WENDELL L. FRENCH and CECIL H. BELL, JR.

SECOND EDITION

Organization Development

behavioral science interventions for organization improvement

2—

Organization Development

behavioral science interventions for organization improvement

second edition

WENDELL L. FRENCH
CECIL H. BELL, JR.

University of Washington

PRENTICE-HALL, INC.
Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 07632

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

French, Wendell L. (date)
Organization development.

Includes bibliographies and index.
1. Organizational change. I. Bell, Cecil (date) joint author. II. Title.
HD58.8.F76 1978 658.4'06 78-5097
ISBN 0-13-641688-8
ISBN 0-13-641670-5 pbk.

© 1978, 1973, by Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 07632

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means without permission in writing from the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

PRENTICE-HALL INTERNATIONAL, INC., *London*
PRENTICE-HALL OF AUSTRALIA PTY. LIMITED, *Sydney*
PRENTICE-HALL OF CANADA, LTD., *Toronto*
PRENTICE-HALL OF INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED, *New Delhi*
PRENTICE-HALL OF JAPAN, INC., *Tokyo*
PRENTICE-HALL OF SOUTHEAST ASIA PTE. LTD., *Singapore*
WHITEHALL BOOKS LIMITED, *Wellington, New Zealand*

TO

Marjorie

and

Dianne

Contents

Preface

"This book is about an exciting and profound idea and about the growing body of knowledge related to that idea. The idea is this: it is possible for the people within an organization collaboratively to manage the culture of that organization in such a way that the goals and purposes of the organization are attained at the same time that human values of individuals within the organization are furthered.

"The key to the subject to which this book is addressed, organization development, is contained in the phrase collaborative management of the organization's culture. To *collaborate* is to labor together, as the derivation of the word suggests. To *manage* is to direct and control; to be in command of. *Organization culture* is the prevailing background fabric of prescriptions and proscriptions for behavior, the systems of beliefs and values, and the technology and task of the organization together with the accepted approaches to these. An organization's culture serves powerfully as a determinant of behavior. If the culture supports behaviors appropriate for organization goal attainment, the result will probably be an effective organization; if the culture supports behaviors obviating goal attainment, the result will probably be an ineffective organization.

"In addition, the organization's culture may operate to enhance human values or may operate to thwart them. By human values we mean those goals and strivings of individuals that relate to what they want from the organization and from their participation as organization members. Some human values that seem to be important today are the following: the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the organization; the opportunity to have satisfying interpersonal relationships; the opportunity to accept responsibility; the opportunities for recognition and advancement; the opportunities to stretch oneself and to grow."

Thus we began the Preface to the first edition of *Organization Development* published in 1973. We still believe that organization development represents a viable and robust strategy for improving organization effectiveness and enhancing the quality of work life for organization members. We still believe that a concise exposition of the theory and practice of organization development can be of use to managers, students, and OD practitioners. OD, with its focus on developing total organizations, still represents a significant social invention for the practice of management.

In this spirit we have revised, updated, and expanded the earlier edition of the book. The field of organization development has changed dramatically in the last five years—it has grown in popularity and usage; it has expanded into new arenas; it has received additional research attention; and there is now a greater, more reasoned, awareness of its capabilities and limitations. The last five years saw a burgeoning of interest in all aspects of OD—theory, practice, and research. As a result there are compelling reasons for managers and academicians to be knowledgeable about this strategy for intervening in organizations. And there are compelling reasons for us to update this book so that readers, new and old, can have a ready reference for understanding organization development—what OD is, what is going on in the field, what the state-of-the art is, and what the future of OD might be.

This is a book about *organization development*, the applied behavioral science discipline that seeks to improve organizations through planned, systematic, long-range efforts focused on the organization's culture and its human and social processes. The means of OD are behavioral science and structural interventions into the ongoing organization. The goals of OD are to make the organization more effective, more viable, and better able to achieve both the goals of the organization as an entity and the goals of the individuals within the organization. The world is becoming increasingly complex and interdependent, with the consequence that organization managers and members need all the help they can get to keep work organizations productive as well as hospitable for human beings. Organization development is not a panacea for all the problems of organizations, but it is one strategy for intelligently facing the requirements of a changing world.

We again acknowledge our debt to the work and to the writings of Chris Argyris, Richard Beckhard, Kenneth Benne, Warren Bennis, Robert Blake, Leland Bradford, Robert Chin, Sheldon Davis, Kurt Lewin, Rensis Likert, Ronald Lippitt, Floyd Mann, Douglas McGregor, Jane Mouton, Herbert Shepard, and many other pioneer thinkers and actors in the area of planned change in organizations. Robert Blake, Rensis Likert, Ronald Lippitt, and Herbert Shepard helped us unravel the threads of the early history of OD through extensive personal correspondence, for which we would like to express our

thanks. Hollis Peter, of the University of Queensland, Australia, added some information in personal conversations with us. W. Warner Burke, Sheldon Davis, and Frank Friedlander provided us with some important information on more recent history. Noel Tichy of Columbia University, Brian Henshall and Nick Marsh of the University of Auckland, New Zealand, and several other colleagues offered suggestions to us for improving the book; our thanks to them for their able assistance.

WENDELL FRENCH
CECIL BELL

I

AN INTRODUCTION TO ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Illustrations

Definition

History

Assumptions and Values

Systems Concepts

1

Some Illustrations of Organization Development Efforts

This is a book about organization development—a planned, systematic process in which applied behavioral science principles and practices are introduced into an ongoing organization toward the goals of effecting organization improvement, greater organizational competence, and greater organizational effectiveness. The focus is on organizations and their improvement, or to put it another way, the focus is on *total system change*. The orientation is on action—achieving desired results as a consequence of planful activities. The setting is real organizations in the real world.

In this book we tell the broad story of organization development (OD); we examine the nature, history, assumptions, strategies and models, intervention activities, and ramifications of organization development. To begin, let us look at some examples of what might happen in an organization as a result of instituting OD efforts. Although the settings of the following illustrations are in business firms, a public school, and an American Indian tribe, the settings and organizations could be any of a wide range of organizations. Labor unions, volunteer organizations, industrial plants, governmental units, service organizations, small and multinational corporations, research and development laboratories—all of these offer appropriate settings for organization development programs. The key, of course, is that where there is an organization that seeks improvement, there is the opportunity for an OD effort.

ILLUSTRATION 1: PROBLEMS IN A BUSINESS FIRM

Problems of lack of cooperation between subunits, increasing complaints from customers, sagging morale, and rapidly increasing costs induced the president of a medium-sized company to confer with a behavioral

scientist consultant about ways to improve the situation. The two talked at length, and it became apparent to the consultant that the executive, while having some apprehensions, was generally agreeable to the desirability of examining the dynamics of the situation, including decision-making processes and his own behavior. He and the consultant agreed that certain organization development efforts might be worthwhile. It was decided that a three-day workshop away from the usual routine, with the executive and his entire work team, might be an appropriate way to start.

The president then sounded out several of his subordinates about the possibility of the workshop, and reactions ranged from enthusiasm to some uneasiness. It was agreed to have the consultant meet with the executive and all his immediate subordinates to explain the typical format of such a meeting and to discuss the probable content of such a workshop. At the end of this meeting, the group decided to give it a try.

A few days before the off-site session, the consultant spent an hour interviewing each member of the team. In essence he asked them, What things are getting in the way of this unit being as successful as you would like it to be? The purpose of these interviews was to obtain the data around which the design of the workshop was to be built.

At the beginning of the workshop, the consultant first reported back to the group the general themes in the interviews which he had grouped under these problem headings: "The Boss," "Meetings," "Administrative Services," "Customer Relations," "Relations between Departments," and "Long-Range Goals." The group then prioritized these problem themes in terms of importance and immediacy and chose the problem areas to be worked on. With the consultant acting more as a coach than as a moderator, the group then examined the underlying dynamics of each problem area and examined optional solutions to problems. In addition to making suggestions for breaking into subgroups to tackle certain agenda items, and in addition to providing several ten-minute lecturettes on such topics as decision making and team effectiveness, the consultant intervened from time to time to comment on the way the group was working together and to help make explicit the norms under which the group seemed to be operating.

The last morning was spent developing "next action steps" relative to a dozen or so items discussed under the above headings. One of the decisions was to spend a half day with the consultant three months in the future for the purpose of reviewing progress toward problem solutions.

During a subsequent meeting between the company president and the consultant, the executive reported that the morale of the group was up substantially and customer complaints and costs were beginning to go down but that "we still have a long way to go, including making our staff meetings more effective." The two then agreed to have the consultant sit in on two or three staff meetings prior to the three-month review session.

The three-month review session with the consultant revealed that significant

progress had been made on some action steps but that improvement seemed to be bogged down, particularly in areas requiring delegation of certain functions by the president to his key subordinates. This matter was extensively worked on by the group, and the president began to see where and how he could "loosen the reins," thus freeing himself for more long-range planning and for more contacts with key customers.

During the following years, the top management team institutionalized an annual three-day "problem-solving workshop" involving the consultant. In addition, all of the top managers utilized the consultant's services in conducting comparable workshops with their own subordinates. Over this period, the consultant and the personnel director, whose hiring had been a direct outgrowth of one of the sessions, began to work as a consulting team to the organization, with the personnel director gradually assuming more and more of the role of a "change agent." In addition to having planning and control responsibilities in the areas of employment and compensation and in other traditional personnel functions, the new personnel director also coordinated a management development program designed to supplement the company's problem-solving workshops. For example, managers were supported in their requests to attend specialized seminars in such areas as budgeting and finance, group dynamics, and long-range planning. The personnel director thus assumed an expanded role in which he served as an internal OD consultant to the operating divisions, as a linking pin with the external (original) consultant, and as a coordinator of the traditional personnel functions.

ILLUSTRATION 2: START-UP OF A NEW JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

A school district in a suburb outside a middle-size city had just finished building its third junior high school. The new principal was a young man, well known and liked in the district. He and two vice-principals selected the faculty (about thirty persons) and the adjunct staff—librarian, cooks, and custodians. With approval from the school district, the principal contacted the national office of the NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science and requested a one-week human relations laboratory for the new school faculty and staff. The NTL Institute office referred the principal to one of its network members, and the week's activities were set up between the consultant and the principal.

It was apparent to the consultant that this situation represented a typical "start-up" situation in which a group of relative strangers were being called upon to form themselves into an interdependent team in order to accomplish some organizational mission. Typical issues in this kind of situation are the following: getting acquainted, learning about each other's expressive and communicative styles, clarifying roles, achieving identification with and acceptance of organization goals, determining how each member's activities fit into and contribute to

organizational goals, and exploring the nature of the demands of the interdependencies of the organization members.

The week's activities were designed to address these issues. Starting with some get-acquainted activities, the group then turned its attention to exploring the nature of interpersonal communications, improving interpersonal communications skills, and exploring issues of trust, openness, and concern for each other. Next, attention was given to determining what kind of organization the members wanted to build together, what kind of climate they wanted to have, and how they could build themselves into an effective team. The thrust of this latter set of activities related to the school's organization structure and processes, to an understanding of organization dynamics and behavior, and then to building collaboratively the organization structure and processes that the members thought would both allow them to achieve organizational goals and allow them to enhance their individual goals. This included looking at the kind of leadership style and behavior they wanted from the principal and the two assistant principals, and it also included an expression of the desires and expectations of the administrators. Considerable attention was given to what Schein calls the "psychological contract"—the set of expectations the organization members have toward the organization and its hierarchical representatives regarding influence and control, and the set of expectations the organization has toward the members regarding performance and commitment.[1] The group also examined how they wanted to solve problems and make decisions as a team as they resolved problems common to their task accomplishment. A particularly important theme during the week was how the group was going to make decisions as a group. At the end of what seemed to be a successful week, they indicated that they had grown much closer together, that they valued the individual differences and contributions of the various members, and that they knew how to attack and solve the upcoming task problems of the new year. In addition, they had developed skills enabling them to look at their own processes (the way they got things done). So two major themes identified the week's activities: (1) developing better interpersonal relations and interpersonal skills and (2) building the skills necessary to achieve and maintain an effective organization.

After the week was over, the consultant suggested to the principal that the members of the school staff continue to work at their own organization development through periodically looking at how well they were achieving the goals and procedures that they had established and through taking "refresher" courses in these matters. To this end, three in-service training days (days in which the teachers furthered their professional development) were given over to refresher courses in which the total school staff as a "family group" looked inward at itself and its processes.

The following summer a second one-week laboratory was held with the same participants and the same consultant. There were several focuses: first, the group

examined its successes and failures of the past school year in an attempt to learn how to improve its functioning. Second, the group devoted attention to developing the knowledge and skills necessary to generate its own valid data about the organization—its climate, culture, organization dynamics and processes—in order to manage these better. Again, during the second summer workshop, group members worked on problems relevant to their real-world work problems; again the entire staff and faculty were in attendance; again they worked on interpersonal relations, as these were instrumental in building the organization that they wanted. The second summer was spent almost entirely on understanding organization dynamics and on ways of generating and utilizing valid information about the organization climate and culture. In-service training days following the second summer were again given over to the organization development activities.

Reactions to the program were favorable. Participants subsequently reported that they worked together well and that they enjoyed the climate of the school. They are currently convinced that they are doing a high-quality job of teaching and educating. They call the summer workshops "hard work, but worth it," and they trace organization procedures to the learnings of the workshops. The school is viewed in the district as a model school and a desirable place to get transferred to. The school has experienced low turnover of staff and faculty.

ILLUSTRATION 3: DEPARTURE FROM TRADITION IN A DIVISION OF A LARGE CORPORATION

Stemming initially from the enthusiasm of the labor relations director and a member of the board, some efforts had been made by a few key executives of a large multidivision company to apply emerging behavioral science ideas to the solution of problems being faced by the corporation. In one division, the top manager and his staff experimented, successfuly they felt, with team-building sessions augmented by workshops on leadership style and decision making. In the team-building sessions, intact work groups looked at their tasks and at their ways of working, and they attempted to clarify the roles and responsibilities necessary for better task accomplishment. The sessions typically revolved around finding answers to the question, How can we build ourselves into a more effective team? The process was being continued at successively lower levels in the organization. In a second division, a major "job enrichment" program was being undertaken which had the immediate consequence of forcing a searching look at the prevailing leadership styles, the structure of the division, and the goals and roles of individuals within the division.

In another division, the top management team became interested in the use of attitude surveys and requested the help of a consultant through corporate headquarters. The consultant urged that there be extensive participation in the design of an

attitude questionnaire, that the data be reported back to all who would participate, and that workshop settings be used. The workshop feature, in particular, was a departure from what the managers thought was traditional business practice, and there was some resistance to the idea because of fears of criticism. This was partially alleviated by a suggestion by the consultant to report the data in such a way as to minimize embarrassment to individual managers, and the management group agreed to go ahead with the questionnaire-plus-workshop approach.

The questionnaire included several items in the following categories: "Organizational Climate," "Pay and Benefits," "Relations with Other Units," "Communications," "Supervisor/Employee Relations," "My Job," and "Opportunities for Personal Growth and Advancement." Subsequently, responses to all items were tabulated for the total division as well as unit by unit. The division summary was reported to all units, but each specific unit tabulation was reported only to the unit involved to avoid misleading and perhaps destructive comparisons.

A team of consultants then worked with all the managers in the organization to design workshops for each unit. During these workshops the data were discussed as well as the probable forces giving rise to the various responses. Emphasis was on "How satisfied are we with the questionnaire responses?" and "What do we wish to improve?" rather than on any external criteria of performance. Action planning, which frequently included recommendations to higher management, was emphasized during the last part of each workshop.

While the workshops had their tense moments and were sometimes heavy going, reactions were generally quite positive. Typically, the manager, the consultants, and the participants agreed afterward that the meetings had been highly successful, that the process should continue throughout the division, and that the questionnaire and the workshops should be repeated in a year or two.

ILLUSTRATION 4: ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT IN AN INDIAN TRIBE

A request to a graduate school of business from the tribal council and the executive director of an American Indian tribe for a management development workshop resulted in a counterproposal by a professor who had been approached for his reactions. The professor, who was also an organization development consultant, suggested, with the concurrence and support of a colleague, that the two faculty members visit the reservation, interview the key people in the tribal organization, and develop a workshop around the problems being experienced by the organization. This particular tribal organization was charged with responsibilities for the management of the natural resources of the reservation, for maintenance and development of utilities and services, for welfare and health, for law and order, for economic development, for management of tribal enterprises, and for preservation of the best of the tribal culture. The tribal organization was the governing body of the tribal members.

With the support of the chairman of the five-man tribal council, the council, and the executive director, it was agreed that a group of approximately twenty key people would be invited to the workshop as proposed by the consultants. These people included the total council, the executive director, his key subordinates, the staff of the Community Action Program, the Bureau of Indian Affairs resident forester, and an educator in charge of vocational education in the high school located on the reservation. All these people were interviewed by the consultants and were asked, in effect, What things are going right, and what things in the organization are getting in the way of accomplishing objectives? The two consultants extracted the central positive and negative themes from the interview data. These themes became the basic issues or problems around which the workshop was designed.

The first workshop, spanning an entire week, was held on the university campus and had two basic components which were intermixed throughout the week: (1) a continuation of the use of the *action research model* and (2) a lecture-exercise component. The action research model provided the basic flow of the workshop strategy as follows: data gathering (the preworkshop interviews plus additional data gathering during the workshop), data feedback, prioritizing of the problems, work on the problems, and action planning to solve the problems. This working of the problems that had been identified by the group served as the backdrop for the week's activities.

Several different types of interventions were initiated by the consultants during the problem-working phases of the workshop. Early in the workshop they presented the *force-field analysis* technique to the participants, who were then asked to use the diagnostic tool in analyzing several of the issues the group had identified as high-priority items. At another point, a modified *role analysis* technique was used relative to the roles of councilmen and executive director. With the council listening, the other participants discussed the following topic printed on a large sheet of newsprint: "If the council members were operating in an optimally effective and efficient way, what would they be doing?" Responses about which there seemed to be substantial consensus were made visible on large sheets taped on the wall. Council members then were encouraged to respond, and subsequent discussion resulted in some modifications on the sheets. The exercise was then repeated for the executive director's role. With the executive director listening, the rest of the group discussed the question: "If the executive director were operating in an optimally effective and efficient way, what would he be doing?" One of the outcomes of this exercise was a gradual, but significant, shift in delegation of day-to-day operating decisions from the council to the executive director and staff.

The workshop also included several short lectures on a number of relevant topics including leadership, group process, decision making, problem diagnosis, and communications. This component also included some instrumented exercises that permitted participants to compare different decision-making models and to evaluate their usefulness.

By the end of the workshop, the participants had worked through a dozen or so important problems or issues and had agreed on next action steps, that is, "who was going to do what when." Results of a questionnaire administered on the last day of the workshop indicated overwhelming enthusiasm for the process and what had been accomplished. The consultants also perceived what they thought was a substantially higher level of openness, trust, and support between the participants at the end of the workshop compared with what was evident during the early part of the workshop.

One of the action steps that was agreed upon was a two-day follow-up visit to the reservation by the consultants to occur in five or six months. During ensuing weeks it became apparent that a follow-up visit sooner than that would be beneficial. The implementation of some action plans had bogged down, although important progress had been made on a number of others.

During the first follow-up visit the consultants interviewed a cross section of the workshop participants to assess the degree of progress, met with the council to assist in a further review of council activities, and assisted in correcting a misunderstanding as to who was to be on one of the task forces created at the workshop. During the second follow-up visit the time of the consultants was primarily devoted to meetings with the executive director and the council members, although some discussions with key supervisors also occurred.

Subsequently, the council and the executive director requested a second workshop, with the suggestion that this workshop be shorter and that more time be devoted to follow-up on the reservation. The workshop was held at a resort; it started on a Tuesday evening and ended Friday afternoon.

Although the same basic pattern was followed for the second workshop, including preworkshop interviews, less time was spent on lectures and instrumented exercises and almost all the time was spent on substantive issues. Since tensions between two subunits of the organization and the need for clarification of responsibilities appeared to be the most pressing issues, a significant amount of time was spent on these matters. The first problem was addressed through a three-way intergroup exercise in which each of the major groups—the council, the tribal staff, and the Community Action Program staff—developed the following lists about the other two groups and shared them in a general session:

What we like about what the _____ group is doing.
What concerns us about the _____ group.
What we predict the _____ group will say about us.

During the sharing of the lists, discussion was limited to explanation and questions requesting clarification. This phase was followed by subgroup discussion and, finally, by total group discussion and action planning.

The problem of clarification of responsibilities was addressed by asking each participant to follow a suggested outline in writing his or her own job description,

to make the descriptions visible on large newsprint, and to discuss the job descriptions with his or her particular work team, including the supervisor. Revised job descriptions were then posted in the general conference room for perusal and informal discussion during breaks in the sessions.

At the end of the workshop, the consultants, the council chairman, and the executive director agreed on the approximate date of two follow-up sessions at the tribal reservation and agreed to keep in touch by telephone.

ILLUSTRATION 5: A NEW PLANT MANAGER

Several years ago a new plant manager arrived at a continuous process facility (a plant where there is a continuous shaping of raw materials into finished products, like a steel-making plant or an oil refinery). He surveyed the scene and found the following characteristics: the plant had over two thousand employees; there were several layers of managers arranged in functional departments (production, maintenance, technical research, purchasing and stores, engineering, etc.); the plant performed fairly well in terms of productivity and profitability. The new manager's predecessor had been an energetic and autocratic man who had made all the operational and administrative decisions at the plant. The rest of the upper and middle management were called "superintendents"—they superintended their bailiwicks, supplied information to the plant manager, and received orders from the manager about what should be done in their departments and divisions, as the plant was run on a day-to-day basis.

The new manager had a different managerial philosophy and a different leadership style: he believed in delegating as much responsibility to his subordinates as possible; he believed in allowing wide participation in the important decisions affecting the works and the work forces; he believed that better information and decisions would come from involved, committed "managers"; he wanted to develop subordinates so that they would move to higher positions of responsibility; and, as he told the managers at one of his first meetings with them, he wanted them to "share in the work and share in the fun." The new manager knew that he needed to build strong individual managers, an effective "management team," and that he needed to change the managerial culture and climate in the plant. He knew that this change in the way things were done would require new skills and a new management climate in the plant. And that would require training; the habits of ten years could not be changed just by his issuing an order. He called in several consultants, told them his desires, and solicited their aid.

As things evolved, there turned out to be six goals of the change project: (1) to increase the abilities and skills of the individual managers; (2) to build an effective top management team; (3) to build stronger division and department teams; (4) to improve the relations between work groups, such as between production and maintenance, and thus reduce the level of energy spent in competition; (5) to

change the managerial culture from one in which one person made all the decisions to one in which all managers made or participated in decisions that affected them; and (6) to improve the long-range planning and decision-making abilities of managers at all levels. These change goals and the ideas of the new plant manager were public knowledge, just as was the information about the consultants and the OD program. Team-building meetings were held with the top management group and the new plant manager. Similar meetings were held with the division managers and their department manager subordinates. Meetings were held with the department managers and their supervisory subordinates. And finally, meetings were held with representatives from several "interface" groups—two or more interdependent groups with overlapping responsibilities or work flow duties. Also attending these meetings were the external consultants and several internal organization members who were being groomed as internal "change agents." The typical role of the consultants was to assist the groups to face up to, work through, and learn from their problems.

This OD program was in operation for four years. During the first year the intervention strategy called mainly for family groups—intact working groups consisting of a superior and key subordinates. These groups met to explore their culture and their methods of problem solving related to their assigned tasks within the organization. It was an important feature of the OD strategy that the first family group held involved the plant manager and his key subordinates, the plant division managers. Following this successful venture the division managers met with their subordinates in team-building sessions in an effort to improve division functioning. Significant issues surfaced during these meetings related to leadership styles, team processes and dynamics, and new ways of solving specific operational problems.

The second year's activities continued the team-building sessions and introduced a new dimension: interface meetings with groups that had problems working together. The fact that the groups had previously been successful in working on their own problems in family groups and analyzing their own dynamics seemed to facilitate the progress of the interface sessions. Greater understanding of the complexities of interdependence and the problems inherent in effective coordination of effort led to rapid and accurate diagnosis of the intergroup problems in most cases. Also during this year, OD task forces were formed to investigate various facets of effectively managing the plant. These task forces were typically temporary problem-solving teams with specific charges, but the charges had far-reaching implications for the plant. For example, task forces have tackled industrial safety problems, labor and union relations issues, and external interface problems with the local community and region. An especially important task force outcome was the development of a new philosophy about career planning and also new career development planning and implementation procedures. These procedures provide better ways for utilizing and developing the manpower talent in the organization and also ensure the development of more managerial talent.

During the third year the top management team, including the plant manager,

turned their attention to developing better long-range strategic planning models. They also instituted some management development programs for the purpose of upgrading the managerial skills of the middle-level supervisors. Some intergroup sessions continued to be utilized when conditions appeared to warrant them. Occasional family group sessions were primarily devoted to problem solving and long-range strategic planning activities.

In the fourth year the OD activities were moved to the shop floor. One of the consultants became a familiar and friendly face to the hourly employees in several critical areas of the plant. He observed the work and work flow and interacted with the employees to elicit their opinions about how to do the job better and how they felt about the work, the supervision, and the company. The consultant initiated meetings between foremen and hourly employees in which they systematically evaluated various ideas that had been suggested for improving the work flow and working conditions. The consultant also acted as an "idea conduit" for suggestions that the hourly employees wanted transmitted to higher levels of management.

At the conclusion of the fourth year, the plant manager and the consultants decided to terminate the OD program. It was agreed that the goals of the program had been met. It was noted that many of the "OD activities"—problem-solving task forces, intergroup sessions, strategic planning—were now an integral part of the plant's culture and organizational processes.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

These examples are not cited as perfect or ideal organizational interventions but only as fairly typical illustrations of what happens in organization development efforts, particularly in their earlier phases. Although these programs vary in their comprehensiveness, all the illustrations have the following common features: (1) the "client" is a total system or major subunit of a total system; (2) the interventions are primarily directed toward problems and issues identified by the client group; (3) the interventions are directed toward problem solving and improved functioning for the client system; and (4) the interventions are based on behavioral science theory and technology.

In later chapters we will look more closely at many of the techniques, at the underlying theory and assumptions of OD, and at some of the pitfalls and challenges in attempting to improve organizations through behavioral science methods.

NOTES

1 Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Psychology*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), pp. 12–15.

2

A Definition of Organization Development

Although a literal interpretation of the words *organization development* could refer to a wide range of strategies for organization improvement, the phrase has come to take on some fairly specific meanings in the behavioral science literature and in practice. We say "fairly specific" because the boundaries are not entirely clear, perceptions of different authors and practitioners vary somewhat, and the field is evolving.

In the behavioral science, and perhaps ideal, sense of the term, *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 organization culture—with special emphasis on the culture of formal work teams—with the assistance of a change agent, or catalyst, and the use of the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including action research.*

By *problem-solving processes* we mean the way an organization goes about diagnosing and making decisions about the opportunities and challenges of its environment. For example, does it see its environment, and thus its mission, in terms of ten years ago, or is it continuously redefining its purposes and its methods in terms of the present and the future? Does the organization solve problems in such a way that it taps the creativity and commitment of a select few, or does it tap deeply into the resources, vitality, and common purposes of all organizational members?

The notion of improving problem-solving processes is interrelated with the matter of improving organizational "renewal processes," which is perhaps a broader concept. Lippitt combines these ideas in his definition of *organization renewal*, which he sees as

> the process of initiating, creating, and confronting needed changes so as to make it possible for organizations to become or remain viable, to adapt to new conditions, to solve problems, to learn from experiences. . . .[1]

Argyris stresses organizational renewal and revitalizing in his description of organization development:

> At the heart of organizational development is the concern for the vitalizing, energizing, actualizing, activating, and renewing of organizations through technical and human resources.[2]

Similarly, Gardner, in writing about organizational *self-renewal*, refers to the avoidance of organizational decay and senility; the regaining of vitality, creativity, and innovation; the furtherance of flexibility and adaptability; the establishment of conditions that encourage individual motivation, development, and fulfillment; and "the process of bringing results of change into line with purposes."[3] Thus, along with ideas about improved problem-solving and renewal processes are the important notions of purpose and direction—all of which are central to organization development activities.

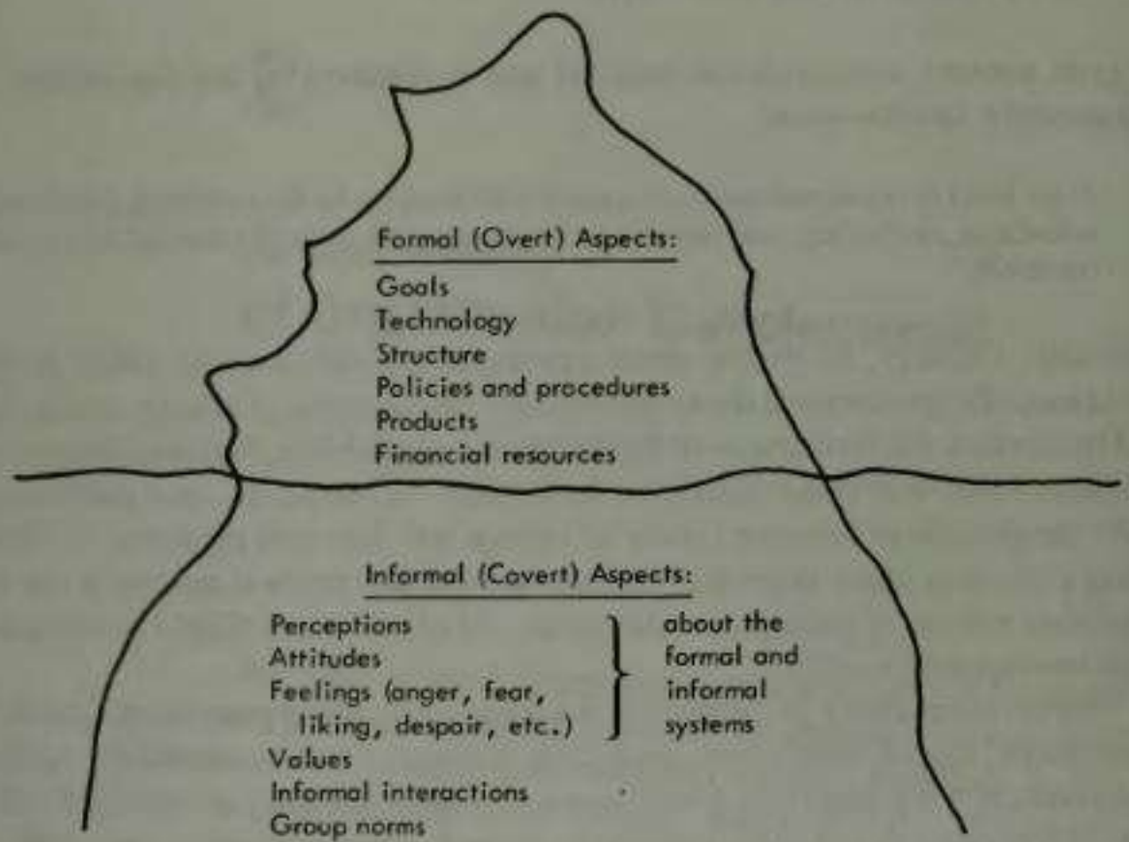
By the term *culture* in our definition we mean prevailing patterns of activities, interactions, norms, sentiments (including feelings),[4] beliefs, attitudes, values, and products.[5] By including products we include technology in our definition, although changes in technology tend to be secondary in organization development efforts. However, technology—if one includes procedures and methods along with equipment—is almost always influenced, and is an influence, in organization development activities.

Our use of the term *culture* includes the notion of the "informal system," which we will be describing in the next chapter as including feelings, informal actions and interactions, group norms, and values.[6] In some ways the informal system is the hidden or suppressed domain of organizational life—the covert part of the "organizational iceberg," as shown in Figure 2-1.[7] Traditionally, this hidden domain either is not examined at all or is only partially examined. Organization development efforts focus on both the formal and the informal systems, but once the OD program is legitimated through the formal system, the initial intervention strategy is usually through the informal system in the sense that perceptions, attitudes, and feelings are usually the first data to be confronted.

By *collaborative management* of the culture we mean a shared kind of management—not a hierarchically imposed kind. Who does what to whom is an important issue in organization development, and we want to stress that management of group culture must be "owned" as much by the subordinates as it is by the formal leader.

Our definition recognizes that the key unit in organization development activities is the ongoing work team, including both superior and subordinates. As we will elaborate upon in later chapters, this is different from more conventional

FIGURE 2-1
Organizational Iceberg



ways of improving organizations. To give only one example, in most management development activities the focus is on the individual manager or supervisor—not on his or her work group. Traditionally the manager has participated in the learning experience in isolation from the dynamics of the work situation. Although we are emphasizing a focus on relatively permanent work groups to differentiate OD from traditional management development, in comprehensive OD programs extensive attention is also paid to temporary work teams, to overlapping team memberships, and to intergroup relations, as well as to total system implications. These matters will also be dealt with in subsequent chapters.

The notion of the use of a *change agent*, or *catalyst*, as one of the distinguishing characterics of OD has a purpose in our definition. We are somewhat pessimistic about the optimal effectiveness of OD efforts that are do-it-yourself programs. As will be discussed later, in the early phases, at least, the services of a third party who is not a part of the prevailing organization culture are essential. This does not mean that the third party cannot be a member of the organization but that he or she at least be external to the particular subsystem that is initiating an OD effort.

And finally, the basic intervention model which runs through most organization development efforts is *action research*. The action research model underlies all the illustrations of organization development described in the first chapter.

Basically, the action research model consists of (1) a preliminary diagnosis, (2) data gathering from the client group, (3) data feedback to the client group, (4) data exploration by the client group, (5) action planning, and (6) action. This model will be discussed in detail in Chapter 8. Parenthetically, because of the extensive applicability of this model to organization development, another definition of *organization development* could be *organization improvement through action research*.

The above characteristics of organization development depart substantially from the features of traditional change programs, which Bennis categorizes as follows: "(1) exposition and propagation, (2) elite corps, (3) psychoanalytic insight, (4) staff, (5) scholarly consultations, and (6) circulation of ideas to the elite."[8] Bennis states that "exposition and propagation" are "possibly the most popular" and cites as illustrations the impact of the ideas of philosophers and scientists. The "elite corps" method is basically the infusion of scientists into key power and decision-making posts in organizations. "Psychoanalytic insight" as a change method is similar to the elite corps method but refers to effective change occurring through the medium of executives who have high self-insight and considerable "psychiatric wisdom" relative to subordinates. The "staff" strategy refers to the employment in organizations of social scientists who analyze situations and make policy recommendations. "Scholarly consultations" is a method of change involving "exploratory inquiry, scholarly understanding, scholarly confrontation, discovery of solutions, and, finally, scientific advice to the client." The sixth method described by Bennis is "circulation of ideas to the elite." One of the illustrations given is the Council of Correspondence, a chain letter which linked rebel leaders in the American Revolution.[9]

Organization development efforts depart substantially from these methods of organizational change. Of particular relevance are the two organizational consultation methods as categorized by Bennis, "staff" and "scholarly consultations." In both strategies an inside or an external expert studies a situation and makes recommendations; this is the traditional way of consulting. Organization development efforts are different. The OD consultant does *not* make recommendations in the traditional sense; his or her end product is not a written report to top management, concluding with recommendations for the solutions of substantive problems. The client organization, however, is assisted in the way it goes about solving problems. For example, the consultant could be called upon to comment on the way a group is working together and might make a number of observations about patterns of interaction, what issues appeared to be avoided, how the agenda appeared to be set, and so forth. Or the consultant could structure situations so as to highlight phenomena, such as in an interpersonal conflict situation where the OD consultant might request two team members to role play each other and each other's point of view. Basically, in most OD interventions the client group is assisted in generating valid data and learning from them.

We see eight characteristics that we think differentiate organization development interventions from more traditional interventions:

1. An emphasis, although not exclusively so, on group and organizational processes in contrast to substantive content
2. An emphasis on the work team as the key unit for learning more effective modes of organizational behavior
3. An emphasis on the collaborative management of work-team culture
4. An emphasis on the management of the culture of the total system
5. Attention to the management of system ramifications
6. The use of the action research model
7. The use of a behavioral scientist–change agent, sometimes referred to as a "catalyst" or "facilitator"
8. A view of the change effort as an ongoing process.

Another characteristic, number 9, a primary emphasis on human and social relationships, does not necessarily differentiate OD from other change efforts, but it is nevertheless an important feature.

These features will be elaborated upon in the chapters that follow. As we will see in the next chapter, these characteristics have identifiable origins in the very recent past and have emerged from the social sciences.

NOTES

1 Gordon L. Lippitt, *Organization Renewal* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969), p. 1.

2 Chris Argyris, *Management and Organizational Development: The Path from XA to YB* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), p. ix.

3 John W. Gardner, *Self-Renewal: The Individual and the Innovative Society* (New York: Harper & Row, Harper Colophon Books, 1965), pp. 1–7.

4 Whyte and Hamilton see sentiments as referring to "the mental and emotional reactions we have to people and physical objects" and as having three elements: "(1) An idea about something or somebody . . . , (2) emotional content or affect, (3) a tendency to recur upon presentation of the same symbols that have been associated with it in the past." William Foote Whyte and Edith Lentz Hamilton, *Action Research for Management* (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, 1965), p. 184.

5 Kroeber and Kluckhohn cite 164 definitions of culture; our above definition is congruent with their synthesis: "*Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action.*" See A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (New York: Vintage Books, 1952), pp. 291, 357.

6 Our use of the word *culture* includes Argyris's notion of the *living system:* "the way people actually behave, the way they actually think and feel, the way they actually deal with each other. It includes both the formal and informal activities." Chris Argyris, "Some Causes of Organizational Ineffectiveness within the Department of State," *Occasional Papers,* No. 2 (U.S. Department of State, Center for International Systems Research, 1967), p. 2.

7 This illustration is adapted from an address by Stanley N. Herman, TRW Systems Group, at an organization development conference sponsored jointly by the Industrial Relations Management Association of British Columbia and the NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, 1970.

8 Warren G. Bennis, "A New Role for the Behavioral Sciences: Effecting Organizational Change," *Administrative Science Quarterly,* 8 (September 1963), p. 130.

9 *Ibid.,* pp. 130–34.

3

A History of Organization Development

The history of organization development is rich with the contributions of behavioral scientists and practitioners, many of whom are well known, and the contributions of many people in client organizations. Even if we were aware of all the significant contributors, which we are not, we could not do justice to the richness of this history in a short chapter. Therefore, all we can do is to write about what we think are the central thrusts of that history and hope that the many people who are not mentioned will not be offended by our incompleteness.

We see systematic organization development activities as having a recent history, and to use an analogy with a tree, as having at least two important trunk stems. One stem consists of innovations in the application of laboratory-training insights to industrial organizations. A second major stem is survey research and feedback methodology. Both stems are intertwined with the history of action research, to which we will give additional attention in Chapter 8.

THE LABORATORY-TRAINING STEM

One stem, laboratory training, essentially unstructured small-group situations in which participants learn from their own interactions and the evolving dynamics of the group, began to develop about 1946 from various experiments in the use of discussion groups to achieve changes in behavior in back-home situations. In particular, an Inter-Group Relations workshop held at the State Teachers College in New Britain, Connecticut, in the summer of 1946 was important in the emergence of laboratory training. This workshop was sponsored by the Connecticut Interracial Commission and the Research Center for Group Dynamics, then at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The leadership team

for this action research consisted of Kurt Lewin, Kenneth Benne, Leland Bradford, and Ronald Lippitt. Feedback at the end of each day to groups, and to group leaders and members about their individual and group behavior, stimulated great interest and appeared to produce more insight and learning than did lectures and seminars. From this experience emerged the "National Training Laboratory in Group Development," which was organized by Benne, Bradford, and Lippitt (Kurt Lewin died in early 1947), and which held a three-week session during the summer of 1947 at the Gould Academy in Bethel, Maine. Participants met with a trainer and an observer in Basic Skill Training Groups (later called T-groups) for a major part of each day. The 1947 laboratory was sponsored by the Research Center for Group Dynamics (M.I.T.), the National Education Association, Teachers College of Columbia University, UCLA, Springfield College, and Cornell University. The Office of Naval Research made a basic research grant for the research aspects of the laboratory. The work of that summer was to evolve into the National Training Laboratories (now the NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science) and contemporary T-group training.[1]

Over the next decade, as trainers in the laboratory-training and group dynamics movement began to work with social systems of more permanency and complexity than T-groups, they began to experience considerable frustration in the transfer of laboratory behavioral skills and insights of individuals into the solution of problems in organizations. Personal skills learned in the "stranger" T-group setting were very difficult to transfer to complex organizations. However, the training of "teams" from the same organization had emerged early at Bethel and undoubtedly was a link to the total organizational focus of Douglas McGregor, Herbert Shepard, Robert Blake, and others.[2]

The late Douglas McGregor, working with Union Carbide beginning about 1957, was one of the first behavioral scientists to begin to solve the transfer problem and to talk systematically about and to help implement the application of laboratory-training skills to a complex organization.[3] In collaboration with McGregor, John Paul Jones, with the support of the Union Carbide's executive vice-president and director, Birny Mason, Jr. (later president of the corporation), established a small internal consulting group which in large part used behavioral science knowledge in assisting line managers. Jones's organization was later called an "organization development group."[4]

During the same year, Herbert Shepard joined the employee relations department of Esso Standard Oil (now Exxon) as a research associate on organization. In 1958 and 1959 he launched three experiments in organization development at major Esso refineries: Bayonne, Baton Rouge, and Bayway. At Bayonne an interview survey and diagnosis were made and discussed with top management, followed by a series of three-day laboratories for all members of management. Paul Buchanan, who had been using a somewhat similar approach in Republic Aviation, collaborated with Shepard at Bayonne and subsequently joined the Esso staff. (Buchanan had previously been employed as a consulting psychologist by the Naval Ordnance Test Station at China Lake, California, where he had engaged

the management in a number of activities, including "retreats" in which they worked on interpersonal relations.)[5]

At Baton Rouge, Robert Blake joined Shepard, and they initiated a series of two-week laboratories attended by all members of "middle" management. At first an effort was made to combine the case method with the laboratory method, but the designs soon became similar to NTL Institute's current Management Work Conferences which emphasize T-groups, organizational exercises, and lectures. One innovation in this training program was an emphasis on intergroup as well as interpersonal relations. Although working on interpersonal problems affecting work performance was clearly an organizational effort, between-group problem solving had even more organization development implications in that a broader and more complex segment of the organization was involved.

At Baton Rouge efforts to involve top management failed, and as a result follow-up resources for implementing organization development were not made available. By the time the Bayway program started, two fundamental OD lessons had been learned: the requirement for active involvement in and leadership of the program by top management, and the need for on-the-job application.

At Bayway there were two significant innovations. First, Shepard, Blake, and Murray Horwitz utilized the instrumented laboratory, which Blake and Jane Mouton had been developing in social psychology classes at the University of Texas and which they later developed into the Managerial Grid approach to organization development.[6] (An essential dimension of the instrumented lab is the use of feedback based on scales and measurements of group and individual behavior during sessions.)[7] Second, at Bayway more resources were devoted to team development, consultation, intergroup conflict resolution, and so forth, than were devoted to laboratory training of "cousins," that is, organization members from different departments.

As Robert Blake stated, "It was learning to *reject* T-group stranger-type labs that permitted OD to come into focus," and it was intergroup projects, in particular, that "triggered real OD."[8] As is evident from the Esso and the Union Carbide activities, Shepard, Blake, McGregor, and others were clearly trying to build on the insights and learnings of laboratory training toward more linkage with and impact on the problems and dynamics of ongoing organizations.

It is not entirely clear who coined the term *organization development*, but in all probability it was Robert Blake, Herbert Shepard, and Jane Mouton.[9] The phrase *development group* had earlier been used by Blake and Mouton in connection with human relations training at the University of Texas and appeared in their 1956 document "Training for Decision Making in Groups," which was distributed for use in connection with the Baton Rouge experiment.[10] (The same phrase appeared in a Mouton and Blake article first published in the journal *Group Psychotherapy* in 1957.)[11] The Baton Rouge T-groups were called *development groups*,[12] and this terminology, coupled with the insights that were emerging, undoubtedly culminated in the concept of organization development.

It is of considerable significance that the emergence of organization development efforts in the first two corporations to be involved, Union Carbide and Esso, included employee relations–industrial relations people seeing themselves in new roles. At Union Carbide, John Paul Jones, who had come up through industrial relations, now saw himself in the role of behavioral science consultant to other managers.[13] At Esso, the headquarters human relations research division began to view itself as an internal consulting group offering services to field managers rather than as a research group developing reports for top management.[14] Thus, in the history of OD we see both external consultants and internal staff departments relinquishing their traditional roles and collaborating in quite a new approach to organization improvement.

THE SURVEY RESEARCH AND FEEDBACK STEM

The history of organization development encompasses a specialized form of action research (see Chapter 8) known as *survey research and feedback*, which refers to the use of attitude surveys and data feedback in workshop sessions. Survey research and feedback constitutes the second major stem in the history of organization development.[15]

The history of this stem, in particular, revolves around the techniques and approach developed by staff members at the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan over a period of years. The center was founded in 1946 after Rensis Likert and other key members of the Division of Program Surveys of the federal Bureau of Agricultural Economics moved to Michigan. Likert became the director of a new Institute for Social Research, which included both the Survey Research Center and the Research Center for Group Dynamics.

Part of the emergence of survey research and feedback was based on the refinements made by SRC staff members in survey methodology, such as the use of the same carefully constructed questionnaire given to all respondents, the use of rigorous probability samples, and the use of carefully controlled coding procedures. Another part was the evolution of the feedback methodology. As related by Rensis Likert:

> In 1947, I was able to interest the Detroit Edison Company (D.E.) in a company-wide study of employee perceptions, behavior, reactions and attitudes which was conducted in 1948. Floyd Mann, who had joined the SRC staff in 1947, was the study director on the project. I provided general direction. Three persons from D.E.: Blair Swartz, Sylvanus Leahy and Robert Schwab with Mann and me worked on the problem of how the company could best use the data from the survey to bring improvement in management and performance. This led to the development and use of the survey-feedback method. Floyd particularly played a key role in this development. He found that when the survey data were reported to a manager (or supervisor) and he or she failed to discuss the results with subordinates and failed to plan with them what the manager and others should do to bring improvement, little change occurred. On the

> other hand, when the manager discussed the results with subordinates and planned with them what to do to bring improvement, substantial favorable changes occurred. The extent to which changes and improvements had occurred were assessed by remeasurement in 1950.
>
> Floyd became a major figure in developing the survey-feedback method. He made extensive use of it and ran many experiments to discover how best to make it highly effective. . . .[16]

A key aspect of the Detroit Edison Study was the process of feeding back data from an attitude survey to the participating accounting departments in what Mann calls an "interlocking chain of conferences."[17] (This project will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 13.) Some of the insights that emerged from this process have a very contemporary OD ring. Baumgartel, for example, drew the following conclusions from the Detroit Edison Study:

> The results of this experimental study lend support to the idea that an intensive, group discussion procedure for utilizing the results of an employee questionnaire survey can be an effective tool for introducing positive change in a business organization. It may be that the effectiveness of this method, in comparison to traditional training courses, is that it deals with the system of human relationships as a whole (superior and subordinate can change together) and it deals with each manager, supervisor, and employee in the context of his own job, his own problems, and his own work relationships.[18]

The relationships between the Survey Research Center staff and the members of the Research Center for Group Dynamics are not entirely clear to us at this writing, but they were undoubtedly of some significance in the evolution of survey feedback. The RCGD, after the death of Kurt Lewin, had moved to Michigan in 1948 with the encouragement of Rensis Likert and members of the SRC. Among the top people in the RCGD who moved to Michigan were Leon Festinger, Dorwin Cartwright, Ronald Lippitt, and John R. P. French, Jr. Cartwright, who was selected by the group to be the director of the RCGD, was particularly knowledgeable about survey research, since he had been on the staff of the Division of Program Surveys with Rensis Likert and others during World War II.

EXTENT OF APPLICATION

Applications emerging from one or both of the stems described above are evident in the organization development efforts now occurring in many countries, including England, Japan, Norway, Canada, Sweden, Finland, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Holland, as well as in the United States. The growing number of organizations in America that have embarked on organization development efforts include Union Carbide and Exxon (the first two companies), Corning Glass Works, Connecticut General Insurance Company, Equitable Life Assurance Company, Digital Equipment Corporation, Procter &

Gamble, Searle Laboratories, General Motors, Bankers Trust, Heinz Foods, Shell Oil (U.S.), IBM, Polaroid, Texas Instruments, Saga Foods, and TRW Inc.[19] Applications at the TRW Systems Group, a large research and development organization in the aerospace field, commenced in 1961 and have been as extensive and innovative as those found anywhere in the world. Efforts there and in the total organization, TRW, have included laboratory training, team building, interface laboratories between departments and between company and customers, career assessment workshops, sensing, and organization redesign and restructuring for improved productivity and quality of working life.[20] In England, Europe, Japan, and the Philippines, illustrative of the growing interest in organization development is the involvement of such companies as Imperial Chemical Industries (United Kingdom and elsewhere), J. Lyons & Company (England), the Royal Dutch Shell Group, Business Consultants, Inc. (Tokyo), and the San Miguel Corporation headquartered in Manila. Projects at Imperial Chemical Industries, a large company headquartered in London, have included job enrichment, survey research, team building, and open systems planning.

Industrial organizations, however, are by no means the only kinds of institutions involved, as we indicated in the illustrations in Chapter 1. We know of applications, for example, in public school systems, colleges, medical schools, social welfare agencies, police departments, and governmental units (at the local, county, state, and national levels) and in various health care delivery systems, churches, and American Indian tribes. Applications have also occurred in the U.S. military. For example, an extensive effort, including team building, has emerged in the 82nd Airborne Division of the U.S. Army.[21] Indicative of widespread application, in 1977 the U.S. Navy was utilizing three hundred full-time OD specialists.[22]

Some "community development" strategies have a number of elements in common with organization development, such as the use of action research, the use of a change agent, and an emphasis on facilitating decision-making and problem-solving processes.[23] Undoubtedly, some of the commonality stems from OD practitioners working in the community development field. For example, in 1961 Herbert Shepard conducted community development laboratories at China Lake, California, sponsored by the Naval Ordnance Test Station. These one-week labs involved military persons and civilians and people of all ages and socioeconomic levels. Outcomes included the resolution of some community and intercommunity issues.[24] Similarly, some OD-type change efforts have focused on what are clearly interorganization systems. For example, we know of one change effort involving police, prosecutors, judges, institutional personnel, and parole officers as a system.

In addition to emphasizing the diversity of types of systems using OD consultants, we want to emphasize that intraorganization development efforts have not focused on just top management teams, although the importance of top management involvement will be discussed in later chapters. The wide range of occupational roles has included work groups consisting of production workers;[25]

scientists and engineers; other professionals such as lawyers, accountants, nurses, physicians, and computer specialists; and technicians, secretaries, and clerical employees.

Symptomatic of the widespread application of organization development concepts is the emergence and growth of the OD Network, which began in 1964 and in little more than a decade had a membership of over thirteen hundred. Most members either have major roles in the OD efforts of organizations or are scholar-practitioners in the OD field. An OD Division of the American Society for Training and Development was established in 1968 and had more than twenty-five hundred members at the end of 1976.

It is also significant that the Academy of Management, whose members are mostly professors in management and related areas, established a Division of Organization Development within its structure in 1971 and this unit had approximately six hundred members in early 1977. The Division of Industrial and Organizational Psychology of the American Psychological Association has held workshops on organization development at the annual APA conventions; several annual conventions going back to at least 1965 have included papers or symposia on organization development or related topics.[26] In 1974 the American Psychological Association included in its *Annual Review of Psychology* the first chapter devoted entirely to a review of research on organization development.[27] Another chapter on OD appeared in 1977,[28] and the association then decided that the *Annual Review* would include a chapter on OD every three years.

The first doctoral program devoted to training OD specialists was founded by Herbert Shepard in 1960 at the Case Institute of Technology. Originally called "The Organizational Behavior Group," this program is now part of the Department of Organizational Behavior, School of Management, Case Western Reserve University. Master's degrees in organization development have been granted since 1975 by Brigham Young, Pepperdine, Bowling Green, and Case Western Reserve universities. In addition, the following universities are among those having graduate courses directly bearing on organization development: Harvard, M.I.T., UCLA, Yale, the University of New Hampshire, and the University of Washington.[29]

This rapid growth in OD interest and attention has been given major impetus by NTL's Program for Specialists in Organization Development, which is an intensive, five-week session held in the summer at Bethel, Maine, and includes a two-week "core" and three one-week modules. A major part of this program is devoted to consultation skills. The two-week core is now offered year-round in various locations in the United States. The first such program was held in 1967 in Bethel as an outgrowth of an Organization Intern Program that had included some OD training. Other shorter programs are now being offered in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia under the sponsorship of universities, foundations, and other institutions. Programs are also emerging elsewhere; for

example, three-day workshops on OD were held in New Zealand in 1977 under the sponsorship of the University of Auckland and Victoria University of Wellington.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Organization development has emerged from applied behavioral science and social psychology and from subsequent efforts to apply laboratory training and survey feedback insights to total systems. Its history is emergent in that a rapidly increasing number of behavioral scientists and practitioners in organizations are building on the research and insights of the past as well as discovering the utility of some of the earlier insights. These efforts are now expanding and include a wide range of organizations, types of institutions, occupational categories, and geographical locations around the world. In the chapters that follow, the assumptions, theory, and techniques of organization development will be examined in substantial depth along with some speculation as to its future viability.

NOTES

1 Based on Kenneth D. Benne, Leland P. Bradford, Jack R. Gibb, and Ronald O. Lippitt, eds., *The Laboratory Method of Changing and Learning: Theory and Application* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Science and Behavior Books, 1975), pp. 1–6; and Alfred J. Marrow, *The Practical Theorist: The Life and Work of Kurt Lewin* (New York: Basic Books, 1969), pp. 210–14. The latter book is rich with events that are important in the history of OD. For example, Marrow mentions a 1944 dinner that Rensis Likert arranged so that Douglas McGregor and Kurt Lewin could explore the feasibility of a group dynamics center at M.I.T. (p. 164). For additional history, see Leland P. Bradford, "Biography of an Institution," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 3 (April-May-June 1967), pp. 127–43. For reference to the impact of John Dewey and others, see Bradford, Gibb, and Benne, *T-Group Theory and Laboratory Method* (New York: John Wiley, 1964), especially p. 466. See also our chapter on "Action Research." We are indebted to Ronald Lippitt for his correspondence which helped clarify this and the following two paragraphs.

2 Based on correspondence with Ronald Lippitt.

3 Richard Beckhard, W. Warner Burke, and Fred I. Steele, "The Program for Specialists in Organization Training and Development," p. ii, mimeographed paper (NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science, December 1967); and John Paul Jones, "What's Wrong with Work?," in *What's Wrong with Work?* (New York: National Association of Manufacturers, 1967), p. 8. According to correspondence with Ronald Lippitt, as early as 1945 Bradford and Lippitt were conducting "three-level training" at Freedman's Hospital in Washington, D.C., in an effort "to induce interdependent changes in all parts of the same system." Lippitt also reports that Leland Bradford very early was acting on a basic concept of "multiple entry," i.e., simultaneously training and working with several groups in the organization. According to correspondence with Rensis Likert, the link between McGregor and John Paul

Jones occurred in the summer of 1957. Discussions took place between the two when Jones attended one of the annual two-week seminars at Aspen, Colorado, organized by Hollis Peter of the Foundation for Research on Human Behavior and conducted by Douglas McGregor, Mason Haire, and Rensis Likert.

4 Gilbert Burck, "Union Carbide's Patient Schemers," *Fortune*, 72 (December 1965), pp. 147–49. For McGregor's account, see "Team Building at Union Carbide," in Douglas McGregor, *The Professional Manager* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), pp. 106–10.

5 Much of the historical account in this paragraph and the following three paragraphs is based on correspondence with Herbert Shepard, with some information added from correspondence with Robert Blake. Tannenbaum reports that he (Robert Tannenbaum) had worked at the Naval Ordnance Test Station with Paul Buchanan and Charles Ferguson and had conducted team-building sessions in 1951 or 1952. See Larry Porter, "A Conversation with Bob Tannenbaum," *OD Practitioner*, 8 (October 1976), pp. 1–5ff. See also the reference to the Naval Ordnance Test Station later in this chapter.

6 Correspondence with Robert Blake and Herbert Shepard. For further reference to Murray Horwitz and Paul Buchanan, as well as comments about the innovative contributions of Michael Blansfield, see Herbert A. Shepard, "Explorations in Observant Participation," in Bradford, Gibb, and Benne, *T-Group Theory*, pp. 382–83.

7 See Robert Blake and Jane Srygley Mouton, "The Instrumented Training Laboratory," in Irving R. Weschler and Edgar M. Schein, eds., *Selected Readings Series Five: Issues in Training* (Washington, D.C., National Training Laboratories, 1962), pp. 61–85. In this chapter, Blake and Mouton credit Muzafer and Carolyn Sherif with important contributions to early intergroup experiments. Reference is also made to the contributions of Frank Cassens of Humble Oil and Refinery in the early phases of the Esso program. For a brief description of the development of the two-dimensional "Managerial Grid," see Robert Blake and Jane Srygley Mouton, *Diary of an OD Man* (Houston, Tex.: Gulf Publishing, 1976), pp. 332–36.

8 Based on correspondence with Robert Blake.

9 Blake correspondence.

10 Blake correspondence.

11 Jane Srygley Mouton and Robert R. Blake, "University Training in Human Relations Skills," *Selected Readings Series Three: Forces in Learning* (Washington, D.C.: National Training Laboratories, 1961), pp. 88–96, reprinted from *Group Psychotherapy*, 10 (1957), pp. 342–45.

12 Shepard and Blake correspondence.

13 Burck, "Union Carbide's Patient Schemers," p. 149.

14 Harry D. Kolb, "Introduction" to *An Action Research Program for Organization Improvement* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Foundation for Research on Human Behavior, 1960), p. i. The phrase *organization development* is used several times in this monograph based on a 1959 meeting about the Esso programs and written by Kolb, Shepard, Blake, and others.

15 This history is largely based on correspondence with Rensis Likert and partially on "The Career of Rensis Likert," *ISR Newsletter*, Winter 1971; and *A Quarter Century of Social Research*, Institute for Social Research, 1971.

16 Likert correspondence. Floyd Mann later became the first director of the Center for Research on the Utilization of Scientific Knowledge (CRUSK) when the center was established by ISR in 1964. See also Floyd C. Mann, "Studying and

Creating Change," in Warren Bennis, Kenneth Benne, and Robert Chin, *The Planning of Change* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1961), pp. 605–13.

17 Mann, "Studying and Creating Change," p. 609.

18 Howard Baumgartel, "Using Employee Questionnaire Results for Improving Organizations: The Survey 'Feedback' Experiment," *Kansas Business Review*, 12 (December 1959), pp. 2–6.

19 Based partially on correspondence with W. Warner Burke.

20 Correspondence with Sheldon A. Davis; and Sheldon A. Davis, "An Organic Problem-Solving Method of Organizational Change," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 3 (November 1, 1967), pp. 3–21. See also the case study of the TRW Systems Group in Gene Dalton, Paul Lawrence, and Larry Greiner, *Organizational Change and Development* (Homewood, Ill.: Irwin-Dorsey Press, 1970), pp. 104–53.

21 Presentation by Lt. Col. Robert L. Phillips, Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Orlando, Fla., August 16, 1977.

22 Presentation by Ray Forbes, Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Orlando, Fla., August 16, 1977.

23 See Eva Schindler-Rainman, "Community Development through Laboratory Methods," in Benne, Bradford, Gibb, and Lippitt, *Laboratory Method of Changing and Learning*, pp. 445–63.

24 Shepard correspondence. Starting in 1967, Herbert Shepard was involved in the applications of OD to community problems in Middletown, Connecticut.

25 See Scott Myers, "Overcoming Union Opposition to Job Enrichment," *Harvard Business Review*, 49 (May-June 1971), pp. 37–49; and Robert Blake, Herbert Shepard, and Jane Mouton, *Managing Intergroup Conflict in Industry* (Houston, Tex.: Gulf Publishing, 1964), pp. 122–38.

26 For example, the following topics were included in the program of the 1965 convention: "Strategies for Organization Improvement: Research and Consultation," "Managerial Grid Organization Development," and "The Impact of Laboratory Training in a Research and Development Environment," *American Psychologist*, 20 (July 1965), pp. 549, 562, 565.

27 Frank Friedlander and L. Dave Brown, "Organization Development," *Annual Review of Psychology*, 25 (1974), pp. 313–41.

28 Clay Alderfer, "Organization Development," *Annual Review of Psychology*, 28 (1977), pp. 197–223.

29 Partially based on correspondence with Frank Friedlander.

4

Underlying Assumptions and Values

Implicit in the preceding chapters and throughout the book are a number of underlying assumptions and values we should now make explicit. These assumptions, basic to most organization development activities, relate to people as individuals, to people as group members and as leaders, and to people as members of total organizational systems. The following appear to be some of the basic assumptions underlying organization development efforts and, in general, are congruent with the theories of Mayo, Roethlisberger and Dickson, Rogers, Maslow, McGregor, Likert, Mann, Argyris, Herzberg, Schein, Bennis, Benne, and Sheats.[1]

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT PEOPLE AS INDIVIDUALS

We think organization development efforts make two basic assumptions about people. One has to do with personal growth and the other with constructive contributions.

The first assumption about people is that most individuals have drives toward personal growth and development if provided an environment that is both supportive and challenging. Most people want to become more of what they are capable of becoming.

The second assumption, related to the first, is that most people desire to make, and are capable of making, a higher level of contribution to the attainment of organizational goals than most organizational environments will permit. A tremendous amount of constructive energy can be tapped if organizations recognize this; for example, by asking for and acting on suggestions. Frequently, however, organizational members learn that what they perceive to be constructive efforts

may be self-defeating in the sense that these efforts are not rewarded and may be penalized. For example, attempts at lateral communications between two departments to solve some problem may be throttled through adherence to some principle about the chain of command.

These assumptions differ markedly from more traditional views about people. As Tannenbaum and Davis state it:

> The traditional view of individuals is that they can be defined in terms of given interests, knowledge, skills and personality characteristics: they can gain new knowledge, acquire additional skills, and even at times change their interests, but it is rare that people really change. This view, when buttressed by related organizational attitudes and modes, insures a relative fixity of individuals, with crippling effects.[3]

Thus, one can view people as fixed entities, or one can view them as potentially "in process" or in "the process of becoming."[3] The latter assumption underlies many OD interventions—many of which are aimed at unleashing drives toward personal growth and contribution or are aimed at modifying organizational constraints that are having a dampening or throttling effect.

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT PEOPLE IN GROUPS AND ABOUT LEADERSHIP

The importance of the work team has long been recognized, and the significance of the "informal" part of group life has received considerable attention since the Hawthorne studies of the late 1920s and early 1930s.[4] Extensive knowledge about group dynamics and collaborative ways of managing group culture, however, has had a more recent origin. In particular, the laboratory-training movement of post-World War II has contributed to this knowledge. The following are some assumptions growing mainly out of this recent history.

The first assumption is that one of the most psychologically relevant reference groups for most people is the work group, including peers and the superior. What goes on in the work team, especially at the informal level, has great significance for feelings of satisfaction and competence.

A related assumption is that most people wish to be accepted and to interact cooperatively with at least one small reference group, and usually with more than one group, that is, the work group, the family, and so forth. Furthermore, most people are capable of greatly increasing their effectiveness and of helping their reference groups solve problems. From our experience, most work groups have only begun to utilize their resources for effective collaboration. Stating the case negatively, a great deal of energy is expended sub rosa on such issues as inclusion-exclusion and dominance-submission if there is no collaborative effort to examine and manage such dimensions.

A third assumption is that for a group to optimize its effectiveness, the formal leader cannot perform all the leadership and maintenance functions in all cir-

cumstances at all times, hence group members must assist each other with effective leadership and member behaviors. For many managers and groups, these are difficult patterns from which to extricate themselves and frequently require a change in perspective on the part of both the manager and the total group. For example, if the manager begins to realize that improvements in unit functioning really require fuller participation on the part of all subordinates, the norms of the group may need to be examined to legitimate such participation. To illustrate—the current norms may call for deference to one or two more vocal members, or the norm may be to avoid issues facing the total unit in order to concentrate efforts on solving narrower problems where there is a more immediate payoff.

A fourth assumption is that suppressed feelings and attitudes adversely affect problem solving, personal growth, and job satisfaction. The culture in most groups and organizations tends to suppress the expression of feelings and attitudes that people have about each other and their behaviors—both positive and negative—and about where they and their organizations are heading. An emphasis on "rationality" seems to assume that emotions and attitudes are best handled by repressing them—that feelings, in particular, are taboo. Of course, what happens is that feelings are expressed covertly instead of openly. For example, we have probably all been a party to meetings in which we have felt unduly limited in what we could express and have approached others afterward to express our more authentic feelings. As a consequence, we have consciously or inadvertently set in motion forces that mitigated or thwarted the apparent decisions that were made. This does not mean that the expression of feelings per se will always be helpful or that individuals and groups immediately have the skill to manage this organizational underworld of sentiments. The development of such skill requires much learning, and much of it together in the group that wishes to improve its performance. Viewing feelings as data important to the organization, however, coupled with the development of group skills in dealing with feelings, tends to open up many avenues for improved goal setting, leadership, communications, conflict resolution, problem solving, between-group collaboration, and morale.

A fifth assumption is that the level of interpersonal trust, support, and cooperation is much lower in most groups and organizations than is either necessary or desirable, in spite of drives toward these same qualities. Typically a number of forces contribute to such situations, including an absence of viewing feelings as important data, lack of group problem-solving skills, and leadership styles that reinforce dysfunctional competition. As one example, in an organization where norms result in a suppression of positive sentiments between people, thus leaving the bulk of evaluative statements to be in a critical mode, organizational members will feel unsupported and will tend to be guarded in their interchange with others. As another example, if the prevailing leadership style emphasizes one-on-one communications and political maneuvering behind closed doors, a highly competitive, mistrusting kind of climate tends to be spawned.

A sixth assumption about people in groups is that the solutions to most

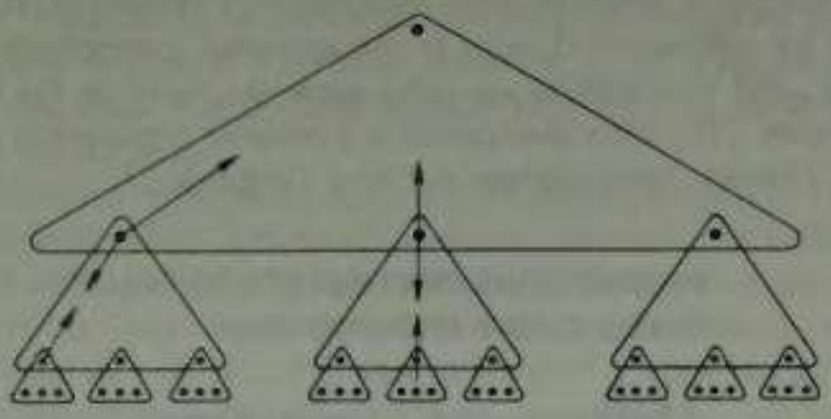
attitudinal and motivational problems in organizations are transactional. That is, such problems have the greatest chance of constructive solution if all parties in the system or subsystem alter their mutual relationships. The objective becomes, not how can A get B to perform, but *how can A and B work together to modify their interactions toward becoming more mutually effective*. Thus the unit for attention becomes a system larger than one individual. This is not to deny the importance of the individual but to stress the significance of the interactional nature of human relationships in the organizational setting.

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT PEOPLE IN ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS

A number of ideas or assumptions about people in systems more complex than groups also underlie organization development efforts. Some of these assumptions follow, and others will be elaborated upon in subsequent chapters.

In recent years it has frequently been observed that organizations tend to be characterized by overlapping work groups, with the superior and others serving, in Likert's terminology, as "linking pins."[5] (See Figure 4-1.[6]) Thus a manager is a member of at least two work teams—as the superior in one and as a subordinate and peer in another.

FIGURE 4-1
The Linking Pin Function



(The arrows indicate the linking pin function)

From: Rensis Likert, *New Patterns of Management*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1961. Used with permission.

This leads to an assumption relative to OD which we believe to be true: the interplay of the dynamics of these work teams, as conveyed by the "linking pin" incumbents, has a powerful effect on the attitudes and behavior of people in both

groups. In particular, the leadership style and the climate of the higher team tend to get transmitted to the lower teams. Conditions of trust, support, openness, and teamwork tend to influence the style of managers lower on the hierarchy and rub off onto their subordinates. Similarly, conditions of mistrust, political infighting, guardedness, and lack of cooperation tend to get transmitted both upward and downward and tend to influence attitudes and interactions at those levels.

This assumption extends to committees or task forces that draw members from several work groups. The culture of these temporary work teams carries over into the culture of the more permanent work teams, and vice versa. The creation of what Zand calls "collateral organizations" (see Chapter 14), which are designed in part to influence the broader culture of the organization, is based on the same assumption.

A second assumption about human dynamics in organizations is that "win-lose" conflict strategies between people and groups, in which one comes off the triumphant winner and the other the defensive loser, while realistic and appropriate in some situations, are not optimal in the long run to the solution of most organizational problems. If the struggle is between two managers, subordinates get drawn into the fray in subtle ways, if no more than their withholding of information from the "enemy" group or remaining silent rather than expressing their real opinion on some issue. Most organizational problems can better be approached in terms of "how can we all win?"

And finally, there are at least two assumptions made that relate to the complexities and difficulties involved in helping make major shifts in the culture of an organization. One is that it takes time and patience, and the key movers in an OD effort need to have a relatively long-range time perspective. The other is that improved performance stemming from organization development efforts needs to be sustained by appropriate changes in the appraisal, compensation, training, staffing, task, and communications subsystems—in short, in the total human resources system. (The latter assumption is a complex topic and is discussed in Chapter 16, "System Ramifications and New Demands.")

ASSUMPTIONS THAT RELATE TO VALUES IN THE CLIENT ORGANIZATION

A basic assumption that most OD practitioners seem to make in engaging with a client is that members of the system, in general, place value in collaborative effort and in the end products of the system. It is essential, obviously, that some values must be held in common between organizational members if conflict-resolving and group problem-solving techniques are to be useful; otherwise people or groups tend to resort to raw power. To state the case negatively, organization development strategies will be unsuccessful to the degree that system members place no value on the goals of the organization and/or have some ideological commitment to chronic dissension and turmoil, anarchy, hate, violence, or destruction. This is not to say that organization development has no role

in the management of dissent. It can play a major role in clarifying and resolving issues, but it will not work if people are not willing to work together to solve problems.

A further, and related, basic assumption underlying organization development activities is that value is placed on the welfare of all system members, particularly by the people having the most power over others. This assumption is the most basic and perhaps the most obvious one of all, but it needs to be made explicit. OD programs are designed to improve the welfare and quality of work life for *all* the members of the organization. They are not a method for giving tools of manipulation or exploitation to any group (say, the managerial group), nor are they a method for improving the welfare of one group at the expense of other groups. The degree to which both of these assumptions hold true relative to the culture of the organization needs to be sensed early in any organization development effort, and any serious incongruities should be worked out between consultant and client, or the relationship should be terminated.

VALUE AND BELIEF SYSTEMS OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST CHANGE AGENTS

While scientific inquiry, ideally, is value free, the applications of science are not value free.[7] Applied behavioral scientist–organization development consultants tend to subscribe to a comparable set of values, although we should avoid the trap of assuming that they constitute a completely homogeneous group. From our experience, they do not.

One value, to which many behavioral scientist–change agents tend to give high priority, is that the needs and aspirations of human beings are the reasons for organized effort in society. They tend, therefore, to be developmental in their outlook and concerned with the long-range opportunities for the personal growth of people in organizations.

This humanistic orientation creates a self-fulfilling prophecy. The belief that people are important tends to result in their being important. The belief that people can grow and develop in terms of personal and organizational competency tends to produce this result. Thus, values and beliefs can be self-fulfilling, and the question becomes, "What do you choose to want to believe?" While this position can be naive in the sense of not seeing the real world, nevertheless, behavioral scientist–change agents—these authors at least—tend to place a value on optimism. It is a kind of optimism that says people can do a better job of goal setting and facing up to and solving problems, not an optimism that says the number of problems is diminishing.

A second value that tends to be held by change agents is that work and life can become richer and more meaningful, and organized effort more effective and enjoyable, if feelings and sentiments are permitted to be a more legitimate part of the culture of organizations. This value, of course, like any other, can be held in excess with a lack of attention to organizational realities. For example, the OD

consultant may be overly zealous in promoting openness in a conflict situation. A reality may be that the internal reward system rewards winners of internal struggles regardless of the human resources wasted in the process.

A third value that tends to be held by change agents is a commitment to both action and research broadly conceived, which can include inquiry and examination into the nature of change processes and the effectiveness of interventions.[8] Although many change agents are perhaps overly action oriented in terms of the utilization of their time, as a group they are paying more and more attention to research and to the examination of ideas and the building of theory.

Finally, a value frequently attributed to applied behavioral scientists is a presumed value placed on democratization of organizations or on "power equalization." While most would probably place high value on humanizing the work place and on a democratic-participative way of life, our distinct impression is that most are not on an excursion to reduce or neutralize the power of owners or managers. The goal they have is to utilize human resources more effectively and thus to increase the power of everybody, including the boss.

This is where we are on these issues. As organization development consultants, we do not see our role as power equalizers or power dismantlers. We do, however, believe that most organizations can profitably learn to be more responsive to organizational members and constituencies and that all parties concerned can learn to be more skillful in this responsiveness. This means that managers should augment the authority of their positions with additional skills and that more resources will have to be allocated at all levels to training in group dynamics, conflict resolution, collaborative problem solving, and the organization development process generally.

Parenthetically, it should be added that it is important that behavioral scientist–change agents make their values and beliefs visible to both themselves and their clients. Neither party can learn to trust the other adequately without such exposure—hidden agendas handicap both trust building and mutual learning. Perhaps more pragmatically, organization development change efforts tend to fail if strategies or techniques are applied unilaterally and without open collaboration.

SUMMARY

Organization development activities rest on a number of assumptions about people as individuals, in groups, and in total systems, about the transactional nature of organization improvement, and about values. These assumptions tend to be humanistic, developmental, and optimistic, while acknowledging the realities of the exercise of power on and within organizations. Assumptions and values held by change agents need to be made explicit, both for enhancing working relationships with clients and for continuous testing through practice and research.

Some assumptions stem from a "systems" view of organizations. In the next chapter, we will elaborate upon some of these systems concepts.

NOTES

1 See, for example, Elton Mayo, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (Boston: Harvard University, 1945); F. J. Roethlisberger and W. J. Dickson, *Management and the Worker* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939); Carl R. Rogers, *Counseling and Psychotherapy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1942); Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1970); Douglas McGregor, *The Professional Manager* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967); Rensis Likert, *The Human Organization: Its Management and Value* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967); Floyd C. Mann, "Studying and Creating Change," in Warren Bennis, Kenneth Benne, and Robert Chin, *The Planning of Change* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1961); Chris Argyris, *Integrating the Individual and the Organization* (New York: John Wiley, 1964); Frederick Herzberg, *Work and the Nature of Man* (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1966); Edgar H. Schein and Warren G. Bennis, *Personal and Organizational Change through Group Methods* (New York: John Wiley, 1965); and Kenneth D. Benne and Paul Sheats, "Functional Roles of Group Members," *Journal of Social Issues*, 4 (Spring 1948), pp. 41–49.

2 Robert Tannenbaum and Sheldon Davis, "Values, Man and Organizations," *Industrial Management Review*, 10 (Winter 1969), pp. 68–70.

3 See Gordon W. Allport, *Becoming* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1955).

4 For the major work growing out of these studies, see Roethlisberger and Dickson, *Management and the Worker*.

5 See Rensis Likert, *New Patterns of Management* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), p. 113.

6 This figure is from Rensis Likert, *New Patterns of Management* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), p. 133. Used with permission of McGraw-Hill Book Company.

7 Parts of this section are drawn from Wendell French, *The Personnel Management Process*, 4th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978), Chap. 26; and Wendell French, "Organization Development Objectives, Assumptions and Strategies," *California Management Review*, 12 (Winter 1969), pp. 23–34.

8 Bennis sees three major approaches to planned organizational change, with the behavioral scientists associated with each having "a deep concern with applying social science knowledge to create more viable social systems; a commitment to action, as well as to research . . . and a belief that improved interpersonal and group relationships will ultimately lead to better organizational performance." Warren G. Bennis, "A New Role for the Behavioral Sciences: Effecting Organizational Change," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 8 (September 1963), pp. 157–58.

5

Relevant Systems Concepts

We have already used the word *system* and would like to elaborate on the concept because it has considerable utility in helping pose questions about organization development and in planning change strategies. Although a system view of organizations and change will be drawn upon throughout this book, we try to be explicit about its relevance in this chapter. We first look at some definitions and descriptions and then move on to a further discussion of the relevance of these ideas to organization development.

THE CONCEPT OF SYSTEM

Fagen defines *system* as "a set of objects together with relationships between the objects and between their attributes."[1] Bertalanffy refers to a system as a set of "elements standing in interaction."[2] Kast and Rosenzweig define system as "an organized, unitary whole composed of two or more interdependent parts, components, or subsystems, and delineated by identifiable boundaries from its environmental suprasystem."[3]

Thus, *system* denotes interdependency or interaction of components or parts, and an identifiable wholeness or gestalt. Organizations are systems, and the aspects of interdependency and interaction of components and of wholeness are very important dimensions in organization development, as we will see later.

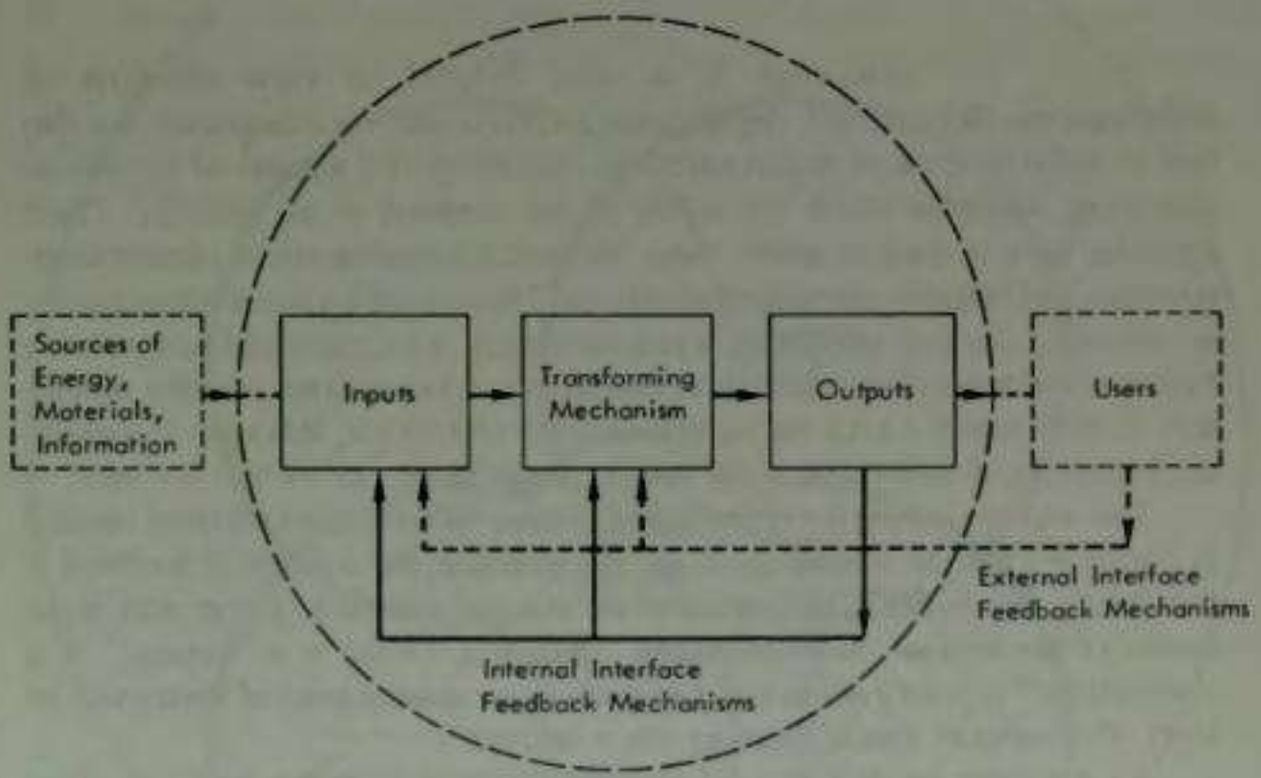
ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SYSTEMS

Other dimensions of systems are also relevant. Systems in operation (active systems), such as organizations, can be viewed as a linkage of *input* flows (energy, materials, or information) from *sources* in the external

environment, a transforming mechanism (a machine or a technical-human organization), and flows of *outputs* or *outcomes*, provided to *users*. The system may include one or more *feedback* mechanisms for self-regulation. For example, signals from the internal or external environment that the output is substandard could result in changes in either the transforming mechanism or the inputs, or both. (See Figure 5-1.)

Each of these components needs to be effectively managed and linked if there is to be a healthy organization. For example, to focus most attention on the technical-human organization (transforming mechanism) and to ignore how customers or clientele are reacting to the product (the user-output relationship) can lead to serious consequences. We have seen how lack of attention by the American automobile industry to public interest in economy cars led to lost opportunity for several years. We recall a top executive of a major automobile corporation saying some years ago that Volkswagen owners "were crazy"; a few years later his company was spending millions of dollars competing with Volkswagen and other manufacturers of economy cars.

FIGURE 5-1
Diagram of a System in Interaction with Its Environment



Similarly, to focus on seeking sources of funding (input) or to concentrate on marketing (output) to the extent of ignoring the effectiveness of the technical-human organization can also have disastrous results. As an illustration, we have seen a chief executive of a private organization almost destroy it by spending almost all his energy on external matters while paying inadequate attention to the quality of internal communications and administration. As a consequence, all his

key subordinates were frustrated, were often in serious conflict with each other, and harbored a growing disillusionment with his leadership. Both illustrations are examples of inadequate attention to feedback mechanisms and to managing the interrelationships of system components.

To elaborate further, while systems differ in the degree to which they are in an open versus a closed state, organizations and subparts of organizations are essentially *open systems* in that they exist in interdependent, exchange relationships with their environments. The more effectively these exchange relationships—that is, the interfaces—are managed in terms of utilizing inputs, the less the system is subject to *entropy*, that is, running down, becoming marginal or obsolete, or going out of existence. In the illustration of the automobile company, the external interface was not being managed properly. In the illustration of the chief executive, the internal interfaces between organizational subsystems—between himself and the board of directors, between himself and his staff, and between departments—were being ignored.

ORGANIZATIONS DESCRIBED IN SYSTEMS TERMINOLOGY

Although it is very helpful to view subunits of organizations—for example, departments and divisions—as subsystems, we also find it useful to think of organizations as consisting of a number of significant interacting variables which cut across or are common to all subunits. These variables have to do with goals, tasks, technology, human-social organization, structure, and external interface relationships. Thus we can visualize organizations as consisting of a goal subsystem, a task subsystem, a technological subsystem, a human-social subsystem, a structural subsystem, and an external interface subsystem.[4] (See Figure 5-2.) All can be influenced by OD efforts, although, in a sense, the human-social subsystem is the initial change target, as we will see later.

This way of viewing the organization is more elaborate than the ideas implicit in Figure 5-1 but can include them all. For example, the concept of feedback is included in Figure 5-2 in the notion of the external interface system, and in the notion of the internal communications subsystem. (What is a "system" or a "subsystem" is purely relative and depends upon at what level of abstraction or level of complexity one is focusing one's analysis.)

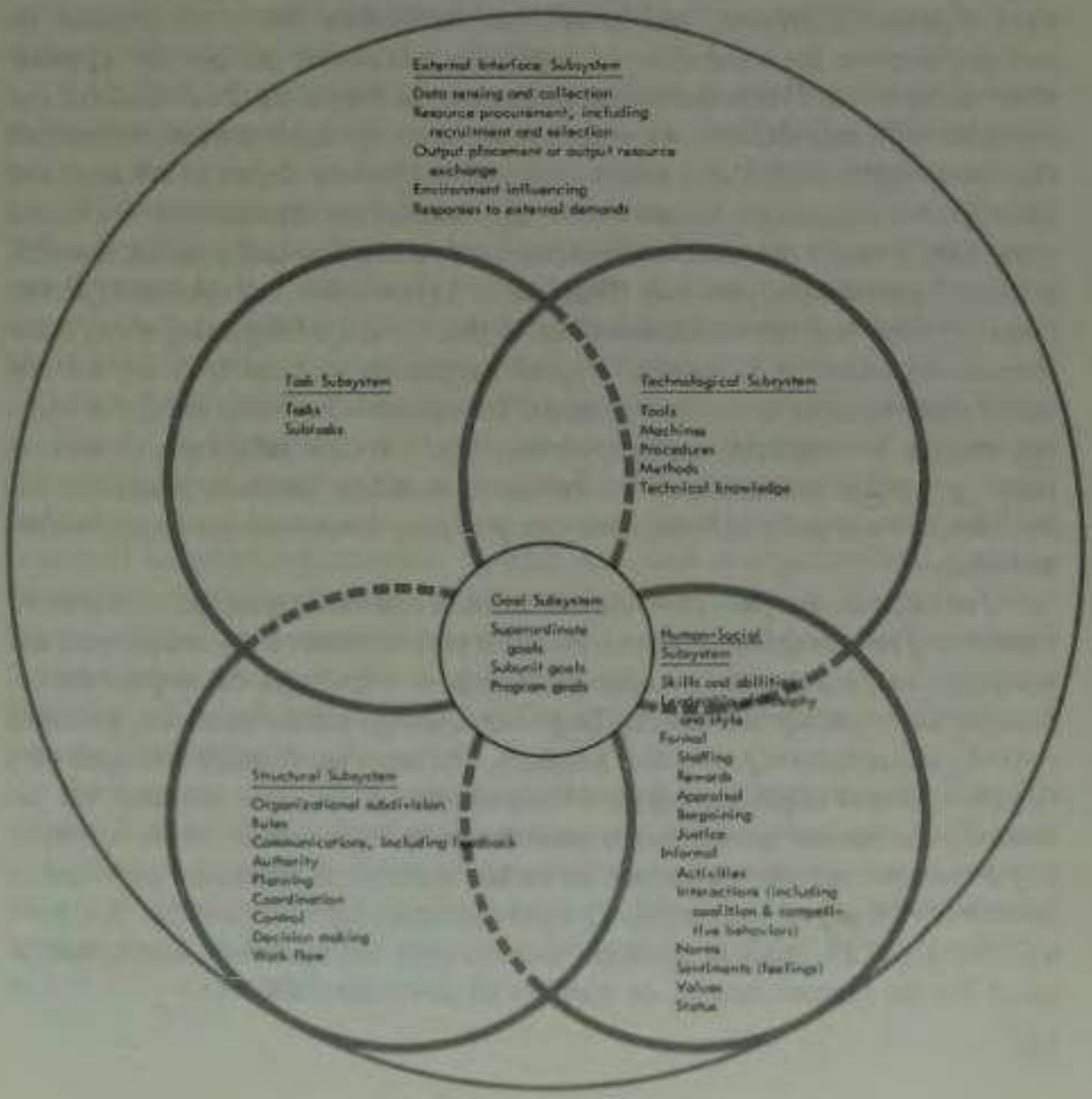
To elaborate on this way of viewing organizations, the *goal subsystem* consists of one or more (usually several) interrelated superordinate objectives or goals, usually set forth in the organization's charter or mission statement, plus the subgoals of units and programs stemming from or forming the superordinate goals. Although corporate goals are frequently reported in terms of profit objectives, even a superficial probing finds most business executives talking about the production of particular kinds of goods or services at a profit. Most are very conscious of

the importance of satisfying certain customer or client needs if they are to satisfy their own. Furthermore, significant aspects of the goal system are the subunit or program goals which either stem from or act interdependently with overall goals.[5] The interrelationship between these levels of goals typically is an area of considerable tension in organizations and requires extensive managing. Thus the goal subsystem is usually highly complex.

The *technological subsystem* consists of tools, machines, procedures, methods, and technical knowledge. In essence, this subsystem consists of the artifacts and knowledge that have been assembled to produce an end product, and it stems largely from the goal subsystem.

The *task subsystem* consists of the subdivision of the total work to be per-

FIGURE 5-2
Major Organizational Subsystems



formed into those tasks and subtasks that need to be accomplished by organization members to produce the end product. The actual tasks to be done are highly dependent upon the technological subsystem. For example, the kinds of machines or tools used will extensively influence the tasks to be performed.

The *structural subsystem* is highly influenced by the technological subsystem and consists of task groupings such as units, departments, or divisions. Interrelated with such task groupings is the design of the work flow, that is, where a partially completed product goes next, and so forth. Also included in the structural subsystem are work rules, such as beginning and ending hours; the authority system, for example, who reports to whom, and who can exercise sanctions toward whom; and procedures and practices relative to communicating, planning, coordination, control, and decision making. These three subsystems—technological, task, and structural—are obviously highly interdependent.

The *human-social subsystem* can be viewed as consisting of four aspects: the *skills and abilities* of organizational members, the *leadership philosophy and style*, a *formal* subsystem, and an *informal* subsystem. Skills and abilities are included because the capabilities of organization members pervade all organizational subsystems. While leadership philosophy and style can be considered one aspect of skills and abilities, we choose to separate out these dimensions because they are so highly interrelated with such matters as the way decisions are made and the degree of concern for human values expressed in the organization. By formal subsystem is meant personnel subsystems, such as staffing (assignment, transfer, promotion, separation), rewards (financial and otherwise), and appraisal (performance review and the communication of that review); bargaining subsystems (formalized collective bargaining or quasi-bargaining relationships); and the system of organizational justice (mechanisms for equitable treatment and for remedying wrongs, for example, appeal systems). The informal subsystem consists of nonprogrammed activities and interactions, including resistant behaviors and coalition and competitive behaviors; group norms; sentiments (feelings); values; and status.

The *external interface subsystem* consists of data sensing and gathering (e.g., market or public reaction surveys); resource procurement (e.g., recruitment and selection, and purchasing); output placement or exchanges of outputs for resources; environment influencing (e.g., advertising, public relations, pollution control); and responses to external demands. The latter has recently become a very conspicuous and impactive aspect of organizational life. The incidents are too numerous to recount: governmental pressures on hiring practices, sit-ins in university presidents' offices, policemen on strike, marches to city halls, picketing of business firms and of conventions, partial consumer boycotts, and the like. How all these kinds of interface problems are managed can have important consequences for the success, health, or viability of an organization.

RELEVANCE TO ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The above discussion of systems concepts and a systems view of organizations leads to several generalizations about organization development. First, *because organizational subsystems exist in a highly interdependent state, system-wide changes may occur by introducing changes in any one of these subsystems*. Thus, OD interventions need to be based on a diagnosis of the consequences throughout the system of different options open to the change agent and key clients.[8]

Second, *the initial vehicle for organization development efforts—for improvements in any or all of the organizational subsystems—tends to be an intervention in the human-social and the structural subsystems*. That is, perceptions and sentiments of organizational members are tapped relative to problems they see in the organization, and in this process the communications and perhaps even the authority and control subsystems are altered. A prior condition may be some change in leadership philosophy or style.

As a third generalization, *there is an immediate interrelated impact between the human-social and the structural subsystems*. For example, the moment group members start trying to understand the norms under which they have been operating, their communications and probably their decision making will be affected. When a manager begins to listen to and understand feelings, the authority structure begins to shift. Reciprocally, the outcome of a manager altering his or her communications style to a more inquiring and understanding-seeking stance is likely to be a positive shift in subordinate feelings.

And fourth, *while the initial vehicle for organization development efforts tends to be an intervention in the human-social and the structural subsystems, there is likely to be either a direct or an indirect confrontation of the goal, task, technological, and external interface systems, plus the human-social and the structural subsystems themselves*. To elaborate, unit or organizational goals are frequently reviewed and modified in "team-building" sessions. Using the Chapter 1 examples, some attention was given to organizational goals in Illustration 1 ("Problems in a Business Firm"), in Illustration 2 ("Start-up of a New Junior High School"), and in Illustration 3 ("Departure from Tradition in a Division of a Large Corporation").

Further, the external interface subsystem is frequently examined in OD efforts. In Illustration 1 there was a review of customer relationships. In some OD efforts, key people involved in the interface are brought together to work on mutual problems with the help of a third party. For example, manufacturers and salespeople from one organization may be brought together to meet with key people from a customer organization.

Although extensive technological changes are typically not made directly through OD interventions, team member reactions to obstacles in carrying out tasks may result in changes in procedures or equipment (technological subsystem). For example, in the instance of Illustration 1 in Chapter 1, action plans that emerged from the workshop included changing procedures having to do with customer complaints. In Illustration 3 (''Departure from Tradition in a Division of a Large Corporation''), action steps included adding direct telephone lines between plants to avoid switchboard delays.

Indirectly, the task subsystem is always modified in OD efforts. For example, in Illustration 5 (''A New Plant Manager''), the very fact that subordinate managers were involved in group sessions served to alter the mix of tasks and the nature of their jobs. Very simply, the planning and decision-making components were being enlarged. More directly, the task subsystem is frequently altered through an exploration of group members' expectations of each other. This occurred in Illustrations 2 and 3, and in Illustration 4 (''Organizational Improvement in an Indian Tribe'').

Thus, organization development efforts may be somewhat more of a total or gestalt kind of consulting than has sometimes been recognized. It does not suffice, for example, to say that OD focuses on ''human relations'' or ''interpersonal relations'' unless, of course, the consultant's style or the client's needs keep the change efforts in these realms.

Indicative of this gestalt approach is a fairly common question asked by change agents in the data-gathering phase of an organization development intervention: ''What do you see as getting in the way of getting the job done the way you would like to see it get done?'' The responses can pertain to any one of the organizational subsystems as described in Figure 5-2. We should, however, recognize the ''set'' that respondents will have; if there has been appropriate pre-work, a change agent will be perceived as an organizational facilitator, not as a technological expert.[7]

As a concluding generalization, the question of *whether to embark on an OD effort is to raise the question of whether to increase the extent and quality of system openness*. While all organizations are open systems they do differ markedly in the degree to which relevant (or potentially relevant) data are shared between people and between subparts of the system. A central issue in organizational life is the degree to which members of the organization are permitted to communicate fully with each other about the various organizational subsystems and the degree to which such communications are facilitated. *This issue is at the heart of organization development; the decision to explore the usefulness of an OD strategy is to decide to examine the utility or the wisdom of enlarging the data base used by organization members in decision making. And since fuller information and more complete understanding lead to more mutual influence, the issue becomes one of whether or not the key power figures wish to enlarge the domain of mutual influence within the organization.*

At another level is the issue of the *quality* of system openness and the quality of the feedback mechanisms. In particular, to what degree is the OD effort to become truly collaborative? The more secret or unilateral the efforts, the more manipulative; the more open and truly participative, the more the efforts are nonmanipulative and the more viable the intervention is likely to be. But openness can be either constructive or destructive. Are the feedback mechanisms developmental or are they punitive and reductive? Thus, both the extent and the quality of system openness are important issues in OD, as will be implicit throughout this book.

SUMMARY

The concept of system, which is a major assumption in organization development efforts, denotes interdependency of components and an identifiable wholeness or gestalt.

Organizations can be viewed as consisting of goal, task, technological, human-social, structural, and external interface subsystems existing in a state of dynamic interdependence. Such concepts as interface, entropy, feedback, and openness are useful in understanding organizations and in raising issues relative to improvement strategies. For example, issues pertaining to both the extent and the quality of organizational feedback mechanisms are important.

The initial vehicles for organization development efforts tend to be the human-social and the structural subsystems, that is, the communications and feedback systems and the attitude and sentiment components of the informal system. However, these become vehicles for confronting problems in any of the major organizational subsystems. The OD process sets off interdependent changes in the human-social and the structural subsystems, and quite likely in all the major organizational subsystems. The OD consultant concentrates on facilitating problem solving relative to these subsystems and avoids being placed in the role of adviser-expert.

NOTES

1 See A. D. Hall and R. E. Fagen, "Definition of a System," *General Systems*, Yearbook of the Society for the Advancement of General Systems Theory, 1 (1956), pp. 18–28.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 1–10.

3 Fremont E. Kast and James E. Rosenzweig, *Organization and Management: A Systems Approach*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), p. 101.

4 This view of an organization is an elaboration of the models described by Leavitt and Seiler. The former views industrial organizations as complex systems with four major "interacting variables": task, structural, technological, and human, the latter views organizations as sociotechnical systems comprised of four major

variables: human, technological, organizational, and social. See Harold J. Leavitt, "Applied Organizational Change in Industry: Structural, Technological and Humanistic Approaches," in James G. March, *Handbook of Organizations* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965), pp. 1144–45; and John A. Seiler, *Systems Analysis in Organizational Behavior* (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, 1967), pp. 23–29. See also E. L. Trist *et al., Organizational Choice* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1963). Katz and Kahn refer to technical, maintenance, supportive, institutional, adaptive, and managerial subsystems. Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn, *The Social Psychology of Organizations* (New York: John Wiley, 1966), p. 456.

5 To be more specific, we can also think about goals in terms of a descending level of abstractions, e.g., end-result, strategic, tactical, and program goals.

6 O'Connell appropriately challenges the idea that there is "one best way" of changing organizations and emphasizes that the consultant should choose his role and intervention strategy on the basis of "the conditions existing when he enters the client system." Jeremiah J. O'Connell, *Managing Organizational Innovation* (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, 1968), pp. 10–11.

7 To elaborate, the change agent may assist a unit in facing up to and making decisions about technology but will tend to stay out of making technological or other prescriptions. The change agent may, however, suggest additional options for consideration if the problem area is within his or her area of expertise. A major trap for the OD consultant is to permit the client to place the consultant in the role of the expert who is supposed to solve problems *for* the organization. The OD consultant is likely to lose effectiveness quickly if he or she gets into this bind. See Chapter 17 for a further discussion of this point.

II

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Operational Components
Characteristics and Foundations
Action Research
OD Interventions: An Overview
Team Interventions
Intergroup Interventions
Personal, Interpersonal, and Group Process Interventions
Comprehensive Interventions
Structural Interventions
Conditions for Optimal Success

6

Operational Components

the nature of organization development

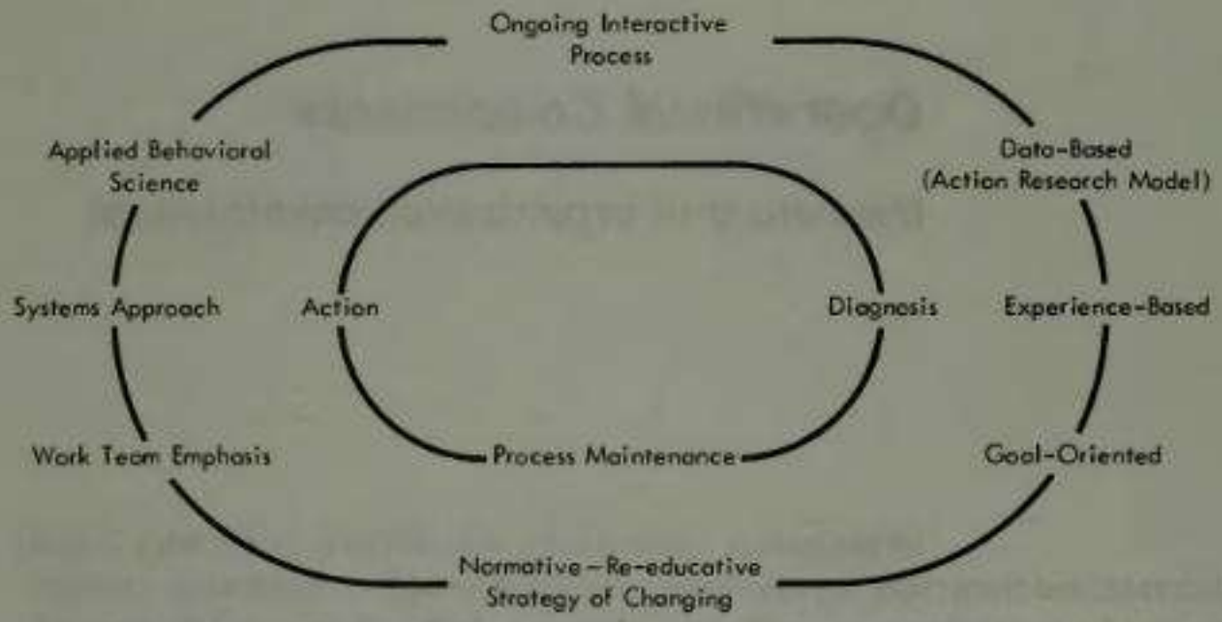
Organization development was defined in Chapter 2 and differentiated from other organizational and educational interventions as a unique process for improving organizational functioning. In this chapter and the next we continue and extend that earlier discussion by focusing attention on the nature of OD. The efficacy of organization development is due largely to the nature of the OD process itself. The nature of OD—what it is, what it tries to accomplish, what characteristics and components it has, and what its theoretical underpinnings are—that is the scope of this discussion.

The nature of OD could be presented in several ways. As shown in Figure 6-1, we have chosen to characterize it in terms of the *foundations* of the OD process and the *components of the OD process in operation*. The outer ellipse describes the foundation characteristics we consider important; the inner ellipse describes the basic components or operations found in any OD program. We will discuss the basic operational components of OD in this chapter (the inner ellipse), and the characteristics and foundations of the OD process in the next chapter (the outer ellipse).

There are three basic components of the OD process in operation; any OD program will contain these elements of *diagnosis*, *action*, and *process-maintenance*. In the next chapter the major characteristics and the theoretical underpinnings of organization development are explored; these might be considered the foundation upon which the process is built. The characteristics we want particularly to emphasize are that organization development is an ongoing interactive process, is data based (built on an action research model), is experience based, is goal oriented, constitutes a normative–re-educative strategy of changing, is both a form of and a result of applied behavioral science, uses a systems

approach, and has a work team emphasis. Some facets of the characteristics are treated more extensively in other sections of the book, but we deal with them all in Chapter 7 to show the broad base of organization development as a process of planned change.

FIGURE 6-1
The Nature of Organization Development



(Outer Ellipse shows the Foundations of the OD Process; Inner Ellipse shows the Components of the OD Process in Operation)

OVERVIEW OF THE OPERATIONAL COMPONENTS OF ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

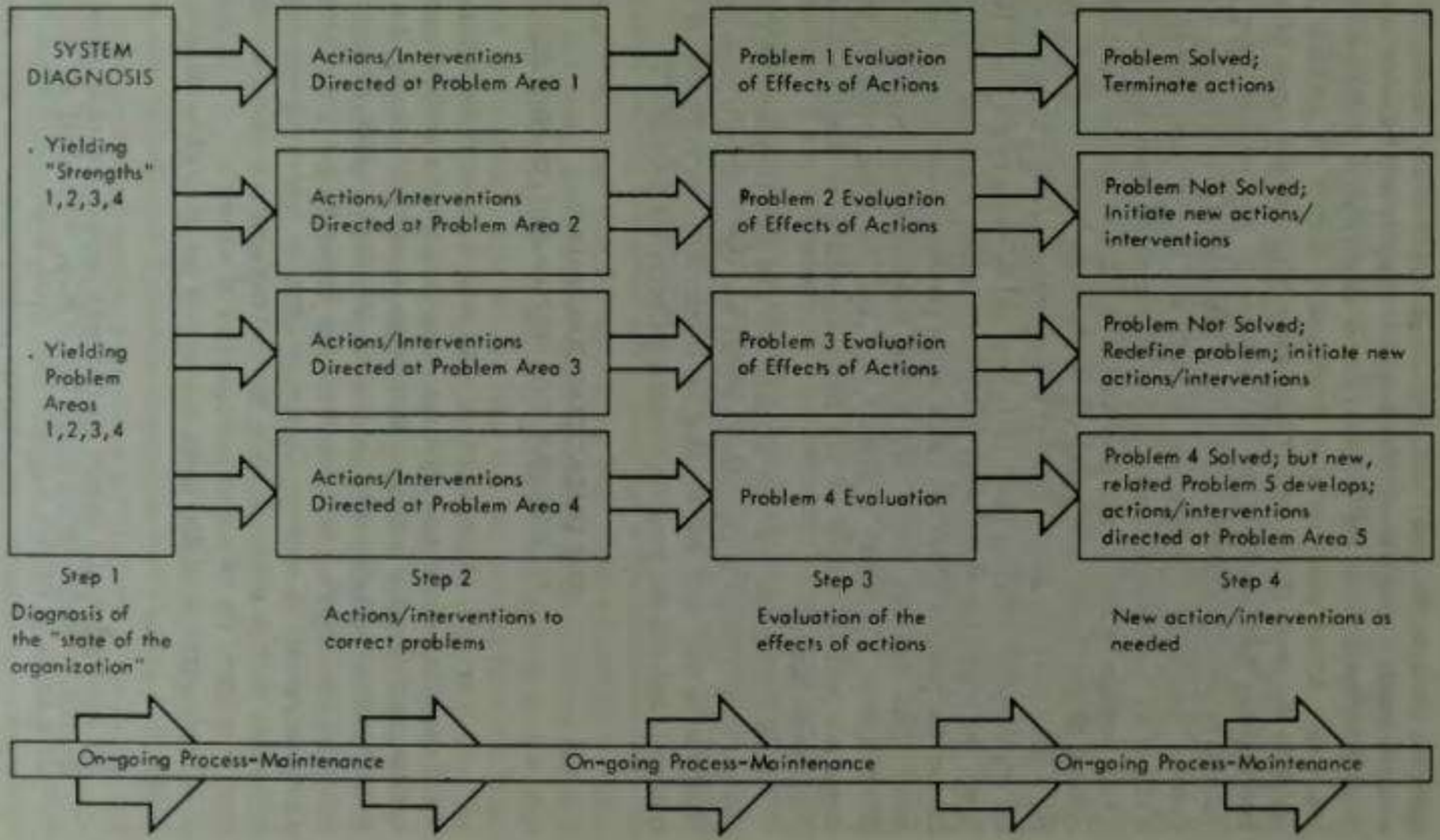
Implementation of an OD program requires attention to three operations that we call the basic components or elements of an OD program in operation: the diagnostic component, representing a continuous collection of system data, focuses on the total system, its subsystems, and system processes; the action (or intervention) component consists of all the activities of consultants and system members designed to improve the organization's functioning;[1] and the process-maintenance component encompasses the activities oriented toward the maintenance and management of the OD process itself. The first two elements related to the OD process vis-à-vis the organization; the third element relates to the OD process vis-à-vis itself.

Figure 6-2 shows what we mean when we describe the OD process in terms of diagnosis, action, and process-maintenance components.

The first step in organization development is to diagnose the state of the system—What are its strengths? What are its problem areas? As we indicated in the preceding chapter, the system can be conceptualized as having various sub-

FIGURE 6-2

Components of the OD Process:
Diagnosis, Action, Process Maintenance



systems, such as the goal, task, technological, structural, human-social, and external interface subsystems. The diagnosis (Step 1) will focus on any or all of these subsystems. From the diagnosis comes identification of strengths and problem areas. Action plans are then developed to correct the problem areas and maintain the areas of strength. These action plans usually result from various interventions that constitute the OD technology. Interventions have been developed to correct problems at the levels of individual effectiveness, team effectiveness, intergroup relations, and so forth, and also to correct problems at the levels of the various subsystems, such as human-social, goal, and structural. Step 2 then consists of actions and interventions to correct specific problems. Step 3 consists of fact-finding concerning the results of the corrective actions taken. Did the actions have the desired effects? Is the problem solved? If the answer is yes, the organization members move on to new and different problems; if the answer is no, the organization members initiate new action plans and interventions to correct the problem (Step 4). Often when problems remain unsolved after an initial attack on them, Steps 3 and 4 entail redefining and reconceptualizing the problem areas. There may be Steps 5, 6, 7, etc., for some problems, but further steps are just iterations of the basic sequence of diagnosis—action—evaluation—action.

During the entire sequence attention must be paid simultaneously to the OD process itself. Energy is expended to ensure that the program is supported by the organization members, that the program is relevant to the organization's priority concerns, and that the program is making discernible progress.

THE DIAGNOSTIC COMPONENT: DIAGNOSING THE SYSTEM AND ITS PROCESSES

Organization development is at heart an action program based on valid information about the *status quo*, current problems and opportunities, and effects of actions as they relate to goal achievement. An OD program thus starts with diagnosis and continuously employs data collecting and data analyzing throughout. The requirement for diagnostic activities—activities designed to provide an accurate account of things as they really are—stems from two needs: the first need is to know the state of things, or "what is"; the second need is to know the effects or consequences of actions.

The importance of diagnostic activities is emphasized by Beckhard as follows:

> The development of a strategy for systematic improvement of an organization demands an examination of the present state of things. Such an analysis usually looks at two broad areas. One is a diagnosis of the various subsystems that make up the total organization. These subsystems may be natural "teams" such as top management, the production department, or a research group; or they may be levels such as top management, middle management, or the work force.

> The second area of diagnosis is the organization processes that are occurring. These include decision-making processes, communications patterns and styles, relationships between interfacing groups, the management of conflict, the setting of goals, and planning methods.[2]

Table 6-1 shows how one would proceed to diagnose a system and its subsystems (the whole and its subunits). For each of the major targets or subsystems in an organization, the typical information desired and common methods of obtaining the information are given. The OD practitioner may be interested in all these target groups or only in one or two of them; he or she may work with one subsystem during one phase of the program and other subsystems during subsequent phases. Frequently the improvement strategy (the overall OD intervention strategy) calls for concentrating on different organizational targets in a planned sequence. For example, the program may start at an important subsystem, move to another subsystem, and then extend to the total organization; or the initial focus could be on the total organization and then move to selected subsystems. Some of the critical issues and dimensions concerning how, when, and where to begin the OD program will be covered in later chapters.

An alternative way to conceptualize the diagnostic components emphasizes the organization's principal processes rather than its primary target groups. Such a scheme is presented in Table 6-2 showing the principal organization processes, the typical desired information concerning the processes, and the common methods of obtaining the information.

In practice the OD consultant works from both tables simultaneously. Although interested in some specific target group from Table 6-1 and the information about that group, the consultant is also interested in the processes found in that group and would rely on Table 6-2. Organizational processes are the *what* and the *how* of the organization, that is, What is going on? and How is it being accomplished? To know about the organization's processes is to know about the organization in its dynamic and complex reality. Organization development practitioners typically pay special attention to the processes listed in Table 6-2 because of their centrality for effective organization functioning, because of their ubiquitous nature in organizations, and because significant organizational problems often stem from them. Careful examination of the two tables will give a good sense of the inner workings of an OD program and its thrusts, emphases, and mechanics.

These tables are intended as heuristic tools for operational diagnosis. As an illustration, say the personnel director in conjunction with a manager of a large, complex, heterogeneous subsystem is interested in OD efforts primarily directed to improving the functioning of significant pairs and individuals within the subsystem. It is helpful to know what information is typically needed and what methods are available for getting an accurate picture of the *status quo* of the large complex unit. And it is helpful to know what different kinds of information and data-gathering techniques are indicated when attention is focused on the pairs and

TABLE 6-1
Diagnosing Organizational Subsystems

Diagnostic Focus or Target	*Explanation and Identifying Examples*	*Typical Information Sought*	*Common Methods of Diagnosis*
The total organization (having a common "charter" or mission and a common power structure)	The total system is the entity assessed and analyzed. The diagnosis might also include, if relevant, extrasystem (environmental) organizations, groups, or forces, such as customers, suppliers, and governmental regulations. Examples are a manufacturing firm, a hospital, a school system, a department store chain, or a church denomination.	What are the norms ("cultural oughts") of the organization? What is the organization's culture? What are the attitudes, opinions, and feelings of system members toward various "cognitive objects" such as compensation, organization goals, supervision, and top management? What is the organization climate—open vs. closed, authoritarian vs. democratic, repressive vs. developmental, trusting vs. suspicious, cooperative vs. competitive? How well do key organizational processes, such as decision making and goal setting, function? What kind and how effective are the organization's "sensing mechanisms" to monitor internal and external demands? Are organization goals understood and accepted?	Questionnaire surveys are most popular with a large organization. Interviews, both group and individual, are useful for getting detailed information, especially if based on effective sampling techniques. A panel of representative members who are surveyed or interviewed periodically is useful to chart changes over time. Examination of organizational "potsherds"—rules, regulations, policies, symbols of office and/or status, etc., yields insight into the organization's culture. Diagnostic meetings held at various levels within the organization yield a great amount of information in a short time period.
Large subsystems that are by nature complex and heterogeneous	This target group stems from making different "slices" of the organization, such as by hierarchial *level*, *function*, and geographical *location*. Two criteria help to identify this set of subsystems: first they are viewed as a subsystem by themselves or others;	All of the above, plus: how does this subsystem view the whole and vice versa? How do the members of this subsystem get along together? What are the unique demands on this subsystem? Are organization structures and processes related to the unique demands?	If the subsystems are large or widely dispersed, questionnaire and survey techniques are recommended. Interviews and observations may be used to provide additional supporting or hypothesis-testing information.

	and second, they are heterogeneous in makeup, that is, the members have some things in common, but many differences from each other, too. Examples would be the middle management group, consisting of managers from diverse functional groups; the personnel department members of an organization that has widely dispersed operations with a personnel group at each location; everyone in one plant in a company that has ten plants; a division made up of several functional groups.	Are there "high" and "low" subunits within the subsystem in terms of performance? Why? What are the major problems confronting this subsystem and its subunits? Are the subsystem's goals compatible with organization goals? Does the heterogeneity of role demands and functional identity get in the way of effective subsystem performance?	
Small subsystems that are simple and relatively homogeneous	These are typically formal work groups or teams that have frequent face-to-face interaction. They may be permanent groups, temporary task forces, or newly constituted groups (e.g., the group charged with the "start-up" of a new operation, or the group formed by an acquisition or merger). Examples are the top management team, any manager and his or her key subordinates, committees of a permanent or temporary nature, task force teams, the work force in an office, the teachers in a single school, etc.	The questions on culture, climate, attitudes, and feelings are relevant here, plus: What are the major problems of the team? How can team effectiveness be improved? What do people do that gets in the way of others? Are member/leader relations those that are desired? Do individuals know how their jobs relate to group and organizational goals? Are the group's working processes, i.e., the way they get things done as a group, effective? Is good use made of group and individual resources?	Typical methods include the following: individual interviews followed by a group meeting to review the interview data; short questionnaires; observation of staff meetings and other day-to-day operations; and a family group meeting for self-diagnosis.

TABLE 6-1 (Continued)

Diagnostic Focus or Target	*Identifying Remarks and Explanation*	*Typical Information Sought*	*Common Methods of Diagnosis*
Small, total organizations that are relatively simple and homogeneous	An example would be a local professional organization. Typical problems as seen by officers might be declining membership, low attendance, or difficulty in manning special task forces.	How do the officers and the members see the organization and its goals? What do they like and dislike about it? What do they want it to be like? What is the competition like? What significant external forces are impacting on the organization?	Questionnaires or interviews are frequently used. Descriptive adjective questionnaires can be used to obtain a quick reading on the culture, "tone," and health of the organization. Diagnostic family group meetings can be useful.
Interface or intergroup subsystems	These consist of subsets of the total system that contain members of two subsystems, such as a matrix organizational structure requiring an individual or a group to have two reporting lines. But more often this target consists of members of one subsystem having common problems and responsibilities with members of another subsystem. We mean to include subsystems with common problems and responsibilities such as production and maintenance overlaps, marketing and sales overlaps.	How does each subsystem see the other? What problems do the two groups have in working together? In what ways do the subsystems get in each other's way? How can they collaborate to improve the performance of both groups? Are goals, subgoals, areas of authority and responsibility clear? What is the nature of the climate between the groups? What do the members want it to be?	Confrontation meetings between both groups are often the method for data gathering and planning corrective actions. Organization mirroring meetings are used when three or more groups are involved. Interviews of each subsystem followed by a "sharing the data" meeting or observation of interactions can be used.
Dyads and/or Triads	Superior/subordinate pairs, interdependent peers, linking pins—i.e., persons who have multiple group memberships—all these are subsystems worthy of analysis.	What is the quality of the relationship? Do the parties have the necessary skills for task accomplishment? Are they collaborative or competitive? Are they effective as a subsystem? Does the addition of a third party facilitate or inhibit their progress? Are they supportive of each other?	Separate interviews followed by a meeting of the parties to view any discrepancies in the interview data are often used. Checking their perceptions of each other through confrontation situations may be useful. Observation is an important way to assess the dynamic quality of the interaction.

Individuals	Any individual within the organization, such as president, division heads, key occupants of positions in a work flow process, e g., quality control, R & D. In school systems, this would be (*a*) students, (*b*) teachers, or (*c*) administrators.	Does the person—he or she—perform according to the organization's expectations? How does he view his place and performance? Do certain kinds of problems typically arise? Does he meet standards and norms of the organization? Does he need particular knowledge, skills, or ability? What career development opportunities does he have/want/need? What pain is he experiencing?	Interviews, information derived from diagnostic work team meetings, or problems identified by personnel department are sources of information. Self-assessment growing out of team or subsystem interventions is another source.
Roles	A role is a set of behaviors enacted by a person as a result of his occupying a certain position within the organization. All persons in the organization have roles requiring certain behaviors, such as the secretaries, production foremen, accountants.	Should the role behaviors be added to, subtracted from, or changed? Is the role defined adequately? What is the "fit" between the person and role? Should the role performer be given special skills and knowledge? Is this the right person for this role?	Usually information comes from observations, interviews, role analysis technique, a team approach to "management by objectives." Career planning activities yield this information as an output.
Between organization systems constituting a supra system	An example might be the system of law and order in a region, including local, county, state, federal police or investigative and enforcement agencies, courts, prisons, parole agencies, prosecuting officers and grand juries. Most such supra systems are so complex that change efforts tend to focus on a pair or a trip of subparts.	How do the key people in one segment of the supra system view the whole and the subparts? Are there frictions or incongruities between subparts? Are there high-performing and low-performing subunits? Why?	Organizational mirroring, or developing lists of how each group sees each other, is a common method of joint diagnosis. Questionnaires and interviews are useful in extensive, long-range interventions.

TABLE 6-2
Diagnosing Organizational Processes

Organizational Process	*Identifying Remarks and Explanation*	*Typical Information Sought*	*Common Methods of Diagnosis*
Communications patterns, styles and flows.	Who talks to whom, for how long, about what? Who initiates the interaction? Is it two-way or one-way? Is it top-down; down-up; lateral?	Is communication directed upward, downward, or both? Are communications filtered? Why? In what way? Do communications patterns "fit" the nature of the jobs to be accomplished? What is the "climate" of communications? What is the place of written communications vs. oral?	Observations, especially in meetings; questionnaires for large-size samples; interviews and discussions with group members—all these methods may be used to collect the desired information. Analysis of videotaped sessions by all concerned is especially useful.
Goal setting	Setting task objectives and determining criteria to measure accomplishment of the objectives takes place at all organizational levels.	Do they set goals? How is this done? Who participates in goal setting? Do they possess the necessary skills for effective goal setting? Are they able to set long-range and short-range objectives?	Questionnaires, interviews, and observation all afford ways of assessing goal-setting ability of individuals and groups within the organization.
Decision making, problem solving, and action planning	Evaluating alternatives and choosing a plan of action are integral and central functions for most organization members. This includes getting the necessary information, establishing priorities, evaluating alternatives, and choosing one alternative over all others.	Who makes decisions? Are they effective? Are all available resources utilized? Are additional decision-making skills needed? Are additional problem-solving skills needed? Are organization members satisfied with the problem-solving and decision-making processes?	Observation of problem-solving meetings at various organizational levels is particularly valuable in diagnosing this process. Analysis of videotaped sessions by all concerned is especially useful.
Conflict resolution and management	Conflict—interpersonal, intrapersonal, and intergroup—frequently exists in organizations. Does the organization have effective ways of dealing with conflict?	Where does conflict exist? Who are the involved parties? How is it being managed? What are the system norms for dealing with conflict? Does the reward system promote conflict?	Interviews, third-party observations, and observation of group meetings are common methods for diagnosing these processes.

Managing interface relations	Interfaces represent these situations wherein two or more groups (subsystems) face common problems or overlapping responsibility. This is most often seen when members of two separate groups are interdependently related in achieving an objective but have separate accountability.	What is the nature of the relations between the two groups? Are goals clear? Is responsibility clear? What major problems do the two groups face? What structural conditions promote/inhibit effective interface management?	Interviews, third-party observations, and observation of group meetings are common methods for diagnosing these processes.
Superior-subordinate relations	Formal hierarchical relations in organizations dictate that some people lead and others follow; these situations are often a source of many organizational problems.	What are the extant leadership styles? What problems arise between superiors and subordinates?	Questionnaires can show overall leadership climate and norms. Interviews and questionnaires reveal the desired leadership behaviors.

individuals. This knowledge facilitates designing the diagnostic phases of the organization development program.

Continual diagnosis is thus a necessary ingredient of any planned change effort. Such diverse activities as getting rich, managing your time, and losing weight, for example, all begin with an audit of "what is"—the status quo—and then require continual monitoring of the changing status quo over time. From a comparison of "what is" with "what should be" comes a discovery of the gap between actual and desired conditions. Action plans are then developed to close the gap between the actual and the desired conditions; and the effects (consequences) of these action plans are continuously monitored to measure progress or movement toward the goal.[3] Diagnostic activities are therefore basic to all goal-seeking behaviors.

Organization development, with its emphasis on moving the organization from "what is" to "what should be," requires continuous generation of system data.[4] In this regard, Argyris states that the consultant ("interventionist" in his terms) has three "primary intervention tasks": to help the client system generate valid data; to enable the client system to have free, informed choice; and to help the client system generate internal commitment to the choices made.[5] Argyris says: "One condition that seems so basic as to be defined axiomatic is the generation of *valid information*. Without valid information it would be difficult for the client to learn and for the interventionist to help. . . . Valid information is that which describes the factors, plus their interrelationships, that create the problem for the client system."[6]

Granted that diagnosis is a *sine qua non* of effective organization development, two issues remain. First, is the diagnosis systematically planned and structured in advance so that it follows an extensive category system and structured question format, or is the diagnosis more emergent—following the data wherever they may lead? Second, what diagnostic categories are to be used? Practice varies widely on these two dimensions. We tend to be about in the middle of the "structured in advance—emergent" continuum. We have some structured questions but follow up on leads as they develop in the course of the diagnosis. We also tend to use the diagnostic categories of Tables 6-1 and 6-2 because we focus on system and subsystem cultures and processes.

Roger Harrison uses somewhat different categories (see Figure 6-3) and an emergent diagnostic approach.[7] In his words: "I approach the system with my antennae waving, and as data are produced I probably slot them into these different categories; and then if one or another of them seems predominant as a focus for the system members, then that's the one I'm likely to use as entry."[8]

Probably the most thorough and systematic diagnostic activities in OD are done as a part of Grid OD, the six-phase organization development program used by Robert Blake and Jane Mouton.[9] (See Chapter 13 for a discussion of this approach.) In addition to being thorough, Blake and Mouton extend the diagnostic categories to include financial considerations, general business strategy, and general business logic. In their view a corporation has six major areas of

FIGURE 6-3

Harrison's Model for Organizational Diagnosis: Categories and Subcategories

Information System

Modes of communication (written, group, individual, etc.)
Informal groupings
Information channels

Technical System

Work process – technology and organization of tasks
Responsibility and authority for specific things
Types of decisions which are made

Points of Entry

System members' own change and improvement goals
Role conflicts and concerns of members
Members' blocks to job effectiveness
Conflicting goals of subsystems
Satisfaction of members with their jobs
Performance evaluation and appraisal of organizational units
Performance evaluation and appraisal of individuals

Power System

Formal authority structure
Informal reward system
Responsibility and authority for major types of decisions
Types of decisions
Types of decisions which are made

System Objectives

Goals of system
Priorities among system objectives
Goals of subsystems: especially those which conflict

Ideology

Organizational culture: norms and values of system members
Control systems

Harrison's categories were derived from his response to a portion of the Hornstein and Tichy "Change Agent Survey" questionnaire which instructed respondents to: (1) indicate what information (from a list including such things as formal reward structure, goals, control system, individual satisfactions, etc.) they would seek in order to diagnose and understand an organization; and (2) arrange the items into categories. Reproduced by special permission from *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, "An Interview with Roger Harrison," by Noel Tichy, Vol. 9, No. 6, p. 707. Copyright 1973 NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science.

activities—human resources, financial management, operations (production/manufacturing), marketing, research and development, and corporate. Each of these areas must be managed effectively if the corporation is to achieve corporate excellence, and each of these areas is measured/assessed in depth and in detail. This extension of diagnosis to the business logic of the organization, in addition to the more usual focus of most OD practitioners on the human and social dynamics of the organization, represents a significant positive feature of Grid OD.

Finally, in an OD program, not only are the *results* of diagnostic activities important, but *how the information is collected* and *what is done with the information* are also significant aspects of the process. There is active collaboration between the OD practitioner and the organization members about such issues as what target groups are to be diagnosed, how the diagnosis is best accomplished, what processes and dynamics should be analyzed, what is to be done with the information, how the data will be worked with, and how the information will be used to aid action planning. Usually information is collected through a variety of methods—interviews, observations, questionnaires, and organization records. Information is generally considered to be the property of those persons who generated it; the data serve as the foundation for planning actions. This is basically an action research model consisting of the following steps: (1) data collection, (2) data feedback to the people who supplied the data, (3) identification of problem areas based on the data, (4) planning corrective action steps, (5) implementing the action steps, and (6) collecting data to evaluate the effects of the actions. Therefore the diagnostic component and the action component are intimately related in organization development.

THE ACTION COMPONENT: INTERVENING IN THE CLIENT SYSTEM

As we have seen, organization development may be viewed as a process designed to improve an organization's adapting, coping, problem-solving, and goal-setting processes. The assumptions are made that the organization is not doing these processes as well as it could or should be doing them and that the organization can improve. Improvement requires: first, knowing what processes are inadequate—gained through diagnosis; and second, doing something to make the inadequate processes more effective—accomplished by taking corrective actions. Taking corrective actions is achieved through activities in the client system called *interventions*, which we define in Chapter 9 as "*sets of structured activities* in which selected organizational units (target groups or individuals) engaged with a task or sequence of tasks where the task goals are related *directly or indirectly to organizational improvement*."

To intervene in the client system is to interpose or interject activities into the normal activities of the organization in such a way that the intervention activities

are done *in addition to* the normal activities or are done *instead of* the normal activities. An example of an "in addition to" intervention would be for a staff group to include a "process critique" at the end of each staff meeting. This simply means that a few minutes are set aside to look at "how we worked"—the process—during the meeting. Critiquing "how we worked" can enable the group to correct any deficient processes and become more effective in its deliberations. An example of an "instead of" intervention would be getting a key service department of an organization to hold an "organization mirroring" workshop with its user-clients to determine how the clients view the services provided and how they want the services changed or improved. In this case, instead of the normal activities of begging, cajoling, or coercing the user-clients to utilize the staff services, a problem-solving workshop called the organization mirror is convened in which the clients give feedback to the service group regarding services and a two-way dialogue is established between service providers and service users. Such a meeting would probably not be a normal activity in the organization.

The range of OD interventions is quite extensive. Structured activities have been developed to solve most organizational problems. For example, there are interventions that focus on most of the target groups in Table 6-1 and most of the organizational processes of Table 6-2. Thus, if problems exist in a particular organizational system or subsystem or in a particular organizational process, intervention activities can be initiated to remedy the problems. An inventory of OD interventions is given in Chapters 9 through 14.

A well-designed OD program unfolds according to a strategy or game plan, called the *overall OD strategy*. This strategy may be planned in advance or may emerge over time as events dictate. The strategy is based on answers to such questions as the following: What are the overall change/improvement goals of the program? What parts of the organization are most ready and receptive to the OD program? What are the key leverage points (individuals and groups) in the organization? What are the most pressing problems of the client organization? What resources are available for the program in terms of client time and energy and internal and external facilitators? Answers to these questions lead the practitioner to develop a game plan for where to intervene in the system, what to do, the sequencing of interventions, and so forth.

It can be seen that planning actions, executing actions, and evaluating the consequences of actions are an integral and essential part of organization development. This emphasis on action planning and action taking is a powerful feature of OD and, in some respects, is a distinguishing one. In many traditional educational and training activities, learning and action taking are separated in that the knowledge and skills are "learned" in one setting, say, in a classroom, and are then taken back to the organization with the learner being admonished to practice what he or she has learned, that is, to take actions. This artificial separation is minimized in most OD interventions in several ways. First, in many intervention activities there are two goals: a learning or educational goal and an

accomplishing-a-task goal. Second, OD problem-solving interventions tend to focus on real organizational problems that are central to the needs of the organization rather than on hypothetical, abstract problems that may or may not fit the members' needs. Third, OD interventions utilize several learning models, not just one. Let us examine these three points in more detail.

The dual aspect of OD interventions can be clarified with an illustration. Let us say that the top executives of an organization spend three days together in a workshop in which they do the following things: (1) explore the need for and desirability of a long-range strategy plan for the organization; (2) learn how to formulate such a strategy by analyzing other strategies, determining what the strategic variables are, being shown a sequence of steps for preparing a comprehensive plan, and so forth; and (3) actually make a three-year strategy plan for the organization.[10] This intervention combines the dual features of learning and action: the executives engaged in activities in which they learned about strategy planning, and they then generated a strategy. In some OD interventions, the "learning aspect" predominates, and in others, the "action aspect" predominates; but both aspects are present in most interventions.

Organization development interventions tend to focus on real problems rather than on abstract problems. The problems facing organization members are real, not hypothetical; the problems members get rewarded for solving are real, not hypothetical; and the problems central to the needs of organization members are real, not hypothetical. Developing the skills and knowledge to solve real problems as they arise in their "natural state" means that the educational problem of "transfer of learning" from one situation to another is minimized (although the problem of generalization, that is, knowing the appropriate times and places to apply this particular set of skills and knowledge, is still present).

An additional feature of working on real problems, as found in some OD interventions, is that the real set of individuals involved in the problem is the group that the problem solvers work with. For example, in a human relations class, if a manager was having trouble understanding and working with disadvantaged subordinates, he or she would perhaps "role play" the situation with the instructor or fellow students. In OD the manager would probably interact with the disadvantaged employees he or she was having difficulties with—but would do so in carefully structured activities that have a high probability of resulting in learning for both parties and a high probability of being a "success experience" for both parties.

Organization development programs rely on several learning models. For example, if "learning how to" do something precedes "doing" it, then we have a somewhat traditional approach to learning that most people are familiar with. If the "doing" precedes the "learning how to," then we have a "deficiency" model of learning in which the learning comes primarily from critiquing the actions after the fact to see how they could have been done differently and, presumably, better. Both models are viable learning modes, and both are used extensively in organization development. Even the traditional model of "learn-

ing how to'' and ''doing'' becomes nontraditional as performed in OD, however, since the OD appoach would be for a formal work team to be learning and doing *together* with the help of a change agent.

Action programs in OD are closely linked with explicit goals and objectives. Careful attention is given to the problem of translating goals into observable, explicit, and measurable actions or behaviors, and equal care is given to the related problem of ensuring that actions are relevant to and instrumental for goal attainment. Such questions as the following thus become an integral part of organizational life: How does this action relate to the goal we have established? What are the action implications of that goal for me, my subordinates, my group? When we say we want to achieve a certain goal, what do we really mean by that, in measurable terms? Given several alternative forms of action, which one seems most appropriate to achieve the goal we have set?

Diagnosis, action taking, and goal setting are inextricably related in an OD program. Diagnostic activities are precursors to action programs, that is, fact-finding is done to provide a foundation for action. Actions are continuously evaluated for their contribution to goal accomplishment. Goals are continuously evaluated in terms of their appropriateness—whether or not they are attainable and whether or not they can be translated into action programs. Organization development is a continuous process of the cycling of setting goals and objectives, collecting data about the *status quo*, planning and taking actions based on hypotheses and on the data, and evaluating the effects of action through additional data collection.

THE PROCESS-MAINTENANCE COMPONENT: MAINTAINING AND MANAGING THE OD PROCESS ITSELF

Just as OD practitioners apply behavioral science principles and practices to ongoing complex systems in order to improve the system's functioning, ideally they apply these same principles and practices to their own work. The OD process and the practitioner group typically model the techniques being proposed for the organization; both the program and the practitioners practice what they preach. Diagnosing and evaluating are an integral part of managing the OD process, similarly so is treating the organization from a systems viewpoint with the OD program being a component force within a wider field of system forces. Practitioners would find the client system probably resisting their teaching and preaching about the desirability and feasibility of managing interpersonal conflict if it were known that conflict was not being managed within the OD group; teaching others to manage against measurable objectives would appear hollow if the OD group did not know where it was going and how; reverberations will occur throughout the total organization as a result of an OD program in one subsystem and this fact must be taken into account.

Among other things, managing the OD process means actively seeking answers to the following questions:

Are we being timely and relevant in our interventions?

Are our activities producing the effects we intended and wanted? If not, why not; if so, why?

Is there continued "ownership," that is, involvement, commitment, and investment, in the program by the clients?

What are the total system ramifications of our efforts? Did we anticipate these? Are any of the ramifications undesirable? If yes, what do we do about them?

What about the culture of our own OD group? Must it be changed in any ways? Are we solving problems effectively, managing against clearly understood goals, and modeling the kinds of interpersonal climate we think is desirable in an organization?

To summarize, the process-maintenance element is designed to accomplish several objectives: to model self-analysis and self-reflection as means of self-improvement; to model the action research principles of goal setting coupled with data feedback loops to guide and evaluate actions; to work to ensure ownership of the interventions and the entire program by organization members; to model the ability to detect and cope with problems and opportunities in the internal and the external environment; to test the effectiveness of interventions by utilizing feedback from the system; to test for relevancy of the program to the organization's needs; to test for timeliness of interventions; and to ensure that intended and unintended consequences do not obviate the organization's and the OD program's goals.

The importance of this component can hardly be overstated. Managing the OD process effectively can spell the difference between success and failure for the improvement effort. This component, maintenance and management of the OD process, may help to explain why there are many aborted OD efforts and few long-range, successful ones. The practicing-what-you-preach aspect probably contributes significantly to bringing about real, genotypic, lasting change in the organization instead of apparent, phenotypic, or "pasted on" change. In later chapters we pay considerable attention to the problems that can arise in OD programs as well as to issues and dimensions related to sound maintenance of the process.

SUMMARY

We have identified three major components of an operational OD program as follows: the diagnostic component; the intervention, or action-taking, component; and the OD process-maintenance component. All three components are necessary for success. The diagnostic component has two facets: finding out about the state of the system and evaluating the effects of remedial action plans. The action/intervention component represents the range of OD interventions designed to improve the functioning of the organization. The

process-maintenance component directs attention to keeping the process itself viable and relevant.

NOTES

1 In fact, all three components represent actions or interventions in the system and thus fall into an action category. Diagnostic activities, for example, have a powerful "action impact" on an organization. We have artificially separated the three components here for analytical purposes only.

2 Richard Beckhard, *Organization Development: Strategies and Models* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. 26. Beckhard's use of *subsystem* synonymously with *subunit* is congruent with our usage in Chapter 5. However, we develop a supplemental conceptual scheme in that chapter that also permits viewing the organization in terms of subsystems that are common to all subunits: goal, technological, task, structural, human-social, and external interface.

3 This "actual condition" vs. "ideal condition" discrepancy model is an integral feature of Kurt Lewin's Force Field Analysis (Kurt Lewin, *Field Theory in Social Science*, [New York: Harper & Bros., 1951]) and appears, in fact, to be basic to all human goal-seeking and problem-solving activities. See, for example, George A. Miller, Eugene Galanter, and Karl H. Pribram, *Plans and the Structure of Behavior* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1960).

4 The movement of the organization from "what is" to "what should be" is the explicit underlying dynamic in Grid OD. See Robert R. Blake and Jane Srygley Mouton, *Corporate Excellence through Grid Organization Development* (Houston, Tex.: Gulf Publishing, 1968).

5 Chris Argyris, *Intervention Theory and Method: A Behavioral Science View* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1970).

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 16–17.

7 Noel Tichy, "An Interview with Roger Harrison," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 9, No. 6 (1973), 701–11. This figure is taken from page 707 and used by permission.

8 *Ibid.*, pp. 706, 708.

9 Robert R. Blake and Jane Srygley Mouton, *Building a Dynamic Corporation through Grid Organization Development* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), and R. R. Blake and J. S. Mouton, *Corporate Excellence Diagnosis: The Phase 6 Instrument* (Austin, Tex.: Scientific Methods, 1968).

10 Actually, in a real strategy-planning session steps 1 and 2 might take place during the first session, with that session concluding with some "homework" assignments to the members in order that the necessary information for the strategy plan could be available. Then, in a second session, step 3 would be finalized. This kind of separation in time is not the artificial one described above, but a separation in time designed to facilitate step 3.

7

Characteristics and Foundations of the OD Process

the nature of organization development

Examining the basic components of an OD program in operation afforded one look at the nature of organization development. In this chapter OD is examined from additional perspectives—call them underlying characteristics, distinguishing features, foundations, or theoretical and practice underpinnings. These perspectives show different facets of the OD process that, taken together, give organization development its unique stamp.

In this chapter OD is characterized in several different ways—as a process, as a form of applied behavioral science, as normative change, as incorporating a systems approach to organizations, as similar to and based on an action research (data-based) model, as an experience-based learning mode, as emphasizing goals and objectives, and as concentrating on intact work teams as the primary instruments for organization improvement. These different aspects of OD serve as the foundation upon which the process is built, and the foundation has played a significant role in shaping the practice of organization development.

OD IS AN ONGOING INTERACTIVE PROCESS

One understands much about the nature of OD by viewing it as an ongoing interactive process. A *process* is an identifiable flow of interrelated events moving over time toward some goal or end.[1] In the OD process, the identifiable flow of interrelated events consists of interventions in the client system and responses to the interventions. Behind the pattern is the overall OD strategy directing the selection, timing, and sequencing of intervention activities; this strategy ties the individual events together into a coherent, directioned thrust. In practice, an initial strategy will be formulated, and this will be modified and

changed as events and experience suggest emergent directions and emergent problems.

But the essential point in calling OD a process is to characterize it as a dynamic, moving, changing thing. People learn new skills and forget old ones; the structure of the organization changes, and then another change is put on top of that; problems are solved and new ones develop; a sick subsystem gets well and a heretofore healthy one develops bad symptoms. There are good days and bad days for the OD program as well as successes and failures. Thus it is imperative that organization development be viewed as a dynamic process for changing dynamic systems. Neither human systems (organizations) nor planned change processes (OD) are static phenomena; they are in constant flux and flow.

Another facet of OD as a process is that the process of improving organizations may be a process of "becoming"—of approaching some end state without ever reaching it in the usual sense of "arriving." Although most people would generally agree about whether one organization is "better" or "worse" than another in terms of organizational effectiveness, there is less agreement on when an organization has "arrived" and lack of agreement on the indicators used to signal that arrival. This is not to say that OD practitioners do not know where they are going and what they are trying to achieve, because that is not so; but it is to say that at this stage in the art and the science of organization development projections about the goals of the OD effort serve primarily as guides or heuristic servomechanisms rather than as definitive descriptions of an end state.

The ongoing process nature of OD implies that it is not to be regarded as a one-shot solution to organizational problems, but more as a "growing toward" greater effectiveness through a *series* of intervention activities over a period of time. Managing and directing the change of an organization's culture and processes does not happen overnight; a more realistic time estimate is several years. Isolated changes, such as in specific individual behaviors, organizational reporting relationships, and policies and procedures, can often be effected quickly. But changing the *culture* of a work team or a department or an entire organization is a long-term, involved process. The culture is the bedrock or source of the system's strengths and weaknesses. It is the culture that must be altered if permanent improvement is to take place. And culture change requires persistence, a considerable investment of energy, and time.

Regarding this point, differing estimates of how long the process will probably take may lead to problems between practitioners and organization members in that members may want and expect immediate results and may get discouraged when they are not forthcoming. On the other hand, a trap practitioners can get themselves into is to raise members' expectations, either deliberately or inadvertently, for quick, easy solutions to problems and then not be able to produce results. At the other end of the spectrum, the practitioner may emphasize the long-term nature of OD to the point that the prospective client gets frightened away with visions of being locked for years into some kind of mysterious pro-

gram that may or may not work. Successful OD efforts can start with small beginnings and without long-range commitments, providing expectations are realistic. Viewing the program as an ongoing process can allow both client and consultant to take a few initial steps and then to evaluate these outcomes before committing themselves to a long-term contract.

The interactive nature of the process also implies a series of actions and reactions, initiated activities and the responses to these activities. Organizational behavior is incredibly complex, and probably the only adequate way to conceptualize it is through an interaction theory of social behavior. But as Bennis, Schein, Berlew, and Steele indicate, we have no such theory in the social sciences at this time.[2] Viewing the OD process as a complex series of interactions promotes a better understanding of organizational dynamics, even though no comprehensive theory exists to help explain the phenomena. The interactive nature of the OD process, however, does suggest the necessity for effective feedback loops for monitoring the reactions to interventions, the readiness of subsystems for change, and emergent problems and new directions.

Finally, organization development is a process in the sense that in OD *how* things are done is as important as *what* is done. That is, the *process* of the OD program—how it is done—is as important as the *content* of the OD program—what is done. This may be a relatively little understood feature of OD to those people who are newly exposed to it. But it is an essential characteristic based on the following reasoning. Broadly speaking, the goals of organization development are to improve the organizational functioning in two ways: first, to solve existing problems and correct existing deficiencies in the organization's culture and processes; and second, to instill in the client system the capabilities for *future* problem solving, self-renewing, and culture managing (without the aid or presence of the OD consultant). Almost all forms of consultation address the first goal; OD is one of the few consulting approaches that addresses both the first and the second goals. The first goal can be attained by appropriate content—make the solutions relevant to the problems. The second goal can be attained by an intervention process done in such a way that the client system builds its own internal capacities and skills. This is achieved by designing interventions so they have a skill-building or skill-learning component, in addition to the problem-solving component directed to the immediate problem. Diagnostic skills and action-taking skills are the skills learned from the interventions. This attention to the process of intervening in the client system is an important foundation of organization development.

OD IS A FORM OF APPLIED BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

An OD program applies the scientific and practice principles from several behavioral sciences: social psychology, social anthropology, sociology, psychiatry, economics, and political science. The OD practitioner is

neither magician nor charlatan; he or she is simply translating what is known about people and organizations as found in behavioral science knowledge into applicable programs of actions. In fact, this section could be titled "demythologizing organization development" because we wish to show that OD is not a mysterious and magical spell cast upon an organization by the incantations of a behavioral scientist "change agent." Quite to the contrary, practitioners base their diagnoses and actions on the known, lawful-patterned events and dynamics that help explain individual, group, and organization behavior. Knowledge of these lawful patterns comes primarily from personality theory, social psychology, group dynamics, and organization theory, typically coupled with knowledge about theory and practice regarding adult education, planned change, systems theory, and a dash of operations research. Another definition of OD could be "OD is the application of behavioral science knowledge, practices, and skills in ongoing systems in collaboration with system members."

A conventional distinction is usually made between (*a*) "pure" or basic science, the object of which is knowledge for its own sake, and (*b*) "technology," applied science, or practice, the object of which is knowledge to solve practical, pressing problems.[3] Greenwood discusses the activities of the practitioner as follows: "The problem that confronts a practitioner is customarily a state of disequilibrium that requires rectification. The practitioner examines the problem situation, on the basis of which he prescribes a solution, that, hopefully, reestablishes the equilibrium, thereby solving the problem. This process is customarily referred to as diagnosis and treatment."[4] Both diagnosis and treatment consist of observing a situation, and on the basis of selected variables, placing it in a classification scheme or typology. The diagnostic typology allows the practitioner to know what category of situation he or she has examined; the treatment typology allows the practitioner to know what remedial efforts to apply to correct the problem. On this point, Greenwood states:

> The diagnostic and treatment typologies are employed together. Each type description of the diagnostic typology contains implications for a certain type of treatment. The practitioner uses treatment as the empirical test of his diagnosis, success corroborating the diagnosis, failure negating it and thus requiring rediagnosis. The principles of diagnosis and of treatment constitute the principles of practice, i.e., with their elaborations and implications constitute practice theory.[5]

It is from this "practice theory" that the OD practitioner works: first diagnosing the situation, then selecting and implementing treatments based on the diagnosis, and finally evaluating the effects of the treatments.

Organization development is both a result of applied behavioral science and a form of applied behavioral science; perhaps more accurately, it is a program of applying behavioral science to organizations. Figure 7-1 shows some of the inputs to applied behavioral science. The two bottom inputs, behavioral science research and behavioral science theory, are intended to represent contributions

from "pure" or basic science; the two top inputs, practice research and practice theory, are intended to represent contributions from "applied" science.

Some examples of contributions from these four sources that are relevant for applying behavioral science in organization development are the following:

Contributions from behavioral science theory:

The importance of social norms in determining perceptions, motivations, and behaviors (Sherif)

The role of an *exchange theory* of behavior that postulates that people tend to exchange approximately equivalent units to maintain a balance between what is given and received (Gouldner, Homans)

The importance of the existing total field of forces in determining and predicting behavior (Lewin)

The relevance of role theory in accounting for stability and change in behavior (G. H. Mead)

The role and importance of *activities*, *interactions*, and *sentiments* as explanatory concepts for elementary social behavior (Homans)

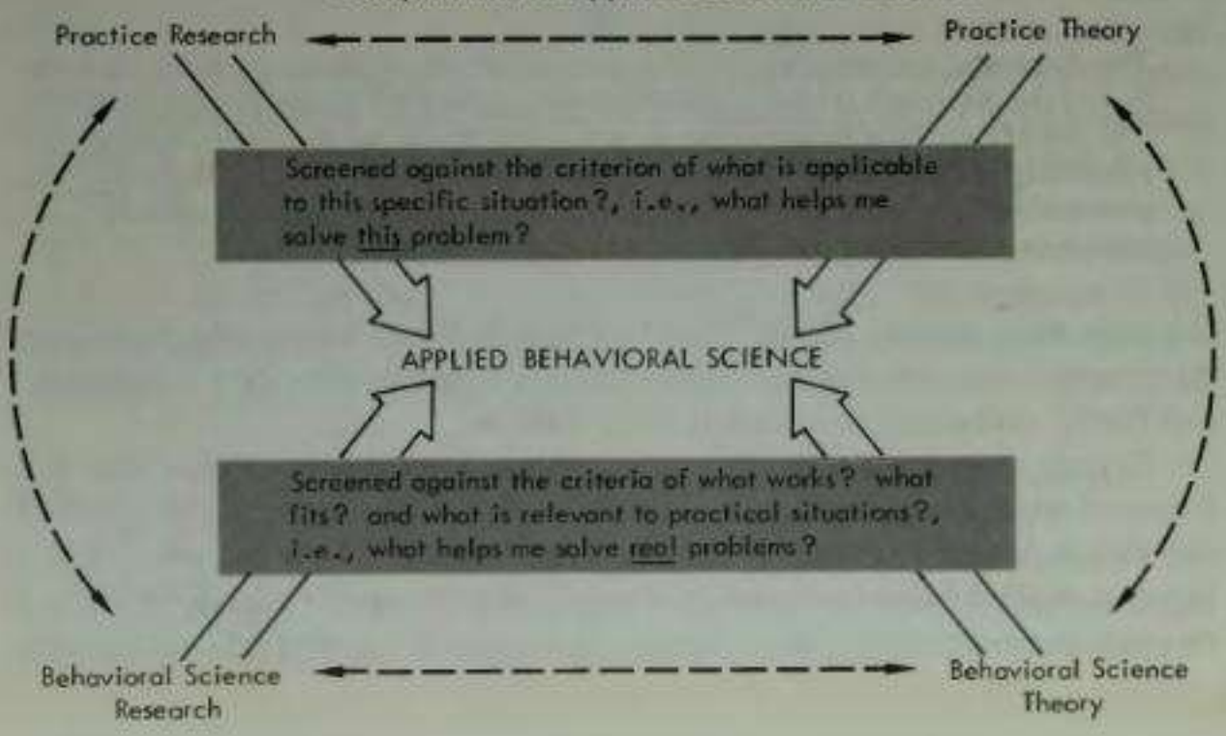
The possibilities inherent in views of motivation different from those provided by older theories (McGregor, Herzberg, Maslow)

The place of learning theories, effects of reward and punishment, attitude change theories, etc.

Contributions from behavioral science research:

Studies on the causes, conditions, and consequences of induced competition on behavior within and between groups (Sherif, and Blake and Mouton)

FIGURE 7-1
Composition of Applied Behavioral Science



Results on the effects of cooperative and competitive group goal structures on behavior within groups (Deutsch)

Studies on the effects of organizational and managerial climate on leadership style (Fleishman)

Studies on the variables relevant for organizational health (Likert)

Studies showing the importance of the social system in relation to the technical system (Trist and Bamforth)

Results from studies on different communication networks (Leavitt), causes and consequences of conformity (Asch), group problem solving (Kelley and Thibaut), and group dynamics (Cartwright and Zander)

Contributions from practice theory:

Implications from the theory and practice of the laboratory-training method (Bradford, Benne, and Gibb)

Implications from theories of group development (Schutz, and Bennis and Shepard)

New dimensions in the helping relationship and specifically the client-consultant relationship (Rogers)

New ideas about the education process (Dewey)

Explorations in intervention theory and method (Argyris)

Developments in consultation typologies and theory (Blake and Mouton)

Implications and applications from theories of *planned change* (Lippitt, Watson, and Westley; Bennis, Benne, and Chin)

Contributions from practice research:

Studies showing that feeding back survey research data can bring about organization change (Mann, Likert, Baumgartel)

Results indicating the importance of the informal work group on individual and group performance (Roethlisberger and Dickson)

Results showing the efficacy of grid organization development in large organizations (Blake, Mouton, Barnes, and Greiner)

Results documenting improved organizational performance and improved organizational climate stemming from a long-term OD effort in a manufacturing firm (Marrow, Bowers, and Seashore)

Results showing the complexity of intraorganizational communication and interaction patterns on job performance (Whyte)

Results from the action research studies in Chapter 8 showing important inputs from practice settings.[6]

These contributions are not meant to be exhaustive, but only to show some of the sources and kinds of information/knowledge that OD practitioners, as applied behavioral scientists, bring to the organizational setting.

OD IS A NORMATIVE–RE-EDUCATIVE STRATEGY OF CHANGING

Since organization development is a process for improving organizational effectiveness, this implies doing things differently and better, and this means changing some features of the organization (usually its processes and culture). OD is a program of planned change, but not a program of change for change's sake. To some people, change is a defense-provoking word; to others, change is a panacea for all problems. We agree with neither of these views. Instead we subscribe to the belief that change, when it is desired by the people who will be affected, and when it opens up alternatives of action rather than closing off alternatives, and when it seems to incorporate choices of action that in other situations have been demonstrated to be good ones or that by generally enlightened criteria (say, for example, the scientific method) are considered good ones—then we believe that change is indicated as a desirable action step. OD is not a broadside attack on the values held by individuals, organizations, or a society, but it does represent a value framework, much of which was discussed in the chapter on assumptions and values in OD. For example, OD practitioners are not interested in changing people's values about religion, politics, marriage, the nation, and so forth; but they would try to change people's values in the direction of belief in the worth of the individual, belief in the dysfunctional aspects of many zero-sum games in the organization, belief that participation in decisions promotes feelings of self-worth, and the like. In addition, most OD practitioners would make known to clients their value systems and would permit the client to accept or reject them.

But organization development does involve change, and it rests on a particular strategy of changing that has implications for practitioners and organization members alike. Chin and Benne describe three types of strategies for changing.[7] First there are the empirical-rational strategies, based on the assumptions that people are rational, will follow their rational self-interest, and will change if and when they come to realize the change is advantageous to them. The second group of strategies are the normative–re-educative strategies, based on the assumptions that norms form the basis for behavior and change comes through a re-education process in which old norms are discarded and supplanted by new ones. The third set of strategies are the power-coercive strategies, based on the assumption that change is compliance of those with less power to the desires of those with more power. Evaluated against these three change approaches, OD is clearly seen to fall within the normative–re-educative category, although in some senses, it may represent a combination of the normative–re-educative with the empirical-rational. The nature of this second change strategy is indicated by Chin and Benne:

> A second group of strategies we call normative–re-educative. These strategies build upon assumptions about human motivation different from those underlying the first.

> The rationality and intelligence of men are not denied. Patterns of action and practice are supported by sociocultural norms and by commitments on the part of individuals to these norms. Sociocultural norms are supported by the attitude and value systems of individuals—normative outlooks which undergird their commitments. Change in a pattern of practice or action, according to this view, will occur only as the persons involved are brought to change their normative orientations to old patterns and development commitments to new ones. And changes in normative orientations involve changes in attitudes, values, skills, and significant relationships, not just changes in knowledge, information, or intellectual rationales for action and practice.[8]

An illustration may clarify these three strategies of changing. Say the Salk polio vaccine has just been invented, tested, and cleared for public use, and you are in charge of disseminating it to the public. Your procedure would depend upon which strategy of changing you believed in. If you espoused the empirical-rational theory of changing, then you would assume that all rational, self-interested people (and that is everyone, just about) would use the vaccine if only they had information and knowledge about its availability and its efficacy. Your program, therefore, would be to disseminate the knowledge and information. As a consequence, everyone would take the vaccine, since it would be in his or her best interests.

On the other hand, if you held a normative–re-educative belief about changing, you would do additional things. While you would not disbelieve or disregard people's intelligence, rationality, and self-interest, you would also believe that many behaviors are rooted in sociocultural norms, values, and beliefs that must be changed in order for them to accept and use the vaccine. Some of these beliefs might be that "all new drugs are dangerous until they have been on the market for ten years"; "My neighbor, Mrs. Jones, isn't going to use the vaccine, and neither am I since she's always right about these things"; "Well, no one in my family has ever had polio, so I'm not afraid of getting it and don't need to be vaccinated." Holding to the second strategy of changing, you would assume that norms and values had to be changed, in addition to making the information available to the public. You would mount both an education campaign about the new drug and a re-education campaign to change some norms and values.

If you held to a power-coercive strategy of changing, your task would be straightforward: you would pass a law stating all persons must get vaccinated, and you would ensure and enforce compliance to the law. If you had the power to pass the law, and power to enforce the law, the people would take the vaccine.

The point here is that there are different strategies for effecting change, and OD is based primarily on a normative–re-educative one and secondarily on a rational-empirical one. Focusing on the normative–re-educative strategy for change, as practiced in an organization development program, the following implications are associated with that change strategy: the *client* defines what changes and improvements he or she wants to make, rather than the change agent; the change agent attempts to intervene in a mutual, collaborative way with

the client as they together define problems and seek solutions; anything hindering effective problem solving is brought to light and publicly examined, that is, doubts, anxieties, and negative feelings are surfaced for "working through"; the methods and knowledge of the behavioral sciences are used as resources by both change agents and clients; and solutions to problems are not a priori assigned to greater technical information or knowledge but may reside in values, attitudes, relationships, and customary ways of doing things.[9] The desire for and the form of re-education are decisions for the client to make; implementing the re-education chosen by the client is the work of the practitioner. These are far-reaching implications for OD for several reasons: they significantly dictate practitioner values and behaviors; they give the clients considerable choice and control over the situation; they impel a collaborative effort rather than a "doing something to" effort; and they lead to more options and alternatives rather than fewer ones for both the client and the practitioner.

Our definition of organization development refers to improving and managing the organization's culture—a clear reference to sociocultural norms and to the normative nature of the change process. Burke and Hornstein emphasize the normative nature of OD even more in their definition: "Organization development is a process of planned change. It involves change of an organization's culture from one which avoids an examination of social processes in organizations, especially decision making, planning and communications, to one which institutionalizes and legitimizes this examination."[10] These authors assert that the initial focus of OD is normative change and that individual change is merely a by-product. The nature of the change in the culture indicated by Burke and Hornstein is congruent with our definition and with those of others. These changes are not of the nature to affront, belittle, coerce, or harass individuals' personally held, deep-seated values but relate more to norms, attitudes, and values about how to get the organizational mission accomplished.

Warren Bennis, in a discussion on the characteristics of organization development, comments on the normative aspect of this process as follows:

> Change agents share a set of *normative goals* based on their philosophy. . . . Most commonly sought are:
>
> 1. Improvement in interpersonal competence.
> 2. A shift in values so that human factors and feelings come to be considered legitimate.
> 3. Development of increased understanding between and within working groups in order to reduce tensions.
> 4. Development of more effective "team management," i.e., the capacity . . . for functional groups to work more competently.
> 5. Development of better methods of "conflict resolution." Rather than the usual bureaucratic methods which rely mainly on suppression, compromise, and unprincipled power, more rational and open methods of conflict resolution are sought.

6. Development of organic rather than mechanical systems. This is a strong reaction against the idea of organizations as mechanisms which managers "work on," like pushing buttons.[11]

Bennis likewise emphasizes the educational nature of OD: "Organization development (OD) 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."[12]

Although a normative–re-educative strategy of changing is most characteristic of the OD process, there is a rational-empirical aspect to it also. Many of the objectives of OD interventions have an appeal as being "obviously" a better way. For example, it is often intrinsically satisfying to learn to manage conflict well, or to learn to make better decisions, or to learn to manage against clearly defined objectives. Clients often know there must be better ways of doing things and have the strong desire to identify these better ways, but they have never been presented with the information and knowledge. Once given the knowledge, there is immediate changeover to new ways of managing and new ways of behaving. From our experience, much change does occur in organization development through the processes described in the rational-empirical strategy for changing.

OD VIEWS ORGANIZATIONS FROM A SYSTEMS APPROACH

Systems concepts relevant to organization development were discussed in Chapter 5, so we will touch on them only briefly here. A systems approach views and emphasizes organizational phenomena and dynamics in their interrelatedness, their connectedness, their interdependence, and their interaction. This is the perspective we believe is useful for understanding organizational life. As Chin says of the systems approach: "The analytic model of system demands that we treat the phenomena and the concepts for organizing the phenomena as if there existed organization, interaction, interdependency, and integration of parts and elements. System analysis assumes structure and stability within some arbitrarily sliced and frozen time period."[13]

Several consequences of viewing organizations from this perspective have value and functionality for applying behavioral science to organization development.

First, issues, events, forces, and incidents are not viewed as isolated phenomena; they occur in relation to other events, issues, phenomena. Understanding only the phenomenon and not understanding it in relation to other phenomena is to have only a half understanding.

Second, a systems approach encourages analysis of events in terms of multiple causation rather than single causation. The real world is complex; events in it

are complex. It is probably a more accurate description of reality to posit multiple causes to events; this is facilitated by the systems approach.

Third, and this is taken from Kurt Lewin's field theory in social psychology, the field of forces at the time of the event are the relevant forces for analysis.[14] This dictum moves the practitioner away from an analysis of historical events and forces to an examination of the contemporary events and forces—to a more existential vantage point.

Fourth, one cannot change one part of a system without influencing other parts in some ways. A related point to this one is that the systems viewpoint inclines the practitioner to anticipate multiple effects rather than single effects. These effects show up in other parts of the system and also in "surprises" in the part of the system with which he or she is working. Anticipating multiple causes and multiple effects, a viewpoint practiced by OD practitioners, takes many of the surprises out of organizational dynamics.

The fifth and final point is that if one wants to change a system, one changes the system, not just its component parts. Organization development is the development of a system, not only of the parts of a system. Blake and Mouton address this issue:

> Organization development means development of the organization. Because of the history of education, training and development in industry, the inclination on seeing the word organization before development is to think and substitute for it the word individual. If the reader does this, he will miss the deeper implication of what is presented. The reason is that he will fail to comprehend how deeply the culture of a corporation controls the behavior of all of its individuals. While the ultimate objective of organization development is to liberate all of the individuals within it, so that they will be free, participative, and contributive to problem solving, in order to achieve corporate purposes of profitability, this objective cannot be reached until the constraints that operate within the corporation's culture have been studied and deliberately rejected. The key difference between individual and organization development will be found in this proposition.[15]

Additional systems concepts are presented in other parts of this book, but we wanted to emphasize that a systems approach is one of the foundations of organization development. When practitioners started viewing organization change from a systems approach, a significant step was taken toward the invention of organization development. In the chapter on OD history it was pointed out that shifting attention from individuals to intact work teams "permitted OD to come into focus." Such a shift was basically a move to a systems approach to effecting organization change.

OD IS A DATA-BASED APPROACH TO PLANNED CHANGE

A data-based model, the action research model, underlies sound OD programs and is a significant facet of the nature of organization development. The action research model is discussed in Chapter 8, but we want

to make a few comments here. Many OD interventions are designed either to generate data or to plan actions based on data. A key value inculcated in organization members is a belief in the validity, desirability, and usefulness of *data about the system itself*, specifically, data about the system's culture and processes.

The data-based nature of organization development has some features that distinguish it from other data-based change activities. Some of the characteristics and their implications are the following. First, strong emphasis is placed on the value of data in the OD process, perhaps stronger than that in most change programs. As a consequence of this, organization members learn how to collect, work with, and utilize data for problem solving in the organization. Second, in OD programs, specific kinds of data are preferred over others. For example, data about the organization's human and social processes would usually be used more than technical data, financial data, market information, and the like. Third, in OD programs, the data usually "belong to" and are used by the people who generated them. This means that an attitude survey, for example, is not conducted just so that that top management can study the results; rather it is conducted so that the contributors at all levels may have an accurate picture of the situations they confront and may then plan action programs to capitalize on the positive attributes and eradicate the negative attributes. The data are public; the data are the property of all organization members; the data are a springboard to action. Fourth, the contradictory data or the discrepancy data are viewed as "nuggets" rather than as nuisances in OD programs. They point the way to differences in perceptions, motivations, attitudes, and so forth, that often, once discovered, can lead to breakthroughs in improving the organization's effectiveness. For example, if one hierarchical level views the compensation plan as fair and equitable and another level views it as unjust and unfair (and if neither of these levels knew the other felt that way), then the finding of this nugget can point toward action plans to decide what to do about the discrepancy. Fifth, in OD programs, feelings toward "facts" tend to shift from viewing facts as either "good" or "bad" to looking at the consequences or functionality/dysfunctionality of the facts. For example, a particular leadership style, highly authoritarian, may be a fact. The important thing about this fact is not to label it as good or bad, but to understand the conditions under which it is functional for certain results and dysfunctional for other results. This is, then, a shift from *evaluating* data to *describing* data—a subtle but important difference. When data are described, people tend to become less defensive about them, compared to when they are evaluated. A sixth point is that in OD programs data tend to be used as aids to problem solving rather than as "clubs" to enforce certain behaviors. One of the goals of organization development is to build the climate in the system to the point where data are used not to punish people but to aid them in problem solving. Seventh, the strong data base used in organization development is similar to that of the scientific method, in the sense that decisions are made increasingly on the basis of empirical facts rather than power, position, tradition,

persuasion, and so forth. As a final note, the data used in the OD process stem from the stated needs and problems of the system members, that is, they are data to supply answers to central needs of the organization and its members.

OD IS EXPERIENCE BASED

The experience-based nature of the OD process derives from an underlying belief of most OD practitioners that people learn how to do things by doing them. And they learn about organizational dynamics by experiencing them and reflecting on the experience. These beliefs are based on tenets of the laboratory-training movement. People learn about the need to manage conflict when they experience the deleterious effects of conflict; people learn to make decisions by making some and then evaluating them. When people are engaged in real experiences, they are engaged with their minds, emotions, strivings—their whole beings. There are no artificial separations engendered, say, by memorizing something so that at some future time one may act in a certain way.

Instead of treating hypothetical problems and abstract organizational issues, OD interventions tend to focus on the real behavior of individuals and groups, tend to try to solve real problems, and tend to derive generalizations about organizational dynamics inductively from experience. Then more general theory input, knowledge building, and skill building are overlaid on the experience base as needed.

Experience-based learning calls not just for exposure to an experience but also for reflection about the experience. Organizational members experience something through an activity, then reflect on that experience to derive learnings and generalizations about the phenomenon. Many OD interventions call for scheduling reflection time after an activity, during which the participants examine such issues as the following: What were the causal relationships we found in this activity? What were the things we appeared to do right in this task? What things hindered our reaching our goals? What can we learn from this experience that may apply to future experiences and tasks? This constant questioning and reflecting is itself related to the goal of increasing people's ability to "learn how to learn." Essentially the concept of learning how to learn refers to having an experimental/inquiry attitude "set" that the individuals take into all their experiences; they continually examine their own experiences in order that they may learn and change and grow.

Many OD practitioners have also worked extensively with laboratory-training methods and procedures. The lab-training approach to learning is heavily dependent upon experiential learning—learning about something by experiencing it and then reflecting on the experience. Experiential learning methods appear to be particularly efficacious for learning about human and social relations, that is, increasing interpersonal skills, learning about small group dynamics, and so

forth. When experiential methods were applied to other task areas, such as planning, goal setting, and decision making, they were found to be equally potent for learning. Various kinds of experiential learning exercises are used in organization development, and this experience-based component is thus another cornerstone in the foundation.

OD EMPHASIZES GOAL SETTING AND PLANNING

It has been said before, but we want to say again, that goal setting and planning are important features of the OD process. The OD process has goals, specifically those of improving, in various ways, the functioning of the organization. One of the ways OD programs facilitate organizational improvement is through emphasizing the importance of goals and plans, and structuring learning activities designed to improve goal-setting and planning skills. Beckhard addresses this issue as follows: "One of the major assumptions underlying organization-development efforts and much managerial strategy today is the need to assure that organizations are managing against goals. Healthy organizations tend to have goal-setting at all levels."[18]

Both organizations and individuals need to manage their affairs against goals—explicit, measurable, obtainable goals. To help achieve this for the organization, OD interventions may be directed toward examination of the planning function, strategy-making processes, and goal-setting processes at the individual, group, and organizational levels. To help achieve this for the individual, OD interventions are directed toward the activities just mentioned and may also devote time to a series of activities called "life- and career-planning" exercises. Career development and life-planning activities are those in which individuals work on clarifying their life and career objectives and goals and determine how they can achieve them. In addition, when management by objectives is a part of an OD program, work teams with their immediate superiors learn to set realistic objectives which will be periodically reviewed. In this way individuals develop goal-setting abilities.

The importance of goal setting in OD programs, at both the individual and the organizational levels, probably represents a response to changes in the culture of organizations in this country in the last decade or two. It used to be that goal setting and planning were the sole function of the top echelons of the organization, while the functions of the lower echelons were to carry out the plans and help reach the objectives. It is now believed that wider participation in goal setting leads to a greater utilization of an organization's resources, human and technical, and results in significantly better plans. In addition, the plans that have been the contribution of many people at all levels of the organization probably have more chance of being realistic and attainable and also have some built-in support for carrying them out. But individuals and groups at lower organizational levels often did not have the skills necessary to do good plan making, since they

had never been called upon to do so. OD interventions directed toward learning and practicing these skills attempt to meet this need of the organization and its members.

The Blake and Mouton *Grid Organization Development model* is particularly relevant for teaching goal-setting and planning abilities. In this six-phase model, Phase 4 consists of the top management team studying the properties of an "ideal strategic corporate model"—what properties a corporation should optimally possess if it is to maximize its goals. This is followed by analyzing the organization to see where it falls short of the ideal model. Phase 5 consists of developing implementation tactics for converting the organization from what it is and has been to what it should become as an ideal corporation. The paradigm first teaches the characteristics and properties of a desirable ideal organization, then measures the real organization against that ideal, then develops implementation procedures for moving from "what we are now" to "what we want to be."[17]

The goal-setting and planning interventions concentrate on the following major skills and abilities: (1) learning to set goals and objectives, (2) learning to translate goals into actions and procedures for achieving them, and (3) learning how to plan and make decisions to facilitate goal attainment. (In a sense, this third point is a restatement of the first two points.) What we mean by goals and plans can best be shown by calling on writings from the fields of management and administration. Koontz and O'Donnell describe the planning function as follows:

> Plans involve selecting enterprise objectives and departmental plans and programs, and determining ways of reaching them. Plans thus provide a rational approach to preselected objectives. . . . Planning is deciding in advance what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and who is to do it. . . . Planning is an intellectual process, the conscious determination of courses of action, the basing of decisions on purpose, facts, and considered estimates.[18]

The relation between planning and goals is suggested by Kast and Rosenzweig as follows:

> Basically, goals are plans expressed as results to be achieved. In this broad sense, goals include objectives, purposes, missions, deadlines, standards, target, quotas, etc. Goals represent not only the end point of planning but the end toward which the other managerial activities, such as organizing and controlling, are aimed.[19]

Thus the emphasis on goal setting and planning in the OD process began as a response to the needs of organizations to have these skills available to all levels of the organization. Now the importance of "managing against objectives" and its positive consequences for better effectiveness are recognized as important in their own right. It is this belief that makes this feature another of the foundations of organization development.

OD ACTIVITIES FOCUS ON INTACT WORK TEAMS

A fundamental belief in organization development is that the organization does its work through work teams of a variety of kinds and natures. A second fundamental belief is that changing the culture, processes, relationships, and ways of performing tasks within these teams is a way to achieve permanent and lasting improvement in the organization. From a historical point of view, it was probably a realization of these two beliefs and the actions on them taken by Blake, Mouton, Shepard, Horowitz, McGregor, and others that gave birth to what we now know as organization development. The capacity for learning and change that comes from working with intact organizational teams can never be captured by the more traditional "stranger-type" learning activities.

Many different kinds of teams have salience and significance for the organizational members and for the OD practitioners. The potency and ability to make things happen by having intact work teams work together to improve their team effectiveness is frankly astounding compared with working with a group of individuals who are organizationally irrelevant to each other. This is true for a number of reasons, some of which are the following. First, much individual behavior is rooted in the sociocultural norms and values of the work team. If the team, as a team, changes those norms and values, the effect on individual behavior is immediate and lasting. Second, the intact work team possesses the "reality configuration of relationships" that the individuals must in fact accommodate to and learn to utilize and cope with. This is to say that many of the "significant others" of the individual's work world are in the work group. Effective (or ineffective) relationships with these people can have far-reaching effects on the individual's performance and behavior. Third, the "reality configuration of organizational dynamics" that the individuals must accommodate to are found in the work team. By this we mean that the work team is the source of most of the individual's knowledge about organizational processes such as communications, decision making, and goal setting. These are the processes that most influence the individual's behavior. Fourth, it is commonly believed that many of the individual's needs for social interaction, status, recognition, and respect are satisfied by his or her work group, consisting of both peers and superior. Any process that improves the work team's processes or task performance will thus probably be related to central needs of the individual members.

In our experience, most OD programs rely heavily on interventions designed to improve work team relationships, processes, and task performance. In the Grid approach to organization development, for example, Phase 1 concentrates on learnings about managerial style and interpersonal competence for individual managers; then Phase 2 moves immediately into improving the work team culture and processes through activities in intact work teams.[20]

While working with intact groups to improve their functioning can be a powerful instrumentality for organizational change, it can also do considerable damage to the team if the activities are poorly conceived or poorly executed. Because the work team is so important to the individual, doing anything to destroy the relationships or to impair the processes or the ability for task performance can cause a profound and disastrous effect. This is another reason why we believe that an external change agent should be involved in the early stages of an OD program. There are numerous tales within the OD trade of calamitous effects in team-building sessions—some of these are true, but many of them are mythical. Team sessions are complex affairs, and a professional should be present to ensure that they go right.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have continued to present our conception of the nature of organization development. In Chapter 6 OD as an operational process was seen to possess three basic components: the diagnostic, the action (or intervention), and the process-maintenance components, although we said that, in effect, all these components are interventions into the client system. In this chapter the foundations or building blocks characterizing the OD process have been explicated. Organization development was seen to have the following characteristics: it is an ongoing process; it is a form of applied behavioral science; it constitutes a normative–re-educative strategy for changing; it utilizes a systems approach; it is a data-based problem-solving model; it reflects an experience-based learning model; it emphasizes goal setting and the planning function; and it involves intact work teams.

These foundations suggest an important conclusion: OD is the confluence of several diverse streams, all of which define the organization development process. Organization development is not one or two of these, but the result of all of these. Organization development represents the process emerging from the coming together at this point in time of the foundations—and each of these foundations was itself the result of diverse streams from earlier theories and earlier practices.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ARGYRIS, C., *Intervention Theory and Method: A Behavioral Science View*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1970.

ASCH, S., "Studies of Independence and Conformity: A Minority of One Against a Unanimous Majority," *Psychological Monograph*, 70, No. 9 (1956).

BAUMGARTEL, H., "Using Employee Questionnaire Results for Improving Organizations: The Survey 'Feedback' Experiment," *Kansas Business Review*, 12 (December 1959), 2–6.

BENNIS, W. G., K. D. BENNE, and R. CHIN, *The Planning of Change*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1961.

BENNIS, W. G., and H. A. SHEPARD, "A Theory of Group Development," *Human Relations*, 9, No. 4 (1956), 415–38.

BLAKE, R. R., and J. S. MOUTON, "Conformity, Resistance, and Conversion," in I. A. Berg and B. M. Bass, eds., *Conformity and Deviation*, pp. 1–37. New York: Harper & Row, 1961.

———, *Consultation*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1976.

BLAKE, R. R., J. S. MOUTON, L. B. BARNES, and L. E. GREINER, "Breakthrough in Organization Development," *Harvard Business Review*, 42 (November-December 1964, 133–55.

BRADFORD, L. P., J. R. GIBB, and K. D. BENNE, eds., *T-Group Theory and Laboratory Method*. New York: John Wiley, 1964.

CARTWRIGHT, D., and A. ZANDER, *Group Dynamics* (2nd ed.). New York: Harper & Row, 1960.

DEUTSCH, M., "A Theory of Cooperation and Competition," *Human Relations*, 2, No. 2 (1949), 129–52.

DEWEY, J., *How We Think* (rev. ed.). New York: Heath, 1933.

FLEISHMAN, E. A., "Leadership Climate, Human Relations Training and Supervisory Behavior," *Personnel Psychology*, 6 (Summer 1953), 205–22.

GOULDNER, A. W., "The Norm of Reciprocity: A Preliminary Statement," *American Sociological Review*, 25 (April 1960), 161–78.

HERZBERG, F., B. MAUSNER, and B. SNYDERMAN, *The Moviation to Work*. New York: John Wiley, 1959.

HOMANS, G. C., *The Human Group*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1950.

———, *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961.

KELLEY, H. H., and J. W. THIBAUT, "Group Problem Solving," in G. Lindzey and E. Aronson, eds., *Handbook of Social Psychology* (2nd ed.), IV, 1–101. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969.

LEAVITT, H. J., "Some Effects of Certain Communication Patterns on Group Performance," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 46 (January 1951), 38–50.

LEWIN, K., *Field Theory in Social Science*. New York: Harper & Bros., 1951.

LIKERT, R., *New Patterns of Management*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961.

LIPPITT, R., J. WATSON, and B. WESTLEY, *The Dynamics of Planned Change*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1958.

MCGREGOR, D. M., *The Human Side of Enterprise*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960.

MANN, F. C., "Studying and Creating Change," in W. G. Bennis, K. D. Benne, and R. Chin, *The Planning of Change*, pp. 605–13. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1961.

MARROW, A. J., D. G., BOWERS, and S. E. SEASHORE, *Management by Participation*. New York: Harper & Row, 1967.

MASLOW, A., *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper & Row, 1964.

MEAD, G. H., *Mind, Self and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934.

ROETHLISBERGER, F. J., and W. J. DICKSON, *Management and the Worker*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956.

ROGERS, C. R., *Client-Centered Therapy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951.

SCHUTZ, W., *FIRO: A Three-Dimensional Theory of Interpersonal Behavior*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1958.

SHERIF, M., *The Psychology of Social Norms*. New York: Harper & Bros., 1936.

SHERIF, M., O. J. HARVEY, B. J. WHITE, W. R. HOOD, and C. SHERIF, *Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation: The Robbers Cave Experiment*. Norman, Okla.: University Book Exchange, 1961.

TRIST, E. L., and K. W. BAMFORTH, "Some Social and Psychological Consequences of the Longwall Method of Coal-Getting," *Human Relations*, 4, No. 1 (1951), 1–38.

WHYTE, W. F., *Human Relations in the Restaurant Industry*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1948.

NOTES

1 Wendell French, *The Personnel Management Process*, 4th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978), Chapter 3.

2 W. G. Bennis, E. H. Schein, D. E. Berlew, and F. I. Steele, *Interpersonal Dynamics* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey, 1964), pp. 2–3.

3 Robert K. Merton and Daniel Lerner, "Social Scientists and Research Policy," in W. G. Bennis, K. D. Benne, and R. Chin, *The Planning of Change* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1961), pp. 53–69.

4 Ernest Greenwood, "The Practice of Science and the Science of Practice," in Bennis, Benne, and Chin, *The Planning of Change*, p. 78.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 79.

6 See bibliography at the end of the chapter for references to the contributions of each of the above authors.

7 R. Chin and K. Benne, "General Strategies for Effecting Changes in Human Systems," in W. G. Bennis, K. D. Benne, R. Chin, and K. E. Corey, *The Planning of Change*, 3rd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976), pp. 22–45.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 23.

9 Based on a discussion in Chin and Benne, "General Strategies," pp. 32–33.

10 W. W. Burke and H. A. Hornstein, *The Social Technology of Organization Development* (Washington, D.C.: NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science Learning Resources Corporation, 1971), p. 1.

11 Warren Bennis, *Organization Development: Its Nature, Origins, and Prospects* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. 15.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

13 Robert Chin, "The Utility of System Models and Developmental Models for Practitioners," in Bennis, Benne, and Chin, *The Planning of Change*, 2nd ed., pp. 299–300.

14 Kurt Lewin, *Field Theory in Social Science* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1951).

15 R. R. Blake and J. S. Mouton, *Building a Dynamic Corporation through Grid Organization Development* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. vi.

16 Richard Beckhard, *Organization Development: Strategies and Models* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. 35.

17 Blake and Mouton, *Building a Dynamic Corporation*, p. 16.

18 Harold Koontz and Cyril O'Donnell, *Principles of Management*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), p. 81.

19 Fremont E. Kast and James E. Rosenzweig, *Organization and Management* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), p. 439–40.

20 Blake and Mouton, *Building a Dynamic Corporation*, p. 16.

8

Action Research and Organization Development

A basic model underlying most organization development activities is the action research model—a data-based, problem-solving model that replicates the steps involved in the scientific method of inquiry. Three processes are involved in action research: data collection, feedback of the data to the clients, and action planning based on the data.[1] Action research is both an *approach* to problem solving—a model or a paradigm, and a problem-solving *process*—a series of activities and events.

We examine the action research model in this chapter for two main reasons: first, the importance of action research as an underpinning for OD seems not to be appreciated sufficiently; and second, there seems to be some misunderstanding about what action research really is. We address these two issues in this chapter. Action research from the points of view of a process and an approach are given, followed by remarks on the history and the kinds of action research. The role and appropriate use of action research in organization development conclude the chapter.

ACTION RESEARCH AS A PROCESS

Action research may be described as a process, that is, as an ongoing series of events and actions. Used in this way, we define *action research* as follows: action research 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. This definition

characterizes action research in terms of the activities comprising the process: first a static picture is taken of an organization; on the basis of "what exists," hunches and hypotheses suggest actions; these actions typically entail manipulating some variable in the system that is under the control of the action researcher (this often means doing something differently from the way it has always been done); later, a second static picture is taken of the system to examine the effects of the actions taken. These steps are the same steps we have described as being what the OD practitioner does as he or she attempts to improve an organization's functioning via organization development.

Several authors have noted the importance of viewing action research as a process. Stephen Corey, an early advocate of action research in education, states: "The process by which practitioners attempt to study their problems scientifically in order to guide, correct, and evaluate their decisions and actions is what a number of people have called action research."[2] Elsewhere Corey defines action research more in terms of a practitioners' tool: "Action research in education is research undertaken by practitioners in order that they may improve their practices."[3] In a study of the Tremont Hotel in Chicago, William F. Whyte and Edith L. Hamilton described their work as follows:

> What was the project? It was an action-research program for management. We developed a process for applying human relations research findings to the changing of organization behavior. The word *process* is important, for this was not a one-shot affair. The project involved a continuous gathering and analysis of human relations research data and the feeding of the findings into the organization in such a way as to change behavior.[4]

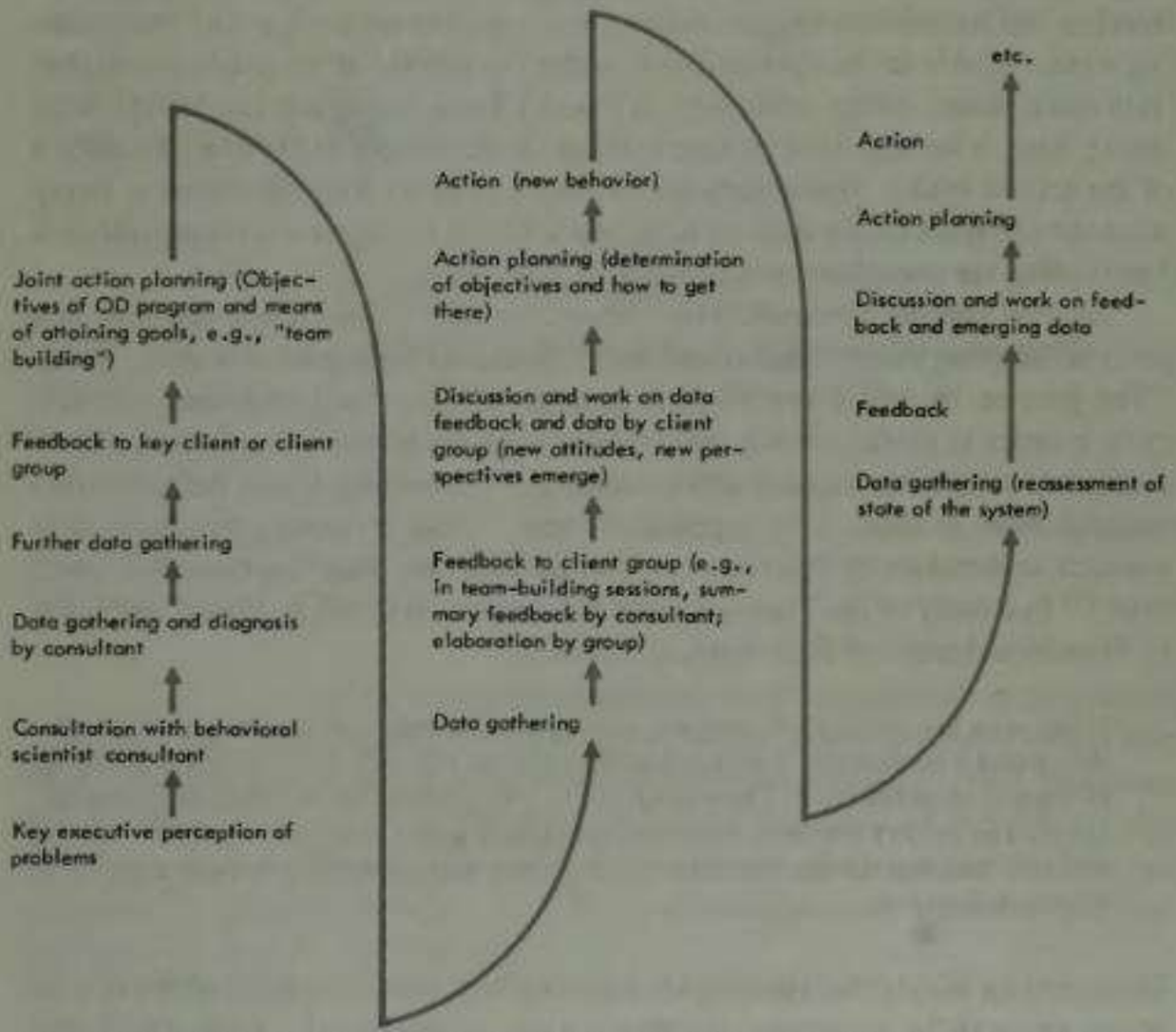
This study by Whyte and Hamilton is a particularly cogent example of the role of action research in improving an organization. Although the study itself was conducted in 1945 and 1946—before the term *organization development* was introduced—it would be considered an OD program today, even though it was based solely on an action research model.

In Figure 8-1 French presents a diagram of the process of action research as it relates to organization development.[5] His diagram points up the iterative or cyclical nature of the process. He clarifies the model as follows:

> The key aspects of the model are *diagnosis, data gathering, feedback to the client group, data discussion and work by the client group, action planning, and action.* The sequence tends to be cyclical, with the focus on new or advanced problems as the client group learns to work more effectively together.[6]

Action research is a process in two different ways: it is a sequence of events and activities *within* each iteration (data collection, feedback and working the data, and taking action based on the data); and it is a *cycle* of iterations of these activities sometimes treating the same problem through several cycles and sometimes moving to different problems in each cycle. Both aspects point up the ongoing nature of action research.

FIGURE 8-1
An Action Research Model for Organization Development



Copyright 1969 by the Regents of the University of California. Reprinted from *California Management Review*, Vol. XII, No. 2, p. 26, Figure 1. By permission of the Regents.

ACTION RESEARCH AS AN APPROACH

Action research may also be described as an approach to problem solving, thus suggesting its usefulness as a model, a guide, or a paradigm. Used in this way, *action research* may be defined as follows: action research is the application of the scientific method of fact-finding and experimentation to practical problems requiring action solutions and involving the collaboration and cooperation of scientists, practitioners, and laymen. The desired outcomes of the action research approach are solutions to the immediate problems and a contribution to scientific knowledge and theory. Viewing action research from this perspective points up some additional features that are important.

Action research was the conceptual model for an early organization improvement program in a series of oil refineries. Herbert Shepard, one of the

behavioral scientists involved in that program, defines the nature of action research as follows:

> The action research model is a normative model for learning, or a model for planned change. Its main features are these. In front of intelligent human action there should be an objective, be it ever so fuzzy or distorted. And in advance of human action there should be planning, although knowledge of paths to the objective is always inadequate. Action itself should be taken a step at a time, and after each step it is well to do some fact-finding. The fact-finding may disclose whether the objective is realistic, whether it is nearer or more distant than before, whether it needs alteration. Through fact-finding, the present situation can be assessed, and this information, together with information about the objective, can be used in planning the second step. Movement toward an objective consists of a series of such cycles of planning—acting—fact-finding—planning.[7]

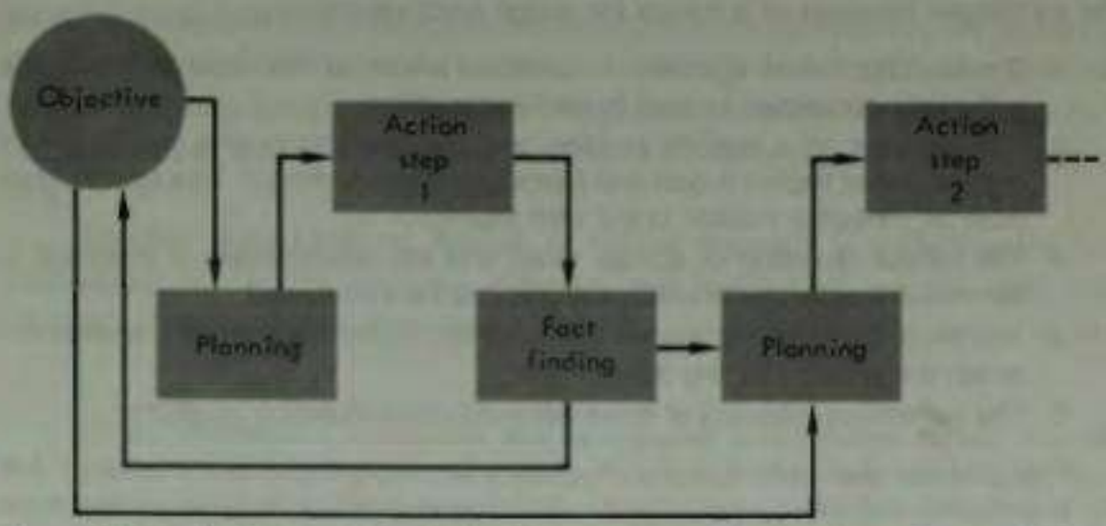
Shepard diagrams his concept of the action research model as shown in Figure 8-2.[8]

Shepard highlights the relations between goals (objectives), planning, and action in his diagram—a point we think is a very important feature of action research. And both he and French emphasize that action research is research inextricably linked to action; furthermore, it is research-with-a-purpose, that is, to guide present and future action.

In an action research approach, the role of the consultant/change agent takes on a special form, as shown by Shepard:

> The role is to help the manager plan his actions and design his fact-finding procedures in such a way that he can learn from them, to serve such ends as becoming a more skillful manager, setting more realistic objectives, discovering better ways of

FIGURE 8-2
Action Research Model



From: Herbert A. Shepard, "An Action Research Model" in *An Action Research Program for Organization Improvement*, Ann Arbor, Mich.: Foundation for Research on Human Behavior, 1960. Used with permission.

organizing. In this sense, the staff concerned with follow-up are research consultants. Their task is to help managers formulate management problems as experiments.[8]

By viewing action research as an approach to problem solving we have noted the following features: the normative nature of this model, the importance and centrality of goals and objectives, and the different role requirements of the consultant/change agent vis-à-vis the clients. Two additional features deserve discussion—first, the elements of the action research model that link it to the scientific method of inquiry; and second, the collaborative relation between scientists, practitioners, and laymen that often is a component of action research.

The paradigm for problematical inquiry that serves both as the model for the scientific method and as the model for action research was introduced by the philosopher John Dewey in his book *How We Think*.[10] He identified the following five phases of reflective thinking: suggestion, intellectualization, hypothesizing, reasoning, and testing the hypothesis by action. This approach to problem solving is translated into the scientific method steps as follows. First the scientist is confronted with a *problem, obstacle, or new idea* that he or she wants to understand (Dewey's suggestion phase). The scientist identifies the problem, intellectualizes about it (what we usually call "thinking"), and arrives at the point where a *hypothesis* about the problem can be formulated. (A *hypothesis* is a conjectural statement positing the relations between two or more phenomena, usually referred to as a "cause" and an "effect.") The next step, a critical one, consists of the scientist *reasoning or deducing the consequences of the hypothesis*. The final step consists of *observing, testing, or experimenting* to see if the relation between the two phenomena expressed in the hypothesis is verified or disconfirmed.[11]

These steps for the scientific method are identical with the steps outlined by Corey for action research in which he says:

> The significant elements of a design for action research are:
>
> 1. The identification of a problem area about which an individual or a group is sufficiently concerned to want to take some action.
> 2. The selection of a specific problem and the formulation of a hypothesis or prediction that implies a goal and a procedure for reaching it. This specific goal must be viewed in relation to the total situation.
> 3. The careful recording of actions taken and the accumulation of evidence to determine the degree to which the goal has been achieved.
> 4. The inference from this evidence of generalizations regarding the relation between the actions and the desired goal.
> 5. The continuous retesting of these generalizations in action situations.
>
> If the problem under attack is one of concern to many people, or if it is likely that the experiment will affect many people, the action research should involve these people. It then becomes *cooperative* action research.[12]

An example applying action research to a typical organizational problem might be helpful. Suppose that the problem is unproductive weekly staff meetings—they are poorly attended; members express low commitment and involvement in them; a low level of activity and interaction is common in them; and they are generally agreed to be unproductive. Suppose also that you are the manager in charge of both the meetings and the staff and that you desire to make the meetings a vital, productive instrument for your organization. Following the action research model, the first step is to gather data about the *status quo*. Assume this has been done, and the data suggest the meetings are generally disliked and regarded as unproductive. The next step is to search for causes of the problem and to generate one or more hypotheses from which you deduce the consequences that will allow the hypotheses to be tested. Say you come up with four hypotheses as listed below. Note the very important feature that an action research hypothesis consists of two aspects: a goal and an action or procedure for achieving that goal.

1. Staff meetings will be more productive if I solicit and use agenda topics from the staff rather than have the agenda made up just by me.
2. Staff meetings will be more productive if I rotate the chairmanship of the meeting among the staff rather than my always being chairman.
3. Staff meetings will be more productive if we have them twice a week instead of only once a week.
4. I have always run the staff meetings in a brisk "all-business-no-nonsense" fashion; perhaps if I (*a*) loosen up on what can be discussed and how, (*b*) encourage more discussion, (*c*) listen to what is said more carefully, and (*d*) am more open about how I am reacting to what is being said, then staff meetings will be more productive.

Each of these action research hypotheses has a goal, or objective (better staff meeting productivity), and each has an action, or procedure, for achieving the goal. Additional work would be done to clarify and specify the goal and the actions in more detail, and then the hypotheses would be systematically tested (implemented) one at a time and evaluated for their effects through data collection.

Another distinguishing feature of action research is collaboration between individuals inside the system—clients—and individuals outside the system—change agents or researchers. Havelock, for example, defines action research as

> the collaboration of researcher and practitioner in the diagnosis and evaluation of problems existing in the practice setting. . . . It provides the cooperating practitioner system with scientific data about its own operation which may be used for self-evaluation.[13]

Elsewhere Havelock discusses "collaborative Action Inquiry," which

> is similar to "action research." However, this model places greater emphasis on service to the practitioner system and on the collaborative teaming of research and practitioner. The inquiry team collaborates on defining goals, on all phases of the research, and on change strategies. . . .[14]

Almost all authors stress the collaborative nature of action research, with some seeing it as the primary reason for the model's efficacy.[15]

It is a widely held belief that people tend to support what they have helped to create. Such a belief is highly congruent with the collaborative aspect of the action research model and impels practitioners and researchers alike to cooperate extensively with client system members. Such a point of view implies that the client system members and the researcher should jointly define the problems they want to address, should define the methods used for data collection, should identify the hypotheses relevant to the situations, and should evaluate the consequences of actions taken. We believe this collaborative ingredient of action research is particularly important in organization development and give additional attention to it in the next section.

THE HISTORY, USE, AND VARIETIES OF ACTION RESEARCH

John Dewey translated the scientific method of problem solving into terms understandable by practitioners and laymen, and these seminal ideas were incorporated into action research several years later. The origin of action research can be traced to two independent sources. One source, John Collier, was a man of practical affairs; the other, Kurt Lewin, was a man of science. John Collier was commissioner of Indian Affairs from 1933 to 1945, a role in which he had to diagnose problems and recommend remedial programs for the improvement of race relations. Collier found that effecting changes in ethnic relations was an extremely difficult process and required *joint effort* on the part of the scientist (researcher), the administrator (practitioner), and the layman (client).

> Principle seven I would call the first and the last: that research and then more research is essential to the program, that in the ethnic field research can be made a tool of action essential to all the other tools, indeed, that it ought to be the master tool. But we had in mind a particular kind of research, or, if you will, particular conditions. We had in mind research impelled from central areas of needed action. And since action is by nature not only specialized but also integrative to more than the specialities, our needed research must be of the integrative sort. Again, since the findings of the research must be carried into effect by the administrator and the layman, and must be criticized by them through their experience, the administrator and the layman must themselves participate creatively in the research, impelled as it is from their own area of need.[16]

Collier called this form of research *action research*. Taking effective actions requires research directed to important practical problems, and the solutions must be relevant and feasible. To be able to implement a good action plan also requires cooperation of the client. Action research seemed to afford a means to mesh these diverse elements.

The other major source for theory and practice of action research, Kurt Lewin, was a social psychologist who was profoundly interested in applying social science knowledge to help solve social problems. In the mid-forties and early fifties, Lewin and his students conducted action research projects in many different behavioral domains: Lewin applied action research principles to intergroup relations and to changing eating habits; Lippitt, and Lippitt and Radke, applied the tool to an extensive community relations project; Bavelas conducted an action research project on leadership training; Coch and French applied the model to studying resistance to change in an industrial plant.[17] As Lewin succinctly stated the issue: "No action without research, and no research without action."

Lewin's work with social agency practitioners engaged in eradicating prejudice led him to conclude that research to help the practitioner was imperative. His answer to the need was action research. Only by conducting research could action people generate standards by which to measure progress. Speaking to this problem he said:

> In a field that lacks objective standards of achievement, no learning can take place. If we cannot judge whether an action has led forward or backward, if we have no criteria for evaluating the relation between effort and achievement, there is nothing to prevent us from making the wrong conclusions and to encourage the wrong work habits. Realistic fact-finding and evaluation is a prerequisite for any learning. Social research should be one of the top priorities for the practical job of improving intergroup relations.[18]

For the Lewin group, action research represented a linking of experimentation and application, and at the same time, people of science and people of action. As an example Lippitt, in the preface to his book on community action research, states: "Bringing together in a single cooperative adventure the skills and resources of both men of science, and men of action, this project is an example of 'action research.' "[19]

Other noteworthy action research projects may be found in the literature.[20] Whyte and Hamilton studied the effects of human relations practices in a large hotel; Elliott Jaques used the action research model in effecting change in the culture of a factory in England; Cyril Sofer applied the methods in three diverse organizations undergoing change for which he was a researcher-consultant; Floyd Mann, and Seashore and Bowers, applied the methods to industrial plants undergoing changes in leadership; Shepard, Katzell, and others, working at a large refinery, used action research to effect a planned change program; Morse and Reimer's field experiment investigating leadership styles and participation in

an insurance company is an example of action research; and Miles, Hornstein, Callahan, Calder, and Schiavo used action research to investigate the processes of self-renewal in a school system. The payoff from a good action research project is high: practical problems get solved, a contribution is made to theory and to practice in behavioral science, and greater understanding grows between scientist, practitioner, and layman. Some varieties of action research emphasize one kind of payoff over others, as we see in the next section.

Action research projects may be directed toward diverse goals, thereby giving rise to several variations of the model. Lewin, for example, suggested two broad categories of action research: the investigation of general laws and the diagnosis of a specific situation.[21] The study of general laws leads to contributions to theory and practice, and to generalizations about natural phenomena; the diagnosis of a specific situation leads to solving immediate, practical problems.

Raymond Katzell, in the refinery action research project, suggested three types of situations in which the research consultant staff were providing data feedback to managers: the first situation was described as "adventitious," that is, the research group happened to have already collected data that turned out to be quite useful to someone at a later time; the second situation represented data collection on a refinery-wide basis of a preplanned, systematic nature, that is, a periodic pulse taking of the organization; the third situation was to work intensively with a small "demonstration" group, continuously collecting data on all sorts of topics and feeding them back to the group as they were needed.[22] The second situation is often found in programs involving surveys taken, say, annually. In this situation it is possible to measure changes in various parts of the organization over time. The third situation is also found in organization development programs where a team of consultants has time and energy to spend on researching the consequences of behaviors within a small group with whom they are working intensively.

Chein, Cook, and Harding enumerate four varieties of action research—diagnostic, participant, empirical, and experimental.[23] In *diagnostic action research,* the scientist enters a problem situation, diagnoses it, and makes recommendations for remedial treatment to the client. The recommendations are intuitively derived, not pretested, and usually come from the scientist's experience or knowledge. Often the recommendations are not put into effect by the client group. This gave rise to a second kind of action research, *participant action research,* in which the people who are to take action are involved in the entire research and action process from the beginning. This involvement both facilitates a carrying out of the actions once decided upon and keeps the recommended actions feasible and workable.

Empirical action research is that in which the actor keeps systematic, extensive record of what he did and what effects it had. This is similar to the practitioner's keeping a day-to-day diary. Limitations of this method are the difficulties found in any clinical data collecting: the actor may have too few experiences

to draw from; he or she may encounter situations too divergent from one another to compare them; the situation may be unique and may not permit generalizations; the actor may lack objectivity in evaluating his or her own performance; and there are difficulties inherent in being both researcher and change agent simultaneously.

> A fourth variety of action research, the *experimental*, is controlled research on the relative effectiveness of various action techniques. There is almost always more than one possible way of trying to accomplish something. The problem is to find which is the best. This is research *on* action in the strictest sense of both words.[24]

These authors indicate that experimental action research may make the greatest contribution to the advancement of scientific knowledge, but at the same time it is the most difficult to accomplish. The experimental nature of the research permits definitive testing of hypothesis and that is good. Controlling conditions to the extent that the hypothesis is tested in exactly the same way over several situations is difficult to do, however, when clients want immediate answers to pressing problems. In situations like these, the research aspects of the project often become subordinated to the problem-solving–remedial treatment requirements of the situation.

Organization development practitioners typically utilize participant action research and, occasionally, experimental action research. The participant model is highly congruent with current OD practices, and the experimental model, while being congruent, is simply harder to implement. In this regard, we maintain that the practice of organization development itself is in a sense a result of the experimental action research model, in that certain kinds of interventions (actions and hypotheses) were found to be effective by practitioners for achieving organization improvement and they were kept in the repertoire, while other interventions were found to be ineffective and were dropped from use.

WHEN AND HOW TO USE ACTION RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

The OD process is basically an action research program in an organization designed to improve the functioning of that organization. Effective improvement programs almost always require a data base, that is, they rely on systematically obtained empirical facts for planning action, taking action, and evaluating action. Action research supplies an approach and a process for generating and utilizing information about the system itself that will provide a base for the action program.

The collaborative inquiry feature of action research suggests to practitioners and laymen alike the desirability for jointly determining central needs, critical problems, and hypotheses and actions. The potential experimental nature of

actions inherent in action research provides a different "set" for managers as they try to solve problems, that is, viewing problems in cause-effect terms and viewing solutions to problems as only one action hypothesis from a range of several. The systematic collection of data about variables related to the organization's culture—which many laymen are only now coming to view as important determiners of performance—and testing the effects of managerial actions on these variables offer new tools for understanding organization dynamics. All these features fit with a program to improve the organization.

The natures of organization development and action research are very similar. They are both variants of applied behavioral science; they are both action oriented; they are both data based; they both call for close collaboration between insider and outsider; and they are both problem-solving social inventions. This is why we believe a sound organization development program rests on an action research model.

SUMMARY REGARDING THE ACTION RESEARCH MODEL

Two philosophical and pragmatic values underlie action research. The first value is that action plans and programs designed to solve real problems should be based on valid public data generated collaboratively by clients and consultants. This belief calls for actions to be based on diagnostic research—an *action-should-follow-research* mode of thinking. Or, to state it another way, diagnose the problem situation and base action plans on that diagnosis. The second value is that action in the real world should be accompanied by research on that action so that we can build up a cumulative body of knowledge and theory of the effects of various actions directed to solving real-world problems—a *research-should-follow-action* mode of thinking. Only if we systematically evaluate (do research on) actions can we know what the real effects of these actions are. And only if we systematically and cumulatively build a body of knowledge can we build better social science theories.

Thus actions to solve real-world problems offer a unique opportunity for both the scientist-researcher and the administrator-laymen if the problems are approached from the standpoint of the action research model: the administrator's problems will be solved and the scientist's quest for theory and empirical validation of theory will be furthered. The applied behavioral science discipline of organization development is a fertile ground for action research projects.[25] We predict an increasing payoff from the use of experimental action research in OD.

NOTES

1 Richard Beckhard, *Organization Development: Strategies and Models* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. 28.

2 Stephen M. Corey, *Action Research to Improve School Practices* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953), p. 6.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 141.

4 William F. Whyte and Edith L. Hamilton, *Action Research for Management* (Homewood, Ill.: Irwin-Dorsey, 1964), pp. 1–2.

5 Wendell French, "Organization Development Objectives, Assumptions, and Strategies," *California Management Review*, 12 (Winter 1969, pp. 23–34. Figure used with permission.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 26.

7 Herbert A. Shepard, "An Action Research Model," in *An Action Research Program for Organization Improvement* (Ann Arbor: The Foundation for Research on Human Behavior, University of Michigan, 1960), pp. 33–34.

8 Figure 8-2 is from Herbert A. Shepard, "An Action Research Model," in *An Action Research Program for Organization Improvement* (Ann Arbor: The Foundation for Research on Human Behavior, 1960), p. 33, and is used with permission.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 34.

10 John Dewey, *How We Think*, rev. ed. (New York: Heath, 1933).

11 Based on a discussion in Fred N. Kerlinger, *Foundations of Behavioral Research*, 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973), pp. 11–15.

12 Corey, *Action Research to Improve School Practices*, pp. 40–41.

13 Ronald G. Havelock, *Planning for Innovation through Dissemination and Utilization of Knowledge* (Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, 1969), p. 9-33.

14 *Ibid.*

15 In this regard, the work of Collier (cited later in this chapter), Corey, and Lippitt (cited later) indicates a heavy emphasis on the importance of collaboration between all the individuals affected by a change project of this nature. And in a more recent article on action research and OD, client-consultant collaboration is cited as one of the basic processes of the action research model. Mark A. Frohman, Marshall Sashkin, and Michael J. Kavanagh, "Action-Research as Applied to Organization Development," *Organization and Administrative Sciences*, 7, Nos. 1 and 2 (Spring/Summer 1976), pp. 129–61.

16 John Collier, "United States Indian Administration as a Laboratory of Ethnic Relations," *Social Research*, 12 (May 1945), pp. 275–76.

17 The relevant sources for Lewin's work are as follows: Kurt Lewin, "Action Research and Minority Problems," *Journal of Social Issues*, 2, No. 4 (1946), pp. 34–46; *Resolving Social Conflicts* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1948); in addition, Ronald Lippitt, *Training in Community Relations* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951); Ronald Lippitt and Marion Radke, "New Trends in the Investigation of Prejudice," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 244 (March 1946), pp. 167–76; Lester Coch and J.R.P. French, Jr., "Overcoming Resistance to Change," *Human Relations*, 1 (1948), pp. 512–32.

18 Lewin, "Action Research and Minority Problems," p. 35.

19 Lippitt, *Training in Community Relations*, p. ix.

20 Whyte and Hamilton, *Action Research for Management;* Elliott Jaques, *The Changing Culture of a Factory* (New York: Dryden Press, 1952); Cyril Sofer, *The Organization from Within* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1962); Floyd Mann, "Studying and Creating Change: A Means to Understanding Social Organization," in C. M. Arensberg *et al.*, eds., *Research in Industrial Human Relations* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957); and S. E. Seashore and D. G. Bowers, *Changing the Structure and Functioning of an Organization*, Monograph No. 33 (Ann Arbor:

Survey Research Center, University of Michigan, 1963). Herbert A. Shepard and Raymond A. Katzell are two of the writers for the book *An Action Research Program for Organization Improvement, op. cit.* Nancy Morse and E. Reimer, "The Experimental Change of a Major Organizational Variable," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology,* 52 (January 1956), pp. 120–29. Matthew Miles, Harvey Hornstein, Daniel Callahan, Paula Calder, and R. Steven Schiavo, "The Consequence of Survey Feedback: Theory and Evaluation," in Warren Bennis, Kenneth Benne, and Robert Chin, *The Planning of Change,* 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969), pp. 457–68.

21 Lewin, "Action Research and Minority Problems," pp. 34–46.

22 Raymond Katzell, "Action Research Activities at One Refinery," in *An Action Research Program for Organization Improvement,* pp. 37–47.

23 Isadore Chein, Stuart Cook, and John Harding, "The Field of Action Research," *American Psychologist,* 3 (February 1948), pp. 43–50.

24 *Ibid.,* p. 48.

25 See Frohman, Sashkin, and Kavanagh, "Action-Research as Applied to Organization Development," pp. 129–61.

9

OD Interventions—An Overview

The term *OD interventions* refers to the range of planned programmatic activities clients and consultants participate in during the course of an organization development program. These activities are designed to improve the organization's functioning through enabling organization members better to manage their team and organization cultures. OD interventions constitute the continually evolving technology—the methods and techniques—of the practice of organization development. Knowing the OD intervention armamentarium and knowing the rationale underlying the use of different interventions contributes substantially to understanding the philosophy, assumptions, nature, and processes of organization development. In these six chapters on interventions, we examine the techniques involved in applying behavioral science theory and practice to change and improving ongoing systems. In this chapter we look at issues, definitions, rationale, and several classificatory schemata related to interventions. In Chapters 10 through 14 we extend the discussion through an examination of the current inventory of OD interventions.

A DEFINITION OF OD INTERVENTIONS

The term *OD interventions* is currently being used in several different ways. On the one hand, this seems to be due to confusion and lack of definition; on the other hand, it is due to the fact that it quite accurately (if not precisely) refers to several orders of meaning in terms of level of abstraction. Is an OD intervention something that someone does to an organization, or is it something that is going on, that is, an activity? It is both. We prefer, however, that emphasis be placed on the activity nature of interventions; interventions are "things that happen," activities, in an organization's life.

One use of the term that is common with practitioners and laymen alike is that an intervention is something the outside consultant does to the client system. The major shortcomings of this definition are, first, that it does not provide for the client system doing something to itself without the assistance of an external, or even internal, consultant; and, second, it denies the joint collaboration that takes place between consultant and client. In OD programs, individuals and units within the organization often initiate activities designed to improve their functioning and do so on their own. These activities can constitute OD interventions.

The term is often used to refer to any learning technique or method available to the practitioner. Thus, any one of the extant methods available, what Burke and Hornstein call "the social technology of OD,"[1] is an intervention according to this use. (These techniques are available both to the client system and to consultants.) This is probably the most common use, and it is an appropriate one. The technology of OD consists of educational activities, methods, and techniques; some "things to do" and "things to be sure not to do"; questionnaires, observation and interview schedules, and so forth. Any of these can appropriately be considered an intervention when it is used to bring about organization improvement.

Common usage also finds the term applied to the following different levels of activities:

A single task, say, a two-hour decision-making exercise

A sequence or series of related tasks designed around some theme or objective; for example, Beckhard's *confrontation meeting* is a series of tasks designed to surface an organization's major problems, determine the priorities for solving the problems, and assign responsibilities for actions[2]

A "family" of activities that are related but may be quite different; for example, the set of activities called team-building interventions are a wide variety of diverse activities all designed to improve a team's effectiveness as a unit, and the activities may relate to ways to perform the task better or to ways to improve the relations between the team members

The overall plan for relating and integrating the organization improvement activities that an organization might be engaged in over a period of years (this is generally referred to as the *intervention strategy*, the *strategy of intervention*, or the *OD strategy* of the organization development program)

All of these are correct uses of the term *intervention*, but they relate to different levels of abstraction and can thus be confusing at times.

Finally, to give our definition of the term: OD interventions are *sets of structured activities* in which selected organizational units (target groups or individuals) engage with a task or a sequence of tasks where the task goals are related directly or indirectly to organizational improvement. Interventions constitute the action thrust of organization development; they "make things happen" and are "what's happening."

The OD practitioner is a professional versed in the theory and practice of organization development. The practitioner brings four sets of attributes to the

organizational setting: a set of values; a set of assumptions about people, organizations, and interpersonal relationships; a set of goals and objectives both for the practitioner and for the organization and its members; and a set of structured activities that are the *means* to implementing the values, assumptions, and goals. These activities are what we mean by the word *interventions*.

A BRIEF WORD ABOUT THE NATURE OF OD INTERVENTIONS

In the chapter on the nature of organization development, the characteristics, nature, and scope of OD interventions were discussed in relation to the OD process. Many of the characteristics ascribed to OD inhere also in OD interventions. The foundations and characteristics of the OD process are given there as follows: it is data based and experience based, with emphasis on action, diagnosis, and goal setting; it frequently utilizes work teams as target groups; it rests on a systems approach to organizations; it is a normative–re-educative strategy of changing; and it is an ongoing process. In this section we deal explicitly with OD interventions, covering some new materials and some old materials in a new way.

OD interventions are structured activities of selected target groups. Some "secrets" of OD are contained in this statement, because there are "better" ways and "worse" ways to structure activities in order for learning and change to take place. Organization development practitioners know how to structure activities in the "better" ways through attending to the following points:

Structure the activity so that the relevant people are there. The relevant people are those affected by the problem or the opportunity. For example, if the goal is improved team effectiveness, have the whole team engage in the activities. If the goal is improved relations between two separate work groups, have both work groups present. If the goal is to build some linkages with some special group, say, the industrial relations people, have them there and have the linking people from the home group there.

This preplanning of the group composition is a necessary feature of properly structuring the activity.

Structure the activity so that it is (1) problem oriented or opportunity oriented and (2) oriented to the problems and opportunities generated by the clients themselves. Solving problems and capitalizing on opportunities are involving, interesting, and enjoyable tasks for most people, whether it is due to a desire for competence or mastery (as suggested by White),[3] or a desire to achieve (as suggested by McClelland),[4] or whatever. This is especially true when the issues to be worked on have been defined by the client. There is built-in support and involvement, and there is a real payoff when clients are solving issues that they have stated have highest priority.

Structure the activity so that the goal is clear and the way to reach the goal is clear. Few things demotivate an individual as much as not knowing what he or she is working toward and not knowing how what the individual is doing contributes to goal attainment. Both of these points are part of structuring the

activity properly. (Parenthetically, the goals will be important goals for the individuals if the second point above is followed.)

Structure the activity so that there is a high probability of successful goal attainment. Implicit in this point is the warning that expectations of practitioners and clients should be realistic. But more than that, manageable, attainable objectives once achieved produce feelings of success, competence, and potency for the people involved. This, in turn, raises aspiration levels and feelings of self- and group-worth. The task can still be hard, complicated, taxing—but it should be attainable. And if there is failure to accomplish the goal, the reasons for this should be clear so they can be avoided in the future.

Structure the activity so that it contains both experience-based learning and conceptual/cognitive/theoretical-based learning. New learnings gained through experience are made a permanent part of the individual's repertoire when they are augmented (and "cemented") through conceptual material that puts the experience into a broader framework of theory and behavior. Relating the experience to conceptual models, theories, and other experiences and beliefs helps the learning to become integrated for the individual.

Structure the climate of the activity so that individuals are "freed up" rather than anxious or defensive. Setting the climate of interventions so that people expect "to learn together" and "to look at practices in an experimenting way so that we can select better procedures" is what we mean by climate setting.

Structure the activity so that the participants learn both how to solve a particular problem and "learn how to learn" at the same time. This may mean scheduling in time for reflecting on the activity and teasing out learnings that occurred; it may mean devoting as much as half the activity to one focus and half to the other.

Structure the activity so that individuals can learn about both *task* and *process*. The task is what the group is working on, that is, the stated agenda items. The term *process*, as used here, refers to *how* the group is working and *what else is going on* as the task is being worked on. This includes the group's processes and dynamics, individual styles of interacting and behaving, etc. Learning to be skillful in working in both of these areas is a powerful tool. Activities structured to focus on both aspects result in learnings on both aspects.

Structure the activity so that individuals are engaged as whole persons, not segmented persons. This means that role demands, thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and strivings should all be called into play, not just one or two of these. Integrating disparate parts of individuals in an organizational world where differentiation in terms of role, feelings, thoughts is common probably enhances the individual's ability to cope and grow.

These features are integral characteristics of OD interventions and also of the practitioner's practice theory of organization development. Little attention is given to characteristics of structuring activities in the literature, but knowledge of them helps to take some of the mystery out of interventions and may also be helpful to people who are just beginning to practice OD.

A different approach to the nature of OD interventions is provided by Robert Blake and Jane Mouton, who list the major interventions in terms of their underlying themes.[5] They describe the following kinds of interventions: (1) *discrep-*

ancy intervention, which calls attention to a contradiction in action or attitudes that then leads to exploration; (2) *theory intervention*, where behavioral science knowledge and theory are used to explain present behavior and assumptions underlying the behavior; (3) *procedural intervention*, which represents a critiquing of how something is being done to determine whether the best methods are being used; (4) *relationship intervention*, which focuses attention on interpersonal relationships (particularly those where there are strong negative feelings) and surfaces the issues for exploration and possible resolution; (5) *experimentation intervention*, in which two different action plans are tested for their consequences before a final decision on one is made; (6) *dilemma intervention*, in which an imposed or emergent dilemma is used to force close examination of the possible choices involved and the assumptions underlying them; (7) *perspective intervention*, which draws attention away from immediate actions and demands and allows a look at historical background, context, and future objectives in order to assess whether or not the actions are "still on target"; (8) *organization structure intervention*, which calls for examination and evaluation of structural causes for organizational ineffectiveness; and (9) *cultural intervention*, which examines traditions, precedents, and practices—the fabric of the organization's culture—in a direct, focused approach. These different kinds of interventions suggest the range of different ways the OD practitioner can intervene in the client system. They also suggest the underlying dynamics of interventions.

Blake and Mouton have continued to examine and refine the nature of interventions and have also proposed a theory and typology for the entire consultation field.[6] The typology, called the Consulcube™, is a 100-cell cube depicting virtually all consultation situations. The cube is built on three dimensions. The first dimension is what the consultant *does*, that is, what kind of intervention the consultant uses. There are five basic types of interventions—*acceptant* (the consultant gives the client a sense of worth, value, acceptance, and support); *catalytic* (the consultant helps the client generate data and information in order to restructure the client's perceptions); *confrontation* (the consultant points out value discrepancies in the client's beliefs and actions); *prescription* (the consultant tells the client what to do to solve the problem); and *theories and principles* (the consultant teaches the client relevant behavioral science theory so that the client can learn to diagnose and solve his or her own problems).

The second dimension is the *focal issues* causing the client's problems. Four focal issue categories are identified: power-authority, morale/cohesion, norms/standards of conduct, and goals/objectives.

The third dimension of the cube is the units of change that are the target of the consultation. Five units are proposed: individual, group, intergroup, organization, and larger social systems such as a community or even a society.

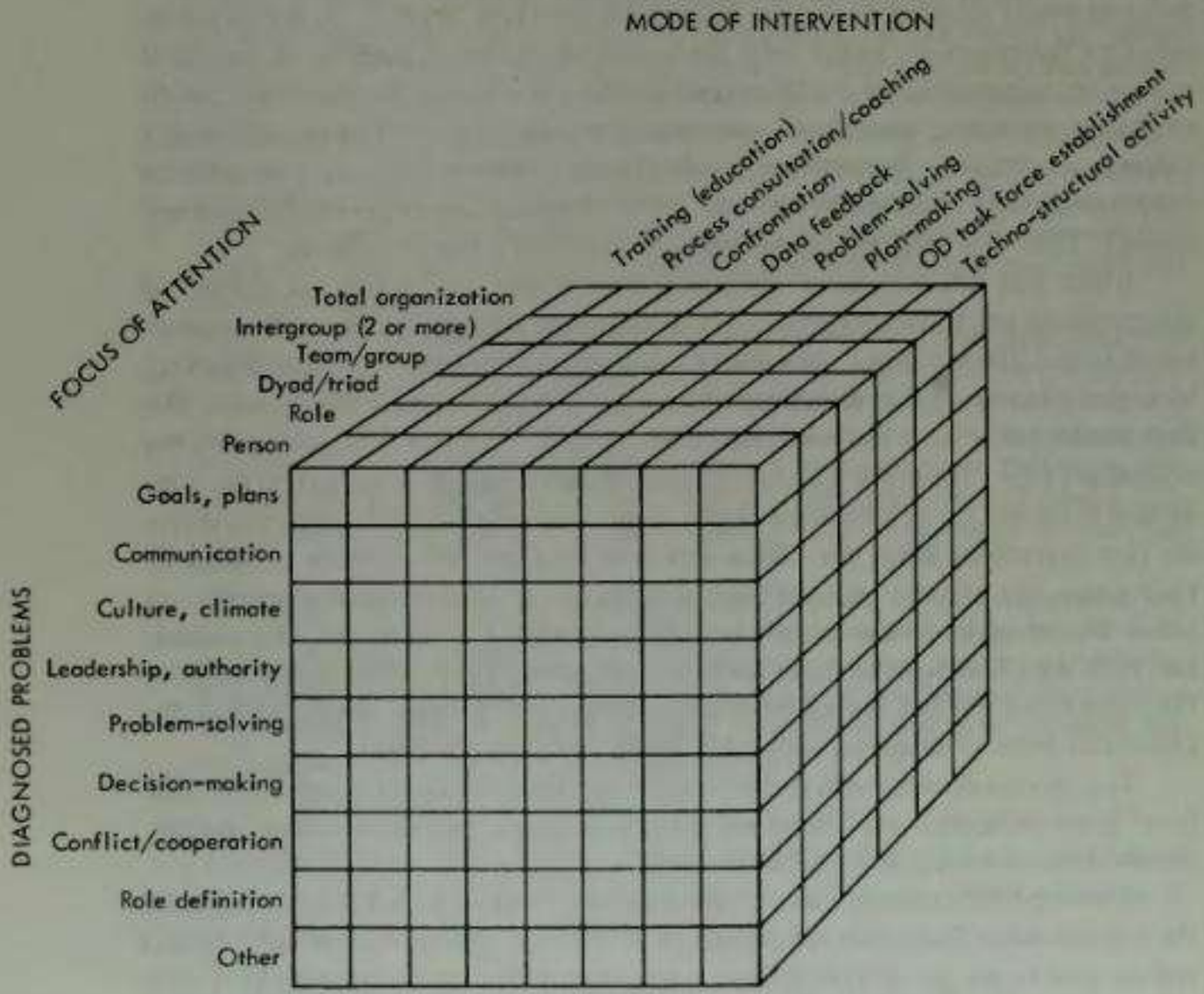
Five kinds of interventions, four different focal issues, and five different units of change are thus seen to encompass the range of consultation possibilities. Blake and Mouton's Consulcube represents a major contribution in the development of a theory of consultation and intervention. It is a contribution that clarifies

the role of organization development and the different interventions that make up the OD technology.

A similar rubric, called the "OD Cube," has been proposed by Richard Schmuck and Matthew Miles.[7] This cube classifies OD interventions based on three dimensions—the diagnosed problems, the focus of attention, and the mode of intervention. The OD Cube is shown in Figure 9-1. It is also a road map for understanding most of the OD interventions.

The nature of OD interventions—the structured activities designed to bring about system improvement—is complex and multifaceted. But certain themes recur in many interventions, the dynamics of the intervention process itself are becoming better understood, and there is a growing body of concepts that relates

FIGURE 9-1
The OD Cube: A Scheme for Classifying OD Interventions



Reproduced from: Richard A. Schmuck and Matthew B. Miles, *OD in Schools*, La Jolla, CA: University Associates, 1971. Used with permission.

to the process of planned change. Considerable understanding of the nature of OD interventions is available to practitioners and clients alike as a result of this process. Just as an example, and to close this section on a serendipitous note: the *decision* to participate in an OD intervention may itself be a cause of organizational improvement. Just making the decision will signal to the members involved that the culture is changing, that new ideas and new ways of doing things are becoming more of a possibility and reality. This signal may itself cause changes in the direction of improvement. Our evaluation techniques and our theories of the intervention process are not sophisticated enough to handle such interactional complexities. That is for future practitioners at future times.

THE MAJOR FAMILIES OF OD INTERVENTIONS

Not all OD programs contain all the possible intervention activities, but a wide range of activities is available to the practitioner. As we see it, the following are the major "families" or types of OD interventions.

Diagnostic Activities: fact-finding activities designed to ascertain the state of the system, the status of a problem, the "way things are." Available methods range from projective devices like "build a collage that represents for you your place in this organization" to the more traditional data collection methods of interviews, questionnaires, surveys, and meetings.

Team-Building Activities: activities designed to enhance the effective operation of system teams. They may relate to task issues, such as the way things are done, the needed skills to accomplish tasks, the resource allocations necessary for task accomplishment; or they may relate to the nature and quality of the relationships between the team members or between members and the leader. Again, a wide range of activities is possible. In addition, consideration is given to the different kinds of teams that may exist in the organization, such as formal work teams, temporary task force teams, and newly constituted teams.

Intergroup Activities: activities designed to improve effectiveness of interdependent groups. They focus on joint activities and the output of the groups considered as a single system rather than as two subsystems. When two groups are involved, the activities are generally designated intergroup or interface activities; when more than two groups are involved, the activities are often called *organizational mirroring*.

Survey-Feedback Activities: related to and similar to the diagnostic activities mentioned above in that they are a large component of those activities. However, they are important enough in their own right to be considered separately. These activities center on actively working the data produced by a survey and designing action plans based on the survey data.

Education and Training Activities: activities designed to improve skills, abilities, and knowledge of individuals. There are several activities available and several approaches possible. For example, the individual can be educated in isolation from his or her own work group (say, in a T-group comprised

of strangers), or one can be educated in relation to the work group (say, when a work team learns how better to manage interpersonal conflict). The activities may be directed toward technical skills required for effective task performance or may be directed toward improving interpersonal competence. The activities may be directed toward leadership issues, responsibilities and functions of group members, decision making, problem solving, goal setting and planning, etc.

Technostructural or Structural Activities: activities designed to improve the effectiveness of the technical or structural inputs and constraints affecting individuals or groups. The activities may take the form of (1) experimenting with new organization structures and evaluating their effectiveness in terms of specific goals, or (2) devising new ways to bring technical resources to bear on problems. In Chapter 14 we discuss these activities and label them "structural interventions," defined as "the broad class of interventions or change efforts aimed at improving organization effectiveness through changes in the task, structural, and technological subsystems." Included in these activities are certain forms of job enrichment, management by objectives, sociotechnical systems, collateral organizations, and physical-settings interventions.

Process Consultation Activities: activities on the part of the consultant "which help the client to perceive, understand, and act upon process events which occur in the client's environment."[6] These activities perhaps more accurately describe an approach, a consulting mode in which the client is given insight into the human processes in organizations and taught skills in diagnosing and managing them. Primary emphasis is on processes such as communications, leader and member roles in groups, problem solving and decision making, group norms and group growth, leadership and authority, and intergroup cooperation and competition. Emphasis is also placed upon learning how to diagnose and develop the necessary skills to be effective in dealing with these processes.

Grid Organization Development Activities: activities invented and franchised by Robert Blake and Jane Mouton, which constitute a six-phase change model involving the total organization.[9] Internal resources are developed to conduct most of the programs, which may take from three to five years to complete. The model starts with upgrading individual managers' skills and leadership abilities, moves to team-improvement activities, then to intergroup relations activities. Later phases include corporate planning for improvement, developing implementation tactics, and concluding with an evaluation phase assessing change in the organization culture and looking toward future directions.

Third-Party Peacemaking Activities: activities conducted by a skilled consultant (the *third party*), which are designed to "help two members of an organization manage their interpersonal conflict."[10] They are based on confrontation tactics and an understanding of the processes involved in conflict and conflict resolution.

Coaching and Counseling Activities: activities that entail the consultant or other organization members working with individuals to help them (1) define learning goals; (2) learn how others see their behavior; (3) learn new modes of behavior to see if these help them to achieve their goals better. A central feature of this activity is the nonevaluative feedback given by others to an individual. A second feature is the joint exploration of alternative behaviors.

Life- and Career-Planning Activities: activities that enable individuals to focus

on their life and career objectives and how they might go about achieving them. Structured activities lead to production of life and career inventories, discussions of goals and objectives, and assessment of capabilities, needed additional training, and areas of strength and deficiency.

Planning and Goal-Setting Activities: activities that include theory and experience in planning and goal setting, utilizing problem-solving models, planning paradigms, ideal organization vs. real organization "discrepancy" models, and the like. The goal of all of them is to improve these skills at the levels of the individual, group, and total organization.

Each of these families of interventions has many activities and exercises included in it. They all rely on inputs of both conceptual material and actual experience with the phenomenon being studied. Some of the families are directed toward specific targets, problems, or processes. For example, the team-building activities are specific to intact work teams, while the life-planning activities are directed to individuals, although this latter activity takes place in group settings. Some interventions are problem-specific: examples of this are the third-party peacemaking activities and the goal-setting activities. Some activities are process-specific—that is, specific to selected processes: an example of this is the intergroup activities in which the processes involved in managing interfaces are explored.

Additional interventions used in OD exist and are discussed in the following chapters. Examples of important interventions that in themselves do not constitute a family are the confrontation meeting, sensitivity training, force-field analysis, the role analysis technique (RAT), Gestalt OD (the application of Gestalt therapy techniques to organizational problems), and Transactional Analysis (TA). There are also several approaches to organization improvement based on theoretical conceptual schemata, such as Lawrence and Lorsch's contingency theory and Likert's System 4 Management theory. These theory-based interventions are usually considered to be OD interventions.

SOME CLASSIFICATION SCHEMATA FOR OD INTERVENTIONS

Several ways of classifying OD interventions have already been discussed: the families of interventions represent one approach; Blake and Mouton's nine intervention types and their Consulcube represent additional views; and Schmuck and Miles's OD Cube represents yet another way to order and classify OD interventions. In this section we wish to construct some classificatory schemata showing interventions from various perspectives. Our purpose in doing this is to impart a better working knowledge of the many different interventions and their dynamics so that we can better accomplish our objective of examining OD from a kaleidoscopic rather than from a microscopic point of view.

One way to gain a perspective of OD interventions is to form a typology of interventions based on the following questions: (1) Is the intervention directed primarily toward individual learning, insight, and skill building or toward group learning? (2) Does the intervention focus on *task* or *process* issues? (Task is what is being done; process is how it is accomplished, including how people are relating to each other and what processes and dynamics are occurring.) A four-quadrant typology constructed by using these two questions is shown in Figure 9-2.

This classification method presents one approximation of the categories of various interventions; it is difficult to assign the interventions precisely because a single intervention may have the attributes of more than one of the quadrants. Interventions simply are not mutually exclusive; there is great overlap of em-

FIGURE 9-2
OD Interventions Classified by Two Independent Dimensions: Individual-Group and Task-Process

Individual vs. Group Dimension

Task vs. Process Dimension

	Focus on the Individual	Focus on the Group
Focus on Task Issues	Role analysis technique Education: technical skills; also decision-making, problem solving, goal setting, and planning Career planning Grid OD phase 1 (see also below) Some forms of job enrichment and Management by Objectives (MBO)	Technostructural changes Survey feedback (see also below) Confrontation meeting Team-building sessions Intergroup activities Grid OD phases 2, 3 (see also below) Some forms of sociotechnical systems
Focus on Process Issues	Life planning Process consultation with coaching and counseling of individuals Education: group dynamics, planned change Stranger T-groups Third-party peacemaking Grid OD phase 1 Gestalt OD Transactional analysis	Survey feedback Team-building sessions Intergroup activities Process consultation Family T-group Grid OD phases 2, 3 Gestalt OD

phasis and the activity will frequently focus on, say, task at one time and process at a later time. Generally, however, the interventions may be viewed as belonging predominantly in the quadrant in which they are placed. It is thus possible to see that the interventions do differ from each other in terms of major emphases.

Another way to view interventions is to see them as *designed to improve the effectiveness of a given organizational unit*. Given different organizational targets, what interventions are most commonly used to improve their effectiveness? This is shown in Figure 9-3. The elasticity of different interventions really becomes apparent in this figure, with many interventions being placed in several categories.

Examination of Figures 9-2 and 9-3 reveals redundancy and overlap in that specific interventions and activities appear in several classification categories. This may be confusing to the reader who is new to the area of organization development, but it nevertheless reflects the use to which various interventions are put. Perhaps a positive feature of the redundancy is that it suggests patterns among the interventions that the practitioner knows but that may not be readily apparent to the layman. Some of these patterns become more apparent in Figure 9-4.

Another conceptual method for categorizing the OD interventions rests on an attempt to determine the central, probable underlying causal mechanisms of the intervention, that is, the underlying dynamics of the intervention that probably are the cause of its efficacy. This method is more controversial: different authors might hypothesize different causal dynamics. This is due partly to the relative paucity of theory and research on interventions. But the practitioner chooses and categorizes interventions on the basis of assumed underlying dynamics of change and learning, and it might therefore be helpful to present a tentative classification based on these mechanisms.

Several hypothesized causal mechanisms inherent in OD interventions may lead to change and learning. These causal mechanisms are found to greater and lesser degrees in different interventions, and it is probable that the efficacy of the different interventions therefore rests on different causes. Some features of different interventions that may be causally related to learning and change are presented below. These are used to construct Figure 9-4.

Feedback: This refers to learning new data about oneself, others, group processes, or organizational dynamics—data that one did not previously take active account of. Feedback refers to activities and processes that "reflect" or "mirror" an objective picture of the real world. Awareness of this "new information" may lead to change if the feedback is not too threatening.

Awareness of Changing Sociocultural Norms or Dysfunctional Present Norms: Often people modify their behavior, attitudes, values, etc., when they become aware of changes in the norms that are helping to determine their behavior. Thus, awareness of new norms has change potential because the individual will adjust his or her behavior to bring it in line with the new norms. The awareness that "this is a new ball game" or that "we're now playing with a

FIGURE 9-3

Typology of OD Interventions Based on Target Groups

Target Group	Types of Interventions
Interventions designed to improve the effectiveness of INDIVIDUALS	Life- and career-planning activities Role analysis technique Coaching and counseling T-group (sensitivity training) Education and training to increase skills, knowledge in the areas of technical task needs, relationship skills, process skills, decision making, problem solving, planning, goal-setting skills Grid OD phase 1 Some forms of job enrichment Gestalt OD Transactional analysis
Interventions designed to improve the effectiveness of DYADS/TRIADS	Process consultation Third-party peacemaking Grid OD phases 1, 2 Gestalt OD Transactional analysis
Interventions designed to improve the effectiveness of TEAMS & GROUPS	Team building – Task directed – Process directed Family T-group Survey feedback Process consultation Role analysis technique "Start-up" team-building activities Education in decision making, problem solving, planning, goal setting in group settings Some forms of job enrichment and MBO Sociotechnical systems
Interventions designed to improve the effectiveness of INTERGROUP RELATIONS	Intergroup activities – Process directed – Task directed Organizational mirroring (three or more groups) Structural interventions Process consultation Third-party peacemaking at group level Grid OD phase 3 Survey feedback
Interventions designed to improve the effectiveness of the TOTAL ORGANIZATION	Technostructural activities such as collateral organizations Confrontation meetings Strategic planning activities Grid OD phases 4, 5, 6 Survey feedback Interventions based on Lawrence and Lorsch's contingency theory Interventions based on Likert's Systems 1–4 Physical settings

new set of rules" is here hypothesized to be a cause of changes in individual behavior. Also awareness of dysfunctional present norms can serve as an incentive to change. When people sense a discrepancy between the outcomes their present norms are causing and the desired outcomes they want, this can lead to change.

Increased Interaction and Communication: Increasing interaction and communication between individuals and groups may in and of itself effect changes in attitudes and behavior. Homans, for example, suggests that increased interaction leads to increased positive sentiments.[11] Individuals and groups in isolation tend to develop "tunnel vision" or "autism," according to Murphy.[12] Increasing communication probably counteracts this tendency. Increased communication allows one to check one's perceptions to see if they are socially validated and shared.

Confrontation: This term refers to surfacing and addressing differences in beliefs, feelings, attitudes, values, or norms to remove obstacles to effective interaction. Confrontation is a process that actively seeks to discern real differences that are "getting in the way," surface those issues, and work on the issues in a constructive way. Many obstacles to growth and learning exist; they continue to exist when they are not actively looked at and examined.

Education: This refers to activities designed to upgrade (1) knowledge and concepts, (2) outmoded beliefs and attitudes, and (3) skills. In organization development the education may be directed toward increasing these three components in several content areas: task achievement, human and social relationships and behavior, organizational dynamics and processes, and processes of managing and directing change. Education has long been an accepted change technique.

Some interventions emphasize one mechanism of change over others. A tentative typology based on these principal underlying change mechanisms is presented in Figure 9-4.

This classification method, while differentiating between interventions, also shows the many multiple emphases that are found in many of the activities. We are only beginning to understand the underlying mechanisms of change in interventions. As that knowledge increases, greater precision in the selection of intervention activities will be possible. The issue can be stated as follows: OD does in fact work; why it works is less well known and understood.

We find that another convenient classificatory method can be used by categorizing OD interventions into those that focus on team improvement (Chapter 10), improving intergroup relations (Chapter 11), personal, interpersonal, and group processes (Chapter 12), comprehensive or total organization interventions (Chapter 13), and structural interventions (Chapter 14). This method is similar to the typology based on target groups presented in Figure 9-3 but separates out the "process' and "structural" interventions for special attention.

As a final note, in addition to knowledge about various interventions and knowledge about the appropriateness and timeliness of interventions, the OD practitioner is cognizant of the many dimensions inherent in each particular activity. Since an intervention contains the possibility for going in many directions, the practitioner attends to the range of alternatives in his or her own inputs. For example, in a team-building meeting, the practitioner will have various

FIGURE 9-4

Intervention Typology Based on Principal Emphasis of Intervention in Relation to Different Hypothesized Change Mechanisms

Hypothesized Change Mechanism	Interventions Based Primarily on the Change Mechanism
Feedback	Survey feedback T-group Process consultation Organization mirroring Grid OD instruments Gestalt OD
Awareness of Changing or Dysfunctional Sociocultural Norms	Team building T-group Intergroup interface sessions First three phases of Grid OD
Increased Interaction and Communication	Survey feedback Intergroup interface sessions Third-party peacemaking Organizational mirroring Some forms of management by objectives Team building Technostructural changes Sociotechnical systems
Confrontation and Working for Resolution of Differences	Third-party peacemaking Intergroup interface sessions Coaching and counseling individuals Confrontation meetings Collateral organizations Organizational mirroring Gestalt OD
Education through: (1) New Knowledge (2) Skill Practice	Career and life planning Team building Goal setting, decision making, problem solving, planning activities T-group Process consultation Transactional analysis

dimensions in mind that guide his or her inputs and contributions. These dimensions can be explained through looking at the questions the practitioner may be considering:

> We are dealing with individual behavior right now; how can this learning be translated to learning for the group?

We are dealing with group phenomena right now; how can this learning be translated to learning for the individuals?

We are focusing on task competencies and requirements; how do these relate to process issues and understanding of the group's dynamics?

We have just learned about a phenomenon by experiencing it; what theoretical or conceptual material would augment this learning?

We are dealing with issues and forces impinging on this group from outside the group; what activities must be designed to facilitate more appropriate handling of these interface issues?

We are dealing with an old problem in a new way; does that signal a change in the sociocultural norms of this group, and are the members aware of it?

We are diagnosing areas of interpersonal and intergroup conflict; what interventions are appropriate to deal with these issues?

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have taken an overview of OD interventions—the sets of structured activities in which selected organizational units (target groups or individuals) engage with a task or a sequence of tasks where task goals are related directly or indirectly to organizational improvement. Different definitions of OD interventions were discussed. The nature of interventions and several classifications of them were presented to gain a picture of interventions from several different perspectives. In the next several chapters OD interventions are described in greater detail in an inventory of most of the extant techniques and methods used in organization development.

NOTES

1 W. W. Burke and H. A. Hornstein, *The Social Technology of Organization Development* (Washington, D.C.: NTL Learning Resources Corporation, 1971), p. 1.

2 Richard Beckhard, "The Confrontation Meeting," *Harvard Business Review*, 45 (March–April 1967), pp. 149–53.

3 R. W. White, "Motivation Reconsidered: The Concept of Competence," *Psychological Review*, 66 (1959), 297–334.

4 D. C. McClelland, J. W. Atkinson, R. A. Clark, and E. L. Lowell, *The Achievement Motive* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1953).

5 Robert R. Blake and Jane Srygley Mouton, *The Managerial Grid* (Houston, Tex.: Gulf Publishing, 1964), pp. 281–83.

6 Robert R. Blake and Jane Syrgley Mouton, *Consultation* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1976).

7 Richard A. Schmuck and Matthew B. Miles, eds., *Organizational Development in Schools* (Palo Alto, Calif.: National Press Books, 1971), p. 8. Used by permission.

8 E. H. Schein, *Process Consultation* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. 9.

9 R. R. Blake and J. S. Mouton, *Building a Dynamic Corporation through Organization Development* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969). This book is a treatise showing how Grid Organization Development programs operate.

10 R. W. Walton, *Interpersonal Peacemaking: Confrontation and Third-Party Consultation* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. 1. This entire book is devoted to an explication of this specialized intervention technique.

11 George C. Homans, *The Human Group* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1950).

12 G. Murphy, "The Freeing of Intelligence," *Psychological Bulletin*, 42 (1945), pp. 1–19.

10

Team Interventions

a descriptive inventory of OD interventions

In Chapters 10 through 14 we examine in detail the intervention activities utilized to develop an organization. These activities are the techniques and methods designed to change the culture of the organization, move it from "where it is" to "where it wants to be," and generally enable the organization members to improve their practices so that they may better accomplish their goals.[1] The nature of these interventions and a preliminary look at the different types of methods have already been presented. In this chapter we want to present descriptions, goals, and mechanics of the various technical tools of OD practitioners that are directed toward improving the performance of intact work teams within the organization.

TEAMS AND WORK GROUPS: STRATEGIC UNITS OF ORGANIZATIONS

Collaborative management of the work-team culture is a fundamental emphasis of organization development programs. This reflects the assumption that in today's organizations much of the work is accomplished directly or indirectly through teams. This also reflects the assumption that the work-team culture exerts a significant influence on the individual's behavior. Usually, the techniques and the theory for understanding and improving team processes come from the laboratory-training movement coupled with research in the area of group dynamics. An appreciation of the importance of the formal

work team as a determinant of individual behavior and sentiments has come from cultural anthropology, sociology, organization theory, and social psychology.

Among those writers who have directed attention to the importance of team functioning are Rensis Likert, Chris Argyris, and Douglas McGregor.[2] Likert suggests that organizations are best conceptualized as systems of interlocking groups, as we indicated in Chapter 4, "Underlying Assumptions and Values." These work groups are connected by *linking pins*—individuals who occupy memberships in two groups (as a subordinate in one group and a boss in the other). It is through these interlocking groups that the work of the organization gets done. The key reality seems to be that individuals in organizations function not so much as *individuals* alone but as *members* of groups or teams. For an individual to function effectively, frequently a prerequisite is that the team must be functioning effectively.[3]

Another key reality is that individual behavior usually reflects the prevailing culture. The *culture* of a work group or organization consists of the prevailing pattern of beliefs, sentiments, norms, practices, and so forth, that individuals subscribe to and use as guides to behavior. Work groups and organizations have distinct cultures, and often the work group culture is the most important one for the individual. The recognition of the importance of teams and work groups for determining both individual and organizational effectiveness was a crucial step in the emergence of the theory and practice of OD.

Douglas McGregor identified some of the characteristics of a well-functioning, effective group as follows:

—The atmosphere tends to be relaxed, comfortable, and informal
—The group's task is well understood and accepted by the members
—The members listen well to each other; there is a lot of task-relevant discussion in which most members participate
—People express both their feelings and ideas
—Conflict and disagreement are present but are centered around ideas and methods, not personalities and people
—The group is self-conscious about its own operation
—Decisions are usually based on consensus, not majority vote
—When actions are decided upon, clear assignments are made and accepted by the members[4]

When these conditions are met, it is likely that the team is successfully accomplishing its mission and simultaneously satisfying the personal and interpersonal needs of its members.

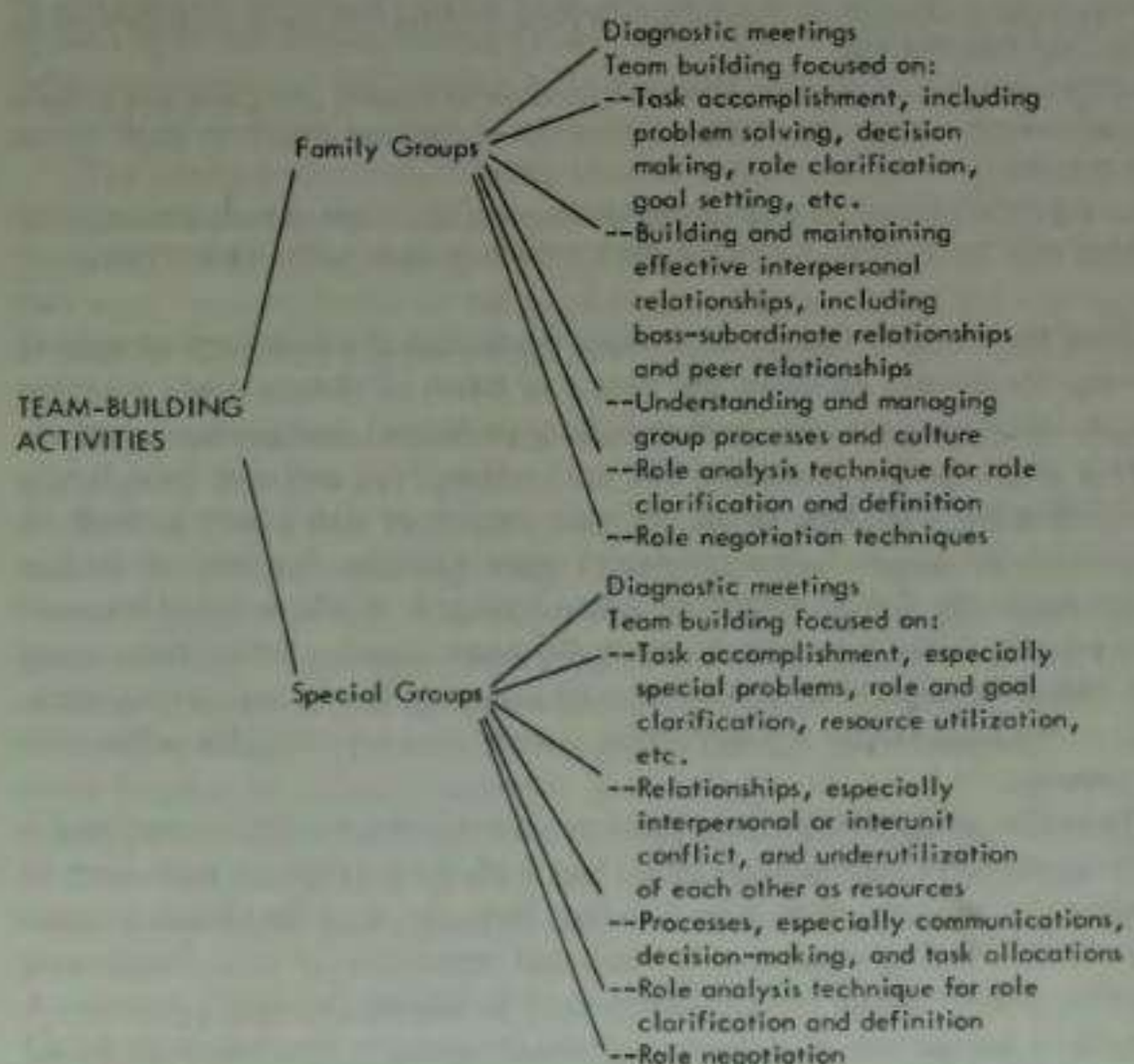
Teams and work groups are thus considered to be fundamental units of organizations and also key leverage points for improving the functioning of the organization. Several different interventions have been developed to make teams more effective.

TEAM-BUILDING INTERVENTIONS

Probably the most important single group of interventions in OD are the team-building activities the goals of which are the improvement and increased effectiveness of various teams within the organization. Some interventions focus on the family group, an intact, permanent work team composed of a boss and subordinates; while other interventions focus on special teams such as "start-up" teams, newly constituted teams due to mergers or organization structure changes, task forces, and committees. The team-building interventions are typically directed toward four major substantive areas: diagnosis, task accomplishment, team relationships, and team and organization processes. These separate thrusts are diagramed in Figure 10-1.

Let us examine several of these interventions as they might be conducted with a family group. The major actors are a consultant, who is not a member of the group (the *third party*), the group leader, and the group members.

FIGURE 10-1
Varieties of Team-Building Interventions



THE FAMILY GROUP DIAGNOSTIC MEETING

The purpose of the family group diagnostic meeting is to conduct a general critique of the performance of the group, that is, to take stock of "where we are going" and "how we are doing," and to surface and identify problems so that they may be worked on. Typically the leader and the consultant discuss the idea first, and if it appears that a genuine need for a diagnostic meeting exists, the idea is put to the group for their reactions. The leader may structure his or her testing for the group's reaction in the form of the following questions: What problems do we have that we should work on? How are we doing in regard to our assigned tasks? How are our relationships with each other? What opportunities should we be taking advantage of? What are we doing right and wrong?

If it is decided to conduct the family group diagnostic meeting, after some thinking about their own performance, the group assembles for a half-day or a day meeting. These are several ways to get the diagnostic data out, that is, to make the information public:

A total-group discussion involving everyone making individual contributions to the total assemblage

Subgrouping, which involves breaking down into smaller groups where a more intensive discussion takes place, then the subgroups reporting back to the total group

Pairing of two individuals who interview each other or who simply discuss their ideas with each other, each pair then reporting back to the total group

When the data are shared throughout the group, the next steps consist of discussing the issues, grouping the issues in terms of themes (say, planning problems, interface problems, goal ambiguity problems), and getting a preliminary look at the next action steps. The next action steps may call for a family team-building meeting, may assign different persons to task groups to work on the problems, or may include a number of other strategies that involve moving from the diagnostic data to corrective action taking. It should be noted however that the primary focus of the family group diagnostic meeting is to surface issues and problems that should be worked on and to decide *how* to take action steps. Taking action is generally a postmeeting activity or an activity for subsequent team meetings.

The family group diagnostic meeting permits a group to critique itself and to identify its strengths and problem areas, and it allows everyone to participate in generating the necessary data. The data then form the basis for planning future actions. Such a meeting requires only a minimal expenditure of time. Semiannual diagnostic meetings afford an excellent method for staying on top of problems. A key secret to the success of a short diagnostic meeting is the realization by all participants that the meeting is for the purpose of identifying problems, not

solving problems (an activity that may require considerably more expense of time and resources).

Diagnostic meetings for newly constituted groups, say, task forces or new teams resulting from mergers or acquisitions, are similar in form and function to the family group diagnostic meeting. These meetings may have to be held more frequently in order to stay ahead of the problems. Furthermore, linking diagnostic meetings with problem-solving sessions or team-building sessions may be indicated for newly constituted teams.

THE FAMILY GROUP TEAM-BUILDING MEETING

The family group team-building meeting has the goal of improving the team's effectiveness through better management of task demands, relationship demands, and group processes. It is an inward look by the team at its own performance, behavior, and culture for the purposes of dropping out dysfunctional behaviors and strengthening functional ones. The group critiques its performance, analyzes its way of doing things, and attempts to develop strategies to improve its operation. Sometimes the purpose of the meeting is a special agenda item, like developing the group's performance goals for the coming year. Often the purpose of the meeting is for the more general charge expressed in the question, How can we build ourselves into a better functioning team?

The family group team-building session is usually initiated by the supervisor in consultation with the third party. The idea is then tested for reactions against the group. (Conversely, the group may initiate the idea and take it to the boss if they sense pressing problems that need examination and solution.) A good length of time for the meeting is about three days. The session should be held away from the work place.

The usual practice for these sessions is to have the consultant interview each of the group members and the leader prior to the meeting, asking them what their problems are, how they think the group functions, and what obstacles are in the way of the group performing better. These interview data are categorized into themes by the consultant, who presents the themes to the group at the beginning of the meeting. The group examines and discusses the issues, ranks them in terms of their importance, examines the underlying dynamics of the problems, begins to work on solutions to the problems, and establishes some action steps to bring about the changes deemed desirable. It is best to have some kind of follow-up meeting to determine whether the action steps that were outlined were taken and to determine whether or not they had the desired effects. This is the flow of events for the family group team meeting. But let us look closer at the components.

The meeting may be called for a special purpose, such as a new member coming into the group, an organization structure change, or planning for the next year; or it may primarily be devoted to maintaining and managing the group's

culture and processes. If it is a special purpose meeting, time should still be allocated to an examination and critique of the group's dynamics.

Several methods are available to generate data for the session. It is often desirable that the consultant interview the entire group, using an open-ended approach, such as "What things do you see getting in the way of this group being a better one?" This procedure introduces the consultant to the group members and allows the consultant to assess commitment to the team-building session. The consultant decides in advance, and informs the interviewees, whether or not the information each gives will be considered public or confidential. There seem to be advantages and disadvantages to either approach. For example, if the information in the interviews is confidential, the interviewees may be more candid and open than they will be if they know the information is public. On the other hand, treating the information as public data helps to set a climate of openness, trust, and constructive problem solving. If the information is considered confidential, the consultant is careful to report the findings in a general way that does not reveal the sources of information. Other ways the agenda items for the meeting are developed are through such devices as the family group diagnostic meeting or through a survey.

The consultant presents the interview results in terms of themes. When everyone has understood the themes, these are ranked by the group in terms of their importance, and the most important ones form the agenda for the meeting. In the course of the meeting, much interpersonal and group process information will be generated, and that may be examined too. The group thus works on two sets of items: the agenda items and the items that emerge from the interactions of the participants.

As important problems are discussed, alternatives for action are developed. Generally, the team-building meeting involves deciding on action steps for remedying problems and setting target dates for "*who* will do *what when*."

Significant variations of the team-building session entail devoting time to problem-solving methods, planning and goal-setting methods, conflict resolution techniques, and the like. These special activities are usually initiated in response to the needs demonstrated or stated by the group. The consultant often makes conceptual inputs (lectures or lecturettes) or structures the situation so that a particular problem or process is focused on and highlighted. A wide variety of exercises may be interspersed into the three-day meeting, depending upon the problems identified and the group phenomena that emerge. (Illustration 4 in Chapter 1 describes some of these specialized activities that facilitate or build upon the emerging issues in a team-building meeting.)

Figure 10-1 suggests that team-building sessions may be directed toward problem solving for task accomplishment, examining and improving interpersonal relationships, or managing the group's culture and processes. It may be that one of these issues is the principal reason for holding the team-building meeting. For example, say the meeting is designed as a team problem-solving session to

examine the impact on the team of a new function or task being added to the group's work requirements. Even in this case a portion of the session will probably be reserved for reflecting on *how* the team is solving its problems, that is, critiquing the group's processes. In this way the team becomes more effective at both the task level and the process level.

Richard Beckhard lists, in order of importance, the four major reasons or purposes involved in having teams meet other than for the sharing of information: (1) to set goals and/or priorities; (2) to analyze or allocate the way work is performed; (3) to examine the way a group is working: its processes (such as norms, decision making, communications); and (4) to examine relationships among the people doing the work.[5] He notes that often all four items will be covered in a single team-building session, but it is imperative that the *primary* goal be clear and accepted by all. It is especially important that the leader and the consultant agree on the primary goal. Often the consultant will have a priority list of items that are inverse to the ones above—from relationships among people as most important, to the way the group works together as next most important, to the work itself next, and to goals and priorities as least important. Lack of agreement on the primary goal can lead to wasted energy and a generally unproductive and frustrating team-building session. We agree with Beckhard when he states that the consultant should help implement the group leader's goal for the session, not the consultant's goal.

Bell and Rosenzweig relied heavily upon team-building workshops in an OD program in a municipal government organization and came to the following assessment:

> Our experience leads us to the tentative conclusion that some relatively simple notions underlie success, namely:
>
> 1. Get the *right people* together for
> 2. A *large block of uninterrupted time*
> 3. To work on *high priority problems or opportunities* that
> 4. *They have identified* and that are worked on
> 5. In *ways that are structured* to enhance the likelihood of
> 6. *Realistic solutions and action plans* that are
> 7. *Implemented* enthusiastically and
> 8. *Followed up* to assess actual versus expected results.[6]

These authors comment on the overall nature of team-building sessions as follows:

> We have come to believe strongly that initial improvement efforts should be task oriented rather than focused on interpersonal relations. It is usually safer, less resisted, and more appropriate in terms of the problems and opportunities identified by the client. We have tended not to focus on team building per se; rather, we find that it occurs as a natural by-product of learning to solve problems in a group setting.

> However, we don't avoid interpersonal or team ineffectiveness issues if they are getting in the way of effective and efficient problem solving.[7]

When a team engages in problem-solving activities directed toward task accomplishment, the team members *build something together*. It appears that the act of building something together also builds a sense of cameraderie, cohesion, and *esprit de corps*. The major ingredients involved in a team's building something together are probably the eight steps identified by Bell and Rosenzweig.

In our own consulting we have increasingly come to designate these sessions as "team-building–problem-solving workshops"—a clear signal to us and the client that *both* building a more effective team and solving priority problems constitute the business at hand. We consider team-building–problem-solving interventions to be a cornerstone of the OD technology.

ROLE ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE (RAT) INTERVENTION

The role analysis technique intervention is designed to clarify role expectations and obligations of team members to improve team effectiveness. In organizations individuals fill different specialized roles in which they manifest certain behaviors. This division of labor and function facilitates organization performance. Often, however, the role incumbent may not have a clear idea of the behaviors expected of him or her by others, and equally often what others can do to help the incumbent fulfill the role is not understood. Ishwar Dayal and John M. Thomas developed a technique for clarifying the roles of the top management of a new organization in India.[8] This technique is particularly applicable for new teams, but it may also be helpful in established teams where role ambiguity or confusion exists. The intervention is predicated on the belief that consensual determination of role requirements for team members, consisting of a joint building of the requirements by all concerned, leads to more mutually satisfactory and productive behavior. Dayal and Thomas call the activity the *role analysis technique*.

In a structured series of steps role incumbents, in conjunction with team members, define and delineate role requirements. The role being defined is called the *focal role*. In a new organization, it may be desirable to conduct a role analysis for each of the major roles.

The first step consists of an analysis of the focal role initiated by the focal role individual. The role, its place in the organization, the rationale for its existence, and its place in achieving overall organization goals are examined along with the specific duties of the office. The specific duties and behaviors are listed on a chalkboard and are discussed by the entire team. Behaviors are added and deleted until the group and the role incumbent are satisfied that they have defined the role completely.

The second step examines the focal role incumbent's expectations of others. The incumbent lists his or her expectations of the other roles in the group that most affect the incumbent's own role performance, and these expectations are discussed, modified, added to, and agreed upon by the entire group.

The third step consists of explicating others' expectations and desired behaviors of the focal role, that is, the members of the group describe what they want from and expect from the incumbent of the focal role. These expectations of others are discussed, modified, and agreed upon by the group and the focal role person.

Upon conclusion of this step, the focal role person assumes responsibility for making a written summary of the role as it has been defined; this is called a *role profile* and is derived from the results of the discussions in steps 1 through 3. Dayal and Thomas describe the role profile as follows: "This consists of (a) a set of activities classified as to the prescribed and discretionary elements of the role, (b) the obligation of the role to each role in its set, and (c) the expectations of this role from others in its set. Viewed in toto, this provides a comprehensive understanding of each individual's 'role space.' "[9]

The written role profile is briefly reviewed at the following meeting before another focal role is analyzed. The accepted role profile constitutes the role activities for the focal role person.

This intervention can be a nonthreatening activity with high payoff. Often the mutual demands, expectations, and obligations of interdependent team members have never been publicly examined. Each role incumbent wonders why "the other guy" is "not doing what he is supposed to," while in reality all of the incumbents are performing as they think they are supposed to. Collaborative role analysis and definition by the entire work group cannot only clarify who is to do what but ensure commitment to the role once it has been clarified.

From our experience, this procedure can be shortened if there is already high visibility and understanding of the current activities of various role incumbents. For example, if one of the problems facing an organization is confusion over the duties of the board of directors and the president or the executive director, the following sequence can be highly productive. (This technique was used in Illustration 4 of Chapter 1.) This occurred in a workshop setting involving the board, the president, and the key subordinates.

1. With the board listening, the president and his staff members discuss this question: "If the board were operating in an optimally effective way, what would they be doing?"
2. During this discussion, responses are made visible on a chalkboard or on large newsprint, and disagreements are recorded.
3. After forty-five minutes or so, the list is modified on the basis of general consensus of the total group.
4. The procedure is repeated, but this time the president listens while staff

and board members discuss the question: "If the president were operating in an optimally effective way, what would he be doing?" Again, responses are made visible during the discussion. The president responds, and then there is an attempt at consensus.

As with the longer technique, this procedure helps clarify role expectations and obligations and frequently leads to some significant shifts in the whole network of activities of the management group, including the board. For example, we have seen this procedure result in boards shifting their activities almost exclusively to policy determination, pulling away from previously dysfunctional tinkering with day-to-day operating problems, and delegating operations to the president and the staff.

A ROLE NEGOTIATION TECHNIQUE

When the causes of team ineffectiveness are based on people's behaviors that they are unwilling to change because it would mean a loss of power or influence to the individual, a technique developed by Roger Harrison called "role negotiation" can often be used to great advantage.[10]

> Role negotiation intervenes directly in the relationships of power, authority, and influence within the group. The change effort is directed at the work relationships among members. It avoids probing into the likes and dislikes of members for one another and their personal feelings about one another.[11]

The technique is basically an imposed structure for controlled negotiations between parties in which each party agrees in writing to change certain behaviors in return for changes in behavior by the other. The behaviors relate to the job. Specifically, I ask you to change some of your behaviors so that I can do my job more effectively; and you ask me to change some of my behaviors so that you can do your job more effectively. Harrison states that the technique rests on one basic assumption: "*Most people prefer a fair negotiated settlement to a state of unresolved conflict*, and they are willing to invest some time and make some concessions in order to achieve a solution."[12]

The role negotiation technique usually takes at least a day to conduct. A two-day session with a follow-up meeting a month later is best. We will outline the steps of the technique as given by Harrison.[13] The first step is *contract setting*. Here the consultant sets the climate and establishes the ground rules: we are looking at work behaviors, not feelings about people; be specific in stating what you want others to *do more of* or do better, to *do less of* or stop doing, or *maintain unchanged;* all expectations and demands must be *written;* no one is to agree to changing any behavior unless there is a *quid pro quo* in which the other must agree to a change also; the session will consist of individuals negotiating with each other to arrive at a *written contract* of what behaviors each will change.

The next step is *issue diagnosis*. Individuals think about how their *own effectiveness* can be improved if others change their work behaviors. Then each person fills out an Issue Diagnosis Form for every other person in the group. On this form the individual states what he or she would like the other to do more of, do less of, or maintain unchanged. These messages are then exchanged among all members, and the messages received by each person are written on a chalkboard or newsprint for all to see.

The next step is the *influence trade* or negotiation period, in which two individuals discuss the *most important* behavior changes they want from the other and the changes they are willing to make themselves. A *quid pro quo* is required in this step: each person must give something in order to get something. Often this step is demonstrated by two individuals with the rest of the group watching. Then the group breaks into negotiating pairs. "The negotiation process consists of parties making contingent offers to one another such as 'If you do X, I will do Y.' The negotiation ends when all parties are satisfied that they will receive a reasonable return for whatever they are agreeing to give."[14] All agreements are written, with each party having a copy. The agreement may be published for the group to see or may not. The influence trade step is concluded when all the negotiated agreements have been made and written down. It is best to have a follow-up meeting to determine whether the contracts have been honored and to assess the effects of the contracts on effectiveness.

In our view Harrison's role negotiation technique is an effective way to bring about positive improvement in a situation where power and influence issues are working to maintain an unsatisfactory status quo. We have used this technique successfully with several groups and have found that it is an intervention that leads to improved team functioning. It is based on the fact that frequently individuals must change their work behaviors in order for the team to become more effective.

A GESTALT ORIENTATION TO TEAM BUILDING

A form of team building that focuses more on the individual than the group is the Gestalt approach to OD. The major spokesman of this orientation is Stanley M. Herman, a management and OD consultant to TRW Systems and other organizations; the approach rests on a form of psychotherapy developed by Frederick S. "Fritz" Perls called Gestalt Therapy.[15] Gestalt Therapy is based on the belief that persons function as whole, total organisms. And each person possesses positive and negative characteristics that must be "owned up to" and permitted expression. People get into trouble when they get fragmented, when they do not accept their total selves, and when they are trying to live up to the demands ("shoulds") of others rather than being themselves. Robert Harman lists the goals of Gestalt Therapy as awareness, integration, maturation, authenticity, self-regulation, and behavior change.[16] Basically, one

must come to terms with oneself, must accept responsibility for one's actions, must experience and live in the "here and now," and must stop blocking off awareness, authenticity, and the like by dysfunctional behaviors.

Stanley Herman applies a Gestalt orientation to organization development, especially in working with leader-subordinate relations and team building. The primary thrust is to make the *individual* stronger, more authentic, and more in touch with the individual's own feelings; building a better team may result, but it is not the primary desired outcome. As Herman says:

> My objective here is not to provide instruction on making the organization culture safer, more pleasant or easier for the individual, but rather to help the individual recognize, develop and experience his own potency and ability to cope with his organization world, whatever its present condition. Further, I would like to encourage him to discover for himself his own unique wants of that environment and his capacity to influence and shape it in ways that get him more of what he wants.[17]

To do this people must be able to express their feelings fully, both positive and negative. They must "get in touch" with "where they are" on issues, relations with others, and relations with selves. They must learn to "stay with" transactions with others and work them through to resolution rather than suppressing negative feelings or cutting off the transactions prematurely. They must learn to accept the polarities within themselves—weakness-strength, autocratic-democratic urges, and so forth.

The Gestalt OD practitioner fosters the expression of positive and negative feelings, encourages people to stay with transactions, structures exercises that cause individuals to become more aware of what they want from others, and pushes toward greater authenticity for everyone. The Gestalt OD practitioner often works within a group setting, but the focus is usually on individuals.

Use of the Gestalt orientation to OD is not widespread, but it is increasing in its application. An interesting book by Herman and Korenich gives a theoretical framework, examples, and exercises for Gestalt OD, and this intervention may become more popular in organization development.[18]

We are somewhat ambivalent about the Gestalt orientation to OD. On the one hand, better individual functioning is a laudable goal and deserves support. On the other hand, this is an intervention of considerable "depth" and one that people might not choose to expose themselves to—they may believe they are being coerced into a therapeutic situation that they would prefer to avoid. One thing is certain: the Gestalt orientation to team building should not be used except by practitioners trained in this method.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In this chapter we have examined the major sets of activities that constitute team-building interventions and their rationales. The interventions to be described in Chapter 12 are closely related to the activities found in

team-building, team diagnosis, and role analysis interventions. Those interventions are more narrowly focused, but they also utilize the medium of the small group.

It is probable that if it were not for the interventions directed to improving intergroup relations (see Chapter 11) or interventions directed to improving the total organization (see Chapters 13 and 14), there would not be such a discipline as OD today; there would instead only be an expanded "small-group" discipline. We want to underscore that while the small group or team is an entry point in most OD strategies, and while ongoing attention to team effectiveness is a *sine qua non* for successful OD efforts, achieving total organizational improvement is possible only by going beyond the level of the team.

NOTES

1 Detailed discussions of interventions can be found in several sources. The most complete treatments are given in J. K. Fordyce and R. Weil, *Managing WITH People: A Manager's Handbook of Organization Development Methods* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1971); Edgar F. Huse, *Organization Development and Change* (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing, 1975); and Michael Beer, "The Technology of Organization Development," in Marvin D. Dunnette, ed., *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1976), pp. 937-93. Additional sources are Richard Beckhard, *Organization Development: Strategies and Models* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969); and W. W. Burke and H. A. Hornstein, *The Social Technology of Organization Development* (Washington, D.C.: NTL Learning Resources Corporation, 1971).

2 R. Likert, *New Patterns of Management* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961); C. Argyris, *Integrating the Individual and the Organization* (New York: John Wiley, 1964); and D. McGregor, *The Human Side of Enterprise* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960).

3 Likert, *New Patterns of Management.*

4 McGregor, *Human Side of Enterprise.*

5 Taken from Richard Beckhard, "Optimizing Team-Building Efforts," *Journal of Contemporary Business*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Summer 1972), 23–32. This list of goals is on page 24.

6 Cecil Bell, Jr., and James Rosenzweig, "Highlights of an Organization Improvement Program in a City Government," in W. L. French, C. H. Bell, Jr., and R. A. Zawacki, eds., *Organization Development: Theory, Practice, and Research* (Dallas, Tex.: Business Publications, 1978, in press).

7 *Ibid.*

8 I. Dayal and J. M. Thomas, "Operation KPE: Developing a New Organization," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 4, No. 4 (1968), 473–506. The present discussion is based on this article.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 488.

10 Roger Harrison, "When Power Conflicts Trigger Team Spirit," *European Business*, Spring 1972, pp. 27–65.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 58.

12 *Ibid.*

13 These steps are paraphrased from *ibid.*, pp. 59–63.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 63.

15 F. Perls, R. Hefferline, and P. Goodman, *Gestalt Therapy* (New York: Julian Press, 1951). See also F. Perls, *Gestalt Therapy Verbatim* (Lafayette, Calif.: Real People Press, 1969).

16 Robert L. Harman, "Goals of Gestalt Therapy," *Professional Psychology*, May 1974, pp. 178–84.

17 Stanley M. Herman, "A Gestalt Orientation to Organization Development," in *Contemporary Organization Development: Conceptual Orientations and Interventions*, W. Warner Burke, ed. (Washington, D.C.: NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science, 1972), pp. 69–89. This passage is taken from page 70.

18 Stanley M. Herman and Michael Korenich, *Authentic Management: A Gestalt Orientation to Organizations and Their Development* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1977).

11

Intergroup Interventions

a descriptive inventory of OD interventions

When there is tension, conflict, or competition between groups some very predictable things happen: each group sees the other group as an "enemy" rather than as a neutral object; each group describes the other group in terms of negative stereotypes; interaction and communication between the two groups decrease, cutting off feedback and data input between them; what intergroup communication and interaction does take place is typically distorted and inaccurate; each group begins to prize itself and its products more positively and to denigrate the other group and its products; each group believes and acts as though it can do no wrong and the other group can do no right; under certain circumstances the groups may commit acts of sabotage (of various kinds) against the other group.[1] Most people are aware of the existence of considerable intergroup conflict in organizations, and most people are aware of the patterns of behavior of groups in conflict. But few people know ways to alleviate the conflict to avoid the consequences of the conflict.

Several strategies for reducing intergroup conflict have been identified in the literature. They include finding a "common enemy" (an outside object or group that both groups dislike, which brings the groups closer together); increasing the interaction and communication between the groups (increased interaction under favorable conditions tends to be associated with increased positive feelings and sentiments); finding a supraordinate goal (a goal that both groups desire to achieve but that neither can achieve without the help of the other); rotating the members of the groups; and instituting some forms of training.[2] Even knowing these strategies for reducing intergroup conflict may not be very helpful—the questions still remain, How can we *implement* conflict-reducing mechanisms? and How do we *begin*?

In this chapter we examine the technology that has been developed to reduce intergroup conflict and to enhance intergroup relations. Because of the magnitude of intergroup problems in organizations, these interventions are very important ones. In addition, the development of techniques to improve subsystems larger than single teams marked a significant step toward being able to improve total systems.

INTERGROUP TEAM-BUILDING INTERVENTIONS

The focus of this team-building group of OD interventions is on improving intergroup relations. The goals of these activities are to increase communications and interactions between work-related groups, to reduce the amount of dysfunctional competition, and to replace a parochial independent point of view with an awareness of the necessity for interdependence of action calling on the best efforts of both groups. It is not uncommon for a significant amount of dysfunctional energy to be spent in competition, misunderstanding, miscommunication, and misperception between groups. Organizational reward structures often encourage such behavior through emphasis on unit goal attainment as contrasted with total-organization goal attainment. Organization development methods provide ways of increasing intergroup cooperation and communication, as we see in this series of interventions.

One set of activities developed by Blake, Shepard, and Mouton is widely applicable to situations where relations between groups are strained or overtly hostile.[3] The steps go something like this:[4]

STEP 1. The leaders of the two groups (or the total membership) meet with the consultant and are asked if they think the relations between the two groups can be better and are asked if they are willing to search for mechanisms or procedures that may improve intergroup relations. Their concurrence that they are willing to search for ameliorative mechanisms is all that they are asked to commit themselves to at that time. If they agree to do this, the following activities take place.

STEP 2. The intergroup intervention per se begins now. The two groups meet in separate rooms and build two lists. In one list they give their thoughts, attitudes, feelings, and perceptions of the other group—what the other group is like, what it does that gets in their way, etc. In the second list the group tries to predict what the other group is saying about them in its list—that is, they try to anticipate what the other group dislikes about them, how the other group sees them, etc. Both groups build these two lists.

STEP 3. The two groups come together to share with each other the information on the lists. Group A reads its list of how it sees Group B and what it dislikes about Group B. Group B reads its list of how it sees Group A and what it

dislikes about it. The consultant imposes the rule that there will be no discussion of the items in the lists and limits questions to clarifying the meaning of the lists only. Next, Group A reads its list of what it expected Group B would say about it, and Group B reads its list of what it thought Group A would say about it.

STEP 4. The two groups return to their separate meeting places and are given two tasks. First, they react to and discuss what they have learned about themselves and the other group. It typically happens that many areas of disagreement and friction are discovered to rest on misperceptions and miscommunication; these are readily resolved through the information sharing of the lists. The differences between the two groups are seen not to be as great as was imagined, and the problems between them are seen to be fewer than imagined. After this discussion, the group is given a second task: to make a list of the priority issues that still need to be resolved between the two groups. This list is generally much smaller than the original list. Each group builds its list of these issues.

STEP 5. The two groups come back together and share their lists with each other. After comparing their lists, they then together make one list containing the issues and problems that should be resolved. They set priorities on the items in terms of importance and immediacy. Together they generate action steps for resolving the issues and assign responsibilities for the actions. "Who will do what when" is agreed upon for the most important items. That concludes the intervention.

STEP 6. As a follow-up to the intergroup team-building activity, it is usually desirable to have a meeting of the two groups or their leaders to determine whether the action steps have in fact occurred and to "take a quick reading" on how the groups are doing on their action plans. This ensures that the momentum of the intergroup intervention is not lost.

This procedure can also be used with large groups drawn from two very large populations. For example, after an expression of interest by parole officers and police officers in improving mutual understanding and relationships, we spent an evening with the two groups in an exercise called Project Understanding. By coincidence, members of the two groups happened to be attending workshops the same week at the same conference center. We simply divided the two large populations into small groups and paired off these small groups and conducted an exercise almost identical to the above sequence. Tentative action recommendations were posted in the large general session room for informal perusal during a social activity which followed.

A slightly modified version of this procedure is presented by Fordyce and Weil based on their experiences at TRW Systems.[8] In this version, two groups who have decided to work on improving their intergroup relations come together for the intergroup team-building meeting and are separated into two meeting rooms. Each group is assigned the task of building three lists as follows:

A "positive feedback" list containing the things the group values and likes about the other group

A "bug" list containing the things the group does not like about the other group

An "empathy" list containing a prediction of what the other group is saying in its list.

The two groups come together, and spokesmen for the groups read their lists. Questions are limited to issues of clarification only; discussion of the items is disallowed.

At this point, instead of breaking into separate groups again, the total group together builds an agenda or a master list of the major problems and unresolved issues between the two groups. The issues are prioritized in terms of importance.

Subgroups are formed containing members from each group and are given the task of discussing and working on each item, the subgroups all report back to the total group.

On the basis of the information from the subgroups, the work on the issues that has been going on, and the total information shared by the two groups, the participants now build a list of action steps for improving intergroup relations and commit themselves to carrying out the actions. For each of the action steps, people are assigned specific responsibilities and an overall schedule of completion for the action steps is recorded.

We have found that it is possible to work simultaneously with *three* groups in these kinds of intergroup activities, without the participants (or the consultants) finding the procedure too confusing. For example, in working with the key people in one Indian tribal organization, we requested each of three groups to develop lists about the other two groups plus themselves and to share the results in the total group. More specifically, the tribal council (one of the three groups) was requested to develop the following lists:

I. How the tribal council sees the tribal staff
   A. Things we like about the tribal staff
   B. Concerns we have about the tribal staff
II. What we (the tribal council) predict the tribal staff will say about us
III. How the tribal council sees the Community Action Program (CAP) staff
   A. Things we like about the CAP staff
   B. Concerns we have about the CAP staff
IV. What we (the tribal council) predict the CAP staff will say about us.

Concurrently, the tribal staff and the CAP staff developed comparable lists reflecting their perceptions of the other two groups and their predictions of what would be said about them.

These kinds of activities have been found to bring about better intergroup relations. It has empirically been shown time and again, in diverse situations, that in a relatively short time period (say, a day) these structured intergroup

activities can result in improved intergroup relations. The intergroup problems and frictions are decreased or resolved, and intergroup communication and interaction are increased.

ORGANIZATION MIRROR INTERVENTIONS

The *organization mirror* is a set of activities in which a particular organizational group, the host group, gets feedback from representatives from several other organizational groups about how it is perceived and regarded. This intervention is designed to improve the relationships between groups and increase the intergroup work effectiveness. It is different from the intergroup team-building intervention in that three or more groups are involved, representatives of other work-related groups typically participate rather than the full membership, and the focus is to assist the host unit that requested the meeting.[6]

The flow of events is as follows: an organizational unit that is experiencing difficulties with units to which it is work related may ask key people from those other units to come to a meeting to provide feedback on how they see the host unit. The consultant often interviews the people attending the meeting before the meeting takes place in order to get a sense of the problems and their magnitude, to prepare the participants, and to answer any questions that the participants may have.

After opening remarks by the manager of the host group, in which he or she sets the climate by stating that the host group genuinely wants to hear how the unit is perceived, the consultant feeds back to the total group information from the interviews. The outsiders "fishbowl" to discuss and explore the data presented by the consultant. (A fishbowl is a group seating and talking configuration in which there is an inner circle of chairs for people who talk and an outside circle of observers and noninteractors.) The fishbowl allows the invited participants to talk about the host unit in a natural, uninterrupted way while the host group members listen and learn. Following this, the host group members fishbowl and talk about what they have heard, ask for any clarification, and generally seek to understand the information they have heard. There may at this point be a general discussion to ensure that everyone understands what is being said, but at this time the participants do not start to work on the problems that have been uncovered.

For actually working on the problems, subgroups composed of both host group members and invited participants are formed. The subgroups are asked to identify the most important changes that need to be made to improve the host unit's effectiveness. After the small groups have identified the key problems, the total group convenes to make a master list to work out specific action plans for bringing about the changes deemed most important. The total group hears a summary report from each subgroup. Action plans are firmed up; people are assigned to tasks; and target dates for completion are agreed upon. This con-

cludes the organization mirror intervention, but a follow-up meeting to assess progress and to review action steps is generally recommended.

In a short period of time an organization can get the feedback it needs to improve its relations with significant work-related groups. The organization mirror intervention provides this feedback effectively. It is imperative that following the meeting the host group in fact implement the action plans that were developed in the meeting.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Intergroup team building and the organization mirror are the two major interventions that have been developed to improve intergroup relations. They both work, that is, they actually reduce intergroup conflict and improve intergroup relations.

Why these interventions work is not very well understood. But the underlying dynamics that cause these techniques to be efficacious are probably the following:

—The interactions between the groups are *controlled* and a *structure is imposed to maintain control.* Control is imposed when the groups are asked to build the lists separately, when they are permitted only minimal interaction at the early stages of the interventions, when they are not allowed to argue or defend positions on the lists, and when they are held to a lockstep procedure by the third-party consultant. Even having to build written lists rather than being allowed to talk between groups is a powerful form of control. These controls keep negative feelings and passions in check; any hostile feelings are not allowed to escalate.

—The interventions are based on data and *the data are complete and public.* When Group A puts down *all* the things about Group B that it dislikes, that gives Group B a grasp of the *scope* of the problem issues and permits a *comprehensive understanding* of the differences and problems. Knowing the scope of the issues and having a comprehensive understanding of them is probably a necessary ingredient in making a group (or an individual) move from a defensive posture to a problem-solving stance. Say Group A is telling Group B the things it does not like about Group B. Someone introduces Item 1. It is argued about, defended, rationalized, and so forth. Probably before there is any resolution on Item 1 someone introduces Item 2, which triggers a new round of argument and counterargument and probably no resolution. By the time Items 3 and 4 have been tossed into the ring, most of the discussants will be frustrated, angry, and convinced that "we were right all along about *them*" and "*they* just don't understand *us.*" When the problems are lobbed in like mortar shells, the group feels that it is under attack: its members are continually off balance; they feel their defense is necessary but is not very good, since it is a tactical one only; and they are hindered from building a strategy for defense, much less a strategy for problem solving or change.

Making the data public seems to have its own important dynamic. There is a sense of "Finally, it's all out in the open." Instead of private gripes

and complaints, rumors of which may get back to the offending party, now things are public and available to all. For joint problem solving to take place, all the actors who are part of the problem or part of the solution must share the same data. Making the data public is one way to make this happen. Another aspect of public data is that now the problems are clearly identified as specific problems; people now have something to work on—they know what expertise or resources must be brought to bear, and how to start to solve the problems. Furthermore, people are by nature problem solvers—once a specific problem is identified and made public, people just naturally start to "work it."

—The early stages of these interventions—making lists and sharing them and using the fishbowl technique—lead the participants to *experience feelings of success in dealing with the other group.* Feelings of anxiety, apprehension, and hostility start to give way to feelings of competence and success as the early stages of the interventions produce better communication and understanding than the participants had expected. Nothing succeeds like success, and the early stages are usually perceived as a success experience by both groups. This leads to the optimistic realization that "We *can* work together with those people." Participants are watching for subtle cues of defensiveness, resistance to the data, stubbornness, and the like, and the controlled nature of the process makes most of these unnecessary. This starts building momentum for feelings of competence and success.

—The *constructive, problem-solving tone* of the meetings, set by the leaders or the consultant, *carries a force of its own.* If people want to be negative, destructive, and defensive, they have to go against the tenor of the meeting. This is increasingly difficult to do if a clear problem-solving climate has been established.

There are no doubt other dynamics of the intergroup interventions, but those listed above indicate some of the reasons why such interventions usually work. The intergroup interventions are an important part of the OD practitioner's repertoire. They require some skill in their execution, but the process itself carries the brunt of the work in making them effective interventions.

NOTES

1 Research evidence for these statements comes from the following sources: M. Sherif and Carolyn Sherif, *Groups in Harmony and Tension* (New York: Harper & Row, 1953); and R. R. Blake and Jane S. Mouton, "Conformity, Resistance, and Conversion," in I. A. Berg and B. M. Bass, eds., *Conformity and Deviation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961). For a succinct summary of this issue, see E. H. Schein, *Organizational Psychology*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), Chap. 5.

2 Schein, *Organizational Psychology*, 2nd ed., Chap. 5.

3 R. R. Blake, H. A. Shepard, and J. S. Mouton, *Managing Intergroup Conflict in Industry* (Houston, Tex.: Gulf Publishing, 1965).

4 This discussion is based on R. Beckhard, *Organization Development: Strategies and Models* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), pp. 33–35.

5 This discussion is taken from J. K. Fordyce and R. Weil, *Managing with People* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1971), pp. 124–30.

6 Fordyce and Weil, in *Managing with People*, discuss this intervention in detail (pp. 101–5). We believe this technique was developed by the OD practitioners at TRW systems.

12

Personal, Interpersonal, and Group Process Interventions

a descriptive inventory of OD interventions

The activities described in this chapter are learning techniques directed toward individuals, dyads and triads, and groups. The central theme of the interventions is learning through an examination of underlying processes. In *process consultation*, an important genre of OD interventions, there is an almost exclusive focus on the diagnosis and management of personal, interpersonal, and group processes. Expertise in this area is essential for OD practitioners. *Third-party peacemaking* focuses on interpersonal conflict and the dynamics of cooperation and competition in sociations of two and three. *Sensitivity training*, the educational and social invention giving rise to the laboratory-training movement, typically yields learnings about self, interpersonal relations, and group dynamics. We view sensitivity training as an important, but not prepotent, OD intervention technique. *Transactional Analysis* (TA) can be a form of psychotherapy, a framework for analyzing interpersonal relations and transactions, or an educational intervention that is introduced into some OD programs. The focus is on the individual and the major benefits accrue to individuals, namely, enhanced individual functioning. But TA has also been used as a technique for team building. *Life- and career-planning* interventions are less process oriented than the other interventions in this chapter and reflect more a systematic approach to a substantive area that has heretofore received little attention. While these planning activities are intended to enhance individual functioning, the setting is generally the small group.

The interventions discussed in this chapter are important ones. Depending on the overall OD strategy, not all of them might be used in a particular OD program, but understanding the activities, and understanding when they are appropriate, is necessary for client and consultant alike.

PROCESS CONSULTATION INTERVENTIONS

Process consultation (P–C) represents an approach or a method for intervening in an ongoing system. The crux of this approach is that a skilled third party (consultant) works with individuals and groups to help them learn about human and social processes and learn to solve problems that stem from process events. This approach has been around a long time; many practitioners operate from this stance. Edgar Schein has pulled together the disparate practices and principles of process consultation in a comprehensive and coherent exposition.[1] In this book he also describes the role of P–C in organization development.

Process consultation consists of many different interventions; it is not any single thing the consultant does. The paramount goal of P–C is stated by Schein as follows:

> The job of the process consultant is to help the organization to solve its own problems by making it *aware of organizational processes*, of the consequences of these processes, and of the mechanisms by which they can be changed. The ultimate concern of the process consultant is the organization's capacity to do for itself what he has done for it. Where the standard consultant is more concerned about passing on his knowledge, the process consultant is concerned about passing on his skills and values.[2]

Some particularly important organizational processes are communications, the roles and functions of group members, group problem solving and decision making, group norms and group growth, leadership and authority, and intergroup cooperation and competition.[3] The P–C consultant works with the organization, typically in work teams, and helps them to develop the skills necessary to diagnose and solve the process problems that arise.

Schein describes the kinds of interventions he believes the process consultant should make:

1. Agenda-setting interventions, consisting of:
   —Questions which direct attention to interpersonal issues.
   —Process-analysis periods.
   —Agenda review and testing procedures.
   —Meetings devoted to interpersonal process.
   —Conceptual inputs on interpersonal-process topics.
2. Feedback of observations or other data, consisting of:
   —Feedback to groups during process analysis or regular work time.
   —Feedback to individuals after meetings or after data-gathering.
3. Coaching or counseling of individuals [see discussion following].
4. Structural suggestions:
   —Pertaining to group membership.
   —Pertaining to communication or interaction patterns.
   —Pertaining to allocation of work, assignment of responsibility, and lines of authority.[4]

In Schein's view, the process consultant would most often make interventions in that same order: agenda setting, feedback of observations or other data, counseling and coaching, and, least likely, structural suggestions. Specific recommendations for the solution of substantive problems are not listed because to Schein such interventions violate the underlying values of the P–C model in that the consultant is acting as an expert rather than as a resource.[5]

In *coaching and counseling interventions*, which may be considered either as a part of P–C or as a set of interventions in their own right, the consultant is placed in the role of responding to such questions from groups or individuals as "What do you think I should do in this instance in order to improve my performance?" "Now that I can see some areas for improvement, how do I go about changing my behavior?"

Schein sees the consultant's role in coaching and counseling situations to be the following: "The consultant's role then becomes one of adding alternatives to those already brought up by the client, and helping the client to analyze the costs and benefits of the various alternatives which have been mentioned."[6] Thus the consultant, when counseling either individuals or groups, continues to maintain the posture that real improvements and changes in behavior should be those decided upon by the client. The consultant serves to reflect or mirror accurate feedback, to listen to alternatives and suggest new ones (often through questions designed to expand the client's horizons), and to assist the client in evaluating alternatives for feasibility, relevance, and appropriateness.

The basic congruence between theories of counseling and the theory of process consultation is pointed out by Schein: "In both cases it is essential to help the client improve his ability to observe and process data about himself, to help him accept and learn from feedback and to help him become an active participant with the counselor/consultant in identifying and solving his own problems."[7]

The process consultation model is similar to team-building interventions and intergroup team-building interventions except that in P–C greater emphasis is placed on diagnosing and understanding process events. Furthermore, there is greater emphasis on the consultant being more nondirective and questioning as he or she gets the groups to solve their own problems.

THIRD-PARTY PEACEMAKING INTERVENTIONS

Third-party interventions into conflict situations have the potential to control (contain) the conflict or resolve it. R. E. Walton has presented a statement of theory and practice for third-party peacemaking interventions that is both important in its own right and important for its role in organization development.[8] His book is directed toward interpersonal conflict—understanding it and intervening in ways to control or resolve the conflict. This intervention technique is somewhat related to intergroup relations described in

Chapter 11, but there are many unique aspects to conflict situations involving only two people. In this section, rather than describe specific interventions, we explicate some of the features of the theory presented by Walton.

A basic feature of third-party intervention is confrontation: the two principals must be willing to confront the fact that conflict exists and that it has consequences for the effectiveness of the two parties involved. The third party must know how, when, and where to utilize confrontation tactics that surface the conflict for examination.

The third party must be able to diagnose conflict situations, and Walton presents a diagnostic model of interpersonal conflict based on four basic elements: the conflict issues, the precipitating circumstances, the conflict-relevant acts of the principals, and the consequences of the conflict.[9] In addition, conflict is a cyclical process, and the cycles may be benevolent, malevolent, or self-maintaining. For accurate diagnosis it is particularly important to know the source of the conflict. Walton speaks to this issue:

> A major distinction is drawn between substantive and emotional conflict. *Substantive issues* involve disagreements over policies and practices, competitive bids for the same resources, and differing conceptions of roles and role relationships. *Emotional issues* involve negative feelings between the parties (e.g., anger, distrust, scorn, resentment, fear, rejection).[10]

This distinction is important for the third-party consultant in that substantive issues require problem-solving and bargaining behaviors between the principals, while emotional issues require restructuring perceptions and working through negative feelings.

Intervention tactics for the third party consist of structuring confrontation and dialogue between the principals. Many choice points exist for the consultant. Walton lists the ingredients of productive confrontation:

1. mutual positive motivation [both parties are disposed to attempt to resolve the conflict]
2. balance in the situational power of the two principals [power parity is most conducive to success]
3. synchronization of their confrontation efforts [initiatives and readiness to confront should occur in concert between the two parties]
4. appropriate pacing of the differentiation and integration phases of a dialogue [time must be allowed for working through of negative feelings and clarification of ambivalent or positive feelings]
5. conditions favoring openness in dialogue [norms supporting openness and reassurance for openness should be structured for the parties]
6. reliable communicative signs [making certain each can understand the other]
7. optimum tension in the situation [there should be moderate stress on the parties][11]

Most of these ingredients are self-explanatory, but some elaboration may be helpful on the differentiation and integration phases. In the differentiation phase of conflict, the principals clarify the differences that divide them and sort out the negative feelings they have; in the integration phase, the principals seek to clarify their commonalities, the positive feelings or ambivalence that may exist, and the commonality of their goals.

The third party will intervene directly and indirectly in facilitating dialogue between the principals. Examples of direct interventions would be interviewing the principals before a confrontation meeting, helping to set the agenda, attending to the pace of the dialogue, and refereeing the interaction; examples of more subtle interventions of the third party would be setting the meeting on neutral turf, setting time boundaries on the interaction, and the like.

Third-party intervention into interpersonal conflict situations requires a highly skilled professional or a highly skilled layman who understands the dynamics of conflict. This intervention group should not be undertaken by the novice in the human and social processes of organizations.

SENSITIVITY-TRAINING LABORATORIES

Sensitivity-training laboratories were a cornerstone of early organization development efforts. These are used less frequently now as interventions, but they are still an important part of OD techniques. The reduction in the use of sensitivity training (or T-groups, *T* for *training*) is not due to its lack of effectiveness or its appropriateness for OD, but rather more to its being supplanted by such interventions as team building and process consultation. T-groups are still an excellent learning and change intervention, particularly for the personal growth and development of the individual.

A T-group is an unstructured, agendaless group session for about ten to twelve members and a professional "trainer" who acts as catalyst and facilitator for the group. The data for discussion are the data provided by the interaction of the group members as they strive to create a viable society for themselves. Actions, reactions, interactions, and the concomitant feelings accompanying all of these are the data for the group. The group typically meets for three days up to two weeks. Conceptual material relating to interpersonal relations, individual personality theory, and group dynamics is a part of the program. But the main learning vehicle is the group experience.

Learnings derived from the T-group vary for different individuals, but they are usually described as learning to be more competent in interpersonal relationships, learning more about oneself as a person, learning how others react to one's behavior, and learning about the dynamics of group formation and group norms and group growth. Benne, Bradford, and Ronald Lippitt list the goals of the laboratory method as follows:

1. One hoped-for outcome for the participant is increased awareness of and sensitivity to emotional reactions and expression in himself and in others. . . .
2. Another desired objective is greater ability to perceive and to learn from the consequences of his actions through attention to feelings, his own and others'. Emphasis is placed on the development of sensitivity to cues furnished by the behavior of others and ability to utilize "feedback" in understanding his own behaviors.
3. The staff also attempts to stimulate the clarification and development of personal values and goals consonant with a democratic and scientific approach to problems and personal decision and action. . . .
4. Another objective is the development of concepts and theoretical insights which will serve as tools in linking personal values, goals, and intentions to actions consistent with these inner factors and with the requirements of the situation. . . . One important source of valid concepts is the findings and methodologies of the behavioral sciences. . . .
5. All laboratory programs foster the achievement of behavioral effectiveness in transactions with one's environment. . . . The learning of concepts, the setting of goals, the clarification of values, and even the achievement of valid insight into self, are sometimes far ahead of the development of the performance skills necessary to expression in actual social transactions. For this reason laboratory programs normally focus on the development of behavioral skills to support better integrations of intentions and actions.[12]

The T-group is a powerful learning laboratory where individuals gain insights into the meaning and consequences of their own behaviors, the meaning and consequences of others' behaviors, and the dynamics and processes of group behavior. These insights are coupled with growth of skills in diagnosing and taking more effective interpersonal and group action. Thus the T-group can give to individuals the basic skills necessary for more competent action taking in the organization.

Uses of T-groups in OD are varied, but they are particularly appropriate to introduce key members of the organization to group methods and they are appropriate to give a basic skill level relevant to group and individual dynamics to individuals. In addition, the T-group may be constituted in several different ways depending on the desired outcome. There are "cousin" laboratories consisting of people from the same organization but who do not have direct working relationships with each other and in fact may not know each other. A different configuration is the "cluster" lab consisting of persons from different parts of the organization similar to the cousin labs, but each group also has "clusters" of work-related people—a twelve-person group may have three separate groups of four persons each who are related in their work in the organization. Another possibility is the "family T-group" in which the intact work team undergoes a T-group experience together.[13] Finally, individuals from an organization may attend a "stranger" lab composed of people from other organizations.

Many people think that organization development means putting everyone in the organization through a T-group. This is not correct. The T-group is only one technique out of many available to the OD practitioner. And laboratory training, while appropriate in some situations, is not the basic thrust or modality of OD.

TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS (TA)

Transactional Analysis (TA) began as a form of psychotherapy but has increasingly been used as an educational technique. It was developed primarily by Eric Berne and was popularized in his book *Games People Play*.[14] Transactional Analysis is a valuable tool both for disturbed people and for healthy individuals. Its use in OD is mainly as an educational intervention, and in this sense it is directed toward the healthy "uncertified normals" who people most organizations. Training seminars containing theory and practice related to TA are the usual mode of introducing the technique into organizations. Individuals attend the seminars either with other non-work-related persons or with persons from their own work group.

Huse describes TA as follows:

> Transactional analysis focuses on such areas as the structure of the personality (structural analysis), the way in which people interact (transactional analysis), or the way in which people structure their time (time structuring), and the roles that people learn to play in life.[15]

Structural analysis in TA postulates that the personality is made up of three *ego states:* the *Parent*, the *Adult*, and the *Child*. Individuals are always acting out of one of these three ego states. The *Parent* ego state is gained from one's real parents; it reflects an ego state of superiority, authority, being right, judging others, and the like. The *Adult* ego state reflects maturity, objectivity, problem solving, logic, and rationality. This ego state represents the capacity for mature, wholesome commerce with the world. The *Child* ego state is gained from one's experiences as a child when one is dependent, rebellious, and perhaps inadequate.

Analysis of the transactions or communications between people is a major aspect of TA. Transactions can be (1) complementary, (2) crossed, or (3) ulterior. *Complementary* transactions are those in which messages from one ego state are responded to with messages from an appropriate ego state. These parallel transactions can be Adult-Adult, Parent-Child, Parent-Parent, and so forth; the response is natural and expected. *Crossed* transactions are those in which messages from one ego state are responded to with messages from an inappropriate or unexpected ego state. Examples would be an Adult-Child transaction or a Parent-Adult transaction. The response is not to the same ego state the sender is in. Crossed transactions make people feel angry, hurt, and put down. *Ulterior*

transactions are those in which the messages do not mean what they literally convey; the apparent, surface ego state implied by the messages are not the real ego states directing the messages. These are often seen in flirtation games. An example would be: "Come let me show you the barn," says the cowboy. "Why, I've always been interested in rural architecture," replies the good-looking female visitor. Interpersonal relations and communication are vastly improved when ulterior and crossed transactions are decreased and complementary transactions are increased.

There are six basic ways to structure time: withdrawal, rituals, pastimes, games, activities, and authenticity.[16] Games are often destructive sets of interpersonal encounters; they stem from pathology and cause the individual to avoid intimacy and authenticity. Authenticity is mature, meaningful, intimate contact with others. *Script analysis* is the analysis of the patterns and roles—the basic themes—that one plays out throughout one's lifetime.

How does Transactional Analysis relate to OD? People are trained in seminars to identify dysfunctional life scripts, time structuring, games, and crossed and ulterior transactions in themselves and others so that they may enjoy better relations with themselves and others. The assumption is made that this knowledge will make them more effective in their organizational roles and personal lives. Lyman Randall, an OD and TA practitioner with American Airlines, defines OD from a TA perspective:

> Organization development is an evolving set of specific activities designed and implemented to achieve the following: (a) To maximize Adult-Adult transactions between individuals. (b) To give an OK to the Natural Child in individuals to participate in transactions with others. (c) To identify and untangle quickly crossed transactions between people. (d) To minimize destructive game playing among people and between work groups. (e) To maximize authentic encounters (intimacy) between individuals. (f) To develop administrative systems, policies, and work climate that support the preceding objectives.[17]

Transactional Analysis is best thought of as only one part of a larger OD program where it is used in conjunction with other interventions. It is primarily directed to individuals and teams in the organization, usually through the vehicle of seminars and practice sessions. Anecdotal evidence from the many organizations using this intervention suggests that it makes individuals more effective in their job-related interactions with others.

LIFE- AND CAREER-PLANNING INTERVENTIONS

Managing against objectives is important for individual effectiveness as well as for organizational effectiveness. A series of interventions focus on the life goals and the career goals of individual organization members in order that they may better exert control over their own destinies. The interven-

tions focus on past, present, and future. The tasks are completed by individuals and then discussed in small groups. The sequence of steps enables individuals to come to grips with the following issues:

1. An assessment of life and career paths up to this point in time, noting highlights, particularly important events, choice points, strengths, and deficiencies.
2. A formulation of goals and objectives related to both desired life style and career path—these are future-oriented goals.
3. A realistic plan for achieving the goals and moving systematically toward goal accomplishment; that is, the goals are specified, action steps needed to reach the goals are determined, and a schedule of target dates is established for measuring progress.

Generally, life planning and career planning are done concurrently because career planning is but one subset of life planning.

One series of life- and career-planning exercises is shown below. Herbert A. Shepard is generally acknowledged as the author and originator of these exercises, and the role of these interventions in organization development programs is due primarily to him.

Life-Goals Exercise

I. First Phase
   A. Draw a straight horizontal line from left to right to represent your life span. The length should represent the totality of your experience and future expectations.
   B. Indicate where you are now.
   C. Prepare a life inventory of important "happenings" for you, including the following:
      1. Any peak experiences you have had.
      2. Things which you do well.
      3. Things which you do poorly.
      4. Things you would like to stop doing.
      5. Things you would like to learn to do well.
      6. Peak experiences you would like to have.
      7. Values (e.g., power, money, etc.) you want to achieve.
      8. Things you would like to start doing now.
   D. Discussions in subgroups.

II. Second Phase
   A. Take 20 minutes to write your own obituary.
   B. Form pairs. Take 20 minutes to write a eulogy for your partner.
   C. Discussions in subgroups.[18]

Additional approaches exist to get the individual thinking about his or her life and career trajectory and to provide data that may be shared in small-group discussion. For example, the outline of activities suggested by Fordyce and Weil has the following steps:[19] First, individuals working in small groups are asked to

make a "collage"—a symbolic representation of their lives constructed out of art materials, old magazines and newspapers, and the like; these are posted on the walls for later discussion. Second, individuals write two letters, the instructions for which are as follows:

> Now imagine that you have died ten years from now. Write a letter from one of your best friends to another good friend, telling about you and your life. What do you *want* him to be able to say about you? Next, imagine you have been killed in an auto accident next week. Now write a similar letter. What would he be likely to say about you?[29]

At this point, the group discusses the collages and letters of each individual, giving the individual the chance to get feedback from the rest of the group about their reactions and also allowing the group to learn more about each other. This third step of public sharing serves to prepare the members for the next step, consisting of building a "life inventory," similar to the one described above. Following the preparation of the life inventory, each individual prepares a career inventory by writing answers to questions like the following: What facets of work (my career up to this point) do I like most, least? What do I think are my best skills, abilities, and talents that I bring to the work situation? What kinds of rewards do I seek from my job—money, status, recognition, being a part of a team, etc.? What new career areas do I want to pursue? What new skills do I need to develop for the new career areas? These inventories are shared and discussed within the group. As a final step, individuals set down a plan of action steps for achieving the goals they have identified.

Life- and career-planning activities may take only a day; or sometimes an entire week can be spent generating data about oneself, analyzing the data both individually and in groups, and formulating clear goals and action plans for achieving them. These activities have great meaning for organization members and are particularly helpful for individuals who feel that they are in a rut, who are contemplating a career change, or who have seldom introspected about their own life-style and career pattern.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have examined a variety of interventions that, taken together, considerably expand the repertoire of the organization development practitioner. They apply to different situations, different configurations of actors, and different problem areas. They are used as components of an OD program, not the entire program. When used in conjunction with a careful diagnosis, these personal, interpersonal, and group process interventions have proved helpful in furthering individual and organizational functioning.

NOTES

1 E. H. Schein, *Process Consultation: Its Role in Organization Development* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969). The discussion is based on this source.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 135.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 102–3.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 103.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 116.

7 *Ibid.*

8 R. E. Walton, *Interpersonal Peacemaking: Confrontations and Third Party Consultation* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969).

9 *Ibid.*, p. 71.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 73.

11 *Ibid.* This list is taken from page 94; our interpretation is shown in brackets; Walton's discussion of the list is on pages 94–115.

12 K. D. Benne, L. P. Bradford, and R. Lippitt, "The Laboratory Method," in L. P. Bradford, J. R. Gibb, and K. D. Benne, *T-Group Theory and Laboratory Method* (New York: John Wiley, 1964), pp. 15–44. This quotation, pp. 16–17.

13 Based on discussions in J. K. Fordyce and R. Weil, *Managing with People* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1971), pp. 109–13.

14 Eric Berne, *Games People Play* (New York: Grove Press, 1964). See also Thomas A. Harris, *I'm OK—You're OK: A Practical Guide to Transactional Analysis* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967).

15 Edgar F. Huse, *Organization Development and Change* (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing, 1975), p. 283.

16 Muriel James and Dorothy Jongeward, *Born to Win: Transactional Analysis with Gestalt Experiments* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1971), p. 56.

17 Lyman K. Randall, "Red, White and Blue TA at 600 MPH," in Dorothy Jongeward and Contributors, *Everybody Wins: Transactional Analysis Applied to Organizations* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1973), pp. 123–46. This quotation is from page 137.

18 These are representative of the life-planning exercises used in NTL Institute programs for the training of OD practitioners. See also Gordon Lippitt, "Developing Life Plans," *Training and Development Journal*, May 1970, pp. 2–7.

19 Based on a discussion in Fordyce and Weil, *Managing with People*, pp. 131–33.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 131.

13

Comprehensive Interventions

a descriptive inventory of OD interventions

Some OD interventions are sufficiently comprehensive to be categorized as total organizational interventions. In increasing order of comprehensiveness are the *confrontation meeting*, *survey feedback*, and *Grid OD*. The confrontation meeting has a total organization quality because it simultaneously involves all the managers of an organization. Survey feedback typically involves all the employees of an organization (or a major subdivision), as well as managers, and includes two major phases. Grid OD, seen in its entirety, can involve all employees at all levels and has several distinct phases spanning several years. In addition, we wish to examine two theory-based approaches to organization development that, while not being interventions per se, nevertheless constitute systematic guidelines for improving organizational effectiveness. These approaches are based on the *System 4 Management* theory of Rensis Likert and the *contingency theory* of Paul Lawrence and Jay Lorsch. Both of these approaches are considered by many authors to be part of the theory and practice of OD.

THE CONFRONTATION MEETING

The *confrontation meeting*, developed by Richard Beckhard, is a one-day meeting of the entire management of an organization in which they take a reading of their own organizational health.[1] In a series of activities, the management group generates information about its major problems, analyzes the underlying causes, develops action plans to correct the problems, and sets a schedule for completed remedial work. This intervention is an important one in organization development; it is a quick, simple, and reliable way to generate data

about an organization and to set action plans for organizational improvement. Beckhard says of the confrontation meeting:

> Experience shows that it is appropriate where:
>
> —There is a need for the total management group to examine its own workings.
> —Very limited time is available for the activity.
> —Top management wishes to improve the conditions quickly.
> —There is enough cohesion in the top team to ensure follow-up.
> —There is real commitment to resolving the issues on the part of top management.
> —The organization is experiencing, or has recently experienced, some major change.[2]

The steps involved in the confrontation meeting are as follows:[3]

STEP 1. *Climate Setting* (forty-five to sixty minutes). The top manager introduces the session by stating his or her goals for the meeting, citing the necessity for free and open discussion of issues and problems, and making it clear that individuals will not be punished for what they say. This is generally followed by an input from the consultant regarding the importance of communication within organizations, the practicability of organization problem solving, and the desirability of addressing and solving organizational problems.

STEP 2. *Information Collecting* (one hour). Small groups of seven or eight members are formed on the basis of heterogeneity of composition, that is, there is a maximum mixture of people from different functional areas and working situations on each team. The only rule is that bosses and subordinates not be put together on the same team. The top management group meets as a separate group during this time. The charge to all the groups is as follows:

> Think of yourself as an individual with needs and goals. Also think as a person concerned about the total organization. What are the obstacles, "demotivators," poor procedures or policies, unclear goals, or poor attitudes that exist today? What different conditions, if any, would make the organization more effective and make life in the organization better?[4]

The groups work on this task for an hour and recorder/reporters list the results of the discussion.

STEP 3. *Information Sharing* (one hour). Reporters from each small group report the group's complete findings to the total group and these are placed on newsprint on the walls. The total list of items is categorized, usually by the meeting leader, into a few major categories that may be based on type of problem (e.g., communications problems), type or relationship (e.g., troubles with top management), or type of area (e.g., problems with the accounting department).

STEP 4. *Priority Setting and Group Action Planning* (one hour and fifteen minutes). This step typically follows a break during which the items from

the lists are duplicated for distribution to everyone. In a fifteen-minute general session, the meeting leader goes through the list of items and puts a category assignment on each one so that everyone has his or her own copy of the categorized items. Next the participants form into functional, natural work teams reflecting the way they are organized in the organization. Each group is headed by the top manager in the group. The groups are asked to respond to a three-part charge, that is, to do three tasks. First, they are to identify and discuss the issues and problems related to their area, decide on the priorities of these problems, and determine early action steps to remedy the problems that they are prepared to commit themselves (in the total group) to work on. Second, they are asked to identify the problems they think should be the priority issues for top management. Third, they are to determine how they will communicate the results of the confrontation meeting to their subordinates. This completes the confrontation meeting for all the managers except for the top management group.

STEP 5. *Immediate Follow-Up by Top Team* (one to three hours). The top management team meets after the rest of the participants have left to plan first follow-up action steps and to determine what actions should be taken on the basis of what they have learned during the day. These follow-up action plans are communicated to the rest of the management group within several days.

STEP 6. *Progress Review* (two hours). A follow-up meeting with the total management group is held four to six weeks later to report progress and to review the actions resulting from the confrontation meeting.

This is the flow of activities for the confrontation meeting. It is an excellent way to get fast results leading toward organization improvement. Beckhard believes that the confrontation meeting provides a quick and accurate means for diagnosing organizational health, promotes constructive problem identification and problem solving, enhances upward communication within the organization, and increases involvement and commitment to action on the part of the entire managerial group.[5] We agree with his assessment.

SURVEY FEEDBACK

An important and widely used intervention for organization development rests on the process of systematically collecting data about the system and feeding back the data for individuals and groups at all levels of the organization to analyze, interpret the meaning of, and design corrective action steps upon. These activities—which have two major components, the use of an attitude survey and the use of feedback workshops—are called *survey feedback*.

An attitude survey, if properly used, can be a powerful tool in organization improvement. Most attitude surveys are not used in an optimal way—at the maximum, most give top management some data for changing practices or provide an index against which to compare trends. At the minimum, they are filed

away with little of consequence resulting. (See Figure 13-1 for a comparison of two approaches to the use of attitude surveys—the traditional approach and the survey feedback approach.) Symptomatic of the lack of knowledge about how to use surveys effectively is the fact that most textbooks on personnel management do not refer to systematic data feedback in connection with their use for organization improvement. Those texts that do comment on feedback do so in a most cursory way. For us, data collection is only part of the process; appropriate feedback is an equally significant aspect.

Research at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan indicates that if the survey is to be optimally useful, the following steps must occur:[6]

STEP 1. Organization members at the top of the hierarchy are involved in the preliminary planning.

STEP 2. Data are collected from all organization members.

FIGURE 13-1
Two Approaches to the Use of Attitude Surveys

	Traditional Approach	Survey Feedback or OD Approach
Data collected from:	Rank and file, and maybe foreman	Everyone in the system or subsystem
Data reported to:	Top management, department heads, and perhaps to employees through newspaper	Everyone who participated
Implications of data are worked on by:	Top management (maybe)	Everyone in work teams, with workshops starting at the top (all superiors with their subordinates)
Third-party intervention strategy:	Design and administration of questionnaire, development of a report	Obtaining concurrence on total strategy, design and administration of questionnaire, design of workshops, appropriate interventions in workshops
Action planning done by:	Top management only	Teams at all levels
Probable extent of change and improvement:	Low	High

STEP 3. Data are fed back to the top executive team and then down through the hierarchy in functional teams. Mann refers to this as an "interlocking chain of conferences."[7]

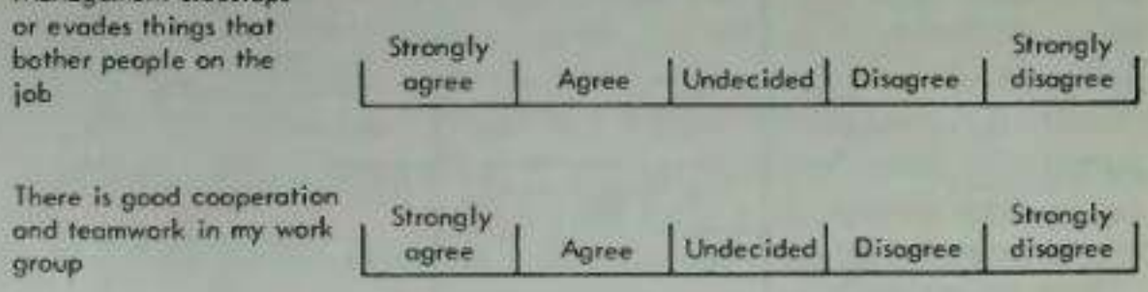
STEP 4. Each superior presides at a meeting with his or her subordinates in which the data are discussed and in which (*a*) subordinates are asked to help interpret the data, (*b*) plans are made for making constructive changes, and (*c*) plans are made for the introduction of the data at the next lower level.

STEP 5. Most feedback meetings include a consultant who has helped prepare the superior for the meeting and who serves as a resource person.

The conclusions regarding the usefulness of survey feedback grew out of a four-year program with a large organization. In the first phase, data were gathered from some eight thousand employees throughout the company (1948). Comparable data were gathered two years later (1950) from the eight accounting departments, involving eight hundred employees and seventy-eight supervisors. In this second phase, four of the eight departments carried on feedback activities as described above; two departments served as control groups with nothing further done after one all-department meeting; and two departments were eliminated from the design because of changes in key personnel. Two years later (1952), another survey was made and the researchers found that "more significant positive changes occurred in employee attitudes and perceptions in the four experimental departments than in the two control departments."[8] In particular, important changes occurred relative to how employees felt about "(1) the kind of work they do (job interest, importance, and level of responsibility); (2) their supervisor (ability to handle people, give recognition, direct their work, and represent them in handling complaints); (3) their progress in the company; and (4) their group's ability to get the job done."[9]

From our experience, feedback workshops take on many of the characteristics of team-building sessions but are less likely to deal with interpersonal matters. However, they frequently focus on leadership style or on matters pertaining to cooperation and teamwork. For example, the following two items were included in a questionnaire used by one of the authors:

In this questionnaire, items were included pertaining to "Organizational Climate," "Pay and Benefits," "Relations with Other Units," "Communica-



tions," "Supervisor/Employee Relations," "Performance Counseling," "My Job," "Pressure of Work," "Management by Objectives," "Opportunities for Personal Growth and Advancement," and "Training."

This kind of attitude survey, coupled with a series of workshops involving work teams at successively lower levels of the organization, can be used to create action plans and change across a wide range of variables in the social, structural, goal, and task subsystems of an organization. We think this approach has exciting possibilities because, in the words of Baumgartel (also quoted in Chapter 3), "*it deals with the system of human relationships as a whole . . . and it deals with each manager, supervisor, and employee in the context of his own job, his own problems, and his own work relationships.*"[10] This is the thrust that permeates most OD activities and is one of the dimensions that differentiates OD from traditional interventions in organizations.

A closer look at some of the underlying dynamics of survey feedback reveals why it works. The survey feedback technique is essentially a procedure for giving objective data about the system's functioning to the system members so that they can change or improve selected aspects of the system. The objective data are obtained by a survey; working with the data to improve the organization is done in feedback sessions. Frank Neff describes these feedback sessions as follows:

> This procedure, which has been called "feedback," was originally developed by Floyd C. Mann. It starts with the assumption that the organization is hierarchically structured. This structure can be thought of as a pyramid of "organizational families." Each family is composed of a supervisor and the people who report to him, starting with the president and going down through the "link-pins" (member of one family, head of the next lower) to the first line supervisor and his subordinates. The information about the study unit (company, department, etc.) goes first to the head of that unit and then to his "family." Then the "family members" take the data to the subordinate family of which they are "heads." Through a series of conferences at each level, data are presented and discussed, down through this hierarchy of "families."[11]

The leaders of each work group guide the feedback presentation, the discussion, the diagnosis of problems based on the data, and the building of action steps to solve the problems. Usually a behavioral scientist consultant works with the leader, acting as a resource and facilitator.

Neff states that for organization improvement (change) to take place, three things must happen. First, the work group must *accept the data as valid*. Often people are defensive and resistant to data about their own organization. This must be overcome. Second, the work group must *accept responsibility* for the part they play in the problems identified. The leader plays a very important role in this regard—he or she should "model" behaviors indicating that the problem is "owned" by the leader and the group. Third, the work group must commit itself to *solving problems*, that is, its members must commit themselves to doing

something about the problems. In summary, the work group must accept the data from the survey as valid, must accept responsibility for the problems identified, and must start solving the problems.

Bowers and Franklin state that the rationale for survey feedback, or what they also call "survey-guided development," is based on a model that views people as rational, cognitive, information-processing individuals. Furthermore, when there are differences between a person's perceptions, these differences act as sources of motivation. New information leads to new perceptions that may be in conflict with old perceptions. In this way, new information becomes a force for changing perceptions and actions. Another basic assumption of survey-guided development is that human behavior is goal-seeking or goal-oriented. Bowers and Franklin describe how the goal-seeking process works:

> . . . at least four elements are involved: (1) a model, (2) a goal, (3) an activity, and (4) feedback. The *model* is a mental picture of the surrounding world, including not only structural properties, but cause-and-effect relations. It is built by the person(s) from past accumulations of information, stored in memory. From the workings of the model and from the modeling process which he employs, alternative possible future states are generated, of which one is selected as a *goal*. At this point what is called the "goal selection system" ends and what is known as the "control system" *per se* begins. *Activities* are initiated to attain the goal, and *feedback*, which comes by some route from the person's environment, is used to compare, confirm, adjust, and correct responses by signaling departures from what was expected.[12]

A well-designed survey helps organization members to develop valid models of how organizations work and also provides information (feedback) about progress toward the goal.

Survey feedback has been shown to be an effective change technique in OD. In a longitudinal study evaluating the effects of different change techniques in twenty-three different organizations, survey feedback was found to be the most effective change strategy when compared with interpersonal process consultation, task process consultation, and laboratory training.[13] These results may be somewhat misleading, however, in that the survey feedback programs may have been more comprehensive than the other programs and the positive results may reflect the superiority of more comprehensive programs compared with less comprehensive ones. On the other hand, survey feedback is a cost-effective means of implementing a comprehensive program, thus making it a highly desirable change technique.

RENSIS LIKERT'S SYSTEM 4 MANAGEMENT

The survey feedback approach is closely related to a larger theory of management developed by Rensis Likert called System 4 Management.[14] System 4 Management provides some of the theoretical foundation for

survey feedback, and survey feedback techniques are used as a part of System 4 interventions.

Likert's lifelong thrust has been that of building a scientifically based theory of management. He has collected data from hundreds of different organizations and from these data has constructed the System 4 Management theory, named after an ideal model of how to run the organization. Four different broad styles of management have been identified by Likert as forming a continuum, with autocratic, task-centered leadership at one end and democratic, participative, employee-centered leadership at the other. The autocratic end of the continuum represents System 1; the democratic end of the continuum represents System 4. Likert labels these systems as follows: System 1 is exploitative-authoritative; System 2 is benevolent-authoritative; System 3 is consultative; and System 4 is participative group. The type of management system prevalent in any organization can be determined by having the organization members complete questionnaires describing the organization's processes and climate.

Likert has consistently found that the most effective organizations show System 4 characteristics and the least effective organizations show System 1 and System 2 characteristics. Since effectiveness and System 4 Management go together, the implications for organization improvement are straightforward: move the management style of the organization from where it is (System 1 or 2) to System 4 and keep it at System 4. This is done by having the leaders manifest democratic, participative leadership styles while focusing on goal attainment, and also by building intact work groups into more effective teams.

A number of organizations have used the System 4 Management theory to guide their organization development efforts. A comprehensive organization change project involving the Weldon Company, a sleepwear manufacturing company, is one of the best OD programs reported in the literature.[15] In this project, massive changes were made in the organization work flow, incentive and reward systems, training programs, leadership styles, and utilization of all employees as resources for expertise. The results were impressive and significant: improvement in almost all aspects of the organization's functioning were reported and maintained over time.[16]

System 4 Management was also used to turn a General Motors assembly plant that had been a "loser" into a "winner." As reported by William Dowling, training sessions to inculcate the Likert theory, team-building sessions starting at the top of the organization and moving to lower levels, improved information and communication flows to the hourly employees, changes in the first-line foreman's job, increased participation in job changes by the hourly employees, some newly constituted cross-functional teams, and new approaches to goal setting—all were used in this program that lasted several years.[17] Operating efficiency improved; grievances decreased; waste costs decreased; and other indicators showed impressive improvement.

We believe that Likert's theory is basically correct, that it can be translated

into organization development interventions and programs, and that it represents a significant contribution both to management theory and to the theory of planned change. A theory-guided approach to organization development allows organization members and practitioners alike to have a cognitive map or model of the change process and the change goals.

GRID ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Perhaps the most thoroughgoing and systematic organization development program is that designed by Robert R. Blake and Jane S. Mouton, *Grid Organization Development*.[18] In a six-phase program lasting about three to five years, an organization can move systematically from the stage of examining managerial behavior and style to the development and implementation of an "ideal strategic corporate model." The program utilizes a considerable number of instruments, enabling individuals and groups to assess their own strengths and weaknesses; it focuses on skills, knowledge, and processes necessary for effectiveness at the individual, group, intergroup, and total-organization levels. The organizational program is conducted by internal members who have been pretrained in Grid concepts.

Basic to the Grid OD program are the concepts and methods of the Managerial Grid, also developed by Blake and Mouton, a two-dimensional schematic for examining and improving the managerial practices of individual managers.[19] One dimension underlying this diagnostic questionnaire is "concern for people"; the other dimension is "concern for production." The most effective managers are those who score high on both of these dimensions—a 9,9 position. A 9,9 management style is described as follows: "Work accomplishment is from committed people; interdependence through a 'common stake' in organization purpose leads to relationships of trust and respect."[20]

The relation between the Managerial Grid diagnostic questionnaire and Grid OD is explained by Blake and Mouton: "The single most significant premise on which Grid Organization Development rests is that the 9,9 way of doing business is acknowledged universally by managers as the soundest way to manage to achieve excellence."[21] As used in the Grid OD process, the Managerial Grid questionnaire becomes one vehicle for individuals and groups to examine and explore their styles and modify prevailing practices.

Behavioral science concepts and rigorous business logic are combined in the Grid OD program's six phases. These phases are described as follows:[22]

PRE-PHASE 1. Before an organization (usually a business corporation) begins a Grid Organization Development program, selected key managers who will later be instructors in the organization attend a Grid Seminar. In this week-long experience-based laboratory, managers learn about Grid concepts, assess their own styles using the Managerial Grid questionnaire and the two-

dimensional schematic, develop team action skills, learn problem-solving and critiquing skills, work at improved communication skills, and learn to analyze the culture of a team and of an organization. Learning takes place through the use of instruments, study team projects which are judged for adequacy, critiquing of individual and team performance, and conceptual inputs.

After several managers have gone to a Grid Seminar, some might go on to advanced Grid courses for further exposure to the Grid OD approach. At a Grid Organization Development Seminar, participants are taught the materials involved in Phases 2–6. They learn both what the Grid OD program is all about and how to conduct it in their own company.

Another advanced course is the Instructor Development Seminar, in which participants actually learn to conduct an in-company Phase 1 Grid Seminar. Training these managers in the various seminars accomplishes two things: the managers learn how to conduct a Grid OD program in their own organization, and they can also evaluate the Grid approach to determine whether or not they think it is a good idea for their organization to embark on such a course of action.

If, at this point, the company decides to implement a Grid Organization Development program, it might conduct a *pilot* Phase 1 program for volunteer managers. If the result of this is a "go" signal, then Phase 1 begins.

PHASE 1: THE MANAGERIAL GRID. In this phase, a Grid seminar, conducted by in-company managers, is given to all the managers of the organization. The focus of the training is similar to that described above: attention is given to assessing an individual's managerial styles; problem-solving, critiquing, and communication skills are practiced; the skills of synergistic teamwork are learned and practiced. In this phase, managers learn to become 9,9 managers.

PHASE 2: TEAMWORK DEVELOPMENT. The focus of this phase is work teams in the organization. The goal is *perfecting* teamwork in the organization through analysis of team culture, traditions, and the like; and also developing skills in planning, setting objectives, and problem solving. Additional aspects of this phase include feedback given to each manager about his or her individual and team behavior; this critique allows the manager to understand how others see his or her strengths and weaknesses in the team's working.

Working on teamwork is done in the context of actual work problems. The problems and issues dealt with are the real ones of the team. In the process of Phase 2, individuals learn how to study and manage the culture of their work teams.

PHASE 3: INTERGROUP DEVELOPMENT. The focus of this phase is intergroup relations, and the goal of this phase is to move groups from their ineffective, often win-lose *actual* ways of relating between groups toward an *ideal* model of intergroup relations. The dynamics of intergroup cooperation and competition are explored. Each group separately analyzes what an ideal relationship would be like; these are shared between groups. Action steps to move toward the ideal are

developed and assigned to individuals. The phase thus includes building operational plans for moving the two groups from their actual state to an ideal state of intergroup relations.

The phase consists of teams convening, in twos, to work on the issues stated above. Not all teams would pair with all others; only teams that have particularly important interface relationships do so. Often only selected members of the teams take part in the exercises and activities. These are the people who are closely work related with the other team.

PHASE 4: DEVELOPING AN IDEAL STRATEGIC CORPORATE MODEL. In this phase the focus shifts to corporate strategic planning, with the goals being to learn the concepts and the skills of corporate logic necessary to achieve corporate excellence. The top management group engages in the strategy-planning activities of this phase, although their plans and ideas are tested, evaluated, and critiqued in conjunction with other corporate members. The charge to the top management group is to design an ideal strategic corporate model that would define what the corporation would be like if it were truly excellent. Fact-finding, technical inputs, etc., may be contributed from all persons in the organization.

Using the comparisons of ideal corporate logic versus real corporate logic, the top management team is better able to recognize what aspects of the culture must be changed to achieve excellence.

In a process that may take up to a year, the top executives build the ideal strategic corporate model *for their particular organization*. This is the model used in the next phase.

PHASE 5: IMPLEMENTING THE IDEAL STRATEGIC MODEL. In several different steps, the organization seeks to implement the model of corporate excellence developed in Phase 4. To execute the conversion to the ideal strategic model, the organization must be reorganized. Logical components of the corporation are designated (these might be profit centers, geographical locations, product lines, etc.). Each component appoints a planning team whose job is to examine every phase of the component's operation to see how the business may be moved more in line with the ideal model. Every concept of the ideal strategic corporate model is studied by the planning team for its implications for the component. In addition, a Phase 5 coordinator is appointed to act as a resource to the planning teams.

The planning teams thus conduct "conversion studies" to see how the components must change to fit the ideal strategic corporate model. An additional planning team is formed and given the charge of designing a headquarters that would operate effectively and yet keep overhead to a minimum. After the planning and assessment steps are completed, conversion of the organization to the ideal condition is implemented.

PHASE 6: SYSTEMATIC CRITIQUE. In this phase the results of the Grid OD program, from pre-Phase 1 to post-Phase 5, are measured. Systematic critiquing,

measuring, and evaluating lead to knowledge of what progress has been made, what barriers still exist and must be overcome, and what new opportunities have developed that may be exploited. This phase is begun after Phase 5 is going well and is beginning to convert the organization well along toward the ideal model. Taking stock of where the corporation has been, how far it has come, and where it currently is thus represents a "new beginning" from which to continue striving toward corporate excellence.

Grid organization development is an approach to organization improvement that is complete and systematic and difficult. Does it work? Blake, Mouton, Barnes, and Greiner evaluated the results of a Grid OD program conducted in a large plant that was part of a very large multiplant company. The eight hundred managers and staff personnel of the four-thousand-person work force at the plant were all given training in the Managerial Grid and Grid OD concepts. Significant organizational improvements showed up on such "bottom-line" measures as greater profits, lower costs, and less waste.[23] Managers themselves, when asked about their own effectiveness and that of their corporation, likewise declared that changes for the better had resulted from the program.

THE CONTINGENCY THEORY OF LAWRENCE AND LORSCH

On the basis of research comparing effective and ineffective business organizations in three different industries, Paul Lawrence and Jay Lorsch of the Harvard Business School concluded that *different external environments required different organization structures*, and that effective organizations had a good "fit" between structure and environment while ineffective organizations did not.[24] The external environment is the world the organization must operate in. Environments can be certain or uncertain, that is, they can be predictable or not, and they can be diverse or homogeneous. For example, the environment of the plastics industry is highly uncertain and diverse; the environment of the container industry is certain and homogeneous. Organization structure refers to how the work is divided up and how the different groups in the organization—for example, manufacturing, research and development, and marketing—relate to one another. The appropriate structure for any organization is *contingent* upon the environment the organization is operating in.

Specifically, the environment determines requirements for *differentiation* within and among work units (departments), and *integration* within and among work units. *Differentiation* is defined as *"the difference in cognitive and emotional orientation among managers in different functional departments."*[25] Lawrence and Lorsch measured four dimensions on which managers can have different orientations: orientation toward particular goals, time orientation, interpersonal orientation, and formality of structure. Different work units will differ

and should differ in their orientations to these four dimensions, depending on the environment. *Integration* is defined as *"the quality of the state of collaboration that exists among departments that are required to achieve unity of effort by the demands of the environment."*[26] Different environments require (1) different amounts of integration and (2) integration between different work units.

Contingency theory carries implications for organization effectiveness and, by extension, implications for organization development. According to contingency theory, if one wants to improve the effectiveness of an organization, one must ensure that there is the right "fit" between organization structure—as indicated by differentiation and integration—and the environment. In general, certain and homogeneous environments require less differentiation and integration, while uncertain and diverse environments require more differentiation and integration. The steps to improve organization functioning using contingency theory are the following: first, measure the key constructs or variables—environment, differentiation, and integration; second, assess the fit between the organization structure variables and the environment; and third, make the necessary adjustments in the organization structure variables to improve the goodness of fit with the environment.

Contingency theory is very popular with management and organization theorists and is becoming increasingly popular with OD practitioners. Although specific interventions to implement the contingency theory have not been formally developed, *ad hoc* interventions have been used in the several OD programs based on the theory. To implement contingency theory, differentiation must be either increased or decreased and/or integration must be either increased or decreased, depending on the environment. Usually the focus of attention is on achieving more integration or on achieving integration between selected work units. The interventions to achieve this have been cross-functional task forces, project teams, matrix team arrangements, and the like. These *structural* changes are sufficient to cause changes in the amount and quality of integration.

Lawrence and Lorsch's contingency theory was used to guide the OD efforts in the Electronic Products Division of the Corning Glass Works Corporation.[27] The theory was translated into the following implications: "A business that is cyclical, unpredictable, and rapidly changing calls for an organization characterized by a high degree of integration and the formulation of decisions as close to the point of execution as possible."[28] The implications were translated into the following activities: intergroup confrontation meetings were held between work units; the marketing department people were given roles as "integrators" between other work units; project teams were formed, made up of middle-level managers from different functional units, and the teams were assigned the task of developing new products. Later some "super" project teams were established. The results, after some difficulties, were positive: more new products were introduced in one year than had been introduced in the previous five years. Much of the credit was given to the OD program, which was predicated on the contingency theory of Lawrence and Lorsch.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have examined OD interventions of a comprehensive nature. These interventions differ in scope, but they can all be applied to changing the total organization. Generally speaking, the interventions discussed in this chapter rest on more solid theoretical bases than do many of the other OD interventions.

NOTES

1 Richard Beckhard, "The Confrontation Meeting," *Harvard Business Review*, 45 (March-April 1967), pp. 149–55.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 150.

3 This discussion represents paraphrasing, *ibid.*, p. 154.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 154.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 153.

6 Floyd C. Mann, "Studying and Creating Change," in W. G. Bennis, K. D. Benne, and R. Chin, *The Planning of Change* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1961), pp. 605–13.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 609.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 611.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 611.

10 Howard Baumgartel, "Using Employee Questionnaire Results for Improving Organizations: The Survey 'Feedback' Experiment," *Kansas Business Review*, 12 (December 1959), p. 6.

11 Frank W. Neff, "Survey Research: A Tool for Problem Diagnosis and Improvement in Organizations," in A. W. Gouldner, and S. M. Miller, eds., *Applied Sociology* (New York: Free Press, 1966), pp. 23–38. This quotation is from page 28.

12 David G. Bowers and Jerome L. Franklin, "Survey-Guided Development: Using Human Resources Measurement in Organizational Change," *Journal of Contemporary Business*, 1, No. 3 (Summer 1972), pp. 43–55. This passage is taken from page 48.

13 David G. Bowers, "OD Techniques and Their Results in 23 Organizations: The Michigan ICL Study," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 9, No. 1 (1973), pp. 21–43.

14 See Rensis Likert's two major statements of the theory, *New Patterns of Management* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), and *The Human Organization* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967). See also Rensis Likert and Jane Gibson Likert, *New Ways of Managing Conflict* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976).

15 See Alfred Marrow, David Bowers, and Stanley Seashore, *Management by Participation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), for a full account of the program.

16 See *Ibid.*; and also Stanley Seashore and David Bowers, "Durability of Organizational Change," *American Psychologist*, 25, No. 3, March, 1970, pp. 227–233.

17 William F. Dowling, "System 4 Builds Performance and Profits," *Organizational Dynamics*, 3, No. 3 (Winter 1975), pp. 23–38.

18 R. R. Blake and J. S. Mouton, *Building a Dynamic Corporation through Grid Organization Development* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969).

19 R. R. Blake and J. S. Mouton, *The Managerial Grid* (Houston, Tex.: Gulf Publishing, 1964).

20 Blake and Mouton, *Building a Dynamic Corporation*, p. 61.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 63.

22 This discussion is based on Blake and Mouton, *Building a Dynamic Corporation*, pp. 76–109.

23 R. R. Blake, J. S. Mouton, L. B. Barnes, and L. E. Greiner, "Breakthrough in Organization Development," *Harvard Business Review*, 42 (November-December 1964), pp. 133–55.

24 Paul R. Lawrence and Jay W. Lorsch, *Organization and Environment* (Boston, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967).

25 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

27 See William F. Dowling, "The Corning Approach to Organization Development," *Organizational Dynamics*, Spring 1975, pp. 16–34, for an overview and evaluation of the Corning project. See also articles by practitioners involved in the project: Edgar F. Huse and Michael Beer, "Eclectic Approach to Organizational Development," *Harvard Business Review*, 49 (September-October 1971), pp. 103–12; and Michael Beer and Edgar F. Huse, "A Systems Approach to Organization Development," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 8, No. 1 (1972), pp. 79–101.

28 Dowling, "The Corning Approach to Organization Development," p. 24.

14

Structural Interventions and OD

a descriptive inventory of OD interventions

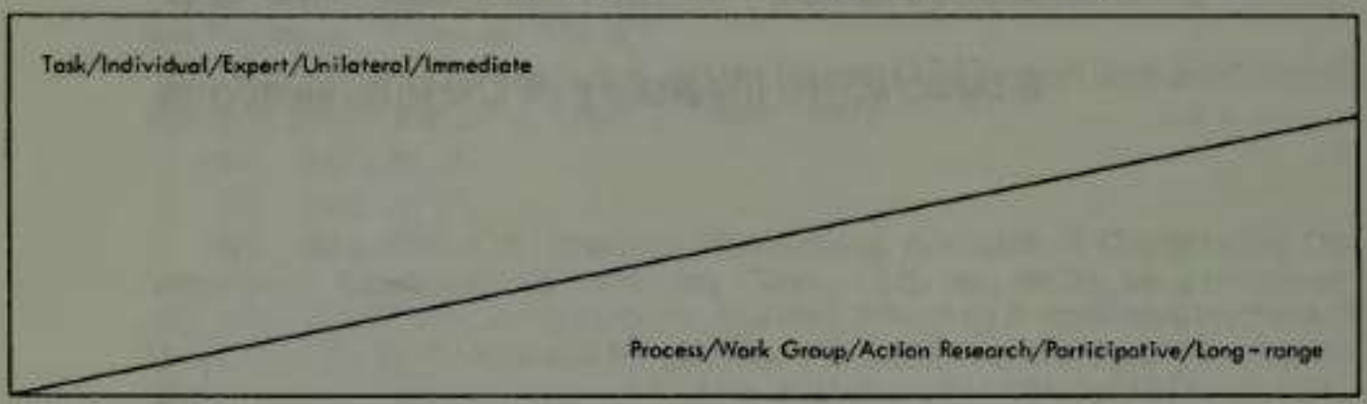
In this chapter we will examine what we call "structural interventions," a shorthand term we will use for the broad class of interventions or change efforts aimed at improving organization effectiveness through changes in the task, structural, and technological subsystems (see Chapter 5, "Relevant Systems Concepts"). This class of interventions would include changes in how the overall work of the organization is divided into units, who reports to whom, methods of control, the spatial arrangements of equipment and people, work flow and procedures, and role definitions. In particular, we want to examine certain interventions that are frequently discussed in connection with OD: job enrichment, management by objectives (MBO), sociotechnical systems, and a unique form of task force, as well as some interventions pertaining to "physical settings."

SUGGESTED CRITERIA FOR CONGRUENCY/INCONGRUENCY WITH OD

Although changes in structure are frequent outcomes of an OD effort, most programs targeted from the outset at structural change are not OD as we have defined the field. Interventions such as job enrichment, MBO, the formation of work teams congruent with a particular technology, and changes in work rules are often applied without much diagnosis and planning and are often "installed" without participation of the relevant work groups and/or the job incumbents. In such cases they tend to avoid utilizing most or all of the action research continuum of preliminary diagnosis, data gathering from client groups, data feedback to client groups, data exploration and depth diagnosis by client

groups, and action planning and action by client groups. Furthermore, such structural interventions may or may not include other features that make up the *gestalt* we have called OD, such as the use of a facilitator or change agent and attention to system ramifications. Implicit in this statement is that *collaborative diagnosis* and *collaborative action planning* loom large in OD but may or may not be a feature in various versions of structural interventions.

FIGURE 14-1
Emphasis of Different Improvement Strategies



1	2	3	4	5	6
Time and motion study	Unilateral, nongroup forms of job enrichment	Traditional MBO	Semiautonomous work groups CMBO (French and Hollman) Group forms of job enrichment (Myers) Physical settings (Steele)	Organizational mirror Confrontation meeting (Beckhard) Collateral organization (Zand) Some sociotechnical experiments (e.g., Rushton Mine)	Team building Intergroup team building Third-party peacemaking Survey feedback Process consultation Grid OD (six phases)

Figure 14-1 attempts to delineate roughly various improvement strategies in terms of the extent to which they approximate the gestalt of ingredients we see in OD. These ingredients are represented by the right-hand side of the scale: a process and group emphasis, the use of a particular kind of action research model, extensive participation, and a heuristic, long-range approach to change. Obviously, a two-dimensional scale cannot adequately portray five dimensions, but this scale should provide some visualization of how various techniques tend to cluster along a scale based on an amalgamation of relatively mutually consistent variables.

The farther we move to the left-hand side of the scale, the more the emphasis is on tasks and on the individual, the more the consulting mode is of the "expert" variety, or "analysis for the top,"[1] the more the diagnosis and implementation are unilateral, and the more the change is a fairly immediate phenomenon. (Structural changes such as a unilateral job enrichment program may occur fairly quickly; structural changes growing out of OD interventions are likely to take more time.) Improvement techniques to the left of the scale, points 1–3, we see

as generally incongruent with OD. (Traditional forms of MBO, which include procedures for subordinate-superior dialogue, are farther toward the right than unilateral versions of job enrichment.) Items toward the middle of the scale, point 4, we see as generally congruent with OD. Items on points 5 and 6 either are main line OD or are highly congruent with OD (such as the Rushton Mine sociotechnical/OD experiment—see later in the chapter for a description of this and certain other interventions arrayed along the scale). Thus, items on points 5 and 6 are OD as we view it; items on points 1, 2, and 3 are not. Some forms of items relating to point 4 can be sufficiently congruent with OD to warrant that label.

This does not mean that unilateral action, a focus on individuals or task dimensions, or an "analysis for the top" can never occur while an OD effort is evolving, but it does mean that if a major change effort having such features is being undertaken simultaneously with an OD effort, there is likely to be a great deal of confusion, resistance, and wasted effort. For example, attempting to launch a participative OD effort simultaneously with an autocratic version of an MBO effort will create a great deal of resistance and cynicism relative to one or both. And a history of unilaterally imposed change efforts will create resistance to any new efforts, participative or otherwise. We will now take a look at several structural change efforts in turn.

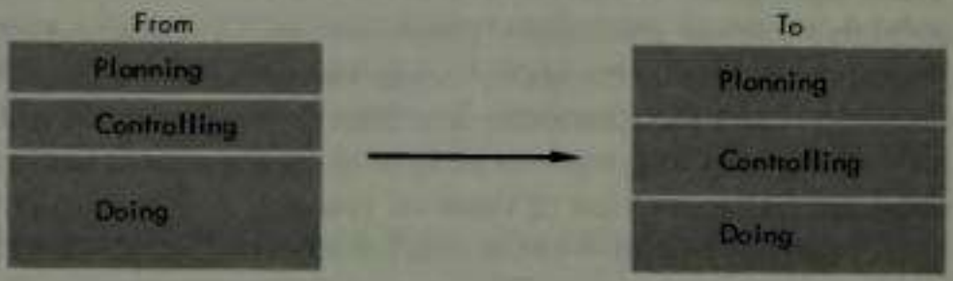
JOB DESIGN

The design of jobs, that is, intervening in the task subsystem, has been a popular domain of the consultant since the days of Frederick Taylor and the "scientific management" movement. In recent years the thrust of that movement has been reversed, with considerable attention being paid to "job enlargement" and, most recently, to "job enrichment." Both *can be*, but are not necessarily, congruent with organization development interventions. Even some offshoots of scientific management, such as work simplification, can be congruent with OD.

For clarification, a distinction needs to be made between (*a*) job enrichment, or vertical job enlargement, and (*b*) horizontal job enlargement. The latter simply adds activities, such as soldering three connections instead of one, while job enrichment (vertical job enlargement) increases the proportion of planning and controlling components to the "doing" components of the job. (See Figure 14-2.)[8] Frequent by-products of job enrichment efforts are either the elimination of a layer of supervision or a reconceptualization of the role of the supervisor.

Organization development activities, therefore, incorporate some job enrichment features, since the process clearly includes some additional subordinate planning and controlling, particularly in group situations, that were not present before. Paradoxically, however, the "doing" aspects of jobs may become narrower or more routine. For example, an office-work team may recommend and

FIGURE 14-2
Job Enrichment (Vertical Job Enlargement)



plan the elimination of some tasks that have become unnecessary, thus reducing the variety of tasks or even the complexity of the jobs.

In what might be called a team problem-solving approach to job enrichment at Texas Instruments, these kinds of shifts in the planning, the controlling, and the doing aspects have occurred through the way the company has gone about the use of work simplification techniques. Work simplification at TI has involved supervisors and subordinates in problem-solving meetings in which they explore ways to eliminate unnecessary steps in production and to make tasks more efficient. In these meetings, work teams also decide who will perform which tasks, and they frequently divide up the work so that each member will have a mixture of challenging tasks along with the more repetitive tasks. And this process is supplemented by the work team's participating in goal setting.[3]

Relative to the dimensions in Figure 14-1, we find considerable use of the action research model in Myers's description of job enrichment at TI, including soliciting the employees' advice about the design of jobs and about their relationship to the larger task subsystem. Thus there is considerable team diagnosis and planning. Overall, the effort is highly congruent with OD and can be considered an OD intervention.

However, job enrichment activities are not necessarily congruent with organization development as we defined it. Herzberg and others, contrary to the practices at Texas Instruments cited above, almost seem to say that job enrichment *should* be imposed from topside:

> So far as the process of job enrichment itself is concerned, experimental constraints in the studies dictated that there could be no participation by jobholders themselves in deciding what changes were to be made in their jobs. The changes nevertheless seemed to be effective. On the other hand, when people were invited to participate—not in any of the reported studies—results were disappointing. In one case, for example, a group of personnel specialists suggested fewer than 30 fairly minor changes in their jobs, whereas their managers had compiled a list of over 100 much more substantial possibilities.
>
> It seems that employees themselves are not in a good position to test out the validity of the boundaries of their jobs. So long as the aim is not to measure experimentally the effects of job enrichment alone, there is undoubtedly benefit in the sharing of ideas . . .[4]

Again referring to Figure 14-1, and if we limit our analysis to the two paragraphs quoted, we infer that there was very little use of a participative, action research model, and a great deal of unilateral action. Before we would conclude that Herzberg's experiments were really all that unilateral, however, we would want to know much more about the preliminary stages of his job enrichment programs. More joint diagnosis and joint planning may be involved than is immediately evident. In some organizations, task specialization may have proceeded so far that a joint diagnosis of the problem may have been occurring in the informal system for some time, and a unilateral restructuring of jobs may be met with considerable relief.

Although we would hypothesize that a job enrichment effort growing out of an action research (OD) mode would have a much higher chance of success than a unilaterally planned and imposed one, our main purpose here has been to show that some job enrichment efforts may be highly congruent with organization development and some may not. It depends upon *what processes are used* in their adoption and utilization.

MBO AND APPRAISAL

To be congruent with the OD effort, goal-setting and performance review processes should have a team thrust and should be both participative and transactional. By *participative and transactional* we mean that in goal setting, subordinates should have meaningful ways to provide inputs; and in reviewing performance, a collaborative examination of the major significant forces in the situation needs to be made, including the superior's and the team's impact on the subordinate's performance, not just an appraisal of the subordinate's performance. In addition to being different on the unilateral-participative scale, various MBO programs can also be differentiated as to whether they reinforce a team-leadership style or a one-on-one style.[5]

In their more congruent forms, MBO programs evolve from a collaborative organization diagnosis and are systems of joint target setting and performance review designed to increase a focus on objectives and to increase the frequency of problem-solving discussions between supervisors and subordinates and within work teams. (Such versions would be approximately in the middle of the scale shown in Figure 14-1.) In their least congruent forms, MBO programs are unilateral, autocratic mechanisms designed to force compliance with a superior's directives and which, in the process, reinforce a one-on-one leadership mode. (Such versions would be on the far left-hand side of the scale in Figure 14-1; most versions are probably at about point 3.)

Our hunch is that many MBO programs are imposed by line managers or promoted by personnel departments without much diagnosis of the problem to be solved. If there is some diagnosis, we suspect it is a diagnosis made by a very few people. Furthermore, our impression is that most MBO programs do not use

a team approach, that they do not provide for sufficient acknowledgment of the interdependency between jobs, and that rather than helping examine team culture, they tend to intensify dysfunctional competition within teams.[6]

If an MBO effort is to avoid some of these deficiencies, and if it is to avoid being punitive or overly constraining, we think it should include such ingredients as the following:

1. A collaborative diagnosis of organizational problems, from which it is concluded that a collaborative MBO effort would be functional.
2. Increased skills in interpersonal communications and group processes. (This will be crucial to the team aspects of this approach.)
3. Real subordinate participation, in team configurations, in setting goals.
4. A team approach to reviewing individual and group targets and their achievement.
5. Ongoing individual and team problem-solving discussions with superiors.
6. A continuous helping relationship within teams and in superior-subordinate relationships. (This will not occur quickly; a climate that says "Let's try to help each other succeed" [win-win] needs to emerge.)
7. Attention to personal and career goals in a real effort to make these complementary to organizational goals.

There is some research evidence to support arguments for some of these ingredients. Research at General Electric, for example, found that criticism by the superior tended to produce defensiveness and impaired performance, that goal setting and mutual goal setting between superior and subordinate were associated with improved performance, and that coaching needed to be a day-to-day activity.[7] Research in a public utility found the organizational climate dimension of support to be a critical factor in the perceived success of MBO efforts.[8] There does not appear to be much, if any, research on a team approach to MBO, which we call "collaborative management by objectives" (CMBO), but some theorizing has been done, including a description of what such a program would be like.[9]

SOCIOTECHNICAL SYSTEMS AND UNION–MANAGEMENT COOPERATION

The term *sociotechnical systems* is largely associated with experiments that have emerged under the auspices of the Tavistock Institute in Britain or have stemmed from the Tavistock approach. These efforts have generally attempted to develop a better "fit" between the technology, the structure, and the social interaction of a particular production unit in a mine, a factory, or an office.

One of the earliest studies was in British coal mining where the consultant/researchers found that by reintroducing a team approach to mining coal, broadening job scope, and providing team pay incentives, a number of benefits accrued,

including improved productivity, safety, and morale.[10] An experiment in India in a textile weaving mill also utilized increased job scope and semiautonomous work groups with beneficial consequences.[11] Other experiments and research with semiautonomous work groups have occurred in Norway and Sweden,[12] as well as in the United States. One U.S. experiment will be examined in detail.

Drawing on the Tavistock experiences, an experiment was conducted at the Rushton Coal Mine in Phillipsburg, Pennsylvania, under joint sponsorship by the United Mine Workers' local and the mine management, and involving a consulting research team funded through the auspices of the National Quality of Work Center. (The consultant/research team included Eric Trist, who had been involved in the early classic Tavistock sociotechnical studies.) Basically, the early phases of the experiment, which had safety improvement as the prime objective, included the following features:[13]

1. A steering committee comprised of management and local union officers, which met once a week for four months to diagnose the work performance and structure of the mine and to make recommendations
2. Ratification of the merging plan by the union membership
3. The creation of an experimental section in the mine, involving twenty-seven volunteers constituting a crew of nine for each of three shifts
4. Top pay for all participants, since all would eventually learn all the jobs, including the higher-classified ones
5. Training of all crew members in all jobs of the section, including the jobs of miner-operator and helper, roof bolter, shuttle-car man, mechanic, and support man
6. Special training in state and federal mine laws
7. The foremen to be responsible for safety, on-the-job training, and planning, but not direct supervision of production
8. The crew members to be responsible for the production of coal, and any initial handling of grievances
9. The production to be calculated on a twenty-four-hour basis rather than by shift so as to enhance cooperation between shift crews
10. Training to be provided by the consultants in group problem solving
11. Consultant/research team assistance to various committees and to foremen and members of management in meetings to discuss labor-management relations, safety training, the resolution of conflicts, and communications
12. Attendance by the consultant/researchers at union meetings when the project was discussed
13. Preliminary discussions about how any gains would be shared between company and workers

Around the end of first year, reports indicated that

1. There were fewer violations of the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act in the experimental section in contrast to the other two conventionally operated sections of the mine.

2. Accident and absenteeism rates were lower than those of one conventionally operated section and equal to those of the other section.
3. Crew members perceived themselves as having more job autonomy and perceived supervisors as making fewer decisions about how the work was to be performed.
4. Crew members recognized their interdependence and believed that coworkers had many useful ideas.
5. There was increased job satisfaction and cooperation. One miner, for example, expressed his feelings as follows:

   > Suddenly, we felt we mattered to somebody. Somebody trusted us . . . The funny thing is, in the new system, the crew, we don't really get tired any more. We probably work twice as hard as we did before, but we don't get tired . . . It's like you feel you're somebody, like you feel you're a professional, like you got a profession you're proud of . . . all 27 guys in all three shifts.[14]

6. The first measurement of results, at the end of about a year, for a one-month period, showed that the experimental section had mined about 25 percent more coal than the poorest section, and that its operating costs were 40 percent lower than the poorest section's. The cost of clean coal produced for that month was $1.16 per ton for the experimental section, while the cost was $1.87 for the mine as a whole, and $2.74 per ton for the poorest section.[15]

Although the improvement project ran into difficulty when union members voted down a proposal to extend the experiment to the whole mine—the researchers later concluded that, among other mistakes, those workers not directly involved in the first experiment had not been kept adequately informed and that the experiment had not been expanded fast enough—another section subsequently voluntarily adopted the new approach with good results. At the time of the Mills report, a modified "Scanlon Plan" for profit sharing was under consideration.[16]

In contrast to some job enrichment and MBO efforts that are unilaterally imposed and do not have a work-team focus, the Rushton experiment had a high component of collaboration, not only with the individuals directly involved but with the union, and had a high emphasis on work teams. Of course, this sociotechnical experiment occurred in the context of a decade of rapidly declining productivity in coal mining in the United States and undoubtedly started with an assumption, based on the Tavistock studies, that job restructuring—i.e., the creation of semiautonomous, interdependent work teams—would be more appropriate than traditional practices involving highly differentiated jobs under the direct supervision of a foreman. However, considerable collaborative diagnosis was done to assess dysfunctional practices and to assess the relevance of job restructuring prior to the restructuring of jobs. To contrast this with OD, while the OD process does not make the assumption that a given job structure is best, it does make the comparable assumption that a team approach has high merit. Overall, it appears that the Rushton sociotechnical experiment was highly con-

gruent with the OD process and had a number of ingredients comparable to an OD effort.[17]

THE COLLATERAL ORGANIZATION: A TASK FORCE WITH A DIFFERENCE

The creation of task forces, a very frequent outgrowth of team-building and intergroup interventions, can be considered structural interventions because these task forces supplement the structural subsystem. Task forces temporarily complement the way the organization is structured into units, the organization's regular communications patterns, and its usual planning procedures.

The *collateral organization*, as described by Dale Zand, is essentially a task force but with some differences. The "collateral organization," according to Zand, ". . . is a supplemental organization coexisting with the usual, formal organization . . ." It is created to deal with "ill-structured" problems that have high priority and that are system-wide, involving more than one unit. In the collateral organization, a deliberate effort is made to develop a set of norms different from those in the formal system. In particular, ". . . careful questioning and analysis of goals, assumptions, methods, alternatives, and criteria for evaluation" are encouraged. Use is made of a change agent, data gathering, data feedback, and process consultation.[18]

In a sense the collateral organization described by Zand is an OD effort in microcosm. A successful effort of this kind would appear to have great promise for providing the interest and skills for a more extensive application of OD technology in the organization.

PHYSICAL SETTINGS AND OD

Some consultants have been active in working with clients and in conceptualizing about how to make physical settings congruent with OD assumptions and the OD process. A notable example of this thrust is Steele's work. To Steele, physical settings are an important part of organization culture which work groups learn to diagnose and manage, and about which top management needs input in the design of plants and buildings.

Steele cites many instances in which physical settings were found to interfere with effective group and organizational functioning. For example:

> —A personnel director promoted to senior vice-president, a position inheriting the incredible, mandatory practice of having a secretary share the same office (which was supposed to signal high status), with the resulting lack of privacy and typewriter noise, adversely affecting the executive's ability to hold spontaneous meetings with employees

—An executive group wanting to rearrange an office setting to increase interaction and rapport, but locked into status considerations relative to the larger and corner offices

—A factory management encouraging group decision making, yet providing no space for more than six people to meet at one time

—Classroom and lecture hall arrangement in universities reinforcing a teacher-dominated and low-peer-interaction climate.[19]

Many OD consultants have long given considerable attention to the physical arrangements for team-building sessions, and Steele reinforces this approach by urging facilitators to include the dimension of physical arrangements in their "process consultation" interventions.[20] (Steele describes a rating process he uses to examine things such as desks, lights, or machines, patterns of elements such as the arrangement of chairs, and sociological factors such as norms about the use of physical settings.)[21]

While architecture and interior arrangements and design are not OD per se, both the approach used by Steele, which includes a strong emphasis on participative diagnosis, and the outcomes, which tend to meet client needs—e.g., enhancing team efforts when needed and privacy when needed—are highly congruent with OD. Steele's work is a notable example of some of the creative integrations that have occurred between OD and other consultancy modes.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Organization improvement techniques aimed at changes in task, structural, and technological subsystems, which we call "structural interventions," can be intermediate outcomes of a longtime OD effort. These are, by definition, congruent with OD to the extent that the strategy includes such features as a collaborative diagnosis of functional and dysfunctional aspects of the target system, and joint problem-solving and action planning. Some versions of structural interventions, however, appear to be highly incongruent with the OD process, both in the steps leading up to their "installation" and in the leadership style they reinforce. In particular, we think it is important for intervention strategies to be examined as to the extent of use of the action research model, and the extent to which the strategy is unilateral versus participative, whether the focus of attention is the individual or a group or the total organization, the consulting mode used, and what alterations simultaneously occur in other systems, such as the training and reward systems. (See also Chapter 5, "Relevant Systems Concepts," and Chapter 16, "System Ramifications and New Demands.") Such an examination should lead to clearer communications about the nature of the OD process and other improvement strategies, less wasted effort, and better research.

NOTES

1 Noel Tichy uses this term in differentiating between four types of change agents. For reference, see Chapter 16, "System Ramifications and New Demands," in which we discuss how the "analysis for the top" kind of role tends to be incompatible with the facilitator-catalyst role.

2 Figure 14-2 is adapted from M. Scott Myers, "Every Employee a Manager," *California Management Review*, 10 (Spring 1968), pp. 9–20.

3 See Harold M. F. Rush, *Behavioral Science Concepts and Management Application* (New York: National Industrial Conference Board Studies in Personnel Policy, No. 216, 1969), pp. 147–48. Although this company had embarked on an extensive Managerial Grid OD program, the job enrichment activities seem to have preceded the more formalized OD effort; nevertheless, both applications at TI appear to be quite congruent (p. 146).

4 William Paul, Keith Robertson, and Frederick Herzberg, "Job Enrichment Pays Off," *Harvard Business Review*, 47 (March–April 1969), p. 75.

5 See Wendell French and Robert Hollmann, "Management by Objectives: The Team Approach," *California Management Review*, 17 (Spring 1975), pp. 13–22.

6 For a description of a federal government MBO program "laid on from the top" and the consequent resistance and token use, see Edward J. Ryan, Jr., "Federal Government MBO: Another Managerial Fad?" *MSU Business Topics*, 24 (Autumn 1976), pp. 35–43. For more on some of the basic faults in many MBO efforts, see Harry Levinson, "Management by Whose Objectives?" *Harvard Business Review*, 48 (July–August 1970), pp. 125–34.

7 H. H. Meyer, E. Kay, and J.R.P. French, Jr., "Split Roles in Performance Appraisal," *Harvard Business Review*, 43 (January–February 1965), pp. 123–39.

8 Robert W. Hollmann, "Supportive Organization Climate and Managerial Assessment of MBO Effectiveness," *Academy of Management Journal*, 19 (December 1976), pp. 560–76.

9 See French and Hollmann, "Management by Objectives," pp. 18–21. A workshop participant has suggested we call this "COMBO." See also Rensis Likert and M. Scott Fisher, "MBGO: Putting Some Team Spirit into MBO," *Personnel*, 54 (January–February 1977), pp. 40–47.

10 E. L. Trist, G. W. Higgin, H. Murray, and A. B. Pollock, *Organizational Choice* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1965).

11 A. K. Rice, "Productivity and Social Organization in an Indian Weaving Shed: An Examination of Some Aspects of the Socio-Technical System of an Experimental Automatic Loom Shed," *Human Relations*, 6 (1953), pp. 297–329.

12 See, for example, E. Thorsrud, "Socio-Technical Approach to Job Design and Organizational Development," *Management International Review*, 8 (1968), pp. 120–31.

13 This discussion is based on "Rushton—An Experiment with Miners Regulating Their Own Work Activities," in *Recent Initiatives in Labor-Management Cooperation* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Productivity and Quality of Working Life, 1976), pp. 51–57; and Ted Mills, "Altering the Social structure in Coal Mining: A Case Study," *Monthly Labor Review*, 99 (October 1976), pp. 3–10.

14 Mills, "Altering the Social Structure," p. 6.

15 These results are based on Mills, "Altering the Social Structure," pp. 6–7.

16 *Ibid.*, pp. 7–9.

17 Other experiments that have involved union-management relations include the use of a "relations by objectives" technique developed by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, which is aimed at improving relationships between the parties. The RBO technique appears to draw extensively on OD theory and practice, particularly intergroup conflict resolution. See "The PMCA Fosters Cooperation at Three Companies," in *Recent Initiatives in Labor-Management Cooperation*, pp. 23–30; and *Business Week*, April 21, 1975, p. 108. For a theoretical discussion of OD as it relates to the labor-management relations, see Thomas A. Kochan and Lee Dyer, "A Model of Organizational Change in the Context of Union-Management Relations," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 12 (January–March 1976), pp. 59–78.

18 This discussion is based on Dale Zand, "Collateral Organization: A New Change Strategy," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 10, No. 1 (1974), 63–89. For more on task forces, making them more effective, and implications for OD, see Jay Galbraith, *Designing Complex Organizations* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1973), Chap. 7.

19 Fred I. Steele, *Physical Settings and Organizational Development* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1973), pp. 101–7.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 131.

21 *Ibid.*, pp. 97–98.

15

Conditions for Optimal Success

We wish to conclude Part II with a discussion of the conditions contributing to optimal success in the organization development process. Theory, research, and experience suggest that successful organization development efforts tend to evolve in the ways we will describe, and they have certain distinguishing characteristics. Conversely, unsuccessful efforts tend to feature mistakes or inattention relative to some of these dimensions. Specifically, the following are the conditions and phases that we see as important to successful organization development efforts, which we will elaborate on in this chapter:

1. Perceptions of organizational problems by key people, and perceptions of the relevance of the behavioral sciences in solving these problems
2. The introduction into the system of a behavioral scientist-consultant
3. Initial top-level involvement, or at least support from a higher echelon with subsequent top management involvement
4. Participation of intact work teams, including the formal leader
5. The operationalizing of the action research model
6. Early successes, with expansion of the effort stemming from these successes
7. An open, educational philosophy about the theory and the technology of OD
8. Acknowledgment of the congruency between OD and many previous effective management practices
9. Involvement of personnel and industrial relations people and congruency with personnel policy and practice
10. Development of internal OD resources
11. Effective management of the OD process
12. Monitoring the process and the measuring of results

PERCEPTION OF ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS BY KEY PEOPLE

Initially, in successful organization development efforts there is strong pressure for improvement, at least on the top management of an organization or one of its subunits, from both inside and outside the organization. In short, the key people have a real sense of things not going as well as they could. This is one of the distinguishing characteristics of successful change efforts as identified by Greiner in his review of seventeen change efforts, of which he labeled eleven "successful" and six "less successful."[1]

> The organization, and especially top management, is under considerable external and internal pressure for improvement long before an explicit organization change is contemplated. Performance and/or morale are low. Top management seems to be groping for a solution to its problems.[2]

We believe, however, that successful OD efforts can emerge in organizations that are in less trouble than that suggested by the above quotation. From our experience, the important thing is a sense that things could be better. We think that an OD effort can play important "tune-up" and ongoing maintenance roles for an organization. In fact, most of the organizations we consult with are basically healthy and successful; they are interested in "getting better."

INTRODUCTION OF AN EXTERNAL BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST-CONSULTANT

A second important condition in the early phases of an organization development effort is that an outside behavioral scientist-consultant is brought in for consultation with a top executive (or the top manager in a subdivision) to diagnose organizational problems. While we do not wish to understate the possibility of an internal person emerging in this role at the beginning, the instances are going to be few when a person with sufficient training, stature, and role congruency can assume a major change-agent role without outside help. The external person is freer of the cultural constraints of the organization, can take more risks to his or her own career, and may be more highly trained.

INITIAL TOP-LEVEL SUPPORT OR INVOLVEMENT

The successful OD effort does not necessarily need to start with the chief executive officer, although this is the ideal circumstance. The main thing is that an influential person at the top of some unit recognize the potential

applicability of the behavioral sciences to the solution of problems being faced by that unit, and that some support from this person's superior be forthcoming relative to doing some preliminary exploring and experimenting. As Bennis states it, there needs to be "some kind of 'umbrella' protection from the next highest echelon. . . ."[3]

As the OD effort proceeds within a unit, support from additional people outside that unit will become imperative. The surrounding informal social system will tend to become either resistive or supportive; and to accomplish the latter, key people in other units and key people higher in the organization will need to be kept informed of the objectives, activities, and general results of the efforts as they unfold. This includes boards of directors, who have a big stake in the success of the organization and who need to interpret the organization to the outside world. Again to quote Bennis: "It can be disastrous if the people most affected by organization development are not involved, informed, or even advised of the program."[4] Ultimately, this means there must be top management support and involvement.

The awareness of the applicability of behavioral sciences, of course, is a prerequisitite for any OD effort, however long- or short-lived. This awareness could occur in one of many ways—for example, through reading, through attendance at a seminar or a workshop, through attendance in a laboratory-training session, through discussions with colleagues in a professional association, or through a dialogue with a consultant already doing some work for the organization. This awareness might be at either the cognitive or the experiential level, or both. For example, at the experiential level, a manager might have become aware of the possibility of improved staff meetings through experiencing the way a workshop was handled. More directly, an outside consultant might be brought in to conduct a short workshop or "microlab" in order to give the client system a brief acquaintanceship with the dynamics of, say, a team-building session. This, of course, presupposes somebody's prior awareness of the potential utility of such pre-work.

Parenthetically, in OD efforts in public agencies that the mass media tend to watch—such as in a city government situation—it would seem wise to provide information seminars for members of the media about the nature of the OD process. News coverage by uninformed reporters and editors can have a serious adverse impact on an OD effort; news coverage by well-informed reporters and editors can have a positive impact. Ideally, information seminars for members of the media would have an experiential component so that there would be some appreciation of the process at both the cognitive and the affective levels. Obviously, such seminars would have to be done well. They should probably take place after a solid beginning to the OD effort has occurred, because news stories about a collaborative effort to improve an organization's functioning before collaboration has occurred can create unnecessary internal resistance. Furthermore, reports of successes can assist the OD effort.[5]

ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF WORK-TEAM LEADERS

We have referred to "intact work teams" several times. It may be obvious at this point, but we want to stress that it is absolutely imperative that the supervisor, leader, or manager of a work team participate in any team-building session of that unit. Because of the complex processes involved, sessions without that person can be extremely frustrating, if not downright dysfunctional. We feel so strongly about this that a major condition of our conducting team-building sessions (by whatever name) is the active, continuous presence of the formal leader. One researcher has documented the consequences of the leader's absence and has quoted one subordinate's reaction as follows:

> I'm so frustrated I can't believe it. The material we are exposed to makes so much sense—and I see what the [another, but intact, work team] people are doing in terms of getting their stuff together. But it is impossible for us. What can we do without our boss here? There is no way we can go back and apply these skills. He won't have the slightest idea what we are talking about. We sit down and try to solve our problems, but it is impossible to do it. The boss is too big a part of it all. In a lot of ways this is making things worse instead of better. At least before we came we didn't have as clear an idea of what was available to us. I guess that is what is causing all the frustration—knowing what is available but we can't do anything about it.[6]

It is also imperative that the formal leader make it legitimate for OD activities, in addition to team building, to occur. For example, that person needs to support such activities as process consultation and, eventually, intergroup activities.

OPERATIONALIZING OF THE ACTION RESEARCH MODEL AND EARLY SUCCESSES

The consultant's initial efforts may be in response to a request for a more traditional intervention, such as an attitude survey or a review of personnel policies and practices. However, the consultant's approach, although the terminology may not be used, quickly begins to take on an action research flavor with the concurrence and involvement of the key client.

Thus, a fifth important characteristic emerges. The action research model of preliminary diagnosis, data gathering, feedback, and action planning is operationalized, probably through a team-building session or through an attitude survey-feedback procedure. These initial interventions are found to be helpful, and additional requests for such assistance emerge laterally or from subordinate units within the organization. Greiner succinctly states the process:

> The new man, with top management support, engages several levels of the organization in collaborative, fact-finding, problem-solving discussions to identify and diagnose current organization problems.

The solutions and decisions are developed, tested, and found creditable for solving problems on a small scale before an attempt is made to widen the scope of change to larger problems and the entire organization.

The change effort spreads with each success experience, and as management support grows, it is gradually absorbed permanently into the organization's way of life.[7]

Thus, top management does not commit itself irrevocably to a five- or ten-year program but, in collaboration with the change agent, does make commitments relative to reasonably sized "chunks" of activities. Successes then lead to additional chunks, and the time perspective grows with the successes.

AN OPEN, EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY ABOUT OD

We believe that it is extremely important to the long-range success of an OD effort that the mystery and mythology be minimized and that the technology be understood. This means that a high value must be placed on making the assumptions, theory, and practices underlying the OD effort open and visible. Most people do not wish to be manipulated or have things done to them, particularly in mysterious ways. The external change agent, and ultimately the internal resource people, will continuously need to assume the role of educators who make their knowledge about the OD process and how to go about improving organizations accessible to all. The desired climate is one in which organizational members find that not only have the number of options open to them increased but they are receiving a high return from their own use of behavioral science knowledge. In short, a major emphasis in an OD program must be the opportunity for self-directed personal growth and increased effectiveness of individuals and groups.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE CONGRUENCY WITH PREVIOUS GOOD PRACTICE

Another quality of successful OD efforts is an open recognition by internal or external change agents that many OD or behavioral science assertions will be highly congruent with the better managerial practices already in existence in the organization. As a manager once expressed it, "I've been a very successful manager over the years and have worked hard and somewhat successfully to bring about a participative, open climate in my organization. Now people in the personnel department and the OD program are preaching the same stuff to me that I've been practicing for years, and I resent it." He also used the phrase "knights on white horses" with reference to the change agents. A successful OD effort needs such managers as allies and valuable resources, not as people who feel pushed around.

Issues about who is the expert versus who is not, and problems of semantics, tend to diminish as the successful OD effort matures. As the skills learned through various phases of the OD program begin to permeate the organizational culture, and as the action research model becomes internalized, the distinction between the change agents and the non–change agents, and between what is OD and what is effective management, becomes less and less distinct. It continues to be important, however, that organizational members have a common language and a common understanding relative to the basic underpinnings of OD—for example, action research, emphasis on work team culture, and so forth.

INVOLVEMENT OF PERSONNEL PEOPLE AND CONGRUENCY WITH PERSONNEL POLICY AND PRACTICE

In a company large enough to have a personnel and industrial relations executive, long-range successful OD activities require that this executive become heavily involved, or at a minimum, highly supportive. This specialist is the one person in the organization whose main function is the design and implementation of human resource systems, and to whom such other specialists as the wage and salary administrator, the training director, and the employment manager report.

We are obviously talking about a personnel–industrial relations/human resources administration role that is much broader than collective bargaining. While OD efforts have considerable promise for shifting union-management relationships toward more of a problem-solving climate, the chief negotiator for the organization may be locked into a "win-lose" stance for a substantial period of time until the entire organizational climate shifts to a different mode. We do know of one labor relations director in a huge multinational company, however, whose breadth of vision and successful bargaining with the unions are beginning to result in a shift of climate in many of the company divisions toward a more participative and problem-solving leadership style relative to the total work force. On the labor relations side, the basic vehicles for this shift have been new labor contracts which have removed many traditional constraints on job boundaries and which now permit job enrichment activities. Additional features include wage increases tied to productivity and cost savings. On the supervision side in this company, the shift has come, in large part, through a variety of organization development activities, including team building, survey feedback, and management workshops.

Ultimately, it seems to us, it is essential that the entire personnel–industrial relations group, including people in salary administration, be involved in the organization development program. Since internal OD groups have such potential for acting as catalysts in rapid organizational change, the temptation is great, as we will discuss in Chapter 17, for them to see themselves as "good guys" and

the other personnel people as "bad guys," or simply ineffective. Any conflicts between a separate organization group and the personnel and industrial relations groups should be faced and resolved. Such tensions can be the undoing of either program. Even in the absence of any serious conflict, the change agents in the organization development program clearly need the support of the other people who are heavily involved in human resources administration, and vice versa.

As we will discuss in more detail in Chapter 16, what is done in the OD program needs to be compatible with what is done in selection, promotion, salary administration, appraisal, and other formalized aspects of the human-social subsystem. For example, substantially improved performance on the part of individuals and groups is not likely to be sustained if financial and promotional rewards are not forthcoming. In short, management needs to have a "systems" point of view and to think through the interrelationships of the OD effort with the reward and staffing systems and the other aspects of the total human resources subsystem.

This congruency is largely built in at the Systems Group of TRW. The model there is to make the total personnel and industrial relations group an integral part of the OD program. People in such roles as employment manager and plant personnel director are also change agents. These specialists are supported by line managers who have demonstrated particular skill in consultation and by external OD consultants.[8]

DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNAL RESOURCES

The development of internal resources, as illustrated in the practices at TRW, is an important, if not inherent, feature of successful OD efforts. In the first place, continued growth in problem-solving skills, in effectiveness in managing meetings, and so forth, is synonymous with a successful OD effort. In other words, the organization incorporates and builds upon what it learns from the change agent, as suggested earlier in our comments about the open, educational nature of OD.

Ideally, as in the TRW model, both members of the personnel staff and a few line executives are trained to do some organization development work in conjunction with the external behavioral scientists. In a large organization, in particular, the demands for the help of change agents may soon exceed the immediate supply or may begin to cost substantially more than people employed full time by the organization. In a sense, then, the external change agent tries to reduce the organization's reliance on his or her services by developing internal resources, both because of the growth and development inherent in successful OD and because of the cost or the availability of change-agent skills. We do, however, see an important long-range role for the external consultant, as we will describe later.

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE OD PROCESS

A number of aspects relative to the managment of the ongoing OD process need careful attention if the program is to meet with continuous success. These dimensions have to do with authenticity, consulting team and client-consultant relationships, coercion versus voluntarism, OD strategy, and coordination.

Authenticity, in contrast to gamesmanship, is an extremely important characteristic of successful OD applications. The outside consultant, the internal coordinator, or the key clients need to work together to check periodically on fears, threats, and anxieties centering on the OD effort. Such problems need to be confronted as they emerge, including those stemming from the promises of overzealous advocates.

Not only is the outside change agent needed for his or her skills, but the organization needs that person to act as a "governor"—to keep the program focused on real problems and to urge authenticity in contrast to gamesmanship. For example, the danger always exists that the organization will begin to punish or reward involvement in group-process kinds of activities per se, or reward superficial lip service to OD values, rather than focus on performance. In this sense, the culture of the organization can begin to take on a cultish kind of behavior which may be out of joint with meeting its objectives. The consultant can, of course, become part of that problem; in this regard there is simply no substitute for professional competence and self-awareness.

In connection with cultlike behavior, coercion relative to such matters as openness and attendance at T-groups can be highly dysfunctional. While it is difficult to draw a line between persuasion and coercion, OD consultants and top management should be aware of the serious consequences of the latter, particularly when real feelings about it are submerged and a perfunctory acquiescence occurs. What is happening under such conditions, of course, is that the informal system is no longer being managed collaboratively, behavior is not authentic, trust goes down, and communications become guarded. These are consequences diametrically opposed to the objectives of an organization development effort.

The problem of gamesmanship can partially be minimized if the OD consultants constantly work on their own effectiveness in interpersonal relationships and their diagnostic skills so they are not in a position of "do as I say, but not as I do." To elaborate further, from our experience it is imperative that any OD consulting teams, including both internal and external change agents, work intensively at their own team relationships. Lack of attention to their own team relationships and effectiveness will reduce their constructive impact on the broader organization.

Both consultant and client must work together to optimize their knowledge of the organization's evolving culture and to optimize their mutual personal

growth. As the consultant needs to be concerned about the personal growth of the key clients, so the clients need to be concerned about the growth of the consultant. For example, this means some investment on the part of the client system to keep the consultant sufficiently tuned in to what is happening in the organization and in providing resources so that consulting teams can pay attention to their own maintenance and development.

Successful OD efforts also require a strategy that can be articulated and made visible. While the overall strategy will evolve, the process can be facilitated by cognitive maps showing where groups have been in their learning experience, where they might go next, and so forth. For example, it can be helpful to realize that follow-up team-building sessions might occur once per year for the purpose of diagnosing and reviewing progress. It can be helpful to realize that, as trust levels go up, it might be productive to focus more intently on conflict reduction and on learning conflict-reducing techniques. Negatively speaking, the constructive gains of the initial OD efforts can be lost if there is no emerging plan relative to what OD means for the long range for both the total organization and its subunits.

Such a long-range strategy is one of the key features of the Grid OD approach as described in Chapter 13. The six phases are deliberately planned to build on each other and to give the effort direction and focus.

The OD strategy as it relates to management development and other programs needs to be planned and articulated. Similarly, there need to be guidelines for subsequent phases or expansion of the OD effort—who has access to the consultants, whether follow-up activities have higher priority than new efforts with new groups, and the like. These are real issues in managing the OD effort and must be faced.

Issues of coordination and control of the OD program also need to be resolved between the key internal OD coordinator, external consultants, and clients. This is particularly relevant to OD activities in large organizations. Lack of coordination can result in incongruous philosophies and practices resulting in dysfunctional tensions between people in different subunits or between OD specialists. For example, high emphasis on T-grouping by consultants in one department or division and a deliberate de-emphasis by consultants in another could interject an unnecessary debate into the system which might better have been worked out within the consulting staff. On the other hand, overcontrol by a central coordinator can choke off useful preliminary and follow-up activities between consultant and client. For example, barriers placed between the client and the consultant can turn an OD effort into a kind of "dog and pony show" in which the consultant displays his or her "tricks" during a team-building session but is prohibited from working with the client group in an ongoing way. In short, we are arguing for a consensual approach to OD strategy, but also for an open, ongoing kind of relationship between consultant and clients in various subunits.

Stating the case even more positively, we recommend that the internal OD coordinator encourage a long-range, direct relationship between consultants and key clients in the subunits of the organization.

MONITORING THE PROCESS AND MEASURING RESULTS

Finally, successful OD efforts require the application of the action research model to the OD process itself. There needs to be continuous audit of the results, both in terms of checking on the evolution of attitudes about what is going on and in terms of the extent to which problems that were identified at the outset by the key clients are being solved through the process.

The chief executive officer and the "line" executives of the organization will evaluate the success of the OD effort in terms of the extent to which it assists the organization in meeting its human and economic objectives. For example, marked improvements on various indexes from one plant, one division, one department, and so forth, will be important indicators of program success. Because of other conditions that will be operating simultaneously, however, the demonstration of cause-and-effect relationships is going to be exceedingly difficult. In fact, both measurement and interpretation are going to be difficult.

We believe, however, that a substantial contribution has been made by University of Michigan people and others both to the data-gathering phase of the OD process and to the measurement of the results of OD efforts. In particular, we would draw attention to questionnaires like Likert's "Profile of Organizational Characteristics"[9] and to their applicability in measuring changes stemming from an OD program. Likert's "Profile," a questionnaire that asks respondents to comment on a variety of organizational dimensions, including leadership, communications, and decision making, essentially taps what Likert calls "causal variables" (e.g., pressure for results) and "intervening variables" (e.g., attitudes toward supervision, height of performance goals, and extent of cooperation).[10] This questionnaire, for example, was used at the Weldon Company to measure changes over a two-year period during a major organization development effort. These changes, in turn, were then related to productivity measures and other "end result" variables.[11]

At a less ambitious level, systematic interviewing or questionnaire polling of participants two or three months after a team-building session could be invaluable for justification of the effort or the modifications in the OD program. We think anecdotal evidence, both positive and negative, is also very useful. The informed judgment of participating managers, in particular, is extremely important. For example, we asked a vice-president in charge of a large operating division of a corporation if the team-building sessions and the OD effort in his division had been useful. His response: "You bet. Now we tell it like it is." This kind of data, supplemented by a more systematic collection of data, can be

invaluable in diagnosing the utility and the strength and weakness of the OD effort.

NOTES

1 Larry E. Greiner, "Patterns of Organization Change," *Harvard Business Review*, 45 (May–June 1967), pp. 119–30.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 122.

3 Warren Bennis, *Organization Development: Its Nature, Origins, and Prospects* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. 57.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 47.

5 Whether a team-building session of, say, a city council and the mayor, or a state governor and his or her immediate staff, must be open to the mass media under any open-meeting law needs to be decided state by state. In our opinion, OD sessions involving the examination of such matters as decision-making and communications processes, interpersonal and intergroup relationships, and preliminary discussions of organizational structure should be exempt from these laws. The personal risks to participants in publicly exploring organizational, group, and personal deficiencies will inevitably stifle candidness. At the federal level, the Freedom of Information Act exempts "purely internal management matters," which we interpret as exempting most OD activities. For a further discussion, see Wendell French, Cecil H. Bell, Jr., and Robert A. Zawacki, *Organization Development: Theory, Practice, and Research* (Dallas: Business Publications, 1978, in press.)

6 R. Wayne Boss, "The Effect of Leader Absence on a Confrontation Team Building Design," unpublished manuscript (University of Colorado, 1977). Used with permission.

7 Greiner, *Patterns of Organization Change*, p. 25. For a discussion of the phenomenon of "success breeding success" at the Corning Glass Works Corporation, see William F. Dowling, "To Move an Organization: The Corning Approach to Organization Development," *Organizational Dynamics*, 3 (Spring 1975), pp. 19, 33.

8 See "TRW Systems Group," in Gene Dalton, Paul Lawrence, and Larry Greiner, eds., *Organizational Change and Development* (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, 1970), pp. 126–31; and Harold M. F. Rush, *Behavioral Science Concepts and Management Application*, Studies in Personnel Policy, No. 216 (New York: National Industrial Conference Board, 1969), pp. 157–71.

9 Rensis Likert, *The Human Organization: Its Management and Value* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), pp. 197–211.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 76.

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 29–40. See also Alfred J. Marrow, David G. Bowers, and Stanley E. Seashore, *Management by Participation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967).

III

SOME KEY CONSIDERATIONS AND ISSUES

System Ramifications
Consultant-Client Relationships
Mechanistic and Organic Systems
Research on OD
The Future of OD

16

System Ramifications and New Demands

In this chapter we will briefly theorize about a few of the more salient ramifications of an organization development effort in terms of new demands that are likely to be made on the system. All parties concerned must realize that if major organization improvements are to be made and sustained, managerial practices with respect to many subsystems will have to be modified if these practices are not already congruent with the OD effort. This is particularly true with respect to the human-social and structural subsystems as discussed in Chapter 5, "Relevant Systems Concepts." Some examples will be provided to show how some managerial practices might be modified to be congruent with the OD process and/or to suggest where innovations might occur. Other examples were given in Chapter 14, "Structural Interventions and OD."

FEEDBACK

Since more extensive data gathering, including making legitimate the expression of feelings and attitudes, is an integral part of an OD effort, people will have to learn how to give and manage feedback in such a way that it is helpful and not destructive. This means training in giving and receiving feedback, and it means paying attention to the gamut of feedback systems—all the way from interpersonal kinds of exchanges to subunit production or cost data and to the results of organization-wide attitude surveys.

For example, at the interpersonal level, feedback tends to be the most constructive when such conditions as the following are met:

It is solicited.
It is fairly immediate after the event.

It is specific.
It is reported in terms of the impact on the person who is providing the feedback.
It is nonjudgmental in that it does not label the recipient "stupid," "worthless," and the like.
It is given when the basic motive is to improve the relationship (in contrast to a desire to punish, belittle, etc.).
It is given in private or in a supportive group atmosphere.
It is given in the spirit of mutual give-and-take.

At the level of subunit production or cost data, feedback is most helpful if it is reported

Directly to the manager who can take remedial action, in contrast to top management or a staff department
Frequently enough so the manager can plan remedial action
Specifically, so that the manager can easily identify the problem area (this will usually mean that the respective manager will need to be involved in designing the reporting system)

In terms of attitude surveys, feedback tends to be the most constructive

When it is sought by the unit involved
When unit data and aggregate organizational data are reported to the respective manager, but not data specific to other units (direct comparisons with peers tend to be highly threatening at first)
When managers plus their subordinates discuss the dynamics underlying the data with the help of a third party and make action plans

In general, constructive feedback requires intervening at the appropriate depth, as will be discussed further in the next chapter, "Issues in Consultant-Client Relationships." In particular, this means that the feedback be *sought* and that it be *provided directly to the person or unit for appropriate action.*

STAFFING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Many aspects of the staffing and career development processes, broadly conceived, can be affected by an evolving OD effort, and vice versa. There are implications for selection, orientation and assimilation, transfer and promotion, training and development, and separation.

Selection

In the selection process, for example, there is likely to be an increasing degree of participation by peers. This would be congruent with a broadened level of participation in the organization, and with more emphasis on the ability of

employees to work interdependently and in team configurations. Training of present employees in effective interviewing of candidates would be an important adjunct to this evolution.

Orientation and Assimilation

Substantial attention needs to be paid to the process of introducing new people into the system (sometimes called the "joining up process") if the staffing process is to be congruent with assumptions and values underlying OD efforts. Group methods in orientation and assimilation seem to be particularly useful.[1]

Some experiments with group techniques have been reported. For example, an experiment at Texas Instruments began when a department manager observed that new employees as well as their supervisors experienced high anxiety during the newcomers' first few days on the job and that this anxiety was seriously interfering with communications and training, with one of the consequences being high turnover. An experiment involving both a control group and an experimental group was conducted to test the efficacy of group methods in minimizing some of the anxiety. A control group participated in the usual procedure, which involved a two-hour orientation session with a good deal of information given out; the new employees were then sent to their supervisors for job instructions and from there to their work stations. The experimental group attended the two-hour orientation seminar but were then sent for the rest of the day to another seminar, which provided information about supervisors and the job environment and presented considerable opportunity for group discussion and questions and answers. The new employees were told what to expect in terms of hazing and rumors from older employees, were given information about the style and practices of their supervisors, and were provided with statistics on their likelihood of success. By the end of four weeks, the experimental group was performing significantly better in job performance and attendance than the control group.[2]

Group methods would also appear to be useful for groups in preparing for the entry of new members. Such sessions, under the guidance of a facilitator or a supervisor having skills in group processes, can do much to alleviate dysfunctional anxiety on the part of present members and to help them make plans for quickly incorporating the new person into the team. A group session with the new member—e.g., involving introductions, descriptions of what each person is currently working on, concerns of the new person, etc.—can also be useful.

Career Development and Progression

If a major thrust of the OD process is to shift organization culture toward more honesty, more openness, and improved personal development, the career and growth aspirations of all organization members must be an area of concern. These are matters of considerable interest to employees at all levels and will tend

to become more openly talked about. This will probably mean paying more attention to advancement and transfer opportunities and will require more of a commitment of resources to training and management development. There might also be some commitment of resources to "life-planning" or "career-planning" workshops; a few organizations have experimented with such learning laboratories. Stranger T-group labs, of course, can be useful in the development of skills that will facilitate OD efforts. Technical courses might not be directly related to the OD process but could be important in a systematic program of career development. These experiences, however, will tend to be more highly specific to individual and system needs than is the usual case; that is, more attention will be given to the diagnosis of training and development needs, with less reliance on "packaged" programs.

Another shift will probably occur. The climate could well shift from suppressing dialogue about the merits of leaving the organization toward openly facing the issue of internal versus external career opportunities. A likely outcome, as indicated above, will be more effort to increase opportunities for internal mobility. Ideally, new departments, divisions, or subsidiaries could be spawned through paying attention to the entrepreneurial and career aspirations of organizational members. Theoretically, the removal of arbitrary ceilings on responsibility will probably release a good deal of energy for constructive contribution within the system.

To use terminology sometimes found in labor contracts, "job posting" (i.e., notifying present employees of job vacancies) and "bidding" (i.e., permitting people to apply for these vacancies) are possible outcomes of an OD effort. This would be congruent with the open developmental thrust of OD. Another outcome might be more attention to the development of "career ladders," which are diagrams of routes of promotion and transfer within and across various job specialities. These devices are used to advise employees about career opportunities and to assist management in planning the training required for progression from one job to another.[3] As a result of such devices as job posting, bidding, and career ladders, more time and effort is likely to be spent in processing internal requests for transfer and promotion and in developing training opportunities. The net effect on employees, however, is likely to be one of higher morale, better placement, better diagnosis of training needs, and improved skills.

The developmental, organic philosophy inherent in the OD process creates a major dilemma relative to the use of psychological tests for selection purposes, especially in the promotion system. On the one hand, some tests, such as intelligence tests, can have sufficient validity in specific circumstances to warrant their use as one additional source of relevant data. On the other hand, tests can leave the candidate feeling subject to mysterious or arbitrary criteria or locked into his or her own personal characteristics which are not subject to modification.

The "assessment center" concept may provide some leads toward solving the testing dilemma. Briefly, companies using assessment centers typically give

the candidate, usually a nonsupervisory person interested in promotion, an extensive battery of tests and involve the candidate in an interview and group discussions and other group situations. Subsequently, trained line managers, who have been observing, make rankings of the relative performance of the candidates. In general, it has been found that assessment centers increase the proportion of successful to unsuccessful supervisors and higher managers and are useful in identifying management potential among minority and women employees.[4]

The ingredients that can shift the assessment center process from being strictly a matter of selection to one that is developmental are the dialogue that communicates the results to the candidate and the developmental opportunities that are subsequently provided. For example, if the assessment center highlights some deficiencies in group discussion, a center staff member can provide some feedback (ideally, requested by the candidate) and the organization may provide opportunities for developing additional skill. Then, too, the whole process of permitting candidates to apply for the assessment center experience and selecting some candidates for promotion tends to create an element of openness and mobility in the system which might not otherwise be there. This is not to say that the use of an assessment center is always constructive. The lack of an effective feedback discussion process can introduce considerable suspicion and hostility into the system.

Group input in the selection of formal leaders would also be congruent with the thrust of an OD effort. Although such an approach, like a number of others we have mentioned, can and does occur outside of OD efforts, it would be inconsistent with the OD process not to consider the feelings and perceptions of group members in these important decisions. There may be instances when it would be highly functional to delegate the selection of new leaders to a group. Although rarely documented, this has been done in a number of instances we know of in situations involving production workers and staff groups.

Separation

It follows that exit from the organization is also likely to require more attention. It would be inconsistent to be concerned about job and career needs up to retirement age and to ignore the dynamics of the inevitable formal separation. Resignations and involuntary separations are also occurrences to which an organization moving extensively into an OD effort will want to pay considerable attention, both after the fact and in a preventive way. For example, in a more open, confronting—but supportive—climate, it is likely that inadequate performance would be faced more quickly with the possibility of early correction, in contrast to unspoken resentments building up to a precipitous discharge.

Some organizations, using OD approaches or techniques congruent with the OD process, have reduced the trauma of layoffs stemming from adverse economic conditions. For example, during the aerospace industry downturn of

the early 1970s, one high-technology firm, having had an OD effort for a number of years, used facilitators and group methods in assisting those being laid off to enable them to overcome their disappointment and anxiety and make plans for a job search. Those being laid off were informed weeks ahead of time, in contrast to the more usual industrial practice of short notice, but overall the performance of those affected did not deteriorate. The company also made great efforts to place these employees with other organizations. (Most laid-off employees subsequently returned when business picked up again.)[5]

REWARDS

As in the staffing process, attention must be paid to the allocation of rewards of all kinds as an OD effort unfolds. We think that any OD effort that improves the performance of organizational members but ignores the total pool of rewards accruing to the system will be self-defeating in the long run. In short, if there is a greatly increased sharing of responsibility and creativity in the attainment of organizational objectives and no proportionate sharing in the rewards, the OD effort will not be sustained.[6] There is no reason to believe that the owners or the top managers of an organization have needs and motives that are drastically different from those of their subordinates, and a great deal of reason to believe that they are similar. The more organic and interdependent the system becomes, the more attention will need to be paid to congruity in the total reward system.

In both profit and nonprofit organizations, this means attention paid to rewards for both individual and team contribution. To place high value on team and interteam cooperation and then allocate rewards solely for individual efforts would clearly be dysfunctional.[7] In a profit-oriented organization, a long-range OD effort might eventually precipitate profit-sharing or stock ownership plans, or both. At a minimum, it would be important to manage the movement of wage and salary scales consistent with the success of the organization. (The possibility of facing up to temporarily reducing wage and salary levels as one option in a financial crisis would also seem more likely in an organization that had been involved in an OD effort for some time.) Obviously, money is not the only reward accruing from the internal and external environments, and attention would also need to be paid to such matters as recognition and opportunities for meaningful interaction in the broader community.

ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE

A shift in team and organizational culture toward more openness and toward more mutual concern should, in large part, facilitate the airing of felt injustices. From our experience, this does occur—and in a more

natural and less-threatening way. Grievances tend to be raised when they occur and are worked out quickly. (This phenomenon plus others that tend to stem from OD efforts, from our observations, seemingly improves mental health. We see OD as a way of improving mental health in an organization; many of its practices and underlying concepts are congruent with theory and clinical experience in counseling psychology, some aspects of psychiatry, and community mental health programs.)

We are not recommending doing away with formalized appeal procedures, however, or what we would call *organizational due process*. We have defined the latter as consisting of "established procedures for handling complaints and grievances, protection against punitive action for using such established procedures, and careful, systematic, and thorough review of the substance of complaints and grievance."[8] We believe a formalized appeal system may be needed to protect individuals from gross anomalies in an organization's culture. For example, what if a norm begins to develop that says it is taboo ever to question the usefulness of any part of the OD effort? Or that subordinates should always be "open" no matter what the consequences might be, but that superiors may have hidden agendas? Or that talking about seniority is off limits even though employees feel deeply that length of service is a significant investment to be taken into account in job retention? Such an environment needs a formal appeal system. It is clearly consistent for a system that values openness to retain mechanisms that tend to protect openness.

MONETARY COSTS AND SKILL DEMANDS

The use of external and internal third parties in the role of change agents, and the use of off-site workshops, is obviously going to cost money. If an organization development effort is to be successful, however, there must be a sustained commitment to the notion that the development of human resources is as important as the development of other kinds of resources. Symptomatic of lack of such commitment is the assumption that a one-shot team-building exercise will suffice to cure organizational problems. Experience shows that shifting to and maintaining the kind of culture we have been describing must be an ongoing process, and that it requires resources.

In addition, the costs in terms of effort and skill demands should not be ignored. In some ways, the environment we have been describing is more difficult and demanding than that found in more traditional organizational cultures. Team members, for example, no longer find it quite so comfortable to let the superior carry the responsibility for effective decision making, or find it convenient to use scapegoats to rationalize why things went wrong. The newer culture is likely to include a commitment to examine all the forces bearing on a problem, including one's own impact.

Thus, while the newer culture may be, and usually is, more exciting and

rewarding, it is likely to be more difficult and challenging as well. Implicit demands will be made upon organizational members constantly to improve their skills in managing the human-social subsystem as well as managing the other major subsystems.

SUMMARY

A sustained, successful organization development effort will have extensive ramifications throughout the system. Attention will need to be paid to the design and quality of a wide range of feedback subsystems; to many aspects of the broad staffing and career development processes, including selection, orientation and assimilation, transfers, promotions, and separations; to monetary and nonmonetary rewards; to organizational justice; and to the monetary costs and new demands for upgrading skills. In general, the administration of a wide variety of organizational subsystems—the formal aspects of the human-social subsystem and the communcations and feedback components of the structural subsystem, in particular—will have to be congruent with the OD effort if sustained organizational improvements are to occur.

NOTES

1 We think that the group methods mentioned in this chapter are likely to be more viable than the selecting, paying, promoting, and firing of groups that Leavitt speculates about in his provocative essay. See Harold J. Leavitt, "Suppose We Took Groups Seriously . . ." in Eugene L. Cass and Frederick G. Zimmer, *Man and Work in Society* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1975), pp. 67–77.

2 See Carl A. Gomersall and M. Scott Myers, "Breakthrough in On-the-Job Training," *Harvard Business Review*, 44 (July–August 1966), pp. 62–72.

3 For an illustration, see William P. Fisher and Paul Gaurnier, *Career Ladders in the Food Service Industry* (Chicago: National Restaurant Association, 1971), p. 25.

4 James R. Huck and Douglas W. Bray, "Management Assessment Center Evaluations and Subsequent Performance of White and Black Females," *Personnel Psychology*, 29 (Spring 1976), 13; and Robert B. Finkle, "Managerial Assessment Centers," in Marvin D. Dunnette, ed., *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1976), pp. 861–88.

5 OD interventions can also assist organization members in avoiding a kind of organizational paralysis and the distortions of reality and communications that can occur in a crisis. See Sheldon Davis and Herbert Shepard, "Organization Development in Good Times and Bad," *Journal of Contemporary Business*, 1 (Summer 1972), pp. 65–73.

6 Experience at TRW is consistent with this assertion. See Meyer M. Cahn, "Thoughts on Planned Change and Change Diffusion: An Interview with Shel Davis," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 12 (April–May–June 1976), p. 235.

7 For example, some of the project teams in one of the Corning Glass Works divisions had become ineffective and conflict ridden. When a substantial part of the individuals' performance ratings (the mechanism for giving raises and promotions) was based on performance in the project teams, in contrast to basing ratings solely on performance in the functional areas, effectiveness of the teams was dramatically increased. William F. Dowling, "The Corning Approach to Organization Development," *Organizational Dynamics*, 3 (Spring 1975), pp. 26–27.

8 Wendell French, *The Personnel Management Process*, 4th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978), Chap. 8.

17

Issues in Consultant-Client Relationships

A number of interrelated issues can arise in consultant-client relationships in organization development activities that need to be managed appropriately if adverse effects are to be avoided. These issues tend to center on the following:

—Is a person or the system the client?
—Trust
—The nature of the consultant's expertise
—The contract
—Diagnosis vis-à-vis appropriate interventions
—The depth of interventions
—On being absorbed by the culture
—The consultant as a model
—The consultant team as a microcosm
—Action research and the OD process
—Client dependency and terminating the relationship
—Implications of OD for the client

There are no simple prescriptions for resolving these issues, but we do have some notions about them.

WHO IS THE CLIENT?

The question of who the client is quickly becomes an important issue in consultant-client relationships. We think a viable model is one in which, in the initial contact, a single manager is the client, but as trust and

confidence develop between the key client and the consultant, both begin to view the manager's organization as the client. Ideally, this begins to occur in the first interview. Thus the health and vitality of the various organizational subsystems, as well as the effectiveness and growth of all individual members of the client system, clearly become the consultant's concern.

Although this is a controversial point, we find ourselves somewhat dubious about vague notions about the consultant's representing the total organization when he or she is working with some subdivision of the total. To be effective, the consultant must have a direct relationship with, and be able to influence, the people in the system. The change agent cannot help those with whom he or she does not interact—to attempt to do so would be a projection of one's assumptions about what some vague "they" might want. Or, if the consultant is carrying out some secret mandate of higher management, relationships with the more immediate clients are bound to fail. The truth will eventually become apparent, and the consultant will be reduced to impotency. Even if the OD consultant is open about some mandate from the top of the hierarchy, efforts will tend to be minimized simply because an externally directed mission is being attempted. Successful OD efforts involve a process of mutual influence, not an imposed program from any direction.

The total system, however, will not be ignored in an effective consulting relationship with a subdivision. The effective consultant will have some ideas about what courses of action will be helpful and what will be dysfunctional relative to the total system, and will express relevant sentiments—concerns, in particular—to the key client. The key client, moreover, will be the real expert about the broader system, and the key client and the consultant together will be looking for ways to improve the total. The real issue, then, is openness. If the client and the consultant are open with each other, the total system becomes a matter of joint concern.

THE TRUST ISSUE

A good deal of the interaction in early contacts between client and consultant is implicitly related to developing a relationship of mutual trust. For example, the key client may be fearful that things will get out of hand with an outsider intervening in the system—e.g., that the organization will be overwhelmed with petty complaints or that people will be encouraged to criticize their superiors. Subordinates may be concerned that they will be manipulated toward their superiors' goals with little attention given to their own. These kinds of concerns mean that the consultant will need to earn trust in these and other areas and that high trust will not be immediate.

Similarly, the consultant's trust of the client may be starting at neutral. The consultant will be trying to understand the client's motives and will want to surface any that are partly hidden. For example, if the client has hopes that a team-building session will punish an inadequately performing subordinate, the

consultant and the client will need to reassess the purposes of team building and examine whether that activity is the appropriate context for confronting the matter. On a positive note, the client may see OD as a means of increasing both the client's and the subordinates' effectiveness, plus having hopes that a successful OD effort may bring considerable recognition from superiors. Surfacing such motives and examining their implications for effective behavior will enhance trust between the consultant and the client and will help assure the eventual success of OD activities.

A related matter is the mystique surrounding organization development and related areas—laboratory training, in particular. In our judgment, the more that assumptions, theory, and technology are shared with the client and the client system, the more that trust develops and the more effective becomes the collaboration.

In this connection a common mistake is for external or internal consultants, in their enthusiasm, to be "selling" a kind of utopia instead of concentrating on helping clients with their problems. For example, they may be perceived as selling trust, openness, cooperation, and the like. While we believe these are good things, they are probably best worked on in the context of helping the client system solve those problems perceived as interfering with organizational effectiveness. In other words, being perceived as helpful enhances trust between client and consultant; conversely, selling philosophy may inhibit trust.

Trust and resistance problems also center on what we call the "good guy–bad guy syndrome." Internal or external OD consultants, through their enthusiasm for an exciting technology, may signal that they perceive themselves as the carriers of the message, that is, that they are "good guys," and implicitly that others are not, or at least are backward. This obviously creates all sorts of trust and resistance problems. People usually want to work collaboratively with others in the pursuit of common ends—but people also tend to resist being pushed around, under whatever banner. No one likes being put in the "bad guy" role, and we mistrust and resent those who seem to be doing that to us. This can be a trap not only for the consultant but also for the overly enthusiastic line manager. We will have more to say about trust later.

THE NATURE OF THE CONSULTANT'S EXPERTISE

Partly because of the unfamiliarity with process consultation and other OD interventions, clients frequently try to put the consultant in the role of the expert on substantive content, such as on personnel policy or organizational structure. *We believe it is possible, and desirable, for the OD consultant to be an expert in the sense of being competent to present a range of options open to the client,* but any extensive reliance on the traditional mode of consulting, that is, giving substantive advice, will tend to negate the OD consultant's effectiveness. The OD consultant needs to resist the temptation of playing the content

expert and will need to clarify his or her role with the client when this becomes an issue.

Lapsing into the expert or advocate role on substantive matters frequently stems from an overriding desire to please the client. The consultant wishes to maintain the relationship for a variety of reasons—professional, financial, or ego reasons—and naturally wishes to be perceived as competent. The consultant therefore gets trapped into preparing reports or giving substantive advice, which if more than minimal, will reduce his or her effectiveness.

There are at least four good reasons why the OD consultant shuld largely stay out of the expert role. The first is that a major objective of an OD effort is to help the client system to develop its own resources. The expert role creates a kind of dependency that typically does not lead to internal skill development.

The second reason is that the expert role almost inevitably requires the consultant to defend his or her recommendations. With reference to an initial exploratory meeting, Schein mentions the danger of being "seduced into a selling role" and states that under such conditions "we are no longer exploring the problem."[1] In short, finding oneself in the expert role and defending one's advice tends to negate a collaborative, developmental approach to improving organizational processes.

A third reason for largely avoiding the expert role has to do with trust. As shown in Table 17-1, one criterion for resolving whether to provide confidential reports or advice to top management is how such an intervention would affect various client groups in the organization and the consultant's relationship with them. The OD consultant's role is a tenuous one at best. Any impression that the consultant is making recommendations inimical to members of client groups puts the consultant in the role of an adversary. For example, the disclosure that the consultant has made a secret recommendation that the number of divisions and vice-presidents be reduced from sixteen to eight is likely to be met with widespread alarm and immediate distrust of the consultant. The question will also immediately arise, what else is the consultant up to that we don't know about? Thus, making recommendations to the top is quite different from confronting the top management group with the data that three-fourths of the members of the top team believe the organization has too many divisions. In the one instance, the consultant is the expert; in the other instance, the consultant is helping team members be the experts.

A fourth reason has to do with expectations. The process of soliciting information for use in a confidential report will reinforce expectations that the consultant's role is in the traditional mode of "analysis for the top."[2] Our guess is that OD consultants have enough difficulty getting many clients to move away from this mode without compounding the problem. As organizational members become more sophisticated about different consulting modes or assumptions underlying them, it may be that the OD consultant can increase the frequency with which he or she acts in the expert role.

There are exceptions to the above, some of which we describe in Table 17-1.

TABLE 17-1
Is a Given Intervention Compatible with the OD Facilitator Role?

Intervention	*To or for CEO or Unit Leader*	*To or for Client Team*
Confidential report of advice on qualifications of job incumbents	No	No
Confidential report or advice on structure of organization or unit	No	Usually not; at stake is the trust of the various team members. One question for resolving the issue would be; Who would be hurt?
Technical report or advice in some area of the consultant's expertise, e.g., computer applications or a wage and salary survey	Usually not. One consideration would be; What would this "analysis for the top" mode of consulting do to the client's expectations about my role?	Usually not. One consideration would be; What would this "analysis for the top" mode of consulting do to the client's expectations about my role?
Describing various options open to the client and the implications of those options	Yes and no. Depends upon whether the intervention is seen as perspective-enlarging or prescriptive for the CEO or other key client, and whether the client and consultant are open with others about the request, and whether considerable trust has been earned.	Yes, providing the intervention is seen as perspective-enlarging and not prescriptive.
Advice on OD strategy	Yes, if overall organizational strategy and if shared with top team and more broadly in the organization. Yes, if it is strategy for team, providing it is shared with team.	Yes, if strategy for team. Yes, if broad organization strategy providing advice is shared widely in the organization.
Advice on interventions —e.g., when and how a team-building session should be conducted	Yes, providing advice is shared with top team.	Yes.

TABLE 17-1 (cont'd.)
Is a Given Intervention Compatible with the OD Facilitator Role?

Intervention	*To or for CEO or Unit Leader*	*To or for Client Team*
Data feedback from interviews or questionnaires	Yes, if it is data about the leader. No, if it is team or organizational data, unless feedback is preliminary and others have concurred in the strategy.	Yes, if it is data about the team. No, if it is data about other teams, unless data have been aggregated to present overall organization averages, ranges, etc., and there has been wide concurrence on the strategy.
Guidance or moderating of a team-building session	Yes, if with concurrence of team.	Yes.
Process consultation or coaching on individual behavior or style	Yes, if requested.	Yes, if requested.

For example, it is usually desirable and necessary to give advice on the design of a workshop or the design of a questionnaire. Such advice is usually quite facilitating, providing the consultant is open to modifications of his or her suggestions by members of the client system. As Schein states it:

> The process consultant should not withhold his expertise on matters of the learning process itself; but he should be very careful not to confuse being an expert on *how to help an organization to learn* with being an expert on the *actual management problems* which the organization is trying to solve.[3]

In other words, the OD consultant should act in the expert role on the *process* used but not on the *task*.

Another exception consists of providing a range of options open to the client. For example, if there are issues about how a unit or organization should be structured in terms of which functions should be grouped together or who should report to whom, it can be helpful for the OD consultant to present some optional forms and to discuss the possible implications of each. However, such an intervention should ordinarily be presented in a team situation so as not to be misinterpreted, must be timely in terms of its relevance and acceptability, and should be essentially perspective-enlarging in contrast to prescriptive. *We believe that the more extensive the OD consultant's knowledge of management and organization, the more effective the OD consultant can be. But there is a difference between being essentially a facilitator-educator and being essentially an*

advice-giver. Even the presenting of options can be overdone. If the consultant's ideas become the focal point for prolonged discussion and debate, the consultant has clearly shifted away from the facilitator role. Obviously, this is not an either/or matter; it is a matter of degree and emphasis.

OTHER DIMENSIONS OF THE INITIAL "CONTRACT"

Implicit in our discussion of the above issues is the issue of consultant and client formulating the "psychological contract." The resolution of such matters as who the client is, underlying concerns about how the OD effort might evolve, and whether the consultant will make substantive recommendations will have a major impact on subsequent events.

The more formal compensation aspects of the initial contract are also important and need to be confronted for the peace of mind of both client and consultant. We tend to prefer a verbal agreement as to an hourly or a daily fee, with no charge for an initial discussion—usually in our offices or over lunch or in the key client's office. Thereafter, we like to bill the client organization monthly for any time spent on the organization's behalf, although the approximate time amounts will be based on mutual agreement, with either party free to terminate the relationship should it not be mutually satisfactory. In the case of the internal OD consultant, the amount of time availability will be an important dimension.

Some consultants will charge for the preliminary exploratory discussions. We find this a reasonable practice, since the key client frequently begins to develop new insight into the nature of the problem during the exploratory interviews.[4] Furthermore, in terms of the application of professional knowledge and skill, the initial meeting is as professionally demanding as the interventions that occur later as the OD effort unfolds.

DIAGNOSIS AND APPROPRIATE INTERVENTIONS

Another pitfall for the consultant is the convenience of applying intervention techniques with which the consultant is familiar or particularly likes, but which may not square with a current diagnosis of unit problems. Thus the consultant who is an effective T-group trainer may push participants in a team-building session into an intensive interpersonal laboratory session, while the more pressing issues may have to do with goal setting or role expectations. Or a consultant may rely heavily on a few instrumented techniques in his or her "bag of tricks" when the need for educational interventions may be minimal and the need for confronting issues directly may be high.

We think a consultant should do what he or she can do, but the intervention should be reasonably appropriate to the diagnosis. The wider the range of interventions open to the consultant, of course, the more the consultant can be free to

make a diagnosis unencumbered by anxieties about how to intervene. Inherent in making a perceptive diagnosis is an awareness of the complexity of and the interdependency of the various organizational subsystems.

DEPTH OF INTERVENTION

In addition to the issue of selecting specific interventions from a range of interventions is the question of the depth of intervention. By *depth* we mean the extent to which the change target is the formal system, the informal system, or the self (see Figure 17-1 for a comparison of various group or organizational interventions in terms of depth).[5] In Harrison's terms, this continuum is based upon accessibility and individuality. By *accessibility* Harrison means the degree to which the data are more or less public versus being hidden or private, and the ease with which the intervention skills can be learned. By *individuality* is meant the closeness to the person's perceptions of self and the degree to which the effects of an intervention are in the individual in contrast to the organization. We are assuming that the closer one moves on this continuum to the sense of self, the more the inherent processes have to do with emotions, values, and hidden matters and, consequently, the more potent they are to do either good or harm. It requires a careful diagnosis to determine that these interventions are appropriate and relevant. If they are inappropriate they may be destructive or, at a minimum, will be unacceptable to the client or the client system.

To minimize these risks, Harrison suggests two criteria for determining the appropriate depth of intervention:

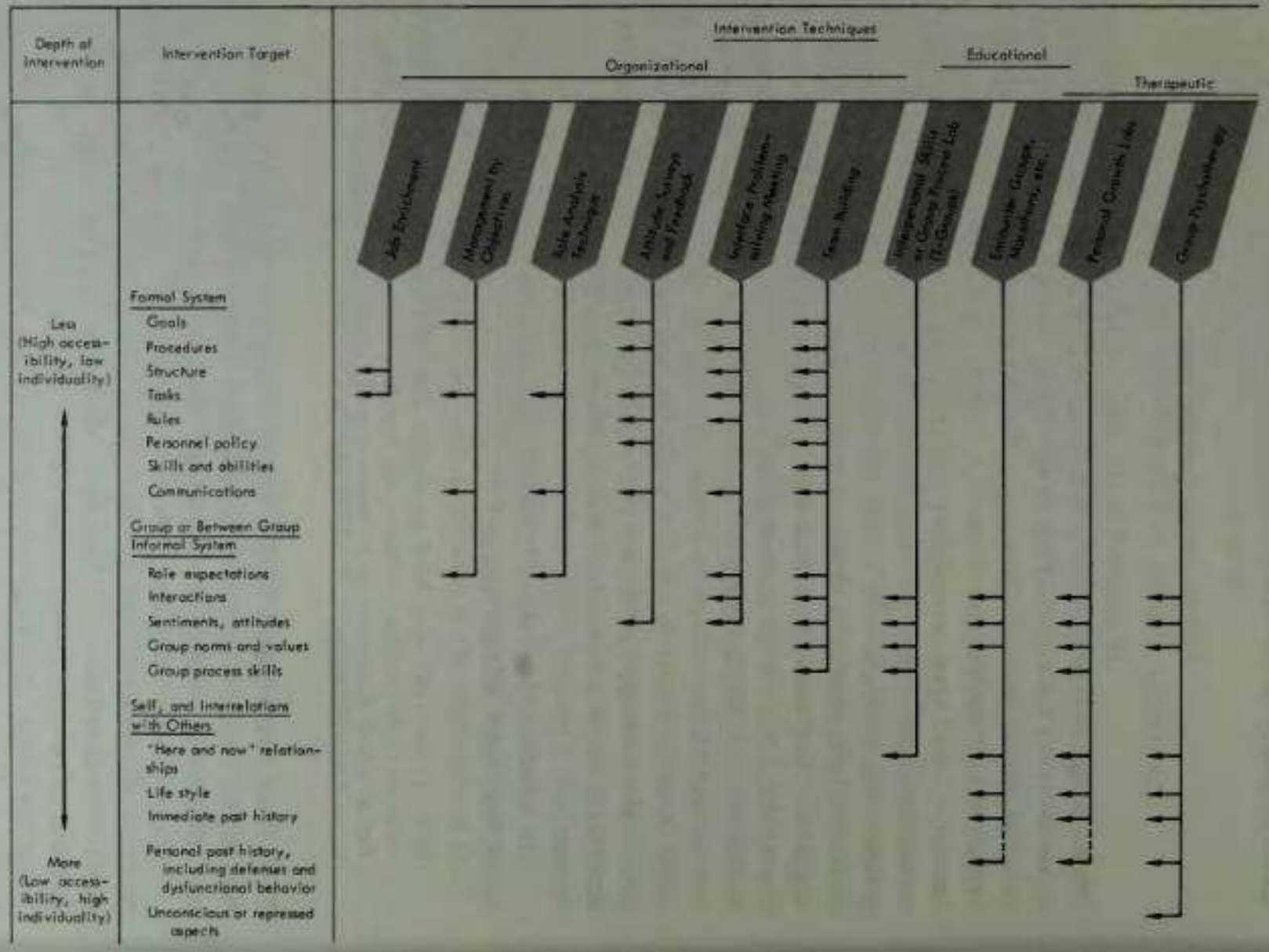
> First, to *intervene at a level no deeper than that required to produce enduring solutions to the problems at hand;* and, second, to *intervene at a level no deeper than that at which the energy and resources of the client can be committed to problem solving and to change.*[6]

To Harrison, these criteria require that the consultant proceed no faster or deeper than the legitimation obtained from the client system culture and that he or she stay at the level of consciously felt needs.[7] We think these are sound guidelines.

Harrison does recognize, however, and we agree, that the change agent is continuously confronted by the dilemma of whether to "lead and push, or to collaborate and follow."[8] Harrison's orientation is to the latter, but we are inclined to be slightly less conservative. We think that, to be effective, the consultant needs occasionally but prudently to take minor risks in the direction of leading and pushing, but these risks should not be quantum jumps. As the consultant develops expertise in diagnosis and in making interventions, the risks that are run are mainly the risks of a rejected suggestion. We do, however, agree with the essence of what Harrison is suggesting and agree with his criteria.

FIGURE 17-1

Depth of Various Group or Organizational Interventions



ON BEING ABSORBED BY THE CULTURE

One of the many mistakes one can make in the change-agent role is to let oneself be seduced into joining the culture of the client organization. While one needs to join the culture enough to participate in and enjoy the functional aspects of the prevailing culture—an example would be good-natured bantering when it is clear to everyone that such bantering is in fun and means inclusion and liking—participating in the organization's pathology will neutralize the consultant's effectiveness.

One of us recalls an experience in which the most critical issue to surface in preliminary interviews with members of a professional staff group—we'll call it an engineering organization—was who would be the new manager. The current manager's promotion was to take effect in a few weeks and he was anxious that the group members provide some input on the selection of his successor as well as that they tidy up a number of unresolved communications and administrative matters. One obvious candidate for the promotion was a senior engineer who was highly respected for his professional competency—clearly an engineer's engineer. However, younger members of the staff privately expressed fears to the consultant that the senior engineer would be too authoritarian if he assumed the manager's role, and they did not want to lose his accessibility as professional mentor. On the other hand, they had strong concerns that they would seriously hurt the man's feelings by openly confronting the issue of his style, and that he might resign if the matter were confronted. As a result, the consultant team acquiesced in not feeding back to the group the issue most troubling them. In effect, everyone but the senior engineer conspired to protect him, to pretend that he was a strong candidate for promotion, and to postpone the decision. As a result, the group was partly paralyzed for weeks. The immediate effect of the team-building session was one of frustration for all of the participants. In retrospect, the consultant's view is that the client system could probably have worked through the matter, and that the senior engineer would have proved to be the strongest and most adaptable person there that day, including the consultants.

Reddin provides us with a delightful account of another instance of the consultant's being absorbed by the culture:

> The chairman of a 10,000 employee subsidiary of a British industrial giant invited me to dinner with his board at their country house training centre. It was an epic meal and the vintage port flowed. The conversation was witty and I had to lean on my limited classical education to keep up with the literary allusions. In preparation for an MBO conference I had in fact recently re-read Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* and this gave me some good lines. My first error was accepting the first invitation and then my next was visiting in similar circumstances yet again. It was a superb, if unconscious, seduction job by the client. My relationship to this client became intellectual witty companion. My attempts to change it were met with incredulity.[8]

Although Reddin did not elaborate, the implication is that once the consultant became the "intellectual witty companion" the chairman resisted any efforts to be guided, along with the board members, toward examining the functional and dysfunctional aspects of the culture of the organization. Perhaps the only course of action open to the consultant, once he realized he had been absorbed by the culture, would have been to express openly his feelings and concerns about the situation to the chairman. Such an intervention might or might not have shifted the relationship more toward an OD consultant–key client mode. This is another illustration in which being absorbed by the culture of the client organization immobilized the change agent.

Internal change agents may be even more susceptible to absorption by the prevailing organizational culture than are external change agents. As long as they work with people and units that have considerable "political distance" from their own unit, their objectivity may not be any more vulnerable than that of a consultant from the outside. On the other hand, if their own unit (whether they are specialists who are part of a personnel or an OD unit or have a home base in some line department) is somehow engaged in maneuvering for resources or power in competition with their client, they may inadvertently be drawn into the politics of the situation. Rather than helping to surface the dynamics of dysfunctional rivalry under appropriate circumstances, the change agents may become part of the problem, thus helping to submerge an issue or contributing to tactics incompatible with the helping role, thus alienating the client or potential clients.

THE CONSULTANT AS A MODEL

Another important issue is whether change agents are willing and able to practice what they preach. In the area of feelings, for example, the consultant may be advocating a more open system in which feelings are considered legitimate and their expression important to effective problem solving and at the same time expressing his or her own feelings about what is happening in the client system. In particular, this can be a frequent problem for the less-experienced change agent, and it usually has an impact on this person's feeling of competency: "If only I had said . . . ." The more one learns to be in touch with one's own feelings, the more spontaneous one can be, and the more options are open for interventions. (This is one reason why we recommend extensive T-group experience for OD consultants.) However, the client system is not the appropriate ground for working out any problems the consultant may be currently experiencing. On the other hand, being too aloof emotionally will tend to minimize the possibilities of helping the client.

As another example of modeling behavior, the OD consultant needs to give out clear messages—that is, the consultant's words and apparent feelings need to

be congruent. The consultant also needs to check on meanings, to suggest optional methods of solving problems, to encourage and support, to give feedback in constructive ways and to accept feedback, to help formulate issues, and to provide a spirit of inquiry.[10] We are not suggesting that the OD consultant must be a paragon of virtue; rather, we are suggesting that to maximize one's effectiveness, it is necessary continuously to practice and develop the effective behaviors one wishes to instill in the client system.

THE CONSULTANT TEAM AS A MICROCOSM

The consultant–key client viewed as a team, or consultants working as a team, can profitably be viewed as a microcosm of the organization they are trying to create. In the first place, the consultant team must set an example of an effective unit if the team is to enhance its credibility. Second, change agents need the effectiveness that comes from continuous growth and renewal processes. And third, the quality of the interrelationships within the consulting team carries over directly into the quality of their diagnosis, their workshop or laboratory designs, and their interventions. To be more explicit about the last point, unresolved and growing conflict between two consultants can paralyze a workshop. Or simple lack of attention to team maintenance matters can produce morale problems that reduce spontaneity and creativity in planning sessions or in interacting with the client system.

ACTION RESEARCH AND THE OD PROCESS

A related issue is whether the OD process itself will be subject to the ongoing action research being experienced by the client system. The issue of congruency is, of course, important, but the viability of the OD effort and the effectiveness of the consultants may be at stake. Unless there are feedback loops relative to various interventions and stages in the OD process, the change agents and the organization will not learn how to make the future OD interventions more effective.

Feedback loops do not necessarily have to be complicated. Simple questionnaires or interviews can be very helpful. As an illustration, we recall having lunch with the key people who had been involved in a problem-solving workshop, and upon asking several questions about how things were going "back at the shop," we found that problems had emerged centering on who had been invited to attend the workshop and who had not. This feedback, at a minimum, has caused us to pay even more attention to pre-work and to helping workshop participants plan how to share effectively what has occurred with those not attending.

THE DEPENDENCY ISSUE AND TERMINATING THE RELATIONSHIP

If the consultant is in the business of enhancing the client system's abilities in problem solving and renewal, then the consultant is in the business of assisting the client to internalize skills and insights rather than to create a prolonged dependency relationship. This tends not to be much of an issue, however, if the consultant and the client can work out the expert-versus-facilitator issue described earlier and if the consultant subscribes to the notion that OD should be a shared technology. The facilitator role, we believe, creates less dependency and more client growth than the traditional consulting modes, and the notion of a shared technology leads to rapid learning on the part of the client.

The latter notion is congruent with Argyris's admonition that if the consultant intervention is to be helpful in an ongoing sense, it is imperative for the client to have "free, informed choice."[11] And to have this free choice, it is necessary for the client to have a cognitive map of the overall process.[12] Thus the consultant will have to be quite open about such matters as the objectives of the various interventions that are made and about the sequence of planned events. The OD consultant should continuously be part educator as he or she intervenes in the system.

An issue of personal importance to the consultant is the dilemma of working to increase the resourcefulness of the client versus wanting to remain involved, to feel needed, and to feel competent. We think there is a satisfactory solution to this dilemma. A good case can be made, we believe, for a gradual reduction in external consultant use as an OD effort reaches maturity. In a large organization, one or more key consultants may be retained in an ongoing relationship, but with less frequent use. If the consultants are constantly developing their skills, they can continue to make innovative contributions. Furthermore, they can serve as a link with outside resources such as universities and research programs, and more importantly, they can serve to help keep the OD effort at the highest possible professional and ethical level. Their skills and insights should serve as a standard against which to compare the activities of internal change agents. The most innovative and successful OD efforts on the world scene, in our judgment, have maintained some planned level of external consultant use.

Another dimension of the issue arises, however, when the consultant senses that his or her assistance is no longer needed or could be greatly reduced. For the client's good, to avoid wasting the consultant's own professional resources, and to be congruent, the consultant should confront the issue.

A particularly troublesome dilemma occurs when the use of the consultant, in the judgment of the consultant, is declining more rapidly than progress on the OD effort seems to warrant. It would be easy to say that here, too, the consultant should raise the matter with the client, and undoubtedly this should occur even if there are risks in appearing self-serving, but we wish more were known about the

dynamics of OD efforts' losing their momentum. Additional knowledge would help the consultant and client to assess more objectively the extent of need for consultant assistance, how to improve the skills of the consultant and the client in managing the OD effort, and how to rejuvenate the OD effort if rejuvenation is warranted.

While much is "known" about the conditions that can lead to success or failure (see Chapter 15, "Conditions for Optimal Success"), we suspect that some OD efforts languish at the point when the next thrust would be to intensify the development of group and interpersonal skills and to confront those issues at this level that have been avoided. The action research approach can be an efficient way to improve many things in an organization fairly quickly, but some of the more difficult problems can remain submerged unless there is a real commitment to managing the culture in depth.

Tannenbaum believes that many OD programs taper off because there has not been enough attention to helping people and units let go of matters that need to be laid to rest, to die. He believes that in a real sense, facilitators should be able to assist in a mourning process, but in order to be of help must be able to confront their own tendencies to want to hang on and their own vulnerability.

> . . . My hunch is that after we get beyond those attitudes and behaviors most individuals and groups are relatively willing to alter, we then begin challenging the more central fixities that define individuals and organizational units at their cores. Holding on at this level becomes crucial. Yet we keep working on processes that focus on *change*, and do *not* do very much about facilitating mourning and the dying process—helping units let go.[13]

We also suspect that OD efforts frequently flounder because of internal power struggles that have not been sensed early enough by the consultant or understood well enough for anyone to intervene constructively. For example, some relatively powerful person or group may be fearful of losing status or influence and may be mobilizing support for the status quo through such tactics as distorting information or discrediting whoever is seen as the threat. The threat may be the change agent or the OD effort, or the threat may be wholly unrelated to the OD process. But if people in the organization get caught up in the political power maneuvering, the OD effort may be immobilized. While not much is known about these occurrences as they relate to OD efforts, it would seem that these situations, if sensed, need to be surfaced and confronted head on. Such shadowy struggles are usually dysfunctional whether or not there is an OD effort under way, and the remedy may need to be a prompt description of reality by the chief executive officer. While a long-term OD effort should replace most such covert maneuvering with an open, working through of issues, these situations can and do occur while an OD effort is under way.

Sometimes the organization may simply be temporarily overloaded by externally imposed crises occupying the attention of key people. Under such conditions, the best strategy may be one of reducing or suspending the more for-

malized OD interventions and letting people carry on with their enhanced skills, and then returning to the more formalized aspects at a later date. If more were known about the dynamics of these and the other circumstances we have described, the resolution of the problem of what to do when the OD effort seems to be running out of steam might take directions other than reducing or terminating the involvement of the change agent.

IMPLICATIONS OF OD FOR THE CLIENT

An OD effort has some fundamental implications for the chief executive officer and top managers of an organization, and we believe these implications need to be shared and understood at the outset. We reach the following conclusions when we ask ourselves: What is top management buying into in participating in and supporting an OD effort?

Basically, *OD interventions*, as we have described them, *are a conscious effort on the part of top management*

To enlarge the data base for making management decisions. In particular, the attitudes, perceptions, and expertise of team members throughout the organization are more extensively considered than heretofore.

To expand the influence processes. The OD process tends to further a process of mutual influence; managers and subordinates alike tend to be influential in ways they have not experienced previously.

To capitalize on the strengths of the informal system and to make the formal and the informal system more congruent. A great deal of information that has previously been suppressed within individuals or within the informal system—e.g., appreciations, hurts, opinions about how to do things more effectively, fears, etc.—begins to be surfaced and dealt with. Energies spent suppressing matters can now be rechanneled into cooperative effort.

To become more responsive. Management must now respond to data that have been submerged and must begin to move in the direction of personal and organizational effectiveness suggested by the data.

To legitimize conflict as an area for collaborative management. Rather than using win-lose, smoothing, or withdrawal modes of conflict resolution, the mode gradually becomes one of confronting the underlying basis for the conflict and working the problem through to a successful resolution.[14]

To examine its own leadership style and ways of managing. We do not think an OD effort can be viable long if the top management team (the CEO plus subordinate team or the top team of an essentially autonomous unit) does not actively participate in the effort. The top team inevitably is a powerful determinant of organizational culture. OD is not a televised game being played for viewing by top management; members of top management are the key players.

To legitimize and encourage the examination and collaborative management of team, interteam, and organization cultures—including the culture of the top team. This is what OD is all about.

We think these items largely describe the underlying implications for top management, and the OD consultant and client must be clear about them at the outset.

NOTES

1 Edgar H. Schein, *Process Consultation: Its Role in Organization Development* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. 82.

2 Tichy differentiates between four types of change agents, which he calls "analysis for the top (AFT)," "organization development (OD)," "people change technology (PCT)," and "outside pressure (OP)." See Noel M. Tichy, "Agents of Planned Social Change: Congruence of Values, Cognitions and Actions," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 19 (June 1974), pp. 164–82.

3 Schein, *Process Consultation*, p. 120.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 82.

5 This discussion and Figure 17-1 were stimulated by and draw upon Roger Harrison's essay, "Choosing the Depth of Organizational Intervention," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 6 (April–June 1970), pp. 181–202.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 201.

7 *Ibid.*, pp. 198–99.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 202.

9 W. J. Reddin, "My Errors in OD" (Paper presented to the Organization Development Division at the Academy of Management 36th Annual Meeting, Kansas City, Mo., August 13, 1976), p. 3.

10 For a more extensive discussion of helpful consultant behaviors, see Charles K. Ferguson, "Concerning the Nature of Human Systems and the Consultant's Role," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 4 (April–June 1968), pp. 179–93.

11 Chris Argyris, *Intervention Theory and Method* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1970), p. 17.

12 See Chris Argyris, *Management and Organizational Development: The Path from XA to YB* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), pp. 58, 108, 137, for a discussion of the importance of "maps."

13 Robert Tannenbaum, "Some Matters of Life and Death," *OD Practitioner*, 8 (February 1976), p. 5.

14 Blake and Mouton refer to "confrontation," "forcing," "smoothing," "compromise," and "withdrawal" as the different modes of conflict resolution. See Robert Blake and Jane Mouton, *The Managerial Grid* (Houston: Gulf Publishing, 1964), pp. 30, 67, 93, 94, 122, 123, 163.

18

Mechanistic and Organic Systems and the Contingency Approach

Two types of organizations, *mechanistic* and *organic*, have been described by Tom Burns and G. M. Stalker; in this chapter we wish to explore the relevance of these concepts to organization development. These terms are being used with increasing frequency, and it is important to understand their meanings and the implications of one system versus the other. These terms can be useful shorthand ways of describing the overall "climate" or mode of operating in an organization or its subunits, but, unfortunately, they can also be used as "bad" or "good" labels. *Mechanistic*, in particular, is frequently used with a "bad" connotation. In general, OD activities tend to result in an organization beginning to take on more *organic* characteristics, but some paradoxes and contingencies need examining.

According to Burns and Stalker, these two types of organizations, mechanistic and organic, in their pure form, are seen as located on opposite ends of a continuum and not as a dichotomy.[1] Various organizations will be found at different points between these polarities and indeed may move back and forth along this continuum, depending upon the degree of stability or change being experienced. In addition, an organization may include both types within its subdivisions.

> Both types represent a "rational" form of organization, in that they may both, in our experience, be explicitly and deliberately created and maintained to exploit the human resources of a concern in the most efficient manner feasible in the circumstances of the concern. Not surprisingly, however, each exhibits characteristics which have been hitherto associated with different kinds of interpretation. For it is our contention that empirical findings have usually been classified according to sociological ideology rather than according to the functional specificity of the working organization to its task and the conditions confronting it.[2]

Thus, implicitly, Burns and Stalker do not see the occurrence of one or the other of these two systems as necessarily accidental, but as frequently stemming from the circumstances being faced by the organization. It would also seem to be implicit that the occurrence of one or the other might also stem from an ideological preference—a phenomenon that could represent a trap for overzealous adherents to either type of organization.

MECHANISTIC SYSTEMS

To elaborate on the two types, Burns and Stalker see the *mechanistic* form of organization as particularly appropriate to stable conditions and having the following characteristics:

1. A high degree of task differentiation and specialization, precise delineation of rights and responsibilities and methods to be used, and role incumbents tending to pursue technical improvements in means in contrast to focusing on the overall ends of the organization.
2. A high degree of reliance on each hierarchical level for task coordination, control, and communications. That is, each supervisor is responsible for reconciling the activities below him.
3. A tendency for the top of the hierarchy to control incoming and outgoing communications and to be conservative in dispensing information within the system. (Burns and Stalker give an example of a manager who literally controlled *all* correspondence in and out of the firm.)
4. A high degree of emphasis on vertical interactions between superiors and subordinates, with subordinate activities mainly governed by these interactions. (While Burns and Stalker do not say this, clearly there is an informal social system involving lateral peer interactions which stays mainly "underground" under these circumstances.)
5. Insistence on loyalty to the organization and to superiors.
6. A higher value placed on internal (local) knowledge, skill, and experience, in contrast to more general (cosmopolitan) knowledge, skill, and experience.[3]

Another characteristic, which is not explicit but is perhaps implied in Burns and Stalker's model and which we believe to be one of the key characteristics of a mechanistic system, is:

7. A one-to-one leadership style, that is, with most interactions between superior and subordinate occurring in private discussion, and an absence or minimal attention to group processes and the informal system. As seen in this form of organization, the superior-subordinate relationship tends to be a telling-reporting relationship. (See Figure 18-1.) To illustrate the existence of such a leadership style, we have had managers tell us that, literally, their superior had never held a meeting involving all his immediate subordinates. They also said that most of the one-to-one conversations centered on assignments initiated by the superior, and in his office, i.e., on his "turf."

FIGURE 18-1
Characteristic Pattern of Leadership in a Mechanistic System

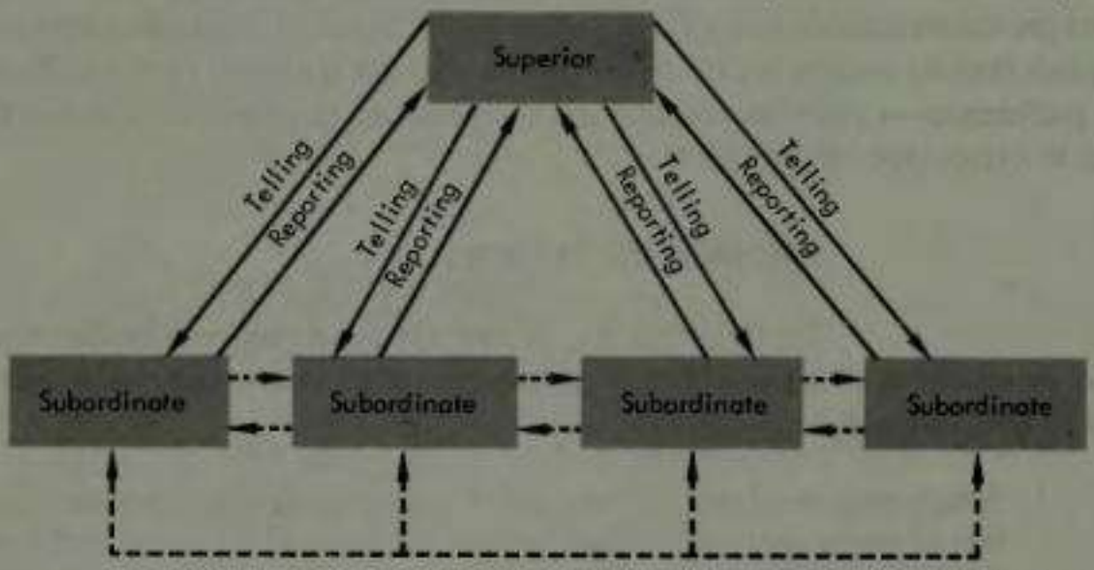


FIGURE 17-1

ORGANIC SYSTEMS

In contrast, the *organic* system is seen by Burns and Stalker as appropriate to changing conditions and has the following characteristics.[4]

1. A continuous reassessment of tasks and assignments through interaction with others and a high value placed on utilizing special knowledge and experience which can contribute to the "real" problems being faced by the organization.
2. A network of authority, control, and communication, stemming more from expertise and commitment to the total task than from the omniscience of the chief executive or the authority of hierarchical roles. Centers of control and communication are frequently *ad hoc,* that is, are located where the knowledge is. Responsibility is viewed as something to be shared rather than narrowly delimited.

Although the organic systems "remain stratified," they tend to be stratified more on the basis of expertise:

> The lead in joint decisions is frequently taken by seniors, but it is an essential presumption of the organic system that the lead, i.e., "authority," is taken by whoever shows himself most informed and capable, i.e., the "best authority." The location of authority is settled by consensus.[5]

3. A tendency for communications to be much more extensive and open in contrast to limited and controlled. (This is more implicit in Burns and Stalker's model than explicit.)
4. The encouragement of a communications pattern and style which is lateral and diagonal as well as vertical and which is more of a consultative, information- and advice-giving nature than of a command or decision-

relying nature. By *diagonal* we refer to Burns and Stalker's notion about communications between people of different rank and across functional groups.

5. A greater emphasis on commitment to the organization's tasks, progress, and growth than on obedience or loyalty.
6. High value placed on expertise relevant to the technological and commercial milieu of the organization (cosmopolitian skills). One indicator would be "importance and prestige attach[ed] to affiliations. . . ."[6]

And finally, to supplement this model, a characteristic that we believe to be central to a truly organic system:

7. A team leadership style, with an emphasis on consultation and considerable attention to interpersonal and group processes, including methods of decision making and more frequent decisions by consensus.[7] (See Figure 18-2.) Perhaps symbolically, meetings are frequently held away from the superior's office, with physical facilities designed to further group dialogue.

FIGURE 18-2
Characteristic Pattern of Leadership in an Organic System

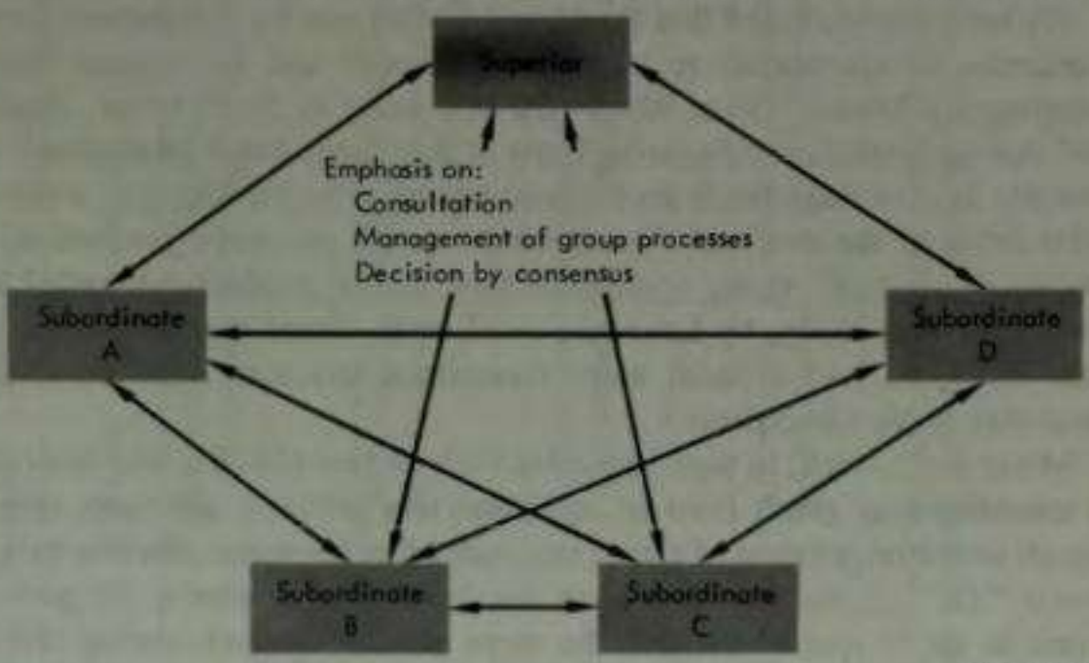


FIGURE 17-2

THE CONTINGENCY QUESTION

From our experience, organization development activities tend to shift an organization toward the organic mode as described by the above seven characteristics. The reason, of course, is that there is a deliberate emphasis in an OD program toward collaboratively managed group culture and collaboratively managed organizational culture. Whether we call it collaboration, consul-

tation, or open communications, the theme in OD is effective participation. And that theme pervades most of the characteristics of an organic system.

Paradoxically, however, while the thrust of an organization development effort is toward the organic mode, OD activities sometimes increase the mechanistic quality of some organizational dimensions. For example, consensus might develop in a work team so that it would be functional for duties and responsibilities to be more precisely defined or so that there should be more reliance on the superior for coordination and control in the assignment of routine tasks. At the level of examining its methods, the team has organic characteristics; at the level of routine tasks, the team is deciding to become more mechanistic. As another illustration, an organization development effort might strengthen the organic characteristics of the design and engineering departments of an automobile company, while the assembly line departments might remain substantially mechanistic in terms of task delineation although becoming more organic in terms of employee involvement in the control function.

Thus it will not suffice to have an ideological adherence to one form of organization over the other. There are unquestionably contingencies that affect the appropriateness of one system over the other or the appropriateness of a particular mix of characteristics of the two systems.

We have already noted that Burns and Stalker see the mechanistic form of organization as appropriate to "stable conditions" and the organic form to "changing conditions." Joan Woodward in a study in South Essex, England, found that successful manufacturing firms of the "large-batch production" type (assembly line, or large-batch production) tended to be mechanistic, while successful firms of the unit and "small-batch" (e.g., prototype production) and "process production" (e.g., continuous flow liquids production) tended to be organic.[8] Another study, by Lawrence and Lorsch, found that production units within six firms had a much more formalized structure than the research laboratories in the same firms.[9]

Morse and Lorsch, in their important study of less effective and more effective manufacturing plants (two of each) and less effective and more effective research laboratories (three of each), concluded that the more effective units had a better "fit" of characteristics than the less effective plants. Of particular interest to us, it was found that the more effective manufacturing units, in contrast to the less effective, had a relatively high structure, a directive supervisory style with influence concentrated at the top, and participants who had relatively little "say" in choosing and handling their own work. The more effective research laboratories, in contrast to the less effective, had a relatively low structure, a participative style of supervision with influence widely distributed, and participants who had a relatively high degree of "say" in choosing and handling their own tasks (see Table 18-1).[10]

On the face of it, it would appear that a manufacturing plant, having highly predictable tasks, becomes less effective if it becomes too loosely structured and

TABLE 18-1
Systems Contingencies in Manufacturing Plants and Research Laboratories

Type of Organization	*Tasks*	*Structure*	*Climate*	*Mode of Conflict Resolution*	*Organizational Effectiveness*
Manufacturing plants	Predictable manufacturing tasks	High formality of structure	Influence concentrated at the top; little "say"; more directive supervisory style	Confrontation	Effective
Manufacturing plants		Low formality of structure	Egalitarian distribution of influence; much "say"; less directive, more participative supervisory style	Forcing	Less effective
Research laboratories	Uncertain research tasks	Low formality of structure	Egalitarian distribution of influence; much "say"; participative style of supervision	Confrontation	Effective
Research laboratories		High formality of structure	Influence tending to concentrate at the top; little "say"; directive style of supervision	Forcing	Less effective

Based on pp. 80–83 and 105–107 from *Organizations and Their Members: A Contingency Approach* by Jay W. Lorsch and John J. Morse. Copyright © 1974 by Jay W. Lorsch and John J. Morse. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

too participative—i.e., too organic. Conversely, a research laboratory, having highly uncertain tasks, becomes less effective if it becomes too structured and too directive—i.e., too mechanistic. This makes sense to us.

However, this conclusion needs to be qualified relative to at least one important contingency that appeared to be working in the Lorsch and Morse study. It is a contingency not dealt with in Burns and Stalker's model or in the Woodward research. In measuring modes of conflict resolution in the various organizations with Blake and Mouton's "confrontation," "forcing," and "smoothing" categories, Lorsch and Morse found that *organizational members in both the effective plants and the effective laboratories used the "confrontation" mode.* In contrast, the prevailing mode in the less effective plants and laboratories was "forcing."[11] The *confrontation* mode was defined as meaning ". . . that individuals attempt to find the basis for the conflict and ways of resolving underlying issues." The *forcing* mode was defined as when ". . . individuals try to win their own positions at the expense of the other parties to the conflict."[12]

Thus, in the less effective manufacturing plants there was more participation but *less skill* demonstrated in interpersonal, group, and intergroup relationships than in the more effective plants where there was less participation but more skill. Furthermore, Lorsch and Morse cited some data suggesting that in the less effective manufacturing plants where there was the most participation, subordinates felt that they were participating in many matters that could more easily be determined topside, and that too much time was spent in meetings without adequate decisions being made. In the case of the research laboratories, the most effective sites were those that *had higher participation coupled with the most skill.*[13] The dimensions of *interpersonal, group,* and *intergroup skills* and *perceived relevance of participation,* then, may be crucial. We conclude, therefore, that there is probably an optimal mix of structure and participation depending upon the technology, that participation must be relevant to the task, and that interpersonal, group, and intergroup skills are critical factors associated with organizational effectiveness generally.

In short, the contingency approach suggests that the question is not "Which is better, an organic system or a mechanistic system?" but that the question needs to be posed in terms of a number of contingencies. For example:

1. What is the most effective mix of organic and mechanistic characteristics for a given organization or unit and its current environment and its current technology? Or
2. Under what conditions is the organic system superior to the mechanistic, and vice versa? Or
3. What is the impact of interpersonal, group, and intergroup skills on the functionality of an organic vs. a mechanistic system? Or
4. Given different technologies, tasks, and human resources, what dimensions do we expect to change with OD-type interventions? Or

5. Under what circumstances is an organization development effort particularly relevant and most likely to succeed?

The following are some of the contingencies that we see as the most relevant in answering question 2—Under what conditions is the organic system superior to the mechanistic, and vice versa?

Contingency of:

a. Hierarchical level. The higher the level, the more extensive the role requirements in terms of planning, coordination, control, and decision making. The higher the level and thus the greater the complexity of these functions, the greater the need for extensive inputs from diverse specialists and for examining many options; thus, the need for acknowledging expertise, for open communications, for clarifying goals, and so forth.

b. Interdependency—the degree to which role performance is directly associated with the discretionary actions of others. (This contingency is related to the preceding one.) The greater the interdependency, the greater the need for open communications, the greater the need for team leadership style, and so forth.

c. Skills—the capabilities and talents of the human resources in the system. The greater the cognitive, problem-solving, and interpersonal capabilities of the people in the system, the greater the effectiveness of both systems.

d. Group process and intergroup skills—the degree to which the leader and the subordinates have basic communications, task and maintenance, and intergroup skills. In particular, skills in both processes are a necessary prerequisite to a team leadership style; such skills are also important in the effective functioning of task forces, committees, and so forth. The more participative and loosely structured the system, the greater the need for interpersonal, group, and intergroup skills.

e. Rapidity of external change. The more the organization is existing in a rapidly changing environment, the more important the adaptability facilitated by the organic mode. Burns and Stalker see this dimension as particularly important.

f. Time pressure, danger, or external threat. For example, although the organic system may be better prepared to cope with future uncertainty, at the time of an unanticipated crisis the organization may need to revert to highly mechanistic characteristics to survive.

g. Technology—the degree to which tasks are predetermined by the machinery or methods of a particular industry. For example, the technology of an assembly line serves to preplan tasks, and to narrow the interdependency, and so forth.

h. Attitudes or assumptions about people in organizations—a "Theory X" versus a "Theory Y" set of assumptions. A Theory X set of assumptions will tend to be incompatible with the culture of an organic system. In contrast, if key

executives or subordinates are philosophically committed to a participative or democratic leadership style, such values will tend to be more congruent with the organic style than with the mechanistic.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Mechanistic and *organic* organizations have been contrasted to provide rubrics for thinking about the outcomes of organization development activities. While, in general, OD strategies tend to increase the organic characteristics of a system; paradoxically they can also lead to an increase in mechanistic attributes along certain dimensions—for example, an increase in task differentiation at lower levels of the organization, or more stringent procedures.

Theory and some research suggest that neither the purely organic form nor the purely mechanistic form may be optimal under all circumstances but that there needs to be a good "fit" between technology, tasks, internal and external environments, and skills of the people in the organization. Thus, different organization development interventions may have differing degrees of relevance under different circumstances. And those circumstances may vary by hierarchical levels, interdependency, technical skills and group process skills, time pressure and rapidity of external change, danger of external threat, technology, and values. Interpersonal, group, and intergroup skills appear to be crucial to the success of both organic and mechanistic systems and are the *sine qua non* of an effective OD effort.

The genius of OD is that the perceptions, feelings, and cognitive inputs of organizational members are tapped to build an optimal, evolving, organizational design for the unique circumstances faced by the organization and its members. The thrust of OD activities is to be responsive to the data, not to impose an organic system. We see OD as relevant to both organic and mechanistic systems, therefore. However, through the OD process, almost by definition some aspects of the organization will become more organic. In either event, it is important that changes be accompanied by growing behavioral and conceptual competencies on the part of organization members.

NOTES

1 Tom Burns and G. M. Stalker, *The Management of Innovation* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1961), pp. 119–25.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 119.

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 119–20. In some respects the mechanistic form of organization is comparable to the "bureaucratic" organization as described by Weber. For example, the features of the bureaucratic form, to Weber, include a "clearly defined hierarchy of offices," emphasis on impersonal rules, and administrators "subject to strict and systematic discipline and control." Max Weber, *The Theory of*

Social and Economic Organization (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 333–34.

4 Burns and Stalker, *Management of Innovation*, pp. 119–25. Bennis uses the term *organic-adaptive* in describing a similar type of organization. See Warren Bennis, "Organizations of the Future," *Personnel Administration*, 30 (September–October 1967), pp. 6–19.

5 Burns and Stalker, *Management of Innovation*, p. 122.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 121.

7 Likert contrasts *man-man* and *group* patterns of organization which are comparable to the two types of leadership styles we are contrasting. See Rensis Likert, *New Patterns of Leadership* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), pp. 106–10.

8 Joan Woodward, *Industrial Organization: Theory and Practice* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 71. A rationale that we see for process organizations to be organic is that the equipment does most of the routine work while employees are largely busy with planning, research, and monitoring functions.

9 Paul R. Lawrence and Jay Lorsch, *Organization and Environment: Managing Differentiation and Integration* (Boston: Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, 1967), p. 32.

10 Jay W. Lorsch and John J. Morse, *Organizations and Their Members: A Contingency Approach* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), pp. 80–83, 105–7.

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 105.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 79. The reference to these categories, as cited by Lorsch and Morse, is Robert Blake and Jane Mouton, *The Managerial Grid* (Houston, Tex.: Gulf Publishing, 1964), pp. 30, 67, 93–94, 122–23, 163.

13 Lorsch and Morse, *Organizations and Their Members*, pp. 74–76, 99–106. Another dimension, "feelings of competence," also differentiated the more effective organizations from the less effective, Lorsch and Morse discuss the causality aspect; we are inclined to accept the explanation that the feelings of competence were a result of feedback about effectiveness (pp. 46–48).

19

Research on Organization Development

Does OD work? The answer to that crucial question is the topic of this chapter. In general the answer is, "Yes, OD can have positive effects on individuals, work groups, and organizations in terms of attitude changes, behavior changes, and performance changes." Evaluating organization development programs is a complicated and difficult undertaking, however, as we shall see in this discussion and review of selected research efforts. Teasing out the effects of specific interventions or even a large OD program is an inherently formidable task; field research is prone to confounding from many sources. But evidence that OD is a successful strategy for improving individual and organizational effectiveness is accumulating, and we shall review some of the evidence in this chapter.

An equally important question is, *Why* does OD work? What is it about specific OD interventions that causes positive changes? What are the causal mechanisms occurring in organization development programs that bring about desirable outcomes? The *explanation* of the OD process requires a theory of planned change or a theory of organization development. In addition it requires theory-guided empirical research. Considerably less progress has been made on this front, although some beginnings of theory development are now appearing in the literature.

In this chapter we first explore some of the issues and problems involved in evaluating organization development. Next some positive developments are listed. Finally we present selected examples of research, concentrating on the type of OD program involved, the research design used, and the results observed. The goals of this chapter are twofold: to impart an understanding of the research process as it applies to OD and to recount some actual studies on OD.

ASSESSING THE EFFECTS OF OD: SOME ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

Organization development is a prescription for a process of planned change in organizations that includes concepts, techniques, and interventions. The desired outcomes of organization development are to make the organization and its members and work groups more effective while also making the organization a better place to satisfy human needs. The OD process, then, utilizes various techniques to bring about improvement or change in various target groups—individuals, groups, and the total organization. Viewed from a research perspective, two questions arise: Does OD in fact bring about or cause these desired effects? and, If we observe these desired effects in an organization engaged in an OD program, can we attribute the effects to the OD program? Unambiguous answers to these questions can come only from careful, controlled empirical research.

In research terminology the OD program could be called the independent variable (IV), or the treatment, or "cause." It is presumed to cause variation in the dependent variable (DV), or "effect." The independent variable is manipulated (by being either present or absent), and this causes changes on the dependent variable (in this case, increased effectiveness). If we let the independent variable be *X* and the dependent variable be *Y*, then the relation between the two is stated as "*X* leads to *Y*"; "*X* is a determining condition of *Y*"; or "*X* causes *Y*." In research on organization development we are interested in determining whether or not OD (*X*) causes or leads to greater effectiveness of individuals, groups, and organizations (*Y*). Parenthetically, Pate, Nielsen, and Bacon suggest, and we agree, that it may be incorrect to conceptualize OD or an OD program as an independent variable; rather it is a treatment whereby the independent variable is manipulated:[1]

> Some researchers regarded OD itself to be an independent variable. However, in our view, OD does not generally constitute the independent variable, but is only instrumental in its manipulation. For example, one might expect introduction of participative decision making (OD intervention) to facilitate worker awareness of the rationale for organizational actions (independent variable), which in turn may increase support for and commitment to those actions (dependent variable).[2]

It is not really known in most cases what "causes" the effects of an OD intervention; it is only known that something within the overall activities caused some changes. In the strictest sense, the cause is the independent variable, and since that is usually not identified in OD research, we will loosely refer to the OD intervention or program as a "treatment" that *contains* some independent variables having an impact on dependent variables of interest. Let us look at some problems in conducting research on OD.

Problems with Definitions and Concepts

One of the first problems in research on organization development is that *X* and *Y* are not precise terms. There are endless variations of "OD." A program can consist of many activities or only one or two activities, yet it would be referred to as OD. A program can be a one-shot intervention or a multiyear intervention and be called OD. A program can include a particular intervention—say, intergroup team building—or not include it and be called OD. And some programs we would not label OD are called OD. Thus there is no unitary treatment known as OD, and research on OD is therefore not on OD per se but rather on a specific set of treatment activities. In reporting on the research examples later in this chapter we will specify the treatments involved in order to know what treatments are causing what outcomes.

Robert Kahn has criticized the field of OD for its lack of precise meaning as follows:

> *Organizational development* is not a concept, at least not in the scientific sense of the word: it is not precisely defined; it is not reducible to specific, uniform, observable behaviors; it does not have a prescribed and verifiable place in a network of logically related concepts, a theory.[3]

We agree with this assessment and believe the lack of precision in definitions has slowed the development of research on the OD process.

Furthermore, the *Y*, improved effectiveness, is not a precise term. Is it to mean greater efficiency? Greater productivity? Greater profits? More positive attitudes? Is it to mean improvements in individual functioning, group functioning, the functioning of most of the organization, or the functioning of all of the organization? And how much "better" must the improvement be over the status quo to be called improvement? Answers to these questions are generally not found in the research literature. Thus, improved organizational effectiveness is treated in a variety of ways in research on OD; it is a global term that refers to many different outcomes.

The major means of overcoming the problem of imprecision in definitions is to be more specific in defining *X*'s and *Y*'s. This is done by giving operational definitions to the terms. An *operational definition* is a statement of the specific operations or activities involved in both implementing the treatment and measuring the effects or results.[4] We must also move from describing global treatments and global effects to describing independent and dependent variables—cause-effect linkages.

Problems with Internal Validity

A second problem in research on OD is that of demonstrating that the *X* of interest, some OD activities, in fact caused the variation in *Y* and not some other known or unknown *X*. This is the problem of internal validity. "*Internal validity*

is the basic minimum without which any experiment is uninterpretable: Did in fact the experimental treatments make a difference in this specific experimental instance?"[5] This is a problem in all field research and evaluation research: there is simply so much going on in the real-world situation that it is difficult to pinpoint what is causing the changes that occur. The key to overcoming or at least attenuating this problem lies in the research design—the structure of the research effort from start to finish. The research must be so executed that *rival explanations* for the changes in the dependent variables can be systematically discounted. For example, if simultaneously with an OD program everyone in the organization received a substantial salary increase, and if we were measuring the effects of the program on attitudes toward work and the organization, then any positive shift in attitudes could be caused by the OD program, by the salary raise, or by some other unknown factor or factors.

Campbell and Stanley have suggested a number of designs that overcome threats to internal validity.[6] In addition, when conditions do not permit true experimental designs, they suggest ways to build "quasi-experimental" designs that will rule out rival explanations for the changes found. The research designs used in OD are getting better in terms of controlling threats to internal validity: in a recent review of thirty-seven research studies on OD, Pate, Nielsen, and Bacon found that experimental or quasi-experimental designs were used in twenty-nine of them; in a review of OD research from 1964 to 1974, White and Mitchell found that experimental or quasi-experimental designs were used in only twelve (out of forty-four) studies.[7]

Several design features enhance internal validity. One of the best methods is to have comparison or control groups that receive no treatment but are measured on the dependent variables. If changes occur in the experimental groups that receive the treatment but no changes occur in the control groups, this is evidence for the treatment's causing the observed effects. It is of course imperative that there be pretreatment and posttreatment measures to register any changes. Post-treatment measures only are of limited value, since one can never know whether the treatment led to the results observed or whether the results would have been there without the treatment. "Time series" designs offer a compromise between control groups and no control groups. In a time series design, multiple measures are made on the experimental group over time. If changes in the measures occur after the treatments, this is some support for the hypothesis that the treatment caused the changes.

Norman Berkowitz has discussed the problems inherent in research on OD and has proposed an elaborate time series design.[8] He further suggests that an excessive concern for internal validity in OD research as reflected in trying to use truly experimental designs rather than quasi-experimental designs may be inappropriate at this stage of the research efforts. Finally, random assignment of units (individuals, groups, or oganizations) to experimental and control groups is a way of controlling for rival explanations for why the change occurred and controlling for extraneous variables. But random assignment is often difficult to

achieve in field research. Organizations involved in OD self-select themselves to engage in such programs and would probably be unwilling to be placed in a "no treatment" control group for research purposes. Furthermore, an organization hostile to OD is in the "no treatment" group for very definite reasons. With self-selection it is never possible to know that any changes that occurred were due to the treatment and not to some other unknown factors.

Problems with External Validity

A third problem in research on OD is that of external validity. "*External validity* asks the question of *generalizability*: To what populations, settings, treatment variables, and measurement variables can this effect be generalized?"[9] This question of generalizability to other settings and circumstances is always an important one and will probably become even more important in the near future. Organization development is being applied in an ever-increasing number of settings,[10] and what "works" in one setting may not work in another. For example, organization development techniques are effective in middle-class suburban schools, but are they also effective in ghetto urban schools? Organization development techniques have been shown to increase productivity in private sector business organizations; can they do the same in a federal bureaucracy? It is likely that some techniques or treatments will be found to be situation-specific, while others will be more universally applicable.

Problems with Lack of Theory

A final problem that we would like to mention is this: OD research is not theory-guided research; in fact, there is essentially no comprehensive theory to explain the process of planned change in organizations. Kerlinger defines *theory* as "*. . . . a set of interrelated constructs (concepts), definitions, and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena.*"[11] Without a theory of organization development, the relations among variables and the variables themselves are unknown. Organization development researchers are forced to fall back on a strategy of measuring the effects of global treatments (not independent variables) on a potpourri of dependent variables—things that should *probably* be affected by the intervention.

Theory-guided research is more efficient, more precise, and more definitive. With theory, researchers know what to look for and where to look for it in their research efforts. Research either confirms or does not confirm the theory; if the theory is disconfirmed, it is modified and new avenues for further research are indicated. The first major step in building theory in OD is the identification and specification of the independent and dependent variables that explain the

phenomena. Next the relations among these variables are specified with increasing precision. These will be the major chores of OD practitioners, researchers, and theoreticians in the near future.

Significant progress is being made, however, in the development of theory and the identification and specification of relevant independent and dependent variables. Alderfer has coalesced a number of disparate ideas relating to planned organizational change into a coherent theory with research implications;[12] Argyris has proposed a general theory of intervention in human systems based on his experience and research;[13] Blake and Mouton have developed a theory and classification scheme for the consultation process;[14] and Vaill has discussed some of the unique requirements for building a "practice theory"—a theory applicable to applied change problems.[15] Bowers, Franklin, and Pecorella have developed a taxonomy that starts to clarify some of the variables involved in organizational improvement strategies by focusing on both the problems the intervention is designed to rectify and the interventions themselves.[16]

In their review of research on OD, White and Mitchell propose a classification system based on facet theory for independent and dependent variables found in OD interventions.[17] These authors identify three underlying dimensions or facets of OD interventions and the effects of OD intervention: (1) a target or recipient of change; (2) a specific content area of change; and (3) the context or relationships that are supposed to change. The first facet, *target of change*, consists of three elements—the individual, the subgroup, and the total organization. The *content area of change* facet consists of four elements—conceptual, behavioral, procedural, and structural. The *context of change* facet consists of five elements—intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, and organizational.[18] Almost all OD interventions and their desired effects can be specified on these three facets and the twelve elements. For example, a team-building intervention would have as a target the subgroup, the content area of change would be either conceptual or behavioral, and the relationships of change would be either interpersonal or intragroup. With such a classification system in mind, researchers can design their data collection methods better and can start to test for the effects of various interventions on the different facets and elements. This will lead to research based on specified hypothesized relations among variables instead of a "shot-gun" approach in which numerous measures are made on variables to "see if anything happened."

Dunn and Swierczek applied a refined content analysis technique (called "retrospective case analysis") to sixty-seven successful and unsuccessful change efforts, many of them case studies, in an attempt to test whether certain hypothesized relations about what causes success would hold up.[19] They examined eleven hypotheses that appear in the literature. These hypotheses consist of such statements as "Change efforts in economic organizations will be more successful than change efforts in other types of organizations"—not sup-

ported by the data and "Change efforts directed at the total organization will be more successful than change efforts directed at lower levels"—also not supported by the evidence. Three hypotheses received moderate support as marking successful versus unsuccessful change efforts: first, change efforts in which the mode of intervention is *collaborative* as opposed to other intervention modes tend to be more successful; second, change efforts in which the change agent has a *participative orientation* versus other orientations tend to be more successful; and third, change efforts employing standardized strategies that involve *high levels of participation* will be more successful than those that involve low levels of participation.[20] This effort toward building a theory of organizational change processes "grounded" or based on empirical research is a laudable one. Benefits derive both from discovering which hypotheses are supported and from discovering which hypotheses are not supported. These hypotheses specify relations among variables that can form the basis for a theory of organizational change and development.

Conclusion

We have discussed four major problems confronting research on OD: imprecision of definitions and conceptualizations concerning OD research, problems with internal and external validity, and the lack of supporting theory to guide research. These do not appear to be insurmountable problems at this time, though they continue to plague research efforts.

The future of OD research will no doubt see the movement from evaluation and validation studies (the does-it-work-and-can-we-demonstrate-that-it-does stage) to a theory-building and hypothesis-testing stage that will signify a more mature level of research. Friedlander and Brown indicate some of the challenges of the future for OD research:

> If the practice and theory of OD is to merge into a broader field of planned change, what role will research play in this transformation? We believe that research will either play a far more crucial role in the advancement of this field, or become an increasingly irrelevant appendage to it. Thus far it has utilized its techniques primarily for evaluation and validation, and its current techniques are well adapted to this. Thus far it has chosen to play a relatively uninvolved and distant role in the change-practice situation. Thus far it has focused on producing data for research needs rather than practice needs. As a result, we have theory from an external research perspective only. We have generally failed to produce a theory of change which emerges from the change process itself. We need a way of enriching our understanding and our action synergistically rather than at one or the other's expense—to become a science in which knowledge-getting and knowledge-giving are an integrated process, and one that is valuable to all parties involved. We believe that a theory of planned change must be a theory of practice, which emerges from practice data and is of the practice situation, not merely about it.[21]

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN RESEARCH ON OD

Some advances in the area of research on organization development have already been cited, namely, increasing use of experimental and quasi-experimental research designs that really permit us to know what the treatment effects are, and increasing attention to the formulation of theory and testable hypotheses. These are recent advances and augur well for the future of OD research.

Another positive feature is the increasing incidence of longitudinal studies on the effects of OD. In the review article by Pate, Nielsen, and Bacon, eighteen of the thirty-seven studies examined are longitudinal research efforts.[22] Although these authors end their review with a plea for *more* systematic, longitudinal research, it is a good sign that such studies are becoming more prevalent. Longitudinal research allows both short- and long-term effects of OD interventions to be noted; it permits the use of tighter research designs; and it allows for the differential effects of different interventions to be discovered. Development of theory will go hand in hand with the emergence of more longitudinal research on OD.

Several longitudinal research efforts of a *programmatic nature* are ongoing at the present time. The Institute for Survey Research of the University of Michigan has been engaged for many years in gathering data on a variety of organizations.[23] These data serve as a repository for measuring the effects of a variety of factors impacting on the organizations including planned change programs.[24] Another long-range programmatic research effort directed specifically at measuring the effects of organizational improvement programs is the Quality of Work Program located at the University of Michigan.[25] This program, under the direction of Professor E. E. Lawler III, is monitoring and sponsoring organization development programs using a variety of treatments. The results of these programs are not available at present, but they are certain to divulge new information on the processes of planned change.

Advances in measurement techniques and valid measurement instruments have also contributed to better research on OD. Alderfer reviewed the OD research from the 1974–76 period and noted several advances along these lines:

> . . . there have been significant research developments in OD during the time covered by this review. More rigorous research designs have been employed to evaluate interventions; both positive and negative outcomes have been observed. There is clear evidence that better measuring instruments are being developed, and greater understanding of measurement errors is being obtained.[26]

Research and verified theory can advance only as fast as the measurement capabilities of a scientific field. Therefore, these improvements in measurement techniques are important developments.

Finally, there is an increased awareness among practitioners and client systems of the value and usefulness of research on OD. In part this may be due to a "coming of age" of OD and research on OD. But credit is probably also due to the numerous excellent reviews and critiques of OD research that have appeared in the professional journals and a number of books. Friedlander and Brown[27] and Alderfer[28] have written careful, comprehensive reviews and critiques of OD research for the 1974 and 1977 editions respectively of the *Annual Review of Psychology*; Michael Beer[29] and George Strauss[30] have told the broad story of OD in two important *Handbooks;* White and Mitchell[31] and Pate, Nielsen, and Bacon[32] have reviewed the research on OD and have offered helpful suggestions for improving it. All these contributions have played a role in emphasizing the need for competent research on OD and have additionally been important in raising the level of sophistication regarding research.

A REVIEW OF SELECTED OD RESEARCH EFFORTS

We will review a number of research reports representing a variety of treatments (interventions) and a variety of research designs. The goal is to explain what was done (the treatment) and what was found (the results) in enough detail to enable the reader to determine the efficacy of various OD interventions. We will briefly describe the organization, the treatment, the research design, and the results.

"Breakthrough in Organization Development," by Robert Blake, Jane Mouton, Louis Barnes, and Larry Greiner.[33]

This early, important study of the effects of a comprehensive OD program took place in a plant of about four thousand employees, including about eight hundred managerial and professional/technical personnel. The plant was code-named "Sigma" and the parent company was code-named "Piedmont" for purposes of disguise. A number of antecedent conditions led to the decision to launch the program: new policies were implemented by the parent company; Piedmont had merged with another company; and in-plant relationships at Sigma were becoming strained, as were relationships between Sigma and headquarters.

The treatment consisted of Grid OD Phase 1 and Phase 2 activities; in addition, some Phase 3 and 4 activities were instituted. (See Chapter 13 for a description of these interventions.) The change program began in November 1962 and was completed in the summer of 1963. This part was done at the direction of Blake and Mouton. All eight hundred managerial and technical people at Sigma were exposed to a one-week Managerial Grid Seminar (Phase 1), and they then applied these Grid principles and concepts in their back-home work teams (Phase 2). Some intergroup team-building activities took place (Phase 3), and some task forces were established to discover better ways to run the organization (Phase 4).

The research design was complicated by the fact that the program was well under way when the decision was made to evaluate the program—not an uncommon event in OD research. The evaluation was performed by Barnes and Greiner and took place between June 1963 and November 1963. Data collection methods included questionnaires, interviews, observations, and a combing of company records in order to separate program effects from nonprogram effects.[34] The researchers looked for changes in three broad areas: productivity and profits; practices and behavior; and perceptions, attitudes, and values. Pretreatment and posttreatment time series data were available from company records for analyzing effects of the program on productivity and profits. Records permitted some pre-post measures of practices and behavior; and in other cases a posttreatment only measure was used, with people being asked to "think back to what was happening a year ago before the program" and also describe what they were doing today. Posttreatment measures only were available for changes in perceptions, attitudes, and values; again, people were asked to describe "present" and "a year ago" feelings. No control groups were used in the research. All in all, the researchers probably did the best they could in building a "patched-up" design, but it is still a moderately weak design.

The results were positive and impressive, even though we cannot be certain, because of the research design, that they were all caused by the change program. There were signficant increases in profits and productivity during 1963, the year the program was in full swing. The authors separated controllable from noncontrollable factors in the profit increase, and they concluded that 44 percent of the profit increase was due to reductions in controllable costs such as wages and maintenance costs—things that the program could be expected to influence. These savings were worth millions of dollars in profit. Of the controllable cost savings, 69 percent came from a manpower reduction of six hundred people, and 31 percent came from better operating procedures and higher productivity per employee. Higher productivity alone was worth several million dollars in profit. In addition, it was agreed that the *quality* of the work-force reduction was enhanced by the OD program—managers felt that better decisions were made as a result of the program; only eighty-four people were actually laid off; and the reduction took place without hard feelings developing on the part of the union and the community. In sum, productivity and profits increased significantly.

Changes in practices and behavior showed a 31 percent increase in formal meetings and a 12.4 percent increase in "team problem-solving meetings" as a result of the program. In addition, there were positive changes in the criteria for promotion, and an increased number of transfers both within the plant and to other parts of the company.

There were also positive changes in perceptions, attitudes, and values. Questionnaire results from 598 respondents showed that 49 percent reported improvement in the way they worked with their bosses, 55 percent reported improvement in the way their work groups worked together, and 61 percent reported improvement in the way their work group worked with other groups.

These comparisons were between a "year ago" (1962, before the program) and "now" (1963, after the program).

These are impressive results and this study is a good research effort. The results suggest that Grid OD is effective in producing positive changes in individuals and work teams and that these can lead to improved organizational functioning.

Management by Participation, by Alfred Marrow, David Bowers, and Stanley Seashore.[35]

This study, probably the best single report of a planned change effort in the literature, is elegant, extensive, and difficult to summarize. The change program was a massive, total organization program; the research project was equally synoptic and complete. We do not claim to do justice to the project in this review.

Harwood Manufacturing Company acquired one of its competitors, the Weldon Company, on January 1, 1962. Both companies manufactured pajamas. Both companies had single plants about thirty years old, and each plant had about one thousand employees. Harwood was a profitable and healthy organization; Weldon was neither of these. As the new owners and others viewed the two organizations, one striking difference between them became obvious: Harwood's managerial style and concern for the human organization reflected Likert's System 4—participative, democratic, and team oriented; Weldon's managerial style and philosophy reflected Likert's System 1—autocratic, controlling, and authority-obedience oriented.[36] The new owners decided to move the managerial style and philosophy at Weldon to System 4 Management, and they enlisted the aid of researchers at the Insitute for Social Research, University of Michigan, to measure the program.

The change treatments started in early 1962 and ended in late 1964. The year 1963 marked the most intensive treatment period. The change program consisted of three overlapping phases: (1) protect the human resources at the Weldon plant; (2) launch an extensive improvement program of an engineering/industrial-engineering nature to improve the plant facilities and work processes; and (3) transform the management system and patterns of interpersonal relations from System 1 to System 4.

Treatments directed toward improving the plant facilities and work flow were extensive. The most basic change was a total reorganization of the work flow throughout the plant—a change from a plant-wide mixed-batch production system to a "unit system" of production. In the unit system similar product lines are relegated to departments (units) for easier scheduling and controlling of the work flow. Sales orders and delivery promises were altered to allow for longer job runs and fewer job changes. New record systems were introduced and made available to first-line supervisors. The shipping department was completely changed in terms of work flow, and a different pay system was instituted. The

cutting room was modified and work standards were established; incentive pay was initiated in the cutting room. "Nearly every job and person in the plant was affected. All these changes took place over a span of about twelve months."[37]

Treatments directed toward altering the social system were likewise extensive. These treatments were mostly implemented after the engineering changes were well under way. Four major features were involved: extending participative management to all levels of the plant; disrupting the managers' old habits of secrecy, distrust, and noncooperation; initiating problem solving and participation in all work groups of the plant; and pushing responsibility and influence downward throughout the organization. Specific treatments or interventions were as follows: a new personnel department was established; attitude surveys were administered to all employees; incentive pay plans were introduced; sensitivity-training sessions were held with all management and supervisory staff; supervisors were instructed in the new management philosophy of System 4; operators and their immediate supervisors held problem-solving meetings to surface complaints and find ways to improve the work process; a vestibule training program was instituted to replace the ineffective old training program; an earnings development program including coaching and counseling substandard operators was initiated; and new policies were initiated in which chronic absentees and employees with substandard performance were terminated. In addition, during the program there was an increase in the federal minimum wage so that everyone got a raise, and the plant became unionized.[38] Thus there were training and participation activities going on at all levels of the organization, as well as a variety of structural and procedural changes.

The research design included both extensive pre-post measures extending over a long period of time and the use of similar measures on the Harwood plant as a control group. Multiple measures were used, both "hard" data on such objective events as absenteeism, turnover, productivity, and profits and "soft" data on attitudes and perceptions. The data analyses were subtle and extensive as the researchers attempted to tease out the effects of the various treatments.

It is impossible to summarize all the results; we will hit some of the highlights. Most of the comparisons of interest to this discussion are of 1962 (before the program) and 1964 (after the program). Production efficiency improved markedly from the fall of 1962 through 1964, with productivity moving from 85 percent of standard to 115 percent of standard. Operator turnover dropped from a monthly rate of 10 percent to a monthly rate of 4 percent. Absenteeism dropped from 6 percent to 3 percent. In terms of profitability, return on capital invested changed from a −15 percent in 1962 to a +17 percent in 1964.

A number of attitudinal changes were measured, centering generally on satisfaction with the company, the work, compensation, and fellow employees, expectations about the future, and the like. In general, attitude changes, where they did occur, were modest though positive. The authors state the situation as follows:

> Rather dramatic changes in policy, in work arrangements, in interpersonal relationships—and in work performance and pay—were in Weldon accompanied by only modest affective and motivational changes. . . .
>
> Such change as did occur was favorable to the firm's program goals. At the end of the change program period there was a more positive view of the company, an awareness of the reduction in disruptive temporary job changes, more satisfaction with the compensation system and with pay, more willingness to plan for continued employment with Weldon. The increase in feelings of having to work hard was accompanied by an increase, not a decrease, in satisfactions and positive attitudes.[39]

These results of a massive change program as measured by a careful, competent research program constitute an important contribution to knowledge in the behavioral sciences. Both the change program and the research program serve as examples to those trying to build a theory of planned change.

But the story is not finished. Seashore and Bowers did a follow-up study of Weldon in 1969, four and one-half years after the termination of the intensive change program.[40] Their purpose: to see if the positive effects of the program would last over time. Questionnaire data from managers, supervisors, and a sample of employees were collected as well as certain company performance information. They found that the positive gains in employee attitudes were maintained and in some cases improved. Managers and supervisors saw the company continuing to move closer to the ideal participative organizational system, System 4. Regarding long-term effects on organizational performance, Seashore and Bowers report:

> Briefly, Weldon moved from a position of substantial capital loss in 1962 to substantial return on investment in 1964; this direction of change in profitability has continued through 1968, the last year of record. Employee earnings which rose substantially between 1962 and 1964 have been sustained at a relatively high level. During the period since 1964 there have been substantial gains in efficiency and volume for the factory as a whole. New products and work methods have been introduced.[41]

The Weldon change program thus resulted in many changes, and these changes have been maintained and extended in the years since the program was formally terminated.

> "Short- and Long-Range Effects of a Team Development Effort," by Richard Beckhard and Dale G. Lake.[42]

This change project took place with twelve managers who were unit and section supervisors in two units of the securities division of a large investment and commercial bank. Nine managers from the Mortgage Production unit and three managers from the Methods unit were selected to become an "experimental team." The managers were a heterogeneous group in that the individuals came from diverse sections and diverse locations. Yet they were all highly interdependently related in terms of getting the work of the Mortgage Production unit done.

The Methods people, for example, were charged with helping to improve the work procedures of the Mortgage Production unit and with helping it convert its bookkeeping procedures over to a computerized system. Relationships between the diverse sections of Mortgage Production were generally unsatisfactory, being characterized by distrust, poor communication, and poor coordination. The stated goals of the change project were to improve their operating effectiveness as a problem-solving unit and facilitate the introduction of the computer in the Mortgage Production unit.

The treatment was remarkable for two reasons: first, its limited extent; and second, its apparent powerful effects. The first part of the treatment was that all twelve members of the experimental team attend a sensitivity-training laboratory; this was "preparation" for the treatment per se. Next the team met for one half-day with the consultant, Richard Beckhard, and discussed the goals of the program, the methods that would be used, and the possible outcomes. During this meeting Beckhard asked each manager to write him an anonymous letter listing the obstacles keeping the group of twelve from functioning as a smooth team. The problems identified in the letters were fed back to the group at the first workshop and were an important part of that conference's agenda. Beckhard suggested that the group have *three team development workshops;* these were weekend conferences and occurred six months apart. These activities constituted the major treatment for this change program. During the three weekend workshops, the group worked at building itself into a more effective team and worked at solving the problems that kept it from effective mission accomplishment.

The change program lasted a little over a year, from late 1963 to the end of 1964. Given the minimal extent of the program, one may wonder why it worked so well. It would appear that in this case the intervention was "right on target" in terms of what the organization needed, and that need was better communication, problem solving, and coordination among a group of highly interdependent managers who were not functioning as a team. It also would appear that the intervention served to release a tremendous amount of creative energy that had previously been bottled up by mistrust and suspicion of others. Finally, it appears that what Beckhard created was a kind of "collateral organization" as described by Zand and discussed in Chapter 14. (A *collateral organization* is a special kind of problem-solving task force that cuts across the usual organizational barriers and boundaries.) At the weekend workshops, group members worked on interpersonal problems they had among themselves and also worked on designing action plans to overcome obstacles to task accomplishment. They set up monthly meetings of the group back at the bank (without the consultant), established some task forces to get some long-standing problems solved, asked their boss to set up communication mechanisms with two related departments, and the like. At the workshops they would assess their progress on action steps, establish new priorities for problems, and assign themselves new action steps. At the third workshop they decided that they no longer needed the services of the consultant; they were well on the way to solving their own problems.

The research design was a strong one in several respects. First, the researcher, Matthew Miles of Columbia University, worked completely independently of the consultant, Beckhard. Second, for measuring changes in productivity, turnover, and absenteeism, two control groups from other parts of the bank were used. Third, pre-post treatment measures were collected both on the experimental team and on the control groups. Fourth, a variety of measures were used, including hard and soft data. And finally, a follow-up study was conducted by Lake and Miles three years after the last workshop to determine whether the changes had endured. Data collection methods included pretreatment and posttreatment interviews with the experimental team; similar interviews with the superior of the experimental team members and managers of departments that did business with Mortgage Production; attitude questionnaires given to the clerical subordinates of the experimental team managers and also to two control groups of subordinates; and productivity, turnover, and absenteeism data for Mortgage Production and two control groups.

The results indicated impressive gains in productivity and impressive decreases in turnover and absenteeism for the experimental unit, Mortgage Production. Productivity moved from about 90 percent of standard in January 1964 to about 120 percent of standard in October 1964. (Yearly productivity did not average 120 percent; this was the highest level, but productivity was consistently above previous levels.) Productivity levels in the two comparison groups did not show similar increases. Follow-up data three years later showed that Mortgage Production was still performing at a high productivity rate, and the two control groups had not increased their productivity. On turnover, Mortgage Production reduced its turnover rate sharply while the two control groups and the bank as a whole increased in turnover rates. Mortgage Production showed a sharp drop in absenteeism while one control group stayed the same and the other control group increased its absenteeism rate. Three years later the turnover rate in Mortgage Production was still well below the total bank rate, and absenteeism, though increasing somewhat, was still low.

Results of the attitude questionnaires given to subordinates of the experimental team and two control groups were not very clear or strong. But subordinates of the experimental managers believed they had more upward influence, more contact with their managers, and more egalitarian contact with their managers than did subordinates in the control groups. Perceptions of upward influence continued to be found among the experimental team's subordinates three years later.

Finally, organization development activities have spread to the rest of the bank. Numerous team-building efforts are going on. The top thirty officers of the bank had a four-day workshop at which they examined their mode of operation and its impact on the organization. Cross-department task forces have been established to solve intergroup problems.

"Organization Development and Change in Organizational Performance," by John R. Kimberly and Warren R. Nielsen.[43]

This is a particularly insightful report of an OD program and its effects in an automotive division of a large multiplant, multidivisional corporation. The organization was an assembly plant employing about twenty-six hundred hourly and two hundred salaried employees. The program was primarily directed toward the managerial group of the hourly production employees—foremen, general foremen, assistant superintendents, superintendents, and the plant manager. It began in January 1970 and continued through March 1971. The goals of the program were to improve the organizational climate, improve the supervisory behavior of production supervisors, and improve such organizational indexes of performance as productivity, quality of production, and profit.

The treatments consisted of seven different sets of activities, described by the authors as the phases of the OD program. The first phase was an initial diagnosis of the system. The second phase consisted of a series of two-and-one-half-day "team skills training" workshops for foremen, general foremen, assistant superintendents, and superintendents designed to increase their effectiveness as supervisors. Phase three was a data collection phase in which all foremen completed two questionnaires, one on organizational climate and one on the supervisory behavior of their immediate supervisors. Phase four was termed "data confrontation." In this phase various work groups reviewed the data generated up to this point, identified problem areas and priorities, and developed tentative action plans to correct the problems. Phase five, "action planning," called for each group to decide on some action plans for change and to assign responsibilities for their accomplishment. Phase six consisted of team building in which each natural work team in the system met in a two-day workshop to explore blocks to their effectiveness and ways to improve their functioning. Phase seven was "intergroup building" consisting of two-day workshops attended by interdependent work groups in the plant. The OD interventions thus focused on the managerial subsystem as the key target group; these managers were given training in supervisory skills, team building, intergroup team building, and problem solving.

The research design was a pretreatment and posttreatment design with no control groups. But an elaborate set of time series observations on productivity and profits for the plant were obtained. These time series data on the "hard" variables of organizational performance considerably strengthened the research effort. Selected comparisons with industry-wide data were also made and these gave additional support for the conclusion that the program, not some other factors, caused most of the results found. Finally, the researchers proposed a model of how the change process should work that strengthened confidence in the results. The authors reasoned that since the program was directed toward a

specific target group—supervisors—clear-cut changes must first be demonstrated in that group. Attitude and behavior changes in the target group could then be expected to impact on other groups, such as the production employees, causing changes in their attitudes and behavior. All these changes should culminate in changes in total organizational performance.

Substantial and positive gains appeared to result from the program. Pretreatment and posttreatment measures of organizational climate showed positive, significant changes on all nine items of the questionnaire. The managerial group perceived positive changes in trust, support, openness of communications, commitment to objectives, and so forth. Pre-post measures were also taken on the supervisory behavior of the foreman's immediate superiors. All ten items on this questionnaire showed significant positive gains indicating improvements in such behaviors as listening, relations with others, handling of conflict, and expressing ideas to others. The first part of the model was thus supported: the managerial target group had changed significantly in terms of perceptions of organizational climate and supervisory behavior. Would these changes affect organizational performance?

Data on daily production rates for the fifteen months before the program, the fourteen months during the program, and the twelve months after the program were collected and analyzed. There were no significant differences found between production levels before and after the program. Production began to decline before the program, continued downward through about half the program, then began to rise substantially and continued to rise in the period after the program. Curious about this finding, the researchers compared the plant production rates with those for the total industry and found a positive correlation of .90. This suggests that plant production was following the general production level of the industry and thus may not have been under the control of the plant managers but instead may have been determined more by market conditions and other factors. Therefore it may not be reasonable to expect the OD program to affect production rates of a plant in this industry.

The authors had also predicted that, due to the improved communication, planning, and problem-solving skills gained in the OD program, there would be a reduction in the amount of variance in production rates; production rates would be more steady and less sporadic. This prediction was supported: before-after comparisons show significantly less variance in production rates after the program.

Predicted significant gains in product quality were found after the program, as well as predicted significant reductions in quality variance. Quality improvements after the program were substantial.

> The final hypothesis tested focused on the relation between the change program and profit. It was hypothesized that if the OD program led to improved managerial and supervisory skills, these changes would ultimately be reflected in changes in the profit index of the organization.[44]

This hypothesis was supported: the profit index, already in a negative (loss) position, declined before and during the program; about halfway through the program it began to rise and moved to a profit level in the period after the program. But was the significant gain in profits due to the program or due to industry-wide factors (as in the case of production rates)? Comparison of plant profits with industry-wide profits yielded a positive correlation of .48, suggesting that profits were more under the control of events occurring in the plant. It can be concluded that the program had a significant positive impact on profits for the organization.

To summarize, significant positive changes occurred in organizational climate, supervisory behavior, production variance, quality levels, quality variance, and profits. It is reasonable to attribute these changes to the OD program.

"Participative Decision Making: An Experimental Study in a Hospital," by J. E. Bragg and I. R. Andrews.[45]

This change project took place in a hospital laundry containing thirty-two employees and one foreman. The formal program lasted eighteen months and was still in operation three years later.

The treatment was participative decision making (PDM). *Participative decision making* is an organizational activity in which decision making and problem solving regarding operating practices are done by the people who are most affected by the decisions. Participative decision making usually involves a superior giving over decision making to subordinates about the way they perform their jobs. The authors describe the treatment as follows: "In the present study, decision-making power was transferred from the laundry foreman to a committee composed of all the laundry employees. Any and all aspects of managing the laundry could be considered by the committee."[46] The program was initiated and explained in a meeting of all employees, the foreman, and the chief hospital administrator. Thereafter the program consisted of formal and informal meetings of employees and the foreman to discuss proposals for changes. There were twenty-eight formal meetings during the first fifteen months of the program during which 147 specific suggestions were discussed. Most of the suggestions (90) concerned work-flow processes and methods; 11 involved working hours and working conditions; 44 involved minor equipment changes; and 2 involved safety matters. Numerous informal meetings were also held.

The research design and the model for implementing PDM were interrelated. Program implementation followed Lowin's theoretical model for participative decision making: first, the system must be unfrozen; next, participative decision-making activities are implemented; and finally, the entire program is measured and monitored for its results.[47] The major hurdle for unfreezing the system consisted of convincing the highly effective, authoritarian foreman to change his leadership style to a participative one. The hospital administrator was able to convince the foreman, and the program was begun. One factor influenc-

ing the foreman was his satisfaction with the great amount of autonomy *he* was given by the hospital administrator.

Measuring and monitoring the results called for a longitudinal study utilizing pretreatment and posttreatment measurements and several control groups. Use of a longitudinal study (eighteen months) permitted the short- and long-term effects of the program to be identified and also allowed any results due to Hawthorne effects—the people knowing they were part of an experimental project, novelty, etc.—to be identified and/or dissipated. Attitude questionnaires administered before, during, and after the program allowed measurement of the program's impact on employee attitudes. Two comparison laundries in other hospitals in town were used as control groups for determining the program's impact on productivity. The rest of the hospital nonmedical staff was used as a control group for comparing the effects of the program on absenteeism. This was a good research design for testing the effects of the participative decision-making program.

The results of the program were very favorable. Employee attitudes toward the PDM program, measured every two months, moved from an initial uncertainty about the program (64 percent approval) to a very positive attitude toward it (90 percent approval). Absenteeism in the laundry dropped significantly during the program compared with previous rates; this occurred while absenteeism rates for the rest of the hospital were increasing slightly.

Productivity, always excellent in this laundry, increased significantly during the program. For the year prior to the program, productivity averaged approximately fifty pounds of processed laundry per employee hour. In the first six months of the program, productivity rose gradually to about sixty-one pounds per employee hour. In the second six months of the program, productivity increased dramatically to seventy-eight pounds per employee hour. In the third six months of the program, productivity dropped back to about seventy-three pounds per employee hour. It is likely that these significant gains in production can be attributed both to improved work-flow procedures stemming from the group's suggestions and to better morale of the group.

This is a good piece of research and an effective, simple intervention. It is clear that a number of factors contributed to the successful outcome. The foreman's role in implementing the program was crucial. He radically changed his leadership and interaction styles, and it appears from the report that his actions were largely responsible for participative decision making becoming a reality. Another factor was the isolation of the laundry from the rest of the hospital. This allowed them to make some changes in working hours and the like relatively free from outside constraints. Involvement of the total, small group was probably also a factor contributing to success.

The authors describe the impact of this successful experiment in participative decision making on the rest of the hospital:

The success of PDM in the laundry has encouraged other subsystems in the hospital to follow suit. In a medical records section where there was an adequate unfreezing of the system and strong support (but no involvement) by the chief nonmedical administrator, a serious turnover problem has been eliminated through PDM and a high level of union grievances has been reduced to zero. With the nursing staff, on the other hand, a deficiency of unfreezing activities and substantial resistance by the head nurse caused PDM to flounder badly for the first 6 months. In fact, PDM was a dismal failure until the introduction of a new head nurse with a favorable attitude toward PDM, and until the chief nonmedical administrator found time for some involvement in the program.[48]

"Effects of Organizational Diagnosis and Intervention on Blue-Collar 'Blues,'"
by Jacob E. Hautaluoma and James F. Gavin.[49]

A three-month OD program in a small midwestern manufacturing company yielded positive results in terms of better attitudes of the work force, reduced turnover, and reduced absenteeism, according to this report. The program began in late 1972 and ended in early 1973. The target group was a large division (seventy employees) engaged in the assembly of components used in building construction. All seventy employees were involved in the data collection and data feedback activities.

The treatment consisted of one day of data collection, one day of data feedback and reaction to the data, a two-day team-building workshop with the top management group, a one-day supervisory skills training workshop with the first- and second-level supervisors, and having the consultants sit in on several management-worker Advisory Committee meetings. The program started with a total group meeting of all seventy people in the division and the consultants. The program was explained and discussed. Then the managerial group left the room and the blue-collar employees discussed the program, aired numerous complaints about the company, and gave the program their approval. The rest of the day was spent collecting diagnostic data about the organization and its problems. Everyone was interviewed, and everyone completed two job attitude questionnaires.

Several weeks later a full day of data feedback meetings took place. First the data were fed back to the managerial and clerical group. Next a total group meeting was convened and the data were fed back to that group. Following the data feedback homogeneous groups of managers, clerical employees, and blue-collar employees met to discuss the data, their implications, and what to do about the problems identified in the data. Toward the end of the day, the consultants met again with the management group to examine the data and determine action plans.

The next intervention was a two-day team development workshop with the management group in which the members discussed how they perceived each

other. Following this a one-day supervisory skills training workshop was conducted for first- and second-level supervisors. A representative group of blue-collar employees attended the workshop to observe and present a different point of view. Role-playing and skills-training exercises were utilized in the workshop. Finally, the consultants attended several Advisory Committee meetings, a group composed of both management and worker representatives. The purpose of the consultants' attending the meetings was to help improve communications between the two groups.

The research design was a one-group pre-posttreatment design with no control groups. Measures were taken before the treatment began and six months later (three months after the last intervention). Measures were taken on behavioral indicators—absenteeism and turnover; and attitudinal indicators—attitudes toward the work, co-workers, supervision, pay, and the like. The research design is not adequate to rule out rival explanations as possible causes of the results found; however, it appears plausible that the changes were due to the program.

Both behavioral indicators and attitudinal indicators showed positive gains from the program. Global turnover figures for before and after the program showed no significant change. However, when employees were categorized as long-term employees (had worked there over one month) and new employees (had worked there less than one month), the data indicated that the long-term employee turnover rate had decreased from 9.5 percent before the program to 3.4 percent after the program while the turnover rate had increased for the new employees after the program. Absenteeism dropped to its lowest levels for a year in the three months following the program.

Attitudes toward "How I see my job" improved significantly both for the blue-collar employees and for the total group. In addition, attitudes toward supervision, pay, and promotion opportunities improved significantly for the blue-collar employees and the total group. Attitudes toward the work itself did not improve (the work continued to be seen as pretty dreary), and attitudes toward co-workers did not change (these scores were already quite high).

The results, then, reflect positive increases over a six-month period during which an OD program affecting all members of the division was implemented. The gains are shown in attitudes, turnover rates, and absenteeism rates. One possible confounding factor is that also during this same period everyone received a raise in pay. What the effects of that are on the results cannot be determined.

"Eclectic Approach to Organizational Development,"
by Edgar F. Huse and Michael Beer.[50]

This article reports on a comprehensive organization development program in the Medfield plant of the Corning Glass Works Corporation. The plant was relatively new; small (thirty-five hourly employees, fifteen technical and clerical people, and eight managers and professionals); and nonunion. The program

started in 1966, with most of the interventions occurring in 1968 and 1969. The plant manufactures electrical and electronic instruments for medical and laboratory use; most of the jobs are assembly-type jobs. The plant's operation are separated into departments that manufacture different products.

Different treatments were used in the different departments and we shall report the treatments and results for each unit separately. The overall research design was a before-and-after treatment design with observations taken over a long time span. No control groups were used; however, since different treatments were implemented in the different departments, what we have in this report is a series of separate prgrams, the results of which were carefully documented.

THE HOTPLATE DEPARTMENT. In this department the employees assembled hotplates on a standard assembly-line basis. It was decided to introduce a job enrichment program in the department in which each worker would assemble the entire hotplate. Job enrichment efforts attempt to put more challenge into jobs by increasing the amount of planning, doing, and controlling by the individual rather than separating these functions among several people. The results were rapid and dramatic: productivity increased 85 percent; controllable rejects dropped from 23 to 1 percent; absenteeism dropped from 8 to 1 percent; and an inspector position was abolished. The employees, in addition, were very satisfied with the new methods.

THE GLASS SHOP. In this department glass tubing for electrodes was produced. It was decided to introduce "autonomous or integrated work teams"—cohesive work groups assigned as a group to perform a series of interdependent tasks. It took some time to get the new system running properly, but when it became operational productivity increased by 20 percent. Involvement and commitment of the employees also increased substantially.

THE MATERIALS CONTROL DEPARTMENT. This department was charged with the responsibility for purchasing, inventory control, plant scheduling, and expediting. The department manager implemented a structural change in the way work was done, as follows:

> Rather than have each group specialize in a particular functional area, he decided to organize his department on the basis of product lines. Each group would have total responsibility for a particular product line or department, including all the functions of purchasing, scheduling, inventory control, and expediting.[41]

The results? The employees liked the new system much better, and within three months the parts-shortage lists decreased from fourteen IBM pages to one page.

THE INSTRUMENT ASSEMBLY DEPARTMENT. Complex electronic equipment was assembled in this department. The manager decided to institute a "total job concept" program, a program similar to the job enrichment program implemented in the Hotplate Department. Rather than work on an assembly-line

basis, individuals were given the complete assembly of the instruments. Measurements indicated that productivity increased by 17 percent, quality increased by 50 percent, and absenteeism decreased by over 50 percent.

ADDITIONAL INTERVENTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS. Other interventions in the plant included forming some matrix teams, cross-departmental teams to ensure coordination and better problem solving; monthly meetings of all natural work groups to discuss problems and to share information from superiors to subordinates; a weekly communications meeting of the plant manager with rotating groups of hourly and weekly employees; and intergroup problem-solving meetings.

These results of the OD program at the Medfield plant are impressive. The interventions were designed to complement the individual manager's preferred modes of working and also to take into account the nature of the tasks to be performed.

A considerable amount of OD work has been launched in the rest of the Corning Glass Works Corporation, and it too appears to be quite successful. William Dowling commented on the Corning approach to OD as follows: "Corning's OD effort is perhaps (and, based on personal observation, we should strike out the perhaps) the most complex, in-depth, carefully thought-through, and conscientiously implemented OD program currently in operation."[52]

"Expectation Effects in Organizational Change," by Albert S. King.[53]

This research, while not strictly on an OD effort as we define it, is reported here to demonstrate one of the inherent problems in research on organization development, namely, that changes observed as a result of change programs may be due as much to the *expectations* people have about the program's effects as they are due to the *program itself*. The results of the study indicated that when managers were told to expect an increase in productivity due to a "job enrichment program," productivity actually increased, compared with production rates in plants where the managers were told the job enrichment program would improve employee relations but not increase productivity. Two treatments were used in the job enrichment programs: a *job enlargement* program in which three jobs were performed by the same person instead of three persons, and a *job rotation* program in which people were allowed to rotate between three separate jobs.

The research was conducted in four different plants owned by the same company. The plants manufactured clothing patterns. In Plant 1 job enlargement was introduced and the plant manager was told that the program would increase production. In Plant 2 job enlargement was also introduced, but the plant manager was told that the program would not increase production although it would improve employee relations. In Plant 3 job rotation was introduced and the plant manager was told that the program would increase production; in Plant 4 job rotation was introduced and the plant manager was told that the program would

not increase production but would improve employee relations. Thus, job enlargement was introduced in Plants 1 and 2, while job rotation was introduced in Plants 3 and 4. In addition, managerial expectations were manipulated so that the managers of Plants 1 and 3 expected the new programs to lead to higher productivity while the managers of Plants 2 and 4 expected the new programs to lead to improved employee relations but not to increased productivity.

Average daily production rates for the twelve months following the introduction of the new programs showed that production was significantly higher in those plants where the managers were told to expect higher production compared with the plants where the managers were told not to expect higher production. On the other hand, production was not higher for the job enlargement programs compared with the job rotation programs. (It is usually assumed that job enlargement is a more powerful and effective intervention than job rotation.) Expectations about program outcomes had more impact on production than the different programs did.

Were employee relations better in the plants where the managers had been told to expect this outcome of the programs? No, not as indicated by absenteeism, the measure used in this research. (Absenteeism is often considered to be an accurate reflection of employee relations, morale, and job satisfaction.)

Questionnaire data supported the belief that the two experimental conditions differed in their expectations: both managers and hourly employees in Plants 1 and 3 expected their programs to lead to higher productivity compared with managers and hourly employees in Plants 2 and 4. There were no significant differences between members of Plants 1 and 3 and Plants 2 and 4 regarding expectations of improved employee relations due to the programs.

This research demonstrates that expectations can influence both performance and attitudes. And the effects of expectations can be as powerful as or more powerful than the interventions themselves. Since most research on OD interventions does not test for or control for expectation effects, the results of the King experiment raise doubts about the real cause of any positive results that accrue from organization development programs. This is an important, if somewhat disturbing, piece of research for the OD researcher in that it demonstrates that independent variables (causes) other than the ones we think we are dealing with may be operating in organizational change programs.

On the other hand, for the OD *practitioner*, this research has definite positive implications: tell the clients to expect positive gains from the program (any program) and "expectation effects" will help the positive gains to be realized.

"OD Techniques and Their Results in 23 Organizations: The Michigan ICL Study," by David G. Bowers.[54]

Pretreatment and posttreatment data from 14,812 people in twenty-three different organizations in a wide variety of industries were analyzed to determine the relative effects of four different kinds of OD programs: Survey Feedback,

Interpersonal Process Consultation, Task Process Consultation, and Laboratory Training. Two "control" treatments, Data Handback and No Treatment, were included in the analysis. The measurement tool was the Survey of Organizations Questionnaire, an instrument that measures organizational health and effectiveness as indicated on sixteen factors. The questionnaire was developed by Taylor and Bowers.[55] In general, the results showed that Survey Feedback was the most effective treatment in that it produced positive gains in perceptions of organizational climate and organizational health; Interpersonal Process Consultation was the next most effective treatment; Task Process Consultation produced little or no change; Laboratory Training and No Treatment produced declines in organizational functioning and health. This report analyzed attitude data only, not performance. We will examine this research in some detail.

The data were collected as part of the University of Michigan Inter-Company Longitudinal Study (ICLS) in which annual, standardized measurements were obtained from a number of companies. Some of these organizations began OD programs during the period and thus the effects of the interventions could be monitored.

The treatments will be described briefly. *Survey Feedback* is a data collection and feedback technique in which questionnaire data are fed back to all members of the organization in natural work groups where action plans to correct problems indicated in the data are developed. *Interpersonal Process Consultation* is an intervention technique in which the consultant teaches the organization members to become more aware of their organizational processes. *Task Process Consultation* is a consultation mode in which the consultant analyzes and helps the group to analyze its task methods and task objectives. *Laboratory Training* is a collection of intervention techniques including sensitivity training, experiential learning exercises, and theory input regarding interpersonal relations. *Data Handback* is not a treatment per se. Questionnaire data were given to supervisors of all work groups, but they were not encouraged to do anything with the data (as they would do in survey feedback). *No Treatment* was also not a treatment; data were given to the top executives of the organizations, but nothing was done with the data.

Sixteen factors measuring organization functioning and health were used as the dependent variables. Six factors measure *organizational climate*—human resources primacy, communication flow, motivational climate, decision-making practices, technological readiness, and lower-level influence. Four factors measure *managerial leadership*—support, interaction facilitation (facilitating "teamwork"), goal emphasis, and work facilitation. Four factors measure *peer leadership* (these are the same as for managerial leadership)—support, interaction facilitation, goal emphasis, and work facilitation. The last two factors are *group process* (how the group works together) and *satisfaction*. The data analysis examined results both for the total organization and for "capstone groups"—groups that actually received the various treatments.

THE RESULTS FOR SURVEY FEEDBACK. Positive and significant changes for capstone groups occurred in every area except managerial leadership. Eleven of the sixteen measures were positive and significant at the level of the total organization.

THE RESULTS FOR INTERPERSONAL PROCESS CONSULTATION. Positive and significant changes at the level of the total organization were found on seven of the sixteen measures, primarily in the managerial and peer leadership areas. Organizational climate, group process, and satisfaction did not change significantly. No firm conclusions could be made on the effects on the capstone groups due to lack of sufficient data.

THE RESULTS FOR TASK PROCESS CONSULTATION. Two factors, decision-making practices and satisfaction, increased significantly in the positive direction for capstone groups as a result of this treatment. At the level of the total organization, however, five factors changed significantly in the negative direction, and three of the factors were associated with organizational climate.

THE RESULTS FOR LABORATORY TRAINING. All six organizational climate factors changed significantly for the total organization—five in the negative direction, and one in the positive direction. In addition, managerial support, peer support, and satisfaction decreased significantly for the total organization. The factor *group process* increased significantly for the total organization. Results for capstone groups were similar, but not quite so negative.

THE RESULTS FOR DATA HANDBACK. This "control" condition showed significant decreases on four factors, and significant gains on five factors, in the analysis of the total organization. For capstone groups, four factors increased significantly while one declined.

THE RESULTS FOR NO TREATMENT. This "control" condition showed significant decreases on *ten* factors in the analysis of the total organization. For capstone groups, four factors declined significantly while one increased.

Overall these results show clear differences in the effects of the different OD interventions. Different organizational variables are impacted by the different programs, and some programs are more impactful than others. In addition, Survey Feedback and Interpersonal Process Consultation are associated with perceptions of significant positive changes in organizational functioning, whereas Laboratory Training and Task Process Consultation are associated with negative change or no change.

However, it may be that the treatments are not exactly comparable in that some treatments, Laboratory Training and Task Process Consultation especially, are not *systemic* in nature. That is, the target is usually a small part of the organization, not the total system. The questionnaire measures systemic problems of a wide range; some treatments are much more narrowly focused.

One further aspect of the research will be mentioned. Perhaps in the organizations where negative or no change occurred as a result of the treatments, the organizational climate was already too negative to allow for gains. Controlling for organizational climate did cause some of the negative effects associated with Laboratory Training to disappear.

This is an important piece of comparative research in which both absolute and relative effects of different OD interventions were measured. Such longitudinal, comparative research makes a contribution to theory building in OD as well as a contribution to evaluation of OD.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have explored the general topic of research on organization development. It can be seen that there are many problems associated with such field research and experimentation, but progress is being made on a number of fronts. Selected research examples were examined in some detail to determine what effects, if any, various OD treatments had on individual, work group, and total organization functioning. It appears, from these examples of research, that there is considerable evidence to suggest that OD works.

NOTES

1 Larry E. Pate, Warren R. Nielsen, and Paula C. Bacon, "Advances in Research on Organization Development: Toward a Beginning," in Robert L. Taylor, Michael J. O'Connell, Robert A. Zawacki, and D. D. Warrick, eds., *Academy of Management Proceedings '76* (Proceedings of the 36th Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Kansas City, Mo., August 11–14, 1976), pp. 389–94.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 389 and 392.

3 Robert L. Kahn, "Organizational Development: Some Problems and Proposals," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 10, No. 4 (1974), pp. 485–502. Kahn also criticized the research on OD as being mostly case studies, a condition that was more true then than now.

4 See, for example, Fred N. Kerlinger, *Foundations of Behavioral Research*, 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973).

5 Donald T. Campbell and Julian C. Stanley, *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1963), p. 5.

6 *Ibid.* This little book is generally considered to be one of the best expositions of research designs available.

7 Pate, Nielsen, and Bacon, "Advances in Research on Organization Development"; and Sam E. White and Terence R. Mitchell, "Organization Development: A Review of Research Content and Research Design," *Academy of Management Review*, 1 (April 1976), pp. 57–73.

8 Norman Berkowitz, "Audiences and Their Implications for Evaluation Research," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 5, No. 3 (1969), pp. 411–28.

9 Campbell and Stanley, *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs*, p. 5.

10 Clayton P. Alderfer, "Organization Development," in *Annual Review of Psychology*, 28 (1977), pp. 197–223.

11 Kerlinger, *Foundations of Behavioral Research*, p. 9. Italics in the original.

12 Clayton P. Alderfer, "Change Processes in Organizations," in Marvin D. Dunnette, ed., *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1976), pp. 1591–1638.

13 Chris Argyris, *Intervention Theory and Method: A Behavioral Science View* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1970).

14 Robert R. Blake and Jane Srygley Mouton, *Consultation* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1976).

15 Peter B. Vaill, "Practice Theories in Organization Development," in J. D. Adams, ed., *New Technologies in Organization Development* (La Jolla, Calif.: University Associates, 1974), pp. 71–84.

16 J. G. Bowers, J. L. Franklin, and P. A. Pecorella, "Matching Problems, Precursors, and Interventions in OD: A Systemic Approach," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 11 (1975), pp. 391–410.

17 White and Mitchell, "Organization Development." For a discussion of facet theory, see L. Guttman, "An Outline of Some New Methodology for Social Research," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 18 (1955), pp. 395–404.

18 See White and Mitchell, "Organization Development," pp. 59–66, for this discussion.

19 William N. Dunn and Frederic W. Swierczek, "Planned Organizational Change: Toward Grounded Theory," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 13, No. 2 (1977), pp. 135–57.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 149.

21 Frank Friedlander and L. Dave Brown, "Organization Development," in *Annual Review of Psychology*, 25 (1974), p. 336.

22 Pate, Nielsen, and Bacon, "Advances in Research on Organization Development," pp. 390–91.

23 J. Taylor and D. G. Bowers, *The Survey of Organizations: A Machine-Scored Standardized Questionnaire Instrument* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Institute for Social Research, 1972).

24 See, for example, David G. Bowers, "OD Techniques and Their Results in 23 Organizations: The Michigan ICL Study," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 9, No. 1 (1973), pp. 21–43.

25 See, for example, the *Michigan Organizational Assessment Package Progress Report II* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Survey Research Center, August 1975). This program is partially sponsored by the National Center for Productivity and the Quality of Working Life, an independent agency of the federal government.

26 Alderfer, "Organization Development," p. 219.

27 Friedlander and Brown, "Organization Development."

28 Alderfer, "Organization Development."

29 Michael Beer, "The Technology of Organization Development," in Marvin D. Dunnette, ed., *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1976), pp. 937–93.

30 George Strauss, "Organization Development," in Robert Dubin, ed., *Handbook of Work, Organization, and Society* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1976), pp. 617–85.

31 White and Mitchell, "Organization Development."

32 Pate, Nielsen, and Bacon, "Advances in Research on Organization Development." In addition, a model for evaluation of OD programs has been proposed by John M. Nicholas, "A Systems Analysis Approach for Planning Evaluations of OD Interventions," in Robert L. Taylor, Michael J. O'Connell, Robert A. Zawacki, and D. D. Warrick, *Academy of Management Proceedings '77* (Proceedings of the 37th annual meeting of the Academy of Management at Orlando, Fla., August 14–17, 1977), pp. 358–62.

33 From *Harvard Business Review*, 42 (November-December 1964), pp. 133–55.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 135.

35 This book is published by Harper & Row (New York, 1967).

36 See Chapter 13 for a description of Likert's System 4 Management and references to Likert's work.

37 Marrow, Bowers, and Seashore, *Management by Participation*, p. 69. This discussion is taken from pp. 68–69.

38 *Ibid.*, pp. 69–74.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 200.

40 Stanley E. Seashore and David G. Bowers, "Durability of Organizational Change," *American Psychologist*, 25, No. 3 (March 1970), pp. 227–33.

41 *Ibid.*, p. 232.

42 This article is in Harvey Hornstein, Barbara Benedict Bunker, W. Warner Burke, Marion Gindes, and Roy J. Lewicki, eds., *Social Intervention: A Behavioral Science Approach* (New York: Free Press, 1971), pp. 421–39.

43 From the *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 20 (June 1975), pp. 191–206.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 201.

45 From the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 9, No. 6 (1973), pp. 727–35.

46 *Ibid.*, p. 730.

47 A. Lowin, "Participative Decision Making: A Model, Literature Critique, and Prescriptions for Research," *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 3 (1968), pp. 68–106.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 734.

49 From the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 11 (1975), pp. 475–96.

50 From the *Harvard Business Review*, 49 (September–October 1971), pp. 103–12.

51 The *Harvard Business Review*, p. 108.

52 William F. Dowling, "The Corning Approach to Organization Development," *Organizational Dynamics*, 3, No. 4 (Spring 1975), pp. 16–34. This quotation is from page 17.

53 From *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 19 (1974), pp. 221–30.

54 From the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 9, No. 1 (1973), pp. 21–43.

55 Taylor and Bowers, *The Survey of Organizations: A Machine-Scored Standardized Questionnaire Instrument.*

20

The Future of OD

Organization development represents one of today's leading edges of applied behavioral science as organization theorists and practitioners endeavor to find ways to improve organizational effectiveness and achieve organizational excellence. Organization development appears to be co-opting a sizable portion of the behavioral science and practitioner talent; it seems to be absorbing increasing amounts of internal resources of organizational time and manpower; there is prolific growth of practitioners and concomitant professional groups; in sum, it looks as though OD's time has come. In this chapter we look at organization development—a social invention and a change technique—from the point of view of its permanence as a form of applied behavioral science. We believe that some of the foundations of OD and some of its practices augur well for its continued value and validity in improving organizations.

Fad is defined as "a practice or interest followed for a time with exaggerated zeal."[1] Clearly OD is being embraced enthusiastically by many applied behavioral scientists, organization theorists, and organizations. The critical issues, then, have to do with whether it will last on the social science practice scene and also whether it has substance and a fundamental quality. Let us examine some of the strengths and the weaknesses of organization development. Following that we will express our opinion in answering the question, Is OD a passing fad?

SOME OF THE STRENGTHS OF OD

Organization development draws upon a large number of models, theories, and practices; it borrows freely from the proven procedures for improving the functioning of individuals, groups, and organizations. Organization development is an amalgam, a culmination from diverse sources, and as

such represents the resultant of some of the best thinking from the behavioral sciences. The foundations and characteristics of OD discussed in Chapter 7 suggest to us that OD is made of solid stuff. The action research model, a systems approach to understanding organizational dynamics, and a change strategy that focuses on the culture of work teams and the organization—all these features of organization development serve to make it more powerful and relevant than most change strategies of the past. In addition, a systematic, planned approach utilizing an overall improvement strategy assures that the desirable features of OD are capitalized upon.

The action research model, for example, is a model for *tracking*—for staying on target, for discarding alternatives that do not meet the test of efficacy in the real world. Not only is it a good model for improvement of an organization (with its emphasis on goal setting, data collecting, and action planning by the organization members themselves), it is also a good model for keeping the practice of OD flexible, responsive to changing demands, and open to new ideas and practices. In effect, we are suggesting that application of the action research paradigm to the practice of OD will keep it from becoming irrelevant to the needs of individuals and organizations.

The focus on organization culture is another strong feature of OD that portends future success. Individual beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors are so overwhelmingly determined by, and are a part of, organization culture that change efforts directed toward other facets of the individual, such as personality and physical environment, will probably have only minimal impact, while change efforts directed toward culture will have significant impact. But OD as a process does not just recognize the importance of culture—it also suggests ways of analyzing culture and changing culture. These are the real steps of progress. Mastery over one's culture rather than subjugation to it is a profound thought. Organization development represents some definite steps in this direction and thus distinguishes itself from other change efforts.

There seems to be historical evidence that permanent change in individuals and groups is facilitated by working with the intact group rather than with isolated individuals. This finding is no doubt related to the importance of culture in determining behaviors. For example, in part, the laboratory-training movement attempted to improve organizational functioning by having key individuals attend sensitivity-training labs. This practice had only limited payoff in terms of organizational change. On the other hand, working with real, intact work groups has been found to have tremendous potency for increasing effectiveness of individuals and groups. Since a central tenet of OD is that of working with the teams of the organization, OD appears to be on a quite solid base in this regard.

While organization development facilitates change in individuals and organizations, there is a genuine sense in which OD also brings stability. Organization development represents an application of the scientific method of problem solving to human, social, and organizational problems. There is great solidity

and stability in having such a model to base solutions upon. Change occurs, of course, when people are moved from a traditional, or haphazard, problem-solving modality to that of the scientific method. But stability occurs when individuals, groups, and organizations learn to apply this method to all sorts of events in the organization. Change occurs, of course, when the win-lose, boundary-defending, competitive relations between groups are altered by organization development efforts aimed at improving intergroup relations and intergroup effectiveness. But stability occurs when the awareness of interdependence of goals and efforts and the benefits of cooperation lead to reward for the groups. We believe that the benefits of OD are stability as well as managed changes. If this is so, OD has a much stronger chance of survival.

SOME PROBLEMS AND CONTINGENCIES

Underattention to Task, Technology, and Structure

We see a number of problems and contingencies that can affect the future viability of OD. Probably the most serious handicap of OD as it has emerged historically has been its overpreoccupation with the human and social dynamics of organizations to the detriment of attending to the task, technical, and structural aspects and their interdependencies. This statement reflects an imbalance of effort and perhaps a lack of skills on the part of the practitioners, not a total disregard for these other areas. Bennis addressed this point in an editorial in the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Sciences* as follows:

> I have yet to see an organization development program that uses an interventional strategy other than an interpersonal one, and this is serious when one considers that the most pivotal strategies of change in our society are political, legal and technological. We call ourselves "change agents," but the real changes in our society have been wrought by the pill, the bomb, the automobile, industrialization, communication media, and other forces of modernization.[3]

This statement is less true today than it was a decade ago; we see many OD efforts that have paid a great deal of attention to such matters as intergroup dynamics, goal clarification, and the modification of structure. But Bennis's point is still well taken with respect to some OD efforts.

In the future, organization development specialists must know much more about such matters as goal setting and structural changes and must establish linkages with practitioners in such fields as management science, personnel and industrial psychology, operations research, and industrial engineering in order to provide a broader range of options for organizational intervention. Such broader knowledge, when integrated with OD techniques, will be particularly relevant in

the second or subsequent phases of OD efforts, that is, probably after the first cycle of diagnosis, data feedback, problem discussion, and action planning. For example, the job description exercise in Illustration 4 of Chapter 1 is a marriage of OD and personnel management techniques and was used in the second phase of an OD effort.

In addition to OD practitioners' knowing more about personnel management, industrial engineering, and the like, specialists in other fields will undoubtedly be learning much more about OD in the future. The result should be enhanced cooperation between the OD specialists as well as staff interventions that are much more congruent and complementary with the cultures emerging from OD efforts. A danger, of course, is that less-than-qualified people will zealously apply OD techniques out of joint with other events. A rash of such occurrences in a number of organizations could seriously jeopardize the long-range viability of OD.

Limited Models

Another significant contingency lies in the conceptual foundation underlying OD strategies. OD is limited to the models of planned change that it utilizes. OD represents the state-of-the-art, but the current state is that we have a rather limited number of models for effecting permanent change. For example, OD seems restricted in its models regarding effective use of power in organizations. Stemming from the laboratory-training method background, models of change underlying OD interventions typically involve love-trust, collaborative models rather than those involving power, coercion, or competition.[3] We have no quarrel with the collaborative model but rather are appealing for the development of additional, perhaps contingency, models. All the models will still have to be tested in the crucible of ongoing organizations. It may be that with the development of new and different models that come to grips with the issue of power in organizations or that treat power in different ways, OD as practiced today will require modification. It seems to us that contributions such as Walton's in the area of third-party peacemaking increase the range of models available for more effective management of power issues in OD efforts.[4]

Time and Cost

Another possible handicap to the viability of OD is that it represents a long-term and expensive investment on the part of client organizations. OD technology has developed to the state that client systems and consultants working together can in fact bring about organization improvement when there is enough time—when there is a long-range change project. OD does not have many quick remedies; OD does not offer shortcuts to total organization improvement. Significant organization improvement requires that there be a stabilization of the complicated fabric of organization culture at successively more effective levels—this takes time and much effort on the part of organizational members.

Semantics and Definitions of the Field

The semantics and definitional problems discussed in this book can also affect the viability of OD. If all sorts of techniques get slotted under the rubric "OD" without much thought as to how similar or dissimilar to one another they are, no one will know what the field is, let alone being able to develop a coherent theoretical framework for it. As Miles states it: ". . . OD by attempting to become everything has become nothing—at least nothing which we can clearly get our minds around, nothing which gives us a distinct identity, nothing which provides clear goals for future development or criteria by which to measure reasoned growth."[5] While we hope we have lent some clarity to defining the field, the semantics and definitional problems require more attention by practitioners and theorists than they have received to date.

Quality and Extent of Laboratory Training

The number of managers who participate in laboratory-training experiences—T-groups in particular—and the quality of these experiences, we believe, will have a major impact on the future viability of OD. Organization development that paid no attention to feelings, no attention to interpersonal and group dynamics, and no attention to personal and group development would not be OD at all. It would be some form of sterile, mechanistic exercise in superrationality.

As Friedlander says, OD is an interplay of the values of rationalism, pragmatism, and existentialism[6] (we would add idealism).[7] A suppression of OD's existential aspects of experiencing, subjective perception, and the confrontation of one's existence would kill OD, we believe. Although we do not see T-grouping as central to OD, we do see the T-group as the most effective training vehicle for developing some of the insights and skills upon which effective OD must be based. Thus the long-range viability of the OD field partially rests on the availability and quality of laboratory training, T-groups in particular, in the United States and abroad.

Assumptions about the Culture

Cultural assumptions underlying OD need to be examined vis-à-vis the unique cultures of different localities around the world. It may be that some of the assumptions underlying OD—e.g., that it is reasonably acceptable to point up areas where organization improvement can occur—may not hold for some societies. To illustrate, the Chinese on Taiwan have a long tradition of deference to authority, and criticism of the practices of superiors may need to be much more oblique at the outset of an OD effort in that setting. On the other hand, some cultures may have characteristics that are uniquely supportive of OD efforts. Japan, for example, has a long tradition of group discussion and decision

by consensus. These cultural aspects may make OD approaches readily adaptable to Japanese organizations.

A number of cultural dimensions may be critical. What does a given culture say about openness? About the expression of feelings? About participation? About authority? About hard work? What does the culture say about examining the culture? What differences exist in these dimensions between organizations within a given country? (Between-organization differences may be greater than differences across national boundaries in many instances. For example, we suspect that the differences between companies in the United States and the differences between companies in Australia on the above dimensions are greater than the differences between typical American and Australian firms.) We think these are important questions that need to be researched. The answers may facilitate OD efforts and/or help create realistic expectations about OD approaches in different cultures.

Impact on Both Managers and Subordinates

The impact that potential and actual OD experiences have on managers is also an area that needs to be examined. It may be that OD never emerges in some organizations because of the fear and anxiety aroused in the boss by the real or imagined things that might happen in an OD effort. How much anxiety is there? What kind of feelings do managers have as they approach and participate in a team-building exercise? What can consultants do to be more helpful to the key client?

Of course, the fears and anxieties of the subordinates are also important and need to be examined. But we are emphasizing the impact on managers because we suspect this is a more potent dimension than is usually assumed. While we agree with Friedlander and Brown that "OD as a field runs the risk of encouraging and implementing subtle but persuasive forms of exploitation" (of subordinates),[8] OD can also be viewed as a vehicle for "clobbering" the boss. The behavior of the manager of any group is obviously an important feature of team dynamics, and positive and dysfunctional behaviors are frequently examined in OD efforts. While team members are ordinarily prepared to work constructively together to solve problems, and competent practitioners will always assess team readiness to do so, the possibility exists that there can be some behind-the-scenes collusion to unload negative feelings on the superior. Fear of criticism in a group setting is very understandable, whether or not escalation in the informal system is involved. (This is one illustration of why facilitators exercise a certain amount of control in the use of various OD interventions, as discussed in a number of places in this book.)

More knowledge about the impact of prospective and actual OD interventions on the formal leader will assist facilitators in being more helpful to client groups, and it should enhance the future viability of the field.

Quality and Extent of Research

Implicit in the above is that more and better research on OD will obviously also be a major aspect of the future viability of OD. There are many hopeful signs in this regard. As Alderfer says, ". . . the overall quality of research on OD is showing increasing signs of both rigor and vigor as more careful studies of OD processes and outcomes are being conducted and reported."[8] This is also the way it seems to us (see Chapter 19).

OD and the External Environment

Another major issue affecting the future viability of OD is the degree of congruence between the emerging internal organizational culture resulting from OD efforts and the cultures of the organization's various external interfaces. Our hypothesis is as follows: the higher the congruence, the greater the potential viability of the OD effort. As an illustration, if the internal culture of a manufacturing company professes honesty, but if that part of the interface between company and consumer under the control of the company has elements of deception, the internal environment will ultimately take on some of the same quality. As another example, if resource development is the internal slogan but resource exploitation is the external practice, a spreading internal cynicism among organizational members can be predicted. One can, however, also be optimistic about such incongruities. A long-range OD effort is likely to result in people confronting such issues and greatly improving the quality of the external interfaces.

To elaborate on the relationship between OD and the external environment, there are a number of likely occurrences that we believe will have an impact on the interest shown in OD. The rapid awakening to the grave dangers of environmental pollution and exploitation is likely to provide impetus to an examination of the quality of life in organizations. We believe that people are increasingly going to be concerned with the quality of organizational life, particularly in those organizations where people earn their livelihood. For example, more and more we are going to realize the important linkages between mental health on the one hand and leadership style and group processes on the other, and the similar linkages between physical health, motivation, and the meaning of one's work. People are increasingly going to be intolerant of organizational cultures that treat human resources as relatively passive entities mainly to be selected, directed and evaluated. People want much more control over their destinies than that, and their impatience with such cultures will become more and more evident. Such concerns for the quality of life in both the physical and the organizational environment will provide, we believe, an acceleration of interest in organization development.

Reciprocally, it should be recognized that internal OD activities will have important effects in the community. For example, the marketing executive who

has developed a real skill in group methods is likely to become highly influential in such matters as meeting improvement, problem diagnosis, and climate setting when on a church board or on the executive committee of a civic organization. The director of nursing who has had a long-range collaborative involvement in a hospital OD effort is likely to be an extraordinarily effective participant in professional associations or clubs. The machinist who is familiar with attitude surveys and problem-solving meetings may become a catalyst around whom union meetings become more participative, more problem-solving oriented.

WILL OD BE A PASSING FAD?

We have three points to make relative to whether or not OD will be a passing fad. First, we are convinced that OD will be around and will survive for many years to come; second, current OD technology will undoubtedly be superseded by additional or modified practices as the years unfold; and third, there will always be a need for something like OD. Organization development is partially a response to the needs of both individuals and organizations for improvement strategies that will bring individual aspirations and organizational objectives together. There will always be that need.

We do not believe OD is a passing fad. Organization development (perhaps under a new name or names) will evolve new forms, new technologies, new concepts, and new models in the future as it changes and grows with new inputs from practitioners and clients in many different situations. It will continue to reflect the state-of-the-art even as that art changes. Organization development will probably be enlarged in scope in the future, encompassing specialists from such disciplines as organization theory, operations research, personnel and industrial relations, community development, and mental health. Through the 1980s OD will be on the increase; it will become more widely used by different kinds of organizations. Long-term relationships may permit and encourage more evaluation research on OD; in addition, the causal dynamics of interventions may increasingly come under scrutiny.

Beckhard suggested that the theme of the seventies was the "active and continuing search for organization excellence."[10] Organization development is the only comprehensive technology we see at the present time that will enable that elusive goal to be reached. Thousands of managers worldwide are engaged in that search. To many, OD is almost intuitively perceived as congruent with the intentions they have been attempting to carry out in their organizations—intentions that have heretofore been handicapped by the lack of such a comprehensive improvement technology.

Alderfer likewise voices "optimism" for the future of OD. He states: "OD at this point in history is dominated by practice values and led by new developments arising out of challenges to the field induced by real problems posed by clients. The tension between practice and science is alive and well and threaten-

ing to influence social science as well as social action."[11] We agree with his assessments. Although OD has many problems, it appears to be robust, both in practice and in inquiry.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Historically, organization development has largely emerged from two interrelated origins: (*a*) innovations stemming from attempts to utilize laboratory training in the solution of work-team and larger system problems and (*b*) innovations centering on the effective feedback of attitude survey data. The action research model is common to both.

Organization development is based on a set of assumptions and values about people and groups in organizations, about the nature of total systems, and about the nature of the client-consultant relationship, and it has a substantial base in behavioral science research and theory. Intervention strategies of the behavioral scientist–change agent tend to be based on an action research model and tend to be focused more on helping the people in an organization learn to solve problems rather than on prescribing how things should be done differently.

Successful organization development efforts require skillful interventions, a systems view, top management support and involvement, an open and shared technology and value system, and a long-range perspective. In addition, to be sustained, changes stemming from organization development must be linked to changes in such organization subsystems as the appraisal, reward, staffing, bargaining, and leadership subsystems.

The future viability of organization development efforts has many dimensions, including the degree to which the OD efforts accurately reflect the perceptions, concerns, and aspirations of the participating members. Other dimensions include the degree to which OD practitioners are innovative and successful in helping bring about congruence with other programs aimed at organization improvement, such as job enrichment, work simplification, and management by objectives; the degree to which theorists and practitioners develop additional conceptual models; the degree to which conceptualizers add clarity and focus to the field of OD; and the quality and extent of research on the effectiveness of various intervention strategies.

Successful organization development tends to be a total system effort, a process of planned improvement—not a program with a temporary quality; it is aimed at developing the organization's internal resources for effective change in the future. Its real thrusts are for organizational members to draw out and help develop the resources of each other and to increase the range of behavioral options open to individuals and teams. Furthermore, it is a collaborative process of managing the culture of the organization—not something that is done *to* somebody, but a transactional process of people working together to improve their mutual effectiveness in attaining their mutual objectives.

NOTES

1 *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam, 1976), p. 410.

2 Cited in W. G. Bennis, *Organization Development: Its Nature, Origins and Prospects* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), pp. 78–79.

3 For an elaboration of this point, see Bennis, *Organization Development*, pp. 77–79. See also W. Warner Burke, "Organization Development in Transition," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 12 (January–February–March 1976), pp. 22–43.

4 See R. E. Walton, *Interpersonal Peacemaking, Confrontation and Third Party Consultation* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969).

5 Raymond E. Miles, "OD: Can It Survive?—and Should It?" *OD Practitioner*, 9 (January 1977), p. 5.

6 Frank Friedlander, "OD Reaches Adolescence: An Exploration of Its Underlying Values," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 12 (January–February–March 1976), pp. 7–12.

7 Wendell French, "Extending Directions and Family for OD," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 12 (January–February–March 1976), pp. 51–58.

8 Frank Friedlander and L. Dave Brown, "Organization Development," *Annual Review of Psychology*, 25 (1974), p. 335.

9 Clayton P. Alderfer, "Organization Development," *Annual Review of Psychology*, 28 (1977), p. 197.

10 Richard Beckhard, *Organization Development: Strategies and Models* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. 116. Italics deleted.

11 Alderfer, "Organization Development," p. 220.

Index

C

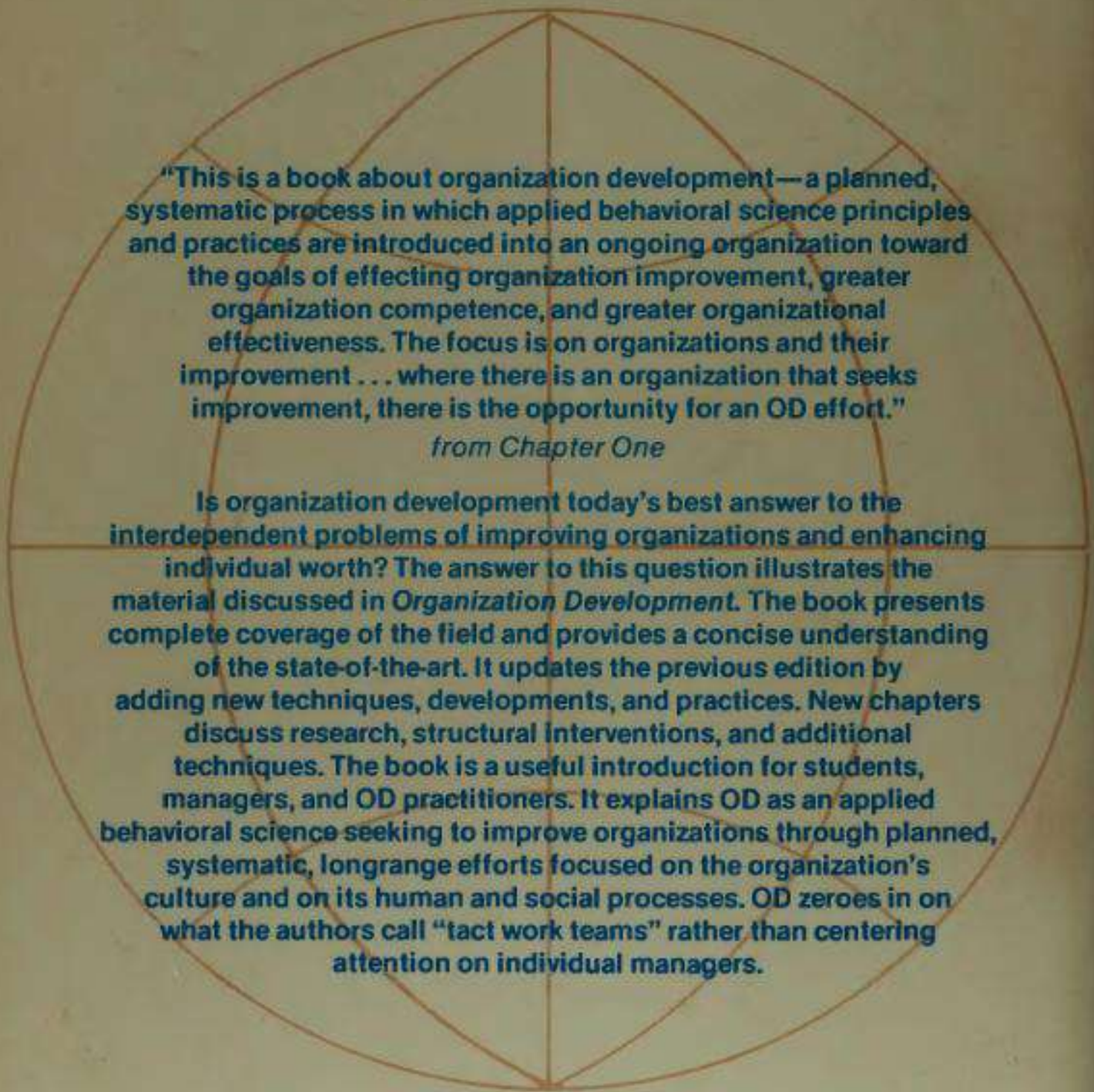
D

E

SECOND EDITION

Organization Development

behavioral science interventions for organization improvement



"This is a book about organization development—a planned, systematic process in which applied behavioral science principles and practices are introduced into an ongoing organization toward the goals of effecting organization improvement, greater organization competence, and greater organizational effectiveness. The focus is on organizations and their improvement . . . where there is an organization that seeks improvement, there is the opportunity for an OD effort."

from Chapter One

Is organization development today's best answer to the interdependent problems of improving organizations and enhancing individual worth? The answer to this question illustrates the material discussed in *Organization Development*. The book presents complete coverage of the field and provides a concise understanding of the state-of-the-art. It updates the previous edition by adding new techniques, developments, and practices. New chapters discuss research, structural interventions, and additional techniques. The book is a useful introduction for students, managers, and OD practitioners. It explains OD as an applied behavioral science seeking to improve organizations through planned, systematic, longrange efforts focused on the organization's culture and on its human and social processes. OD zeroes in on what the authors call "tact work teams" rather than centering attention on individual managers.

WENDELL L. FRENCH and CECIL H. BELL, JR.

Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632

0-13-641670-5