
UNIT 8 SELF RENEWAL SYSTEM

Objectives

After going through the unit, you should be able to:

- 1 delineate self-renewal system as a part of HRD;
- 1 define organisation development (OD);
- 1 elaborate the various phases of OD and OD interventions;
- 1 discuss the importance and scope of HR research; and
- 1 explain the ways of developing internal self-renewal facilitators.

Structure

- 8.1 Introduction
 - 8.2 Organisation Development (OD)
 - 8.3 Operational Goals of OD
 - 8.4 Conditions for OD Success
 - 8.5 Phases of Organisation Development
 - 8.6 Some Guidelines for Conducting OD
 - 8.7 OD Interventions
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8.1 INTRODUCTION

Training has made very limited contribution to the capability of the organisations to respond to new developments and changes, and to pro-act (to anticipate new conditions and take action to influence them). An effective organisation needs to develop self-renewing competencies—a capability to continuously examine itself, and effectively respond to and pro-act with the environment (both internal and external). This is reflected in the decisions of several progressive organisations like Larsen & Toubro and State Bank of India, to re-examine their structures, systems and procedures, from time to time, even when the organisations are successful and have no apparent problems necessitating such an examination. Organisations can develop internal mechanisms in this regard. This can be done by establishing a self-renewal system, comprising Organisation Development (OD) and research. In some organisations this can be an independent function (like in the Hindustan Machine Tools), and in some others this can be a part of the Human Resource System (HRS). The latter has the advantage of building better linkages with other sub-systems of the HRS.

HRS itself needs self-renewal. Research is the process of collecting relevant information and data, analysing these scientifically, and learning from them for improvement. Action research, as a special emphasis of research for solving problems, also needs to be increasingly used in organisations. This unit first discusses the concepts of OD and action research, and then suggests some areas of HRS needing research.

8.2 ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT (OD)

Organisation Development (OD) as an approach to planned change in organisations, has been widely used. Several writers have defined OD in different ways. Although there are several points of agreement in these definitions, special emphases are also reflected in them. The following definition is proposed here.

'OD is a planned effort, initiated by process specialist(s) to help an organisation develop its diagnostic skills, coping capabilities, linkage strategies in the form of temporary and semi-permanent systems, and a culture of mutuality.'

There are several important dimensions of OD contained in this definition. Some elaboration of these dimensions may be useful.

A planned effort: OD is a planned effort, and, therefore, requires a great deal of thinking and planning on the part of the OD expert.

Initiated by process specialists: The knowledge and skills of applied behavioural science are used in OD. It can, therefore, be properly initiated by an expert who has both the knowledge of applied behavioural science, and the skill of applying this knowledge in the organisational situation. This effort may be taken over by the organisation in the long run, and an internal resource in the organisation can be developed to carry on this work. However, in the beginning, mostly behavioural science consultants from outside are used for this purpose.

Diagnostic skills: The emphasis of OD is on planning change on the basis of data. As a part of OD, data are continuously collected about several aspects of the organisation and its problems. OD tries to develop the capacity of the organisation to diagnose its problems. The emphasis of OD is not only on the diagnosis of the current problems, but also on developing these skills in the organisation, so that these skills be use to diagnose its problems as a part of its regular functioning.

Coping capabilities: The main thrust of OD is on problem solving abilities of the organisation. The organisation is helped to develop the ability to confront and cope with the problems it faces. OD certainly deals with the problems the organisation is currently facing, but does not stop there.

Linkage strategies: OD emphasizes building of linkage between the individual goals and the organisational goals, amongst the individuals who work in the various roles, and amongst various groups which function in the organisation. Problems of the organisation can be resolved only through collaborative efforts. One emphasis of OD, therefore, is on building such collaborative effort in the organisation. This is done, amongst several other ways, by setting up temporary systems, like task forces, and by creating structural changes which may ensure continuing collaboration in the organisation.

Culture of mutuality: OD is based on certain values which are important for the development of organisations as open and proactive systems. The client organisation should know it clearly that OD fosters a set of specific values. OD makes an effort to develop OCTAPACE culture. OCTAPACE stands for eight important values, which OD tries to develop in the organisation. These are : *openness, confrontation, trust, authenticity, proaction, autonomy, collaboration and experimentation.* Openness

implies confronting the problems rather than avoiding them. Confrontation means facing the problems, and exploring ways of improving relationships amongst individuals, and searching for solutions to the problems the organisation faces. Trust is both the result of these values as well as helps in generating mutuality in the organisation. Authenticity is the value underlying trust. It is the willingness of a person to acknowledge the feelings he has and accept both himself as well as others who relate to him as persons. This value is important for the development of the culture of mutuality. Another value emphasised is proaction. Instead of merely reacting to the situations, the organisation should take the initiative in influencing the situation. Autonomy is the next value emphasised. An individual who does not feel threatened in seeking help from others in coping with the various problems is an autonomous person. Autonomy involves collaboration and mutuality, because only an autonomous person can collaborate, and does not perceive his own collaborative initiative as a sign of weakness or inferiority. Collaboration is emphasised as a value, so that individuals instead of working independently in solving their problems, work in teams and develop commitment to their roles and to the organisation.

8.3 OPERATIONAL GOALS OF OD

The OD approach to change treats the organisation as a system. In this respect OD is different from action research. While the latter may attempt solutions of one problem without much regard to related issues in the organisation, the former takes the total organisation. This would mean understanding both the organisation in relation to the environment, and the internal dynamics of the organisation. A systematic view of the organisation would imply understanding the various dynamics of the organisation : its interface with the environment; the stable systems in the organisation; interteam, i.e., collaborative relationship and working amongst various groups in the organisation; teams, i.e., groups of which the organisation consists; interperson, i.e., relationship amongst the various members of a team; the role, the position individuals occupy as defined by expectations from that position and finally, and the most important, the person who works in the organisation. For accomplishing this, OD has to work with some operational goals.

The person: The individual is the centrally important entity for OD. Although the goal of OD is to produce change in the organisation, the individual or the person working in the organisation is the most important vehicle as well as target of change. The development of self-awareness and self-acceptance is the main goal of working with the individuals in an organisation. In many cases the individual may be alienated, and OD focuses on the integration of the individual with the organisation. There may be a process of alienation taking place. OD focuses on the motivation of the people by helping them to learn how to set realistic and challenging goals so that they have a sense of challenge and satisfaction. It helps individuals in developing the skills of planning so that the goals can be further divided into smaller achievable units. OD attempts to develop individual's competencies.

The Role: Role is the position a person occupies in the organisation (called role occupant), as defined by the expectations of the significant persons who work with the role occupant, and by the role occupants own expectations, from that role. Role is the strong link between the individual and the organisation. OD attempts to make this linkage stronger, and helps the individuals to integrate various expectations to be effective in using them for achieving his/her own satisfaction, and as well as the organisational goals..

Interperson: The individual's competence to work effectively in the organisation depends on his interpersonal effectiveness. OD tries to open communication amongst the various persons working in the organisation with a view to increase either interpersonal competence. It tries to foster what we have called OCTAPACE values.

Teams: Teams are both temporary systems as well as permanent or semi-permanent groups in the organisation. By developing teams, OD tries to work for establishing continuous improvement mechanisms in the organisation. These are mainly in the form of temporary systems. These mechanisms may help the organisation build its ability to cope with the problems it faces.

Inter teams: Regarding the interface between teams and groups in the organisation, OD aims at developing the ability of the teams to manage the conflicts and to develop collaboration among them in order to further the attainment of the individual and the organisational goals.

Organisation: The organisation is the stable entity which uses the individuals and the various teams for the attainment of the goals. OD helps the total organisation in its goal-setting process. It also helps the organisation develop internal resources for carrying on the work which may be started by an outside expert. This new role of an internal OD facilitator is important for the continuing growth or development of the organisation.

Interface with environment: OD deals with the problem of the organisation's ability to transact with the environment through both adaptive as well as proactive behaviours. Adaptation is not the same, as adjustment. The changing environment may demand certain changes within the organisation so that it can continue effective transaction with the environment. Proactive behaviour is equally important where the organisation needs to produce change and initiate new action. Compared to several foreign countries, India seems to be in a better position where several organisations, specially those in the public sector, are in a position to influence national issues and policies which may have long-term and widespread effects. The organisations should realise their potential for taking proactive action and help to develop a conducive climate and environment in the country.

8.4 CONDITIONS FOR OD SUCCESS

Before we discuss the various phases of OD programmes, and how OD works in organisations, it may be useful to consider the various conditions necessary for successful use of OD in an organisation. In the absence of these conditions, OD work is not likely to succeed. However, one way to create such conditions is to start some OD programme. In that case OD may attempt mainly to create preconditions for full-scale OD work. These conditions are as follows:

- 1) **Commitment at the top:** OD cannot succeed unless the persons at the top are committed to what is being done through OD in their organisations. By the very definition of OD, the work has to begin from the top level. In many organisations, the top people may be in favour of OD but not in favour of making changes in some aspects and getting involved themselves in the effort of change. In the absence of such a commitment, OD cannot succeed.
- 2) **Strong linkpins:** OD can succeed, if what Likert describes as "linkpins" are strengthened in the organisation. These are the roles which connect various levels and various parts of the organisation. These roles which link different parts of the organisation are extremely important because change can flow through these key roles which can become the main media of communication. In some organisations these may not be visible and several parts of the organisation may be functioning almost independently of each other, with only the head of the organisation coordinating the various parts. An absence of strong linkpins may not be conducive to the use of OD in the organisation.
- 3) **Willingness and resource in a department:** OD can be successful if at least one department in the organisation is both willing to experiment and has resources

which can be used to stabilize change introduced through OD. It is necessary to stabilise change in the organisation, and this can be done by making sure that at least in one part of the organisation such a change will continue. If at least one department is ready for this kind of work, OD can have an entry into the organisation and later can spread out when other departments see the effect of the OD work in that one department. If an organisation does not have any department in which there is willingness as well as resources to carry on this kind of change, it is not likely to succeed.

- 4) **Involvement of an external consultant:** In the beginning, for various reasons an external consultant is necessary for a successful OD effort. He not only brings expertise with him but his role is helpful in confronting several issues in the organisation which an internal person may find difficult to do, even though he may have the skill and ability to do so. An external OD consultant can take certain risks and can confront the organisation to some extent. In due course, the external consultant withdraws from the organisation, and internal people can take over.
- 5) **Strong internal resources:** One of the objectives of OD is to develop strong internal resources in the organisation to be able to continue the work which an external consultant may start. For this, it is necessary that internal resources are identified in the organisation. These internal persons should be able to replace the external consultant. Such a replacement has to be properly phased so that there is an overlapping between the external consultant and the internal facilitator(s). In organisations where such people have been identified and developed, OD efforts are stabilised and the organisation is able to continue to develop on those lines.

8.5 PHASES OF ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT

The OD programme develops through certain phases. The purpose of discussing these phases is to see how the OD programme flows. Although there will be variations, and some elements of these phases may either overlap, or the phases may come in a different order, generally OD goes through the following phases:

1) *Entry in the organisation*

The first phase of OD is the establishment of rapport between the external consultant and the organisation. During this phase, the external consultant enters an organisation and establishes both his identity and understanding with the organisation regarding the purpose of OD. A consultant may enter an organisation in several ways. He may either be called by the organisation for a specific problem, or he may be called to discuss the possibility of a general OD programme leading on to the various kinds of OD activities. In any case, the following may occur during the first phase:

- a) **Preliminary information:** The external consultant collects some preliminary information about the organisation in order to understand its nature. In order to have an overview of the organisation he may look at the various reports and other papers available, may go round and acquaint himself with the nature of technology, a general view of the size and type of the organisation, etc.
- b) **Interviewing key persons:** The consultant collects information not only through a general survey and reading of the available material, but he also interviews those persons who are involved in an organisation and who, in fact, determine its culture. The main purpose of interviewing the key persons is to understand their value systems, the various roles in the organisation, and to develop a shared understanding mainly about two things: firstly the assumptions on which they are

operating and performing their roles, and secondly the chief actors in the organisation. It is necessary for the organisation to understand the assumptions on which the consultant will operate as well as for the consultant to understand how the chief persons in the organisation operate. This helps to develop healthy relationship between the consultant and the main persons in the organisation.

- c) **A glimpse of the process:** The consultant may also have an opportunity to look inside the process and one useful way to do this is to sit in on one or a few meetings of top people, and of some other groups. The discussions in the meetings and the way differences are voiced and are resolved sometimes give much more insight than an interview can. It may, therefore, be useful for the consultants to have such an opportunity to observe the dynamics of the interactional process.
- d) **Presentation of OD approach:** Finally, before OD work is taken up in the organisation, the consultant makes a presentation of what OD is and what it involves. Such a presentation may be made to the top group of the organisation so that they have an opportunity to ask questions and raise doubts. Such a meeting is very useful to allay many fears about OD. In some cases a top person from another organisation where OD has been used, can be invited to informally share his experience with the group on how OD was introduced and what it did and did not do. As a result of such a meeting, the consultant may either be finally invited to initiate the OD programme or the top group may feel that their organisation is not yet ready for OD programmes.

2) *Problem Identification*

After the first phase is over, and in case the OD consultant has been invited to work with the organisation, the second phase begins. The main purpose of the second phase is to understand the main problems of the organisation. This understanding has to be developed by working with several people in the organisation. In addition to collecting preliminary data, the consultant gives more detailed attention to OD strategy. The following elements are involved in this phase.

- a) **Interview:** The consultant interviews people at several stages. In addition to interviewing top people, he interviews persons at various levels and he collects information based on these interviews. He keeps his eyes open to see in the organisation what ordinarily would be neglected. For example, while going through the shop-floor to interview the supervisor, he may observe some behaviour of a person shouting at another person, or people busy in hurried conversation in a small group, etc. The consultant notes down all these important observations.
- b) **Data collection:** As a result of the interview with several people, the consultant has some information to select some aspects of the organisation to work on. He may, for example, find that the main problem in the organisation is the lack of trust in each other, or people feel that they do not get enough responsibility in their roles. He collects more data in order to go into more details about the problem. The usual way of data collection is to use some instruments to be filled out by the individuals. Such instruments may give data about the individuals as well as group processes. The instruments used may focus on such aspects of the organisation: the climate, the motivational patterns, perception of leadership styles, perception of various kinds of problems, delay etc., work satisfaction and role tension. Such instruments are either available as standard instruments (Pareek, 2002) or these instruments are especially prepared by the consultant in order to collect data. Data collection through structured instruments helps in getting some systematic information about the organisation and many things which may not come out in the interview can be known from such data. In many

cases it may not be possible to interview such a large number of persons in the organisation, and data collection through instruments may be more convenient.

- c) **Diagnosis:** After data collection the consultant tries to diagnose the main problems. Diagnosis takes into account not only the data collected through the instruments but also the data from the interviews with the people, as well as several observations and notes kept. The consultant has his preliminary understanding of the diagnosis, he prepares notes on it and has some understanding of what the problems are and which of these are more important than the others.
- d) **Strategy planning:** The consultant then sits with the main persons in the organisation in order to give a first feedback to them and work with them on what to do. During this part of the second phase, a shared understanding of where the organisation will go from here is necessary. During strategy planning, the first step is the feedback of the diagnostic understanding to the main persons. Then, the consultant works out various alternatives for dealing with the problem which was identified and agreed on. He discusses the consequences of using different alternatives. This may help to understand what may happen while using one kind of intervention as against another kind of intervention. This helps the client group get involved in the decision about the intervention to be used. At this stage, the choice of termination of the relationship with the consultant is always open. The consultant helps the client commit himself to the OD work. Once the strategy is planned, it is a strategy to which the client is committed; he can commit himself to a particular action plan only when he is clear about what is involved in it.

3) Specific Intervention

After planning the strategy for change, specific intervention should be designed/ selected and implemented. An intervention is a planned structural group of activities to achieve the goals of OD. Such an intervention may be in the form of specific structural changes, working on conflicts on some aspects, team building in a particular department, work at the top level, etc. Each intervention requires a detailed plan. Two main aspects of interventions are as follows:

- a) **Team building:** One of the goals of any intervention used in an organisation is to build teams in it. Team building may be done either through special programmes, or through specific activity on which they have to work together. Sometimes team building exercises are held in quick succession so that a shared understanding and a culture of mutuality could be developed and the teams are able to function effectively on the intervention chosen.
- b) **Collaborative work on intervention:** Both as a result of team building and for continued work on team building, it is necessary that the work on the intervention is done jointly by the consultant and the various teams which have been identified and are able to collect data and work out the details. In practice, such collaborative work may result in further strategy planning.

4) Building collaborative culture

While the work on the intervention is going on, it is necessary to build a collaborative culture in the organisation. This is both the culmination of and the necessary part of OD effort. The following steps are involved during this phase:

- a) **Data collection:** After the use of the intervention the various teams which have been formed and the consultant jointly collect data in order to see whether any change has taken place, and to what extent. The data may be collected again either through interviews and/or through the use of specific instruments.

- b) **Review:** The consultant looks at all the data collected and he has joint meetings with the groups of the client organisation in order to review and assess what OD work has been effective so far. In such reviews either the top people are involved or members of the various teams. It depends on what is being reviewed and for what purpose.
- c) **Formation of temporary teams:** As a result of the review work in order to sustain the OD efforts, some teams are formed which have the responsibility of continuously collecting data and planning strategy of continuing the OD work by having subsequent and frequent meetings.
- d) **Planning of the next phase:** The organisation and the consultant together plan the next phase of what is to be done. This is mainly done by the top people and the consultant in a joint meeting. They may, for example, decide that the next phase may have to do with more process work or that specific structural changes are needed, or that a particular department may be taken up for more intensive work. At this stage, it is necessary for the consultant to see how much involvement he would like to have, and to ensure that the internal person is able to take on a larger responsibility.

5) Development of Internal Resources

Although this has been mentioned as the last phase, in fact, this runs throughout the four phases already mentioned. The consultant identifies an internal resource in the beginning and he works with him in such a way that the internal resource person is strengthened both in terms of his acceptability as a consultant in his skills to work on various aspects of the OD programmes. If the person is not strong enough in terms of his professional preparation, plans are worked out to help the person develop professionally as OD consultant. Investment of the external consultant's time and energy in the development of an internal person for OD work in the organisation is very well paid off in terms of speedier work and sustained effort of OD. HRD managers and trainers are effective OD resources. In one large bank HRD managers and trainers in its training institutions have been extensively involved to function not only as internal OD resource people, but also as external consultants for various branches and other subsystems of the Bank.

8.6 SOME GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING OD

Experience has shown that some considerations are important for a pragmatic approach to OD programmes in an organisation. These may help to assure probability of successes for OD effort. The following suggestions are made in this regard.

- 1) **Choose receptive points for entry:** Only a few points of entry may be chosen for OD work in the organisation. Instead of either attempting to introduce change in the entire organisation, or taking up departments in which there are difficulties. It may be useful to enter an organisation for OD work through those departments which are willing to change and want to do something about their problems. These are healthy parts of the organisation and may, therefore, provide much more facility for introducing change.
- 2) **Focus on the linkpins:** It is important to identify the linkpins in the organisation, i.e., those roles which are crucial in connecting one level with the other level and one department with another department. If these persons are first taken into confidence and they are built into a team, they will facilitate a great deal the OD work being planned.

- 3) **Work with forces supportive of change:** It may be useful for the consultant to identify those roles and those person in the organisation, who want change, and therefore, are enthusiastic about it. These persons are likely to be of great help to the consultant. They can be used without creating suspicion and showing as if the consultant has preference for some people compared to the others.
- 4) **Work with autonomous parts:** It may be useful for the OD consultant to work with a department which is more autonomous than others, and which can introduce changes without necessary approval from other departments. Initially, it may be difficult to introduce changes in a department which has a visible link with another department and therefore cannot introduce the changes without approval of an without disturbing the relationship with the other department.
- 5) **Use internal resources and develop them:** It may be necessary to identify and develop the internal resources for OD work and continuously use them.
- 6) **Begin at the top and get their commitment:** It is necessary for the consultant to begin at the top level in order to get their support for the OD programme, for them to understand the implications of the work, and to get their active participation in it. This may ensure a sustained action and something happening as a result of OD. Beckhard (1969) has put this as a necessary part of OD.
- 7) **Achieve minimum critical concentration:** The principle of critical concentration is an important principle in achieving effectiveness (Lynton and Pareek, 2000). In any department, it is necessary to have a minimum level of concentrated effort in order to achieve success. For example, for team building, not only a few persons but several of them should be taken in a department so that there is a minimum critical concentration of a different kind of culture and this is built to help in further achieving objectives of OD.
- 8) **Multiple entry points:** Instead of attempting only one OD intervention in one department, it may be useful to have several entry points, although OD work can start with only one department. Through multiple entry points the consultant can focus attention on several interrelated problems.
- 9) **Work on felt needs:** The organisation may be having some problems of which it is aware. On many occasions these problems may be at the surface level, while there are some real problems underneath these felt problems. However, it may be useful for the consultant to rely on and trust the perception of the organisation. If the consultant starts with its felt needs, he may soon be able to confront the organisation with what is real needs may be and help it perceive these. However, a consultant who thinks that eh needs felt by the organisation are not its real needs, may get into trouble if he uses his judgement and is seen as imposing his understanding on the organisation.
- 10) **Use of proactive behaviour:** The main role of OD and the OD consultant is to establish a new culture, an OCTAPACE culture, with new norms of solving problems in the organisation. This can be done by the consultant himself showing some proactive behaviour. For example, he may establish new norms of functional leadership rather than traditional hierarchical leadership, by formation of teams in which the convenership is given to a person who is able to perform a role very well even if he may be from a lower rank. Consultant's attempt at establishing such norms may help the organisation develop a new tradition and a new culture.

In what has been said above, it is necessary for the consultant to see that there is a continuous reinforcement of the various interventions. It is necessary to provide various experiences of psychological successes to the organisation. A positive reinforcement in terms of perceived successes goes a long way in establishing a culture of mutual trust. The role of the external consultant becomes less prominent

and visible as the OD work progresses. He has somehow to phase himself out, so that both the internal change agent and various other persons in the organisation are able to take on the responsibility of continuing OD work.

8.7 OD INTERVENTIONS

It is important to look at the various OD interventions which can be used during various phases of OD work. The most important factor in the choice of an intervention is the understanding of the culture of the organisation. It may be useful to look at the organisation and its past history. If the organisation is a highly traditional one which has grown out of successes in the past, but these successes were based mostly on the traditional ways of achieving results, the unstructured interventions focused on the process may threaten it, and the top people may not know how to deal with the consequences. As a result OD may be seen as threatening, resulting the rejection of OD programmes. There are four factors which are involved in the culture of an organisation.

Ambiguity tolerance: It may be useful to see to what extent the organisation is prepared to live with ambiguity in the situation. Some organisation have functioned only on the basis of clear-cut and specific directions being received from the top, and this tradition may still continue, in which case any ambiguous situation may threaten it.

Risk taking capacity: It may also be assessed to what extent the organisation is prepared to take risks in terms of dealing with problems which may arise as a result of making the system open and introduce elements of OCTAPACE culture.

Openness: It may be necessary to see whether the organisation has a climate of support and mutual trust or one in which the people function only as roles and have no consideration for each other.

Another important dimension of the intervention choice is the background of OD **consultant** himself. Some consultants are more comfortable with one rather than another kind of intervention. The consultant will and should work with the interventions with which he is familiar and comfortable. Certainly the consultant should experiment and try out different interventions. But a consultant may not be able to use effectively the interventions with which he is not at all comfortable.

The choice of intervention will also depend on the initial problems felt by the organisation. If the problems felt require somewhat structured interventions, it may not be useful to use highly unstructured interventions. The consultant has a wide choice of interventions. In fact, all the steps he takes from the point of meeting the top people onwards are interventions. The sequencing of interventions, and planning interventions needed at the various stages form the basis of strategy planning.

A large number of interventions have been designed. Several ways have been proposed for grouping the interventions. Some of the suggested classification systems are as follows:

OD Cube: Schmuck & Miles (1971) proposed a 9 X 6 X 8 cube, suggesting the following dimensions:

Diagnosed problem (9): Goals/plans, communication, culture/climate, leadership, authority, problem-solving, decision-making, conflict/cooperation, role definition, other *Focus of attention (6):* Person, role, dyad/triad, team/group, interteam, total organisations

Mode of interventions (8): Training (education, process consultation) coaching, confrontation, data feedback, problem-solving, plan-making, OD task force establishment, techno-structural activity.

Consulcube: Blake & Mouton (1976) proposed a comprehensive system covering a large number of interventions at different levels. This is an excellent source book for interventions. They classified intervention using three dimensions to make it a cube (5 X 4 X 5).

Consulting approach (5): acceptant, catalytic, confrontation, prescription, theories and principles

Focal issues (4): Power/authority, morale/cohesion, norms, goals/objectives

Units of change (5): Individual, group, intergroup, organisation, larger social systems

Intervention Families: French & Bell (1989) have proposed 13 families, or types of intervention in terms of activities: diagnostic, team-building, intergroup, survey feedback, education and training, techno-structural change, process consultation, Grid OD, third party peace making, coaching/counselling, life and career planning, planning and goal setting, strategic management.

Four Quadrants: French and Bell (1989) have also suggested classification of interventions in four quadrants by combining two dimensions: the target of intervention (individual or group) and the focus of intervention (task issues or process issues).

We are proposing another way of classifying the interventions based on two dimensions: focus of the intervention and nature of the intervention. The focus of the intervention may be on the statics (structure) or on the dynamics (process) of the organisation, or it may be on both. The nature of the intervention may be either structured or unstructured, or it may be a mixture of both. With a combination of these three different ways of looking at the two dimensions, we have a 3 X 3 classification table. This is shown in Exhibit 8.1. Brief suggested steps for a few popular interventions have been appended at the end of the chapter.

Exhibit 8.1: Focus of the Intervention

	<i>Statics (Structure)</i>	<i>Dynamics (Process)</i>	<i>Both</i>
Structured	Reorganisation Organisational designing MBO Work Review Differentiation Integration	Motivation Development Role Negotiation Organisation Mirroring Interaction Process Analysis	Survey Feedback
	Team Development Development of Internal Facilitators	L Groups Counselling Conflict Resolution	Process Consultation
	Job Enrichment Meetings Task Force	Managerial Grid	Confrontation Interrole Exploration

8.8 ACTION RESEARCH

The concern to use research as an instrument for change is growing in all fields. The recent work on utilisation of knowledge has sharply focused attention on the gap between the research results (even of pragmatic researches) and their utilisation in improving practices. Action research (AR) seems to meet this important need.

The concept of AR emerged out of disillusionment with research contributing to the improvement of a practice, or resulting in social action. The gap between research and action, and between theory and practice, concerned some social scientists in the USA. Kurt Lewin was one such person. His experiments of involving the persons implementing the results of research, or change programmes, were the beginning of the movement of AR.

The traditional concept of AR follows Lewin’s 3-stage model of social change: unfreezing-moving-refreezing. The process consists (with some variations) of the following eight steps. These are essentially the various steps of problem solving.

- 1) dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs;
- 2) identification of a problem area;
- 3) identification of a specific problem to be solved through action;
- 4) formulation of several hypotheses, and their preliminary testing;
- 5) choice of a hypothesis;
- 6) design of action to test and implement the hypothesis;
- 7) evaluation of the effect of action; and
- 8) generalisations.

AR is not old wine in a new bottle. Although the concept of AR is close to that of OD, there are some differences between the two. These are summarised in Exhibit 8.2.

Exhibit 8.2: Organisation Development and Action Research

<i>OD</i>	<i>AR</i>
1. Emphasises use of applied behavioural science	1. No such emphasis, work can be done in any area
2. Emphasises work from the top in the organisation	2. Emphasises work at the level at which problem is felt
3. Emphasises work throughout the whole organisation	3. Emphasises solving specific problem at the concerned level
4. Emphasises building organisational health	4. Emphasises building research competence
5. More concern for process	5. More concern for praxis
6. Maintains duality between outside consultant and organisation	6. Works towards partnership

OD emphasises the use of applied behavioural science. In AR this is not an essential condition, and it can be conducted in any area on any problem in the organisation. OD is mostly regarded as a problem of change which starts from the top in the organisation. AR, on the other hand, can be initiated at any level, depending on where the problem is felt, and who are involved in the problem. In OD change is attempted throughout the organisation, and the entire organisation is used for diagnosis and designing of interventions. AR is always problem-oriented, and some problems can be taken up without getting into other areas of the organisation. While OD emphasises development of persons, the emphasis of AR is on building research competence in the organisation, and helping people to develop skills of diagnosis, action planning (designing intervention) and evaluation. The concern of AR is praxis- integration of theory and research, and also of process. The main concern of OD, on the other hand, is that of process. Probably the main difference between the two approaches is with regard to the integration of outside expertise and internal resources. In OD the duality is still maintained the outside consultant is an expert in process work (applied behavioural science), and continues to play the role as an outsider. In AR the outside expert and the inside people work in partnership for managing change. This may be a subtle difference, but it has implication for joint responsibility for change.

AR has evolved over several years. While its traditional concept moves towards linking research with action, and although it has made very useful contributions in this regards, it has been criticised, not surprisingly, both by those who look for more rigour in research, and by those who expect more vigour of action. Those involved in social action, like; revolutionaries and architects of new social systems during and after revolution, intuitively use the process of research in their work. This process consists primarily of using a theoretical framework in the beginning to prepare a strategy of change; designing methods of testing to what extent change is achieved through attempted action; reviewing the action steps in the light of feedback received; and testing and reformulating the conceptual framework in the light of action results. This feedback loop (action-to-theory) strengthens praxis as much as the tactics-formulation (theory-to-action). While this may be done intuitively by a few visionaries and revolutionaries, the role of AR is the research model (strategy formulation based on a conceptual framework which is tested and, if necessary adjusted in the light of feedback received from action more widely by the persons concerned in the previous period).

A new three-dimensional model of AR has been proposed (Pareek, 1978). The concept of praxis brings about integration amongst theory (research), practice (action), and human concerns (processes).

8.9 DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNAL SELF-RENEWAL FACILITATORS

The development of the internal resource for self-renewal work in the organisation is extremely important. Without such resources, the organisation may not be able to stabilise the changes and continue the OD work. Several important aspects of the development of the internal resource deserve attention. The following are some of these important aspects:

- 1) **Support of the community:** The role of the internal OD facilitator has to be legitimised in the organisation. It is necessary for various important roles in the organisation to sit together and define the role of the OD facilitator. The legitimization process can be accelerated by discussing the role openly in the system rather than an appointment of a person to this role by the head of the organisation. Role Analysis Technique can be used to clarify and work out the role in details. It is also useful for various members in the organisation to project their expectations from such a role. The person to be selected for such a role should have some qualities of functioning as a change agent. There should be enough time for the preparation of the person for this role.
- 2) **Linkage with consultants:** The person who grows as an internal facilitator should have linkage with several outside consultants. The initial linkage should be with the external consultant associated with the OD effort from the beginning. The external consultant can help the person through several programmes as well as by giving him graduated readings. The linkage can be established by the internal resource person becoming a member of some professional bodies like the Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science.
- 3) **Stabilisation of the role:** It is necessary that the role is stabilised in the system through sharing of successes and failures of this role. The review of the internal change agents' work can be done from time to time by the organisation.
- 4) **Professional development:** It is necessary to attend to the continuous professional development of the internal OD facilitators. This can be achieved by helping the facilitator attend some advanced programmes, become a member of the professional organisations and work with other organisations in a helping role.

There are several important aspects of the development of the internal OD facilitator. He will always work under stress because he is an internal person and there may be a lot of pressures on him of various kinds. These stresses may arise as a result of the conflict of the new values he acquires and the values of the organisation. The marginality of his role is also a source of pressure on him. If he receives very little feedback, then his conflict and tensions may be higher. His role may be seen as very marginal since he may not be functioning as an important role unless this is legitimised and accepted in the organisation. In the beginning there may not be a separate OD facilitator. However, it may eventually be necessary for the organisation to consider whether a separate role and department can be evolved for OD work.

In order to help the internal OD facilitator, it is necessary to provide facilities for him to grow so that, he receives some feedback on his work; he is able to budget some time for his professional readings; he is able to budget some time for his professional readings; he is able to work with experts; he is able to budget some time for his professional readings; he is able to work with experts; he is able to become a member of a temporary system where he can go on work on problems: he can be a member of professional organisations; and he is able to plan his own career in this area, which the organisation may support. With these organisational supports, the OD facilitator may be able to function effectively and help stabilise the change in the organisation.

8.10 RESEARCH IN HRS

Research deals with development of and investigating effectiveness of subsystems like; performance appraisal, potential appraisal, career planning, training, work and job design, and redesign, employee welfare, etc. The purpose of research and OD is to facilitate the development of people and of various systems and subsystems that help increase the organisational effectiveness. Both these functions are inter-linked because any effort to improve the systems in the organisation should be based on an understanding of the human resources and the dynamics of their interaction. Similarly, any effort to help the HRD would also bring in systemic changes. The self-renewal system of HRD can facilitate and provide process feedback. The effectiveness of the research and OD subsystem would depend upon the extent to which the line people are interested in using the findings and suggestions. In order to ensure effective use of their findings and suggestions, the research and OD function should identify areas that are likely to have action implications. This function helps the top management in evolving new systems, reviewing existing systems, and policy formulation. It serves as a centre for feedback to the top management.

The following areas of HRM are suggested for purposes of research and OD:

Performance Appraisal

Self-renewal system can undertake the following research activities:

- a) ***Identifying Behavioural Dimensions of Managerial Effectiveness:*** In the appraisal system initiative, creativity, contribution to team spirit and development of subordinates have been suggested as four aspects for annual performance appraisal. There may be some other important qualities critical for various managerial jobs. Self-renewal section can conduct surveys to identify such common qualities on which managerial performance can be assessed. On the basis of such researches new additional dimensions can be incorporated into the performance appraisal forms. Some of the dimensions may be common to the managerial roles at certain levels. Some may be different for different levels. For example, it is quite possible that creativity may not be as critical for production engineers as it may be for R & D engineers. It may, therefore, not be appropriate to include this dimension in performance appraisal for all employees.

- b) **Research on Performance Analysis:** Generally, in performance appraisal the reporting manager and the employee analyse the performance of the employee, and identify the facilitating and inhibiting factors. Selfrenewal section can analyse these forms periodically and prepare lists of commonly observed facilitating and inhibiting factors (both personal and environmental). Such an analysis can be conducted department-wise, level-wise, etc. Reports of such analysis would serve as a very useful mechanism for designing organisational policies and identifying bottlenecks in organisational effectiveness.
- c) **Analysis for Rater Behaviour:** In the performance appraisal system every appraiser may be appraising more than one person. In organisations where a single appraiser appraises a sizeable number of people, at the end of a three or four-year period, the research and OD section may find out the rating patterns of the rater. They might look for constant high ratings or constant low ratings given by a particular rater to his subordinates. Such an analysis may show that some raters are too lenient while others are too conservative. A feedback to raters on the rater behaviour is likely to have a moderating effect and increase objectivity of the system.
- d) **Analysis of Behavioural Dimensions of Poor and Good Performance:** Analysis of trends in ratings of behavioural dimensions in performance appraisal may be useful. For example, it can be found out if the initiative is rated consistently low in some departments. Such a finding may require further investigation into the reasons of such trends. Corrective action can then be suggested to the concerned department of the individuals. These may include increasing delegation, sponsoring people for training, changing the organisational structure, job relation, etc. The research and OD section can periodically analyse the appraisal data to identify consistently poor performers and consistently high performers. Such analysis can give several insights about the systems and people.
- e) **Analysis of Training Needs:** In the performance appraisal forms developmental needs of the employees are indicated. The research and OD function may continuously investigate the common trends occurring in the training and developmental needs. Whenever certain patterns are found they could investigate further into the reasons for such consistencies. They could also suggest corrective actions besides training.

Potential Appraisal

A good potential appraisal system should be based on analysis of different functions required for different jobs as well as an understanding of the qualities required to perform these functions. Such functions and qualities can be identified only through a sound research programme which may aim at studying the qualities differentiating more successful and less successful managers at different levels in the organisation. Various research techniques can be used for this purpose, including interviews, role set discussions, analysis of records like past performance, etc. Once the potential appraisal system is developed, a lot of data are generated requiring continuously analysis and feedback of such data both for improving the system and for the training departments. An organisation should arrange for continuous research in identifying qualities contributing to the managerial effectiveness. This may help in designing training programmes and other organisational interventions to help managers develop these qualities. Examples of such possible researches are given in Campbell, *et al.* (1970).

Career Planning and Promotions

The following are some of the dimensions needing attention by the OD and research section.

- a) Investigation of the career aspirations of people.
- b) Investigation into the periods required for employees to reach a saturation level of performance in a given job at various levels.
- c) Rates of promotion in the organisation at various levels and in various departments.
- d) Impact of job rotation on the development of employees, etc.

A good study by the research and OD unit to identify the career aspirations of the employees in the organisation will help the top management in designing and changing the career planning policies.

Analysis of promotions may reveal some trends in the organisation. Promotions may be faster in some departments and slower in some departments. Unless some mechanisms are developed to ensure some uniformity in the rate of promotions, employee morale in departments where promotion rate is slow is likely to be low. In some departments where promotion rates are objectively reasonable, the employees may still have a feeling that they are disadvantaged. Research may help in analysing the situation for possible feedback to the appropriate people. Whenever certain decisions related to career planning are taken, the research and OD section may help in designing follow-up mechanisms, and undertake to investigate the impact of these decisions on the morale and performance of people.

Training

Besides identifying the training needs the research unit can conduct periodical surveys on knowledge utilisation. Such surveys should aim at assessing the impact of training through post-training surveys. When in-company training programmes are arranged the research unit may also gather evaluation reports on these programmes. In large companies the research unit may also undertake studies on the effectiveness of various types of training programme. In one company a large number of people complained that training was not recognised as a useful investment and very few people were sent for it. However, an actual analysis indicated that more than 70 per cent of the people had been sponsored for some training programmes or the other in the preceding three years. This analysis also brought out that certain programmes and some employees were being oversponsored. Such information may help in solving several problems and may help to streamline the training policy. In another company an analysis of the costs and benefits involved in the in-company and outside agency programmes indicated very revealing things about programmes offered by outside institutions and their effectiveness *vis-a-vis* the costs incurred by the company. This analysis pointed out the relative advantages of having in-company programmes in comparison with sponsoring employees for outside programmes.

Employee Welfare

Several research studies are possible in employee welfare. The researches in this area should aim at finding out the common problems of workers through systematic surveys and feeding them to both the unions and management so that employees welfare-oriented activities can be planned. A research-based programme can help in installing an employee welfare and counselling centre and worker education activities.

8.11 SUMMARY

In this unit we have discussed the importance of continuous renewal of knowledge, skill and ability of employees to survive in the turbulent business environment. OD plays a major role for self renewal of the employees of an organisation. There are about five phases in an OD plan. Action research also plays a crucial role in this regard. Research in HRS (like performance appraisal, potential appraisal, training etc.) aims at facilitating development of people and various systems/sub-systems of an organisation.

8.12 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- 1) Define 'Organisational Development'.
- 2) Describe various phases of OD plan with illustrations.
- 3) Write short notes on:
 - a) Action Research
 - b) Research in HRS
- 4) 'Self-renewal system is an integral part of HRD', examine.

8.13 FURTHER READINGS

There has been so much literature on organisation development that it is difficult to suggest a few readings. *Organisation development* by French and Bell (Prentice Hall) is a small introductory book. Addison-Wesley have published a series of books on various issues of OD.

Fordyce, J.K., and Weil, R., *Managing with people* (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley; 1971) is a practical book on OD, explaining how OD is done, with detailed case studies.

A comprehensive and excellent book is Rothwell, W.J., R. Sullivan & G.N. McLean. *Practicing Organisation development: A guide for consultants*. San Diego: Pfeiffer & Co. (revised edition being published in 2005)

In India a large number of writings on OD have been published for different types of organisations. Carol Huss reported OD work in a hospital in *Planned change in a hospital*; S. Chattopadhyay & U. Pareek on OD in a voluntary organisation in their volume *Managing Organisational Change* (Oxford & IBH, 1982); N. De on OD in government systems. For alternative redesign of a work system see B.Mathur, K. Dinesh & C. Chandrasekharan (Eds.) *Management in Government* (GOI, 1979); and D. Sinha in an industry: Team building in a mining organisation (*ASCI Journal of Management*, 1976, 6(1), 59) and so on.

Pareek, Udai. The concept and the process of organisation development, *Indian Journal of Social Work*, 1975, 36(2), 109–25.

Discusses the basic process of OD and briefly mentions the various OD interventions.

S. Ramnarayan, TV Rao and K. Singh (Ed.) *Organisation development: Intervention's and strategies*. New Delhi: Sage, 1998 contains chapters on various aspects and issues of OD.

Amongst OD interventions, B.L. Maheshwari has done pioneering work on MBO, summarised in his book *Management by objectives: Concepts, methods and experiences* (Tata McGraw-Hill, 1980). Process consultation has been used in some settings, see U. Pareek *Effective Organisations* (Oxford & IBH, 2002). Team building has been extensively used in India as an OD intervention, e.g., D. Sinha, Team

building in a mining organisation (*ASCI Journal of Management*, 9176, 6(1), 59–79. Search conference and conscientisation has been used by N. De, reported in his book *Alternative organisatioal designs* (Sage, 1987). Some role-related intervention's are discussed in *Making organisational roles effective* (New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill, 1993, 2000 reprint).

Pareek, Udai, The role of action research in building self-sustaining systems, *Indian Journal of Social Work*, 1978, 28(4), 341–55.

Discusses the concept of action research, the conditions of its success, and its role in building self-renewing systems.

R.K. Gupta in *Towards the optional organisation: Integrating Indian culture and management* (Excel Books, 2002) has discussed challenges in developing indigenous Indian theories of organisation and management and has discussed characteristics of Indian culture (familial orientation, sacred element, patronising style, personalised relationship etc.) and their implications for designing organisation in the new reality, managing change and undertaking OD work and learning and growth.

Lessons Learnt from an OD Experience

Chemcorp is a large successful public sector corporation in the chemical industry, situated in the west of India. The events described here cover the period between 1983 and 1988. We were working at the Tata Management Training Centre during this period. In 1983, a new chief executive (chairman & managing director or CMD) was appointed by the government to head Chemcorp. The new CMD, along with his functional directors, decided that there was an urgent need to train staff throughout the corporation. The staff were divided into three groups—senior management, middle management and supervisory staff. Various training institutions in the country were approached to design and impart training at these levels. The Tata Management Centre was contacted sometime in early 1983 to train the senior managers of the corporation. A proposal prepared by us was accepted by the corporation. The proposal suggested that a training needs assessment be conducted first to determine the scope and content of training. This was to be followed by a workshop for the CMD and his directors. This workshop was to discuss issues arising out of the assessment and agree on a strategic direction for the corporation. This strategic direction would be the basis for designing and conducting a series of training workshops for senior managers.

Both of us were strongly committed to an approach to change which was based on the principles and practice of OD. We had both obtained our doctoral degrees from the same university (Case Western Reserve) in the USA, one of the leading centres in the world in the area of OD. We were both clearly excited by the opportunity to put our learning to use. Added to this was the exhilaration of working with a chief executive who was not only very bright but also highly committed to this process. Although we never openly stated this, we implicitly saw ourselves as facilitators who would help this corporation unlock its true potential.

In a way this reflected our mindset about OD and change. We saw change as a collaborative process characterised by learning. Our role as facilitators was to create a collaborative learning climate that would inevitably lead to change. We were, of course, heavily influenced by what we had learnt at the Case Western Reserve University. Our view of change was also the prevailing view of OD as a strategy of empowering people to reflect, learn, and change in a collaborative manner. In hindsight, it was also a rather naive view.

Chemcorp employed about 15,000 people. There were around, 160 senior managers who were to be trained by us. The training needs assessment was conducted through a series of relatively unstructured and informal interviews with a sample of senior managers. These interviews revealed that the senior managers largely saw themselves as technical specialists rather than managers. There was a great deal of cynicism. There was widespread discontent with the personnel policies in general, and promotion policies in particular. Many senior managers seemed to lack elementary skills in motivating and supervising their staff.

The organisation had a functional structure. The major functions were marketing, operations, finance, and personnel. These were each divided into a variety of departments such as production, mechanical maintenance, electrical maintenance, instrumentation maintenance, production services, R&D, engineering services, management services, training, projects, purchase, stores, corporate personnel, industrial relations, quality control, production planning, despatch, safety, and so on. Each department was further subdivided into sections. There was a great deal of parochialism with respect to one's function and department. Very few of the senior managers could take a holistic view of the organisation. Status was considered very

important and directly tied to hierarchy. Some functions and departments were considered to be of higher status than others. In general, there was a greater preference for working in an office rather than on the shop floor. The picture that emerged was a largely impersonal, non-appreciative bureaucratic organisation with all the negative features of a bureaucracy. In spite of all this, the corporation was highly profitable. Its plants functioned at almost full capacity and its operations were highly efficient.

The results of the needs assessment survey were shared with the CMD and his directors in a one-day workshop in early 1984. The results did not seem to evoke any surprise or concern. It appeared that the top management was aware of these issues. The top management team was also relatively new and there was little in-depth exploration of these issues. They accepted the general design of the workshops presented by us. The workshops consisted of a series of skill-building exercises based on the themes of learning, interpersonal relations, teamwork, and leadership. These exercises were woven around sessions which involved working on real, task-related issues in the organization. In keeping with our view of OD, the workshops were designed to help the participants reflect on their experiences, learn collaboratively, and work together to generate choices and options to solve key organisational problems. Each workshop was attended by about 20 senior managers and lasted for about a week. On the last day, the participants worked in small teams and made specific recommendations to tackle the key problems in the organisation. These presentations were usually attended by the CMD and occasionally by the other directors who actively participated in the discussions.

Our initial contract was to design and organize about eight training workshops. But as we got going, more and more work was handed to us. This happened mainly because of the participant presentations. In one of the workshops, the participants complained about the quality of service from the materials department. The CMD requested us to conduct a study of this department and submit a report. In another workshop, concerns were expressed about the personnel department. We were asked to study the personnel function. In one of the workshops, the R&D department became an object of focus. Naturally, we were asked to look into this function too. Our credibility and support seemed to increase gradually. Needless to say, we enjoyed all this and felt very significant and important. The greatest source of satisfaction and joy was the support and credibility we had with the CMD whom we came to admire and respect. There were, of course, occasional setbacks to our steadily bloating egos. Our report on the materials department resulted in the materials manager's transfer out of this department. Although this was not our recommendation, many in the organisation, and particularly in the materials department, attributed this to our actions.

Our efforts to vehemently deny any responsibility were greeted with barely concealed skepticism. But, by and large, there was a great deal of support, trust, and affection for us among the senior managers even if some of them felt that nothing was going to result from the different OD initiatives. When the corporation began constructing a new plant in another part of India, the Tata Management Training Centre was asked to design the structure and suggest a manpower plan for the new organisation. When we expressed a desire to conduct a study on middle management motivation, the corporation eagerly gave us access to two manufacturing plants for collecting data.

There was a change of CMD at Chemcorp in 1988. We had also left the Tata Management Training Centre during this period. Although we still enjoyed the support of the new CMD, we had other plans and our involvement came to an end by the middle of 1988. Sometime in 1992, we returned to Chemcorp briefly to conduct a follow-up study on middle management motivation. We interviewed about 140 managers from all levels in groups of five to eight managers. These interviews revealed feelings of anger, frustration, resentment, stagnation, powerlessness, and lack

of purpose among the middle managers. The middle managers perceived the organisational structures and processes as incapable of accommodating their views and ideas. They felt that they had access to only limited information. They reported numerous anomalies, paradoxes, and contradictions in decision making. They felt mostly marginal in the organisation. In a sense, these interviews seemed to indicate that little had changed in the organisation. The core issues, problems, and concerns remained unresolved.

In hindsight, OD initiatives at Chemcorp led to incremental change rather than frame-breaking transformational change. As Tushman et al. (1986) so eloquently argue, frame-breaking change is only driven by major shifts in the environment. There were no such shifts in Chemcorp's environment in 1983. It operated in a highly regulated environment. There was almost no direct competition. In other words, there were no compelling reasons for a transformational change. Therefore, OD was an appropriate strategy given that the organisation was only undergoing convergence. Our mistake was that we believed that it could bring about a transformation. Does this mean that our efforts were completely futile? We don't think so. We think our contribution to Chemcorp was in raising the consciousness of its managers. After undergoing the workshops and training programmes, they became aware of the gaps between their ideals and reality. The training provided them with a common language to explore their concerns. It provided them a forum where they discovered the shared and common conditions of their frustrations. They initiated incremental changes in structures, systems, and processes that made the organisational functioning more efficient. The most significant contribution of OD was that it created a climate that would have facilitated transformational change. While there was greater expression of discontent there was also greater energy for change. We believe that the OD efforts were the first step towards a cultural transformation of this organisation.

Recommendations for Practice

What can we recommend to others who are in a similar situation today? Our experience leads us to suggest the following steps:

- 1 First, find out what the organisation really needs. Does it require incremental change or transformational change? Are there significant shifts in the environment of the organisation? Do you anticipate any shifts? Is the culture and history of the organisation proving to be a barrier to change? You need to collect a great deal of data to answer these crucial questions. There is no point in launching transformational change if there is no anticipated change in the environment.

If it is incremental change that is needed, then traditional OD interventions may be an appropriate strategy. Set up a team from within the organisation to drive the change. Work closely with this team and jointly design needs assessment surveys and training programmes. Train people within the organisation to act as trainers. Make the team monitor the change process and take responsibility for the change. We could not do this at Chemcorp because there were simply not enough people with requisite skills to form the team.

- 1 If you strongly believe that the organisation needs transformational change, get the top management to commit to the change. The bulk of the work is required at this level. The top management must take responsibility for the change and must also drive the process. Help the top management articulate a vision for the organisation—a statement of what the organisation wants to be. The vision should also provide a compelling reason for radical change. This vision should signal a clear break from the past and should be communicated by the top managers in face-to-face meetings with groups of employees. Organisation workshops to

debate, challenge, and discuss the vision. At the end of the workshops, there should be commitment to a shared vision.

- 1 Once the organisation has a shared vision, help the top management translate the vision into specific strategies. If vision represents a destination, strategies are the vehicles that would carry the organisation to its destination. Set up a transition management team comprising individuals from different parts of the organisation to implement those strategies.
- 1 At this stage you may choose to help the transition management team to work with other people in the organisation in converting the strategies into action plans.
- 1 Be aware that a change of this nature is likely to be an intensely political process. You need to understand the power issues and make sure that you don't get dysfunctionally caught up in the political struggles (see Chapter 19).
- 1 Once the vision and strategies have been accepted, you may use traditional OD to identify and provide skills and capabilities required in the new changed organisation.

One of the most important lessons that the two of us learnt from our experience with Chemcorp is that managing change of any kind, particularly in India, requires a great deal of patience and perseverance. Organisations may not always be changing in the direction that we desire, but they are nevertheless changing. As OD practitioners, we need to develop qualities of tolerance and appreciation.