What do you believe about change? Why should you care about organization development (OD)? What is change management (CM), and what is organization development (OD)? What special terms of importance are used in organization change and development? What is systems thinking, and why is it important to OD practitioners? What are the philosophical foundations of OD, and why are they important? How is OD related to other HR fields? This chapter addresses these and related questions.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ABOUT CHANGE?

Get some paper and record your answers to the following questions. Write down the first thing that comes to your mind in response to each question:

1. Who should be involved in an organization change effort, and how should they be involved?
2. Who should make decisions about the way in which a change effort of any kind is launched? Implemented on a continual basis? Evaluated?
3. What do you believe about change in the world generally?
4. What do you believe about change in today’s organizations?
5. What do you believe are the biggest challenges facing decision-makers in organization change efforts?
6. *What* do you believe are your own strengths and developmental needs in enacting the role of “helper to others” in a change effort? What do you do especially well? What do you wish to personally develop to become a more effective change agent? On what basis do you believe as you do?

7. *When* do you believe that a group of people might need a helper in a change effort?

8. *Where* do you believe that the most profound changes are occurring in the world, and why do you think as you do?

9. *Why* should organization change and development be a focus for the attention of managers? Other groups?


11. *How* have you reacted in the past to change in an organization in which you have been employed or been a consultant with? Think about what you did and how you felt as the change occurred.

12. *What* are some common examples of organization change in organizations? Reflect on what they are. Consider such interventions as team building, implementing technological change, succession planning, culture development, aligning management, enterprise wide change, mergers and acquisitions, and structural reorganizations.

Write down these questions and your answers on a sheet of paper—or else use the worksheet in Exhibit 1.1. Then take a break from the book and identify a few professional peers or colleagues—or find yourself some mentors whom you believe to be more experienced than you are—and pose these questions to them. Use this activity as a “warm-up exercise” to focus your thinking about organization change and development. When you finish, continue reading.

**WHY CARE ABOUT ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT (OD)?**

According to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus, “There is nothing permanent but change.” By that he meant that everything is always in flux. Nobody can step in the same river twice, because the river is always in motion and is therefore always changing. What is new since our last edition is that change has quickened.

The last time the world was this troubled was in the in middle of the Renaissance, a golden age of creation. But hang on to your hat. We will experience more change the rest of our lives than has been experienced since the beginning of civilization. We can expect more confusion in our organizations than at any other time in history. On the positive side, nano-technology, artificial intelligence, and the robotic world will bring advances beyond our most bodacious fantasies.
Exhibit 1.1. A Worksheet for Reflecting on Your Assumptions

Directions: Use this worksheet to organize your thinking. For each question posed below, write your answers in the space provided. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers in any absolute sense. However, some answers may be better than others.

1. *Who* should be involved in an organizational change effort, and how should they be involved?

2. *Who* should make decisions about the way in which a change effort of any kind is formulated? Implemented? Evaluated?

3. *What* do you believe about change in the world generally?

4. *What* do you believe about change in today’s organizations?

5. *What* do you believe are the biggest challenges facing decision makers in organizational change efforts?

6. *What* do you believe are your own strengths and weaknesses in enacting the role of “helper to others” in a change effort? What do you do especially well? Not so well? On what basis do you believe as you do?

7. *When* do you believe that a group of people might need a helper in a change effort?

8. *Where* do you believe that the most profound changes are occurring in the world, and why do you think as you do?

9. *Why* should organizational change and development be a focus for the attention of managers? Other groups?

10. *How* should change be formulated? Implemented? Evaluated?

11. *How* have you reacted in the past to change in an organization in which you have been employed or for which you have worked? Think about what you did and how you felt as the change occurred.

12. *What* are some common examples of organizational change in organizations? Reflect on what they are. Consider such issues as team building, implementing technological change, planning for successors, mergers and acquisitions, and company downsizings and reorganizations.
Yes indeed!! The pace and magnitude of change has itself been changing over the last few decades. Dramatic, mind-boggling, transformational change has been accelerating. One reason is that improvements in communications, wrought by technological innovation, make otherwise local events global in scope.

The field of organization development has a history of over forty years. OD practitioners have been thinking about, and intervening actively, to help society make the most of the change age. It is worth asking this question: Why should anyone care about all the organization change occurring? To answer that question, it is worth devoting some time to reflect on what changes are occurring, why change is occurring so fast, and what effects those changes are having.

### What Changes Are Occurring?

One study of human resource management practitioners identified six key changes that would have the greatest impact in the workplace and workforce over the next ten years (Rothwell, Prescott, & Taylor, 1998). The study began with an analysis of published accounts of workplace trends. Only trends mentioned three or more times were included on the initial list. A total of 158 trends were identified in this way. Then a handpicked group of HR experts rated the trends for their relative importance on the present and future workplace and workforce. The result was a narrowed-down list of six key trends:

- Changing technology;
- Increasing globalization;
- Continuing cost containment;
- Increasing speed in market change;
- Growing importance of knowledge capital; and
- Increasing rate and magnitude of change.

*Changing technology* refers to rapid advances in human know-how. *Increasing globalization* refers to the impact of rapid transportation and global communication on doing business. *Continuing cost containment* refers to efforts undertaken by organizations to address declining profit margins, wrought by the ease of price comparisons through web-based technology, by making decided efforts to improve profits by reducing the costs of business operations. *Increasing speed in market change* refers to the continuing importance of beating competitors to the punch to meet the rapidly changing tastes of consumers. *The growing importance of knowledge capital* refers to the key value-added capabilities of human creativity to identify new businesses, new products, new services, and new markets. And finally, the *increasing rate and magnitude of change* refers to the increasing speed and scope of changes that occur. In short,
change itself is changing—and posing ever-more-daunting challenges for business leaders to respond in real time to breaking events.

Each trend influences the others. The definition of each trend may vary by organizational context and even by functional area. The trends are related in that many are root causes of other trends or consequences of other trends. And each trend requires new competencies from leaders to respond to, or even anticipate, the changes wrought by each trend.

Anderson and Anderson (2001a) provide a compatible perspective, discussing the so-called drivers of change model. To them, change is wrought by external environmental influences that change the marketplace requirements for success. These marketplace requirements, in turn, lead to new business imperatives that, in due course, lead to organizational imperatives, corporate cultural imperatives, requirements for changes in leader and employee behaviors, and (finally) in new leader and employee mindsets and beliefs.

Why Is Change Occurring So Fast?

Time has become a key strategic resource. The challenge of the future is to help people adapt to change, often in real time and as events unfold. Time has become important precisely because changing technology provides many possible strategic advantages to organizations. Today the organization that makes it to market first by commercializing basic research results seizes market share—and is likely to keep it. And organizations that miss technological innovations to increase production speed or improve quality lose out to global competitors who function in a world where differences in labor costs can easily be taken advantage of because of the relative ease of international travel and communication.

Changing technology is also a driver for the information explosion—and vice versa. Consider the sheer magnitude and pace of the information explosion:

- The sheer quantity of information is increasing so fast that nobody can keep pace with it. The amount of information created over the last thirty years is greater than what was produced over the previous five thousand years.
- According to one source (see www.softpanorama.org/Social/overload.shtml), more than 100,000 new book titles are published in the United States every year—and the total number of books published worldwide may exceed one million.
- The amount of information stored online is now more than 2.5 times what is found on paper—and human knowledge, at least as measured by the amount of information available online, is doubling every one hundred days (see Heylighen, 1999).
- We all are experiencing an invasion of our time with a tremendous amount of phone calls, emails, and voice mails. The cell phone is with some people twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week.
People have different ways of responding to information overload and to change. One approach is to give up. Another approach, widely used, is to try to master clever ways to do more than one thing at a time—that is, multi-tasking. And yet, according to University of Michigan researcher David E. Meyer, efforts to cope with the effects of change by trying to do more than one thing at a time are causing their own problems. Multi-tasking can actually reduce productivity because it may take as much as 50 percent longer to process two tasks performed simultaneously than it takes to do two tasks one after the other, according to Richtel (cited in Heylighen, 1999).

What Effects Are Those Changes Having?

There are many effects of change.

One effect is that change begets more change. As organization leaders struggle to meet competitive challenges, they search for ways to slash cycle times for product development, chase fads to discover new ways to gain advantage, and struggle with efforts to manage across a burgeoning number of improvement programs.

A second effect is that so much change has prompted an increasing amount of cynicism about change, an emerging theme in the literature about change management (Bruhn, Zajac, & Al-Kazemi, 2001; Cutler, 2000). Cynicism about change means that workers and managers increasingly question the motives of those who sponsor, champion, or drive change. Cynicism about the motives of other people erodes trust and confidence in organizational leaders. And a growing number of scandals in business, government, education, the media, and the church only reinforce that cynicism.

A third effect is growing stress on individuals and their families. As the rate and magnitude of change increase, individuals struggle to keep up emotionally as well as cognitively. Their stressed-out feelings about change, if expressed, occasionally erupt in workplace violence, as found from studies of over 300,000 instances of workplace violence that occur annually in the United States (Magyar, 2003). It may also prompt increasing instances of “desk rage” (Buhler, 2003), create pushback through growing interest in work/life balance programs (“New agenda for rights at work needed,” 2001), and encourage some people to seek innovative ways to work through telecommuting or other efforts that distance individuals from others.

So Why Should Anyone Care About Organization Development?

People should care about organization development because it is rapidly emerging as a key business topic—if not the key business topic.

The ability to manage change successfully may set leaders apart from followers. A study by Rosen and Digh (2001) identified “guiding people successfully through change” as one of twenty key competencies for global managers. Anderson and Anderson (2001a, p. 1) note that “In today’s marketplace, change
is a requirement for continued success, and competent change leadership is a most coveted executive skill.”

And there is clearly a need for improvements in demonstrating that competency. After all, the track record of change efforts is not so good. Consider: success rates for reengineering efforts in Fortune 1000 companies range from 20 to 50 percent (Strebel, 1996). A study of corporate mergers revealed that only 33 percent could be classified as successful (Dinkin, 2000), and Doucet (2000) found that four in ten firms did not realize desired savings from mergers. Only 28 percent of information technology projects are successful (Johnson, 2000), and 50 percent of firms that downsized actually experienced a decrease—not an increase—in productivity (Applebaum, Everard, & Hung, 1999). The inability to manage change has thus proven to be the undoing of many otherwise laudable organizational efforts. The situation is so bad that managers would get a C if they were being graded on managing change (Burke, Spencer, Clark, & Corruzzzi, 1991). As Anderson and Anderson (2001a, p. 25) note, “A major source of the failure of most of the change efforts of the past decade has been the lack of leader and consultant skill in the internal domain of people.”

Smith (2002) reaches several conclusions about failed change efforts based on a survey of 210 managers. His survey results revealed that 75 percent of change efforts fail to make dramatic improvements, that top and middle management support for change is essential to success in change efforts, that about 50 percent of all change efforts emanate from the top but about 47 percent come from division or department heads, and that most change efforts come about as a reaction to a combination of organization and environmental factors. Further, the survey results reveal that most organizations rely on financial, operational, and customer service metrics to evaluate the success of change efforts, that success is highly correlated with visible support from a change sponsor, that failure is associated with missing or conflicted leadership, and that managers agree much more clearly on why change succeeds than on why it fails.

In an opinion piece about failures in change, Zackrison and Freedman (2003) identify fifteen possible reasons why so many change efforts fail:

1. Ill-advised interventions: They should not have been undertaken to begin with.
2. Inappropriate use of external consultants: Consultants were engaged, or took responsibility, for interventions that should have been addressed by the organization.
3. Self-centered consultant: The consultants were more interested in doing their own thing than in helping the client.
4. The wrong type of consultant: Many change efforts failed because the wrong type of consultant was selected to help facilitate or manage the change.
5. **Solving with symptoms**: The change effort focused on an issue that was really a symptom of some other root cause.

6. **Providing first aid to terminally ill patients**: The organization’s management waited until it was too late to start an improvement process.

7. **Dead elephants are ignored**: Consultants and/or key stakeholders ignore a problem that should have been addressed, and that (in turn) leads to failure.

8. **Management was incapable of managing the change**: Change efforts fail because managers do not feel a strong need to change or else do not know how to go about it.

9. **Management was incapable of keeping the change going**: Change efforts fail because there is no sustained commitment to change.

10. **Lack of key stakeholder support**: Change efforts fail because key stakeholders do not provide the necessary support.

11. **Consultant uneducated or disinterested in change processes**: Change efforts fail because the consultants do not know how to make the change themselves.

12. **Inadequate or inappropriate evaluation**: Many consulting interventions fail because the consulting effort was inappropriately or ineffectively evaluated—or else not evaluated at all.

13. **Confusion between “od” and “OD”**: Many OD consulting interventions fail because so-called OD consultants were unable or unwilling to recognize the difference between “little od” and “big OD.” Little od is about one change effort. An example would be a consultant who specializes in team building and calls herself an OD consultant. But team building is not big OD, the entire field that focuses on bringing about change in organizational settings through various interventions and through a process of involving those who are affected by change.

14. **Confusion between techniques and processes**: Many OD interventions fail because the consultants responsible for their design and facilitation were so hung up on their own favorite techniques that they forgot to pay attention to relevant existing and/or emerging processes.

15. **Focusing on improving processes instead of on improving the outputs that those processes produce**: Many OD interventions fail because the consultants designing and facilitating them began by asking, “What are we going to do?,” when they should have begun by asking, “What do we want to achieve?”

To summarize, then, organization change presents one of the greatest challenges in modern organizational life. All managers and employees will have to
deal with it. If they cannot, they are not likely to be successful in what they do in the future—no matter what their specialty areas might be.

WHAT IS CHANGE MANAGEMENT, AND WHAT IS ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT?

“Defining change management is tough under any circumstances,” write Holland and Skarke (2003, p. 24), “especially in the context of a new technology being implemented in an existing organization. Mention the issue of change management and a typical response is the question ‘Does it really matter in the real world?’” The answer to that question is “Of course.” After all, definitions are important because they can provide clarity in discussions about any issue.

Change Management Defined

In the simplest sense, change management means the process of helping a person, group, or organization change. The word management implies an effort to plan the change and exert influence over other people in the process. Change management thus implies a purposeful effort to bring about change. Kudray and Kleiner (1997, p. 18) define change management as “the continuous process of aligning an organization with its marketplace—and doing it more responsively and effectively than competitors.” Anderson and Anderson (2001b, p. xxviii) define change management as “a set of principles, techniques, and prescriptions applied to the human aspects of executing major change initiatives in organizational settings. Its focus is not on ‘what’ is driving change (technology, reorganization plans, mergers/acquisitions, globalization, etc.), but on ‘how’ to orchestrate the human infrastructure that surrounds key projects so that people are better prepared to absorb the implications affecting them.”

Planned change has always been a key ingredient in any definition and application of OD. Warner Burke made a unique distinction between planned change and change management in his 2004 Linkage OD Summit keynote address. To summarize, he said that planned change results from an extensive assessment of the situation and then plans for customized interventions that are created to increase organizational excellence. Change management is thus the management of the planned changes. Organization change planned in today’s environment is never implemented as planned. For that reason, management of the change planned is thus required—and essential.

Perhaps, then, a difference just might be that OD works from a base of valid information coming from assessment, along with making free choices with the client system regarding what tools or interventions to enact the change might be best. Additionally, another difference just may be that the OD process seems to have more of a human values base. We mentioned this to one of our
colleagues and he said we were treading on a slippery slope. So let’s reserve judgment but ask you (the reader) this question: *Do you think that in your interactions with OD people you experience a greater emphasis on human values than in your interaction with people who call themselves change management consultants?*

**Organization Development Defined**

According to Clardy (2003, p. 785):

“The field of planned organization change was long equated with organization development (OD). OD proponents were up-front with the bona fides of their approach: full disclosure, informed consent, inclusive participation, and so on. These canons of OD provided the principles and practices that could be applied to any organizational change project. Yet, for a number of years, standing alongside the OD literature were smaller volumes (Zaltman & Duncan, 1977, was an early example) that did not so neatly fit the OD mold. By these accounts, the geography of organizational change management was bigger than that encompassed by OD.”

While some might disagree with the assertions in the preceding paragraph, those assertions are effective in forcing readers to confront what they believe about OD—and what they do not.

Over the years, organization development has been defined by just about every author who has written about it. Here are a few chronologically organized definitions that represent a range of ways to understand OD:

- Organization development is an effort (1) planned, (2) organization-wide, and (3) managed from the top, to (4) increase organization effectiveness and health through (5) planned interventions in the organization’s “processes,” using behavioral-science knowledge (Beckhard, 1969, p. 9).

- Organization development is a response to change, a complex educational strategy intended to change the beliefs, attitudes, values, and structure of organizations so that they can better adapt to new technologies, markets, and challenges, and the dizzying rate of change itself (Bennis, 1969, p. 2).

- Most people in the field agree that OD involves consultants who try to help clients improve their organizations by applying knowledge from the behavioral sciences—psychology, sociology, cultural anthropology, and certain related disciplines. Most would also agree that OD implies change and, if we accept that improvement in organizational functioning means that change has occurred, then, broadly defined, OD means organizational change (Burke, 1982, p. 3).
Organization development is a top-management-supported long-range effort to improve an organization’s problem-solving and renewal processes, particularly through a more effective and collaborative diagnosis and management of organization culture—with special emphasis on formal work team, temporary team, and intergroup culture—with the assistance of a consultant-facilitator and the use of the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including Action Research (French & Bell, 1990, p. 17).

Organization development is “a systemic and systematic change effort, using behavioral science knowledge and skill, to change or transform the organization to a new state” (Beckhard, 1999, personal communication).

Organization development is a system-wide and values-based collaborative process of applying behavioral science knowledge to the adaptive development, improvement and reinforcement of such organizational features as the strategies, structures, processes, people, and cultures that lead to organization effectiveness (Bradford, Burke, Seashore, Worley, & Tannenbaum, 2001).

For more definitions of OD, see Chapter Six.

These definitions imply several key points deserving elaboration.

First, OD is long-range in perspective. It is not a “quick-fix” strategy for solving short-term performance issues, as employee training is often inappropriately perceived to be. Many managers are becoming acutely aware of the need to move beyond quick, unworkable solutions to complex organizational problems. Organization development is a means to bring about complex, deep, and lasting change. This may include any domain in the organization that is in need of learning to be better so performance is enhanced. Patience and a long-term effort are required to achieve deep and significant change. In many organizations OD is coupled with strategic business planning, a natural fit because both can be long-range in scope.

Second, OD should be supported by top managers. They are usually the chief power brokers and change agents in any organization; top managers control an organization’s resources and reward systems. Although OD efforts can be undertaken at any organizational level without direct top-management participation, OD is less likely to succeed if it does not have at least tacit approval from top management.

Third, OD effects change, although not exclusively, through education. Organization development expands people’s ideas, beliefs, and behaviors so that they can apply new approaches to old states of existence. Even more importantly, OD change efforts go beyond employee-training efforts and concentrate on the work group or organization in which new ideas, beliefs, or behaviors are to be applied. Organization development for many has always been synonymous with...
organization learning (Argyris, 1993, 2004; Bennis, 1969; Kanter, 1992; Lippitt, 1958; Senge, 1990; & Vaill, 1996). Peter Senge (1990, p. 13) says, “A learning organization is a place where people are continually discovering how they create reality. And how they can change it. Organization-wide learning involves change in culture and change in the most basic managerial practices, not just within a company, but within a whole system management... I guarantee that when you start to create a learning environment, people will not feel as though they are in control.”

The words change and learning are often used to mean the same thing, thus the title of a classic book, The Laboratory Method of Learning and Changing, by OD founders Benne, Bradford, Gibb, and Lippitt (1975). These men, and so many of the early leaders of the field, were innovative educators. Many OD founders were leading educators. They saw one of OD’s major goals to innovate and re-invent education.

Fourth, OD emphasizes employee participation in assessing the current and a positive future state, making free and collaborative choices on how implementation should proceed, and empowering the system to take responsibility for achieving and evaluating results. In this sense OD differs from other methods that hold managers or consultants responsible for the success or failure of a change effort. The entire system is accountable rather than just management.

In OD, everyone in an organization who is affected by change should have an opportunity to contribute to—and accept responsibility for—the continuous-improvement process or the transformation. Organizational effectiveness and humanistic values meet as employee ownership increases in change processes and outcomes.

What Organization Development Is Not

David Bradford, who wrote the foreword to this book, challenged the authors to convey a strong message to readers. OD is more than the use of a tool kit filled with canned tricks, piecemeal programs, gimmicks, techniques, and methodologies. Rosabeth Moss Kanter said, “Piecemeal programs are not enough. Only total transformation will help companies and people master change” (1995, p. 83).

Consultants reduce their chances for success if they rely on cookbook approaches to change. One size does not fit all. And one approach to change, as listed in a step-by-step model, does not work with all groups, all corporate cultures, all national cultures, or all people.

We believe that OD is not a mechanical rote application of someone else’s best practice. On the contrary, it uses one’s whole self encountering the full and quantum living system. Living systems are made up of vibrant communities, changing networks—formal and informal, feedback, self-organization, ongoing change, and learning. They need an organic and emerging helping process. Rote mechanisms and un-integrated change projects are less effective.
OD is not about short-term manipulation to achieve immediate financial gains. Using OD in such a way ensures failure. Instead OD is utilized as an adaptable and real-time discipline that encounters living systems that require feedback to govern next moves and adjustments. It is interactive. It is relational. It is super-engaging. It is participative. Rigid tools most often prevent the use of living robust processes to help that magical, intangible high-performing culture from emerging.

Effective trainers can be in control of a management development effort. But facilitators of organization change are not in control of the change effort. Instead they facilitate in collaborative fashion. They learn and personally change with the organization. Successful change efforts require an ebb and flow. If an inappropriate tool is chosen, it may not bend and relate to the living personality of the system.

The following statement by Edgar Schein came to us via email last week. It is in regard to his well-known contribution to the OD field titled *Process Consultation*: “What gets me is that people still see it as a technique to be chosen among other techniques rather than a core philosophy of how to establish a relationship with a human system. Oh well.”


> “In previous versions of this book, I attempted to categorize interventions. . . . I have concluded that such categories are not really useful because they divert one from the more fundamental question of figuring out what will be helpful at any given moment in the evolving relationship. I prefer a general concept of ‘Facilitative Intervention’ that implies that a consultant should always select whatever intervention will be most helpful at any given moment, given all one knows about the situation” (p. 245).

### WHAT SPECIAL TERMS OF IMPORTANCE ARE USED IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT?

Organization development consultants use special terms. Every field of endeavor has its own nomenclature, and OD is no different. Although these terms can create barriers to understanding and may be potential sources of suspicion for those not versed in them, they are useful when consultants and customers communicate with one another.

#### Organization Change

Roland Sullivan invited the professional OD community, which often dialogues at www.odnetwork.org/listsinfo, to respond to a concern he heard often from Bob Tannenbaum. Bob felt that OD needed a fresh definition of “change.” He wished for a common definition that those who initiate change would find
useful in helping the larger world better understand who we are and what we do.

Matt Minahan summarized the dialogue:

“We put this question to our 1500+ members, and found, to no one’s real surprise, that there isn’t one definition to which many members subscribe.

“There were discussions of change for what reasons, with which values, at the service of whom, at what scale, whether it has to be proactive or could be reactive, whether it should be led or managed, and even whether our field should just use the existing definitions for simplicity and clarity.

“Integrating the best of everything that was offered, we could say that organization change is the process of learning and behaving differently, in order to achieve new and better outcomes, by reordering the system structures that drive behavior.

“Of course, ‘new’ and ‘better’ are loaded with implicit values, but a values basis for the definition seemed to be important to our members.

“Other variables that came up in the list discussion included the beliefs that we—and our client organizations—hold about the world and change and how we organize those beliefs; the fit between our capability/willingness to change and the challenge, danger, or opportunity that confronts us; the alignment between the organization and its environment and the likelihood of suboptimization at some point; the ability to deeply influence the organization, down to the pattern, or second loop level; the patterns of relationships resulting in and arising from different conversations.

“Finally, there was an interesting conversation about the difference between managing change as reacting to the environment, versus leading change as anticipating and influencing the environment.”

Organization change is a departure from the status quo. It implies movement toward a goal, an idealized state, or a vision of what should be and movement away from present conditions, beliefs, or attitudes.

Different degrees of change exist. In a classic discussion on that topic, Golembiewski (1990) distinguished among three levels of change:

- **Alpha change** implies constant progress, a shift from a pre-change state to a post-change state in which variables and measurement remain constant. It is sometimes associated with incremental change.

- **Beta change** implies variable progress, a shift from a pre-change state to a post-change state in which variables and measurement methods themselves change. For example, as members of an organization participate in a change effort, they become aware of emerging issues that were unknown to them at the outset. The members change their vision of what should be and thereby alter the course of the change effort itself.
• **Gamma change** implies, in addition to beta change, a radical shift from what was originally defined as a pre-change state and a post-change state. It is sometimes called transformational change, a radical alteration from the status quo, a quantum leap or paradigm shift. It involves a complete revolution in “how we do things” or “what results we strive to achieve.”

Anderson and Anderson (2001b) provide a more recent perspective on levels or types of change. They distinguish between:

• **Developmental change**: It “represents the improvement of an existing skill, method, performance standard, or condition that for some reason does not measure up to current or future needs.” (p. 34)

• **Transitional change**: “Rather than simply improve what is, transitional change replaces what is with something entirely different.” (p. 35)

• **Transformational change**: It is the “most complex type of change facing organizations today. Simply said, transformation is the radical shift from one state of being to another, so significant that it requires a shift of culture, behavior, and mindset to implement successfully and sustain over time.” (p. 39)

**Change Agent**

One of this chapter’s authors had a conversation with Bob Blake, a noted founder of OD, many years ago regarding the origin of the term change agent. If my memory serves me accurately, in the 1950s NTL founders were in Europe collaborating with the Tavistock Institute. Someone from Tavistock used the phrase “change agent” to describe a person who facilitates change through interventions in groups and organizations. The NTL group started using it on their return and now, as you well know, it has become a common phrase among change makers and leaders. So when you hear the phrase “change agent,” recognize that it is a key OD phrase that has become popularized over the years. It says what we do. We are agents who facilitate positive learning, change, and development.

So what is a change agent? Cummings and Worley (2005) define a change agent “as a person who attempts to alter some aspect of an organization or an environment. Change agents may come from inside an organization, in which case they are called internal consultants, or they may come from outside an organization, in which case they are called external consultants.”

It is interesting to note that recently Drucker takes the term change agent to a new level. As the classic definition above states, traditionally we have heard the phrase used to define a person. But management pundit Drucker challenges us now to see the organization as change agent. Writing in *Executive Excellence,*
Drucker (2004, p. 3) says, “We can already see the future taking shape. But I believe that the future will turn in unexpected ways. The greatest changes are still ahead of us. The society of 2030 will be very different from today’s society and bear little resemblance to that predicted by today’s futurists. The next society is close enough for action to be considered in five areas. [The fourth area is] change agents. To survive and succeed, organizations will have to become change agents. The most effective way to manage change successfully is to create it.”

Client

The *client* is the organization, group, or individuals whose interests the change agent primarily serves.

Although consultants often think of the client as the one who authorized the change effort and pays their bills, they are not always certain whose purposes are to be served. For this reason, a key question for any OD consultant to consider is “Who is the client?” (Varney, 1977). On occasion, the “client” may not be the one who originally sponsored or participated in the change effort.

Culture

One focal point of OD is making changes in an organization’s culture. Prior to the early 1980s, the issue of culture was restricted to anthropology and OD circles, but *culture* became a popular buzzword after the publication of *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life* by Deal and Kennedy (1982) and *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America’s Best-Run Companies* by Peters and Waterman (1982). Peters and Waterman provided numerous examples demonstrating the importance of culture in many of the best-known and best-run companies in the United States at that time. Generally, corporate culture means:

“*Basic assumptions and beliefs* that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic ‘taken-for-granted’ fashion an organization’s view of itself and its environment. These assumptions and beliefs are *learned* responses to a group’s problems. They come to be taken for granted because they solve those problems repeatedly and reliably.” (Schein, 1985, pp. 6–7)

Culture should not be confused with climate. *Culture* refers to the overall organization. *Climate* refers more specifically to how things are done in a local team, department, or site.

Intervention

In the nomenclature of OD, an *intervention* is a change effort or a change process. It implies an intentional entry into an ongoing system. Cummings and Worley (2005) define intervention as “any action on the part of a change agent. [An] intervention carries the implication that the action is planned, deliberate, and presumably functional.”
Many people suggest that an OD intervention requires valid information, free choice, and a high degree of ownership in the course of action by the client system. Argyris defined an intervention with the following classic statement: “To intervene is to enter into an ongoing system of relationships, to come between or among persons, groups or objects for the purpose of helping them. The intervener exists independently of the system” (1970, p. 15).

**Sponsor**

A sponsor is one who underwrites, legitimizes, and champions a change effort or OD intervention.

**Stakeholder**

A stakeholder is anyone who has a stake in an OD intervention. Stakeholders may be customers, suppliers, distributors, employees, and government regulators.

**WHAT IS SYSTEMS THINKING, AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO OD PRACTITIONERS?**

In the simplest sense, a system is a series of interdependent components (Burke, 1980). For example, organizations may be viewed as social systems because they depend on interactions among people (Katz & Kahn, 1978). In addition, any organization that gives and takes information from the environment is an open system. Organizations take in inputs (customer requirements, raw materials, capital, information, or people), appreciate value through the input of a transformation process (production or service-delivery methods), and release them into the environment as outputs (finished goods, services, information, or people) (see Figure 1.1). This transformation cycle must continue to add value in the process of producing desired results if an organization is to survive.

A subsystem is a part of a system. In one sense, subsystems of an organization (a system) may include work units, departments, or divisions. In another sense, subsystems may cut across an organization and encompass activities, processes, or structures. It is thus possible to focus on an organization’s maintenance, adaptive, or managerial subsystems (Katz & Kahn, 1978), among others.

“The interdependent nature of our world calls for all of us to collaborate with others within and outside of our organizations each and every day. ‘Going-it-alone’ is often an ineffective, even damaging, strategy, particularly in light of the tremendous complexity of the challenges we face. The success of our organizations—and our individual and collective well-being—depends more and more on our ability to work with others to create a common understanding of the systems from which both problems and solutions emerge.” (Building Collaborations, 2004)
Facilitating collaboration with our clients is a key competency for OD practitioners. The identity of a system shifts when it creates a new collective and common understanding. The shift creates a culture where many ideas for action will bubble up. Helping the system distill “B” (suboptimal) ideas from “A” (best) ideas is a role very much needed today.

Interdependence comes from a trusting, open, self-realizing process. It is the opposite of a culture that is hindered by fear, closed behavior, and imposition. Such created dependence on autocratic leaders. Today we need the collaborative spirit of an engaged system to meet customer requirements and create success both for the system and for their customers. So we may say that systems thinking and acting hurls an organization into higher levels of performance.

Systems thinking is also important to OD for the simple reason that any change in any part of a system changes other parts of a system. The implications of that simple statement are, in fact, profound. The change process needs to heed such dynamics. Any change in a system will have both predictable and unpredictable consequences. Mitigating the unpredictable consequences best occurs if all parts of the system are in collaboration all through the change effort.

Exhibit 1.2 contrasts system and non-system behaviors.

**WHAT ARE THE PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF OD, AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?**

One way to view the history of organization development stresses its emergence from three separate but related behavioral-science applications: (1) laboratory training, (2) survey research and feedback, and (3) Tavistock Sociotechnical
Systems. While Chapter Three will provide a different, and more comprehensive, perspective on the origins of organization development, it is worthwhile here to offer a brief view of historical influences.

**Laboratory Training**

An early precursor of thinking about organizational change and development, laboratory training is associated with unstructured, small-group sessions in which participants share their experiences and learn from their interactions. Bradford, Gibb, and Benne (1964) explain this application in the following way:

“The term ‘laboratory’ was not idly chosen. A training laboratory is a community dedicated to the stimulation and support of experimental learning and change. New patterns of behavior are invented and tested in a climate supporting change and protected for the time from the full practical consequences of innovative action in ongoing associations.” (p. 3)

Unlike employee-training sessions, which focus on increasing individual knowledge or skill in conformance with the participant’s job requirements, laboratory-training sessions focus on group processes and group dynamics. The first laboratory-training sessions were carried out in the 1940s. In particular, the work of the New Britain Workshop in 1946, under the direction of such major social scientists as Kurt Lewin, Kenneth Benne, Leland Bradford, and Ronald Lippitt, stimulated much interest in laboratory training. The leaders and members of the workshop accidentally discovered that providing feedback to groups and to individuals at the end of each day produced more real learning about group dynamics than did lectures. The groundbreaking work of the New Britain Workshop led to the founding of the National Training Laboratories (NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science).

Early laboratory-training sessions were usually composed of participants from different organizations, a fact that led such groups to be called Stranger T-groups. (The term T-group is an abbreviation of “training group.”) Bradford, Gibb, and Benne (1964) define such a group in the following manner:

“A T-Group is a relatively unstructured group in which individuals participate as learners. The data for learning are not outside these individuals or removed from their immediate experience within the T-Group. The data are transactions among members, their own behavior in the group, as they struggle to create a productive and viable organization, a miniature society; and as they work to stimulate and support one another’s learning within that society.”

Behavioral scientists later discovered that the participants had difficulty transferring insights and behavioral changes to their work lives. This transfer-of-learning problem increased interest in conducting such sessions in a single organization, a technique that has evolved into what is now called team building.
# Exhibit 1.2. Comparison of Systems and Non-Systems Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System Behavior</th>
<th>Non-System Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Wholistic:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Non-System Behavior</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is purposefully driven from the overall view</td>
<td>• Is viewed as disconnected parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is synergistic connection to all</td>
<td>• Has an activity focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Capable of exuding transformative existence</td>
<td>• Achieves suboptimal results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emerges as a whole that is more than sum of the parts</td>
<td>• Exhibits little teamwork or harmony with parts outside itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Isolated and cut off from rich exchanges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Open Systems:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Open Systems:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Open to the surrounding milieu</td>
<td>• Closed system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As diverse as the environment</td>
<td>• Ignores ring beyond self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accepts and incorporates differences</td>
<td>• Repels influence of other ideologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Everyone has access to everyone and all information at any time</td>
<td>• Only cliques and the inner circle are in the know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Boundaries:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Boundaries:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Integrated and collaborative</td>
<td>• Concerned only with what is happening within its domain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are continually clarified to bring order out of chaos</td>
<td>• Throw projects over the wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Performs so those beyond one’s boundaries become more successful</td>
<td>• Makes it difficult for others to work with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Interactive Feedback:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interactive Feedback:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Solicits and gives continual feedback</td>
<td>• Little feedback and isolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses two-way feedback as an influence toward effectiveness of all</td>
<td>• Is blind to what others need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Truth is welcome</td>
<td>• Has a distorted view of self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Multiple Outcomes:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Multiple Outcomes:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Believes there are many ways to achieve the same outcomes</td>
<td>• Either/or—my way or else</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Innovation is a result of creativity and risk taking</td>
<td>• Non-creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Has stopped thinking because the top dictates what is to be done and how it is to be done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Equifinality:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Equifinality:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Believes in exploring many alternatives to reach the end</td>
<td>• Direct cause and effect: Believes there is one best way for all to follow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Flexible and agile</td>
<td>• Ignores resources from outside the system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Re-imagination with diverse minds and ideologies</td>
<td>• Closed minded—will not listen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
System Behavior

7. **Less Entropy:**
   - High-energy, propels an authentic commitment to execution
   - Has the ability to self-renew its energy
   - Order and self-regulation surface that lead to effectiveness

8. **Hierarchy:**
   - Self-determining
   - Leaders weave substantial webs of inclusion at all levels
   - A return to self-realization and reliance—I am in charge here; I am accountable
   - Hyperlinks and networks subvert the old hierarchy

9. **Interrelated Parts:**
   - Relationships, involvement, and participation
   - Seeks to understand complex interconnections
   - Viable networks
   - Strong partnerships
   - Integrated action plans and application of resources

10. **Dynamic Equilibrium:**
    - Stability and standardization in core processes with continual adjustments being made
    - Is gleeful and happy about being a change agent organization
    - Becomes more effective

11. **Internal Elaboration:**
    - Details refined, sophisticated operation and effectively works to more satisfy the whole

12. **Unity and All-ness and Oneness:**
    - Uses all resources intelligently
    - Transcends holism and reductionism
    - Becomes wildly successful because is in touch with the new dynamic reality

Non-System Behavior

- Rigidity stifles energy
- Confusion and disjointedness occur
- Obsolescence and death begin to set in
- The systems choke them of their vitality so often they do not survive

- Legal dictation
- Bureaucracy causes ineffectiveness
- Command and control
- Fear-driven management
- Out of touch with reality

- Components/divisions
- Ignores synergies and partnerships
- Silos and separate parts

- Short-term, myopic view
- Ruts—same old-same old
- Resistance to change

- Complexity, confusion, and frustration
- Overall does not work to satisfy the whole

- Competes with differences and destroys what they might bring for survival and success

Jointly created by Steve Harmon, MBA, president and CEO, Twin Cities Die Castings Company, and Roland Sullivan.
Laboratory training was an important forerunner of OD because it focused attention on the dynamics of group or team interaction. In addition, it provided a basis for team building, which is still an important OD intervention.

**Survey Research and Feedback**

Survey research and feedback also made an important contribution to the evolution of OD. This approach to change was developed and refined by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan under the direction of Rensis Likert. Likert, who directed the Survey Research Center from 1950 to 1970, became widely recognized for his innovative use of written survey questionnaires to collect information about an organization and its problems, provide feedback to survey respondents, and stimulate joint planning for improvement. This technique is called *survey research and feedback* or *survey-guided development*.

Likert’s method began evolving when he observed that many organizations seldom used the results from attitude surveys to guide their change efforts. Managers authorized the surveys but did not always act on the results. This “ask-but-don’t-act” approach produced greater frustration among employees than not asking for their opinions in the first place.

The centerpiece of Likert’s approach was a technique called the *interlocking conference*. Survey results were given to top managers during the first conference, and then other conferences were held to inform the organization’s successively lower levels. In each conference, group members worked together to establish an action plan to address problems or weaknesses revealed by the survey. This top-down strategy of feedback and performance planning ensured that the action plan devised by each group was tied to those at higher levels.

A philosophy about organizational systems governed much of Likert’s work. He believed that any system—that is, an organization or a component part of an organization—can be categorized into one of four types based on eight key characteristics. The four organizational types are shown in Exhibit 1.3.

Likert believed that System 4 was the “ideal” organization. In Likert’s System 4 organization, leadership is based on influence, not authority or power. Employees are motivated through the intrinsic rewards stemming from the work itself. Communication is balanced, with a great deal of two-way interaction between managers and employees. Likert (1961) justified System 4 as a norm or ideal because he found that “supervisors with the best records of performance focus their primary attention on the human aspects of their subordinates’ problems and on endeavoring to build effective work groups with high performance goals” (p. 7).
Likert’s views, described in his two major books, *New Patterns of Management* (1961) and *The Human Organization* (1967), have had a profound influence on OD. He demonstrated how information can be collected from members of an organization and used as the basis for participative problem solving and action planning. In addition, he advocated pursuit of a norm for organizational functioning (System 4) that has since prompted others to pursue similar norms for organizations. In some respects, Likert’s views about the System 4 organization are important precursors to modern-day interest in self-directed work teams and high-performance work environments.

**Tavistock Sociotechnical Systems**

Another major contributor to the evolution of OD is Tavistock Sociotechnical Systems. Tavistock, founded in 1920, is a clinic in England. Its earliest work was devoted to family therapy in which both child and parents received simultaneous treatment.

An important experiment in work redesign was conducted for coal miners by a team of Tavistock researchers at about the same time that laboratory training was introduced in the United States. Before the experiment, coal miners worked closely in teams of six. They maintained control over who was placed on a team and were rewarded for team, not individual, production. New technology was introduced to the mine, changing work methods from a team to an individual orientation. The result was a decrease in productivity and an increase in absenteeism. The Tavistock researchers recommended that the new technology could

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**Exhibit 1.3. Characteristics of Likert’s Four Types of Organizations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System 1</th>
<th>System 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploitive-Authoritarian</td>
<td>Benevolent-Authoritative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogmatic leadership</td>
<td>Parental approach to management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulative use of rewards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top-down communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System 3</th>
<th>System 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultative</td>
<td>Participative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management listens to employees, but reserves the right to make decisions</td>
<td>Leadership based on influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some reliance on intrinsic rewards; most rewards are based on extrinsic (money) rewards</td>
<td>Intrinsic rewards predominate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two-way communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
be used by miners grouped into teams. The researchers’ advice, when implemented, improved productivity and restored absenteeism rates to historically low levels in the organization.

Tavistock Sociotechnical Systems’ key contribution to OD was an emphasis on both the social and the technical subsystems. Tavistock researchers believed that organizations are systems and are composed of key subsystems. One such subsystem is the people in an organization. The other is the non-human subsystem. Both must be taken into account if a change is to be successful.

**Process Consultation**

A more recent influence on our field has been Schein’s process consultation. *Process consultation* can be defined as the creation of a relationship that permits both the consultant and the client to perceive, understand, and act on the process events that occur in the client’s internal and external environment in order to improve the situation as defined by the client.

In *Process Consultation Revisited*, Schein writes:

“In reflecting on process consultation and the building of a ‘helping relationship,’ the question arises: where is the emphasis or the essence that makes this philosophy of helping ‘different’? In my reflections on some forty years of practicing ‘this stuff,’ I have concluded that the essence is in the word *relationship*. To put it bluntly, I have come to believe that the *decisive factor as to whether or not help will occur in human situations involving personality, group dynamics, and culture is the relationship between the helper and the person, group, or organization that needs help*. From that point of view, every action I take, from the beginning contact with a client, should be an intervention that simultaneously allows both the client and me to diagnose what is going on and that builds a relationship between us. When all is said and done, I measure success in every contact by whether or not I feel the relationship has been helpful and whether or not the client feels helped.

“Furthermore, from that point of view, the principles, guidelines, practical tips, call them what you like, fall out as the kinds of things I have to constantly remind myself of in my efforts to build that kind of helping relationship. Let us review the principles from that point of view.

1. Always try to be helpful.
2. Always stay in touch with current reality.
3. Access your ignorance.
4. Everything you do is an intervention.
5. It is the client who owns the problem and the solution.
6. Go with the flow.
7. Timing is crucial.
8. Be constructively opportunistic with confrontive interventions.
9. Everything is a source of data; errors are inevitable—learn from them.

10. When in doubt share the problem.

“These principles do not tell me what to do. Rather, they are reminders of how to think about the situation I am in. They offer guidelines when the situation is a bit ambiguous.” (1999, pp. 243–245)

So there you have it! Remember always that OD is more than just applying techniques, tools, and methods. Good OD is built on building effective relationships that are trusting, open, self-discovering, and interdependent. We best serve by staying in the here and now and innovating responses and interactions that facilitate movement to a client-desired state that helps the clients discover with us action that will bring them success and unprecedented results. It is about adding measurable value to any encounter. Personally, we receive so much pleasure in being human interaction agents and artists. This is a world of work that is most personal, challenging, and meaningful.

**HOW IS OD RELATED TO OTHER HR FIELDS?**

Organization development may be regarded as part of a larger human resource (HR) field that is unified in its focus on people—and primarily people in organizational settings. However, OD’s central focus differs from that of other HR fields. It is worth considering the relationship between OD and these other fields because OD activities are affected by—and, in turn, affect—other HR activities.

Leonard Nadler (1980, 1989) is one prominent authority who made an early attempt to explain these relationships. He distinguished between human resource development (HRD), human resource management (HRM), and human resource environment (HRE) activities. Taken together, they encompass all HR fields.

**Human Resource Development**

*Human resource development,* according to Nadler (1989), consists of training, education, and development. It is defined as “organized learning experiences provided by employers within a specified period of time to bring about the possibility of performance improvement and/or personal growth” (p. 6). *Training* is a short-term change effort intended to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need to perform their jobs better. *Education* is an intermediate-term change effort intended to prepare individuals for promotions (vertical career progression) or for enhanced technical abilities in their current jobs (horizontal career progression). *Development* is a long-term change effort intended to broaden individuals through experience and to give them new insights about themselves and their organizations. All HRD efforts share a common goal of bringing about “the possibility of performance improvement and/or personal growth” (p. 6).
Human Resource Management

Nadler believes that HRM includes all activities traditionally linked with the personnel function except training. Human resource management (HRM) is thus associated with recruitment, selection, placement, compensation, benefits, appraisal, and HR information systems. According to Nadler, all HRM efforts share one common goal: to increase organizational productivity by using the talents of its current employees.

Human Resource Environment

Human resource environment includes OD and job- or work-redesign efforts. According to Nadler, HRE activities focus on changing working conditions and interpersonal relationships when they interfere with performance or impede employee creativity. Unlike other HR fields, HRE activities share one goal: to improve the work environment through planned, long-term, and group-oriented change in organizational structures or interpersonal relations.

More Recent Thinking About HR, OD, Training, and HRD

The HR, OD, training, and HRD fields have not remained static. Thinking about all these fields has been changing in recent years. A major change has been a movement away from activities or techniques and toward a greater focus on results and on demonstrated, measurable achievements. The HR and OD fields are converging—a topic treated at greater length in a later chapter of this book. The training field has been changing with increased recognition of the importance of obtaining results rather than just training people, an activity. While systematically designed training has remained important, even at a time when e-learning methods have come into vogue and then faded in the face of the growing importance of blended learning (see Rothwell & Kazanas, 2004), greater focus has turned to what learners must do to take responsibility for their own learning process (Rothwell, 2002). Human resource development (HRD), now an outdated term that reflects outdated thinking, has evolved into a new generation called workplace learning and performance (WLP) that is defined as “the integrated use of learning and other interventions for the purpose of improving individual and organizational performance. It uses a systematic process of analyzing performance and responding to individual, group, and organizational needs. WLP creates positive, progressive change within organizations by balancing human, ethical, technological, and operational considerations” (Rothwell, Sanders, & Soper, 1999, p. 121). Unlike HRD, which was operationally defined in terms of such activities as training, OD, and career development (McLagan, 1989), WLP focuses on results, performance, outputs, and productivity through learning. It is thus goal-oriented (Rothwell & Sredl, 2000).
SUMMARY

In this chapter we addressed many important questions. The questions and brief answers to them supplied in the chapter, follow:

**Question:** What do you believe about change?  **Answer:** Clarify your own beliefs about people, change, organizations, and other issues relevant to organization change and development.

**Question:** Why should you care about organization development (OD)?  **Answer:** People should care about organization development because it is rapidly emerging as a key business topic—if not the key business topic.

**Question:** What is change management (CM), and what is organization development (OD)?  **Answer:** Change management implies “a purposeful effort to bring about change. Organization development is a system-wide application of behavioral science knowledge to the planned development, improvement, and reinforcement of the strategies, structures, and processes that lead to organization effectiveness” (Cummings & Worley, 2001, p. 1). A key difference between OD and other change management strategies may be OD’s important focus on values and ethics, both key issues to business in the wake of a continuing spate of ethical scandals affecting previously respected organizations.

**Question:** What special terms of importance are used in organization change and development?  **Answer:** Key terms include change; change agent; client; culture; intervention; sponsor; and stakeholder.

**Question:** What is systems thinking, and why is it important to OD practitioners?  **Answer:** Systems thinking is important to OD for the simple reason that any change in any part of a system changes other parts of a system.

**Question:** What are the philosophical foundations of OD, and why are they important?  **Answer:** One way to view the history of OD stresses its emergence from three separate but related behavioral-science applications: (1) laboratory training, (2) survey research and feedback, and (3) Tavistock Sociotechnical Systems, (4) process consultation.

**Question:** How is OD related to other HR fields?  **Answer:** A simple way to distinguish OD from WLP is to think in terms of *what is to be changed* and *how it is to be changed*. OD focuses on changing an organization and the modes of behavior demonstrated in the corporate culture. WLP focuses on getting results in organizational settings, using any and all methods appropriate to do that—but with a heavy emphasis on learning-oriented efforts for individuals and groups.
References


