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ACADEMY MEETINGS TO BE IN DALLAS: AUGUST 14-17, 1983

FINAL PROGRAM SET FOR ANNUAL MEETINGS: EDGAR SCHEIN TO BE DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER

Jerry Porras, the Program Chairperson for the OD Division, has announced the final program for the OD Division of the National Academy of Management Meetings. The program will begin with a pre-conference workshop on "TEACHING OD" and will include the presentation of a variety of techniques, ideas, and approaches to teaching OD at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

A highlight of the conference is expected to be the Invited Presentation by Edgar H. Schein of the Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. As this year's Distinguished Speaker in Organization Development, Professor Schein will address the subject "OD as Culture Change: Is It Possible?" His presentation

will include a discussion of organizational culture and its implications for resistance to change, in general, and to the field of OD in particular.

The general program will include a combination of symposia and high quality papers selected by competition from Division members. Program details can be found in the Academy of Management 1983 Program, which should be arriving shortly. Based upon initial reviews, the program promises to be both stimulating and thought provoking. Subjects to be covered include Quality of Work Life Research, Micro-Interventions and Macro-Impacts, Advances in the Measurement of Beta and Gamma Changes in Longitudinal Survey Research, Survey Feedback Research, Beyond Socio-technical/Open System Design, OD Research Methodology, OD Intervention Theory and Political Behavior in Different Organizational Settings. The OD Division is also co-sponsoring a number of Joint Symposia with other Academy Divisions.

REGISTER NOW FOR THE OD WORKSHOP ON TEACHING OD!

August 14, 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

On Sunday, August 14, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., the OD Division of the Academy of Management will hold a workshop on Teaching OD. The workshop coordinators are D.D. Warrick and Wayne Boss of the University of Colorado. Faculty members will include Cecil Bell, University of Washington; Don Bowen, University of Tulsa; Warner Burke, Columbia Teachers College; Newton Margulies, University of California at Irvine; Mark Plovnik, Clark University; and Jerry Porras, Stanford University. All of the faculty members have written significant books or articles on OD. The topics covered will be: Course Designs (Traditional and Non-traditional) Assignments (In-Class and Out-of-Class) Experiential Learning (Exercises, Cases, T-Groups) OD-Seminars and Institutes, Promoting OD Courses. In addition, the participants will be involved in developing and sharing ideas on teaching OD.

Registration

The Executive Committee of the OD Division is very enthused about this workshop and would like to encourage members of the OD Division, OD practitioners, and other interested persons to attend. The cost of the workshop is \$35.00 for members of the OD Division and \$45.00 for non-members. To register, send a check payable to Don

Warrick, along with your Name, Affiliation, and Address to: Don Warrick, 1370 Rangely Drive, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80908 (303) 488-3626. Late registration should be called in to assure a space.

TRANSNATIONAL O.D.: A PRACTITIONER'S POINT OF VIEW

by J. Malcolm Rigby

L. David Brown's intimation that organization development may well be culture bound (Winter 82 Newsletter) appears to be based on somewhat flimsy evidence. Geert Hofstede's (1980) excellent book, for example, quoted as supporting evidence for Brown's argument, contains only six references to organization development, a total of two paragraphs in 475 pages.

Meanwhile, the review by Facheux, Amado and Laurent (1982), the only other reference referred to by Brown begins with several pages describing what in their opinion O.D. is not. It is not, practitioners may be surprised to learn, organizational change. It is not Industrial Democracy. It is not Quality of Work Life. Nor is it Quality Control Circles! Even socio-technical approaches are, in their view, "somewhat foreign to O.D. practice." Finally, having defined almost every behavioral science approach to organization problems developed and/or successfully applied outside the U.S.A. as "not O.D.", they go on to suggest that O.D. theory and practice may not be very relevant outside North America! Brown reveals his agreement with this constrictive viewpoint (and his ethnocentrism) when he states that "in truth most O.D. theory and practice has emerged from a rather small and specialized North American subculture". Given a definition of O.D. so narrow and restrictive, it should be expected that any argument based upon it would conclude that organization development is culture bound.

However, it is doubtful that any full time professional practitioner of O.D. would seriously countenance such a definition as anywhere close to a description of what he or she actually does in his or her daily work. Few, if any, practitioners of transnational O.D. could work at all within the bounds of such a definition. Most O.D. PRACTITIONERS are happy with the fact that "O.D. is only a convenient label for a bunch of activities" (Kahn 1974), since it is this very fact which enables them to encompass the full range of behavioral science theory and technology in their work, and may well be responsible for their continued employment in industrial organizations, not to mention the growth and resilience of the profession. Those consultants who successfully practice transnational O.D. consistently integrate a broad spectrum of behavior science theory in going about their work. Indeed, given the

paucity of cross-cultural research in organizations, they have little choice but to seek elsewhere for theories and models. Consequently, their definitions of the discipline tend to be much wider, less value laden and more realistic than those implied in most articles questioning the efficacy of O.D. practice outside North America.

Brown himself (1974) suggests such definition, describing O.D. as "a method for facilitating change and development in people, in technology, and in organizational processes and structures." Tichy and Hornstein (1976) more tersely suggest that O.D. is, "the application of behavioral science knowledge and techniques to organizational problems," whilst a definition which has served the writer well on five continents for more than fifteen years of full time O.D. practice defines the field as the application of theories, concepts, and techniques from the behavioral sciences to the various aspects involved in managing an organization. (Rigby, 1971.)

Operating under these loose definitions and from a systems viewpoint, utilizing whatever research data happens to be available, successful transnational O.D. practitioners operate from a series of shifting "practice theories" (Vail 1971) which, while "bearing some relation to public, objective theories about organizational situations," are "in no sense identical with them." Their frame of reference and theoretical orientation may lack academic rigor but at best takes full account of the realities of the situation and of the opportunities offered by the whole wide range of behavioral science knowledge, be it sociology, anthropology, political science or whatever comes to hand. What he or she then practices is not Quality Control Circles, nor Quality of Work Life, nor job enrichment, nor survey feedback, although a practice theory may contain elements of all of these. It is, in my view, Organization Development.

In the same paper, Vail states his opinion that, if the study of organizations is not tempered by the O.D. practitioner's frame of reference, O.D. risks "metamorphosis into a body of idealistic and unrealizable goals which are sought by impractical means." The ethnocentric urge to define O.D. as only those theories and techniques emerging from a certain narrow geographical area (USA), time frame (1950-70), and academic field (social psychology) runs this risk whilst undermining the work carried out by consultants of all nationalities who still choose to adopt the "convenient label" of O.D. Practitioner.

Taking into account the growth throughout the world in the last ten years of the number of people involved in the application of behavioral science knowledge to organizational problems, it is difficult to give much weight to the suggestion that organization development is culture bound, although it appears that many definitions of the field, and

more practitioners and theorist, within it, may well be so.

IN SEARCH OF TRANSCULTURAL OD

by Robert R. Blake and Jane S. Mouton

Darwin's 19th Century investigations of the expression of emotions in man and Animals led him to two important conclusions: that close parallels exist between animal and human species as to identity of emotions, and that all cultures and races of people experience the same emotional reactions. (I) Others since, looking at the human race from anthropological, biological, and psychological perspectives, have drawn essentially the same conclusion--in many important ways, people throughout the world are basically the same.

Human psychology, then, is basically culture-independent. Biological and psychological determinants of humanness are fundamental, and provide a common denominator for understanding and influencing human behavior. Beyond behavior at the individual level, certain consistent and predictable dynamics arise when people in any culture become members of groups, or at interfaces between groups.

National sociology, by contrast, is significantly culture-dependent. A societal attitude toward work, patterns of organization life, religious and familial values, politics, economics, and law--these sociological variables impact cultural norms, standards, and expectations. Within and among nations, sociocultural factors give rise to a range of individual differences in perspectives and behaviors.

In exploring the cultural transferability of organization development strategies, it is simply an understatement of the obvious to note that there are basic and important differences in the sociologies of nations, but the failure to recognize and act upon psychological similarities common to all people could be a critical flaw. Looking at L. David Brown's recent question, "Is OD Culture Bound?" from this perspective may lead to alternative formulations about the availability and applicability of a "general theory of planned change."

Effective management and sound OD tune in to human psychology and focus on important cross-cultural similarities in people rather than on more shallow sociological differences. Since few OD methodologies have proven consistently effective for generating change in any culture, their impotence across cultures is not surprising.

Nevertheless, the solution to Brown's quest for "transnational OD" may already exist in the behavioral sciences.

When an understanding of human psychology guides, and is systematically applied to, comprehensive theory-based OD activities, cultural norms can be shifted in more positive and productive directions, regardless of what they are initially. Behavioral science theory and principles are not culture specific, but are generalizable to the whole of human kind. Specific OD intervention tactics may vary from country to country, but sound strategies for achieving planned, systematic change and development are universally powerful and appropriate. Perhaps the apparent failure of transcultural OD applications lies not as much in a need to recognize and attend to cultural uniqueness as in practitioners' willingness to rely on piecemeal, fragmented OD efforts which lack sound theoretical footing.

We have been actively engaged in Grid Organization Development over the past twenty-five years. This work has extended into forty national cultures where it has persisted and continued to expand. We have reported research comparisons as to what people from different cultural roots think to be sound behavior. We have evaluated tactical differences that must be respected in bringing sounder behavior into everyday use. Nothing that we have discovered in this quarter of a century contradicts the conclusions forwarded in the paragraphs immediately preceding. This leads us to conclude that selective attention to differences and selective inattention to fundamental similarities may explain the appeal of Organization Development relativism. It is quite true that if one only looks at superficial differences, then these differences can be interpreted, as indicating Organization Development "must" be tailored to the uniqueness of each cultural setting or grouping of people. However, when one looks at fundamentals, it is apparent that resolution of conflict is essential for sound problem solving, openness and candor are critical for mutual understanding basic to decision making, and critique is a significant tool for learning from experience, etc. All (and others) of these are basic within any culture; all are basic to effectiveness within any culture; and all are fundamental building blocks of Organization Development.

REFERENCES

- 1 Darwin, Charles. Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals. London: Julian Friedman, 1979.
- 2 Blake, Robert R. and Jane S. Mouton. Corporate Excellence Through Grid Organization Development. Houston: Gulf Publishing Company, 1968. (The authors can be contacted at the following address: Robert R. Blake & Jane S. Mouton, Scientific Methods, Inc., Box 195, Austin, Texas 78767).

DEVELOPING TRANSCULTURAL ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

by L. David Brown

Rigby and Blake and Mouton argue that OD is not culture bound from quite different perspectives. My long-term interest is in using, adapting, or transforming what we know for developmental social change in both "developed" and "developing" countries. So I will focus on implications of their comments for planned change theory and practice that span cultural differences.

Rigby challenges the narrow definition of "OD" implied in my argument, and argues for a broader concept: "the application of theories, concepts and techniques from the behavioral sciences to the various aspects involved in managing an organization." I did use a narrow definition of, OD (as Rigby points out, narrower than definitions I have used in other settings), and a broader definition can (but does not necessarily) include activities appropriate to many cultures.

But Rigby solves one problem and creates another. When OD definitionally includes a wide range of strategies and tactics, practitioners are not automatically limited to a narrow set of interventions that may be culturally inappropriate. But they do have to choose alternatives that fit the cultural context. Rigby argues that "successful" practitioners develop "practice theories" that enable them to make appropriate choices. Even if those theories are not "academically rigorous," they must be articulated and elaborated if we are to develop a transcultural theory of OD to complement the practice that Rigby asserts already exists.

Blake and Mouton assert that "behavioral science theory and principles are not culture specific, but are generalizable to the whole of human kind." They concede that cultural variety produces "sociological differences," but describe those differences as more shallow", than the cross-cultural similarities inherent in human psychology. They believe that OD has been impotent across (and often within) cultural boundaries because of practitioner failure to place OD efforts on a sound theoretical footing."

Behavioral science theory is potentially generalizable to all humanity--but I think Blake and Mouton overstate its present attainments. I also believe that useful change theories integrate psychological and sociological analyses, rather than subjugate one to the other (Blake and Mouton's enthusiasm for psychology as the premier social science

is very consistent with American values on individualism). More importantly, when they move from abstract argument to concrete description of "fundamentals" that are "basic to effectiveness in any culture," they offer very controversial examples. "Openness and candor," for example, may be "critical to mutual understanding" in the U.S. and in some (but not all) Western European countries. But openness may be counterproductive for mutual understanding in many cultures. Sharing information may be vital to understanding across many settings, but the ways in which information appropriately exchanged (e.g., in subtle nonverbal cues, or through intermediaries, or via careful listening and circumlocution) vary widely across cultures. In such situations, efforts to promote interpersonal openness are likely to seem strange at best.

Where are we? Brown questions the cross-cultural relevance of OD. Rigby says practitioners know how to do it even if theorists don't. Blake and Mouton say the theory exists, even if practitioners don't use it. Transcultural OD may be developing, and exchanges like this may help to fill in its outlines. Indeed, the dialogue would benefit from more participants--consultants, researchers, and clients--from many different cultural bases. (The author can be contacted at the following address: L. David Brown, Organizational Behavior Dept., Boston University, 621 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, Mass. 02215).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I am interested in what happens from an OD perspective when two (or possibly more) organizations interact through mergers, affiliations, voluntary cooperation, government reorganization, or administrative mandate. Perhaps some of your readers could refer me to projects and sources for information: Frederick C Brechler, Ph.D., Wisconsin Organization Development Group, Post Office Box 577, Wausau, Wisconsin 54401 (715) 845-7049

OD & LABOR LAW: COMMENTS

by Robert A. Zawacki

I suspect that anyone who does consulting and reads Tom Cummings' article and Labor Law: A Word of Caution," in the Winter 1982 OD Newsletter, became alarmed. If you did not become alarmed, you may want to read the article again.

I believe that Congress never intended or foresaw the interpretations that professional office holders (bureaucrats) and the judicial system would make regarding the NLRA. However, the fact is that the NLRB has interpreted the act in a way that scares me and may hinder consulting.

Given this background, what can OD members do? I believe that the OD Division should organize a joint task force with other professional consulting organizations such as the Academy of Management Managerial Consultation Division, and QC associations to explore this issue in depth. This task force should approach the NLRB for comments on Tom's article. If they interpret the NLRA as Tom indicates they may, then the OD Division must initiate a political solution.

The OD Division can (and should) provide a service to its members by exploring this issue. (The author can be contacted at the College of Business, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, Colorado Springs, CO 80907).

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

Group A Organization Studies

Group & Organization Studies is an international quarterly journal publishing reports of research that are relevant and are directly linked to application. G&OS are now in its eighth volume and publish only empirical, database reports. Articles are anonymously refereed by at least two, and usually three, expert reviewers on the editorial board. Papers should be ten to thirty pages in length and must conform to the publication guidelines of the American Psychological Association in format. Case study reports are also welcome, when supported by strong data collection methodology. The journal also publishes occasional features such as interviews with prominent behavioral scientists, reviews of new paper and pencil instruments, and book reviews. Each issue contains one practice-centered article, which need not be data based, but is reviewed and refereed in the Perspectives section. These brief articles focus on important professional practice issues.

The aim of G&OS is to bridge the gap between research and practice in the fields of human resource management, human relations training, and organization development. No article is published without a clear discussion of practice implications of the research reported. Normal review time is ten weeks and accepted articles are published

within three to six months of receipt of the acceptable final revision. Very few papers are published without at least one round of revision.

G&OS welcome manuscripts dealing with any of the issues in its domain. Four copies of the manuscript should be sent to: Marshall Sashkin, Editor, Group & Organization Studies, Graduate Studies, Univ. of Maryland University College, College Park, MD 20742

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NEWS ABOUT MEMBERS

Cary L. Cooper, has been invited by the UK government's Equal Opportunities Commission to convene a special conference for a small number of major UK organizations in the field of positive action for female managers.

Frank Bireley, has accepted a new position in Commercial Credit Company as Director, Productivity Programs.

Dr. John T. Samaras, is the editor of the new publication: Central State Business Review. They welcome manuscripts from any area of business or public administration and have had three well-received issues published in 1982 with distribution throughout the southwest. Send manuscripts or request manuscript guides from: Dr. John T. Samaras, Editor, Central State Business Review, Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma 73034

Eugene S. Andrews, has joined the General Company (Crotonville, N.Y.) as Manager, Executive Education.

L. Dave Brown, is the new Department Chairman of the Organization Behavior Department at Boston University.

Brent Green, was a non-governmental Representative to the United Nations World Assembly on Aging held during August, 1982 in Vienna, Austria. He convened a workshop on International Training Needs during the assembly.

Ogden Brown Jr., is the Secretary/Treasurer of the Technical Group on Organizational Design and Management, Human Factors Department, Institute of Safety and Systems Management, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90089-0021.

Hal W. Hendrick, is the Chairperson of the Human Factors Society Technical Group on Organizational Design and Management, Human Factors Department, Institute of Safety and Systems Management, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90089-0021.

Martin M. Greller, formerly with Rohrer, Hibler & Replogle, is now Director of Human Resources Planning & Development, The New York Times Company.

Walter F. Hubner, has been-named director of the Institute of Industrial Relations at LeMoyne College, Syracuse, New York, 13214.

Dr. Kenneth L. Murrell, of the Management Department, University of West Florida has completed the first phase of project with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, better known as the World Bank. This project is a part of an overall program of research on developing culturally appropriate management models in the third world based on their cultural strengths and uniqueness.

Gary M. Richetto, Senior Partner & Director of TRIAD Associates, has been selected to the Executive Board of ASTD's Organization Development Division, and will co-instruct the O.D.

Personal Development Workshop with D.D. (Don) Warrick in Boston, August 17-19.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OD

Human Factors Society

At the Annual meeting of the Human Factors Society (HFS) in October 1980, the tenth Technical Group of the HFS was formed--The Technical Group on Organizational Design and Management. It now has about 300 members and publishes a quarterly newsletter. It is possible to join this TG without having to join the HFS. Dues are \$5.00 per year, which primarily cover the cost of the newsletter. Applications may be obtained from the Human Factors Society, Box 1369, Santa Monica, CA 90406.

Organization Development World Congress

You are invited to attend the, Third Organization Development World Congress October 4-7, 1983, in Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, on "Improving the Quality of Life." Dubrovnik is quoted as being un-contestably the most beautiful and famous walled coastal city anywhere on the globe." The Third World Congress is a scientific educational meeting of Social Scientists and Social Science organizations from all over the world to see if the technology used to solve problems inside organizations might not be applicable to the solution of world problems. Write the O.D. Institute, 11234 Walnut Ridge Road, Cheaterland, Ohio 44026 USA to arrive before 5/30/83. Telephone (216) 461-4333.

OD ORGANIZATIONS

Association for Creative Change

The Association's 1983 Annual Conference will be: influencing the Future; Re-Vision, June 20-23 at Moravian College, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Key presenters and events will include Barbara Marx Hubbard (author, futurist), Alan K. Waltz (futures researcher), Speed B. Leas (action research on conflict management), Judy Ellison (futures processes), and others. Non-members welcome.

Association provides professional development and collegiality for people working in the applied behavioral sciences consulting, the ministry, etc. For membership or conference information contact: Association for Creative Change, P.O. Box 2212, Syracuse, New York 13220.

The Organization Development Institute

The Organization Development Institute is a non-profit educational association organized to promote an understanding of Organization Development. Annual membership is \$50 and includes a free listing of your name and credentials in, and one free copy of the International Registry of Organization Development Professionals (priced at \$15); reduced meeting fees (usually \$30); and twelve issues of Organizations and Change which lists job information. Write: Organization Development Institute, 11234 Walnut Ridge Road, Chesterland, Ohio 44026-1299 (216) 461-4333.