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CALL FOR PAPERS: REDUCING BARRIERS TO UNDERSTANDING

by Gerald E. Ledford, Jr.

The 1994 Academy of Management Annual Meeting will be held August 14-17, 1994 in Dallas. The host hotel will be the Loew's Anatole. Veterans of the previous Academy meeting at this hotel should note that it has been greatly expanded and renovated since then.

Theme

The conference theme will be "Reducing Barriers to Understanding." This is one of the broadest themes offered for the Academy meeting in recent years. Rick Mowday, the Program Chair for the Academy, suggests that the theme describes key activities of researchers, managers, consultants, and colleagues. Relevant questions include: What barriers to understanding exist in our various professional roles? How can important barriers to understanding be reduced? Increased understanding is a common purpose in the diverse roles and activities of those in our field.

A Call for Intellectual Exchange

There is widespread dissatisfaction among Academy members and division program chairs with the one-way communication offered in the standard Academy paper session or symposium. Typically, any discussion with the audience comes in the form of a few perfunctory questions before the audience moves to the next session or to a social engagement. Such sessions are safe, predictable, and ineffective as a medium of intellectual exchange.

The Organization Development and Change Division has helped lead the way toward session formats that are engaging and exciting. Last year, our symposia and paper sessions used many different formats to encourage exchange with the audience. Some sessions devoted half of the time to small group discussions related to the presentations. Others solicited written questions from the audience, which the discussion facilitator categorized on the spot and used as the basis for a commentary. The range of formats has been limited only by our creativity.

My commitment as the division's Program Chair for this year is to insure that every session on the ODC program will offer a meaningful opportunity for intellectual exchange. I would like the see every session on our program as an attractive draw for those interested in sharing ideas about the themes central to our field.

As a step in this direction, I propose to eliminate the conventional discussant role. It is ironic, to say the least, that the "discussant" usually replaces a discussion between the audience and the presenters. An audience of academics usually does not need someone to summarize what they just heard and to tell them why it was or was not important. I ask those proposing symposia to simply eliminate this role or to recast it as a "facilitator," "discussion facilitator," or the like. For paper sessions, which I will organize with the help of the division's Executive Committee, there will be no "discussant," although there may be a "facilitator."

If you are submitting a symposium for the ODC program, please note that the submission will be judged in part on whether the format encourages a dialogue with the audience. How you do this is up to you. Be creative! For paper sessions, I will insure that presenters and session chairs provide plenty of opportunity for audience interaction.

I would especially like to encourage division members to submit papers for the program. The odds of acceptance for quality papers have increased greatly because of the use of poster sessions by the academy. These allow the acceptance of an additional 10 percent of paper submissions in poster format, permitting acceptance of approximately 43 percent of all submissions to the division. The overall quality of submissions to the division has increased over the years, but so have the available slots on the program.

IFSAM Congress

Immediately following the Academy meeting, at the same hotel, the International Federation of Scholarly Associations of Management (IFSAM) will host the Second World Congress on Management. The theme of the meeting will be "Linking Management Scholars Worldwide." This is a conference of scholars from many nations, but not a conference on international management. Submissions on the full range of topics that interest Academy members are encouraged.

The Academy is the host association for the IFSAM meeting. As a result, a special effort is being made to encourage submissions for IFSAM. Papers and symposia may be SUBMITTED JOINTLY to the Academy and IFSAM. Papers will be independently reviewed, and can be accepted by either conference, neither, or both. Papers can be presented, however, at either but not both conferences. This gives submissions that have been rejected for the Academy a potential second chance at the IFSAM conference.

See the October Academy of Management News for more information on submission formats and requirements. Submissions to each conference must meet the specific requirements of each.

Submission Requirements

The current issue of the Academy of Management News contains the full list of requirements for sumissions to the Academy Meeting. Please read the full call for papers. Even though there are a lot of rules, meeting them is not very difficult. I will unilaterally reject submissions that do not adhere to the rules without a review.

Here I will highlight a few of the key formal rules and offer clarifications on some of them.

1. Deadline. The deadline for RECEIPT of submissions is January 7, 1994.

2. Originality. Submissions must not be scheduled for presentation or under consideration for presentation at any conference (except the IFSAM conference--see above), and must not have been accepted for publication in a journal. Note, however, it is acceptable to submit a paper to a journal after it has been submitted for consideration at the Academy meeting. The journal review process is slow enough to insure that a paper that is submitted next January will not be published prior to the Academy meetings. Also, the same paper may ultimately appear both in the conference Proceedings and a journal.

3. Rule of 3. No participant may be included as an author or other participant or in any other role as presenter, session chair, discussant, etc. in more than 3 submissions or sessions for the REGULAR program. Violators are easily caught, with embarrassing results, by means of the software that is now used to prepare the meeting program.

4. Format. Papers should be no more than 21 total pages, including EVERYTHING (title page, abstract page, etc.). Page length requirements are based on 12 pitch on typewriters (which corresponds to 10 point size for standard computer fonts) with 1 inch margins on each side. Note: please don't imagine that I'll mistake smaller font sizes for 10 point.

5. Review Process. Papers are selected by blind review. Only the title page should include authors' names and affiliations. Papers are submitted to one division only. Symposia are NOT blind reviewed. They must include a signed statement from each intended participant showing agreement to participate. Joint submissions of symposia to other divisions are encouraged.

6. Checklist. Include a completed, signed submission checklist form. This will indicate the things you need to include in the submission. These are four copies of the submission, an additional copy of the title page and abstract page, a self-addressed, stamped postcard to acknowledge submission receipt, and a stamped legal size envelope for returning Program Committee decisions.

7. Addresses: Send submissions for the Organization Development and Change Division to: Gerald E. Ledford, Jr., Center for Effective Organizations, School of Business Administration, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90089-1421. For overnight mail junkies, my street address is Powell Hall, 3rd Floor, 3737 Watt Way, Los Angeles, CA 90089 (Phone: 213/740-9814).

8. Review Criteria. As usual, submissions will be judged on the basis of (1) original contribution; (2) overall quality, and (3) interest to Academy. As indicated above, symposia proposals should address the third criteria by means of format as well as topic, and should explicitly indicate how the format will provide for a meaningful intellectual exchange.

ARTICLES BY MEMBERS

Reagan, G. (1992). Total Quality Management (TQM) Inventory. The 1992 Annual: Developing Human Resources, 149-161.

Reagan, G. (1992). Strategic Leadership Styles Instrument. The 1993 Annual: Developing Human Resources.

BOOKS BY MEMBERS

Diamond, Michael A. (1993). The Unconscious Life of Organizations Interpreting Organizational Identity. Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc.

Stein, Murray & Hollwitz, John (Eds.). (1992). Psyche at work: Organizational applications of Jungian analytical psychology. Wilmette, Il.: Chiron Publications.

CALL FOR AMR BOOK NOTES

The Academy of Management Review Book Review Section is planning to develop a "Readers Are Reading" section. The objective of this section is to cover more books and highlight books that the Academy of Management members are reading. The section will consist of brief notes on recent management books that are not reviewed in the Book Review Section.

The AMR Book Review Section is able to do detailed reviews of only 20 books per year (out of nearly 500 received). This new section is one way to bring more books to the attention of our readers.

I invite members of the Academy to send me their contribution for this section. The contribution should be in the form of a 75-word note describing the book's content or key arguments. The notes should be descriptive and accurate, and not evaluative. The book should be of academic interest and make contributions to management theory. It should be published in 1993 or forthcoming (but with an ISBN assigned). Notes from authors (and publishers) on their own books are not acceptable. Please provide a complete cite for the book in the following format:

Author(s)/Editor(s), Title, Publisher, Place. Publication Date. ISBN, Number of pages, Price.

The Book Review Editor will select the notes to be included in the section based on the appropriateness of the book, balanced coverage of Academy Divisions/Interest Groups, and the quality of the notes. Please send two copies of your contribution to: Professor Paul Shrivastava, Book Review Editor, Academy of Management Review, Department of Management, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, 17837, USA. Telephone: (717)524-1821; Fax: (717)524-1338.

ODC INTERNET USER GROUP
by Robert Munzenrider

The ODC Division now has an Internet User Group to which members of other interested parties can subscribe and use to communicate with one another. Thanks to this Internet "Electronic Superhighway," members of the ODC Division can communicate electronically from around the world. This user group is available to members to discuss issues of interest, make announcements, seek help or information on a topic, or whatever.

This user group, called ODCNET-L, is supported through the LISTSERV at Pennsylvania State University. Even though it is managed by Bob Munzenrider at Penn State--Harrisburg, it is an "Un-Moderated" user group. As an un-moderated group, any message posted by a member/subscriber will not be edited or reviewed by anyone before being broadcast to all members/subscribers of the ODCNET-L User Group.

To become a member of this new user group, send a one-line message to LISTSERV@PSUVM.PSU.EDU that says:

SUBSCRIBE ODCNET-L (Your first name) (Your last name)

If your computer system has a pre-formatted NOTE screen, with a "TO:" line and a "SUBJECT:" line, fill in the TO: line with LISTSERV@PSUVM.PSU.EDU, leave the SUBJECT line blank, and send the one-line message "SUBSCRIBE ODCNET-L (Your first name) (Your last name)." Do not include either the parentheses or the quotation marks.

If you either have questions about either joining this new group or problems getting connected, feel free to call Bob Munzenrider for help. He can be reached at (717)948-6057 (voice mail), (717)948-6320 (fax), or RFM@PSUVM.PSU.EDU (e-mail on the Internet).

INAPPROPRIATE DEFENSES OF OD PRACTITIONERS
by Chris Argyris

How do we monitor the efficacy of our interventions, especially when we are threatened?

For example, A and I differed on when and how much to confront a client. I agreed that we differed on timing and criteria, but these differences are not tactical. Rather, the differences stem from our having different theories of how to learn from defensiveness and how to test interventions.

For example, we were discussing a case in which a CEO was pushing for an increasing emphasis on pay for performance. A role-played the role of the consultant and I took the role of the CEO (because I knew the CEO).

During the role-play I felt that A understood me (as CEO) and was acting in ways consistent with his views on effective intervention. After 5 to 10 minutes of role- playing, A stopped and said that, in his opinion, the CEO was not owning his problem. "He wants a quick fix, he wants somebody else to work it."

I was surprised by A's comments. I thought I had been acting as a relatively open-minded CEO who did not want a quick fix. Moreover, I felt perturbed that A had kept all his thoughts secret from me. If I were his client, I would have wanted to him to share his evaluations and analyses of me in order to test their validity. He argued that he would not test his evaluations publicly at this time, claiming that doing so might make the CEO --me--defensive. But could keeping these evaluations private, yet still acting on them, lead to unrecognized distortions? Moreover, if the basis for his decision to withhold his opinions is that they are private, then the logic for this choice is self- referential: That is, the test of its validity is limited to the logic of the actor. Such tests are susceptible to self-sealing reasoning. We advise our clients against the use of such logic.

I asked A what I (as the CEO) had said or done that led him to make his evaluations of me and to decide he could not test the validity of them with me.

A responded that, in his opinion, I was being "too cognitive." "The problem of whether I can learn or not," he explained, "has to do with whether I can get my feelings under control. It is not a logical issue."

I empathized with that view. All of us have experienced moments when we are so upset that we cannot respond to requests that are primarily cognitive. Had A said that, I would have understood. But he continued by announcing I was "too competitive." I wondered how he had reached that conclusion. Was it because his actions were also "competitive"? How would either possibility be tested?

I do not have difficulty meeting someone's request to "back off" until that person has come to grips with her or his feelings. Indeed, I would make a similar request in such circumstances. I do mind backing off, however, when doing so reinforces an action strategy with rules such as these: Evaluate another person's intentions; do not attempt to test the validity of your evaluations; justify your thoughts and actions by asserting that the other person is acting incompetently; do not attempt to test this assertion.

We are faced with a dilemma. On the one hand, I believe many of us would agree that our biases and defenses influence the theories of intervention we create and the ways which we implement them. On the other hand, how do we identify those rules of intervention that, if based upon our personal biases or defenses, ought to be changed? My answer is that behavioral rules permitting the rejection of inquiry into our actions should be highly limited. As professionals, we have an obligation to be able to be confronted, even if this makes us feel vulnerable.

For this assertion to be credible, however, I must define what I consider effective confrontation. I would suggest the following: In response to any statement of advocacy, evaluation, or attribution, it is acceptable behavior to request an illustration, an inquiry into the reasoning behind the attribution, and a test of the validity of the claims being made.

Moreover, such a test should not be trapped by the logic used to make the evaluations and attributions in the first place. Otherwise, we run the risk of encouraging professionals to design their thinking and act on reasoning that is self-protective and self-sealing.

The behavior of A (and the other OD professionals in two other cases described in the article) illustrate what I believe is defensive reasoning. It is based on rules such as, (1) do not be too rational or too cognitive, (2) develop an intervention strategy that is consistent with your personal style of learning, and (3) withdraw from dialogue with colleagues about substantive differences in your respective theories of practice if the conversation becomes too cognitive or requires that defenses be confronted.

Such rules, when applied, lead to a compulsive repetition of one's original strategy, because they do not permit any opportunity to interrupt it, to explore it, and to test it.

Implications

I believe that cognitive-clinical research has documented strongly that all of us have designs that we use to implement our actions. The designs range from being implicit or tacit to explicit. I believe that most OD professionals have such designs, and they base their actions on them. I call such designs their theories-in-use.

It is important for us to become more conscious and explicit about our theories-in-use, especially when they are inconsistent with the theories that we espouse. After all, we use our espoused theories to tell clients about our services.

I have held workshops to implement these objectives. In the article I cite three cases of senior to world class groups of OD professionals (about 35 in total) who found the discrepancies between their espoused theories and theories-in-use quite surprising. What was troubling, in my view, was that they dealt with the discrepancy defensively. They, as was illustrated by A, behaved in ways that stopped inquiry and learning into their theories-in-use, especially when they were embarrassed or threatened. Yet these are the conditions under which we claim that we can help clients.

I recommend that we begin to offer workshops for OD professionals, where the objective is to help them to make their theories-in-use more explicit and to modify them so they can be tested more rigorously during contact with clients.

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT THE FIELD OF OD

by Wendell L. French

I have some suggestions about where I think the field of OD should be heading. First, here are a few of the things we need to know more about. Or to be more accurate, here are some things I wish I knew more about:

The art and science of subgrouping--different methods have vastly different consequences

How various CEOs came to be supportive.

The impact of T-group training and other experiential training in enhancing OD efforts

Comparisons and contrasts between OD practice and other third-party approaches such as mediation, arbitration, conflict management, group psychotherapy, family therapy, and community development, to name a few. Related to this is the importance of knowing more about the facilitator's role. I do not think the third-party role is sufficiently appreciated and understood. I think the role of the OD facilitator is as least as important as the lawyer, the consulting engineer, and the CPA.

The extent to which other disciplines are using OD techniques and approaches

What concepts can we draw on from other fields such as anthropology, social psychology, psychotherapy, and diplomacy that could be applicable to OD? As a field we ought to be systematically tracking these and perhaps some other disciplines.

The to which there can be burnout in focusing on group processes. Effective group and intergroup behavior is hard work. Are there ways to revitalize interest and promote continuous learning about interpersonal, group, and intergroup dynamics?

How to encourage OD practitioners to publish more of the results from various inventions. I am convinced that there are many excellent interventions that have never been written up. What would happen to medical practice if new techniques were not widely shared?

I don't know what the demand for OD specialists may be at this time, but I'm convinced that there is a tremendous need world-wide for OD practitioners and for management people who know how to use OD processes; and this need is great in both highly developed industrialized countries and in underdeveloped countries. For example, there is tremendous need for OD help in the former Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe; and there is also a desperate need for within-organization OD efforts, between-organization efforts, and efforts between organizations and government agencies. Whether managers and government officials in these countries will have the insight to use OD practitioners is another story. Maybe it is time for the OD Network, NTL Institute, and other organizations with a big stake in OD to become more proactive and more political. The OD Network has sponsored three or more trips of OD practitioners to what is now called the Commonwealth of Independent States. Perhaps this will lead to additional OD training in these countries and to the utilization of OD practitioners.

There is a huge need in the U.S. for OD people to help organizations learn how to develop effective teams, move toward more employee involvement, toward unleashing creativity, helping people with transitions, and helping manage rapid change. There is also a tremendous need to help people with career and life planning.

At the same time, there is a need for OD people to work with top management on such things as:

Helping them create more collaborative, open cultures

Working with HRM execs and other managers in revising compensation, training, and other practices to be compatible with broad organizational culture changes (for example the development of gainsharing plans and other incentive plans so that all organizational members can share in rewards) and training in effective team behaviors.

Furthermore, there is a tremendous need to help organizations remain aware and concerned about the social system of the organizations as organizations move toward and into such such efforts as Quality of Work Life Programs and Total Quality Management Programs.

James O'Toole, at the University of Southern California, has written about organizations choosing to take the high road in contrast to the low road. I think the OD field has generally been on the high road. O'Toole describes how, in times of crisis, some organizations have abandoned their high principles only to reap employee mistrust and disillusionment. This is a possible fate for some OD efforts.

Overall, I believe the OD field is on the high road and has an extraordinarily important and bright future, providing we:

Continue to use and refine the participant action research model

Continue to help teams at all levels become more. effective, including teams all the way from the shop floor or the office to the board of directors.

Help teams become more effective in working collaboratively with other teams.

Help top management face up to its philosophy of dealing with people.

Refine, develop, and publicize the role of the third-party facilitator.

Continue to develop concepts and skills in linking OD to such continuous improvement efforts as QWL and Total Quality Management efforts.

Continue to support experiential learning along with cognitive learning.

Continue to support and develop broad-based teaching and research programs toward high-quality, ethical, professional OD practice.

Research and publication of OD theory and practice appear to be alive and well. However, I see a need for certain kinds of publications that at present are quite scarce. For example, I believe the field could profit from many more case studies that describe change efforts and draw conclusions about what went well and what went awry. also see a great need for the sharing of OD inventions and the publication of their results. I am confident there are quite a few mini-inventions that OD practitioners have designed and used successfully in addressing unique intervention challenges, but that have not been published and shared with others.

Now, some concerns about where OD is now - but which are also tributes to the past and present people in the field. It seems to me that over the last decade or two, Fortune, Business Week, The Wall Street Journal, and the New York Times have published many articles about the merits of participative leadership styles, teamwork, self-managed teams, employee involvement, valuing diversity, employee networks in companies (such as minority and women's support networks, career planning, etc.). However, seldom, if ever, is there any recognition in these articles of where some of the concepts and approaches came from or gained their constructive forms. I'm convinced that many OD people--teaming up with enlightened managers--are lurking in the background of many of the more successful stories. If true, this is a huge compliment to the OD field.

Above all, in the context of a democratic society, we need to continue to develop and refine our individual and collective visions of what ideal organizations look and feel like. This will come largely out of what we sense and see as we work with organizations and our own sense of values.

(This material is taken from remarks given at the Master of Organization Development Conference, Bowling Green State University, April 4, 1992.)

OD AND THE MANAGEMENT OF GLOBAL CHANGE: IMPLICATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES
by William A. Pasmore

For a moment, imagine that your monthly income is approximately $30. Further imagine that you have been forced by secret police to have five children and that no food is available to feed them. Imagine your heartbreak when you realize that the only possibility for survival for four of your children is to give them up for adoption. Imagine this, and further imagine that you and your children have no hope for a better future - and you may begin to experience what is reality for the average Romanian family. The net result of the warped dreams of Nicolai Ceausescu can be seen in the faces of the more than one hundred thousand orphans interred in institutions in Romania; and in the sometimes blank and sometimes angry expressions of their parents. Life in Romania is a cruel mixture of victim punishment and despair.

Sadly, we are still in our infancy as a global family in dealing with situations like the one uncovered in Romania. As we witness the nightly news and hear of yet another flood in Bangladesh or another catastrophic oil spill, we become almost numb; the situation seems beyond human control. Yet the problems we are viewing are our problems; they belong to our generation, and will be inherited by succeeding generations unless we step forward with new efforts to manage our planet and ourselves.

During a recent visit to Romania sponsored by World Vision Relief and Development, David Cooperrider and I, representing the Weatherhead School of Management of Case Western Reserve University, saw firsthand the impact of disorganized, short term relief efforts. What we found were orphanages with closets stockpiled with toys and food; and factories pumping out millions of penicillin tablets daily - but the orphans received neither. James Bascom, M.D., who, together with his wife Barbara Bascom, M.D. headed the World Vision effort in Romania, invited us to Romania because he felt that the problem facing the orphans was no longer one of supplies - but rather one of management. The system is broken and needs to be fixed - nothing else will get the toys in the closets and the drugs in the warehouse into the hands of people who can do something with them on behalf of the orphans. The same is true of the situation in Somalia and before that, the tragedy in Bangladesh. For a short time, while the world media focuses on the current disaster, there is an outpouring of goodwill from around the world to provide short-term emergency relief. The result in Bangladesh was literally to throw food out of airplanes onto peoples' heads; a few weeks or months or years later, the basic conditions remain much the same. Throwing food at people won't help them move off the flood plain. Sending toys to Romanian children won't get them out of the orphanages or provide them with hope for a better future.

What is needed in Romania and Bangladesh and Somalia is a more thoughtful approach, one that is well known to the international relief community but seemingly difficult to implement. That is, a long term effort directed toward sustainable economic development which involves effective collaboration among relief agencies, governments and business. With economic progress, Romanian families would reclaim their lost children; Bangladeshees would construct suitable housing off the flood plains; and Somalees would find meaningful work rather than rely on subsistence farming in an overgrazed desert. We know economic development is the answer. Why hasn't it happened? Because, like achieving organizational effectiveness in other industries, sustainable economic development is a socio-technical challenge, not simply a technical or economic one. And it is here that OD can play a crucial role that may make a difference.

As we face the effects of recession in this country and staggering unemployment and poverty among segments of our own people, we need look no farther than our backyard to see the problem. The failure is not, as we too quickly perceive, with the will or intellect of the peoples who flash across our television screens and ignite us with short-lived compassion. The failure is in our ability to create and manage meaningful partnerships among governments, businesses, non-governmental agencies and universities. Only concerted, coordinated actions across these sectors and with the full involvement and guidance of those receiving assistance can produce the long-term results that we all hope for. In Romania, we are establishing advisory councils that will guide action-oriented education programs to transfer management know-how to Romanians. Action teams will be formed of current and future leaders to diagnose the situation, plan solutions, and work across sectors to implement them.

By supporting partnerships across sectors, classes and international boundaries, we can achieve long term solutions to our global problems. Until recently, we have lacked the vision and capacity to forge these partnerships, but the scene is changing rapidly. The vision is within our grasp. In our studies of the most innovative efforts to address global problems like those outlined above, we have observed miracles in progress - individuals and organizations accomplishing what few beforehand would have believed achievable. In its pioneering work in Romania, World Vision is reaching out to form linkages between the American and Romanian governments, with dozens of universities providing training in health care, management, and social work, and with corporations which can provide the computers and financial resources to invest in Romania's future. In fact, a recent count of World Vision's partners in the Romanian effort totaled over one hundred. In another case, an effort organized by Dr. Donald Henderson of John Hopkins University led to the eradication of smallpox from the globe - the first and only disease to be dispatched from the face of the Earth. This effort required several hundred thousand individuals working around the world to administer a vaccine which had been available for over 75 years. The problem is not one of technology or resources; it is one of organization and vision.

With cooperation among governments, businesses, universities and development agencies, we can begin to shape a more desirable future. Specifically, those of us interested in organizational development and transformation need to study the most successful examples of partnerships and apply the learnings to our most pressing problems. At Case Western Reserve, we have started SIGMA (Social Innovations in Global Management), a research and educational program devoted to studying the process of global social change and to educating business, government and not-for-profit leaders in managing change. We are aware of related efforts underway at McGill, Boston University, and the University of British Columbia. In the literature, we see expressed more ideas, values and programs that are consistent with the engagement of OD practitioners in global change. Peter Reason, for example, has argued persuasively in favor of a new form of "human inquiry" in which the roles of "subjects" and "scientists" become blurred and each has the potential to shape the goals and outcomes of their joint efforts (Reason & Rowan, 1981; Reason, 1988). Paulo Freire (1981), in Pedagogy of the Oppressed, called for changes in educational systems using "dialogical methods" in which the social scientist assumed the role of social change agent by helping oppressed people develop "generative themes" that would "awaken critical consciousness" necessary for cultural liberation. Dave Brown and Rajesh Tandon (1983) have called for an even more active role for the social scientist in what they call "participatory research"; the purpose of such research is to help groups with a social change agenda to organize and learn how to overcome political barriers to change. We believe that a new branch of our field is being born, as we wrote in Human Relations recently:

"We see that the opportunity for a new agenda for social science in the study of global social innovations arises from: (1) the existence of global problems which need to be approached with human as well as technological solutions, (2) the emergence of a new form of organization, the global social change organization, which is unlike its bureaucratic predecessors in a number of significant ways, (3) the emergence of a more liberating and actively involved role for the social scientist in studying social change, and (4) the convergence of several fields of inquiry on the phenomenon of global social innovation." (pp.1049-1050).

We hope to contribute to the further involvement of OD in social change through our work in SIGMA, with the following objectives:

Objective 1: To undertake a program of significant research pertaining to global social innovation and the management of global social change organizations. The first and primary activity of SIGMA is to conduct research of global social consequence. Our most extensive project to date has been to study the efforts of World Vision and its many partnering organizations to address the urgent needs of orphans in Romania. Recently, as a consequence of intense collaborative effort, a conference was held at Case Western Reserve that brought together representatives of all levels and disciplines of the Romanian health care sector to plan a more viable system of delivering health care to the orphans and to all Romanian people. From an OD perspective, our part of the meeting involved facilitating the process - using a combination of appreciative inquiry and team building among people who in some cases had not met previously or who held opposite views on appropriate steps that should be taken to respond to the crisis. The outcome of the meeting was the formation of a multilateral commission to continue to meet and plan the future of the Romanian health care system, an activity previously conducted by the central government.

Objective 2: To study global social change organizations (GSCO's) in depth. We have begun to study a broad range of organizations, differing in mission and style of organizing. These organizations have included The Hunger Project, The Nature Conservancy, The International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, The Institute for Cultural Affairs and Ohio in the World. The cross-organizational analyses may focus on such themes as: sources of creativity and innovation; the alignment of personal and organizational goals and values; processes enhancing commitment to higher values and to action; processes of empowerment; valuing diversity and cross-cultural collaboration; inter organizational partnerships; creating new languages of organizing and cooperation; and processes of expanding global consciousness.

Objective 3: To interview leaders of global social change. In addition to the organizational studies, we are concerned with the leadership of global social change organizations and movements. The results of the studies of leaders will be incorporated into both individual profiles of the leaders and materials developed for educational programs of the Center. Interviewees have included Desmond Tutu, Dr. Bernard Lown (IPPNW), Randall Robinson (Trans-Africa), Millard Fuller (Habitat for Humanity), and Peter Benensen (Amnesty International).

Objective 4: To hold conferences and colloquia involving global social change organizations and scholars of global social change. SIGMA is dedicated to the dissemination of both general knowledge and particular innovations and to the stimulation of dialogue among GSCO's and innovative leaders. One of the most effective ways of accomplishing this is through a series of conferences patterned after the Social Innovations in Global Management Conference held at CWRU in November, l989.

Objective 5: To publish high quality work based on these conferences, the organizational case studies and the interviews with leaders of social change. SIGMA activities stimulate writing that deserves wide dissemination. For example, papers from the first conference were published in Human Relations in 1991. Case studies of GSCO's will be offered as journal articles or monographs.

Objective 6: To develop programs for educating leaders of global social change. We are in the early stage of developing a truly global Ph.D. program in collaboration with a group of universities from North and South America, Africa, Asia and Europe. We are also participating in a program on private voluntary organization excellence sponsored by USAID that brings together the leadership teams of U.S.-based international private voluntary organizations. Using appreciative inquiry as a starting place, the goal is to help these organizations learn how to learn - and to formulate strategic plans that are responsive to the evolving challenges in assisting others in achieving sustainable economic development.

Where should you start?

We have found our colleagues in OD to be very excited about global change; OD practitioners have always been the kind to jump in to help wherever they can. OD practitioners bring skills which are essential to building cooperation and planning change. We have found that appreciative inquiry and search conferences work very well to bring diverse groups of people together to build community and design a better future for themselves. If you are interested in getting involved, we suggest that you start with a reading of the report of the Brundtland Commission on sustainable development, entitled Our Common Future and Marvin Weisbord's new book, Discovering Common Ground. We think you will agree that there is a great deal that needs to be done, and a lot that members of the Division can do.

References

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A BAYESIAN APPROACH TO THE DEFINITION OF PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN FIELD SETTINGS
by Daniel J. Svyantek, Steven E. Ekeberg, Michael E. Marinis, & Roberto F. Figueroa

Statistics may be used to describe a situation (statistical inference) or prescribe action in the context of situation (statistical decision-making) (1). Traditional approaches to statistics and research design have separated these two functions and have emphasized the former function (1). This has resulted in a dilemma faced in the evaluation of change in field settings. This dilemma is deciding whether statistically significant results are practically significant.

Woodman (8) sees the definition of meaning for evaluation in the field as two orthogonal dimensions of statistical and practical significance. These dimensions deal with the a) practical value of the research findings to the organizational client and b) statistical significance for the evaluator acting as scientist. Woodman proposes that four quadrants formed by these dimensions may be used in a decision theory approach to understanding statistical and practical significance in organizational change interventions. Interventions which have statistically significant effects on criteria and have practically meaningful changes in criteria are seen as true positives(TP). This quadrant represents the balancing of the inferential and decision-making aspects of statistics. Interventions which have statistically significant effects on criteria but lead to no practically meaningful changes in criteria are false positives(FP). Interventions which do not have statistically significant effects on criteria but have practically meaningful changes in criteria are false negatives(FN). Interventions which do not have statistically significant effects on criteria and do not lead to practically meaningful changes in criteria are true negatives(TN).

Woodman (8) called for the development of a research paradigm which combines the dimensions of statistical significance (for evaluators) and practical value (for the organizational client) in a more systematic, comprehensive manner. Bayesian evaluation methods allow the combination of Woodman's two dimensions of statistical and practical significance.

The basic foundation of Bayesian statistics is the quantification of a prior probability (or distribution) for a phenomena being studied (3). The development of such priors, however, requires the use of context experts. Context experts, for the purposes of organizational evaluation, are the employees of the organization in which the intervention is being conducted (6, 7).

In the evaluation of organizational interventions, the prior serves as a baseline defining the expected results of an intervention within a particular organizational context (6, 7). A critical requirement for the use of a Bayesian statistical approach for organizational research and practice is that the active, collaborative input of organizational members be incorporated into the evaluation process. The Bayesian method allow members of an organization to define practical significance within the organization's context and then allows the evaluator to test for this significance statistically.

The utilization of context-specific success criteria is a powerful effect of the use of Bayesian statistics. Bayesian statistics allow the balancing of the practical needs of the individual(s) for whom an intervention is being conducted and the scientific needs of the individual conducting the evaluation of intervention outcomes.

The Bayesian approach allows the testing of statistical significance for different levels of practical significance. It has been shown that the use of the contextually defined level of practical significance may allow the Bayesian approach to find statistical significance when traditional statistics do not (7). In addition, the use of the Bayesian approach may mean that a statistically significant finding, arrived at through the use of traditional statistics, will be found to be non-significant in the context of the organizationally desired levels of change in the criterion (5).

Woodman (8) has described two perspectives on the statistical evaluation of organizational change. Each perspective is a legitimate manner for the use of information gathered during evaluation. The differences in perspective are, however, potential sources of conflict and confusion in the evaluation of change in the field. The Bayesian approach to evaluation provides the researcher with an alternative method of assessing the effects of interventions in the field which allows the balancing of these two complementary goals. The Bayesian approach is more flexible than the traditional statistics. The Bayesian method allows the determination of statistical significance for defined levels of change which have practical value for the organization conducting the evaluation of an intervention.

The factors influencing the obtained values for traditional statistics (i.e., the t-test) are the mean differences between groups, the variances of the groups being evaluated and the sample size (4). Given the sample data, this obtained statistics showing a significant difference will always show a statistically significant difference. The use of the Bayesian approach, however, allows the needs of the client to be considered. For example, given the same sample data, criteria differences of up that are statistically significantly (using traditional statistics) may not be practically significant. Such results can be shown to be non- significant using Bayesian statistics (5).

The Bayesian approach to evaluation, therefore, adds a fourth factor to the calculation of the obtained statistic. This is the client's expectations for change. The client's defined minimum level of practical significance is tested statistically in the Bayesian approach. It is this factor which gives the Bayesian approach the flexibility to incorporate the goals of statistical inference and statistical decision-making into one statistic.

A principal value of Bayesian analysis, therefore, is its sensitivity to the client's goals for the conducting of the evaluation (2). This requires the use of context experts (e.g., managers) to define the practical level of change deemed to be significant. It is the incorporation of this context information which may change the results of the evaluations of organizational interventions found with traditional statistics. The Bayesian approach, therefore, is valuable anytime a statistical expert works in the service of a client whose goals are accepted as well-defined and legitimate (2).

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