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CRUCIAL ISSUES IN ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

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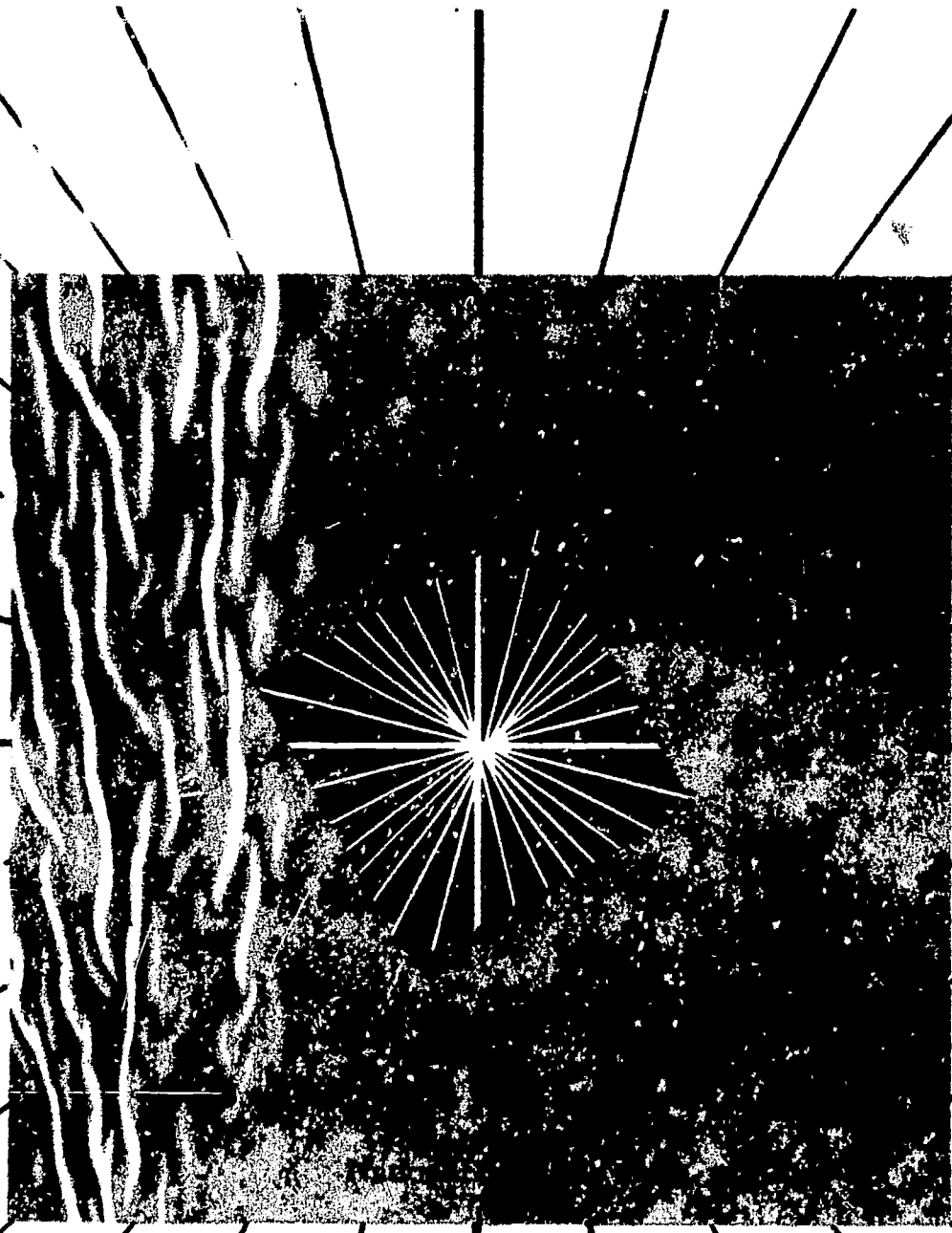
SEVERAL CASES OF ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT ARE EXAMINED FOR COMMON STRATEGIES APPLIED IN A SELECTED GROUP OF CASES. STUDIES SELECTED MET THE CONCEPT OF ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT AND PROVIDED SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO INDICATE CASE OUTCOME. AFTER SELECTING THE STUDIES, THE STRATEGY AND ISSUES OF EACH WERE IDENTIFIED, AND COMPARISONS WERE MADE OF CASES CLASSED AS SUCCESSFUL AND UNSUCCESSFUL (OBJECTIVES NOT FULLY REALIZED). THIS PROCESS ALLOWED EVALUATION OF THE CRUCIAL ISSUES "WHICH MADE A DIFFERENCE" IN THE PROCESS OF ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. WHEN COMPARING THE SUCCESSFUL AND UNSUCCESSFUL CASES, THE MOST CONSPICUOUS ISSUE WAS THAT OF LINKAGE BETWEEN THE TARGET SYSTEM AND THE LARGER (EXTERNAL) SYSTEM. IN TWO OF THREE UNSUCCESSFUL CASES, CHANGES WERE INITIATED AND PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE, ONLYTO BE HALTED BECAUSE OF MANAGEMENT ACTION ABOVE AND OUTSIDE THE TARGET SYSTEM. IN BOTH CASES, CHANGE WOULD HAVE BEEN FAVORABLY EVENTUATED IF IT HAD NOT BEEN FOR THE LINKAGE BREAKDOWN BETWEEN THE EXTERNAL MANAGEMENT AND THE CHANGE AGENT. ANOTHER IMPORTANT ISSUE DELINEATED THROUGH SUCCESSFUL AND UNSUCCESSFUL CASE COMPARISON WAS THAT OF LINKAGE WITH PERSONS, ISSUES, AND/OR PARTS WITHIN THE TARGET SYSTEM. THE CASES USED A VARIETY OF WAYS TO COPE WITH MANY SIMILAR ISSUES. OF THE 33 ISSUES, THREE ISSUES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS HAVING CENTRAL IMPORTANCE IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT--(1) INTRODUCING A NEW MODEL OF OPERATION WHICH THE ORGANIZATION MEMBERS CAN CONSIDER AS A BASIS FOR FORMULATING IMPROVEMENT, (2) SEQUENCING OBJECTIVES AND ACTION STEPS IN SUCH A WAY THAT LINKAGE IS ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE INITIAL POINT OF CHANGE AND THE EXTERNAL SYSTEM WITH WHICH THE TARGET SYSTEM HAS IMPORTANT INTERDEPENDENCY, AND (3) SEQUENCING STEPS TO ESTABLISH LINKAGE BETWEEN THE INITIAL POINT OF CHANGE AND THE OPERATION INTERNAL TO THE TARGET SYSTEM. THIS ARTICLE APPEARS IN "CHANGE IN SCHOOL SYSTEMS," AND IS ALSO AVAILABLE FROM THE NATIONAL TRAINING LABORATORIES, NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, 1201 SIXTEENTH STREET, N.W. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036 FOR $2.50. (JK)

# CHANGE IN SCHOOL SYSTEMS







COOPERATIVE PROJECT FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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# INTRODUCTORY NOTE—WHAT IS COPED?

*Change in School Systems* is a companion volume to *Concepts for Social Change*. The working papers presented in *Concepts for Social Change* develop the core ideas about planned change that give direction to the Cooperative Project for Educational Development (COPED). The papers in *Change in School Systems* focus attention on the special properties and processes of the schools and on strategies for change designed to test and develop the core ideas. Although COPED is concerned with improving education, the ideas in both sets of papers are relevant to change in other social contexts and, indeed, were in many instances derived from work in other fields.

COPED is a number of things. It is a three-year project, funded by the U. S. Office of Education, for "the exploratory development of models of planned change in education" in about 25 school systems located in the metropolitan areas of New York, Boston, Chicago, and Detroit-Ann Arbor (with affiliates separately funded in Madison). It is an emerging inter-university facility committed to joint inquiry, to collaborative action, and to interdependence among universities and school systems as a means to improving education. COPED is thus a linker, joining behavioral scientists and school system "change-agent teams" within and across regional centers. With coordination by the National Training Laboratories of the NEA, COPED links staff teams from Teachers College, Yeshiva University, and Newark State College; from Boston University and Lesley College; from the University of Michigan; from the University of Chicago; and from the University of Wisconsin.

To a degree not fully anticipated, COPED has also become a leadership development facility. Looking at the young behavioral scientists who in a few months have achieved full colleagueship at each center, we were reminded at a recent all-staff COPED seminar that "a chicken is simply an egg's way of making another egg." COPED has been an effective producer and assimilator of competent staff members. It has done so by providing a continuing seminar anchored in the realities and urgencies of working with school systems. Through personal interactions among people with a wide range of experience and knowledge, the seminars and regional staff sessions have provided learningful confrontations around ideological, conceptual, methodological, and value issues.

COPED's effectiveness in the area of professional development was greatly enhanced in 1966-67 when grants from the U.S. Office of Education and the Fund for the Advancement of Education of the Ford Foundation enabled NTL and COPED to initiate in-service training programs both for university-based interns and for school system- and education association-based training consultants.

COPED is also a forum—a continuing seminar—for conceptualizing about, studying, and developing models for bringing about improvement in education. The titles of the first papers prepared for discussion at COPED seminars, the working papers presented in *Concepts for Social Change,* reflect the themes and concerns of COPED. Buchanan, in "The Concept of Organization Development, or Self-Renewal, as a Form of Planned Change," links COPED concerns to relevant issues in settings other than education. Watson's "Resistance to Change" specifies factors at the individual personality and social-system levels which make for resistance. In "Concepts for Collaborative Action-Inquiry" Thelen distinguishes between "forced change" and "genuine change" where change in overt behavior is rationalized in internal changes of concepts, perceptions, and attitudes. Lippitt's "The Use of Social Research To Improve Social Practice" describes patterns of using scientific resources in coping with persistent social problems. Havelock and Benne develop a conceptual framework in "An Exploratory Study of Knowledge Utilization." Klein's paper on "Some Notes on the Dynamics of Resistance to Change: The Defender Role" calls attention to the positive contribution that resistance may make in change efforts. The concluding paper in that volume, "Self-Renewal in School Systems: A Strategy for Planned Change" by Miles and Lake, illustrates application of the various concepts in the development of strategies for change in education. The papers in the present volume continue the discussion but focus more specifically on the schools and on strategies for action.

Finally, COPED is an organizational experiment testing the feasibility of creating and sustaining an inter-university facility for collaborative work with schools. The concept of inter-university collaboration has been put to rigorous test. There are clearly costs to be paid in time, in communications efforts, in energy, and in threatened autonomy, conflicting loyalties, and potentially "watered down" compromise. Thus far there is the conviction that the benefits outweigh the costs. Incentives to collaboration have included access to a wider range of ideas and experience and to joint resources for staff development and for work on such specific tasks as developing research instruments. Long-range or anticipated values include richer interpretation of results because more school systems can be included, a wider range of strategies can be studied, and a greater range of orientations can be explored. Conceptual work is richer and

more challenging than it would be within individual regions. Assumptions and issues are more sharply defined through inter-regional reaction and interaction. At the same time inter-regional commitments and responsibilities have supported continuous task accomplishment which might have been postponed if the region alone were involved.

A variety of means have been used in fostering inter-regional collaboration. A representative Executive Committee was created at the first all-staff seminar. It meets approximately every other month and holds more frequent one-hour telephone conferences. (The conference call is beginning to be used by other COPED committees and task forces and also to link participating school systems and university staff members within a region.) The all-staff seminars every three or four months have been the major means for identifying and working through issues and giving COPED an identity. The joint development of the in-service training program and continuing utilization of the interns and the school system training consultants is another major source of organizational strength.

COPED goals are emergent, with testing and reformulations made through the seminars, task forces, and regional sessions. The goals have been stated broadly as:

To increase knowledge about how change takes place in schools.

To develop, assess, and draw generalizations regarding the effectiveness of specific strategies of planned change.

To disseminate, in ways that they are likely to be utilized, findings and materials generated through COPED.

To help about 25 school systems become self-renewing (innovative, competent in the management of innovations, skillful in problem solving).

To influence the universities as sources of help to school systems.

COPED will be asking:

What actual changes occur in COPED-linked school systems?
What are the causes for these changes?

At this writing—when pre-involvement measures are being taken and relationships established between university and school systems—no one is under any illusions that the task is simple. The reality, as Matthew Miles, Measurement Committee chairman, has stressed, is that some 25 school systems are being entered by COPED change agents with varying entry strategies and with a wide variety of subsequent change approaches carried out in different operating centers. To assess change carefully and

explain it plausibly represents a very substantial challenge. We know that the challenge has to be accepted if we are to emerge with findings that relate significantly to pressing educational problems and not simply with 25 "interesting" development projects.

A major commitment through a number of months has therefore been to the development of a "core package" of assessment instruments. By its reality and its urgency, this effort has helped bring COPED into being as an organization. It has also demonstrated one of the important rewards in attempting to work in an inter-university staff rather than independently. The development of the core package has utilized the variety of special interests and competencies represented at the various centers.

As issues and problems, as well as potential benefits, have become clearer, stronger commitment has developed to cross-center designing and the ultimate discipline this involves. The earlier Measurement and Continuous Assessment Committees have been merged into a representative Research Council and given responsibility for improving the core package; for helping the regional groups make their hypotheses more explicit and classifying the districts they are working in more rigorously; and for formulating, "working," and bringing important issues to the total staff. For example, the Council has been helpful in defining the relative demands of service to client-collaborator and of research. To paraphrase William Schutz, research coordinator for COPED, we need to be rigorous and experimental in formulating hypotheses, testing them, and evaluating results. But if we are to avoid sterile results—much ado about little—this phase of the scientific enterprise needs to be preceded by a period of discovery. The researcher entering the system needs to be open, creative, sensitive to the situation, imaginative, free to *discover* what the problems really are and what is happening.

COPED's potential importance lies in what can be learned not only about change and improved problem-solving skill and self-renewal in schools but also in what can be learned about interdependent approaches to educational problems. While it is too early to predict the ultimate contribution of COPED, experience thus far suggests that inter-university facilities can be created and sustained and that collaboration can be achieved between university and school to the advantage of each. The readiness of school systems to enter into COPED—though this means commitments of time, energy, and funds—is one of the promising factors.

Without naming the entire staff and each of the committees, it would not be possible to acknowledge the contributions that have brought COPED into being. NTL's Core Committee on Education should be

listed as the initiators—Ronald Lippitt, chairman, and Paul Buchanan, David Jenkins, Matthew B. Miles, Don Orton, Herbert Thelen, and Goodwin Watson. The COPED Executive Committee should also be named: Charles Jung, Fred Lighthall, Dale Lake, Elmer VanEgmond, Richard Hammes, Robert A. Luke, Jr., Miriam Ritvo, Loren Downey, Donald Barr, Audrey Borth, and Robert Fox. There should also be acknowledgment of the roles of William Schutz as research coordinator, Goodwin Watson as publications chairman and COPED editor-in-chief, and finally, Stanley Jacobson, who has made preparing these papers for publication his first project as newly appointed publications director for NTL.

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# CRUCIAL ISSUES IN ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

Organization development has become an important area of concern to behavioral scientists as well as to executives in educational, industrial, and other kinds of organizations, and several strategies of development have been formulated and applied. In the present paper I examine several cases of organization development in order to determine if there are any common and critical issues discernible among the different strategies applied in a selected group of cases.

The relevance of this analysis of organization development to self-renewal in school systems is a further question. Presumably the answer hinges upon the similarities and differences between industries and schools as social systems, a topic discussed in the chapter in this book by Miles.

## METHOD OF STUDY

As a basis for attempting to identify crucial issues in organization development (OD), I first located as many studies[1] as I could which (a) met the concept of OD as outlined in my paper "The Concept of Organization Development, or Self-Renewal, as a Form of Planned Change" (Buchanan, 1967), and (b) provided sufficient information to indicate the outcome of the undertaking. These two criteria are interrelated, in that to be a program of OD rather than organization improvement there needs to be indication that planned improvement continued after the OD project itself was terminated. There must be indication that a "take off" point has been passed and the organization continues to improve under its own initiative and with its own resources. On this basis it is necessary to "track" a program over an extended period of

[1] One will note that all of these cases involve what Leavitt (1964) refers to as the "People Approaches" to change. One reason for this is that the "People Approaches," more than others, emphasize *development* or *self-renewal.*

time. Thus, in this study several cases have been excluded which, on the basis of short-range data, were imaginative and promising.[2] Other studies similar to OD in objective but focusing on communities[3] have been excluded since I believe it would unduly complicate the task of identifying differences between successful and unsuccessful cases to introduce too great a variety in the kind of system which was the focus of development effort. However, there will be occasion to refer to some of these cases in analyzing crucial issues later on in this paper. The same is true regarding the growing body of information on the development of nations—it seems to me there is much to be gained from analysis of case studies of organization, community, and national development.

Cases of OD to which I had access at the time I undertook this study and which I considered to be "successful" were Guest (1962), Blake and Mouton as described by Greiner (1965), Jaques (1951), Beckhard (1966), Shepard and Buchanan's work with a refinery (Buchanan, 1964a), Dennis (1964), and Zand, Miles, and Lytle (1964). Cases which I considered to be "unsuccessful" were Argyris (1962), Buchanan and Brunstetter (1959), and Buchanan (1964b).

An explanation is in order regarding the classification of cases. In one—that reported by Argyris—the change effort in many ways attained the objectives toward which it was directed, since changes occurring in the interrelations among the top management group were identifiable several months after the major "interventions." I list it as a failure, however, since the changes in the relationships among the top group did not spread to their relations with other members of the organization and apparently did not result in further improvements. Two cases (Buchanan and Brunstetter, 1959, and Buchanan, 1964b) achieved initial success, one for a period of about two years and the other for about six months, in that the changes spread throughout the unit which was the focus of the effort and involved more and more dimensions of the operations of the units; however, both became failures later, for reasons which are examined below.

Having selected the cases, I tried to identify the strategy, or main action steps, in each. This is not easy and is bound to be only roughly accurate since some of the cases are not reported in much detail. These strategies are presented in the following section of this paper.

[2] Examples: Sofer's work with a small company, the research unit in a hospital, and a department of a technical college (Sofer, 1962); Morton and Weight's work at Aerojet (Morton & Weight), the work of General Electric's Business Effectiveness Staff, and Whyte and Hamilton's work with a hotel (Whyte and Hamilton, 1965).

[3] Examples: Klein's work with a community in New England (in Schein and Bennis, 1965); Holmberg's work with a community in Peru (Holmberg, 1965).

Next, on the basis of a study of these cases, and after examining analyses which have been made of the process of planned change (Argyris, 1960; Bennis and others, 1961; Schein and Bennis, 1965; Sofer, 1962), I attempted to identify issues or elements of strategy which the process involves. Most relevant in this regard is the work by Lippitt, Watson & Westley, *The Dynamics of Planned Change*, from which I have borrowed heavily. A summary of issues from these sources, augmented by my own experiences, is given in the second section below.

Finally, from comparison of the successful and the unsuccessful cases, and by looking at similarities and differences among the successful cases, I attempted to identify which of these issues were "crucial"—*which made a difference*—in the process of organization development. Again, this is a difficult process, since many of the questions one would like to ask are not answerable from the case descriptions.

## STRATEGIES OF ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

In this section an attempt is made to outline the major steps in the different strategies reported in the cases selected for study.

1. "Socio-analytic consultation" (Jaques).

   In describing his approach, Jaques (1964) says it ". . . requires that an individual or individuals in an organization with a problem concerning the working of the organization should seek the help of an analyst in sorting out the nature of the problem." Once this help is sought the steps appear to be as follows:

   a) The relationship between the consultant and the client system is worked out, written down, and made known to all members of the organization.
   b) At the request of the individuals, the consultant discusses with them, individually or in small groups, problems raised by the members. He "listens for the principles and concepts behind the words."
   c) The consultant formulates a report consisting of information obtained from members of a work group ("command team") and of his analysis of this information.
   d) The consultant presents his report at meetings of the work group.
   e) He regularly attends the periodic meetings of the work group during which his role again is to listen for principles and concepts behind the words, and to help members identify and work through issues they are avoiding, anxieties which influence their problem-solving abilities, and so on.
   f) This leads to the formulation of projects undertaken by special task forces or command groups, in which, if the members request it, the consultant participates in the role indicated previously:

listening for principles, identifying and helping the group work through issues being avoided, and so forth.

In Glacier Metals, where Jaques did this work, he was available on a full-time basis for four years, during which major changes were made in the functioning of the company. Projects included change in the appeals procedures of the company, modification of the executive system, working out a new method for measuring performance, modification of the pay system, changes in company policy, and others. One of the consequences was the development within the company of ability to "continue socio-analytic consultation under its own steam," and subsequently Jaques has been used only on a part-time basis.

2. Survey-feedback-training-problem solving.
   Two of the cases (Dennis, 1964, and Buchanan, 1964a) involved strategies which were basically similar yet included some variations which will be identified:
   a) Survey of all members of management to determine what the members considered to be problems in working effectively. This was done by interviews.
   b) Formulation of the survey data into a conceptual scheme considered appropriate by the consultants.
   c) Report-back and analysis of the findings in a series of meetings of the top management group and the consultants.
   d) Laboratory training for all members of management. In one case this was a conventional one-week laboratory (Dennis, 1964); in the other it was a modified laboratory, with the training groups assigned responsibility for studying the survey report, formulating issues requiring further work, and exploring means of increasing teamwork in the plant (Buchanan, 1964a).
   e) Systematic problem solving. In one case (Dennis, 1964) this was done by utilizing a modified form of the Scanlon Plan (Lesieur, 1958). In the other, task groups were formed around issues formulated at the laboratory sessions, the project being coordinated by a committee representing each of the training groups. At the end of a year, groups composed of members of management who worked on the same product met for two days off the job to again identify problems and develop action plans. These plans were systematically discussed with the top management group and then carried through with assistance as needed from top management.
3. Cyclical survey-feedback-problem-solving-team training.
   Beckhard used an approach similar to that outlined above, but sufficiently different to be described separately:
   a) Interviews with the top management team.
   b) Formulation of the data into a conceptual scheme considered appropriate by the consultant.

c) Series of 3-day meetings of top management, with the task being carefully controlled so the group first understood the data, then set priorities for action, then determined the group or person responsible for action, and then worked on those which were within the action responsibility of the managers who participated in the meeting.

d) Steps (a) through (c) followed by successively lower levels of managers, with the top manager joining each group toward the end of each group's meeting to hear and consider issues requiring attention at his level.

e) Introduction of theory and some skill-practice in the problem-solving meetings.

f) Laboratory training conducted for middle levels of management, and technical training for those entering jobs for which they needed additional skills.

g) Intergroup problem-solving sessions held by groups where the need was indicated.

h) Teams formed to open new plants (hotels) received team training.

A variation of Beckhard's approach was used by Zand, Miles, and Lytle: Instead of gathering information in advance, consultants and members of management met for three days away from the job, the middle and upper level managers meeting one week and the first-line supervisors meeting the following. With both groups some time was spent in training regarding the problem-solving process, but the major activity was to identify and plan action regarding on-the-job problems. A unique aspect of the design was that the consultants carefully separated the group's work in the various stages of problem solving: diagnosis of difficulties was completed before effort was made to formulate problems; agreement among the participants regarding the statement of problems was reached before attempts were made to formulate possible solutions; and so on. A second unique aspect was that several of the higher level managers participated in the last day of the meeting of the first-line supervisors and thus provided a means of integrating the plans of the two groups. The third phase of the program involved task groups carrying out, on the job, plans made in the previous phases, with guidance and support from a steering committee formed from both groups. The effectiveness of this approach as OD, or self-renewal, is indicated by the fact that the task groups completed their work; then the total group of managers met again (without a consultant), they formulated additional action plans, and they were continuing their developmental efforts at the time the case report was prepared (two years after the first off-the-job meeting was held).

4. Survey-feedback-team training.
   Argyris proceeded as follows:
   a) He interviewed and observed members of the top management group to determine the extent to which their values as reflected in their job behavior conformed to a predicted set of values.
   b) He fed the results back to the group in a meeting away from the job. On the basis of their interpretation of these findings, the group decided improvement was called for.
   c) The managers as a team participated in a T-group.
   d) The group analyzed its own manner of working by having part of the team conduct problem-solving meetings while being observed by the other members and by consultants, the analysis being used to determine the extent to which they ware applying what they had decided from their T-group experience to be desirable.
5. "Managerial Grid Organization Development"
   Although Blake and Mouton (1964) described their program as consisting of six phases, the case description (Greiner, 1965) that I am using in this paper involved some important additional steps. To keep the record straight, I will star the steps mentioned by Blake and Mouton.
   a) The consultant spent approximately two weeks in the target system, getting a "feel" for it and its problems.
   b) The top management group in the plant and a group in headquarters to whom they reported met for three days to explore and improve each group's perceptions of the other and to improve their ability to work effectively with one another.
   c) The top manager and a few members of the plant participated in a public managerial grid laboratory.
   d) A pilot managerial grid laboratory was conducted within the plant for managers from all levels and departments of the plant.
   e) *All members of management in the plant participated in a managerial grid laboratory.
   f) *Family groups, beginning with the top, met to improve their working relations and their effectiveness as teams. (This was done in only a few of the teams in the case reported by Greiner.)
   g) *Meetings were held of members of groups which had working interrelationships, the purpose and procedure being similar to Step (b) above. (In the case described by Greiner such meetings were held only by top plant and headquarters management.)
   h) *Organizational improvement goals were worked out. Beginning in the grid laboratories and in the team development meetings, conditions requiring change were formulated in systematic terms.

In this phase, action goals were formulated on a personal, team, and organization-wide basis, and "unresolved problems preventing attainment of organization competence" were identified and plans for solving them were worked out.

i) *Plans for attaining established goals were carried out. This was done in part by use of "task paragraph discussions" which followed a procedure designed to facilitate effective problem solving (Blake and Mouton, 1964, p. 277ff.).

j) *Stabilization. This step involved "establishing a sound relationship between goals and actions previously set in motion and current activities." Greiner presents little information regarding what, if anything, was done in this phase of the program.

6. Change conducted by a new manager (Guest)
Unlike all the other cases in this study, Guest (1962) describes one in which there was no consultant, the change being planned and effected by the new plant manager. The steps taken were as follows:

a) Higher management changed its actions in relation to the plant manager. How this came about is not made clear in the case description, although Guest speculates that a new corporate officer urged the division manager to allow the plant manager latitude in "running his own show."

b) The new plant manager communicated (by action and words) his philosophy and approach to all members of plant management.

c) The plant manager held informal meetings to find out the problems of the plant as seen by all levels of the management group.

d) The manager initiated regular problem-solving meetings with his high-level subordinates. Steps (b), (c), and (d) resulted in a new pattern of interaction between superiors and subordinates, and among peers, which spread to all levels of the management group.

e) Many managers were transferred laterally within the plant.

f) Plans were put into effect as changes were agreed upon in staff meetings. These consisted of changes both in the plant's technical system and in procedures. In this phase the manager "played an increasingly important role in gaining divisional support of such changes."

g) Long-range plans, based upon consensus of the management group, were formulated and carried out.

As can be noted from even these brief summaries of strategies, the cases utilized a variety of types and mixtures of "inputs" (interventions) while still having the similarities mentioned in my earlier paper (Buchanan, 1967). The next section lists some dimensions on which these comparisons can be made.

## ISSUES IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

The following are issues which appear to be potentially important as a consultant attempts to help an organization develop its effectiveness:[4]

1. Clarify or develop the client's motivation to change.
2. Assess the change agent's potential helpfulness:
   a. Relevance of his resources, interests, and competence to the client's need.
   b. His job security in relation to the client system.
   c. Relations among members of the change-agent team.
   d. Compatibility of his different objectives (to help the client, to conduct research, to get promoted within the company, and so on).
   e. Time he has available.
3. Establish effective relations between the change agent and the client system.
   a. Role of each in planning and conducting the program.
   b. Expectations of each regarding the amount and kind of effort required of each in the change program.
   c. Restrictions (if any) upon the kinds of changes which are allowable.
   d. Who the client is—whom the change agent's relations are with.
   e. Expectations regarding the role(s), or kind(s) of help, the change agent is to provide.
4. Clarify or diagnose the client system's problems.
   a. Concepts in terms of which diagnosis is to be made.
   b. How information is to be obtained, and from whom.
   c. Use of data in diagnosis.
   d. Develop diagnostic skills of members of the system.
   e. Determine the boundaries of the client system.
5. Establish instrumental objectives for change. (How should we operate?)
6. Formulate plans for change.
   a. Link to other persons, issues, and/or parts within the internal system.
   b. Link to other persons, parts, and/or issues in the external system.
   c. Develop time schedule and build time expectations.
   d. Develop procedures and/or structures for carrying out plans.
   e. Provide for anticipatory testing of plans.

[4] In addition to the sources mentioned earlier, I have also benefited from comparing issues in my preliminary list with observations made about the change process by people familiar with the Vicos Project of Community Development in Peru. (See Holmberg, 1965; Holmberg and Dobyns, 1962; and Lasswell, 1962.)

f. Develop competence of those involved in taking actions.
g. Develop motivation for carrying out plans.

7. Carry out plans for change.
   a. Maintain support and understanding from the larger system.
   b. Obtain feedback on consequences of early action steps.
   c. Coordinate efforts of different people and groups involved.
8. Generalize and stabilize changes.
   a. Assess the effects of the change upon the total system.
   b. Look for "regression."
   c. Facilitate spread to other parts of target system and to adjacent interdependent systems.
9. Institutionalize planned development or self-renewal.
   a. Develop problem-sensing and problem-solving skills and mechanisms in all components of the system.
   b. Develop reward systems which facilitate innovation.
   c. Establish a change-agent role in the system.

We are now in a position to determine which, if any, of these issues are "crucial" by returning to an examination of the ten actual cases outlined in the previous section.

## CRUCIAL ISSUES IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

*Comparing the successful and the unsuccessful cases,* the issue which appears to be most conspicuous is that of *linkage between the target system and the larger system* (Issue 6b). In two of the three unsuccessful cases, changes were initiated and progress was being made, only to come to a halt because of action by management above the top man in the target system. While the change agents in these cases recognized the importance of linkage with higher management, steps taken to accomplish such linkage were not effective. The difficulty[5] in one case was partly due to disagreement among members of the change-agent team regarding the approach to be followed (Issue 2c), and in part to the way the change agents related to the company president (Issue 3a). The program in question was initiated by the head of a department in a large company, and he requested help from both an inside and an outside consultant. The consultants were in agreement that the program plan of the department should be fully understood by corporate managers, and a two-day conference to accomplish this was worked out by the outside consultant and the president. The consultants jointly planned the two-day conference, but under the tensions which arose regarding the corporate officers' reactions to the meeting, the consultant who had the central

[5] The information upon which these observations are made is not in the case reports, but was available to me from direct sources.

role in the conference changed the plan, creating tension and role ambiguity between the consultants. This reduced the quality of the meeting, and at the end of the first day the president postponed the second day of the conference—which was never held. The department decided to go ahead with its program, with the support of a vice president, and it proved to be highly effective. Then the vice president left the company, leaving the change program in the target department going full swing but with no effective links between it and an uninterested and rather hostile corporate management. Shortly after the vice president left, a higher official called the top managers of the focal department into his office and said, in effect, "You do the technical work and leave the management to me."

In the other case, work was being done to effect the linkage, but ıe meeting where this was intended to be accomplished was not effective, apparently due to Issue 3b, expectations by the top man regarding what was required of him, and to the lack of competence (Issue 2a) and/or job security (Issue 2b) of the change agent. Thus, when the changes being made in the norms, reward system, and methods of decision making in the department required accommodating changes in the practices and values of higher management, such changes were not possible. Furthermore, higher management replaced the three key people in the target department with managers who were unfamiliar and unsympathetic with the change program, and the development effort was discontinued.

In the third unsuccessful case (Argyris, 1962), there is no indication that the issue of linkage upward arose. Perhaps this was due in part to the fact that a high-level manager (division president) initiated and was a participant in the program, and in part because the kinds of changes which resulted did not require accommodating changes in other parts of the company.

In contrast to two of the unsuccessful cases, there is indication of effective linkage with the external system in two of the successful ones. Both Greiner (1965) and Guest (1962), in describing the cases, emphasize the importance of this issue. In three other cases the top manager of the organization was included in the target system (Jaques, 1951; Dennis, 1964; and Beckhard, 1966). In another case (Zand, Miles, and Lytle, 1964) linkage was not given much attention, and this almost led to termination of the program: A higher level manager heard of the meetings the first-line supervisors were holding, and he called the head of the target unit, wanting to know about the "unionization of foremen." The head of the focal unit was able to explain the program to the higher manager's satisfaction. In the seventh case (Buchanan, 1964a) the plant which was the target system was sufficiently autonomous so that relations with higher levels didn't become a problem during the four years of the program. There was a change of manager during this time, but the new

one had participated in a training laboratory and was enthusiastic about the program which was going on when he took over. Yet the top managers in the plant took "linking" steps which are worth noting. At the third of a series of off-the-job meetings during which they were formulating long-range plans, the plant managers asked two key managers from headquarters to meet with them. They were thus enabled to integrate plant plans with headquarters' plans.

A case described by Schein and Bennis (1965, p. 255ff) adds further support of the importance of linkage to the larger systems (Issue 6b). Laboratory training was undertaken with lower levels of management, only to be abruptly terminated when the top manager learned about what was going on.[6] Linkage has also been highlighted as a factor in effective community development (see Lasswell, 1962, p. 122). Additional support of the importance of this issue, and an interesting way of trying to attain it, are reported by Whyte and Hamilton (1965): One consultant worked with lower managers and employees, the other with the general manager.[7] As the one working with lower levels encountered difficulties resulting from the behavior of the general manager, he talked with the other consultant, who brought up the issues in his next meeting with the general manager. But the method seemed to be only partially successful; while the general manager approved of changes requested at lower levels, and he encouraged the development effort, he seemed not to become involved. In sharp contrast is the method of linking used by Blake (see Greiner, 1965). Sensing that the plant managers and their superiors in headquarters disagreed over important issues, he proposed a three-day meeting of the two groups to explore their perceptions of each other. The openness, mutual understanding, and role clarification which resulted from the meeting seemed to be an important factor in the magnitude and depth of change which was subsequently accomplished in the plant. In contrast to the Whyte-Hamilton case, the linkage was made not via the consultant as intermediary but through direct changes in the relations between the plant and headquarters managers.

Another issue suggested by comparison of the successful and unsuccessful cases is *linkage with other persons, issues, and/or parts within the*

[6] Schein and Bennis interpret this failure as due to introducing a set of values in a component of an organization where the prevailing value system is too greatly different from that being introduced. I believe the linkage issue is a better way of formulating the difficulty, since the cases described by Guest and by Greiner indicate that a change program can be effective even when the new values are distinctly different from those currently prevalent in the system. However, the analysis by Schein and Bennis regarding "crucial issues" in the use of laboratory training is very relevant to our subject. (See Schein and Bennis, 1965, chapter 10.)

[7] Fantini and Weinstein (1966) report a similar approach to linkage in their work with a school system.

*target system* (Issue 6a). The case described by Argyris indicates success in effecting the change which that program attempted: members of the top management group who were involved in the program seemed to have become more authentic and open in their dealings with each other. However, the evidence seems rather clear that this change did not lead to changes in their dealings with their subordinates, nor was there a spread of the program to other units of the organization or to other dimensions of the unit's operation.

In all the successful cases linkage with several levels of people within the target system was established either as part of the change-induction plan (Blake, 1964; Buchanan, 1964a; Dennis, 1964; Zand, Miles, and Lytle, 1964), or by steps taken early in the program which led to such action (Beckhard, 1966; Jaques, 1951; Guest, 1962). It seems that such linkage was either in the form of *working on operating problems* which involved units or groups beyond the original focal unit (for example, in one case work on the issue of cost reduction led to involving the union in the development program), or linkage was in the form of involving large numbers and levels of organizational members at the problem-identification phase of the program.

Support for the centrality of Issue 6a also comes from the field of community development. In describing their work in Peru, Holmberg and Dobyns state that "the project has selected values and institutions to change which would then foster more change by the [members of the community] themselves" (Holmberg and Dobyns, 1962, p. 107).

Now what can be learned from *differences among the successful cases?*

One thing which stands out is the variety of ways in which the different programs coped with many issues listed in the previous section:

1. One difference among the successful cases was the *kind* of model introduced by the change agents, both as a basis for diagnosis (Issue 4a) and for determining how the members thought they should try to operate their organization (Issue 5). There appear to be three types of models used in the seven cases: *cognitive, process,* and *procedural.* While most of the cases involve more than one, it appears that Blake and Mouton make primary use of the cognitive one, in the form of the managerial grid: through assigned readings, tests on the readings, and demonstration exercises, managers are taught the distinctions among five managerial styles and some consequences of the use of each. Jaques used primarily a process model: he focused on how members related to each other and on the fact, for example, that the way they felt about exercising authority influenced their effectiveness. Zand, Miles, and Lytle used primarily a procedural model: they guided the managers through a carefully controlled series of steps in identifying, diagnosing, and planning action regarding problems in the operation of the target system. (Guest's

manager used a procedural model, while Beckhard, Buchanan, and Dennis used mixtures of process and procedural models.)

2. The cases also varied greatly in the *manner* in which models for formulating goals were introduced into the organization. In the case of Blake and Mouton it was done primarily by an extensive training program. At the other extreme, Guest introduced the model by the example set by the change agent—the top manager: in his first meeting with his management group he described how he intended to operate; then he set about illustrating it, with the result that the procedure spread to all levels of the organization. It appears that Jaques introduced a model partly by demonstrating it (see Bennis, 1963, for an analysis of Jaques' method) and partly by helping members identify "spontaneously emerging solutions to problems" by "listening for the principles and concepts behind the words" (Jaques, 1964) and holding them up for examination and comparison with current practices. Beckhard, and Zand, Miles, and Lytle (although in somewhat different ways) also demonstrated use of a problem-solving procedure.

What strikes me as of special significance is that each of these different approaches resulted in the introduction of a model which was incorporated into the practices of the organization—it became institutionalized. It is my impression, although I cannot prove it from these cases, that successful introduction of a new and viable model, relating to a fundamental aspect of the organization's operation, was one of the single most important contributions of the change agent in the successful cases.

In light of the differences in (1) the kind of model used and (2) the way it was introduced, it appears that a change agent should be wary of believing that he alone holds the key to utopian organizations.

3. In one case the change agent was the top manager in the target system (Guest), in two they were "internal" consultants from headquarters working with a plant (Buchanan, Dennis), while in the rest they were "outside" consultants. Apparently the location of the change agent was not, in itself, a crucial factor. This is consistent with the fact that the "catalysts" in General Electric's Program of Business Effectiveness, which appears to be successful in accomplishing organization development, also are "internal" consultants. However, it seems likely that the location of the change agent is closely related to several other issues: role of the change agent in planning (Issue 3a), the change agent's motivation (Issue 2d), who his "client" is (Issue 3d), and his job security (Issue 2b).

4. While all of the successful cases involved all levels of management in the target system, they differed in the time at which additional levels were involved. In Beckhard's case the main program began with the top management group; then as issues were identified and progress made, the same or similar activities were undertaken at successively lower levels

(activity at the higher levels being continued). In three cases (Jaques; Blake; and Zand, Miles, and Lytle) all levels of management—and in Jaques' case some non-managers—were involved during the early stages of the program. In the case described by Guest there was some activity involving all levels of management. At an early meeting of all management personnel the change agent announced his intention, and he immediately began obtaining information and ideas from a sample at all levels; yet the major work was done at the top of the target unit. While it is difficult to draw generalizations from Guest's case, since the change agent was the manager, this case suggests that we hold open the issue of whether the change agent is needed at all levels, or whether if significant changes on a central issue are made at the top, they will spread throughout the subordinate organization.

Finally, we need to look at what can be learned from the *similarities in the successful cases.*

1. As has been indicated, in all seven cases the top manager of the target system was actively involved in the project. It appears that this is important, although this was not an issue which differentiated the successes from the failures. Determining the boundaries of the target system (Issue 4e) is probably of more importance, since this helps define who is the "top person in the system."

2. In all cases the change agent introduced a model for collecting data and for diagnosing the system's needs (Issue 4a), which could be considered by the members of the system in establishing goals for improvements (Issue 5).

3. Although the models differed, and were introduced into the system in different ways, all concerned the problem-solving processes of the organization.

4. All of the models resulted in changes in the power structure of the target system, such changes being in the *kind* of power or influence used (away from authority and toward increased use of information), in the *distribution* of influence among the members of management (proportionately greater influence by people at lower levels), and in the total *amount* of influence exerted, or in the "size of the influence pie" (after the development program, the target systems appeared to have more self-control, and their operation appeared to be less determined by chance or by forces outside the system).

5. The models used also emphasized the development of norms and of skills which facilitated a shift from relationships based on negotiation or bargaining toward relationships based on problem solving or collaboration.

Obviously the cases varied in the extent of change in the above respects; yet because of the crude measurements used in assessing the cases, it is difficult to determine which resulted in the most change and, therefore, which strategy of development was most effective.

6. In all cases the change agent came from outside the target organization and was new to the target system. Since this was also the situation in the three unsuccessful cases, it is difficult to assess the implications.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Of approximately 33 issues which there was some reason to believe are important in organization development, three have been identified as being of particular centrality in this study of ten cases. These issues are:

1. Introducing a new model of operation which the members of an organization can consider as a basis for formulating improvement goals regarding a dimension or operation which is central to the performance of the organization (Issue 5).

2. Sequencing objectives and action steps in such a way that linkage is established between the initial point of change and other persons, parts, and dimensions of operation *internal* to the target system (Issue 6a).

3. Sequencing objectives and action steps in such a way that linkage is established between the initial point of change and other persons, parts, and dimensions of the *external* system with which the target system has important interdependency (Issue 6b).

Why did so few issues emerge as crucial?

One possibility is that the cases studied all represent a similar approach to organization development—what Leavitt calls the "people approaches" and what Bennis refers to as "change agents working on organizational dynamics" (Bennis, 1963, p. 140). It is to be expected that the more the similarity of approach, the less any differences are highlighted, and thus the greater the difficulty in discerning crucial or significant differences.

Perhaps of greater importance is the fact that the differences in the outcomes of what I have called the successful and unsuccessful cases were not as pronounced as my discussion of them has implied. Probably cases that are "really" failures do not get reported, and so we do not have access to cases required for a thorough study of the effectiveness of change strategies and of issues which are crucial to the process.

A third, and in my judgment the most important, possible explanation for the emergence of so few crucial issues is that information required to determine the importance of each of the 33 issues listed earlier in this paper was not included in the case reports. The reports vary considerably in what is reported, and the reasons for the inclusions and omissions are not clear. It may be that the reporter is including what he considers most important either in the particular case or in cases in general; he may be reporting either what he is willing to reveal about his own work or what the organization concerned will permit him to print. At any rate, it appears to me that if organization development is to advance as an application of behavioral science, and if we are to practice our own

beliefs, it is important to engage in systematic self-study. This can be done only if we document our work in such a form that it can be studied by ourselves and our associates. And this, it seems to me, requires that we agree upon a format, or at least upon some key issues to be covered in reports. I hope that the list of issues presented in the middle section of this paper is a fruitful beginning of such a format.

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