Role and Style of the OD Practitioner - Chapter 4

Dr. Bernice R. Kennedy
Objectives

- Define the role of an OD Practitioner.
- Identify your strengths and areas of improvement as a potential practitioner.
- Experience and practice your own style of intervention and influence in a group.
Haphazard Versus Planned Change

- Change programs do not happen accidentally.
- There are two types of change:
  - Random or haphazard change is force on the organization by the external environment.
  - Planned change results from deliberate attempts to modify organization operations in order to promote improvement.
External and Internal Practitioners

- The OD Practitioners are specialists, whether from within or outside of the organization.
- Often referred to as Consultants.
External Practitioner

- They are not associated with the client system.
- They are less in awe of the power wield by various organization members.
- They do not depend on the organization for raises, approval or promotions.
- They are generally unfamiliar with the organization system and may not have particular knowledge of its technology etc.
Internal Practitioner

- They are already a member of the organization.
- Top executive who initiates change in his or her work group, or member of the human resources or organization development department.
- These practitioners often operate out of the human resources area and may report directly to the president of the organization.
- They are familiar with the organization’s culture and norms.
Internal Practitioner

- Disadvantages
  - Lack of the specialized skills needed for the organization development.
  - They often lack objectivity.
  - They often may be more likely to accept the organizational system as a given and accommodate their change tactics to the need of the organization.
  - They may not have the necessary power and authority.
The External-Internal Practitioner Team

- Team formed with working with an External Practitioner working directly with an Internal practitioner to initiate and facilitate change program
OD Practitioner Styles

- Change begins with the intervention of the practitioner in the system to be changed.

- Intervention refers to the practitioner’s entry into the client system and includes several different roles and activities.
Five Different Types of Practitioner Styles or Roles

- The Stabilizer Style
- The Cheerleader Style
- The Analyzer Style
- The Persuader Style
- The Pathfinder Style
The Stabilizer Style

- The goal of the stabilizer is neither effectiveness nor participant satisfaction.
- The practitioner is trying to keep from rocking the boat and to maintain a low profile.
- This style is usually forced upon the practitioner by organizational pressure.
  - So the practitioner usually have to learn to conform and suppress any other motivation.
The Cheerleader Style

- The cheerleader style places emphasis on the satisfaction of the organization members and is chiefly concerned with motivation and morale.

- The cheerleader style strongly minimizes differences and maintains harmony.
The Analyzer Style

- The analyzer places great emphasis on efficiency, and gives little emphasis to member satisfaction.
- The analyzer feel most comfortable with a rational assessment of problems and assumes that the facts will lead to a solution.
- The practitioner may be more confrontational, relying on the authority to resolve conflicts and on rational problem-solving process.
The Persuader Style

- The persuader style focuses on both dimensions, effectiveness and morale, yet optimizes neither.

- Such a style provides a relatively low-risk strategy, avoids direct confrontation with others.
The Pathfinder Style

The pathfinder style seeks a high degree and a high degree of member satisfaction, believing that greater effectiveness is possible when all members are involved and problem-solving is done through teamwork.

The pathfinder focuses on 6 processes essential to organizational performance:

- Communication
- Member roles and functions in groups
- Group problem-solving and decision-making
- Groups norms and growth
- Leadership and authority
- Intergroup cooperation and competition.
The Intervention Process

- The OD process involves a collaborative relationship between a practitioner and a client system.
- OD practitioners may have a variety of style, philosophies, and approaches:
- Functions performed:
  - Helping the client determine its current level or state (data gathering)
  - Assisting in a collaborative analysis or problem and planning strategies of change (diagnosis)
  - Intervening and facilitating change from the current level to some ideal or desired level.
The Readiness of the Organization for OD

Upon first contacting the client system, the OD practitioner begins evaluating its receptiveness for an OD program.

To gauge preparedness of an organization for an OD program, there are four questions the practitioner needs to answer before venturing further.

1. Are the learning goals appropriate?
2. Is the culture state of the client system ready for organizational development?
3. Are the key people involved?
4. Are members of the client system prepared and oriented to organizational development?
Intervention

- Intervention refers to an array of planned activities participated by both the practitioner and the client, including shared observations of the processes occurring between members of a group or an organization for the purpose of improving the effectiveness of the processes.
OD Practitioner Skills and Activities

- Team Development  2.97
- Corporate change  2.91
- Strategy development  2.60
- Management development  2.45
- Employee (career) development  2.04
- Technology integration  1.97
Practitioner Skills Profile

- Leadership
- Project Management
- Communication
- Problem-Solving
- Interpersonal
- Personal
Forming the Practitioner-Client Relationship

- Initial Perception
- Practitioner Style Model
- Creating a Client for Change
- Practitioner-Client Relationship Modes
The Formulation of Operating Rules

1. The point of contact.
2. The role of the practitioner.
3. The fees.
4. The schedule.
5. The anticipated results.
6. The operating ground rules.
Red Flags in the Practitioner-Client Relationship

- The level of Commitment to Change
- The Degree of Leverage or Power to Influence Change
- The Client’s Manipulative Use of Practitioner
Questions