
ENHANCING COMPETENCE IN ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF GROUP CONSULTANTS

S.Z.Makhmudova

Mirzo Ulugbek National University Of Uzbekistan Jizzakh Branch Of Kazan Federal University
Co-Educational, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT: The term organizational development (OD) has been in vogue for more than forty years, and consultants have intensified their activities since the 1990s. OD can be understood as an applied behavioral science and is described as the planned approach to change management that aims to maintain, as well as enhance, the effectiveness and health of the organization. Hence, it involves interventions undertaken in an organization to move the organization and its members from where they are to where they want to be. The purpose of planned OD interventions is to ensure changes to a recalibrated organization – that is, from negativism to positivity – and to see what is there instead of what is not there in the organization. The ultimate goal of the field is to improve the effectiveness, productivity, quality, and performance of individual and collective systems. This could happen from either a micro- or a macro-organizational perspective.

The role of the OD consultant closely relates to the broad range of trends and challenges that are shaping organizations. The various types of consultants operate within different organizational levels, and they have been known as, for example, clinical therapists, managers, administrators, executive coaches, advisers, and indeed, also researchers. Hence, the impact each of them has on the client is, at least to some extent, defined by the role the consultant adopts and the area in which he or she is working within the client organization. Therefore, there seem to be certain competencies required for them to be successful interventionists and to develop the organization. Many high-cost interventions have not provided the results that companies expected initially. Therefore, it could be possible that transitions are not managed well, and corruption could have resulted in the shortage of profound experts in the fellowship.

KEYWORDS: Psychology, psychological counseling, consultant, organizational development.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational development (OD) builds upon a theoretical foundation that provides a framework for interventions in organizations. The knowledge of one or several theoretical concepts is considered to be helpful for understanding an organization and its dynamics. For instance, the concept of a system as it is used in OD literature, or the principles of humanistic psychology that inform OD, are considered relevant in the literature. Irrespective of the chosen theoretical foundation, the individual consultant should be capable of transferring the theoretical understanding of pathological behavior, group dynamics, or corresponding change and learning

processes into an extension of the retroaction and therefore design an intervention. Behavioristic methods, systemic analyses, and Gestalt theory must be linked with the overall change strategy of a client.

A sound theoretical framework seems to be crucial for the beginning of a consultant's OD efforts. He must be able to understand an organization theoretically. However, a lot of actions will only be reactions directed to the needs of a client system during the OD consulting, and "the moment you find a matching concept of the behavioral phenomena and the dynamics of the organizational system, which meets both the desire for understanding and the logical and empirical conditions for causality, scientists start to limit their interest in the range covered by this concept." At least, organizational theories represent a complex way of looking at an organization; the essence of the telephone system is the collection of functional characteristics that are essential to understanding the nature of the telephone system at the wire-tumbling level.

Group consultants often draw on a range of concepts and models that are foundational to the field of organizational development. These models guide organizational development consultants in the application of concepts such as organizational culture, change management, and various aspects of leadership dynamics. In this sense, they are tools that provide a basic structure to organize the process of change. Most models of organizational development are based on the normal theory of planned change. This means that the focus of the development effort is specifically identified and is planned in terms of a goal. Such goals may include increased collaboration, communication, and cohesion, and efficiencies to complement economic or strategic objectives. It is generally agreed that most leaders come with a particular model, based on their experience, assessment of the organizational situation, belief about the fundamental problem, and preferred approach to action.

There are many different models used to persuade or influence change in organizations. They are developed from very divergent theoretical assumptions about the nature of the organization and would be appropriate in quite different organizational situations. From a consultancy perspective, to be a skilled practitioner involves the ability to break these models apart and to build new models to persuade change based on the actual situation. In keeping with this, they would need to understand generically from a theoretical perspective the tools, processes, and issues embedded within these models. A practitioner needs to use models that best fit the actual situation they are dealing with. It may be necessary, for example, in a very difficult case, to build a model that draws on threads from three or four of the various perspectives outlined, even though on a theoretical basis they appear somewhat incompatible.

Consultants who serve in a process facilitation role in helping groups to be more effective, flexible, creative, and functional share a set of competencies that are critical for the effectiveness of the organizational development interventions that they facilitate. Competencies, such as those that are technical or those that refer to the interpersonal skills that enhance the dynamic and functioning of the group and its individual members in an extended or open systems context, are the "tools" that the practitioner uses in his or her practice of consulting. The technical skills and knowledge that a consultant uses in his or her practice are developed and applied within a

particular stance or way of relating to the clients, that is driven and informed by this practitioner's value premises.

A broad range of competencies operate in training work or in process facilitation, including technical, interpersonal, and analytical or conceptual competencies. These three areas might be imagined operating across a continuum. These competencies are fundamental in developing a foundation from which the consultant operates and provide a foundation for additional specific competencies. Clearly, if a consultant lacks some of the competencies that lie within this base of the "competency pyramid," the ability to help groups or systems maximize their potential and/or improve the system's overall functioning may be compromised. However, understanding the constructs and behaviors that provide the foundation for the above-mentioned competencies is of utmost importance in the practice of process consultation. For example, a consultant who does not understand the elements and meaning behind the concept of power and their associated dynamics holds less ability or scope of practice in helping his or her clients affect real change within their organization, particularly in the systemic context.

The ability to serve as an effective organizational development consultant necessitates various levels of skills and competencies. Technical competence is essential to providing efficient and effective consulting services. The ability of a practitioner to provide evidence that they have appropriate knowledge of and training in the application of appropriate techniques and methods associated with consultancy is also fundamental to achieving their desired outcomes. Data analysis, intervention design and execution, and process evaluation—these are the technical competencies involved in the organizational development field. Also important is the need for regular refreshing of organizational development consulting toolkits. Consultant practitioners should be adept at keeping pace with changes in organizational development, business psychology, and HR tools and be comfortable in updating their practice. Successful intervention and consulting practitioners provide visual evidence in their case studies that they have successfully applied one or more of their toolkit skills. This can be a piece of research information that has been used as their intervention within a consulting project itself or a written case study where a particular skill has been used as part of a client intervention. The case study may refer to the use of pre-existing skills in intervening with burning platforms, innovative HR, gender, diversity practice, and ethical HR, or it can focus more on change management approaches. Whether focused on skills or techniques, this will be evidence that the consulting work is evidence-based. It could be the ability of the consultant to explore the use of narratives and storytelling in business interventions or the application of 360-degree appraisal approaches in healthcare. The use of survey feedback in schools and emotional intelligence testing in government departments are just some possible examples. This sort of evidence will play a part in the level of credibility of their consulting capabilities and ensure that if claims of benefits are made, they are appropriate, justifiable, and measurable. Lastly, evaluative techniques or customer outcome measures could also be evident in the early part of reflecting on one's ability to develop their consultancy skills too. Alternative examples could include process improvement consulting skills honing in SME environments.

Interpersonal skills are an essential competency for organizational development consulting. To work successfully as a liaison between a client's organization and one or several change agents, the consultant must be able to relate to the client at the individual and group levels.

Good interpersonal skills such as genuine friendliness, good communication, accurate empathy, and the ability to build and maintain a warm relationship are necessary in most intervention and organizational change processes. Consequently, consultants without good interpersonal skills often produce little changes in their clients' organizations. Practitioners report that trust and rapport are necessary to be considered a competent consultant. In some cases, they can even be more important than actual technical competence. Thus, some practitioners claim that the social relationship that springs up between consultant and client is the essential part from which are derived the characteristic attitudes and qualities that distinguish the relationship from relations between correspondent and organizer. The one-to-one, individual nature of the personal relationship and the understanding and support that it offers are critical to the effective work conducted together.

Conflict resolution and negotiation skills help when individuals are "acting out" and when individual members of an organization are at odds with each other. A consultant found that her skills at individual level conflict negotiation were especially helpful in building more open communication and trust between management and union leaders. Such skills stand behind both early diagnostic work in union-management relationships and the solutions designed to decrease recrimination. Part of the problem lay in a difficult management-union relationship that was as well as a larger part of the problem represented many small, high-severity conflicts between individual workers and individual supervisors; if the personal-feeling conflicts could be reduced, she believed that some mutual respect between workers and managers might be built. Any given consultant-negotiator should be equally adept at this type of multi-level problem solving and power exploration. In organizational development, the two previous levels are often complemented by even higher-level diplomatic negotiation - the consultant could meet with the other side of the company or even intervene at an industry level. This type of economic sector skill is also a powerful tool in business settings where many small companies might be vying for the consultant's expertise. The choice of intervention level depends on the groups of conflict needing to be negotiated and on the approach chosen for intervention. These three areas: intervener negotiation, intra-community/intra-individual conflict resolution, and individual communication for readiness, encompass all the relevant competencies in need of further study. On a theoretical level, the special role of analytical abilities results from the scientific and technological nature of organizational development consulting. Systematic, research-based analysis of a consulting target is often the necessary starting point to identify an intervention strategy or a suitable method. In the practice of organizational development advisory, analytical skills manifest themselves mainly in three areas: diagnosis (the client's real problem), data analysis (interpretation of information received about an organization), and integration and evaluation (of the available interventions). These dimensions, of course, overlap in practice. If the first function is usually understood as associative thinking, analysis of the connections (reasons) that explain the phenomena that we could observe with an unaided eye, and the third is usually called

critical thinking, conclusions based on evidence and logical analysis of the information obtained, the second dimension requires more thorough methodological training, discussion, and professional expertise.

The ability to think in terms of indicators and ratios should be based more on systematic practice, because there is a large body of knowledge on organizational measurement and management-specific indicators used in various organizational interventions, which would apply to the field of organizational psychology supported by consulting. The best method to form a consultant practitioner who is engaged in the path of developing analytical skills is repetitive practice. Repetitive practice of analytical thinking involving real problems encourages the creation of new thinking patterns, deeper perceptions, and the ability to integrate the larger situation. Orienting a reflective culture in consultancy that involves always-on practice and approach to clients' problems in terms of evidence-based contributions to shaping analytical thinking. Therefore, a practitioner would identify a potential problem in each activity or training, revealing an innovation, a new path at a set ceremony, or a small administrative novelty. This way, the practitioner benefits from both skills: the "big eyes" that seniority brought and the clients' problems. In terms of its practical applications, analytical thinking in consultancy contributes to the development of the following competencies: executive coaching, training evaluation, surveys, and organizational climate diagnosis, organizational behavior, and resources management. Drawing the picture from the practice of a plethora of models results in spending time on creating a tool belt for the practitioner; he spends his time reading or taking courses. A true practitioner spends his time making client paintings, and a cartoon or maybe "a Mona Lisa." Reading about the Mona Lisa portrait and how it was made might help the artist, but painting them, for sure, does. Senior consultants focus on the client's problem, the uniqueness, the peculiarity of the client's environment. Central in his attention is the method. He is no longer absorbed in cognitive theory, content, and what underlies cognitive processes, but cognitive processes and not the methods it produces – both the cognitive and critical thinking about which method might solve this particular problem. By paying systematic attention in consultancy to each bias, the practitioner has developed cognitive thinking.

Consultant competence evaluation, training professional development programs, and ongoing professional development to increase credibility and enhance services for client systems. One area of growth that is needed in the development of OD consultants is the identification of effective methods to assess and continually develop and evaluate the competencies of an OD consultant. In business and other human service and corporate entities, competencies are listed in the form of knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for effective and satisfactory performance. This also applies to consultants working in the fields of organizational development, community development, and other applied areas that use consultative processes. There are multiple frameworks and assessment tools that are used to evaluate future and ongoing performance in business that can also be used in organizational development work, such as using accountability techniques like a robust feedback system in identifying effective professionals. Additional methods would be appropriate for looking at the qualities and competencies for OD consultant

work. More research is needed to discover the effectiveness of consultant assessment frameworks.

The ranked level of competency shown on the self-assessment tool can allow the consultant the ability to prioritize their skill development efforts, starting with the highest ranked measurable competencies, and then proceed in descending order. By using self-assessment and receiving feedback from multiple people concerning their skills and knowledge capital, the OD consultant is able to identify strengths and areas of opportunity for professional training development. From this vantage point, the consultant can chart a plan to improve in areas of need or can identify strengths to sell to others as a value add for engaging their services. We suggest that other items and assessment tools identified in our reviews presented need to be organized into a framework in order to systematically study the full context of consultant work. Like in the practice of program evaluation, if we ourselves are expert program evaluators, we need to systematically structure the approach to see the big picture, especially in a human system at the organizational level. Programs approach assessment of their parts in systematic and integrated means. The same principles would apply to the study of consultant competencies and linked performance, which ultimately lead to more effective practices that have global and societal value.

Assessment methods have been proposed that are broadly consistent with approaches to competency used in business and industry. Three broad approaches to assessing employee competence in organizations have been proposed. A popular and comprehensively studied method is conducting widely varying performance appraisals using supervisors as raters. A second method is to use "distal criteria" such as employee productive longevity or future potential. This is often accomplished by creating competency models that specify attributes and behaviors of high-performing employees. A third method for assessing competence involves using more proximal criteria that are seen as components of job performance. This approach has sought to assess competencies such as self-directed learning, emotional intelligence, personality traits, and constructs that might be seen as proximal causes of job performance or simply valued by employers.

An approach used in Midwest Manufacturing involved 20 different internal consultants who were asked to evaluate how much time they spent on desired behaviors on a scale from 1 (rarely) to 5 (regularly). Time talking with clients, time thinking about clients, and time spent on interventions are compared for each of the 20 consultants. In some studies, informants' assessment of their own competencies has been used as well. An inclusive list of competencies required for a consulting role has been developed to include the "tips and tools" that distinguish the skills of good from not-as-good consultants. Likewise, in a paper more focused on ethical commitments, relevant competencies described are those of the "good consultant." Finally, some tools are being developed or proposed to help consultants assess their competencies. Research is being conducted using the proposed guidelines as the basis for creating a measure of self-assessed consulting competencies. Moreover, a paper is being developed that explores whether and how a self-assessment tool can encourage reflection that leads to growth in consulting competence. In one of the earliest reviews, a research team conducted the only known comprehensive

examination of the practice of OD in England. They recorded the taxonomy of KSEs of the 42 consultants training to provide this service.

Training and development opportunities tailored to suit the actual skill gaps of organization development consultants can lead to increased individual competence in their domain. One of the reasons why training results are not always reliable is that training needs are either self-identified or self-administered. Training needs also depend on the individual's profile, where the tools used for this purpose are personality and individual assessment instruments such as feedback, case studies, and psychological assessment tests. The most important aspect of assessing training needs is that this process needs to start when an individual decides to become an OD consultant. There are numerous formats and methodologies that can be employed in the provision of development training for OD consultants. Examples include lecture series, workshops, online courses, experiential learning programs, or on-the-job training. Due to the nature of the OD work, relying on traditional didactic mediums may be insufficient. Workshops might be the preferred method of training, as they can combine experiential learning, case study analysis, group activities, role plays, and action planning. Even though, as a stand-alone, a training program may seem to have a limited effect on performance, as consulting is a journey and is therefore developed over time, it is crucial for consultants to continuously develop themselves. As such, organizations are advised to encourage consultants to be lifelong learners. Offering ongoing professional development opportunities can also have the added benefit of encouraging greater retention levels among staff. Mentorship supervision in group consultancy has been gaining recognition as an important tool in the striving for quality and consistency in consulting. It helps to deal with personal and behavior change issues associated with consulting and, as such, plays a supportive role in the training and development of consultants. Coaching can be seen in line with this, where the focus is on individual skill building on a one-on-one level. There is potential to use coaching models in consultancy training to support learning outcomes. Here are some potential examples of OD skills and training programs that target these, which have evidence of impact. These are presented as a practical example of training areas with evidence of impact on consultant performance as opposed to a comprehensive list.

It is evident that many areas encompass the field of consulting and OD and therefore require separate attention. Organizations must subsequently attend to each of the different areas of development in order for competencies or gaps to be effectively built upon or eliminated.

Conclusion. Since much of consultant competency cannot be technically assessed from the tangible, raw data available about the consultant, case studies are presented that provide oversamples of consultant actions as illustrative of consultant effectiveness. Each case study is a description of a real-world situation where the consultant performed effectively in ways that supported the organizational development effort. These interventions often were effective primarily because of the consultant's ability to perform the technical and interpersonal activities described in the body of this paper, and the development of these competencies contributed to their uniformity in all interventions. Each case is a snapshot of what we judge to be among the best consulting practices available. Just as organization development professionals have been theorizing about the importance of consultant competencies for many years, leadership theorists

are writing about the value of emotional intelligence for effective leadership. In the next few years, we can expect a rational basis for diagnosing and developing emotional intelligence in consultants as well as leaders in general. The focus of these papers on how competencies make for effective consultant behavior will aid this process. These case studies specifically display some best practices related to all the competencies in the grid, but are not as comprehensive as the chapters. The case studies are highly varied and yet share the underlying approach of the consultant. They provide a unique evidence-based opportunity for examining effective consulting practice and for learning about the principles behind it.

REFERENCES

1. Cooper, Scott, Lawrence, Eton, Kierstead, James, Lynch, Brian, Luce, Sally. Competencies—A brief overview of development and application to public and private sectors. Ottawa: Public Service Commission of Canada, Research Directorate. Policy, Research and Communications Branch 1998.
2. Draganidis, Mentzas. Competency Based Management; a review of Systems and approaches. *Information Management & Computer Security* 2006; 14(1):51- 64
3. Donzelli A, Walsh V. Introducing competency management at ESA. *ESA Bulletin* 2006; (ISSN 0376- 4265), 126:72 – 76.
4. Ennis. Competency Models: A Review of the Literature and the Role of the Employment and Training Administration (ETA). U. S. Department of Labor 2008