1976

Conference Materials, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1976

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ACTION RESEARCH

Steps
- Problem awareness (gap between real and possible)
- Data collection and analysis
- Data feedback
- Diagnosis
- Goal setting (objectives, purpose)
- Resource gathering
- Action, planning and talking
- Evaluation

Not necessarily in this order. Frequently recycles.

Predicated on change theory of Kurt Lewin - Unfreeze, Move, Refreeze

PROBLEM OWNERSHIP "Who owns the problem?"

\[\text{Party I Aware} \quad \text{Party I Not Aware}\]

\[\text{Party II Aware}\]
- Problem solving
- Collaboration
- Data sharing
- Action research

\[\text{Party II}\]
- Consult
- Learn

\[\text{Party II Not Aware}\]
- Gather data

\[\text{Confrontation}\]
- Data feedback

\[\text{Party II}\]
### INTERVENTION ALTERNATIVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process/Facilitation</th>
<th>Structural/Technical</th>
<th>Knowledge/Expertise</th>
<th>R &amp; D/Demonstration</th>
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<tr>
<td>Personal/Individual</td>
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<td>Interpersonal/Group</td>
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<td>Organizational/Intergroup</td>
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### INTERVENOR FOCUS

**Process/Facilitation** - Try to improve ability of system to do own goal setting, problem solving, etc.  
- Help people do for themselves.

**Structural/Technical** - Use of physical space.  
- Rules, procedures.  
- Equipment

**Knowledge/Expertise** - Information giving  
- Teaching

**R & D/Demonstration** - Pilot run  
- Research and report  
- Assumption is that others will adopt a successful activity.

### CONSIDERATIONS IN SELECTING INTERVENTION LEVEL AND TYPE

**Process/Facilitation** - Develops ownership  
- Generates commitment  
- May be designing the wheel  
- May get stuck  
- Requires interpersonal and group skills
Walter Sikes

-2-

**Structural/Technical**

- Sometimes unpredictable
- Likely to overlook needs of people
- Can be quick and powerful
- Requires organizational power

**Knowledge/Expertise**

- Knowledge supplied may not match the problem
- Generates resistance
- Good for generating view of the possible, interest, ideas
- Requires knowledge

**R & D/Demonstration**

- Assumption that world will beat path to better mousetrap
- Good for building courage in others
- May reduce resistance
- Requires time, facilities, organizational support
CONDITIONS FOR APPLICATION OF COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY

High level of trust of people in each other.
High degree of shared values.
Reasonably good and open channels of communication.
Time.
Willingness to invest time in process.

CHANGEABILITY IN SYSTEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amenable to change</th>
<th>Not amenable to change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creative extension of present activity</td>
<td>No action monitor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Not Functional | Remedial efforts | Disaster area Don't get stuck |

Questions -
What is changeable?
What is worth changing given goals/time/resources?
What's going right?
What's going badly?
Of what is going badly, which is amenable to change?

ISSUES TO LOOK AT IN CONSULTATION

1. Where is the power in the system?
   Nominally - really?
   Where is the power with different issues?

2. How are decisions made? Participatively, democratically, autocratically, formally, consensus, sense of meeting, pairs of people?

3. How do people feel about the decision process? Do they feel okay? Are they happy? Are they annoyed?

4. What is quality of relationship?
   Interpersonal/Intergroup - open, trusting, do they hear? Are they fearful, skeptical?
5. How are conflicts managed? Are they suppressed, denied, squashed? Do they lead to problem solving? Fighting?

6. Do people in organizations have support groups to sustain them? To help in problem solving? To test ideas or decisions? To provide feedback?

7. Where is energy for change? Commitment, time, resources?

8. What blocks do you sense to creativity in organization? Personal, interpersonal, organizational?

9. What is going well? What are assets, strengths?

10. What are structural and technical factors?

11. Are goals clear, shared and motivating? For individuals, groups and the organization?

KINDS OF DATA TO COLLECT TO LOOK AT ISSUES
- Intuitive, subjective
- Observations
- Interviews - individuals, groups
- Interview/questionnaire
  (sample) (build after interview)
- Questionnaire - General, localized.
  - Build self or get group in organization to build.
- Nonobtrusive - Group unaffected by observation, eg. look at bulletin boards, walk around, are people smiling? In pairs, individuals?
- Experimental
Survey Feedback

Survey feedback is a general technique used in consultations with organizations. In survey feedback (unlike some techniques), the client is encouraged to take an active role throughout the consultation. Optimally, the client defines the kinds of data needed and chooses among various methods of data collection. Areas of interest might include employee satisfaction, patterns of communication and decision making, the perception of roles and norms as well as more "concrete" data such as turnover rates, cost-effectiveness and goal achievement. Information is generally collected by interviewing, questionnaires, observation of meetings and other instruments. After the information is collected, it is ordinarily "fed back" to the client at a meeting, or series of meetings, set up for this purpose. At this point we explore with the client not only possible interpretations of the data but possible courses of action. Again, any change in action that results from the feeding back of the data is decided upon by the client with our collaboration. We will not impose either an identification of a problem or a problem's solution upon the client. In survey feedback a client must be willing to engage in self-examination and possible change. He must also be willing to devote the necessary time and energy to insure success.

This process is seen as having three major components: data collection, feedback meetings and process analysis.

Data Collection

Instruments are developed by the consultant and the client which will identify various aspects of the organization: how well it functions, points of disfunction, factors of change and probability of change. The information gained in this stage tends to confirm some feelings and ideas of the client and to disconfirm others. The client may, of course, personally agree with
or deny the validity of the information. Regardless, the data collection is
designed to generate a broader and more organized basis of information than
is usually possible for any single individual or small group to have.

Feedback Meetings

After the information is collected and analyzed, feedback meetings are
set up with the client in order to interpret the results. At such meetings
problems are identified and possible responses to the problems are explored.
While the consultant may have opinions differing from the client they are
never imposed since without the client's motivation for change little, if any-
thing, of lasting value will result. Once problems are identified and responses
are agreed upon, the consultation enters its final stage.

Process Analysis

It is in the process analysis stage that the human and behavioral factors
involved in change are dealt with. The consultant at this point helps the
client to study realistically their process in their attempts at change. The
focus becomes how the problems are being dealt with. The essence of process
analysis, then, is that from time to time the client examines the procedures
by which problems are being solved and discusses them openly.

When properly accomplished survey feedback maximizes collaboration between
the client and consultant, minimizes the disruption within the system usually
caused by change and increases the commitment of individuals within the system
to the change by involving them from the beginning.

Vincent Skotko, Community Psychology Institute, University of Cincinnati.
Adopted from C. T. McElvany and M. B. Miles. Using survey feedback and
consultation. In Schmuck and Miles (Eds.) Organizational Development in
Introduction to Organizational Development in Schools

Daniel Langmeyer, Ph.D.

O.D. Defined:

A planned and sustained effort to apply behavioral science for system improvement, using reflexive, self-analytic methods. OD involves system members themselves in the active assessment, diagnosis, and transformation of their own organization.

Properties of Organizations:

A. Systems Theory
   1. Components, subsystems, boundaries
   2. Goal directed functions
   3. Openness and adaptability, system always changing
   4. Variety pool, unused resources and structures

B. Internal Features
   1. Roles
   2. Norms
   3. Differentiation and integration
   4. Sharing—communication
   5. Behavioral styles: leaders, roles, individuals
   6. Climates
   7. Morale
   8. Commitments
   9. Motivational patterns

Goal:

Develop an optimally flexible organization that has mechanisms to monitor itself, and shared expectations for problem solving and openness to change (self-renewal).

Sub-Goals, Objectives:

1. Increase understanding of how people in different parts of the organization effect one another.
2. Develop clear communication networks up and down and laterally.
3. Understanding of goals in different parts of the organization.
4. Develop new way of solving problems through creative use of new roles in groups.
5. Develop new ways of assessing progress toward goals.
6. Involve more people at all levels in decision-making.
7. Procedures for searching out innovation practices within and without the organization.
O.D. Focuses on:

1. Communication processes
2. Problem-solving processes
3. Decision-making procedures
4. Meeting procedures
5. Working together

Stages of O.D.:

1. Improving communication skills.
2. Changing Norms, support for openness and sharing, observable and shared change.
3. Structural change, new functions, roles, procedures, policies.

O.D. Emphasizes:

System, norms, interdependency, communication skills, structure, planned change.
In this way it is different from sensitivity training which is personal, insight, value laden, individual competence.
In this way it is different from most curriculum and in-service training which is individually skill oriented but non-organizational.

References:

Schmuck and Miles: O.D. in Schools, 1971, National Press.


The following is a goal setting activity; one that can be used to find the relevant goals that exist among individuals and subgroups and to obtain a final list of goals toward which both administrators and subordinates can take committed action. Beckhard wrote as follows about this procedure:

Another form of organization goal-setting is what is called an "organization confrontation" meeting. This is usually a one-day activity which can be used to bring together a large segment of an organization in order to set priorities and action targets. The activity is particularly appropriate in situations where an organization is in stress; where, for example, there is a new top management, where there has been a loss of a major customer, or where the organization is going into a new product or a new area of business. Organizationaly, this meeting is most appropriate where the top group is relatively cohesive but there is a gap between the top and the rest of the organization.

The activity is designed to mobilize the whole organization in a very short period of time toward an action plan and priorities for change and improvement. It takes the following form.

Let us suppose that there are eighty people in the management from the general manager down through first-line supervision. This meeting includes all eighty members. The meeting itself takes between 4½ and 6 hours and could easily be divided into two time units—an afternoon and the following morning, or an evening and a morning. Let's assume we are using a night and a morning. The evening session has the following elements.

A general meeting includes a brief introduction by the general manager and possibly a statement by an outside resource if one is used. The statements define the purposes of the meeting, stress that this is an opportunity for everyone to influence the actions of the organization, and urge that people be open and say what they think. Assurances should be provided that no one will be punished for what they say and that anonymity will be preserved insofar as possible.

The group is divided into small groups of five or six people across organization lines, so that no boss is in the same group with a subordinate or working colleague. The top-management group, excluding the general manager, meets as one group and not with one of the heterogeneous subgroups.

The task of these groups is information collecting. The groups are assigned the following task: "Thinking of yourself as a person with needs and goals in this organization, and also thinking of the total organization, what are the behaviors, procedures, ways of work,
attitudes, etc., that should be different so that life would be better around here?" Each group is asked to make a list of its items. They have about an hour for this task.

The total group then reassembles. The lists of the subgroups are placed on the board. From this total list, categories of problems are developed by the meeting leader. This marks the end of the evening meeting.

In the morning, another general session takes place. Each participant receives a copy of the information collected from the groups the night before, along with a cover page listing the category headings. The total group then participates in assigning category headings to each item on the list under the direction of the meeting leader and/or general manager.

The group then divides into functional groups under the leadership of those reporting to the general manager. For example, everyone in the manufacturing area would meet together, chaired by the head of manufacturing; the same with finance, personnel, etc. These groups would have the following tasks:

1. Go through the entire list and select three or four items which most affect you or your group. Determine what action your group will take on those and the timetable for beginning work on the problems. Be prepared to report this out to the total group.

2. Go through the list again and select those items to which you think top management should be giving highest priority. (Criteria for inclusion on this list is that your group can't deal with it.)

3. Since this is a large meeting, and all of us are off the job, develop a tactical plan for communicating what happened at this meeting to those who are not here.

The group reconvenes and each subunit reports out its list of three or four priority items and its plans for dealing with them. Then each group reports its suggestions for top management. A cumulative list of suggestions is developed. The top manager responds to this list, making some commitment on each item.

The top manager would then set a follow-up meeting for the near future, say, in five or six weeks; two hours should be allotted for such a meeting, in which the manager is committed to report progress on the items on his list and expects to receive reports of progress on other items from the various units.

The expectation of a follow-up meeting sustains "positive tension" in the system and keeps the whole organization focusing toward goals.

This model tends to produce rather dramatic organization results in a very short period of time.
REDUCING RESISTANCE

Resistance to change will tend to be less if:

1. Teachers and administrators see the project as their own rather than one devised and operated by outsiders.
2. The project has support from the top.
3. Participants see the change as reducing rather than increasing their burdens.
4. The project accords with values and ideals acknowledged by participants.
5. If the program offers the kind of new experience which interests participants.
6. Participants do not feel their autonomy and security threatened.
7. Participants have joined in diagnosis.
8. The project is adopted by consensus.
9. If proponents empathize with opponents and recognize valid objections.
10. Provision is made for feedback to clarify misunderstandings.
11. Participants develop acceptance, support and trust in their relations with each other.
12. The project is kept open to revision and reconsideration.

Walter Sikes
Center for Creative Change in Higher Education
Yellow Springs, Ohio
From Goodwin Watson, Concepts for Social Change, NTL Institute, 1967
Concentration in an intervention promotes recovery of attention, concentration, and memory. Conditions promoting recovery of these functions include:

- Practice sessions
- Feedback
- Instruction on distraction
- Exercise
- Customized intervention

Conditions that inhibit recovery include:

- Lack of practice
- Absence of feedback
- Overgeneralized instruction
- Excessive distraction

The following is a partial list of conditions that increase or decrease a person's concentration in intervention.

Conditions facilitating recovery:

- Provided feedback
- Practice sessions
- Customized intervention
- Instruction on distraction

Conditions inhibiting recovery:

- Lack of practice
- Absence of feedback
- Overgeneralized instruction
- Excessive distraction

These are three primary factors of effective intervention. These are:

Primary factors of course, other factors.

Sincerely yours,

Daniel Landcaster, Ph.D.

Addison-Rosely, 1970

COMENIUS AWARDS HONORARY EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Behavior Of An Interventionist To Produce Effectiveness

Owning up to, being open toward, and experimenting with ideas and feelings; helping others to own up, be open, and experiment with ideas and feelings; contributing to the norms of individuality, concern, and trust; communicating in observed, directly verifiable categories, with minimal attribution, evaluation, and internal contradiction.

Some Summary Notes

Argyris' description of intervention activity seems most suitable to a small face-to-face group but can likely be applied to larger systems.

He emphasizes the interventionist as social scientist producing valid information for the system to make informed and free choices on and committing themselves to action.

Argyris has a very clear idea of what is effective and what is not and sticks to his guns.

Argyris is talking about only one part of most organization development programs.

His data feedback model is quite similar to others such as Floyd Mann and the Michigan ISR team. It is a strategy that has a good track record for outcomes.

CPI-5/75
The basic elements of this feedback process described above are not new. They involve (1) the orderly collection of information about the functioning of a system, and (2) the reporting of this information into the system for (3) its use in making further adjustments.

Work by Hall and others who have had considerable practical experience with the use of information about a system for creating change show a similarity in both action steps and basic approach. This suggests there are certain psychological and sociological facts which must be taken into consideration in attempting to change the attitudes and behavior of an individual or a group of individuals in an organizational setting.

1. Attitudes and behavior of an individual are functions of both basic personality and social role. Change processes need to be concerned with altering both the forces within an individual and the forces in the organizational situation surrounding the individual.

2. Organizations, as systems of hierarchically ordered, interlocking roles with rights and privileges, reciprocal expectations, and shared frames of reference, contain tremendous forces for stability or change in the behavior of individuals or subgroups. Change processes need to be designed to harness these forces for creating and supporting change. As forces already in existence, they must first be made pliable, then altered or shifted, and finally made stable again to support the change.

3. Essentially, unilateral power and authority structures underlie the hierarchical ordering of organizational roles. Expectations of the superior are therefore more important forces for creating change in an individual than the expectations of his subordinates. Also, those with a direct authority relationship—line superiors—have more influence than those without direct authority—staff trainers.

4. The attitudes, beliefs, and values of an individual are more firmly grounded in the groups which have continuing psychological meaning to him than in those where he has only temporary membership. The supervisor's role of interlocking the activities of two organizational units requires that he have continuing membership in two groups: (a) the organizational unit directed by his superior in which he is a subordinate along with this immediate peers; and (b) the organizational unit for which he is responsible. Change processes designed to work with individual supervisors off the job in temporarily created training groups contain less force for initiating and reinforcing change than those which work with an individual in situ.

5. Information about the functioning of a system may introduce a need for change. This is especially true when the new data are seen as objective and at variance with common perceptions and expectations. Change processes organized around objective, new social facts about one's own organizational situation have more force for change than those organized around general principles about human behavior. The more meaningful and relevant the material, the greater the likelihood of change.

6. Involvement and participation in the planning, collection, analysis, and interpretation of information initiate powerful forces for change. Own facts are better understood, more emotionally acceptable, and more likely to be utilized than those of some "outside experts." Participation in analysis and interpretation helps by-pass those resistances which arise from proceeding too rapidly or too slowly.

7. Objective information on direction and magnitude of change—knowledge of results—facilitates further improvement. Change processes which furnish adequate knowledge on progress and specify criteria against which to measure improvement are apt to be more successful in creating and maintaining change than those which do not.
ISSUES IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

The following are issues which appear to be potentially important as a consultant attempts to help an organization develop its effectiveness:

1. Clarify or develop the client's motivation to change.

2. Assess the change agent's potential helpfulness:
   a. Relevance of his resources, interests, and competence to the client's need.
   b. His job security in relation to the client system.
   c. Relations among members of the change-agent team.
   d. Compatibility of his different objectives (to help the client; to conduct research, to get promoted within the company, and so on).
   e. Time he has available.

3. Establish effective relations between the change agent and the client system.
   a. Role of each in planning and conducting the program.
   b. Expectations of each regarding the amount and kind of effort required of each in the change program.
   c. Restrictions (if any) upon the kinds of changes which are allowable.
   d. Who the client is -- whom the change agent's relations are with.
   e. Expectations regarding the role(s), or kind(s) of help, the change agent is to provide.

4. Clarify or diagnose the client system's problems.
   a. Concepts in terms of which diagnosis is to be made.
   b. How information is to be obtained, and from whom.
   c. Use of data in diagnosis.
   d. Develop diagnostic skills of members of the system.
   e. Determine the boundaries of the client system.

5. Establish instrumental objectives for change. (How should we operate?)

6. Formulate plans for change.
   a. Link to other persons, issues, and/or parts within the internal system.
   b. Link to other persons, parts, and/or issues in the external system.
   c. Develop time schedule and build time expectations.
   d. Develop procedures and/or structures for carrying out plans.
   e. Provide for anticipatory testing of plans.
   f. Develop competence of those involved in taking actions.
   g. Develop motivation for carrying out plans.

7. Carry out plans for change.
   a. Maintain support and understanding from the larger system.
   b. Obtain feedback on consequences of early action steps.
   c. Coordinate efforts of different people and groups involved.

8. Generalize and stabilize changes.
   a. Assess the effects of the change upon the total system.
   b. Look for "regression."
   c. Facilitate spread to other parts of target system and to adjacent interdependent systems.

9. Institutionalize planned development or self-renewal.
   a. Develop problem-sensing and problem-solving skills and mechanisms in all components of the system.
   b. Develop reward systems which facilitate innovation.
   c. Establish a change-agent role in the system.
Organization Development Enables the Organization

To monitor and respond to the environment

To find, maintain, and use the resources and ideas needed to respond

By Improving It's Self-Renewing Capabilities

Communication processes
Problem-solving processes
Decision-making procedures
Meeting procedures
Potential for collaboration

The Organization Becomes Self-Renewing By Experiencing

Learning-by-doing in the task group
Skill training
New procedures
Survey feedback
Group and intergroup exercises