Organizational Development Executive Summary

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Abstract

Organization development (OD) is an effort that is planned organizationwide, to increase organization effectiveness and health through planned interventions in the organization's processes using behavioral science knowledge (Anderson, 2012). The planned change is aimed toward improving overall organization effectiveness by enhancing organizational dimensions such as external environment, mission, strategy, leadership, culture, structure, information, reward systems, and work policies and procedures (2012). OD process assist organization as they adapt to change internally and externally to improve their overall performance.
Organizational Development Executive Summary

Organization development (OD) is an effort that is planned, organizationwide, managed from the top to increase organization effectiveness and health through planned interventions in the organization's processes using behavioral science knowledge (Anderson, 2012). Organizations go through change or need to change periodically to adapt to customer demands, to improve profits, or changing technology. Organization development is a process that assists the organization to make changes internally to be more productive and adapt to the external environment changes such as laws and regulations that may affect the organization.

Burke and Bradford (as cited in Anderson, 2012, p. 3) describe OD as a planned change aimed toward improving overall organization effectiveness by way of enhanced congruence of key organizational dimensions such as external environment, mission, strategy, leadership, culture, structure, information, reward systems, and work policies and procedures. As organizations try to keep up and adapt to change it requires the organization to develop or change strategies, structures and processes. In addition, individual employees will have to adapt to change perhaps by learning new skills as structures and processes change, or changing their behavior as organizational culture changes.

OD assists the organization in the change process. The practice of OD can include areas such as management practices, quality and employee involvement, organizational culture, and change management, strategic change, and reengineering. Successful and collaborative teamwork is important in the success of an organization. The OD process can help the organization develop successful and collaborative working organizational teams.
Employee Involvement

Employee participation, involvement and empowerment are important elements in the OD change process. Personal effectiveness, challenge, learning, fulfillment, and satisfaction can be gained at the same time that the organization's effectiveness and objectives are also realized (Anderson, 2012). Participation is a foundational value essential to organizational development and change. This value means that organizational members should be involved and included in decisions and organizational changes that impact them (2012).

Employee involvement is an attempt to include workers in order to develop greater commitment, productivity, and quality by granting decision-making authority, giving them information about the organization such as goals and finances (Anderson, 2012). Employee involvement encourages the organization to disseminate information to employees so they become engaged in meeting the goals and strategies of the organization. Employee engagement is a view in organizational development that refers to the individual’s involvement and satisfaction as well as enthusiasm for work (2012).

Developing Systems and Processes

To accomplish and understand the connection of planning and processes within the organization an open systems approach can be utilized. Open systems thinking is the process of considering how people, processes, structures, and policies all exist in an interconnected web of relationships (Anderson, 2012). Open systems’ thinking sees the whole organization larger than the sum of its parts (2012). This thinking reflects the importance of each part contributing to the overall success of the organization, each part is important to the organization meeting its goals and objectives.
Aspects of the organizations systems are interdependent on one another; problems in one part can create problems in other parts of the system (Anderson, 2012). Four common models of organizational change are the Lewin’s three-phase model, the Nadler-Tushman congruence model, the Burke-Litwin model, and the Weisboard Six-Box model (2012). Each model has differing perspectives in organizational change and helps the organization identify patterns in the structures and processes that may need change.

Many scholars and practitioners believe that there are several practical steps to facilitate change no matter what model of change is used. Kotter (as cited in Anderson, 2012, p. 83) outlined eight steps to institute major change in organizations: establishing a sense of urgency, creating the guiding coalition, developing a vision and strategy, communicating the change vision, empowering broad-based action, generating short-term wins, consolidating gains and producing more change, and anchoring new approaches in the culture.

Teamwork

Team development programs proactively encourage teams to develop healthier groups from team building approach relying on team exercises and simulations (Anderson, 2012). Susan Wheelan developed a four step model evolution process of team development to show how teams grow and develop in their team settings. The four stages include dependency and inclusion, counterdependency and fight, trust and structure, and work (2012). Not all groups reach the higher stages of group development and remain stuck in earlier stages of development, but groups that do reach the higher stages of development are more productive (Wheelan, 2009). Being aware of the stages of team development can help pinpoint common team problems and suggest interventions that enhance team effectiveness (2012).
Team members are sometimes unclear of the goals and their roles. Goals and objectives should be conveyed to team members and members should have a clear understanding of their particular role in the team. Communication and collaboration among team members can help determine if the team is working well together. There are eight characteristics that set apart high performing successful teams: clear and elevating goals; a results driven structure; competent members; unified commitment; collaborative climate; standards of excellence; external support and recognition; and principled leadership (Anderson, 2012). Most often teams fail in one or more of these areas. Not meeting one or more of these characteristics can help the organization determine that a team intervention in needed.

There are several types of teams including self-directed work teams, virtual teams, and cross-functional teams. OD can assist the organization in developing successful teams and meeting the eight characteristics of high performing teams. Team building interventions include team start-up and transition meetings; confrontation meetings; role negotiation and role analysis; work re-design, workout, and appreciative inquiry (Anderson, 2012).

The interventions address team building in various ways and settings. For teams that need more participative roles and clearly defined roles, the role negotiation and role analysis would be an appropriate intervention. In the OD process role negotiation and role analysis is highly participative and can build team consensus about responsibilities (Anderson, 2012). Analysis, charting, and negotiation of members roles not only documents roles and clarifies the decision-making process but identifies struggles that can be addressed as the team moves forward in reaching their goals (2012). The role negotiation and role analysis helps team members negotiate responsibilities and help clarify the decision making processes.
Institutional Foresight and Knowledge

Exercising foresight is being able to perceive the significance and nature of events before they have occurred (Kim, 2002). An ethical responsibility of a leader is to know the understanding structures within his or her domain of responsibility and be able to make predictions that can guide the organization and the people to a better future (2002).

Clarity at the levels of purpose and core values in the organization can bring about foresight (Kim, 2002). Developing and understanding core values brings about our identity both individually and organizationally. Values are underlying beliefs that express what we believe and guide us as we make choices and for resolving conflicts (Anderson, 2012). Core values of the organization signify what the organization stands for, what they believe in, and their identity.

Important current values in organization development are participation, involvement and empowerment; importance of groups and teams; growth, development and learning; valuing the whole person; dialogue and collaboration; and authenticity, openness and trust (Anderson, 2012). A statement of core values will help clarify the identity of the institution to the employees and external communities.

Organizational Culture

Culture has been defined as the shared attitudes, values beliefs, and customs of members of a social unit or organization (Anderson, 2012). The concept of corporate culture began in the 1980's. Corporate culture emphasized the importance of aligning strategy and culture to drive a company's success (2012). If the strategy and culture were not in alignment, one of them must change.
Culture can be described as ‘this is how we do things around here’ mentality. Organizational culture can have a variety of behaviors, actions and meanings. Elements of organizational culture include language, artifacts, stories, rites and rituals, values, ethics and moral codes (Anderson, 2012). As an organization grows and changes, organization culture must also change. An organization must determine the existing culture, define values, analyze and then discuss action plans to change negative culture values and implement new culture values (2012). Changing the organizational culture can be difficult, time consuming and costly but it is an important element in the organizational development process.

Trust has developed into a preeminent value in organizational change and development. Trust in competence and trust in intentions are important for employees to perform effectively in the development of an organization (Lucas & Klein, 2008). Employees must trust the intentions of the organization and that the leadership is making the best decisions in the OD process and that they are also taking into account the employees best interest. Lucas and Klein (2008) stressed when initiating change efforts, an organization needs to assess and understand what aspects of the culture can be facilitators or hindrances and what aspects of the group structures the organization can use to facilitate learning and change.

**Bacone College and Organizational Development**

Bacone College is a non-profit private institution in Oklahoma founded in 1880. The college has an historical educational mission to American Indians and has an affiliation with the American Baptist Churches-USA. In 2012, Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools conducted the on-site accreditation visit at Bacone College. The HLC team commended Bacone on improvements made at the institution since the
last visit in 2005. The HLC report however indicated several areas in which the institution should develop and make changes to advance the institution forward. The report indicated a need for more and better communication and collaboration. The report stated that at the top management level there was great communication and collaboration but it did not extend past this central administration (Fansler, Brown, Corey & Holmes, 2012). The study further stated that sharing data, reports, vision, concerns, progress and updates are key to building a cohesive campus that buys into the vision and level of trust that is important to the organization (2012).

The plan further revealed that the college lacked detailed planning in the areas of budgeting, enrollment, human resources development and facilities management. The detailed planning and processes of these areas is essential to the effective connection of the strategic plan to one another and the organization as a whole (Fansler et al., 2012). Effective organizations demonstrate their ability to be forward looking, and when necessary to realign their programs and resources to meet future needs and opportunities (2012). The HLC team found the college needed to be looking forward or exercising foresight to anticipate changes the institution needs to undertake.

Another important area to address for the college is in the area of collaborative teamwork and employee participation. Teams can become isolated not realizing that they have become separated from other teams or groups in the organization. Staff members did not feel like they were 'in the loop' about changes, strategic planning, its progress and their budgets (Fansler et al., 2012). Staff would like to have their voices heard, knowing that the administration will make the final decision, there was a lack of trust that has developed between the administration and staff
(2012). The lack of established and written core values also leads to the lack of trust and understanding of the institution's goals and mission.

Organizational development can assist the college in addressing these changes and to develop new plans and processes. The open systems thinking can help the college in considering how people, processes, structures, and policies are all connected. Utilizing the role negotiating and role analysis can help clarify roles and responsibilities.

The culture of the institution is an important area to address for college. Employees may be resistant to change and want to hold on to the old ways. The OD process can help the institution in determining the existing culture and defining values and then will allow the college to change the culture of mistrust and implement new culture values. Implementing an OD process at the college would improve the overall performance, effectiveness and success of the college and address the areas indicated in the HLC report.

**Conclusion**

Change is a constant in organizations. Organizations must adapt to change as they look to improve financial performance, customer demands change, and technology changes. OD is not only a planned effort but can be brought about by external environment changes. The OD process introduces change to improve overall organization effectiveness. A final element of the OD process is sustaining change. Sustaining change involves creating systems, structures, or processes so that the organization and individuals do not drift back to doing things the old way. OD will help the organization address areas of strategy, structures and processes and make the necessary changes that will help make the organization high performing and successful.
References


