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CALL FOR PAPERS AND SYMPOSIA

Inger G. Stensaker
Program Chair
NHH Norwegian School of Economics
& Business Administration

As the incoming ODC Program Chair, it's my pleasure to invite submissions to the Academy of Management Meetings in Montréal 2010. In order to deliver an exciting and high-quality program, we rely on you to send in your best work to the ODC division. There are a number of ways in which you can contribute in making the meetings in Montréal at least as outstanding as the 2009 program in Chicago!

The conference theme for 2010 is "Dare to Care: Passion and Compassion in Management Practice and Research" encouraging us to reflect on the role of passion and compassion in organizational change and the implications (and potential limitations) daring to care might have for change practices and processes. The theme also challenges us as researchers to reflect on the topics we study, how a focus on passion and compassion might expand our current theories, and how our research can make a difference in the world of practice. We encourage you to submit papers and symposia that address this conference theme.

In addition, submissions related to traditional ODC Division themes are welcome. These include change processes within organizations, with or without assistance by change agents; active attempts to intervene in organization life to improve effectiveness, and scholarly studies of such interventions; multi- or cross-cultural dynamics of systems change in the global context; the roles of change leaders and agents; and issues surrounding self-awareness and responsibility of ODC theory and practice.

Submitting & the Rule of Three

The deadline for all paper and symposia submissions to the ODC Division is January 14th, 2010, 5:00 p.m.

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WHAT IS GOOD ACTION RESEARCH? WHY THE RESURGENT INTEREST?

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Purpose

In the following essay I respond to an invitation to share my perspective on what constitutes good action research. In particular I aim to speak to a readership of students and their faculty advisors on what constitutes high quality projects and papers. As action researchers privilege the context of practice over disembodied theory, I will introduce examples

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Eastern Standard Time (New York time). Please submit your contribution electronically at http://submissions.aomonline.org. The Academy of Management strongly enforces a rule of three. In other words, an individual cannot be involved in more than three main program submissions or appear in any role in more than three sessions (PDWs are excluded). The rule of three applies to papers and symposia submitted to any and all divisions. For an elaboration of the rule of three (including exceptions), please visit http://meetings.aomonline.org/2010.

Division Awards

The following recognition awards, some with honorariums, will be given for the best paper in the following categories:

- Best Paper Overall
- Rupe Chisolm Best Practical Theory Paper Award
- Best Paper based on a Dissertation
- Best Student Paper
- Best Action Research Paper
- Susan G Cohen Doctoral Research Award in Organization Design, Effectiveness and Change

The Division also recognizes a Best Reviewer Award. All award winners will be recognized at the ODC business meeting.

Reviewing

One of the best and easiest ways to get involved in the division activities is by participating in the paper and symposia reviews. We welcome and encourage our members to serve as reviewers. Please visit http://review.aomonline.org to sign up. The review period will run from January 14th (submission deadline) to February 12th (review deadline).

We look forward to receiving your submissions and seeing you in Montréal, Canada, August 6-10, 2010! If you have any questions, please consult the meeting website at http://annualmeeting.aomonline.org/2010 or contact me at inger.stensaker@nhh.no.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS (PDW)

James D. Ludema
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PDWs are interactive learning experiences that help people strengthen and enrich their professional practice. They can take many forms (workshops, interactive symposia, tutorials, town hall meetings, breakout sessions, field trips, debates, case studies, roundtables, research incubators, etc.) and can address any issue of concern to ODC scholars and practitioners.

If you have an interesting idea for an ODC PDW session, we encourage you to submit your proposal as soon as possible. The final deadline is January 14, 2010.

We especially welcome proposals that address this year's conference theme: "Dare to Care: Passion and Compassion in Management Practice and Research." For more on the conference theme go to: http://annualmeeting.aomonline.org/2010.

Note that because PDW space is limited, we encourage PDW proposals that are of interest to several divisions or interest groups. Although PDW proposals may be submitted only to one division, if your proposal is accepted by ODC, other divisions will be offered the opportunity to co-sponsor it based on your recommendations.

ODC Division PDW sessions will be scheduled from 8 am Friday, August 6, 2010 to 8 pm Saturday, August 7, 2010 in Montreal, Canada. Please submit your proposals using the PDW submission system at: http://submissions.aomonline.org/2010. Again, the deadline for proposals is January 14, 2010, and early submissions are appreciated.

NEWS ABOUT MEMBERS

Wendell L. French, the first Division Chair and one of the founders of the Organization Change and Development Division, passed away on October 12, 2009.

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of action research—after some initial definition and framing.

Definition

Action research is an orientation to knowledge creation that arises in a context of practice and requires researchers to work with practitioners. Unlike conventional social science, its purpose is not primarily or solely to understand social arrangements, but also to effect desired change as a path to generating knowledge and empowering stakeholders. We may therefore say that action research represents *a transformative orientation to knowledge creation in that action researchers seek to take knowledge production beyond the gate-keeping of professional knowledge makers.*

Action researchers do not readily separate understanding and action, rather we argue that only through action is legitimate understanding possible; theory without practice is not theory but speculation. Our activist wing might summarize that action research takes knowledge creation to the people!

Many Forms

I acknowledge that many elements of action research can appear confusing. The label itself is, in fact, an umbrella term that represents a "family" of practices. Like all families that Tolstoy would have us bother with, action researchers argue and fall in and out with one another. Inside the family we see practices that seem genetically unrelated. After all, what could Chris Argyris' combative investigation of learning defenses ("action science") have in common with Dave Cooperrider's more gentle engagement ("appreciative inquiry")? Yet both are forms of action research. Moreover there are confusing similarities with work outside the family.

Relation to Qualitative Research

Action research does bear resemblance to, and frequently draws from the methods of, qualitative research in that both are richly contextualized in the local knowledge of practitioners. However qualitative research is research about practice, not *with* practitioners. This crucial difference often leaves the work "inactionable," i.e., not something that practitioners can or even wish to make practical use of. Ultimately, the relationship with quantitative work depends on what is relevant to a particular project. Thus some of us are quite good at quantitative analysis too! Similarly, in its organizational manifestation, action research bears resemblance to business consulting.

Relation to Business Consulting

Indeed some of the best organizational action researchers are also known to business leaders as consultants (and they are smart enough not to try to explain the odd term 'action research' outside the scholarly-practitioner community). But again there is a simple but crucial difference. Consulting is work done *for* practitioners, i.e., usually the elites who can pay to have their concerns addressed.

Action research, however, necessarily *stretches beyond* a consulting relationship, though it may overlap and can begin there, to engage more systematically with knowledge creation. Further, some may understandably confuse AR with applied research. But that too is different, generated as it is *about* practice and then offered by scholars for use *by* practitioners.

To reiterate, action research *with* practitioners *always includes* practitioners as partners in the work of knowledge creation.

Perception of Action Research

Action research is often said to have originated in the 1950s with the social-psychology work of Kurt Lewin, and is currently receiving resurgent interest especially in the fields of education, social work, international development, healthcare, etc., i.e., the "helping" professions. In the organizational world it has become a fairly standard way of working for the increasing numbers of professional students who seek masters and doctoral credentials. Action research also lives more or less happily on the margins of conventional social science departments and does this despite its critique of the very values, assumptions and approaches that have grounded university research to date. It is tolerated more and less depending on the context. I think it fair to say that it is recognized as an important way of responding to the critique that conventional social science offers little of value to the people it studies. In professional schools this can be a devastating critique. As the cost of education increases we are bound to hear more of this critique, the type that deans take seriously. In this sense action research offers an important *complement* to conventional social science.

Autobiographical Note

Before I proceed to the promised examples, I offer first a little autobiography. Action researchers are, relative to conventional social scientists, more autobiographical in their expression (we call it reflexive). Because we acknowledge that all claims to knowledge are shaped by interests (consider that knowledge claims are never neutral), what may seem like autobiographical self indulgence is offered to help contextualize the claims, create transparency and also to anchor ownership of expression that can otherwise masquerade as worryingly disembodied and neutral. We might say that reflexivity is as much a part of explaining any project as is the conventional article´s array of methodological and literature review statements at the outset of most articles.

Undergraduate & Masters Work

My scholarly training at the undergraduate and masters levels was in the humanities, a world in which I encountered immense erudition and quietism. Had I wanted simply to "understand" the world better I would have remained at the University of Chicago where I was lucky enough to study with both Jürgen Habermas and Paul Ricoeur. My fellow students and I would quip, with an unreflexive self satisfaction that in hindsight makes me cringe, that we ate "hermeneutics for breakfast." My thesis, written to advance to yet more studies, compared the categories of myth and critical rationality. Perhaps it was the careful footnoting from Foucault's and Nietzsche's texts (from the originals mind you!) that allowed a slow dawning on me that I didn't wish to spend my life always at a distance from experience. I guess I wanted to live a little!

Exploring Life

I withdrew from formal studies and went to study Zen in Japan. Zen practice encourages us to get deeply familiar with our own experience "right here, right now." It teaches that intellectual understanding is a distant second best. Returning after a year to the States, I landed a job working closely for a Texan oil billionaire, a context that attracted me for its seeming closeness to the main artery of big business—now that'd be really living! But despite living vicariously at the margins of eye-popping wealth and power, after two years I was drawn inexorably back to a scholarly setting.

Discovery of Action Research

An important moment was my discovery of Argyris' et al. *Action Science*. I immediately saw in it a user friendly and actionable version of Habermas' theory of communicative action. This set me on a path toward getting involved with the work of organizational learning that flourished at that time around Cambridge, MA. From that I moved to formal organization studies. I count myself lucky that Boston College took me in, a place where the senior faculty (Jean Bartunek, Richard Nielsen, William Torbert) were all familiar with, and indeed seasoned practitioners of, action research. At Boston College, my interest in action research was supported although most of the course work was aimed at gaining familiarity with the foundations of conventional organization science.

Academic Career

Upon completion I started my academic career at Case Western Reserve, a place traditionally seen as also embracing the action paradigm. Against all "conventional" advice early in my career I co-edited an encyclopedic *Handbook of Action Research* with Peter Reason, an English grand master of action research. The book managed to simultaneously allow the international community of AR to see ourselves and to feel pride in our collective accomplishments. The range was extraordinary—from helping create whole new states (Ernie Stringer's work in East Timor) to reorienting policy on sustainable food production that affected millions of people in India and Latin America (Michel Pimbert's work), to organizational learning that swept corporate life (Peter Senge). The Handbook's relative success (not that we made the Oprah list) led to founding the international, peer reviewed journal *Action Research*, published by Sage and considered one of the most successful new journals they have launched. So today I respond to the invitation to write this essay not as a distanced observer of the field but as an active leader.

My Interests

My interests are in promulgating the action paradigm among and for those who, like me, yearn to contribute to making a positive difference. I admit there is a part that also wishes to respond to the dismissive disdain that hovers around AOM conversations about action research. I understand that disdain, having myself once dismissed the entire empirical endeavor! But now located inside the community of social science, I too feel disdain for work labeled action research that is in fact some amalgam of uncritical consulting that leads to the reification of power relations in organizations and, oops, somehow forgets that contribution to theory and practice is also required. In the following I hope my concern for the quality of work shared under the label "action research" is evident. My intention here is not so much to invite a thousand flowers to bloom, but to suggest that action research must be nurtured by those involved especially in preparing graduate students for life after their degree.

Core Features of Action Research

I'll quote from what is called the 'Manifesto on Transformation of Knowledge Creation,' signed by all sixty advisory editors of *Action Research Journal* and available on the Sage Publications ARJ website. We begin:

> Action researchers see our work as providing models for increasing the relevance of conventional social research to wider society. What makes our work fundamental to the revitalization of social research more generally lies in its orientation towards taking action, its reflexivity, the significance of its impacts and that it evolves from partnership and participation.
>
> By *partnership and participation* we are referring to the quality of the relationships we form with primary stakeholders and the extent to which all stakeholders are appropriately involved in the design and assessment of inquiry and change. By *actionable* we refer to the extent to which work provides new ideas that guide action in response to need as well as our concern with developing action research crafts of practice in their own terms. By *reflexive* we mean the extent to which the self is acknowledged as an instrument of change among change agents and our partner stakeholders. By *significant* we mean having meaning and relevance beyond an immediate context in support of the flour-

ishing of persons, communities, and the wider ecology.

In sum then the core features of action research are that the work happens in the *context of action* and we have to get into an organization and be engaged with the practitioners there. It operates in partnership with practitioners and we need to discuss and shape our research question and design with the practitioners. Not only must practitioners see the value of working with us, they must want to engage in the experiment in learning that is action research. Action researchers plan for cycles of action and reflection and thereby must be reflexive about how change efforts are unfolding, and the impact that our presence (the intervention) is having. We must be acquainted with the practices of action research which are numerous and varied, and remain interested in always strengthening a skill set for designing/ leading workshops that invite knowledge creation with practitioners.

Technical, Practical and Emancipatory Aims of Action Research

Working in partnership with practitioners pretty much ensures the practical aims will be met—otherwise they won't waste their time. Moreover as scholars we are also called to make sure that technical aims are met—of particular importance here is the question of how to ensure quality of the work, which I discuss in more detail below. The emancipatory aim, however, is often the trickiest and the most alluring to scholars. It may manifest in many ways. In oppressive contexts, it may take the form of empowering those with little voice through including those who have been disappeared from a social system. In more familiar organizational inquiry, it may mean empowering employees as members of knowledge creation efforts that will inform their efforts to take the work forward, thus leaving them stronger.

The action researcher must develop facility in communicating with two audiences: the "local" practitioners and the "cosmopolitan" community of scholars.

The latter is motivated by the question of what, if anything, can be contributed to what scholars already know. Academic colleagues privilege the written medium exclusively. The local audience, however, is not served by an early draft of the manuscript intended for scholarly peers! Communications with practitioners will be dictated by the professional or cultural expectations of the practitioners. As a rule of thumb, I find that practitioners are more readily engaged by story and multi media reports to which their reaction may then be invited. Generally speaking, one must communicate with the local community first, using this as an opportunity for validating and disseminating local learning.

In some early public musings on what constitutes quality in action research, I suggested that quality:

1. proceeds from a praxis of participation,
2. is guided by practitioners' concerns for practicality,
3. is inclusive of stakeholders' ways of knowing,
4. and helps to build capacity for ongoing change efforts.

Because doing all that is very time consuming, I also suggested that people should not waste their time on trifling matters but instead 5) choose to engage with those issues people might consider significant for, in the language of my colleague Peter Reason—"the flourishing of people, their communities and the broader ecology." *Being value neutral is not a pretense action researchers uphold!*

Three Examples of Action Research

So what might all this mean in practice with regard to creating a project and writing a paper? Next I (finally!) sketch those examples I promised. My selection is based on what I happen to have been teaching this week. I am hoping that this mix, from Action Research journal (ARJ), a successfully defended dissertation and an article from Administrative Science Quarterly (ASQ), helps highlight the types of work that readers may identify with.

Example 1: Urban Policy in Hong Kong (from ARJ).

Background: Jackie Yan-chi Kwok and Hok-Bun Ku write as scholars of policy and development in Hong Kong.

Goal: The goal of their study was to help marginalized women become participants in urban planning decisions.

Research Practice: First they gathered a group of immigrant women and children from one of the high density locations on the island. They asked them to take photos of their everyday life that represented the issues they wished addressed by new policy. Gathering the group back together for a workshop there was dialogue about the photos and images of overcrowding naturally were quite provocative.

Collaborative Action: A three dimensional planning kit to scale was then made available to help turn good ideas into concretely actionable planning decisions on how to get more sunshine and play spaces for their children. Together with social workers, they disseminated the new plans via radio and news publications. The Housing authority followed up further to invite participative assessment of public housing and invited advice on how to improve existing housing stock.

Results: The intervention produced practical improvements. More sustainably, it also produced insights on how to lessen social distancing between policy makers and those affected by allowing for cycles of input and feedback.

Example 2: LowcarbonWorks (a dissertation).

Background: The recently completed dissertation of Margaret Gearty, at the University of Bath, emerges from the context of a project called "LowcarbonWorks." The interdisciplinary project, convened by the university and supported by government grants, brings engineers, social scientists and organizational leaders together.

Goal: Their goal is to better understand the impediments to organizational embrace of low carbon technologies and to experiment to overcome them. Gearty and her organizational studies colleagues, frame their effort as a way to understand and encourage change amid the complex interlock of human, organizational and systemic factors that hold the status quo in place.

Research Practice: The project convenes regular conferences for its scholarly and practitioner stakeholders as well as new government leaders who can attend.

Collaborative Action: Gearty both contributes content to the conferences in the form of "learning histories" (an action research practice) and then also uses the conferences as sites for validation and dissemination of the content of those learning histories. The learning history practice uses the rules and methods of qualitative research to tell a jointly told tale of researchers' and practitioners' learning efforts. In bringing the practitioners together, Gearty can disconfirm/validate the "tales," in that the conference affords a deeper dive into discussions of what really was important for their organization in making change. In having newcomers listen to these learning oriented conversations, dissemination of learning also occurs.

Results: In effect Gearty's dissertation both generated the learning histories and documented the effects of this method of disseminating learning among six different organizations. The very creativity of the conference and the beautifully designed learning history reports (with video) represent the project's overall embrace of new forms of learning history that can engage learning across multi organizational boundaries.

Example 3: Toward a Sociology of Work Time (in ASQ).

Background: Leslie Perlow's work is entitled "The Time Famine: Toward a Sociology of Work Time."

Research Practice: She documents her work with engineers to both understand how time is managed and also to help them innovate with time management.

Collaborative Action: As a result of the collaboration, the engineers began to experiment with preserving part of their day without interruption.

Results: This led to their agreeing to no longer allow spontaneous drop in meetings (which required organization level agreement) or to take phone calls. The experiment proved helpful to the engineers and afforded Perlow a deeper understanding of time in the workplace.

Action Research Journal Criteria

Next I introduce the seven criteria for quality in action research endeavors that the associate editors of ARJ have articulated for our work with authors and reviewers. I believe they can also serve as a checklist for quality with regard to any action research project proposals/dissertations and papers.

I unpack each criterion ("choicepoint for quality") in the following table with reference to the examples offered above:

Criteria	Description From Examples
Articulation of objectives	*The extent to which authors explicitly address the objectives they believe relevant to their work and the choices they have made in meeting those.* Kwok & Ku aim to inform policy and empower marginalized immigrant women. Gearty aims to both document and enhance change efforts with regard to uptakes of low carbon technology. Perlow aims at creating a sociology of time in the workplace, seeing the intervention as a necessary component to allow her access and a deeper understanding of the engineers' use of time at work.
Partnership and participation	*The extent to and means by which the project reflects or enacts participative values and concern for the relational component of research. By the extent of participation, we are referring to a continuum from consultation with stakeholders to stakeholders as full co-researchers.* Kwok & Ku convene interaction among immigrant women, social workers, policy makers and media. The women are given cameras to document their lives. The former are invited to a workshop that includes a scaled urban planning kit to inform policy making. Extensive relationship and trust building happens as a prerequisite to change in policy making. Gearty engages organizational leaders in reflective interviews about why they took up new CO2 reducing technology. She then shares these tales in a variety of media (including written but also video format) that are interesting to the practitioners themselves and their peers. She invites them into conversation that reflects on the tales she has woven about their work. This conversation, in the context of conferences, has the effect of validating/disconfirming and disseminating the learning. The validated copies are the made available while those wishing to newly engage with the work enter into the ongoing cycles of the learning history process. Perlow's study is part of a larger action research project led by senior scholar colleagues Rappoport and Bailyn. Their work engages software engineers in what at first is primarily an ethnographic study that documents how engineers use their time. The work has multiple agendas, hers primarily to understand how time is used, the engineers' primarily to develop more effective time management practices. The multiple agendas are therefore "integrated in a collaborative action research agenda."
Contribution to action research theory/practice	*The extent to which the project builds on (creates explicit links with) or contributes to a wider body of practice knowledge and or theory, that contributes to the action research literature.* Kwok & Ku contribute to our knowledge of the practice of "photovoice" and experiential workshops, while also developing insight on how to craft policy. Gearty's work helps generate insight on the social dimensions of new technology which in turn informs our theory of technology adoption. Perlow's study does little to advance theory or practice of action research specifically.
Methods and process	*The extent to which the action research methods and process are articulated and clarified.* The written products of all the efforts (journal articles and a dissertation respectively) clearly articulate what was done to whom so that the reader can see the choices to enhance quality that were made.

Criteria	Description From Examples
Actionability	*The extent to which the project provides new ideas that guide action in response to need.* In all efforts the work engaged change agents, rather than merely informing them. In effect action is an intrinsic part of the participation of change agents.
Reflexivity	*The extent to which the authors explicitly locate themselves as change agents.* Kwok & Ku reflect mostly on the power dynamics of the unusual context created for the work. Gearty narrates a personal journey of learning alongside the practitioners, making her assumptions transparent. Perlow's work shows the high degree of reflexivity associated with the work of ethnography. She clearly delineates the differing scholarly vs. practitioner agendas.
Significance	*The extent to which the insights in the manuscript are significant in content and process. By significant we mean having meaning and relevance beyond their immediate context in support of the flourishing of persons, communities, and the wider ecology.* All work effected positive local change. The reach of the work is greatest when the action research agenda is central to all involved.

A Note of Caution: As in the examples described, it is rare that any one piece of work successfully responds to all choicepoints equally. If there is a rule in action research on the creation of quality, it is to be transparent about the choicepoints we make and about the limitations that come as a result of these choices.

Misconceptions About Action Research

If all the above responds to the question "what is good action research," I want to also add some thoughts on what it is not. There are three common misconceptions. Let's call the first the *"I intend to show my results to the CEO—that's action research"* misconception. Keeping "at-a-distance" from practitioners and limiting interaction to those with formal power is not action research. Action research emerges from working with practitioners, hence the core emphasis on "partnership and participation."

Then there is the *"I shared my findings with someone in the organization, all will now be well"* misconception. Simply offering one's insights is not action research either. Consider for a moment when and how practitioners do engage with actionable knowledge- isn't it more often through personal experiential learning? Experiential learning can be usefully shaped by vicarious or substitute experience in association with (in partnership with!) a researcher who is close to the practitioner in their context of practice. It is naïve to believe there will be genuine interest in your work among practitioners who have been treated as an afterthought.

And let's not politely overlook the "Action Research Work Is Just Sloppy Social Science" misconception. It helps to admit that there is sloppy conventional and sloppy action research. Calling sloppy conventional work "action research" is unfair. Based on the definitions above, and in much more detail elsewhere, I hope such a mistaken identity can be unmasked. Beyond that however—let's imagine that a piece of action research is indeed well done—we must also acknowledge that confusion and disdain will always arise when we insistently evaluate one paradigm using the standards of the other. In simple terms we cannot compare apples and oranges, or, more properly as we are reflecting on paradigmatic difference, we cannot compare apples and blue.

Moving Beyond Misconceptions

What the first two misconceptions have in common is that there is a 'keep-practitioners-at-a-distance' way of operating. This is very understandable. The practice of participation is perhaps simply too unfamiliar or for many unrepentant introverts, too anxiety provoking. For all of us, it's quite exhausting. Yet many action researchers would say that we feel less alone, more integrated, and more clear about the competence of other people in the midst of challenging moments in AR where we do not have to be the "be all-know all" arbiter.

More good news is that participation/partnership is not an all or nothing arrangement. Consider practitioner engagement as happening along a spectrum. On one end there is the "as minimum as necessary consultation with the practitioners to have them be engaged with your work" position, which essentially means you have practitioners' perspective on all important matters. On the other end is bringing practitioners on as 'co-researchers" who co-design the work and may take it in new directions.

We are seeing increasing numbers of people experimenting, e.g., many hitherto conventional social scientists in the healthcare domain are seeking to be more participative with healthcare consumers; they are using AR practices to respond to the demands of managing chronic illness. This type of work is increasing because it is being financed by government grants (e.g., the US National Institute of Health) because strikingly better results have emerged from studies using participative approaches to chronic healthcare challenges. Based in my own experience and what I hear from colleagues, attaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is no more time consuming for action researchers, than for our conventional colleagues. However be warned, most IRB administrative personnel are trained as "very conventional" social scientists. It is important to educate them about the participative dimension and seek their advice early on how to proceed.

There is also a deeper problem with participation that confounds all of us trained to (at least appear to) be "very right." The typical default position of the human ego is to want to appear as a smart expert. Balancing our expertise driven advocacy with an inquiry mode with practitioners is really quite difficult. Perhaps contrary to commonsense, the more skillful we become, the more the insider-practitioners may be invited to control the action research. As a consequence, some of the most scholar-outsider controlled action research is inevitably part of the early work of a scholar, e.g., the dissertation. With appropriate mentoring it is always possible to do high quality AR in the context of dissertation work. If the budding action researcher can take it further—we might think of Dreyfus and Dreyfus' distinction between novice, journeyman and expert as relevant here—deeper levels of partnership become possible over time.

More generally and especially with regard to the third misconception we are called to appreciate what each paradigm seeks to offer. The quality of most conventional social science looks very pale indeed when we inquire as to its actionability and reflexivity. And, yes, most action research looks rather pale when we ask about its generalizability. My response to the valid criticism about generalizability (emanating as it does from a concern for conventional validity), is to draw attention to the growing accumulation of local knowledge. Others (such as Numagami) have noted that seeking generalizability may be asking too much of *any* local knowledge/case study work. However I'd also suggest that if more local knowledge can be shared through peer review mechanism, a new stock of knowledge becomes available to all and the possibility of transferability of knowledge may also grow.

Seeking to increase the generalizability of action research jeopardizes the partnership with practitioners. However we can also imagine the work extending through time. Action researchers can do more to develop post intervention insights by articulating propositions based on the partnership phase. In this way the complementarity of the paradigms may be developed in active partnerships between action and conventional researchers.

The paucity of partnerships between conventional and action researchers leads me to wonder if there isn't a deeper resistance to action research that is shaped primarily by a desire not to question the current status or the reward systems that keep it in place. Those who determine the rewards of the academy today insist that publication in a handful (or two) of journals alone determines whether a scholarly career has merit. Those socialized to produce these articles are unlikely to appreciate work that is not primarily aimed at publication. If I have a request around this delicate matter, it's that we each consider what can be learned *with* each other. In working with an action researcher, a conventional social scientist can learn to offer more useful contributions in a variety of genres and venues.

"What Is Action Research?" A Doctoral Student Perspective

Could a self respecting action researcher deliver an essay on doing action research without talking it through with others? In writing this essay I was with a group of professional doctoral students at a quarterly residency. I was helping them prepare for their "Advanced Action Research Practicum" the following month in Beijing. The students had taken an introduction to action research a year previously and then studied qualitative and quantitative methods. Jeffrey Couch of the Institute for Advanced Studies at Colorado Technical University was kind enough to contribute some thoughts on how action research fits into his program.

Jeff writes:

> *Before even looking at the "what" of action research, I first ask why is it that I received no exposure to AR whatsoever before my doctoral studies?* Students of AR usually reach some measure of academic maturity before being exposed to theory and practice of AR. As a consequence of having been trained to know rather than to discover together, many students simply cannot integrate the emphasis on co-inquiry. Also, as both qualitative and quantitative methods augment and help develop results of AR inquiry, the timing of when to develop adequate skills in research methods is important. Even as a novice with AR I can see the artistry needed when conducting a good AR project. Approaching an inquiry as a subject matter expert (which is what my qual/quant methods classes assume), rather than as part of a shared process of inquiry, leads more often to a missed opportunity to participate in a liberating process with those usually considered instrumental but otherwise marginal to conventional research.
>
> *So, the real question may be "why not" do AR?!* Creating conditions for partnership, which is one of the main elements of AR, seems to help generate a sense of connection that better ensures benefit of the collective good. Looking then through the lens of critical theory, which is concerned with empowerment and transformation, I experience the study and practice of AR in the interplay of the classroom and project site, as itself also moving the professor (as learning facilitator) and students (as learning participants) toward emancipatory education. This puts utopian ideas of praxis and the dialectics of knowledge creation -- what Freire called "problem-posing education" and what Dewey and Kolb call "experiential learning" —into the learning experience. Therefore by learning AR, we are taking critical thinking right into the core of our education. We are letting go the "banking" concept of education described by Freire, in which knowledge is transferred through lecture and stored for possible resurrection some day that too rarely ever comes.

Thank you Jeff!

Action Research: Enhancing Scholarly and Scholarly-Practitioner Partnership

I suspect that the reception of action research sits about where reception of qualitative methods was a decade or so ago. Where once action research complemented the positivist procedures of conventional social science (Kurt Lewin, often named a father of action research, was a great hypothesis tester), these days action research has more fully embraced the communicative/linguistic turn. Habermas seems to reign supreme as a legitimator of the more pragmatic and dialogue oriented philosophy and practice that now dominates action research. This philosophically pragmatist foundation (acknowledging that truth lies in what has demonstrable actionability) is what engenders the practical outcomes so needed by practitioners. Happy coincidence.

Recommended Reading: I'd suggest that all doctoral students be better exposed to the action research paradigm. I recommend the textbook *The action research dissertation: A guide for students and faculty,* by Herr and Anderson, as a start.

As one who advises professional doctoral students, I find variations on two simple questions to be good ways to help. For the ones who can't (or are too timid) to engage in partnership with practitioners whose context they wish to study, I simply ask "What difference would you have your work make? Where is the action in your research?" For those overcome by the context and too deeply engaged in making what can only amount to a momentary contribution, I ask "Where is the research in your action?" In helping students to design their proposals, I encourage the articulation of an actionable question. I encourage students to get stuck into conversation with the key stakeholders as soon as possible and I encourage stakeholders to give input during the project proposal design phase. Ambitious projects may indeed be undertaken with temerity as long as the student can carve out a component that allows for timely dissertation completion, as Gearty (and many of us!) have shown is possible.

What About Getting a Job? What About Publishing?!

Many students of organizations who take up the action paradigm do so as professionals who are also students, i.e., they are not looking for an academic position. For those feeling the pull to a more scholarly career, I'd say notice that jobs on the tenure track are increasingly scarce, a fact that few see reversing any time soon. With that in mind it's important to reiterate that the action paradigm is best seen as a complement, not a replacement in our social science endeavors. Education in how to do quality action research would create *more* not fewer options. While I believe that not all students have the multi-dimensionality to be effective action researchers, let us simply allow students to find their own niche. Therefore, to find a place to offer one's contribution *requires* exposure also to action research.

For those looking for a life that integrates scholarship *and* impact, awareness of the action paradigm may, in fact, open up creative alternatives. There are an increasing number of jobs for those who would work in executive and professional advanced degree programs. It is up to universities and the reward systems they design to make these positions as attractive to talented action researchers as tenure track has been. It is also possible, some say likely, that universities may prefer to go the "Wal-Mart" route and increase the numbers of badly paid adjuncts doing much of the hard work in support of a feudal elite. In all likelihood both will happen and the education market will determine which model will be ethically and financially sustainable.

Happily, I also experience that the academic market has changed in the past decade. Whereas before it was either tenure track or demoralizing positions one took while awaiting a TT opening, today there are more creative tracks for people called to a scholarly, yet also practice friendly, vocation. These innovations include the creation of new clinical and teaching tracks that require practitioner friendly communication skills. Some of these tracks are indeed designed to accommodate an academic second class citizenry to be treated as teaching workhorses. Yet in many, especially well resourced schools, the new tracks have begun to offer attractive pay, long term contracts and respect from conventional colleagues. Their success is in no small part a result of their ability to support the school (or department) in engendering more credibility with salient stakeholders/practitioners (donors!). Importantly these tracks, and those yet to be created, offer conditions for doing interesting and useful work in professionally supportive contexts. The best of these tracks are also beginning to create conditions for partnership between conventional scholars and scholar practitioners. These partnerships can advance both the scholarly *and* practitioner impact of a department, school, research center or an entire university.

As for Publishing…

For those who look for worthy journals beyond the top five A ranked journals usually referred to in doctoral preparation, they will find a multitude of vehicles for sharing what they have to say. An important benefit is that people actually read these journals! It would seem that when junior faculty do the simple math of how many of their peers are vying to place articles in the tiny number of available slots in "hit" journals, they may also consider a Plan B so that their intellectual effort may be better spent on other, potentially more society-enhancing endeavors.

What the Practice of Action Research May Mean for ODC Members

I have learned that the Academy of Management Division (AOM) Organizations Development and Change (ODC) division, likely a division that attracts more than its share of action researchers, receives relatively fewer papers. On asking further, I also learned that it receives relatively *more* symposia. Through the lens of the action research paradigm, I understand why this may be. The symposium (dialogue) format is more attractive to an audience engaged with change efforts. Indeed as a field we have increasingly shifted to acknowledge the power of conversation and language in convening organizational change with practitioners. Situated as I am in a post positive worldview, I see dialogue as the process by which truth claims are created and then collectively validated. Dialogue is a particularly important vehicle for scholarly expression. Therefore a suggestion I will bring to the next ODC board retreat is that we consider emphasizing symposia (they're better attended and more interesting too!) by allocating 75% of our Academy of Management Division (AOM)"space" to symposia, instead of the current 50/50. While we are at it, we might also consider whether and how to encourage more co-authoring of papers *with* practitioners, the action researchers' "co-researchers."

Final Reflection

I conclude by sharing what has motivated me over the years. In a world so deeply in need of change (as I write I note with incredible sadness that all living systems are in decline- if that is not a compelling cause for coordinating collective action, I don't know what can be), I see that the brilliance of social scientists can be put to work in helping bring about needed change. I see the university as especially important for the potential to convene stakeholders for change in ways that overcome jurisdictional fragmentation. I have therefore come to think of action research as residing in the space that can integrate truth and power. The benefit for all involved in scholarly work is that deeper engagement with practice will revitalize social science and increase its relevance to the very issues that most deserve our attention.

The author acknowledges the helpful input of ARJ colleagues, especially Drs. Davydd Greenwood (Cornell U.) and Mary Brydon-Miller (U. Cincinnati).

COMMENTARY ON THE FOUNDING OF THE ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE DIVISION

Glenn H. Varney
Bowling Green State University

Building organization development and change as an academic discipline started when Bill Wolf (AOM President, 1970-71) and Charles Summers (AOM Board Member, 1970-71), along with the AOM Board, decided to invite Wendell French, Craig Lundberg and Tony Raia to facilitate the formation of the Organization Development Division.

By Tony Raia's own account, the founding meeting, held at the Atlanta AOM Conference in 1971, went something like this: "The three of us facilitated the session, and two hours later (after going through six pads of newssheet, 21 yards of masking tape, 32 marking pens and many group hugs), Wendell was selected the first Chair of the newly formed OD Division."

Fifty-three academics and practitioners attended the meeting. To many of those in attendance, the "group GROPE" they were asked to engage in was very uncomfortable. Remarks included: "This is a waste of time," "Whose idea was this?" "I never thought we'd be able to digest all of the stuff recorded on the flipcharts." Wendell French, especially, was uncomfortable but pleasantly surprised when the group elected him as the Division Chair. He thought he was signing up for one year but served for three.

The first three years of the OD Division was devoted to issues of organizing, defining OD, and writing a code of ethics. It is interesting to note that we are still debating who we are, how we should behave and how we train individuals to become effective "change agents."

Wendell's chairmanship was followed for the rest of the founding decade (1971-81) by Craig C. Lundberg (1974), Dale E. Zand (1975), Robert T. Golembiewski (1976), Frank Friedlander (1977), Newton Margulies (1978), Larry E. Greiner (1979), W. Warner Burke (1980), and Michael Beer (1981). Although Tony Raia never served as chair of our division, he played a pivotal role in its formation and was also honored during the Chicago meetings.

The idea of inviting the "founders" of the ODC Division to tell their stories was a result of several members of the Division (especially Wayne Boss, Glenn Varney, and Michael Manning) contacting each of the nine OD Division Chairs. We succeeded in persuading seven of them to attend the Chicago 2009 AOM Conference, where we honored them for their contributions. Wendell French was unable to attend due to poor health. Sadly, he passed away on October 12, 2009.

The eight people who did participate were each asked to write a paper on milestones in their careers, what OD was like when they started in the field, and pearls of wisdom they would like to convey to those just starting in the field. Their stories are published in this issue of the *ODC Newsletter*.

We hope these inspiring personal accounts will help you understand how important it is to remember our founders and how their contributions have enabled us to move forward as we continue to build ODC as an academic discipline.

LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD: PERSONAL LEARNINGS AND DIVISION OPPORTUNITIES

Craig Lundberg
1974 ODC Division Chair
Cornell University

The invitation to participate in the 2009 ODC Division celebration event gently suggested that I share a "story" that touched upon (1) what the ODC field was like when I became involved, (2) some milestones in my OD career, (3) any advice I wished to convey to younger ODC colleagues, and (4) any remarks I might have for our Division as it goes forward. This charge seemed reasonable, if challenging—I've much to reflect upon after forty plus years as an ODC scholar-educator-practitioner.

I first became aware of OD in 1967. I was in Bethel, Maine, T-Grouping the summer away toward becoming a facilitator. NTL's first OD session occurred at the same time. I "hung out" with the OD staff and participants quite a lot. If OD was a field then, it was very small. There were just a handful of real players (mostly academics who consulted), few articles, no textbooks (the Addison Wesley OD Series was yet unborn). Theory was mostly Lewin's simple unfreezing-change-refreezing model. There was, however, a lot of energy and enthusiasm, the theme of prompting humanistic values in organization, and a few organizations beginning to entertain OD work, such as TRW. The field was very much in the shadow of laboratory education. The early players, however, were busy inventing and using all sorts of new interventions. I was intrigued, and still am.

If by milestones, we mean markers of turning-learning points, I've had a bunch as OD and I have both grown up. Here, I will note just a short list. First, I was nicely prepared for OD by my father and my doctoral program. My dad and the out-of-doors life he encouraged taught me the values of working hard and being very curious, and that I could gain self-discipline by always looking thoroughly and closely in the field, grounding any conceptualization oh-so carefully, and the real complexity of attempting change any social system.

Second, early on I invested years in executive development and management consulting. Eventually, it dawned on me that that story of work rarely produced any real organizational change. Needless to say, OD's implicit and explicit promise re change captured my attention.

Third, contemporarily I was active as a t-group facilitator. This was enormously growthful for me as a person and has as an OD professional. The "lab scene" and involvement with groups of early OD and consultancy programs (e.g. Pepperdine and UCLA's Ojai program) helped me acquire many of the interpersonal and group skills so useful for my OD work. And I met, learned from, and became colleagues with a set of smart, talented, and bold persons, such as Dick Beckhard, Pat Williams, Tony Raia, Sam Shirley, and Newt Margulies. The list is long!

Fourth, from 1970 through 1986 I was, among other things, an academic administrator at several universities. In each situation I was a change agent in my own shop, attempting system enhancements in schools that were variously highly politicized, inertial, resource stingy, egocentric, or lacking direction. These all tested and forced expansion of what I thought I knew and could do about OD.

Fifth, about 1985 "organizational culture" gained recognition as previously an under examined and underappreciated phenomenon. I became an early enthusiastic camp-follower, relieved that we finally had the conceptual lens to see behind organizational formalities and see beyond climate and norms to the power of symbols, patterned assumptions, values and beliefs—all really helpful in understanding resistance, finding pockets of change energy, and so much else.

Lastly, the "biggie" for me—my client systems over the years. Much of my OD competency has been acquired simply by doing the work. Over and over I've encountered talented managers, whose energy, passion, and insight have made me look good (especially since I keep working with systems I initially know little about.) Oh, the learningful clients I have had: those where success and failure intertwined; those where I barely escaped their distractions and seductions; those where their glibness or pseudo-sincerity or crippling anxiety pushed me to up my game; those where naiveté, stupidity and/or simplistic thinking stimulated the intervention of new change techniques and models; and those occasional wonderful clients who transformed themselves in spite of my bumbling. Clients can be potent teachers.

So what "advice" might I share here? It is a short list, but one I've come to feel strongly about:

- Work with any client system you are fascinated with. You don't have to know their business, what to do, or how to do it, as long as they believe that they must change. We all get in over our heads, often ad-lib, and have to learn swiftly.
- Invest your time and energy in client systems in which you're likely to learn something. Working for just money and/or glory is really a short-run strategy and surely will shrivel your OD soul.
- Since everything is changing in some ways all of the time—our clients, our field, or world—we have to actively change ourselves, too. While you may be tempted to ignore or delay your own personal and professional development, doing so will hobble you sooner than you can imagine.
- It is crucial to stay actively grounded. Thus, sweat, and savor the details of every organization you encounter. Read, read, read, because the intellectual basis of what we do is evolving rapidly. Write, write, write, because you can't trust your or anyone's memory or know what you think without a record. And initiate and nurture professional exchanges with partners for dialogue and debate, with mentors for wisdom and challenges, and with shadow consultant-friends for more careful, probing assistance then you can give yourself.
- Finally, there are four kinds of skills that, while not currently popular, are likely, in my opinion, to be more and more central to your success. These skills are: a) inferring and surfacing assumptions and beliefs, and helping organizational members appreciate that power; b) actively confronting your clients, colleagues, and yourself—straight talk will eventually be appreciated; c) recognizing and managing distress—everyone's. Distress is the number one killer of intention; and d) making your intuitive beliefs explicit. If you do so, you'll have a chance at learning from your actions.

Finally, let me note 10 areas of concern I currently hold for the field of ODC, each, interestingly, holding an opportunity for our Division to service its members:

- Early on practitioners of OD believed that they were key instruments in change processes. We spoke of the "self as instrument" and often encouraged our manager-clients to have personal-social development experiences like us. The primary developmental device then, and for several decades thereafter, was, of course the T-group/sensitivity training/encounter group. Some OD folks even engaged in counseling or therapy. Laboratory learning was a part of the few OD educational programs. Today, however, the social-emotional development of OD practitioner and client managers occurs less and less.
- Also common in the field's earlier days was the practice of using "shadow consultants," those trustworthy OD colleagues and friends that one turns to for solace, assistance and/or direction with one's own projects. Sometimes shadows were built-in, e.g., paired internal and external consultants. Shadows often are mentors, too. The academic equivalent is that set of others a scholar asks to comment on his/her papers. While many active OD professionals exchange help as shadow consultants, we don't hear much about them of late. The ODC Division could sponsor a session on shadow consultancy, in which real-time assistance was sought and given.
- The teaching of ODC in colleges and in professional programs has a surprisingly long history. Mostly, however, these are designed and taught uniquely; only partially conditioned by the available texts, cases, exercises and types of students. At the present time there are a lot of offerings, and they appear to vary a lot. How an instructor learns of new materials and pedagogies seems to depend mostly on his/her friendship set in the field. The ODC Division could sponsor a PDW, where ODC faculty shared syllabi, materials, what works/doesn't work, and provide experiential demos.
- Case studies about ODC—both teaching and research—have been written almost from the inception of our field, but actually aren't plentiful at all. ODC educators need to provide descriptions to ground and validate their work. The ODC division could sponsor case research, case writing, and case teaching workshops.
- ODC diagnosis has always been more art than systematic practice. The portion of ODC text-

books devoted to diagnosis is perennially short. Diagnosis is likewise mostly neglected in the practitioner and scholarly literature. Nevertheless, diagnosis is ubiquitous and always significant; and many ODC professionals are highly skilled in it. Perhaps it is timely to make explicit our collective knowledge about diagnoses, and, thus, enhance both theory and practice. The ODC Division could sponsor workshops to share diagnostic models and to identify change syndromes, i.e., a related set of symptoms systematically associated with various fundamental organizational phenomena.

- ODC professionals have invented many diagnostics, interventional and assessment techniques over the years. New ones continue to appear annually. The diffusion of new techniques, however, seems very uneven, mostly depending on whether and where it appears in print. The ODC Division could sponsor training in the form of sessions that describe and demonstrate techniques useful in our field. Helpful areas would include constructing and using cause-maps diagnostically or on adopting cultural anthropology's rapid assessment process to organizations, etc.

- While ODC claims a behavioral science base, any perusal of the field's recent literature will show that it is unusually self-referential. Even the schools of thought in contemporary organization studies seldom reference anymore. It is as if ODC has quit borrowing ideas, theories, and practices from its sister fields and from its foundational social-behavioral science disciplines. The ODC Division could sponsor presentations or seminars by non-ODC stars who look closely and think deeply about management in organizations and, hence, might open some new doors on ODC. Examples include Professors March, Pfeffer, Staw, Van de Van, and Weick.

- Over the years, the ODC field has been critically assessed as either theory-light or having a conceptual cacophony. While there has been a small, steady stream of unrelated, provocative theories about the how's and why's of organizational change (e.g. social rules theory, sense-making, etc.) as well as many models about guiding organizational change (e.g. from guerilla OD to cultural transformations), conceptualization remains a potpourri. Both synthesis and appropriate differentiation seems overdue. The ODC Division could sponsor one or more workshops or sessions whose challenge would be to consolidate/synthesize and/or to reformate/extend and extant conceptualization.

- Research in ODC all too often exhibits simple and inappropriate designs and methods (e.g. before and after surveys and regressions), which mask contexts, processes, and meso analysis and whose findings are seldom compiled. In addition, several relevant phenomena tend to be ignored (e.g. justice, ideologies, trust, and inertia.) Our field begs for more sophisticated and more telling research. The ODC Division could sponsor sessions that feature exemplary research projects that utilize a variety of alternative research designs, including comparable cases, action inquiry, field experiments, and laboratory experiments.

- Few people dispute the well supported contention that beliefs influence much of what we experience and the sense we make of it. This be so, isn't it surprising that ODC hasn't zeroed in on the part that beliefs play in organizational change (there are of course exceptions, such as Argryris's double loops), both in mindsets of managers and consultants, as well as in the ideological affiliations of its scholars. The ODC Division could sponsor a pair of sessions, one on ideology and management/applied science, and one about how to explicate beliefs in organizations.

OD: YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY BABY!

Dale E. Zand
1975 ODC Division Chair
New York University

OD has prospered during the past 50 years, but its spread raises issues about its use and misuse. Managers and many non-OD consultants casually pick up and use OD interventions. For example, future managers routinely learn about group process, intergroup conflict, negotiation and experiential learning as part of university programs in business administration. Also, many consultants have applied so-called OD practices in business, government and educational organizations.

Historically, OD found its greatest opportunities and made its greatest contributions where power-directive change faltered. The OD community, however, should be concerned that power-centered managers increasingly misuse OD tools for a quick fix. Believing they can bypass guidance from OD professionals, managers pursue greater efficiency while ignoring OD's perspective and humanistic values.

Managers have absorbed and become comfortable co-opting OD. Beneficial co-optation should lead to better process, decisions and outcomes, and more meaningful, satisfying work. Co-optation, however, can superficially mask a power-centered status quo that ignores or subverts OD principles.

Transfer and Withdraw

Good OD practice transfers behavioral knowledge and skills to management and reduces dependence on consultants.

If the transfer-and-withdraw principle helps an organization, does that make managers savvy OD practitioners? Some perhaps, but many not. There is the risk that with superficial understanding, managers initiate process analysis, team building, role analysis, issue sensing and so on with no guidance from OD specialists.

The opportunities to learn abstract OD concepts pose a dilemma. MBA programs, executive literature, corporate education programs, company anecdotes and internal HR personnel provide information about OD. They do not necessarily instill competent OD behavioral skills.

Managers may think that the availability of OD knowledge makes them OD practitioners. But, we have to question whether organizations are really more OD self-sufficient or merely more verbally fluent. Because someone can name the parts of the brain, that does not make them a brain surgeon.

Transfer and withdrawal poses several issues for OD professionals and managers: As managers become OD skilled and independent, how good are practitioners at reducing inputs and withdrawing? After withdrawal, how is managerial OD competence monitored and maintained? If managers think they can initiate OD interventions, but are not competent, what is the role, if any, of the OD professional? How long does transfer and withdrawal last? Managers regularly leave and move to other positions. How OD competent and motivated are the successors to the current managers?

Minimal Intervention

Managers do not want so-called "deep," personal interventions. They want OD to facilitate process and alter relationships just enough to improve achieving organizational goals.

Originally, OD sought to develop sensitive, self-aware, behaviorally skilled managers as change agents. OD's tools were laboratory method, T-groups and group dynamics. Trust and voluntary participation were critical to learning change agent skills. Prospective change agents were immersed in a deep, personal learning experience to develop self-awareness and sensitivity—now called emotional intelligence. (For more about the early days of OD see "Organization Development and Change: A Reflection on Where We Came From," *Organization Development and Change Division Newsletter*, Academy of Management, Winter 2002, 7-12. http://people.stern.nyu.edu/dzand)

Managers moved away from "deep" interventions as they found that cross-functional teams improved coordination and intergroup meetings improved conflict management. Both worked reasonably well without sensitivity training or process consultation.

Managers, and OD professionals, also found that common, clear goals were often enough to coordinate effort and motivate people without deeply probing feelings or behavior.

Organizations increasingly used minimal interventions that did not examine interpersonal relations or group process. The "six sigma" programs in Xerox, GE and Citibank, for example, trained people in basic industrial engineering techniques: problem definition, flow charting, statistical analysis and value analysis. Some included sessions on conducting meetings and cascading change down the organization. The programs were impersonal and avoided deep intervention. Trainees applied their, "six sigma" skills to improve the efficiency of their work.

Programs, such as six sigma, do not review or modify a firm's overall strategy. Such programs improve efficiency within an existing strategy but cannot offset offset the flaws of a bad strategy. Lucent, for example, the manufacturer of telecommunication equipment spun off from the old AT&T, made increasingly out-dated products. Its slow-moving, bureaucratic culture stifled rapid development of new products. To push sales, Lucent practically gave away its obsolescing products by offering extremely liberal financing. Accounts receivable and credit losses soared as telecom companies loaded with excess capacity and facing intense competition, defaulted on payments. Lucent's revenues, earnings and market share plummeted. Minimal interventions, such as six sigma, would not offset the death spiral of the existing strategy. A deeper and more extensive intervention was needed to transform the organization's strategy and culture. Alcatel, a French company, ultimately acquired Lucent as a distressed company at a distressed price.

Managers prefer change methods with minimal depth of intervention and offering greatest opportunity for better decisions and efficiency. To train others in rational, industrial engineering analysis or how to conduct a meeting does not require mastery of OD theory, concepts and skills. As managers move to minimal intervention, they consider OD knowledge and skills unnecessary and a potential impediment.

Lateral Organization

OD introduces lateral modes that support creative inquiry to aid managerial problem solving.

Before OD's advent, management used suggestion systems and an open door policy to supplement its problem solving process. Often these were feeble gestures that did little to improve the organization's performance.

The confrontation meeting (Beckhard) was a major OD step forward in lateral organizing. Bringing together several levels and sections of an organization, it packaged quick, extensive problem sensing, with solution finding and access to managerial authority. Managers absorbed the method and repeated it. Their efforts worked, without OD professional guidance, so long as there was trust, openness, expertise, representation of stakeholders and managerial concurrence.

OD professionals introduced other lateral interventions such as issue sensing, team building, Likert's System 4 survey feedback, managerial grid, and appreciative inquiry.

As years passed, organizations accumulated experience with OD techniques, which became off the shelf items. Managers freely applied the techniques though they did understand the underlying theory and concepts or how they fit into a larger system of change.

Sam Walton, for example, created his own lateral mode. Called the "jamboree," he brought together hundreds of store managers and several levels of management to talk about good selling items, poor selling items, and problems of merchandising, logistics, and personnel. Everyone was expected to report, listen, help, offer suggestions, and have fun. Managers came away with a fistful of suggestions and personal contacts for dealing with problems. After observing a Walton "jamboree", Jack Welch decided to support "workout" meetings at GE.

Managers have coopted the OD lateral mode. Managers may not know lateral organization theory or conditions for its successful use. But many believe the lateral mode is simple to use and feel no need for professional OD guidance.

Model and Mentor

Good OD practice uses successful units to model and mentor change for other units.

Lewin's three phase theory of change—unfreeze, move, refreeze—tells us that after a system has moved, it is important to refreeze and stabilize the new behavior. Psychological support—that is, feedback confirming the effectiveness and value of the new behavior—is essential to refreezing. Managers stabilize new behavior by having a successful unit model and mentor change in others.

The model unit gets managerial confirmation and reward for its new behavior.

The model unit unfreezes others by disconfirmation—that is, the model's performance becomes a benchmark. It shows others how much more effective they can be. The model then mentors others through the move phase by helping with diagnosis and providing counsel about enacting change.

Managers apply the OD principle of modeling and mentoring without using OD professionals or knowing Lewin's theory of change.

Banc One, for example, moved from a modest state bank with assets of $3 billion to a super regional bank with assets of $30 billion while almost doubling its return on assets by using model units to successfully mentor and integrate more than forty acquisitions in 10 years. Each acquisition kept its leadership in place and was assigned as a client to a successful "mentor" bank of similar size and market within the Banc One system.

GE has a program to spread best practices through its organization. If a GE unit has an activity that it believes should be an organization-wide best practice, it sends the information to an office of executive learning. This office acts as a clearinghouse and designs a process to disseminate the practice in GE.

External benchmarking, another form of modeling, finds non-competing companies that are high performers in warehousing, distribution, product design or customer service. The external high performer serves as a model for change. For example, to improve warehousing and parts distribution, companies like Xerox and Caterpillar visit and study high performing, mass-market, mail order companies like L. L. Bean and Amazon

Managers have co-opted and applied the modeling and mentoring with little input, if any, from OD professionals.

What's Ahead?

My point is that OD has been remarkably successful in spreading many of its techniques. Managers will continue to appropriate OD techniques to improve their organization's ability to adapt to and operate efficiently in a competitive environment. That is what managers are paid to do.

Co-optation is evidence of OD's effectiveness. Very likely, however, demand for OD professionals will be selective and sporadic and will still depend on power-directive failures in organizations. Other OD opportunities will come in start-ups, rapid growth and organizations requiring integration of temporary groups. Global organizations facing cross-cultural conflicts will require OD skills in sensitivity to cultural differences and negotiation.

Co-optation by managers has become a major force in OD. Managers want interventions that build efficient, high-performing organizations. OD specialists, will be disappointed by declining attention to humanism. As OD professionals train managers and help organizations achieve economic goals, they need to integrate humanism with OD's contribution to achieving organizational goals and help management minimize its misuse of OD interventions.

ODC NOTES
FOR FOUNDERS PRESENTATION

Robert T. Golembiewski
1976 ODC Division Chair
University of Georgia

My False Step

Because I heard what I wanted to hear, most probably, I originally began preparing a paper on the theme of my career in moving from there to here. Arrangements were be made at Chicago to get copies of this paper to those who have an interest in how I got where I am as an ODCer.

Note also that what follows is in the format suggested by Glenn Varney. This proposed formula only recently attracted my attention. As a final caveat, this essay rests on my sense of OD or ODC. Interested readers can consult my *Ironies in Organization Development* (2003) and other sources for my slant on foundation issues. Note also that I was never much invested in the sometimes-zesty dispute over OD or ODC as *the* label. My sense of the conceptual tent here is large enough to cover both OD and ODC, I believe.

Milestones in my Career

Primarily, I persisted: I'm now heading into my 46th year in what I would call OD or ODC. This has something to recommend it, but I generally advise clients that how long it took is far less consequential than what got done and how long it lasted.

Most of the time was spent in three large projects, which in a way suggest that I did not always follow the principle of achieving vs. lasting, but sought to do the latter via the former. The three consulting relationships each lasted from 15-20 years, and I would count them successes which lasted a substantial time: The first two cases were business—Smith Kline & French in its various forms; and spin-off Allergan. In both cases, small-to-medium size organizations grew to and beyond $1 billion in sales during the period of multiple consultancies.

The third case was the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority which grew in my tenure from a limited bus company to a comprehensive urban system via a $2+ billion dollar program of development. Over two decades, this proved "class" vs. mass transportation," but today faces significant demographic and funding challenges after several decades of operation.

In addition to being an ODC consultant, I also saw myself as a researcher. Here, I cherish our long-term studies of success rates in ODC applications, as well as the "trinitarian model of change" as a central theoretical advancement underlying especially tomorrow's practice. I also authored or edited a passel of books, often in collaboration with ODC clients and those earning apprenticeships in ODC by contributing to the field as well as to me.

ODC as It Was

ODC had a general resemblance to herding cats—energetic, full of surprises, and full of willful characters seeking their own ways; and major opportunities for doing things and gaining recognition with small investments in degrees, training, etc.

Perhaps the best that can be said is that, despite factionists, the field retained a substantial coherence that distinguishes it from many breakthrough efforts like the often-nasty warfare among early mental health leaders like Freud and his cohorts.

Perhaps it is no wonder that early efforts at institutionalizations had quite mixed results in ODC: witness the several limited efforts at institutionalization of practice, ODC content in curricular, and certification and accreditation. For example, only vestiges remain of these major initiatives: International Association of Applied Social Scientists; and Certified Consultants International, as well as various trimmings of plans and ambitions involving NTL in its evolution toward becoming a full-scale professional entity covering the gamut of education, training, practice, interventions, and so on.

It appears that many ODCers had luck with their ODC major milestones similar to mine. In sum:

- When I began practice, my first two or three deans did not have a workable sense of ODC but, by the middle years, many ODC academic programs existed.
- Whatever the doubt about ODC effectiveness in the early days, and they may still be held by some influentials, by 1990 or so substantial success rates were demonstrated in a widening set of applications in business and industry; and almost all studies of ODC success rates clustered above the mid-70 percent range. Our files of ODC cases evaluating success now numbers over 1000 cases, including a few duplicates.
- ODC life was often a rose garden, but it had its thorns.

To provide some needed balance, my own major milestone was not met: to establish a National (if not International) Institute of Planned and Peaceful Change, with mandates ranging over the full range of ODC activities—from research development of theory and practice, the growth of institutions for certification and accreditation.

In sum, I early set my career plans to be influential in this evolution. Despite at least three major chances of attaining such an institution, events and accidents distracted the field from this (to me) critical institutional development.

Guides for Our Tomorrows in ODC

One advisory about this presentation encouraged us older guys to risk sharing "wisdom," but these concluding comments will not rise to this bait except for one point. For me, the basic wisdom for OD practice involves taking care of yourself and your own—first and always. That to me means all the obvious things—get proper R & R, do your homework, keep up with the literature, and don't let your promises overreach your skills, experience, and knowledge. More basically, cleave to those who love you and can provide the most powerful support when things go awry, as they almost certainly will, from time to time.

For ODC as a useful body of theory and practice, it seems to me that future ODCers need only support and build upon the foundation of theory and practice as most of us know them today.

Beyond this useful foundation, major work needs doing on institutional aspects of OD. Some real progress has been made, as reflected (for example) in the present activity which seeks the linkage between past and future that will support solid future extensions of ODC.

By institutional emphases, I mean many things, only some of which I summarize here. Institutional progress can result, for example, as by:

- protecting more fully the rights of all stakeholders, as in clients, ODCers, and the escalating sunk costs that today's ODCers now invest in their education and training.

- giving priority to accelerating the development of policies and procedures for accrediting ODC programs and certifying individual ODCers.
- giving much additional attention to the caring for intervenors.
- developing programs to protect intervenors from conflicts of interest deriving from unwise or unethical demands of clients.
- increasing the priority of research about ODC applications, and perhaps especially when that involves clients as part of the effort to increase their knowledge and skills.
- as by refining diagnosis so as to increase their target—specificity to situations presented by clients.
- enhancing the success rates of interventions, given that the prevailing rates are quite attractive in public research—approximating 70-75 percent in initial results.
- as by giving greater attention to effects over time periods longer than (let us say) 3-6 months or so time periods extending beyond initial effects. That is, some unknown degrees of fade-out can be expected to occur over time in many interventions even though some delayed fade-in results may be expected to counterbalance some portion of fade-out effects. In any case, prudent practice suggests the usefulness of "booster shots," although the recommended periodicity of them is now basically a matter of cautious estimate in specific cases.

This list can be extended, but one point is clear. Matters may have seemed easier and simpler in ODC's earlier days, but that appearance was chimerical and, in any case, those days are gone and emphasis on institutional progress cannot be finessed except at the risk of jeopardizing existing progress on foundational work which we all here represented draw on every day.

Personal Priorities

In addition to the short list of priority developments above, I add three personal developments. Overall these additions will aid the development of the others.

First, ODC permits a "centroid," if you will, a crucial nexus of variables highlighted in application and research possibilities. My own work gives most attention to such centroids clustering around the "phases of burnout" (e.g., *Global Burnout*, 1996) which explores the interaction of personal features, structural, variable, group properties, and institutional features.

Second, great progress is implied by such developing fields as "neuroeconomics." Here the key variable deals with elements in body chemistry, and their influence on all decision making. Beyond this central feature of life, numerous economics looks for interaction of features of the brain with levels of trust as well as with various micro-and macro-institutional features such as alternative decision-making systems along with policies and practices. The potential reach of such developments is not yet great, and the grasp of such initiative is consequently still in early development stages.

Third, as noted above, I have long advocated without success the need in ODC to follow a national health model—as in developing A National Institute of Peaceful Change for Individuals, Groups and Organizations. This may seem to be aiming too high, but in reality there have been three or four cases in which such a development was possible. Consider only NTL's goal of developing a broad institutional sense of itself in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

DIFFERENTIATION AND INTEGRATION AS A CAREER MODEL

Frank Friedlander
1977 ODC Division Chair
Fielding Institute

What a pleasure and an honor to be here today. This is a reunion with my colleagues here on the speakers platform. It is also a reunion with my earlier professional self. And finally, it is an opportunity to explore the roots of OD as I experienced them many years ago.

My most treasured memories are working with students, and with my colleagues on committees, on research projects and consulting jobs, and of feeling an increased sense of my own capabilities and maturity. What is more faint in these memories is the relevance of my publications and the impact of my consulting efforts on my clients (I never quite understood how I could learn so much and get paid for it!). I used skills that I wish I had. With many projects, I often felt afterward that the client organization had a mile to go, and I helped it gain only a few inches. It is difficult to change organizations!

After I had outlined what I planned to say today, I observed a very interesting pattern in my career—and perhaps in the development of OD. I would find myself committed to one path or method, and then take on an alternative or divergent perspective, and finally I struggled to integrate the two approaches or perspectives. In this way, I was able to conceptualize my career and perhaps the field of OD into phases of differentiation and integration.

The first of these differentiation's concerned the focus of study. Do we concentrate on the individual (as conceived in psychology) or on the organization (as suggested by more sociological or systems perspectives)?

My career followed a similar divergent pattern—from an undergraduate psychology major to an MBA and then back to the individual with a Ph.D. in industrial psychology. The intrigue of these two perspectives did not stop there since I found my interests and readings increasingly in social psychology, sociology and systems theory. All of these provided a variety of perspectives of organizations and organization development.

My development paralleled that of the field. OD started out in the 1950s as personal and interpersonal development. The assumption was that if we changed enough people in the organization, the organization would change. This is the assumption of almost all training as well. Of course it leaves out the structure, the culture, the policies, the finances, and the politics of the organization and therefore is likely to fail. In the mid 1960s, the National Training Laboratories (NTL) and the OD Network had an amiable separation, but not a divorce. I maintained my membership in both. I believe each has continued that separation; NTL has focused on personal growth and social justice while the OD Network has focused more on the practice of organization change. The Academy has been more concerned with the study of organizations and organization change.

During the past 25 years, I believe the pendulum has swung far toward the organization, minimizing the impact of and on the individual and depersonalizing the field of organization behavior. In the 1960s when I entered the field, OD was a highly participative upward influence activity. Change management, more predominant today, reverses that direction. Management makes the relevant decisions on change and OD tends to implement these

One of my favorite ways of introducing to students the contrast of the individual focus vs. the organizational focus has been for them to look at their topic or area through one end of an imaginary telescope (a rolled-up piece of paper) e.g. at the organization, and to then turn the telescope around to look through the other end—at an individual or team. After their view from each end, they verbalize the primary elements of what they see. The contrast between the micro perspective and the macro perspective of the same subject is often revealing and suggests ways to integrate these two.

A second pair of divergent perspectives in my career has been a choice between a focus on the organization vs. a focus on organization change. I believe that life simply is not captured or even understood with a single still picture. This simple fact became apparent to me one night as I checked into a motel in a city. I left a wake-up call for 7:00 a.m. since I was to conduct a workshop the next morning starting at 8:00 a.m. Imagine my surprise when I arose to find no mirror in the room in which to shave. But the problem was solved; I had brought along a life-size photo of my face, and it was unshaven. I simply hung it on the wall, and went ahead to shave. Of course you realize the futility of this: there was no action in the photo, no feedback on how or where or when the razor was doing its job. We need continuous and immediate feedback in order to understand change from the perspective of the consultant, the researcher, or the client. Taking a static picture of an organization or person provides little guidance for action or depth of understanding. And for those who claim that a before-after study accomplishes this, let me point out that had I brought a photo of my shaven face and hung it side by side with the unshaven face, it would not have helped. We need a movie camera to document the entire process

A third struggle in my career was to integrate the practice of OD with the research of OD. I had learned in my graduate work to keep these separate, since research results are often biased by getting too close to the subjects of study. There is a bit of a paradox in saying that the further away I get from people I am studying, the better I will understand them.

After I received my Ph.D. in 1962, I had several offers of employment at more traditional research sites and universities, but the odd ball offer came from a Navy R&D laboratory at China Lake, California. The freedom for researchers in the physical sciences there spilled over to the behavioral sciences, allowing me to pursue my own interests as well as those of the laboratory. The organization was on the forefront of using t-groups or sensitivity training to facilitate OD. About one-third of the employees had been through a laboratory training experience. In this sense the whole organization was a case study—an experiment in training employees in intense interpersonal relations and personal development, frequently followed by various team-building efforts.

When I arrived at China Lake, I was a rather straight conventional researcher. A colleague in my department had interviewed the top team of about 10 scientists at the laboratory, each of whom supervised 50-100 professional scientists. She had invited an expert consultant in team building to work with the top team. This was 1962. Team building and t-groups were viewed with suspicion, especially by us legitimate guys in psychology. I immediately saw this as an opportunity to expose the trainer as a charlatan and the team building effort as near worthless. I drew upon her notes to build an 80-item questionnaire, which I then sent to the 10 department heads. These were completed and returned, but with brief notes asking who I was, was I going to send these to the consultant as part of his effort, and would they see the results. I, of viewed these gratuitous comments as nuisance notes, superfluous to the core research. They were, of course, of equal or greater importance than those responses requested on the questionnaire.

The consultant, Herb Shepard, was one of the early pioneers in the field, conducting OD with Standard Oil among others in the 1950's. Although he published few articles, he is recognized as a founder, long before the OD Network presented awards of recognition to founders. Herb started the Organization Behavior Program at Case Western about 1963; Case, along with UCLA, were the two initial Ph.D. programs in Organization Behavior in this country.

Herb spent most of the first day of his visit interviewing the top scientist team at China Lake. That night we had dinner together. It lasted four hours and laid the basis for a major turning point in my career. Herb reflected the questions and views of the top team: were Herb and I working together, did Herb get the results of the questionnaire, who was the stranger who sent the # questionnaire? It was clear that the questionnaire was an interruption and disruption to the team building effort. Herb supported my effort, although it was clear that he would not have done it as I did. Our discussion ran the risk of polarizing: The consultant mission (What is important is that we facilitate a better working process among team members) vs. the traditional researcher (What is important is that we research this effort to learn from it and to improve it). Something about his acceptance of the research as important and his suggesting other ways to research were appealing. Involving myself with the client organization and being present with them seemed a more authentic way of understanding the client and the change process. This was opposed to the more traditional method of using a lengthy and impersonal questionnaire. Later in my career, action research became my preferred method of learning,

The need to bring together research, practice, and theory has been a continual challenge and interest in my career. They are reflected in the first review of OD published in the Annual Review of Psychology, which Dave Brown and I authored in 1974 (Frank Friedlander and L.Dave Brown, 1974) . Simply having a chapter in the Annual Review was recognition that OD had was reaching maturity (at least in the eyes of psychology).

Let me put in a strong recommendation to my colleagues that they seek unconventional organizational experiences whenever they can. This might Q take the form of a job, a consulting or research project, or a visit with an unconventional organization. When I was teaching at Case Western, I took off for a couple of weeks to live and work at a commune in West Virginia. It was so very different from most corporations and universities in terms of its reward system, its culture, its governing structure and its living arrangements. It gave me insight into alternative ways of governing an organization other than an hierarchical structure and leadership,

A fourth schism in my career that resulted in a constructive integration was that between practice and research. When I say practice, I don't mean simply doing consulting, training, or speaking for the purposes of income; I mean setting up a design in which the consulting project is also a research project. In this way, the research results feed into the practice which, in turn, feeds back into further research.

It always seemed somewhat unethical to me to use an organization for research, yet not benefit it in any way. This separation bothered me for many years. And one of the exciting breakthroughs for me personally was discovering the concept and methods of participative action research. This is not the same as traditional research. It is essentially helping a unit of the organization discover what information it needs to better its condition, helping it get this information, and then helping it utilize the information so as to improve itself. The facilitator does not actually perform these steps, but facilitates each step. Thus, the organizational unit initiates the process, develops the method of obtaining the data and decides what to do with it. Since it has come from the Unit itself, it tends to own the data, and is most likely to do something with it to solve its problem. The process is owned by the unit or organization, not by the consultant. This is in contrast to non-participative research in which the consultant simply performs these steps unilaterally

In the early 1980s, Bill Pasmore and I worked with a General Electric lamp plant in which about a third of its employees had tenosynovitis in their arms. Production had suffered, absenteeism and tardiness were high. We helped initiate a process in which a core group of employees who had "sore arm" built a questionnaire concerning their problems and possible causes. They then administered this to all 400 employees in the plant, received back 99% of completed questionnaires, and used the results to influence an oppressive management and to change the working relationship between themselves and management. Many changes in work methods, in relationships, and in worker representation occurred as a result. During the following six months, production rose to its highest level, absenteeism and tardiness declined sharply. The key elements underlying successes were: a sense of responsibility and ownership by employees of the action research process empowered workers, who heretofore felt powerless; employees knew what needed to be changed, whereas management did not. A more traditional management survey initiated by management would have been viewed by employees with suspicion and not answered honestly since there was high distrust and fear of management. The project was published as the first article in Administrative Science Quarterly that described an organization development project (William Pasmore and Frank Friedlander, 1982)

So often, our research and our consulting result in either benefiting the organization or the profession through publication. The relevant and infrequently asked question for many faculty in our field may be "Who is our client?" Is it our academic department? Is it the organization that hired us as consultants and is paying us, the employees of that organization, the profession for whom we publish, our students, society in general or is it simply ourselves as individuals? I think it's wise for each of us to consider this question and to make a conscious and ethical decision.

Another schism that I struggled with was theory derived from the academic literature vs. theory induced from the experience of people. Theory in our academic literature is, well, academic. It is full of jargon, complexity and a bit incomprehensible. Theory derived inductively from talking with people is more "everyday" in terms of experience and language. I have always felt that theory should be a way to help people conceptualize the experience they have had—not just an intellectualized rationalization of that experience. In effect, we have our own personal theories that guide our thinking and therefore our behavior. We frequently test these theories unconsciously in our own behavior. Dave Kolb and I worked on a theory-building exercise designed o help people get in touch with their personal theories. Each student starts out with a system such as his/her organization, family, university, consulting style, etc. By the end of the exercise, the student has identified the basic concepts and variables of which the system was composed and draws this on a newsprint paper for all to see. Most students were amazed to see their own theories on a newsprint sheet and learned much from the process.

A polarity which almost all of us face daily is how to integrate or at least balance our work life with family life. One of the interesting studies I did was to explore one's sense of self (one's identity) at work and at home. The results indicated that at work, we are more formal, tense, serious, unemotional, demanding, and confronting. At home we are more informal, fun, relaxed, emotional, allowing, and passive. Part of the work-home problem is that our identity in our organization is quite different from who we are in our family setting; this makes it difficult to be a consistent person (Friedlander, 1994). But perhaps of more importance is the question of why the culture of work demands that we have a more tense and unemotional sense of ourselves than at home. And finally, as long as our theory of work is separate from our theory of family life, we will be unable to build concepts and connections that integrate these two.

Finally I am dismayed at the diminishing focus within our profession on human values and on growth of the individual. These are the values which sponsored the birth of OD in the sixties, and have for the most part been replaced during the past 25 years by a focus on business-oriented values of materialism, efficiency, and hierarchy. I am not pointing a finger at the business enterprise in which these values are endemic, but rather at the educational enterprise which offers the hope of educating and of humanizing business organizations.

I would like to review briefly the major polarities of which I have been conscious in my career, and the challenge to integrate these for me, perhaps for you, and likely for the field . Many of these polarities are not very different from the challenges that faced the field of OD in the 1960s.

1. How can we integrate a micro and macro perspective into our research and our theories?
2. How can we integrate the image of a static organization or person with one which is constantly changing?
3. How can we integrate the "why" (as in theory) the "what" (as in research) and the "how" (as in practice)?
4. How can we change our role from doing research to one of helping the organization do research?
5. As academicians, who is our client? How can we integrate our various clients: students, the profession, the organizations to we consult, the employees of that organization, society, or simply ourselves?
6. How can we integrate our academic theories (jargon language, abstract concepts) with personal theories (which are alive and meaningful to the lives of most people).
7. How can we integrate our work life with our family life? Why are the two cultures so different so as to shape two different identities?
8. How can we integrate our more focused academic life and direction with experiences that are more radical, adventuresome, and deviant? How can we expand our knowledge beyond the current boundaries of our lives?
9. How can we enact our more humanitarian values in organizations which are materialistic, strategic, and often hierarchically oppressive?

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MY 40-YEAR JOURNEY INTO OTHER DISCIPLINES WHILE REMAINING TRUE TO OD

Larry Greiner
1979 ODC Division Chair
University of Southern California

There are various people and events that made a vivid and lasting impression on me during my long career with OD. I will try to recount these memorable events and notable people who had such an influence.

When I first became acquainted with OD, I was doing my doctoral research at Harvard Business School on Bob Blake's Managerial Grid OD program in Humble Oil's Baytown refinery. Humble funded and sponsored this research to see if anything positive happened. They were concerned about their investment and had experience in their two other “B” refineries—Baton Rouge, LA and Bayonne, N. J where T-Groups had been applied with disappointing results. Paul Buchanan with a long interest in OD was the sponsoring executive in Humble HR department.

My research was intended to be evaluative since I was looking for its effects, including situational modifiers. Because of all the public controversy over the issue “T-Groups versus The Grid” as Bob phrased it. He characterized the Grid as a more structured approach toward OD than the “one shot” use of sensitivity training. He was sort of “at war” with the sensitivity approach which began and ended with a T-Group experience. Bob believed in organized models (The Grid) with a phased approach to organization change, including Phase 1, a stranger lab where they learned the grid model and applied it in interpersonal feedback during one day. Then Phase 2 was back in their home work groups and Phase 3 was an intergroup phase.

Eight hundred managers at the Baton Rouge refinery, owned by Enjay, had just been put through T-groups with anyone from NTL serving as trainers. Bob Blake had been there and his conclusion was “no effect” in results from a loosely structured approach without phases; in fact, he argued it was negative for building up expectations.

I interviewed Bob when he came to Baytown and observed his interventions with the management group. He observed how the labs and the management group meeting and he always made pointed confrontive comments that were listened to seriously. He, along with his partner Jane Mouton, had figured out a way to make a lot of money for their company, Scientific Methods—by charging for each person to go through a one week lab, which was automated and management run—like a movie theater but with higher prices. Sometimes they had four clients running simultaneously.

During my nightly interviews in his motel, Blake recounted for me a short history of the T-Group movement, which he had participated in. He had done his doctoral dissertation at Harvard on the “movements of eyeball during the Rorschach”—a long way from T-Groups, but probably a sign of his underlying interest in psychiatry. While serving on the faculty in Harvard’s Social Relations Department, he became involved in NTL and participated in their summer labs.

When I finished my doctoral research, I was appointed as an Assistant Professor at the Harvard Business School. We wrote an article from the Baytown results for HBR called “Breakthrough in Organization Development” that portrayed all the positive results from the Grid approach, along with its caveats. It was one of the first evaluations of organization wide OD, and it especially received a lot of controversy from the T-group adherents. I was more interested in the situational modifiers that lay in the changed behavior area—for a person to be reported as having changed his/her behavior in Grid direction, the person’s boss had to be perceived as changing toward Grid dimensions.

Meanwhile at Harvard, I had teaching responsibilities. The entire PMD (program for management development) of 150 participants was going through one week of T-Groups. As trainers were hard to come by, I was enlisted to serve as one of those trainers. I did this while I was teaching a core section of 80 MBAs. Eventually I became a PMD faculty member and had the responsibility of carrying on the T-Group tradition, which the participants found valuable.

In that class, we had the TRW case which was about the use of T-Groups in TRW led by Shel Davis. I invited Shel to class one day to discuss the TRW OD effort—and, to my surprise, he proceeded to put the students into groups to discuss me and the course. We were all experimenting with OD methods, and I remember the whole OB faculty group, including Fritz Roethlisberger and Paul Lawrence, in one of the Harvard living rooms one evening with an Indian woman taking us through being “reborn” to Indian music with candles and incense burning. We were all down on the floor in the fetal position when the Dean came in the room with some likely donor guests. After one look at us, he did a quick about face and ushered his guests out the door.

This was at a time when OD was in its initial stages of conceptualization. Because of Blake’s efforts, it was no longer grounded in T-groups as a methodology, assuming it was an individual change effort leading to organization changes. I continued with my modifier approach to writing about OD with an article called “Red Flags in OD”—a flag example of which was the T-group approach to OD emphasized "the informal organization before the formal organization" and placed the "individual before the organization." This led to string of skeptical OD articles from me during the 1970s and 80s, one was entitled "Reflections on OD American Style," another "A Revisionist Look at Power and OD, and others and "Can OD be Fine Tuned to Bureaucracies?" with Virginia Schein.

Somewhere in there I wrote a history of OD under the title "OD Values and the Bottom Line". It was a stage theory with the stages reading as follows:

Stage I—The Fifties—"In the Beginning"

Stage II—The Early/Mid Sixties—"Going Commercial"

Stage III—The Late Sixties and Early Seventies—"Getting Knocked"

Stage IV—The Late Seventies—"Branching Out"

My fascination with stage models continued with publication of the Harvard Business Review classic "Evolution and Revolution as Organizations Grow." So you see I kept my focus on development with a "larger O" for organizations. Virginia Schein and I also wrote an Addison-Wesley book on *Power and OD*. I was becoming interested in top management and strategic change.

About this time, I became Chair of the OD division before the Change title came into being. In this capacity I was invited to an OD Network event in Chicago where my talk topic was "OD people ought to stop holding hands and get an MBA." During my talk a woman stood up in the audience to shout "This conference was planed by men and spoken to by Men." At which point I walked off the stage and went down the street to see "Last Tango in Paris."

I had come to USC after getting an offer I couldn't refuse because I was tired of the long winters in Boston. Also, my interests had turned to consulting where I had done some consulting, probably this was traceable to my experience with Blake. So my research had transferred to consultants and their way of working but I continued my skeptical vein with an article by Danielle Nees "Seeing Behind the Look-Alike Consultants." While serving on the MAC board (Management Analysis Center), we wrote a book on the subject, *Consulting to Management*, with Robert Metzger and currently an edited book with Flemming Poulfelt called *Management Consulting Today and Tomorrow,* which features 27 notable authors since knowledge about consulting is not limited to a single person.

Shortly after serving as chair of the OD division I shifted my efforts to the MC division and eventually became its Chair. Recently, like other founders, I've become interested in strategic change facilitated by OD methods on the process side combined with lots of strategic content. Tom Cummings and I have a book out right now called *Dynamic Strategy-Making* from Wiley. It is about the world moving too fast for old style calendar driven strategic planning, where implementation is delayed by the consultants until after the strategic analysis and recommendations are formulated. We involve the management in workshops from the outset in formulating a new strategy.

You see, I had been an MBA at Harvard and this probably explains my flirtation with OD and its journey forward with other disciplines. Still I keep a love affair with the OD fundamentals, which involves a focus on organizations and behavior in them while supplementing them with content and context.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON OD

W. Warner Burke
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My comments are in response to two questions asked of me by the organizers of the "Founders" PDW in Chicago. The first question was, "What was OD like when you started in the field?"

I started in the field in 1966 when I joined full time the NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science (known at the time as simply the National Training Laboratories) and quickly became in April '67 the first executive director of the OD Network (about 40 members at the time) and that summer served as a core faculty member, along with Fritz Steele for the first "Program for Specialists in Organization Development" under the direction of Richard Beckhard, one of the founders of OD. It was four weeks of intensive training in the summer at Bethel, Maine. The program continued for many years.

At the time I became involved in the field, OD had been in existence for less than a decade, so I consider myself second generation or maybe generation 1.5. The field was barely a field and everyone involved was in one way or the other defining what OD was to become. It was learning on the run and therefore highly absorbing and exciting. Although I was not at the creation, I was there shortly thereafter.

Another characteristic at the time, particularly true at ODN meetings, was to talk with one another about failures—this team building session did not go well, that conflict resolution issue never seemed to get resolved, and I was not sure about how to deal with an organizational structure problem, etc. Today we seem to want only to impress one another with our successes. Where does the learning come from today?

OD in the late sixties and into the seventies was much ado about learning. We came together to learn from one another. I saw my role at the time as one of facilitating "get togethers"—two ODN meetings a year (now there is one), five new OD technology conferences in the seventies and early eighties followed in each case by a book that captured the essence of each session, support of the formation of OD divisions in ASTD, where I was the first elected general chairman, and the Academy of Management, and support on the Addison-Wesley Series on OD. These were heady times and "six degrees of separation" was no more than two. I knew everyone's name.

And, finally, we seemed to be clearer then as compared with today about our roots and values—our *roots* being in much of academia that generated theory, action research, and how to provide feedback that was grounded in comprehensible data, and our *values* being concerned about how important it was to be clear about values, to be as cognizant as possible about what is *right* in human relationships, and that the organization is not more important than the individual organizational member and vice versa.

And, oh yes, we had *time* back then to collect data, to conduct a thorough diagnosis, and to plan accordingly an appropriate intervention that addressed the change need. Seems today like a luxury.

The second question was, "What 'wisdom' would you like to convey to those starting in the field?"

Like most professions (bearing in mind that OD is a field of inquiry and practice not a profession) organization development is an artful practice based on evidence from sound research and theory. It is important to read books and articles, but there is no substitute for experiential learning. Early on, then, it is very helpful to serve in an apprentice role with one who is more learned and experienced. Mentoring in this field is key. Beckhard served as a mentor for me. He told me in the summer of 1967 that I might be a good social psychologist, but I didn't know much of anything about organizations. This feedback hurt me, but at the same time spurred my competitive juices ("I'll show you!"), and I made it my business to learn as much about organizations as fast as I could.

The point is to discover what it is that you do not know but need to know—about organizations, about change, about the difference between symptoms and causes with respect to organizational diagnosis, about power and politics in organizations, about level differences in organizations (individual, interpersonal, group, intergroup, larger system, and interorganizational relations), and about the collective unconscious, to name a few "need-to-knows." Focus on the good skills that you have and on the skills that you need but don't have. Early on I knew a lot about group dynamics, and therefore team building was my strong suit, but I was limited about larger system issues and those at the individual level. So, I studied areas such as open system theory and got myself trained as a gestalt therapist to strengthen my individual level skills (now called coaching).

The final point is that in this field of OD, you personally are the instrument. Yes, OD is grounded in theory and research, but the practice of OD is not a science, but a craft, thus, underscoring the importance of apprenticeship and having a mentor that you believe is a role model. So, it's how you know and use yourself that truly matters. Being an agile learner and to hold the value of life-long learning are the imperatives.

LESSONS FROM A SEMINAL EXPERIENCE IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

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There is a tension in the field of OD between soft and hard—a relationships (interpersonal, team and intergroup) and values perspective on which the field was founded and a performance perspective (strategy, organization design, strategic management) that emerged much later. This a productive tension given that hard and soft are deeply intertwined in any effort to improve organizational and economic health of an enterprise. But in the late ’60s and early ’70s, when I began to practice OD, the primary focus of practice and theory was on softer side. In this paper I describe a seminal experience in organization development that enabled me to integrate the hard and soft side of OD and the lessons I drew from that experience, lessons that influenced my practice and theory building in the years that followed.

In the late 1960s, I was approached by Dr. Don Rogers (a pseudonym), vice president and general manager of Corning, the Electronic Products Division (EPD), a business unit of Corning Glass Works (now Corning Inc.), where I was working as an internal organization development consultant. Rogers had never held a line position of any kind, having been promoted to his job from corporate R&D, where he held a senior position. He had taken charge of the Division two years before we met, following the untimely death of its previous General Manager, Joe Bennett. Over lunch, Rogers described a business facing fierce competition and major organizational problems. He said:

> We have had some difficult times in my division over the past two years. Sales have been down due to the general economy and the effects on the electronics industry. But our problems are greater than that. Our business is becoming fiercely competitive. To deal with the downturn in business we have had to reduce the number of people and expenses sharply. This has been painful, but I think these actions have stemmed the tide. We are in control again. But the business continues to be very competitive, morale is low, there is a lot of conflict between groups that we can’t seem to resolve. There is a lack of mutual confidence and trust. The organization is just not pulling together and the lack of coordination is affecting our ability to develop new products. Most of my people believe that we are having conflicts because business is bad. They say that if business would only get better we will stop crabbing at each other. Frankly, I am not so sure if they are right. The conflicts might be due to pressures we are under but more likely they indicate a more fundamental problem. Can you and your group help determine if the conflict between groups is serious and if and what might be done about it?

I told Rogers I would be happy to help despite the fact that I did not have the foggiest idea about what the source of such intergroup conflict might be, or potential solutions. Nor did I have knowledge of the business, business strategy or organization design, having earned a doctorate in Industrial & Organizational Psychology. I had been at Corning for only two years, and had never tackled a complex business unit problem such as this.

Corning’s EPD manufactured high-reliability electronic components for defense and commercial markets. Founded by Joe Bennett, the business had performed very well until just a year before Rogers took charge. As a result of Bennett’s untimely death, Rogers was promoted to be the division’s new general manager. Since then, sales in its core business—high-reliability components sold primarily into the defense industry—were in alarming decline, due to a slowdown in defense spending, while sales and profits in more competitive commercial markets were not increasing at a sufficient rate. The latter depended on new products, too few of which were coming out of the new-product development pipeline, and when they did, and the process was painful and took too long. Despite significant cost cutting and the replacement of most of the senior team by Rogers, the business was falling short of corporate expectation for a 10 percent annual rise in revenues and profits. Managers reporting to Rogers felt that corporate expectations were unrealistic given that EPD operated in a much more competitive landscape compared to Corning’s other businesses, where Corning’s technology and manufacturing capabilities were a distinctive advantage. Managers were certain that EPD would never meet the expectations for 10 percent revenue and profit rise; some wondered if EPD would be better off with a corporate parent in the components business.

Organizational Diagnosis

Despite my lack of knowledge about business, strategy and organization design and effectiveness issues, I did have research skills which I and my team put to use in conducting an organizational diagnosis. Our findings, based on interview with key people and a questionnaire survey of a larger group are organized here into *three key outcomes of effective high commitment and performance organizations* discussed in my new book, *High Commitment, High Performance: How to Build a Resilient Organization for Sustained Advantage*, Jossey-Bass, 2009.

Performance Alignment. EPD's organization and management processes were not aligned with new strategic realities. Although the decline in the defense business and the emergent needs of TV and computer manufacturers for reliable but cheaper components called for a new strategy. The senior team, who were aware of this shift, had not articulated the new strategy or requisite new-product development priorities. EPD's functional structure and management processes needed to foster coordination and had not been realigned to fit the much faster pace of product development required in commercial markets. Performance measures that worked in a defense-oriented business, a system that held manufacturing plants responsible for gross margin, for example, undermined responsiveness to shifting customer needs in a fast-moving commercial market. All of this resulted in very poor coordination. Indeed, there was a war going on between Marketing, Product Development and Manufacturing, the latter the most powerful function that consistently underlined efforts by marketing direct and coordinate the product development process. A corporate R&D function was unresponsive to requests for help.

Psychological Alignment. Managers in various parts of the organization made decisions to maximize the performance of their own department or activity, particularly a powerful manufacturing function, as opposed to supporting the EPD's overarching objectives for new product development, revenue and profit growth. Adversarial relationships between functional departments undermined any sense of common purpose. For example, manufacturing plant managers resisted requests from marketing and product development for trial runs of new products on their manufacturing lines because such trials undermined plant gross margins; poor margins could undermine their career progress. A history of top-down autocratic management by Bennett had caused managers to become protective of their department and themselves. Though Rogers had replaced most of the senior team and was an open and participative manager, his laissez-faire style, more appropriate to the corporate research and development, from which he came, was not sufficient to bring together rival functional departments. Morale and commitment were extremely low.

Capacity for Learning and Change. Bi-monthly product development meeting involving Rogers, senior team members, plant managers and key marketing personnel (some 25 in total) were ineffective. Delays in the achievement of goals by each function were never confronted. When disagreements arose they were resolved by moving on and agreeing to disagree. Rogers would often play a technical role in the discussions but did not force confrontation. After meetings key people often met in small groups at the water cooler and behind closed doors to air their frustrations. These frustrations were not openly shared and discussed with the relevant parties or within the top team. Consequently, frustrations turned into deep distrust. Although individual senior team members, indeed many key people beyond the senior team, were aware of EPD's problems, distrust and a lack of mechanisms for an honest, collective, and public conversation prevented the senior team from confronting problems openly, diagnosing root causes, and reinventing the organizational and management system to fit new competitive realities.

The inability of EPD to developed performance and psychological alignment as well as capacity of learning and change (these problems dated back to Rogers' predecessor) was a function of six silent barriers I identified in subsequent research but retrospectively existed in this case. They were:

- Unclear strategy, priorities and values
- Ineffective top team

- Leader behavior—too top down or too laissez-faire
- Poor coordination between value creating activities
- Closed vertical communication, in particular the inability of truth to speak to power
- Inadequate leadership development and down the line leaders. In this case leaders to lead product development teams)

The stakes were high. For Corning, failure would mean an eventual exit from a business that was to be the foundation for entry into the larger electronics market. As a new general manager just two years in his job, failure to turn around EPD's performance would probably derail Rogers' promising career, one widely seen as having great potential.

The Transformation of Corning's Electronic Product Division

Don Rogers succeeded in transforming an underperforming business into a very successful one by enabling an *honest and public conversation* about "hidden barriers" to effectiveness typically undiscussible publicly. He commissioned me and my team of consultants to interview some forty key people in all parts of the organization. A survey was then sent to all key employees to verify that our initial findings represented the pattern of management in the larger organization.

The unvarnished truth about the barriers to effectiveness discussed above was fed back to Rogers' team—not an entirely comfortable experience. Also presented were initial ideas for steps needed to change EPD as a total system.

The feedback about barriers to effectiveness that began within the senior team about our findings was then extended into a collective organization-wide conversation in 12 different locations—manufacturing plants, sales offices and headquarters staff. At each location the entire senior team was present—to tell people the whole truth about what they had learned from the feedback employees had provided and about their plan for change (developed in advance by the senior team). At each location Rogers and his staff were challenged by lower levels, sometimes quite emotionally, about the plans. In every location it became clear to EPD staff that the senior team had been given unvarnished feedback by the consultants, had accepted it, and was now acting on it. The fact that Rogers had the courage to make public feedback about his laissez-faire leadership reinforced the belief that the truth had been put on the table and that he was open to learning and change. It was this open organizational conversation about hard and soft barriers to effectiveness that enabled the leadership team to "see" the system and implement simultaneous changes in soft and hard dimensions of the organization. They made announced and later executed changes in five change levers listed and discussed briefly below.

- *Strategy and Priorities were Clarified:* A meeting to develop and articulate a new strategy consistent with EPD's changing environment and to prioritize new-product development initiatives had already been held and the strategy and priorities that emerged were presented.
- *Changed Senior Team Role and Effective:* The senior team changed its role into a strategic one. They did this by making changes in format and frequency of meetings (described below) as well as by undertaking team development activities during top team meetings with me as coach.
- *Rogers Changed his Leadership Behavior:* Honest feedback for Rogers from consultants about perceptions of his leadership and how he might engage the organization more effectively primed the pump. Ongoing coaching and consultation became the means for learning.
- *Changes in Organization Design:* A frame-breaking reorganization was undertaken. EPD's functional organization was transformed into to a matrix-like project team organization. Cross-functional teams, one for each new product, were led by marketing specialists. This constituted a radical shift in power for function heads, particularly for manufacturing which had the most power, and was met with many questions and some initial resistance. This change was aimed at improving cross-functional coordination and collaboration. It resulted in faster and more effective new-product development process. Giving leadership of new-product development teams to marketing not only increased the influence of marketing, but also helped create an outward perspective needed in the fast-changing commercial markets EPD had

entered. Facilitation of new product team meetings by my team of OD consultants helped build capabilities in team leaders and team members. It created a new constituency for change that gave the change effort the support it needed in the early stages when the changes were most fragile. Of course, Rogers' commitment to this frame breaking change was essential.

- *New Strategic Performance Management System:* The top team put in place a new process for reviewing new product development initiatives. It eliminated the large and unwieldy new-product development meetings in favor of quarterly reviews of each new-product development team. Their role was to evaluate progress and, based on what they learned, to reprioritize these initiatives as needed and reallocate financial and human resources accordingly. These meetings were also intended for strategic discussions that would lead to commissioning teams to evaluate new product opportunities.
- *Ongoing Learning and Governance Process:* Periodic assessment of progress in order to make midcourse corrections occurred, using the same high-involvement data collection, feedback and learning process that facilitated the original transformation. In effect, that process became the governance process for managing ongoing change. My consulting team was engaged to facilitate this process and coach the senior team and each new cross-functional new-product development team.

Modifications in all five change levers were made within a short period of time. EPD was reorganized and its leadership team adopted its new strategic role. Cross-functional teams experienced growing pains but kept meeting, reviewing their progress with the senior team. By engaging his senior team in reviewing strategy and action planning for change Rogers was able to garner commitment and improve performance.

Two years after my initial meeting with Rogers the following performance changes were evident:

- Within a year the following six silent barriers (see above) had been transformed into strengths
- The rate of new-product development for new commercial markets, a necessary strategic response, increased significantly.
- EPD's performance improved dramatically in the first year and steadily improved over the years. It beat the corporate standards for revenue and profit growth that many managers had been certain, at the beginning of the transformation journey could not be attained.
- Corning's top management saw EPD's management, particularly its planning and strategic management, as the best in the company. Don Rogers, a new general manager whom no one thought of as a candidate top management, was promoted to head a much larger division. Five years after I first met with him he was promoted to president of Corning, bypassing a number of more senior and seasoned candidates for the job.

Given that *culture* has to be the ultimate target of any HCHP transformation, you may wonder whether EPD's culture changed. Consider the quotes below from key people who were deeply involved in new cross-functional teams two years after the transformation began:

A manager said:

> Problems are shared and understood. If things don't happen, I don't start placing blame. I have better understanding of why it didn't happen. Now I ask how I can help to make it happen. It is important to have empathy for the other guy, but not sympathy.

A marketing specialist and project team leader said the following regarding how to handle conflict:

> Sam [the OD consultant who was working with his team], we have been having some problems and I decided it was time to get to the causes. We are just not working together effectively, and we all see a need for improvement. For example, I find myself going around the system to get something done. I am going over [one of my project team member's] head. I think we should all get together and put the technical tasks aside and take a closer look at our process.

Two events are illustrative of the extent to which EPD's culture changed.

- EPD's top team's commitment to a new set of assumptions and beliefs about how to manage the business were strong enough for them to challenge Rogers's successor, whom they feared would bring assumptions and beliefs rooted in the Bennett era. The successor was told not to make any decision without first talking to key people about the changes that had occurred in EPD, and to me, the consultant who had collaborated with the senior team in planning and implementing the transformation.
- A few years after the transformation began, a manufacturing plant manager—a powerful and prestigious role in EPD—accepted the job of head of marketing, an indication of how perceptions of the value and influence of marketing had changed in this previously manufacturing-dominated business.

Lessons Learned

The experience of partnering with a senior executive to develop his organization into a more effective high commitment, high performance organization was seminal and has shaped my view of organization development and change. I list these lessons; many learned and articulated elsewhere by others.

1. Organizations are complex systems. Organization development, as this case illustrates, requires change in multiple hard and soft dimensions of the organization—structure and systems as well as leadership and group behavior and of course ultimately culture. Bringing multiple changes to bear enables sustained change. Piecemeal changes simply do not have the same effect. OD has historically espoused systems theory but its interventions and practitioners do not often deal with the total system. In particular strategy, structure and strategic management are too often not part of the OD consultant's repertoire. Of course, such fundamental change requires leaders like Don Rogers, in this case, who are ready to learn and change their organization.
2. Leader readiness to learn and change is essential for systemic change. There must be a compelling business problem like that faced by Rogers to be open to change on multiple dimensions. And like Rogers, the leader has to be open to learning. Subsequent successful systemic changes I have been associated with suggest that new general managers like Rogers (this was his first general management job) are most open to advice to change multiple dimensions of the system.
3. Organizational diagnosis is the first and most important step in the change process. It is best done by the senior team because they are the ones who must develop a new theory of their case. They must then be willing to share the unvarnished truth about what they learned and why they are proposing the changes they have in mind if organizational members are to become committed to the change. It was honesty about the problems and their roles in it that enabled EPD's senior team to gain commitment to a frame breaking change. Rogers' willingness to share feedback he received from us as consultants sent a clear message that he was serious about making changes.
4. Underlying an ineffective organization is a remarkable stable set of barriers, which I first saw in Corning's EPD. These crystallized later as six "silent barriers," silent in the sense that they are undiscussible, not in the sense that they are not known. What I have come to call honest, collective (organization-wide) and public conversations such as those that took place in EPD through the dozen one day meeting with all salaried staff at each geographic location is essential for deep commitment to change to develop.
5. Consistent with the above lesson, Organization development is best framed as an organizational learning process in which leaders and the larger organization learn from each other about what is not working and why (including leadership behavior). Change occurs through a partnership between the senior team and lower relevant key people.
6. Effective organization development consulting integrates expert and process consultation. Consultants—individually or as a team—must bring knowledge of strategy, organization design and management process along with skills in process facilitation and coaching. One or the other is not sufficient to enable a coherent and systemic change. To enable EPD's senior team to develop the systemic solution they crafted my team and I needed knowledge

about organization design as well as leadership. We were fortunate to have come across the work of Lawrence and Lorsch who had studied the causes of poor integration and coordination in several industries and the solutions companies employed to solve them. This confirmed ideas we were already considering based on our own analysis, but gave us confidence that we were on the right track.

7. Effective OD consulting requires a partnership between the leader and the consultant. This means access over the entire period of change. The relationship cannot be transactional—fee for specific solution or program. The leader must be prepared to employ the OD consultant as a thought partner over time, as Rogers did in this case. Too many OD practitioners allow themselves to be engaged in such programmatic efforts. These actually do damage. They create the illusion of change and do not help leaders to learn how to learn. As an internal consultant at Corning I had that access to Rogers and his team. I sat in on key meetings and this enabled ongoing coaching and thought partnership. This is challenge for external consultants given that too many leaders treat outsiders as vendors, not partners. One way to deal with this is to partner with internal HR/OD professionals who do have access. No consulting relationship can or should go on indefinitely, however. It is not productive for the client or for the organization. Excessively long consulting relationships lead senior team members and others to impute to the leader lack of confidence and capability to lead, nor do they enable the client to become independent.

8. Hands on experiences in a systemic organization development and change process like the one described here is the primary way practitioners learn and OD theory is developed. OD is a field of practice first and for most. Practice informs our evolving personal theory of organizations development and our clinical sense making of successive OD engagements have the potential of contributing to OD theory. It is our responsibility as scholar-practitioners to make sense of our experience, articulate our emerging theory. The case of EPD launched my theory.

STONE SOUP [1]

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Some years ago I searched for a small band of pioneers who I had heard were dispensing throughout the land what seemed to be a magic elixir. I found them one day sitting around a fire with a kettle sitting atop its embers. “What are you doing?” I asked. “We are making stone soup.” they replied. I peered into the kettle and much to my surprise saw only a smooth bright stone boiling in the water. “What else is in the soup?” I inquired. Their response was even more surprising. “We season it with a few ingredients, but the stone is really the only thing one needs.” I became perplexed. “How can that be?” I asked. “How can a stone make soup?” The pioneers were amused by my question. “You cannot make stone soup without the stone!” they said emphatically. “The stone contains a vision of a better world, one in which human decency prevails. And within the stone lies a set of values, values that nourish and empower people; that give them the will to deal with the challenges they face; that provide them with the courage to make their lives better; that help them decide what things need to be changed and how to go about changing them. They are also the values that guide us, that nourish and sustain us in the work that we do.” Although I did not fully comprehend what they were saying, I continued probing. “But what do you do with the soup?” I asked. “What is its purpose?” Their response was patient and measured. “These are very trying times, young man. Change is all around us. We prescribe the soup mainly to organizations, especially those that dull the human spirit, and we

[1] Stone soup stories have been around for a many years and have been written or told in a number of different languages. Some are intended to be fables, with morals or lessons attached to them, while others pass down traditional beliefs and folk lore. Although the story line varies from country to country, most of them involve Chinese monks, or Zen Buddhists, who place a stone in a kettle of boiling water and convince villagers that the magical stone will make delicious soup if only they would add some other ingredients. Although stone soup stories are generally written in the third person (and is about "them") this one is very personal. It's a story about me, the ODC Division, and the field of OD. It may even be about you or someone you know.

serve it to help them and their people become more effective. By the way, we also serve it to individuals who wish to improve the quality of their lives." I came away from the encounter feeling both fascinated and bewildered by their story.

As I continued my professional journey, I experimented with concocting and dispensing stone soup and, much to my amazement, found it to be very effective. It did not take me long to adopt the magic stone as my own. I added MBO and some of my other favorite interventions to the mix and eagerly served the soup wherever and to whomever I could. Along the way I met and befriended others who were dispensing stone soup. Many of them had also encountered the pioneers. And it was not long before we evolved into a loosely-knit community of academics and practitioners with a common desire to improve the science and art of making this magic broth. Our overall purpose was to establish stone soup as both an academic discipline and a respected field of practice. In addition to improving the soup's potency and effectiveness, we set out to develop a sound base of knowledge and skills that could be taught to others. We also worked to improve the soup's potency and how it was dispensed by a rapidly growing community of practitioners. In time we became known as the Stone Soup Society.

It should be noted here that stone soup was not without its skeptics and critics. There were those who saw it as nothing more than a "feel good" approach to change, one that was narrowly focused on people and on the human side of enterprise. Others were skeptical because it was not based on sound economics, was not tied to the bottom line. And there were even critics who mistakenly believed that we were religious zealots, that we were anti-business, or worse, that we held our clients in distain. And although some academic and professional publications were curious about and generally interested in what we were doing, they were not very supportive of our research. Some skeptics viewed laboratory methods and T-groups as nothing more than short-lived, euphoric experiences which had little or no pay-off for the organization and might even be dangerous or destructive to those participating in them. A late 1960s Business Week article which mocked the stone soup program at TRW is still etched in my memory. It was titled "It's OK to cry in the office."

To these external criticisms we added our own paranoia and questions. How does this magic elixir work? Does it really do what we think it does? Is it harmful to organizations and to people as some of its skeptics assert? How can we improve the recipe, make the soup more effective? But since we did not really know what was being changed, we had no way of assessing its impact. We spent a good deal of our time struggling with these important questions and experimenting with the soup's recipe. Our initial debates focused on defining and developing a better understanding the field and on clarifying the vision and values contained within the stone. Many of us were also concerned about how to assess the impact of the soup on the organization and on its people. Does it improve their performance, make them more effective? Does it change things for the better? However, we were neither sure of, nor in agreement about, what it was we were improving or changing. Was it process, was it outcomes, or was it something else? Later our debates focused on the nature of these improvements. Were they alpha, beta, or gamma changes? There were also questions and issues related to the quality of the research we conducted. There were those who said that stone soup studies were anecdotal, that they were not well-designed, that they were not based on quantitative criteria, that they were tainted by a positive-findings bias, and worse, that they were not longitudinal. Despite these and other criticisms, both the Society and the community of practitioners grew in numbers. I was encouraged by the progress we made and by the prospect of stone soup emerging as a respected academic discipline and field of practice.

Although most stone soup activities were neither well-planned nor well-coordinated, the demand for the magic broth increased dramatically. Academics and practitioners from a wide variety of disciplines and backgrounds continued to enter the field. They brought with them Socio-technical Systems, Action Research, the Managerial Grid, Open Systems Planning, Quality of Work Life projects, Self-Designing Systems, and a number of other potent interventions, all of which made significant contributions to the science and art of making and dispensing stone soup. Business organizations were among the first to recognize the soup's potential. School systems and other public sector organizations soon followed. Although most of them hired external consultants to conduct stone soup programs and activities, a few developed extensive in-house programs, recruited and/or trained internal consultants, and appointed vice presidents to manage and coordinate them. It was not long before a variety of stone soup programs and courses were offered by educational institutions in this country and abroad. And as enrollments in them increased, some universities began to offer stone soup graduate degrees. The future seemed bright and I could not have been more optimistic about the future of the field and the progress we were making.

Over time, however, the world around us continued to change and the Society now finds itself faced with a different and more challenging set of issues. The introspections, the self-criticisms, and the internal debates seem to me to have intensified. There are those who assert that we have become fractured into two factions: one a group of traditionalists who believe that stone soup should focus on and be confined only to issues of human processes, and the other a group of pragmatists who believe that process skills need to be integrated with the more analytical and rational approaches to strategy and other areas of general management. There are others who believe that we have become blinded by our values, trapped in an old paradigm that is at odds with the values, needs, and leadership styles of present day managers and organizations. They call for a new type of change agent, one who understands both the world of business and the world of human relationships. And, I am sorry to say, there are even those who do not understand why adding Quality Circles, or Reengineering, or TQM, or Appreciative Inquiry, and/or other potent interventions to the mix does not in and of itself increase the effectiveness of the soup. They scratch their heads in disbelief and wonder how this can be.

To my way of thinking, many of these self-criticisms and internal debates serve only to distract us from our original purpose, which was and still is to establish stone soup as a respected academic discipline and field of practice. To begin with, I do not believe that we are a society of traditionalists and pragmatists, each with a different set of beliefs and skills. This may have been true years ago, but the pioneers who focused primarily on human processes have long since left us. We are now a large community of experienced academics and practitioners who have been trained in and are fully capable of integrating process skills with some of the more analytical and broader approaches to management. And I do not believe that we are trapped either by our paradigm or by our values, even though they may be in conflict with those of today's assertive business leaders. Most members of this Society, as well as those I know in the practice community, are not neophytes. We know and understand the world of business as well as we do the world of human relationships. More importantly, when our values are incompatible with those of our client organizations, we are not forced to choose one over the other. Like Janus, the Roman God of gates and doorways, we need only to acknowledge and accept the existence of both realities and to work creatively within the context these two realities create for us. Furthermore, it is no mystery to me why the addition of new interventions does not in and of itself increase the potency of the soups we dispense. There are some among us who sometimes forget that it does not take much for the stone to lose its luster, to become jaded and tarnished, to be crushed or buried under the weight of interventions and the other ingredients that have been carelessly thrown into the mix. There are also those who are enamored with their interventions and, in order to make room for them, dilute the potency of the soup by breaking the stone into smaller pieces and including only a few bits of it in their recipes. And, much to my chagrin, there are even some among us who fail to include the stone because they have forgotten about, or are unaware of, or do not believe in its magical powers.

Alas, it appears to me that the field, the Society, and the practice community are in disarray. We now find ourselves awash and drowning in a sea of alphabet soups, many of them imposters, look-a-likes, wannabes, or weakened versions of the real thing. The doubts, the hand-wringing, the self-flagellation continue to occupy too much of our time. There are those who see the field as dead, or dying, and they mourn its demise. Their chorus of pessimism stems from the belief that stone soup is no longer relevant, that the field has become stagnated, that it lacks vitality, or that it is on its death bed. "Why don't they take the tubes out of grandma?" they lament. Others seem to be more optimistic. They suggest that the field needs to be reinvented, renewed, reborn, or in some way transformed. Although I share some of these views and concerns, I fear that the baby has been thrown out with the bathwater. It is clear to me that the Society has lost its way, that we no longer have a sense of common purpose, that we no longer share the core values that gave birth to the vibrant and exciting discipline that has nurtured the professional lives of so many of us. I believe that before we can reinvent or transform ourselves, we must return to our roots and the vision and values that defined our field and made us who we are. Now, more than ever, we need to rediscover the stone, cherish it, polish it, protect it, and return it to its rightful place in the soups we concoct and in the work that we do.

Although I no longer travel as widely or as extensively as I once did, I continue to dispense this magical broth whenever and to whomever I can. This causes wonderment on the part of some of my younger colleagues. "Why do you still concoct and serve stone soup?" they inquire. "Isn't it passé?" Although I am irked by the question, I try to make my response instructive. "If I believe that it will help to make an organization or its people more effective, if there is even the slight possibility that the organization will become a better place, if there is only a small chance that the quality of life of just one person will be enhanced, it is well worth my time and effort." Not quite satisfied with my response, some of them continue to press me further. "Yes, but the world has changed. Why do you continue to include the stone?" they ask. Bemused by the question, my response is as clear and emphatic as I can make it. "You cannot make stone soup without the stone!" I tell them. "It is the stone, not the ingredients that gives the soup its potency." I then go on to explain to them that the stone provides me with a vision of what the world can be, a place where human decency prevails; that it gives me a sense of purpose, something to strive for; that it nourishes and sustains me in my work; that it keeps me focused on what needs to be changed and how to go about changing it; and, most importantly, I explain to them that I include the stone because I believe it's the right thing to do.

FEEDBACK TO THE EDITOR

We welcome your feedback and would appreciate your comments below. Selected comments on articles in the *ODC Newsletter* may be published in the next issue, so please indicate if you prefer your comments to be withheld. Please address all correspondence to:

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1. Do you have any comments that you would like to share with the editor (comments on articles from the last issue, comments on this issue, suggestions, etc.)?

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NEWS ABOUT MEMBERS

2. Is there any important information about you or a colleague that you would like to have appear in the next issue?

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PUBLICATIONS

3. Please list all recent or forthcoming publications by you or a colleague. (Indicate full citation.)

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