

ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT AND HIGH PERFORMANCE ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract

The economic downturn and turbulent economic condition has caught many organizations off-guard. Building effective and high performing organization is a biggest challenge before them. Organizational effectiveness is one condition for success. The importance of successful implementation of organizational development (OD) in today's ever-expanding and constantly evolving dynamic world is recognized by most of the successful organizations. A key component of building an effective organization is to ensure effective implementation of organization development values and assumption, understanding organizational structure, culture, climate and its effect on behaviour. This article examines the process, phases and approaches of OD. In addition, it discusses few OD intervention strategies that influence an organization's improvement program in a change agent-client system relationship.

Keywords: *Effective organization, Organization development, OD Process, OD intervention.*

Introduction

The economic downturn and turbulent economic condition has caught many organizations off-guard. Building effective and high performing organization is a biggest challenge before them and begins with a proactive, team-level commitment to excellence. A key component of building an effective organization is to ensure effective implementation of organization development values and assumption, understanding organizational structure, culture, climate and its effect on behaviour. Building an effective organization begins with a proactive, team-level commitment to excellence The importance of successful implementation of

organizational development (OD) in today's ever-expanding and constantly evolving dynamic world is recognized by most of the successful organizations.

Now with increased competition and globalization of world, the need of implementation of OD is felt by organizations. When organizations decide about OD programme, it is decided at the top management level. They often contact external OD consultant or change agent for implementation of OD process. However, an internal change agent and team of HR personnel also part of OD process. The planned change process is aligned with external and internal demands such as changes in workforce demographics, the socio-political and economic environment, competition, and constraints on resources.

Definition of Organization Development

Various OD practitioner defined Organization development in different ways. OD is a long term planned effort to improve organization's problem solving and renewal processes, by effective and collaborative management of organizational culture, often with the assistance of a change agent and the use of the theory and technology of applied behavioural science. Organization development is a contractual relationship between a change agent and a sponsoring organization entered into for the purpose of using applied behavioural science in a systems context to improve organizational performance and the capacity of the organization to improve itself.

As defined by Richard Beckhard, "Organizational development" (OD) is a planned, top-down, organization-wide effort to increase the organization's effectiveness and health. OD is achieved through interventions in the organization's "processes," using behavioural science knowledge.

According to Warren Bennis, OD is a complex strategy intended to change the beliefs, attitudes, values, and structure of organizations so that they can better adapt to new technologies, markets, and challenges.

Warner Burke emphasizes that OD is not just "anything done to better an organization"; it is a particular kind of change process designed to bring about a particular kind of end result. OD involves organizational reflection, system improvement, planning, and self-analysis.

The change agent's main function is to help the organization define and solve its own problems. The basic method used is known as action research. The action research consists of a preliminary diagnosis, collecting data, feedback of the data to the client, data exploration by the client group, action planning based on the data, and taking action

Systems Context:

OD deals with a total system the organization as a whole, including its relevant environment or with a subsystem or systems departments or work groups in the context of the total system. Parts of systems, for example, individuals, cliques, structures, norms, values, and products are not considered in isolation; the principle of interdependency, that is, that change in one part of a system affects the other parts, is fully recognized. Thus, OD interventions focus on the total culture and cultural processes of organizations. The focus is also on groups, since the relevant behaviour of individuals in organizations and groups is generally a product of group influences rather than personality.

Role of OD Change Agent:

After determining a need for organizational change informed by, one agency sought to transform its organizational culture into that of a learning organization. An external organizational development consultant was hired to work with agency leadership to identify ways that would help move the agency's culture towards one that was conducive to learning. Specifically, the agency director sought to create a culture where communication is encouraged both vertically and horizontally, frontline level workers are engaged and their voices heard, cross-departmental problem solving is practiced, innovative ideas are supported, and evidence-informed practice regularly implemented. This case study describes the experiences of this

agency and the process taken toward engaging an external consultant and moving towards the development of a culture of learning.

Organization Development Process

In the process of OD emphasis is given on using Applied Behavioral Science for organizational effectiveness. It is based on a "helping relationship." The change agent is uses theory and methods drawn from behavioral sciences such as psychology, sociology, communication, cultural anthropology, administrative theory, organizational behavior, economics, and political science.

The O. D. process consists of three components-diagnosis, action and program management. The process is diagnosis-action-evaluation-action. An O. D. programme thus starts with diagnosis and employs data collecting and data analyzing throughout. These activities are required to provide an accurate account of things as they are needed for two reasons-first to know the state of things or 'what is': the second is to know the effects or consequences of actions

Diagnosis:

Diagnosis component consists of continuous collection of data about the total system, its sub-units its processes, and its culture. The first area of diagnosis is that of various sub-systems of the total organization e.g. teams. The second area are the organizational processes e.g. decision-making communication styles , relationships between groups, management of conflicts, setting of goals and planning methods.

Diagnosis involves;

1. What are its strengths?
2. What are its problems?
3. What are its unrealized opportunities?

Action Plan

The action component consists of all the activities and interventions designed to improve the organization's functioning. Action Plans are developed to correct problems, seize opportunities and maintains areas of strengths .These are interventions specifically to address issues at the individual, group, inter-group, or organizational levels.

Results

This stage consists of a fact-finding about the results of the actions. Did they have the desired effects? Have the problems been solved or the opportunities exploited?

Organization Development Stages

There are seven broad stages of organization development accepted by OD consultants. They are examined one by one in following paragraphs.

1. ENTRY

In the organization change is anticipated and desired by many stake holders. The need for is recognized and accepted at the top management level. The need for change may be felt as decline in profit, less production and moreover innovations from competitors often force organization to start with organization development process. The role of OD change agents is considered and decided and internal and external OD change agents and/or OD consultant is identified and consulted at this stage.

2. CONTRACTING

In this stage of contracting OD Practitioner enters system. He establishes a trusting relationship with organization and its member. It is important for the success of OD programme

to form a good first impression. The contracting is based on open communication and agreed upon outcomes.

3. DIAGNOSIS

At this stage Practitioner and client gather data. The objectives of diagnosis are to Understand client's problems, Identify causes, and Select change strategies. Various methods and model of organizational diagnosis is used. The Diagnostic devices for managers include interviews, surveys, group sociometric devices, process-oriented diagnosis, and performance records.

4. FEEDBACK

The feedback stage is very important in the process of organization development. In this all data is feedback to the organizational members. They accept this data and suggest some solutions for change.

5. PLANNING CHANGE

The series of interventions, activities, or programs are planned at this stage. These action plans, strategies, and techniques are aimed at increasing effectiveness. By using these strategies model of planned change is determine by OD consultant and members of the organization.

6. INTERVENTION

The most important stage is intervention stage. Organization development interventions include t-group training, team building, and job redesign etc. The importance various intervention strategies are discussed in following paragraphs.

7. EVALUATION

In this stage the main criterion for evaluation is whether the original objective has been accomplished. Surveys and other techniques may be reused to determine what progress has been made toward solving the problem.

At the end of successful organizational development programme need for dependency on OD practitioner decreases. His main role is now limited to monitoring results and stabilizing change. After the refreezing is established organization start with the gradual disengagement of OD practitioner.

Organizational Development Interventions

An intervention is a set of sequenced and planned actions or events intended to help the organization increase its effectiveness. Interventions are structured activities used individually or in combination by the members of a client system to improve their social or task performance. They may be introduced by a change agent as part of an improvement program, or they may be used by the client following a program to check on the state of the organization's health, or to effect necessary changes in its own behavior. Every action that influences an organization's improvement program in a change agent-client system relationship can be said to be an intervention.

There are many possible intervention strategies from which to choose. There are generally categorised as:

- Human Process Interventions
- Technostructural Interventions
- Human Resources Management Interventions
- Strategic Interventions

Several assumptions about the nature and functioning of organizations are made in the choice of a particular strategy. Interventions range from those designed to improve the effectiveness of individuals through those designed to deal with teams and groups, intergroup relations, and the total organization. There are interventions that focus on task issues, and those that focus on process issues. Interventions may be roughly classified according to which change mechanism they tend to emphasize: for example, feedback, awareness of changing cultural norms, interaction and communication, conflict, and education through either new knowledge or skill practice.

Conclusion:

The implementation of effective organization development process is depends on alignment of all part of the organization. It starts from top management and implemented in entire organization. The organizational structure, culture and job accountabilities are aligned with organizational effectiveness. Thus it can be state that Organizational Development is essential for survival and in today's technologically advanced world of change and economic competitiveness. Because only constant is change.

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