Portales in Chile. She is actively involved in the International Organization Development Association (IODA) and has served on the board of trustees of the Organization Development Network (ODN). She also serves on the board of a large healthcare corporation. Her life and her work are rooted in earth wisdom, in open space, and in global community. She describes herself as a "global citizen and gardener." Ms. Davis can be reached at kdavis@concentric.net.

W. Gibb Dyer, Jr., is the O. Leslie Stone Professor of Entrepreneurship and the academic director of the Center for Economic Self-Reliance in the Marriott School of Management at Brigham Young University. He received his B.S. and M.B.A. degrees from Brigham Young University and his Ph.D. in management philosophy from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Before coming to BYU, he was on the faculty at the University of New Hampshire, and he has served as a visiting professor at IESE (Instituto de Estudios Superiores de la Empresa) in Barcelona, Spain. He publishes widely on the topics of family business, entrepreneurship, organizational culture, and managing change in organizations, and his articles have appeared in many of the top journals in his field. He has authored several books, included the award-winning *Cultural Change in Family Firms*. His most recent book is *Consulting to Family Businesses* with Jane Hilburt-Davis. Because of his innovative approach to teaching, Dr. Dyer was awarded the 1990 Leavy Award for Excellence in Private Enterprise Education by the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge. Dr. Dyer is a recognized authority on family business and entrepreneurship and has been quoted in publications such as *Fortune*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and *Nation's*

Business. At Brigham Young University, he has served as chair of the Department of Organizational Behavior, director of the Master's Program in Organizational Behavior, and on the University Council on Faculty Rank and Status.

Terri Egan is an associate professor of applied behavioral science at Pepperdine University's Graziadio School of Business and Management and a core faculty member of the MSOD program. She teaches courses in leadership, team effectiveness, managerial decision making, critical thinking, business ethics, and organizational change and development. Her award-winning research has been published in a number of academic journals, including *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Organization Science*, *Journal of Public Administration*, and *The Information Society*. She is on the advisory board of the Clearinghouse for Information on Values and Ethics in Organization and Human Systems Development. In 2000, Ms. Egan combined her love of horses with her expertise and experience in management and leadership development to co-found Saddle Sojourns, Inc. (www.saddlesojourns.com), a full-service organization development and change management consultancy. Beyond rivers, rocks, and ropes courses, Saddle Sojourns integrates outdoor experiential training on horseback with classroom-style seminars designed to enhance professional and personal effectiveness.

Saul Eisen, Ph.D., provides consulting and facilitation to organizations and communities in the United States and other countries. Among his clients have been educational institutions, Fortune 500 companies, and community organizations. Dr. Eisen is a professor of psychology and the coordinator of the organization development master's program at Sonoma State University, providing professional preparation for consultants, trainers, and internal staff specialists. His work has been widely published in professional journals and books on organization development, and he is a frequent presenter at regional and national conferences. Dr. Eisen holds an MBA from UCLA and a Ph.D. in organizational behavior from Case-Western Reserve University. He is a member of the STS Roundtable, the National Organization Development Network, and the Bay Area Organization Development Network. He can be contacted at saul.eisen@sonoma.edu and his website at Sonoma State University is www.sonoma.edu/programs/od/.

Glenda H. Eoyang is founding executive director of the Human Systems Dynamics Institute, a network of individuals and organizations developing theory and practice at the intersection of complexity and social sciences. Since 1988, she has explored the world of complexity in physical systems and used the insights she gains to develop concepts, methods, tools, and techniques to improve innovation and productivity in human systems. Her published

works include *Coping with Chaos: Seven Simple Tools* (Lagumo, 1997); *Facilitating Organization Change: Lessons from Complexity Science* (Pfeiffer, 2001), which she wrote with Ed E. Olson; and numerous articles and lectures. She is also editor of and contributor to *Voices from the Field: An Introduction to Human Systems Dynamics* (HSD Institute Press, 2003). She can be reached at www.hsdinstitute.org or geoyang@hsdinstitute.org.

A **nne E. Feyerherm** is associate professor of organization and management at Pepperdine University, chair of the Management Department, and a core faculty of the MSOD program. She has published in several volumes of the JAI series on organization development and special issues and in journals such as the *Leadership Quarterly* and has presented research at national and international conferences. Her consulting practice is based in an appreciative inquiry methodology and has focused on change management, managing diversity, and trans-organizational issues. She can be contacted by e-mail at afeyerhe@pepperdine.edu or by phone at (310) 568-5545.

A **llan Foss** is the manager of leadership development for PPG Industries, Inc., in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In his role, Mr. Foss is responsible for implementing strategic initiatives to develop the breadth and depth of leadership talent across PPG. His efforts specifically target those individuals being developed as potential candidates for senior leadership roles within the company. Mr. Foss has extensive experience in implementing organization and individual development initiatives in the chemicals and pharmaceuticals industries. This experience includes designing comprehensive leadership development curricula, implementing multi-national high performance teams, implementing self-managed teams, and facilitating talent management initiatives. He earned his master of science degree in organization development from Bowling Green State University. He earned his bachelor's degree from Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona. He can be reached by e-mail at afoss@ppg.com.

R **onald E. Fry, Ph.D.**, is an associate professor of organizational behavior at the Weatherhead School of Management, where he directs the Center for Advances in Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and the new Master's Program in Positive Organization Development and Change. He was part of the group that originated the AI approach and continues to both apply and study the applications of AI in the field. He has recently co-edited *Appreciative Inquiry and Organizational Transformation: Reports from the Field*. (Greenwood, 2001). He and Professor David Cooperrider currently conduct the AI Certificate Program in Positive Change for Business and Society. He currently oversees AI applications in a variety of systems such as World Vision, Lubrizol, Imagine Uruguay, Roadway Express, and the U.S. Navy. Dr. Fry received his B.S. in engineering

from UCLA and his M.S. and Ph.D. from MIT prior to joining the Weatherhead School in 1978 and has been honored with the University Award for Outstanding Teacher in the Professional Schools.

William Gellermann has a Ph.D. in applied behavioral science from UCLA's Graduate School of Management, and an MBA in accounting and a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Washington. He has served on several university faculties, including Cornell, SUNY, and CUNY. For nearly forty years, he has been an OD consultant, doing work with business (Westvaco, General Foods, and the American Management Association), government, labor unions, and community groups. He co-authored the book *Values and Ethics in Organization and Human Systems Development* and has written numerous articles. He is currently vice president of the Communications Coordination Committee for the United Nations and is an ECOSOC representative to the UN.

David W. Jamieson is president of the Jamieson Consulting Group and adjunct professor of management, Pepperdine University. He has over thirty years of experience consulting to organizations on change, strategy, design, and human resources. He is a past national president of ASTD and past consultation division chair of the Academy of Management. Mr. Jamieson is co-author of *Managing Workforce 2000: Gaining the Diversity Advantage* (Jossey-Bass, 1991) and *The Complete Guide to Facilitation: Enabling Groups to Succeed* (HRD Press, 1998). He can be reached at 2265 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA, 90064; david.jamieson@pepperdine.edu; (310)-397-8502.

Soren Kaplan, Ph.D., is a co-founder of iCohere, a software and consulting firm that helps organizations create collaborative online communities. He works with corporations, universities, and non-profits to provide new ways to engage key stakeholders in communication, collaboration, learning, and knowledge-sharing, focused on facilitating and implementing positive organizational change. As a speaker and authority on collaboration, web communities, and online learning, Dr. Kaplan has presented at conferences, institutes, and universities, including the Organization Development National Conference, the American Society for Training and Development TechKnowledge conference, the e-Learning Forum, the Creative Education Foundation, Alliant International University, and the Harvard Business School. Prior to founding iCohere, he held numerous positions at Hewlett-Packard, including manager of business strategy services, where he led an internal consulting group that assisted management teams across the company with strategic planning and organization development. Dr. Kaplan holds master's and Ph.D. degrees in organizational psychology. He can be contacted directly at soren@icohere.com.

David Lipsky helps individuals, teams, and organizations get results. He accomplishes this by assisting people in identifying what they want to achieve, aligning their unique abilities, and taking action to achieve success. Key focus areas include organizational change, employee engagement and branding, internal consulting, and performance management. He is currently the director of organization development at Sony Electronics. Dr. Lipsky has also worked at The Bowery Savings Bank, The American Institute of Banking, KPMG Peat Marwick, and Merrill Lynch. He received his undergraduate degree from Cornell University in human ecology and received a Ph.D. in applied psychology from Hofstra University focusing on leadership effectiveness and success. He currently lives in Woodbury, New York, and can be reached at DavidLipsky@am.sony.com.

Marty Mattare has spent more than twenty-five years in the business world in senior management positions for business startups and entrepreneurial divisions of large organizations. She also was the principal in a consulting company for many years, providing services in organizational positioning, hiring, and staffing. Drawing on her extensive management background, Ms. Mattare has been an instructor for the past several years in the College of Business at Frostburg State University, a constituent institution of the University System of Maryland. She currently teaches a range of courses in the master's and undergraduate level in communication, organization development, and human resource management. She also consults to nonprofit organizations in evaluation and staff development and offers MBTI® workshops and training. Ms. Mattare is currently a doctoral student in human and organization development at Fielding Graduate Institute. She may be contacted at mmattare6@aol.com.

Gary N. McLean, Ed.D., is a professor and coordinator of human resource development and adult education at the University of Minnesota, St. Paul. He has been an independent consultant, primarily in training and organization development, for over thirty years as a principal consultant with ECCO Consulting and is a Registered Organization Development Consultant (RODC). A frequent speaker and author, with over 150 articles and twenty books, and actively involved in international HRD, he is past editor of *Human Resource Development Quarterly* and *Human Resource Development International*. He has served as president of the Academy of Human Resource Development and the International Management Development Association.

Allen Orr, Ph.D., has been an organization development consultant since 1988, working in the fields of large-scale culture change, change management, and strategic planning. His client list ranges from non-profits to For-

tune 200 companies. His mission is to enable organizations to improve performance while becoming healthier human habitats. Dr. Orr is also a cultural anthropologist, specializing in planned culture change. He conducts field work in Asia and the United States on organizational culture formation, persistence, and change. He has studied the strategies used by individuals to achieve the highest levels of career success despite coming from backgrounds that do not usually favor such success. Dr. Orr earned his Ph.D. in applied cultural anthropology at Columbia University, an M.Ed. from Teachers College, and a B.A. in communications from Auburn University. He can be reached by e-mail at allenorr@patmedia.net.

Udai Pareek, Ph.D., is chairman of the Academy of Human Resource Development (promoted by the National HRD Network of India) and distinguished visiting professor at the Indian Institute of Health Management Research, Jaipur, India. He is chairman of the Governing Board of the Institute of Developmental Research and Statistics, Jaipur, and vice president of the Management Board of IIHMR. He is advisory member for Asia and the Middle East of Human Resource Development International. He is also a member of the Academic Advisory Board of the Global Committee on the Future of Organization Development (sponsored by the OD Institute in collaboration with the OD Network and the International OD Association). He is chairman of HR LABS of EMTI, New Delhi. He is editor of the *Journal of Health Management* and has just finished his term as consulting editor of the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*. He is on the editorial boards of the *Indian Journal of Clinical Psychology* and the *Indian Journal of Training and Development*. He has authored or edited about fifty books and more than 350 papers. He has been given several national awards and has been cited in a large number of national and international biographical reference books.

Kristine Quade is an independent consultant who combines her background as an attorney with a master's degree in organization development from Pepperdine University and twenty years of practical experience. Recognized as the 1996 Minnesota Organization Development Practitioner of the Year, Ms. Quade teaches in six international OD programs. Along with others, she self-published *The Essential Handbook: Behind the Scenes of Large Group Event* (1996); she also co-authored *The Conscious Consultant: Mastering Change from the Inside Out* (2002). Her third book, entitled *Organization Development at Work: Conversations on the Values, Applications, and Future of OD*, is co-authored with Margaret Wheatley, Robert Tannenbaum, and Paula Griffin (2003). Ms. Quade is a member of National Training Laboratories and serves on the Board of Trustees for the Organization Development Network and can be reached at KrisQuade@aol.com.

T.V. Rao is currently chairman of T V Rao Learning Systems Pvt. Ltd. and chairman, Academic Council, Academy of Human Resources Development, Ahmedabad. He was professor at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, India, for over twenty years, beginning in 1973. Dr. Rao is the founder president of the National HRD Network, a body with about thirty chapters all over India and was president of the Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science (ISABS). Dr. Rao also was a visiting faculty member at the Indian Business School, Hyderabad. His consulting experience includes designing and implementing performance management and other HR systems. He has authored over thirty books in the areas of HRD, performance management, 360-degree feedback, education management, organizational behavior, and entrepreneurship. Some of his books include *HRD Audit* (Sage India), *Performance Management* (Sage India), *Organization Development in India* (co-editor, Response Books, Sage India), *360-Degree Feedback and Performance Management Systems* (excel), and *The HRD Missionary* (Oxford & IBH).

Edgar Schein was educated at the University of Chicago, at Stanford University—where he received a master's degree in psychology—and at Harvard University, where he received his Ph.D. in social psychology. At present, he is Sloan Fellows Professor of Management Emeritus and part-time senior lecturer at the Sloan School of Management (MIT). Dr. Schein has been a prolific researcher, writer, teacher, and consultant. Besides his numerous articles in professional journals, he has authored fourteen books, including *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (1985, 1992, 2004), *Process Consultation*, Vols. 1 and 2 (1969, 1987, 1988), *Process Consultation Revisited* (1999), and *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide* (1999). He was co-editor with the late Richard Beckhard of the Addison-Wesley Series on Organization Development, which has published over thirty titles since its inception in 1969.

His consultation focuses on organizational culture, organization development, process consultation, and career dynamics, and among his past and current clients are major corporations both in the United States and overseas. He has received many honors and awards for his writing, most recently the Lifetime Achievement Award in Workplace Learning and Performance of the American Society of Training Directors (2000), the Everett Cherington Hughes Award for Career Scholarship from the Careers Division of the Academy of Management (2000), and the Marion Gislason Award for Leadership in Executive Development from the Boston University School of Management Executive Development Roundtable (2002).

John J. Scherer, innovative consultant, author, educator, and keynote presenter, has been in personal and organization development work for over twenty-five years and is a pioneer in the emerging area that shares the name

of his 1992 book, *Work and the Human Spirit*. Co-creator in 1973 of one of the first competency-based graduate degree programs in applied behavioral science at Whitworth College, he also co-developed in 1982 the *People-Performance Profile* and the Organization Effectiveness Program. Ron Lippitt, John's mentor, called the computer-based data-feedback process "one of the most significant contributions to our field since Kurt Lewin." He lives in Seattle, where he heads The Scherer Leadership Center (www.schererenter.com), conducting seminars designed to "equip leaders to transform their lives and their organizations."

Beverly Scott is a consultant to organizations and senior leaders who brings clarity, focus, integrity, and a sense of purpose to her work. She has over twenty-five years of experience in a full range of organization development services. Her current work includes coaching and development of internal and external consultants, leadership development and coaching, team building, and strategic organization alignment and change. She has used her consulting experience in the private, public, and volunteer sectors. Her most recent book, *Consulting on the Inside*, was published in 2000 by ASTD. She is active in both the local and national OD Network, currently serving as past chair of the National Board of Trustees. Ms. Scott has presented her work at recent conferences of the Organization Development Network, the American Society for Training and Development, Global Business and Technology Association, Institute of Management Consultants, and the Association for Internal Management Consultants. She has served as a speaker and facilitator for many professional association meetings. She has masters' degrees in sociology and in human resource development and has completed doctoral course work at the University of Michigan.

Terrence Seamon is the training and OD manager for NUI Elizabethtown Gas in Union, New Jersey. He comes to this role with over twenty years of experience in several industries, including energy, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, and telecommunications. A strategic business partner, he has worked with all levels in an organization and all functional areas from sales to R&D to operations to administration. Before NUI, he worked at AT&T, where he was the culture manager in the Organizational & People Effectiveness Team in the corporate HR department. Mr. Seamon's interests include organizational learning and culture, community building, collaboration and negotiation, knowledge transfer, change management, performance improvement, and process management, as well as innovation and creativity. He holds an undergraduate degree in human communication and a master's degree in creative arts education, both from Rutgers University.

Charles Seashore, Ph.D., is chair of the faculty of the doctoral program in human and organization development of the Fielding Graduate Institute. He is also a founding member of the faculty in the American University/NTL

Institute master's program in organization development. Dr. Seashore serves as an OD consultant to many health care organizations, including academic medical centers and teaching hospitals. He is a past chair of the board of the NTL Institute and co-authored the book *What Did You Say? The Art of Giving and Receiving Feedback* with colleagues Edith Seashore and Jerry Weinberg. He was the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Organization Development Network in 2004.

Mary Nash Shawver, M.S., M.Ed., (mshawver@thenashgroup.com), has sixteen years' experience in upper-level management and leadership positions in the private sector as well as the public sector, including state government. In her consulting practice, she focuses on facilitating and enhancing effectiveness of individuals, teams, and organizations. An experienced, effective teacher and facilitator of workshops for preschoolers through adults, Ms. Shawver also draws on her strong background in research and evaluation as well as her experience as a qualified user of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®). She is currently a doctoral student at Fielding Graduate Institute's School of Human and Organization Development.

Julie Smendzuik-O'Brien serves as organizational improvement program coordinator with the Minnesota state colleges and universities, the largest public higher education system in Minnesota. She works with the senior leadership of the thirty-three institutions comprising the system, offering facilitation, strategic planning, quality management, appreciative inquiry, large scale change, team building, and business process improvement services. Previously, she served two other Minnesota state agencies in professional, mid-level, and senior-level management positions and consulted with federal and state agencies in Washington, D.C., and Michigan, respectively. She holds a master's degree in public administration, has a Certified Quality Manager designation from the American Society for Quality, serves as evaluator for the Minnesota Council for Quality Award (2003), and is a member of the national and Minnesota OD Networks. She can be reached by e-mail at Julie.Smendzuik@so.mnscu.edu.

Robert Tannenbaum (1915–2003) was one of the founders of organization development as a field of study, research, and practice; his humanistic vision profoundly influenced the field—and continues to do so. In the 1950s he was instrumental in establishing UCLA's Department of Behavioral Science in Management as a key center of thought and practice in the fields of organization development and leadership training. During his tenure at UCLA, he helped found the Western Training Labs, which developed a version of T-groups that became known as Sensitivity Training. His work influenced and supported the evolution of the NTL Institute of Applied

Behavioral Science, fostering the increased understanding of self and of one's impact on others as essential competencies for management and leadership. After his retirement from UCLA, he continued consulting and counseling executives and change agents on the use of self in facilitating organizational effectiveness.

Dr. Tannenbaum's seminal contributions always began with the ones he made interpersonally—with students, colleagues, and clients—and his everyday interactions with almost everyone he encountered. However, they also include his written words. His 1961 book, with Irving Weschler and Fred Massarik, *Leadership and Organization*, was significant in making the academic and practical argument for the use of group dynamics in developing leaders and teaching them how to operate effectively. His articles (with Warren Schmidt) "How to Choose a Leadership Pattern" (1958) and "Management of Differences" (1960) both set *Harvard Business Review* records for reprint requests and were reprinted in publications worldwide. In 1985 he produced a seminal book (with Newton Margulies and Fred Massarik) titled *Human Systems Development*.

He received many honors that he valued greatly but about which he seldom talked. They included an honorary doctorate from the Saybrook Institute, Fellow of the NTL Institute, and Diplomate from the American Board of Professional Psychology. He was the first recipient of the National OD Network's Lifetime Achievement Award, in 1999.

A **anna Tavis** is a global organization effectiveness and leadership development consultant and executive coach who successfully delivers long-term business results by aligning business strategy and organization culture with competency-based human performance. She is also head of global talent management and management and leadership development at Nokia, Finland. Dr. Tavis speaks four languages and has lived and worked in the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. She brings a depth of insight, wisdom, and humor to all the practical applications of her work. Her consulting experience includes external consultancy with many Fortune 500 companies, a senior internal consulting position for a global technology conglomerate, and extensive academic, publishing, and speaking expertise. Her degrees include a doctorate from Princeton University, two master's from Princeton, an executive MBA certificate from the University of Southern California, and undergraduate degrees from Hertzen University, Russia, Bradford University, UK, and Dartmouth College. She can be reached by e-mail at anna.tavis@nokia.com.

G **reg Thompson** has spent twelve years in leadership roles in social service agencies, nine years in corporate training, and is currently a consultant to small and mid-sized organizations. His consulting work, designing performance feedback systems and facilitating emotional intelligence assessments,

is informed by his master's degree in organization development and his ongoing development of self as a Ph.D. student in human and organization development at Fielding Graduate Institute. He can be reached by e-mail at Research@esme-greg.com.

Ann Van Eron is principal and founder of Potentials, an international coaching and organization development consulting firm dedicated to helping organizations and the individuals working in them to better understand and fully develop their capabilities. She has worked with corporations, government agencies, and educational institutions. In addition to coaching and consulting, she facilitates team development interventions with organizations internationally. She develops and facilitates training programs on many topics, including effective interpersonal communication, change management, coaching, management and leadership skills, and diversity initiatives. Prior to founding Potentials, Dr. Van Eron served as a corporate officer with a Fortune 50 service corporation. She completed her bachelor's degree at Georgetown University and earned her M.A. and Ph.D. in organizational psychology from Columbia University. She can be contacted at www.Potentials.com or 312/856-1155.

D.D. Warrick is a professor of management and organization change at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, where he holds the lifetime title of President's Teaching Scholar and has received many Outstanding Teaching Awards and the Chancellor's Award, the highest award granted by the university. He is also the president of the Warrick Agency Training and Development Company and has been a consultant and trainer for many Fortune 500 companies, smaller organizations, public agencies, and universities. Dr. Warrick is the author or co-author of five books and numerous articles and has received many awards for his contributions, including a number of commendations from the Academy of Management, the David Bradford/McGraw-Hill Outstanding Educator Award, and the Outstanding Organization Development Practitioner of the Year and Outstanding Human Resources Professional of the Year awards. He received his BBA and MBA degrees from the University of Oklahoma and doctorate from the University of Southern California.

Ian Weiss is one of the rare people who can say he is a consultant, speaker, and author, and mean it. His work has taken him to fifty-one countries and forty-nine states. *The New York Post* has called him "one of the most highly respected independent consultants in the country," and *Success* magazine, in an editorial devoted to his work, called him "a worldwide expert in executive education." His friends call him "the rock star of consulting." Mr. Weiss has consulted with the best-of-the-best: Mercedes-Benz, Merck, The Federal Reserve, Hewlett-Packard, Chase, American Press Institute, American

Institute of Architects, and over three hundred other major organizations. He is a highly sought-after keynote speaker. His twenty-one books include the ten-year best-seller *Million Dollar Consulting* (McGraw-Hill), as well as the seven-book *The Ultimate Consultant* series (Pfeiffer). He can be reached through his website at www.summitconsulting.com.

Michael Welp, Ph.D., leads EqualVoice” (www.equalvoice.com), an organization development consulting firm recognized for its transformative approaches to conflict. Known for his authentic, trust-building style, he works to develop leadership in everyone. He is also a founding principal of White Men as Full Diversity Partners”, a consulting firm that has pioneered work on engaging white men as full diversity partners inside organizations (www.wmfdp.com). Dr. Welp’s background includes a year of facilitating interracial team building for South African corporations. He is an adjunct faculty member at Capella University. He is a recipient of the Minnesota Organization Development Practitioner of the Year Award and is a professional member of NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science.

Margaret Wheatley, Ed.D., writes, teaches, and speaks about radically new practices and ideas for organizing in chaotic times. She works to create organizations of all types where people are known as the blessing, not the problem. She is president of The Berkana Institute, a charitable global leadership foundation serving life-affirming leaders, and has been an organizational consultant for many years, as well as a professor of management in two graduate programs. Her newest book, *Finding Our Way: Leadership for an Uncertain Time*, will be released in January 2005. Dr. Wheatley’s work also appears in two award-winning books, *Leadership and the New Science* (1992, 1999) and *A Simpler Way* (with Myron Kellner-Rogers, 1996), plus several videos and articles. She draws many of her ideas from new science and life’s ability to organize in self-organizing, systemic, and cooperative modes. And, increasingly, her models for new organizations are drawn from her understanding of many different cultures and spiritual traditions. Her articles and work can be accessed at www.margaretwheatley.com or by phoning 801-377-2996.

Dale Wissman is the corporate development officer for the Air Force Research Laboratory, Wright-Patterson AFB. He consults with the laboratory leadership on organization development issues, including strategic planning, leadership development, cultural assessment, organizational effectiveness, and executive coaching. In this role he provides overall management guidance and technical direction to a team of ten organizational consultants, who facilitate over one hundred organizational workshops per year. He can be reached by e-mail at dalewissman@sbcglobal.net.

Catherine Woods has over ten years of international experience in internal OD and has held management positions in the IT, energy, financial services, and the travel industries. She is highly skilled at helping executives develop business strategies and redesign organizations to enhance bottom-line effectiveness. Working within multinational organizations, Ms. Woods bridges needs of diverse constituencies while developing practical, business-driven solutions. In 2000, her achievements were recognized by the Organization Development Institute, which named her Grand Award Winner of the Worldwide OD Project of the Year. Ms. Woods has been a featured speaker at NYU and many professional conferences. She has lived and worked throughout Europe and the New York area and has recently returned to her hometown of Anchorage, Alaska. She can be reached by e-mail at aknl@gci.net.

Christopher G. Worley (Ph.D., University of Southern California) is a manager, professor, author, and consultant. He is director of the Master of Science in Organization Development (MSOD) program and an associate professor of organization theory at the Graziadio School of Business and Management at Pepperdine University. In addition to over thirty articles, chapters, and presentations, Dr. Worley is co-author of *Integrated Strategic Change* and *Organization Development and Change*, the leading textbook on organization development. He is currently serving as chair of the Academy of Management's Organization Development and Change Division. His recent consulting clients include Microsoft, American Healthways, and the Canadian Broadcasting Company.



ABOUT THE SERIES EDITORS

William J. Rothwell is professor in charge of workforce education and development in the Department of Learning and Performance Systems in the College of Education on the University Park campus of The Pennsylvania State University. He leads a graduate emphasis in workplace learning and performance. He is also president of Rothwell & Associates, Inc. (see www.rothwell-associates.com), a full-service private consulting firm that specializes in all facets of workplace learning and performance.

Dr. Rothwell completed a B.A. in English at Illinois State University, an M.A. (and all courses for the doctorate) in English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, an M.B.A. at the University of Illinois at Springfield, and a Ph.D. degree with a specialization in employee training at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Before entering academe in 1993, Dr. Rothwell had twenty years of experience as a practitioner, serving first as training director for the Illinois Office of Auditor General and later as assistant vice president and management development director for The Franklin Life Insurance Company, at that time a wholly owned subsidiary of a Fortune 50 multinational company.

Best-known for his extensive and high-profile work in succession management (see *Effective Succession Planning*, 2005), Dr. Rothwell has authored, co-authored, edited, or co-edited numerous books, book chapters, and articles. Among his most recent publications is the current ASTD competency study to define the workplace learning and performance field, entitled *Mapping the Future* (with P. Bernthal and others, 2004), *Competency-Based Human Resource Management* (with D. Dubois,

2004), *Linking Training to Performance* (with P. Gerity and E. Gaertner, 2004), *The Strategic Development of Talent* (with H. Kazanas, 2004), *Mastering the Instructional Design Process*, 3rd ed. (with H. Kazanas, 2004), *Improving On-the-Job Training*, 2nd ed. (with H. Kazanas, 2004), *What CEOs Expect from Corporate Training: Building Workplace Learning and Performance Initiatives That Advance Organizational Goals* (with J. Lindholm and W. Wallick, 2003), *Planning and Managing Human Resources*, 2nd ed. (with H.C. Kazanas, 2003), *Creating Sales Training and Development Programs: A Competency-Based Approach to Building Sales Ability* (with W. Donahue and J. Park, 2002), *The Workplace Learner: How to Align Training Initiatives with Individual Learning Competencies* (2002), and *Building Effective Technical Training: How to Develop Hard Skills Within Organizations* (with J. Benkowski, 2002).

Dr. Rothwell is also a book series coeditor, with Rita Richey and Tim Spannaus, of the Pfeiffer book series *Using Technology in Training and Learning*.

Kristine Quade brings her many years of experience in helping organizations resolve phenomena caused by chaos within complex adaptive human systems in workable ways so that people can understand and knowingly take action. Her expertise comes from her background as a practicing attorney, combined with a master's degree in organization development from Pepperdine University and a variety of internal corporate senior management assignments, including having served as the vice president of OD at a Fortune 500 company. Her external consulting practice centers on work with senior management teams and whole systems work in over twenty countries.

Ms. Quade has always been in the forefront of whole systems change; her work has included facilitation of small senior teams facing serious and complex issues up to groups of 1,500 focused on developing significant, ground-breaking change. She is an expert in a variety of flexible and tested intervention methods.

She has authored three books: *The Essential Handbook: Behind the Scenes of Large Group Event*, *The Conscious Consultant: Mastering Change from the Inside Out*, and *Organization Development at Work: Conversations on the Values, Applications, and Future of OD*, co-authored with Margaret Wheatley and Robert Tannenbaum.

Recognized as the 1996 Minnesota Organization Development Practitioner of the Year, Ms. Quade teaches in the master's and doctoral programs at Pepperdine University, the University of St. Thomas, Bowling Green University, and Mankato State University. She is a frequent presenter at the Organization Development National Conference (including being the keynote speaker in 1998), the International Organization Development Congress in Mexico, and the International Association of Facilitators. She currently serves as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Organization Development Network and is a member of the NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science. Ms. Quade can be reached at KrisQuade@aol.com or www.QuantumChange.us.



ABOUT THE BOARD MEMBERS

David L. Bradford is senior lecturer in organizational behavior and dean of the Executive Program on Leadership and Power at the Graduate School of Business, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California. He is co-author (with Allan R. Cohen) of *Managing for Excellence: Influence Without Authority*, and *POWER UP: Transforming Organizations Through Shared Leadership*.

W. Warner Burke is the Edward Lee Thorndike Professor of Psychology and Education and coordinator of the graduate programs in social-organizational psychology at Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York. His most recent publication is *Organization Change: Theory and Practice*.

Lenneal Henderson is currently distinguished professor of government and public administration at the University of Baltimore. He is also a faculty member of the Fielding Graduate Institute in the programs on human and organization development and educational leadership and change. He has conducted organization development training and consulting in Europe, Africa, India, and Latin America. He is the author of *Administrative Advocacy* and a forthcoming book on OD in the public sector.

Edith Whitfield Seashore is an organization consultant and co-founder (with Morley Segal) of AUNTL Master's Program in Organization Development. She is co-author of *What Did You Say?* and *The Art of Giving and Receiving Feedback* and co-editor of *The Promise of Diversity*.

Christopher G. Worley is director, MSOD Program, Pepperdine University, Malibu, California. He is co-author of *Organization Development and Change* (8th ed.), with Tom Cummings, and of *Integrated Strategic Change*, with David Hitchin and Walter Ross.



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HOW TO USE THE CD-ROM

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

PC with Microsoft Windows 98SE or later

Mac with Apple OS version 8.6 or later

USING THE CD WITH WINDOWS

To view the items located on the CD, follow these steps:

1. Insert the CD into your computer's CD-ROM drive.
2. A window appears with the following options:
 - Contents: Allows you to view the files included on the CD-ROM.
 - Software: Allows you to install useful software from the CD-ROM.
 - Links: Displays a hyperlinked page of websites.
 - Author: Displays a page with information about the Author(s).
 - Contact Us: Displays a page with information on contacting the publisher or author.
 - Help: Displays a page with information on using the CD.
 - Exit: Closes the interface window.

If you do not have autorun enabled, or if the autorun window does not appear, follow these steps to access the CD:

1. Click Start ⇄ Run.
2. In the dialog box that appears, type `d: < \\ > start.exe`, where d is the letter of your CD-ROM drive. This brings up the autorun window described in the preceding set of steps.
3. Choose the desired option from the menu. (See Step 2 in the preceding list for a description of these options.)

IN CASE OF TROUBLE

If you experience difficulty using the CD-ROM, please follow these steps:

1. Make sure your hardware and systems configurations conform to the systems requirements noted under "System Requirements" above.
2. Review the installation procedure for your type of hardware and operating system.

It is possible to reinstall the software if necessary.

To speak with someone in Product Technical Support, call 800-762-2974 or 317-572-3994 M-F 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. EST. You can also get support and contact Product Technical Support through our website at www.wiley.com/techsupport.

Before calling or writing, please have the following information available:

- Type of computer and operating system
- Any error messages displayed
- Complete description of the problem.

It is best if you are sitting at your computer when making the call.



Pfeiffer Publications Guide

This guide is designed to familiarize you with the various types of Pfeiffer publications. The formats section describes the various types of products that we publish; the methodologies section describes the many different ways that content might be provided within a product. We also provide a list of the topic areas in which we publish.

FORMATS

In addition to its extensive book-publishing program, Pfeiffer offers content in an array of formats, from fieldbooks for the practitioner to complete, ready-to-use training packages that support group learning.

FIELDBOOK Designed to provide information and guidance to practitioners in the midst of action. Most fieldbooks are companions to another, sometimes earlier, work, from which its ideas are derived; the fieldbook makes practical what was theoretical in the original text. Fieldbooks can certainly be read from cover to cover. More likely, though, you'll find yourself bouncing around following a particular theme, or dipping in as the mood, and the situation, dictate.

HANDBOOK A contributed volume of work on a single topic, comprising an eclectic mix of ideas, case studies, and best practices sourced by practitioners and experts in the field.

An editor or team of editors usually is appointed to seek out contributors and to evaluate content for relevance to the topic. Think of a handbook not as a ready-to-eat meal, but as a cookbook of ingredients that enables you to create the most fitting experience for the occasion.

RESOURCE Materials designed to support group learning. They come in many forms: a complete, ready-to-use exercise (such as a game); a comprehensive resource on one topic (such as conflict management) containing a variety of methods and approaches; or a collection of like-minded activities (such as icebreakers) on multiple subjects and situations.

TRAINING PACKAGE An entire, ready-to-use learning program that focuses on a particular topic or skill. All packages comprise a guide for the facilitator/trainer and a workbook for the participants. Some packages are supported with additional media—such as video—or learning aids, instruments, or other devices to help participants understand concepts or practice and develop skills.

- *Facilitator/trainer's guide* Contains an introduction to the program, advice on how to organize and facilitate the learning event, and step-by-step instructor notes. The guide also contains copies of presentation materials—handouts, presentations, and overhead designs, for example—used in the program.

- *Participant's workbook* Contains exercises and reading materials that support the learning goal and serves as a valuable reference and support guide for participants in the weeks and months that follow the learning event. Typically, each participant will require his or her own workbook.

ELECTRONIC CD-ROMs and web-based products transform static Pfeiffer content into dynamic, interactive experiences. Designed to take advantage of the searchability, automation, and ease-of-use that technology provides, our e-products bring convenience and immediate accessibility to your workspace.

METHODOLOGIES

CASE STUDY A presentation, in narrative form, of an actual event that has occurred inside an organization. Case studies are not prescriptive, nor are they used to prove a point; they are designed to develop critical analysis and decision-making skills. A case study has a specific time frame, specifies a sequence of events, is narrative in structure, and contains a plot structure—an issue (what should be/have been done?). Use case studies when the goal is to enable participants to apply previously learned theories to the circumstances in the case, decide what is pertinent, identify the real issues, decide what should have been done, and develop a plan of action.

ENERGIZER A short activity that develops readiness for the next session or learning event. Energizers are most commonly used after a break or lunch to stimulate or refocus the group. Many involve some form of physical activity, so they are a useful way to counter post-lunch lethargy. Other uses include transitioning from one topic to another, where “mental” distancing is important.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACTIVITY (ELA) A facilitator-led intervention that moves participants through the learning cycle from experience to application (also known as a Structured Experience). ELAs are carefully thought-out designs in which there is a definite learning purpose and intended outcome. Each step—everything that participants do during the activity—facilitates the accomplishment of the stated goal. Each ELA includes complete instructions for facilitating the intervention and a clear statement of goals, suggested group size and timing, materials required, an explanation of the process, and, where appropriate, possible variations to the activity. (For more detail on Experiential Learning Activities, see the Introduction to the *Reference Guide to Handbooks and Annuals*, 1999 edition, Pfeiffer, San Francisco.)

GAME A group activity that has the purpose of fostering team spirit and togetherness in addition to the achievement of a pre-stated goal. Usually contrived—undertaking a desert expedition, for example—this type of learning method offers an engaging means for participants to demonstrate and practice business and interpersonal skills. Games are effective for team building and personal development mainly because the goal is subordinate to the process—the means through which participants reach decisions, collaborate, communicate, and generate trust and understanding. Games often engage teams in “friendly” competition.

ICEBREAKER A (usually) short activity designed to help participants overcome initial anxiety in a training session and/or to acquaint the participants with one another. An icebreaker can be a fun activity or can be tied to specific topics or training goals. While a useful tool in itself, the icebreaker comes into its own in situations where tension or resistance exists within a group.

INSTRUMENT A device used to assess, appraise, evaluate, describe, classify, and summarize various aspects of human behavior. The term used to describe an instrument depends primarily on its format and purpose. These terms include survey, questionnaire, inventory, diagnostic, survey, and poll. Some uses of instruments include providing instrumental feedback to group members, studying here-and-now processes or functioning within a group, manipulating group composition, and evaluating outcomes of training and other interventions.

Instruments are popular in the training and HR field because, in general, more growth can occur if an individual is provided with a method for focusing specifically on his or her own behavior. Instruments also are used to obtain information that will serve as a basis for change and to assist in workforce planning efforts.

Paper-and-pencil tests still dominate the instrument landscape with a typical package comprising a facilitator's guide, which offers advice on administering the instrument and interpreting the collected data, and an initial set of instruments. Additional instruments are available separately. Pfeiffer, though, is investing heavily in e-instruments. Electronic instrumentation provides effortless distribution and, for larger groups particularly, offers advantages over paper-and-pencil tests in the time it takes to analyze data and provide feedback.

LECTURETTE A short talk that provides an explanation of a principle, model, or process that is pertinent to the participants' current learning needs. A lecturette is intended to establish a common language bond between the trainer and the participants by providing a mutual frame of reference. Use a lecturette as an introduction to a group activity or event, as an interjection during an event, or as a handout.

MODEL A graphic depiction of a system or process and the relationship among its elements. Models provide a frame of reference and something more tangible, and more easily remembered, than a verbal explanation. They also give participants something to “go on,” enabling them to track their own progress as they experience the dynamics, processes, and relationships being depicted in the model.

ROLE PLAY A technique in which people assume a role in a situation/scenario: a customer service rep in an angry-customer exchange, for example. The way in which the role is approached is then discussed and feedback is offered. The role play is often repeated using a different approach and/or incorporating changes made based on feedback received. In other words, role playing is a spontaneous interaction involving realistic behavior under artificial (and safe) conditions.

SIMULATION A methodology for understanding the interrelationships among components of a system or process. Simulations differ from games in that they test or use a model that depicts or mirrors some aspect of reality in form, if not necessarily in content. Learning occurs by studying the effects of change on one or more factors of the model. Simulations are commonly used to test hypotheses about what happens in a system—often referred to as “what if?” analysis—or to examine best-case/worst-case scenarios.

THEORY A presentation of an idea from a conjectural perspective. Theories are useful because they encourage us to examine behavior and phenomena through a different lens.

TOPICS

The twin goals of providing effective and practical solutions for workforce training and organization development and meeting the educational needs of training and human resource professionals shape Pfeiffer’s publishing program. Core topics include the following:

- Leadership & Management
- Communication & Presentation
- Coaching & Mentoring
- Training & Development
- e-Learning
- Teams & Collaboration
- OD & Strategic Planning
- Human Resources
- Consulting



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The screenshot displays the Pfeiffer website interface. At the top right, there are navigation links: [My Account](#), [Shopping Cart](#), [Help](#), and [Contact Us](#). The main header features the Pfeiffer logo and the tagline "Essential resources for training and HR professionals".

On the left side, there is a "Resources for:" section with links for [Authors](#), [Librarians](#), [Booksellers](#), and [Educators](#). Below this are links for [About Pfeiffer](#) and [Contact Us](#).

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The "Hot Off the Press" section features three product recommendations: "Stories Trainers Tell: 55 Ready-to-Use Stories to Make Training Stick (with CD-Rom)", "Beyond Teams: Building the Collaborative Organization", and "Pfeiffer Library CD-ROM, 3rd Edition".

At the bottom right, there is a "Pfeiffer Tools Now Available for Immediate Purchase" section with a "DOWNLOAD" button.

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