

Contents

[Call for Papers: Academy of Management by Kenneth L. Murrell](#)

[A Search for a Common Body of Knowledge for Masters Level Organization Development and Change Programs by Christopher G. Worley & Glenn H. Varney](#)

[Articles by Members](#)

[News About Members](#)

[Call for Submissions: Study of Organizational Change](#)

[European OD Journals](#)

[AMR Seeks to Publish More Manuscripts](#)

[Sanding Down the Edges: Paradoxical Impediments to Organizational Change by Andrew L. Molinaky](#)

CALL FOR PAPERS

by Kenneth L. Murrell

The 1998 Academy of Management Annual Meetings will be held August 7-12, in San Diego, California with pre-conference activities, now to be referred to as professional development workshops, conducted Friday noon 7th August to noon Sunday the 8th. This year's special theme is "What Matters Most?" For the Organization Development and Change division this is very much aligned with our professional values and ethical commitments towards helping organizations with both enhancing performance and human dignity. It is a call for us to think again about what really does matter in the work we do.

THEME

What matters most as a theme is timely as we approach the end of one century and the beginning of the next. The call for papers encourages a reflective effort to identify our priorities and hoped for accomplishments at this closing moment of the millennium. From the all academy program description: "Papers, symposia, or "pre-conference" professional development workshops might focus on what matters most in terms of our professional theories, methods, tools, and conclusions. They might consider what matters most within the context of our host institutions,

our disciplines, our local communities, or our global society. They might consider what matters most from the perspective of our relationships with benefactors, colleagues, students, "consumers" of our information, and families and friends. Or, they might explore how we come to know what matters, or what stands in the way of our learning or sharing what matters, or what purpose is served by being attentive to what matters most, or they might speculate on the risks of being too confident that we know what matters most".

What matters is that we take advantage of both a critical moment in history and that we meet in San Diego to share our ideas, passions and research. It also matters greatly that we come to renew and build relationships that will help move our discipline forward.

The coastal setting of southern California and the chance to share a year of learning since Boston should inspire division members to prepare papers plus other more unique ways of building a community of scholars. As fits the history of the ODC division it is also an opportunity to invite others to experience our unique conference. In particular consider submitting joint papers and proposals with clients or OD colleagues active within non-academic institutions or profit and not for profit organizations.

Please also give special thought to setting up, modifying or totally rearranging the physical setup for each session in such a way that interaction and participation is made possible. In Boston too often the room structure, spacing and chair positions exhibited more influence over the communication dynamics than did any other single force. As a division that can understand these factors it would be great if we could exert our influence over the physical setting and yes even move chairs to something other than a theater style layout. In the great scheme of things, physical setup is something that "does really matter".

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS: NOTE A NEW REQUIREMENT FOR THIS YEAR IS AS FOLLOWS:

The title page and abstract for all papers and symposia must be submitted electronically prior to submitting the printed versions. Please proof read the information submitted carefully. This is the database that will be used for printing the Program and the Proceedings. After this data entry process is completed, authors will receive a submission number that must be included on all copies of the mailed submission. The Internet address for submitting the electronic version of your abstract and title pages is: <http://www.aom.pace.edu>. To help us avoid a last minute

traffic jam on the Internet, please complete all electronic submissions several days before the January 8, 1998 deadline. (We have extended the deadline two days to accommodate this extra step in the submission process.) This requirement will be waived for authors who do not have access to the Internet. (Please explain why you do not have the technological capability to access the Internet in a cover letter and make sure that your printed submission arrives by January 7, 1998.)

Record the electronic submission number on the upper right corner of all copies of submissions. Indicate the division or interest group receiving the submission at the bottom of the title page. The title page for a symposium submission should identify all divisions or interest groups receiving the submission.

A separate abstract page should include the title and an abstract of no more than 50 words. This abstract should be identical to the one submitted electronically. At the end of the abstract list up to three key words in bold that identify the major subject(s) of the submission.

GUIDELINES SPECIFIC TO PAPERS

Submitted papers must not have been previously:

1. Accepted for publication in a journal; and, if under journal review, must not appear in print before the Academy meeting. Submissions must not have been previously presented nor scheduled for presentation at another professional meeting nor be under concurrent consideration by another meeting.
2. Each person can participate (as author, presenter, discussant, panelist, or session chair) in no more than three submissions to the regular program. However, it counts as only one submission if an author chairs a symposium in which he or she also presents a paper. This "Rule of Three" does not apply to "pre-conference" activities or to program listings resulting from officer roles.
3. Each paper can be submitted to only one division or interest group.
4. There are no specific length restrictions. However, authors should observe a 30-page guideline common for major journals (e.g., AMJ, AMR). In addition to other criteria, papers will be evaluated according to the ratio of their length

to the value of the contribution. Papers' references and format should follow the Style Guide for the Academy of Management Journal which can be found in the back of the Journal.

5. Papers will be selected for presentation by a blind review process. Please ensure that only the title page reveals the authors' names and affiliations. The title page must also specify who will be presenting the paper. The title page should also show complete address, FAX numbers, and e-mail addresses of all authors and specify who will be presenting the paper.

6. A separate abstract page should include the title and an abstract of no more than 50 words. At the end of the abstract list up to three key words in bold that identify the major subject(s) of the submission.

GUIDELINES SPECIFIC TO SYMPOSIA

1. Symposia and innovative presentations can be submitted simultaneously to up to three (3) divisions and/or interest groups. Complete information should be sent to all relevant Program Chairs. The division(s) and/or interest group(s) to which the symposium is being submitted should be indicated at the bottom of the title page. Four copies of the submission and one additional copy of the title page and abstract are to be submitted to the ODC program chair by the deadline of January 8th.

2. Symposia and proposals for innovative presentations are not blind reviewed. Each submission should include:

- * a title page which includes the complete professional name and contact information for the chair as well as all participants and discussants,
- * a 50 word abstract with up to 3 key words, identifying the major subjects of the symposium,
- * a 3-5 page overview statement,
- * an explanation of why the symposium should be of interest to each of the specified divisions or interest groups,
- * a 2-5 page synopsis of each presentation,
- * a description of the session's format,
- * a signed statement from each intended participant showing agreement to participate.

3. Reviewers will judge symposia submissions primarily on six criteria:

- * interest to Academy members,
- * relevance to the domain of the division or interest group to which they are submitted,
- * overall quality,
- * newness and value of contribution,
- * ratio of length to contribution value, and
- * relevance to the meeting theme.

PAPERS AND SYMPOSIUM PROPOSALS ARE DUE JANUARY 8TH, 1997. Manuscripts should be sent to: Dr. Kenneth L. Murrell, Management and MIS Dept. College of Business, The University of West Florida, Pensacola, Florida 32514.

CAUCUSES

Caucuses are round-table discussions scheduled on Monday and Tuesday evenings. They offer a convenient, informal way for Academy members who share a topical interest or a professional concern to find one another and to develop a sense of community.

Caucus organizers need to submit the following items to the Caucus Coordinator, Timothy M. Stearns, by February 27, 1998:

- I. the title
- II. a short description, including up to 3 key words in bold,
- III. the names and signatures of 5 Academy members who support the proposal.

Caucus proposals and signatures can be submitted by e-mail or fax to the address of Dr. Stearns Sid Craig School of Business, California State University, Fresno, CA 93740-8001, Phone: (209) 278-2326, Fax: (209) 278-4911, E-mail:timothys@csufresno.edu

A SEARCH FOR A COMMON BODY OF KNOWLEDGE FOR MASTERS LEVEL ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE PROGRAMS - AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE DISCUSSION

by Christopher G. Worley & Glenn H. Varney

A recent and significant increase in the number of master-level programs in organization development and change has brought confusion and complaints from potential students who are trying to select a OD&C graduate program. Despite growing research, colorful brochures, and an increasing number of OD departments in organizations, there is no clear statement about what OD is and is not. Mindful of this problem, a small group of OD&C division members met at the Vancouver Academy of Management meeting to discuss whether a common body of OD&C knowledge could guide the design of master-level programs. This preliminary discussion led to a caucus meeting during the Cincinnati conference. At this meeting, there was unanimous support to conduct a "search" meeting in Boston the following year. By the time the Boston meeting took place, the number of participants had grown to thirty-five. Twenty members participated intermittently for six hours at a pre-conference meeting the Friday before the conference.

The pre-conference attendees identified two questions to identify the competencies, knowledge, and skills considered important for master's-level graduates in OD.

1) What should a masters level OD&C graduate be capable of doing?

OD&C practitioners should be able to help organizations achieve and maintain viability in their environment by emphasizing planned change through the application of the following value driven OD&C knowledge and skills.

- diagnosis of organizational viability
- design of strategies for change
- design the associated interventions to accomplish change
- implement the change strategy
- measure and evaluate the effectiveness of change

2) What specific knowledge and skills should master's-level OD&C graduates possess?

The group answered this question with four categories: foundation knowledge, foundation skills, core knowledge, and core skills. Topics listed in the foundation knowledge and skills categories are intended to suggest a base set of competencies on which OD&C education can take place. These topics are not precluded from inclusion in a master's-level OD curriculum, rather they are suggested areas of knowledge and skills that precede an

understanding of OD. the core knowledge and skills categories are intended to be the competencies that actually define the field of OD. Each category is defined and described below.

A. Foundation Knowledge

1. organization behavior

- a. organization culture
- b. work design
- c. interpersonal relations (giving and receiving feedback)
- d. power and politics
- e. leadership
- f. goal setting
- g. conflict
- h. ethics

2. individual behavior (psychology)

- a. learning theory
- b. motivation theory
- c. perception theory

3. group dynamics

- a. roles
- b. communication processes
- c. decision-making processes
- d. stages of group development.
- e. leadership

4. management and organization theory

- a. planning, organizing, leading, and controlling
- b. problem solving, decision-making
- c. systems theory
- d. contingency theory
- e. organization structure

- f. characteristics of environment and technology
- 5. research methods/statistics
 - a. measures of central tendency
 - b. measures of dispersion
 - c. basic sampling theory
 - d. basic experimental designs (case study, post-test only control group, etc.)
 - e. simple inferential statistics

B. Foundation Skills

- 1. interpersonal communication: listen, feedback, articulate
- 2. collaboration/working together
- 3. problem solving
- 4. using new technology
- 5. conceptualizing
- 6. project management
- 7. present/educate/coach

C. Core OD&C Knowledge

The core knowledge of OD&C includes advanced theories, concepts, and frameworks that are directly related to the art and science of organization development and change. Mastery of each assumes that the student possess the foundation skills and knowledge listed in A and B above.

1. Organization Design

The decision processes associated with formulating and aligning the elements of an organizational system, including, but not limited to structural systems, human resource systems, information. systems, reward systems, work design, political, technical systems and organization culture.

a. The concept of fit and alignment

b. Diagnostic and design models for the various subsystems that comprise and organization at any level of

analysis, including structure, work, human resources, information systems, reward systems, and so on.

c. Key thought leaders in organization design.

2. Organization Research

Field research methods, interviewing, content analysis, questionnaire and interview protocol design, designing change evaluation processes, longitudinal data collection and analysis, understanding and detection of alpha, beta, and gamma change and a host of quantitative techniques and methods.

3. System Dynamics

The description and understanding of how systems evolve and develop over time. The understanding of how systems respond to exogenous and endogenous disruption as well as planned interventions (e.g., evolution and revolution, punctuated equilibrium theory, chaos theory, catastrophe theory, incremental vs. quantum change, transformation theory, etc.).

4. History of OD

An understanding of the social, political, economic, and personal forces that lead to the emergence and development of OD&C, including the key thought leaders in the field, the values underlying their writings and actions, the key events and writings, and documentation.

- a. human relations movement
- b. NTL/T groups/sensitivity training.
- c. survey research
- d. quality of worklife movement
- e. Tavistock Institute
- f. key thought leaders
- g. humanistic values
- h. statement of ethics

5. Theories and Models for Change

Basic action research model, participatory action research, the planning model, change typologies (fast, slow, incremental, quantum, revolutionary etc.) Lewin's model, and so on.

D. Core Skills in OD&C

1. Managing the Consulting Process

The ability to enter, contract, diagnosis, design appropriate interventions, implement those interventions, manage unprogrammed events, and evaluate a change process.

2. Analysis/Diagnosis

The ability to conduct an inquiry into a system's effectiveness. The ability to see the root cause(s) for existing problems underlying the need for change. This skill would understand all systems, individuals, group, organization, and multi-organization, as well as the ability to understand and inquire into one's self.

3. Designing/Choosing Appropriate/Relevant Interventions

Understanding how to select, modify, or design interventions that will effectively move the organization from its current state to its desired future state.

4. Facilitation and Process Consultation

Facilitation involves the ability to assist an individual, group or organization toward a goal. The ability to conduct an inquiry into individual, group, and organizational processes such that the client system maintains ownership of the issue, increases their capacity for reflection on the consequences of their behaviors and actions, and develops a sense of increased control and ability.

5. Developing Client Capability

The ability to conduct a change process in such a way that the client is more able to plan and implement a successful change process in the future, utilizing technologies of planned change in a values-based and ethical manner. This involves the ability to teach and transfer knowledge and skills to the client.

6. Evaluating Organization Change

The ability to design and implement a process to evaluate the impact and effects of a change intervention, including control of alternative explanations and interpretation of performance outcomes.

We are asking all members of the OD&C Division to join us in this effort. You can do this by giving us your reactions and suggestions. To aid in planning for next years Academy meeting, please give us your response by December 15, 1997.

Sincerely,

Terry Armstrong, Fenezydoon Azarhoosh, David Barry, Jack Brittain, Harry Bury, Gervase Bushe, Al Cooke, Steve Cady, David Cooperrider, Arthur Darrow, W. Gibb Dyer Jr., Ann Feyerherm, Jose Gasalla Dapena, Tom Head, Maeve Houliman, Dave Jamieson, Laurel Jeris, Gwen Jones, Kate Kirkham, Darl Kolb, Miriam Lacey, Jim McFillen, Kurt Motamedi, Bob Munzenrider, Ken Murrell, Joanne Preston, Michael Sabiers, Raymond Saner, Lichia Saner-Yiu, Rene Schalk, Peter Sorensen, Tim Stearns, Steve Treacy, Glenn Varney, James Warren, Donald Warrick, Carolyn Wiley, Chris Worley

ARTICLES BY MEMBERS

Hinterhuber, Hans H. (1997). Strategic Cost Management: Preliminary Lessons From European Companies. *International Journal of Technology Management*, Special Issue on Strategic Cost Management, 13(1), 1-14.

Hinterhuber, Hans H. & Fink, Andrea. (1997). Case Study: Doppelmayr - A Representative European Multinational Firm. *The International Executive*, 39(2), 201-223.

Hinterhuber, Hans H., Friedrich, Stephan A., Handlbauer, Gernot & Stuhec, Ulrich. (1996). The Company as a Dognitive System of Core Competences and Strategic Business Units. *Strategic Change*, 5(8), 223-238.

Matzler, Kurt, Hinterhuber, Hans H., Bailom, Franz & Sauerwein, Elmar. (1996). How to Delight Your Customers. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 5(2), 6-18.

Oliver, J.R. & Fleming, R.K. (1997). Applying Direct Measurement and With-in Subject Experimental Designs in the Analysis of Transfer of Training. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 1, 172-179.

Paul, J. (1996). Between-method Traingulation in Organizational Diagnosis. *The International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 4(2), 135-153.

Paul, J. & Strbiak, C.A. (1997). The Ethics of Strategic Ambiguity. *The Journal of Business Communication*, 34(2), 150-159.

Sydow, Joerg. (1996). Inter-organizational Relations. In Warner, Malcomn (ed):*The International Encyclopedia of Business and Management*, Vol. III, London: Thomson, 2360-2373.

Sydow, Joerg. (1996). Flexible Specialization in Regional Networks. In Spaber, U.; Schaefer, N.V.; & Sharma, B. (eds). *Business Network*, Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 24-40.

Sydow, Joerg. (1997). Understanding the Constitution of Interorganizational Trust. In Lane, C. & Bachman, R. (eds): *Trust Within and Between Organizations*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press (in print).

NEWS ABOUT MEMBERS

William S. Brown, assistant professor of management, has be chosen Professor of the Year by undergraduates at

Babson College, an honor determined by undergraduate student election and presented to the professor who demonstrated superior dedication and commitment to excellence in teaching. Brown accepted the award at the College's commencement ceremonies Saturday, May 17.

Cary L. Cooper has been elected a fellow of the Academy of Management. He has also been made a fellow of Royal Society of Medicine and the Royal Society of Management in the U.K.

Dr. Patrick Dawson had been appointed to: Salvesen Chair of Management Department, Management Studies, University of Aberdeen, Scotland. He will start 1/10/97-1st October, 1997.

Frank Shipper, professor of management at the Franklin P. Perdue School of Business at Salisbury State University, Salisbury, Maryland, and Jeanette Davy, of the Department of Management at Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio, are the first-place winners of the Walter F. Ulmer Applied Research Award. They presented their research, "A Comparative Study of Women's and Men's Self Perceptions of Managerial Skills on Others' Perceptions, Employee Attitudes, and Managerial Performance" at a colloquium at CCL on August 23, 1996, where they received \$1,500 and a plaque of recognition.

Dale Zand has been reelected to the board of directors of the Newfield Exploration Company.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Center for the Study of Organizational Change in the University of Missouri College of Business & Public Administration is convening its inaugural conference showcasing theoretical and empirical works relating to the planning, promotion, and/or management of change within and between organizations. A conference entitled "The 21st Century Change Imperative: Evolving Organizations & Emerging Networks" will be held on June 12-14, 1998 at the University of Missouri--Columbia Campus in Columbia, Missouri.

Abstracts are due by January 31, 1998.

Competitive submissions should take the form of an abstract of theoretical or empirical papers; a proposal for special session workshops, panel discussions, or debates; or an abstract of poster session entries. Accepted

abstracts will be published in a conference proceedings. Please submit by January 31, 1998, four hard copies of the abstract or proposal and one WordPerfect or MS Word file on 3.5" diskette (maximum 3 single-spaced pages, 12 point Times Roman font). Indicate the appropriate track (Organizational Change Track or Interorganizational Change Track).

Submissions and requests for more information should be sent to: Ms. Jeri King, Center for the Study of Organizational Change, College of Business & Public Administration, University of Missouri--Columbia, 123 Middlebush Hall, Columbia, MO 65211-6100.

EUROPEAN OD JOURNALS

Karsten Trebesch is co-editor of two OD Journals--ORGANISATION SENTWICKLUNG for the German speaking countries of Europe and PERSPECTIVAS DE GESTION for Spain and South-America. If you are interested these journals can be subscribed to at the following addresses:

ORGANISATION SENTWICKLUNG

Postfach 147

CH-4003 Basel - Switzerland

Tel.: ++41 61 302 01 25 Fax: ++41 61 302 01 25 e-mail: Braune@ubaclu.unibas.ch

PERSEPECTIVAS DE GESTION

c/o Franceso Beltri Gebrat

C/Villaroel 45, 30, 6a

E-.08011 Barcelona (Spain) Tel.: 0034-3-323 2174 e-mail: fbeltri@filnet.es

ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT REVIEW (AMR) SEEKS TO PUBLISH MORE MANUSCRIPTS

What kind of papers are appropriate for AMR? AMR publishes cutting edge conceptual manuscripts that provide new insights that improve our understanding of management and organizations. Articles of many types are appropriate for publication in AMR, including theoretical syntheses, new and exploratory conceptual models, carefully constructed and reflective position papers, rival papers as in a "point counterpoint" debate between authors

(submitted as a package), conceptually grounded discussions of methodology, historical essays with clear implications for current and future science, discussion of timely and important social issues, and comprehensive literature reviews firmly grounded in theory or with important theoretical implications. Why submit to AMR? Papers published in AMR have the highest average citation per article over a ten year period (1982-1991) of all business and management journals. In addition, AMR offers three very high quality developmental reviews and speedy response times averaging under 60 days. Authors interested in submitting their work to AMR should consult the "Information to Contributors" available in any issue.

SANDING DOWN THE EDGES: PARADOXICAL IMPEDIMENTS TO ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

by Andrew L. Molinaky

1997 Best Student Paper

The academic and popular literature generally cites three different factors as being absolute prerequisites for organizational change.(2) While individual theorists may differ on the specifics, the typical recipe for successful change includes: (1) effective management of the process; (2) unwavering commitment of top leadership; and (3) visionary and engaging rhetoric. (3)

The central thesis of the paper from which this short summary is abstracted is that these very same ingredients described in the literature as being absolute prerequisites for successful change are paradoxically those which make change less likely to occur. Examples of failed organizational change from a Fortune 50 corporation (Technology Inc.) and a metropolitan teaching hospital (City Hospital) illustrate the ways in which the organizational system not only sands down the sharp edges of ambitious change agendas, but also uses change itself as fuel for perpetuating the status quo. What follows is a brief overview of the three main paradoxes described in the full version of the paper.(4)

Paradox #1: Change needs to be managed, but management inhibits change

While change needs management in order to succeed, management inhibits change from being successful. The first way in which management undermines change occurs when the change project becomes exclusively affiliated with a

particular division or area, and is subsequently undermined not because of the merits of the project, but because of antagonism towards the project's sponsor. For example, in City Hospital, the change project became viewed over time as a nursing project by all involved, and, as a result, served to fuel the very same group rivalries that the project was meant to resolve. According to a pharmacist involved in the project: "Even if this nursing study solved all our problems, I believe that certain people here would still be fighting against it just because it came from nursing."

A second dimension of the management paradox involves the way in which the organization structures and frames the initiative for potential leaders of the process. By framing leadership of the initiative as a win/lose proposition (e.g. the change leader in Technology Inc was given the project as a "make or break" career challenge), the organization encourages impression management from project leadership, and, in doing so, severs the very feedback mechanism crucial for the project's success. As the change leader in the corporation quipped to her team before a session with top management: "The project doesn't have to be perfect, but the communication has to be."

A final dimension of the management paradox occurs when the very mechanisms that one needs to effectively manage the change process (e.g. trust and inter-group cooperation) are simultaneously a major goal of the effort itself. In the corporation, for example, efforts to build trust and communication between workers and management were undermined by the very lack of openness and trust which prompted the change initiative in the first place. As a Technology Inc. employee described a particular trust building session: "The problem with this 'we/they' stuff is that if 'we' bring up stuff to them about things we'd like to change, most of the time we'll just get in trouble for having brought it up. And they're not even here to talk about it. It's all a big mess."

Thus, while change depends upon management in order to succeed, management inhibits change from being successful. First, by compartmentalizing change into a bounded change project with a designated sponsor, the organization allows the project to become a pawn in existing intergroup rivalries. Second, by structuring and framing the leadership of the initiative as a win/lose, individualistic proposition, the organization encourages impression management from project leadership. Finally, by depending on trust and cooperation in order to facilitate the change process, the organization relies upon the very same factors to create change which are not only lacking in the organization, but which are also a major goal of the change project itself.

Paradox #2: Change depends upon the commitment of change leaders, but the commitment of change leaders

makes change less likely to occur.

While committed leaders are crucial for accomplishing change, they simultaneously make it less likely to occur. The key to the paradox of committed leaders lies in the nature of the commitment. In both the hospital and the corporation, being a committed change leader meant 1) being involved with multiple, high-profile projects; and 2) catering to the wishes of top leadership.

The first paradoxical effect of commitment concerns involvement with multiple, high-profile projects. While involvement with multiple projects serves to maximize the overall scope of change in the organization, it minimizes the potential effectiveness of any single initiative. For instance, the nursing division in the hospital, which originally sponsored the cross-disciplinary change project, was simultaneously involved with 20 other projects, several of which were also change-oriented. As the leader of the project admitted, "To tell you the truth, I have no idea what's going on with the project. Work pressure from other projects is just too intense and as a result, I cannot commit the time that I'd like to for this project."

In addition to stretching resources, multiple change efforts can also confuse employees. As one employee from the corporation quipped: "It's all the same to me -- TQM, reengineering, work groups -- all this stuff. It's all the same, just under a different name." And as another employee lamented, "I don't know why they are having us go through it again." By stretching organizational resources and flooding organizational members with confusing and overlapping change initiatives, change leaders lessen the overall effectiveness of change by making it impossible for anyone (including themselves) to dedicate the necessary attention to seeing any single project through.

In addition to involvement with multiple, high-profile projects, commitment in both the hospital and the corporation also meant catering to the wishes of current leadership of the organization. While catering to the wishes of top management insures organizational resources and support, the initiative ends up suffering from this dependent relationship. Because catering to the wishes of top management necessarily involves retaining the status quo system from which top management derives its power and prestige, this particular manifestation of committed leadership insures that little fundamental change will actually occur.

Paradox #3: Change depends upon rhetoric, but rhetoric makes change less likely to occur

Leaders of change projects in organizations must be able to use rhetoric to present an appealing vision for the future and to motivate organizational members to undertake necessary sacrifices for change. Without the galvanizing power of inspirational and motivational rhetoric, the change initiative risks falling upon deaf or ambivalent ears. However, while the inspirational and motivational qualities of rhetoric are especially crucial for organizations in need of major change, it is precisely under these conditions that rhetoric is least effective. Since organizations in need of major change are often those which, in the past, have not delivered on their promises, members of these organizations approach rhetorical flourishes with learned skepticism. Because these types of organizations also typically lack the type of trust and inter-group cooperation necessary to break through the skepticism, rhetoric also serves the unforeseen consequence of deepening the very sense of skepticism and disillusionment it was originally meant to resolve. Thus, while critical for the success of change, rhetoric simultaneously makes change less likely to occur.

Summary of the paradoxes

The three paradoxes of organizational change thus present the organization with a dilemma. In order to accomplish organizational change within the context of the current system, organizations need management, commitment and rhetoric. However, these very same qualities inhibit change from occurring.

Because change always occurs within a context, an intervention into a social system with as richly developed a texture as the hospital and corporation will necessarily be interpreted, understood, and reacted to differently by the different constituents that it affects. For instance, in the case of City Hospital, change was interpreted as an opportunity for individual accumulation of power, as a symbol of the status of nursing vis-à-vis the pharmacy (and thus something worthy of undermining), and as a symbol of the leader's ability to commit to and carry out a high profile project. In Technology Inc., the change project was interpreted and reacted to as a personal challenge for the change leader's career and as yet another example of the organization not supporting its lofty rhetoric with vigorous action.

When translated through the filter of the organizational context, change plays a far different role than intended. Instead of altering the state of the organization, the change initiative gets used by the organization to perpetuate and extend the very conflicts and tensions that it was meant to resolve. In this way, the three paradoxes of management, commitment, and rhetoric serve to fuel the overarching paradox of organizational change: instead of fundamentally

altering the organization as originally intended, change programs instead serve to strengthen the status quo.

Endnotes

1. I am grateful to Richard Hackman for invaluable feedback and direction on all stages of this project, and to Joshua Margolis for his insightful comments and suggestions. I would also like to thank Ruth Wageman, Victoria Alexander, Randi Lunnan, and Erin Lehman for helpful feedback on the full version of this paper from which this summary was abstracted.
2. A full set of references are available from the author upon request.
3. The full version of this paper includes a literature review of these three key ingredients.
4. The full version of the paper includes a detailed description of the methodology and the research sites.