Using Corporate Tools for Organizational Development to Affect Cultural and Structural Change in the Academy: Gallup Impact Planning at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Gail F. Latta
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

External pressures have transformed academic life, shattering the roles and relationships that created a sense of community. Increasingly the challenges of fostering an engaged workforce in these institutions mirror the corporate world. Leaders at UNL have adapted Gallup's organizational development strategy to improve faculty engagement and inclusiveness in the academy. The adaptation of these corporate tools, and the impact of their application on academic culture and structure are analyzed in relation to organizational change theory.

Keywords : Organizational Development, Change, Organizational Culture

External pressures on the academy have transformed the traditional academic life of faculty and staff, shattering the familiar roles and relationships that created a sense of community within the halls of higher education institutions (Kolodny, 1998; Lucas, 1996). Increased competition for funding and students, the technological transformation of the learning environment, expectations for best practices in business systems, and heightened pressure for accountability through outcome measures, have infiltrated the higher education environment from the corporate establishment. With them have come new expectations for practice and productivity, driven both by students seeking "edutainment" to increase their earning potential without interfering with their current life style, and by university leaders conscious of improving the bottom line. Seemingly lost is the intrinsic value of scholarship and the pursuit of knowledge for the benefit of society, apart from its economic impact. Scholarship pursued for intrinsic rewards has been replaced by a high stakes environment in which the value of intellectual engagement is measured by research dollars generated, lucrative intellectual property rights, and the market appeal of academic programs. Many individuals working in academe are still experiencing culture shock, lamenting the loss of intellectual community that has accompanied these transformations of the academy.

University leaders cannot afford the luxury of lamenting these changes in the higher education community. They must seek strategic means of developing effective work units that can respond to the new market demands of adult learners, while assuming increased responsibility for generating the revenue streams that will sustain their institutions. The challenge of fostering a cohesive whole is made more difficult in an environment that rewards scholars primarily for their earning capacity. Tying worth to earning potential carries with it inherent dangers of operationalizing a caste system that tears at the fabric of the academic community. Faculty struggling for survival in the increasingly competitive academic environment experience internal conflicts regarding identity, worth and career goals. These struggles interfere with motivation and cause some to question their career paths and long-term commitment to the academy. Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin (2000) have documented the angst experienced by young faculty disillusioned by their decision to pursue academic careers. These young scholars question the ideals that attracted them to the academy when they find themselves working for organizations that increasing mirror the values of the corporate world.

Theoretical Framework

As a result of these tremendous changes in the academic environment, higher education administrators face new challenges for fostering employee engagement and a climate of inclusiveness. An environment striped of its intrinsic rewards requires alternative means of fostering commitment and dedication. In the face of these challenges, Lucas (2000) notes that "it may be time to rethink – and even replace – our traditional ideas about academic change and improvement and the strategies that flow from them if we are to move from tinkering to transformation" (p.2).
Transforming Academic Culture

Organizational culture has emerged in the literature as a pivotal variable in the success of organizational change initiatives (Bate, Khan & Pye, 2000; Shein, 2004, Tierney, 1988). Only by understanding culture can we devise interventions that will shape organizational change in ways that will achieve desired results. Yet the deficiencies in our knowledge of academic culture continue to hinder our efforts at organizational development in these types of

institutions. Tierney (1988) asserts "our lack of understanding about the role of organizational culture in improving management and institutional performance inhibits our ability to address the challenges that face higher education" (p. 4).

Ethnographic studies of academic culture have revealed the complexities of these communities. Tierney (1988) identified six critical dimensions that form a schema for diagnosing academic culture: environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy and leadership. Using ethnographic techniques to analyze the culture of higher education institutions, Bergquist (1992) delineated four competing subcultures, shattering the myth of a unified culture of the academy. These cultures, which he labeled collegial, administrative, developmental and negotiating, each vye for dominance, creating an environment of competition. Given the common view of culture as the glue that holds an organization together (Schein, 2004), the existence of these competing cultures within the academy serves as a challenge to the academic administrator seeking to implement planned change initiatives.

But understanding academic culture is only the first step toward knowing how to manage cultural change in the academy, and as theorists and practitioners alike have noted, organizational culture is notoriously difficult and slow to change Wilkins & Dyer (1988) assert that one reason for this is that most theories of cultural change "describe the process as though it were independent of the kind of culture that is changing (or being changed)" (p. 522). They outline three fundamental factors that determine the success of change efforts aimed at affecting organizational culture: fluidity, commitment, and the availability of alternatives cultural frames. These factors shape the interpretation of events and constrain how readily its members learn new ways of thinking and relating. The more fluid an organizational culture, the more open its members are to change ("morphogenic" as opposed to "homeostatic"). The more committed members of an organization are to the current culture, the more difficult it will be to change it. Finally, even highly morphogenic cultures and those with minimal commitment require the availability of alternatives to stimulate change.

According to theorists, culture arises to aid an organization in dealing with problems of "(1) survival in and adaptation to its external environment and (2) integration of its internal processes to ensure the capacity to continue to survive and adapt" (Schein, 1992, p. 51). Mounting pressures on institutions of higher education described above, emanating both within and outside the academy, are creating challenges for sustaining the underlying norms and basic assumptions of academic culture. Academic administrators are struggling to maintain academic community and employee engagement and motivation in the face of these changes in institutional culture.

Cultural Challenges and Forces for Change at UNL

At UNL awareness of the urgency of these challenges reached a crescendo over a ten-year period. Numerous internal reports were produced describing the transformation of the academy and the effects of these changes on the roles and rewards of faculty and staff. A 2-year study funded by the Kellogg Foundation called for new ways of apportioning, supporting, recognizing and rewarding academic work, recognizing the contributions of both traditional academics and others in the academy (Hilliard & Lynne, 1999). A subsequent study of the quality of faculty work environments called for greater attention to the importance of workplace quality for fostering employee morale, motivation, loyalty and trust (Latta, 2001a & b). A diversity commission drew attention to the need to foster a more inclusive and welcoming working climate for representatives of ethnic, religious and gender-related minority populations. Each of these initiatives drew attention to the need for a planned change initiative aimed at addressing the mounting pressures on the human resources of the academy. Together, these activities combined to create the requisite sense of urgency Kotter (1995) identifies as the essential first step in implementing successful organizational change initiatives.

A new chancellor appointed in 2001 recognized that this groundswell of activity required an institutional response, and he retained an outside consultant to supercede these internal efforts. A partnership was formed with The Gallup Organization to implement their organizational development process for continuous quality improvement in human resource development and management of work units. Developed in the corporate environment, by studying differences between highly productive and underproductive work units, the Gallup assessment instruments operationalized the concepts of employee engagement and climate inclusiveness within the workplace (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). These instruments, and the associated Gallup intervention strategy, were designed to aid individual work units in identifying and focusing attention on factors relating to employee engagement and institutional climate that impact organizational productivity.

Gallup's organizational development process incorporates many elements characteristic of the action research model of OD (Rothwell, Sullivan, & McLean, (1995). It is designed to chart a "path between the individual contribution of every employee and the ultimate business outcome of any company" (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999, p. 245). Emphasis is placed on building institutional capacity by focusing initially on meeting basic employee needs for clear expectations and adequate resources; secondarily, on building community; thirdly, on ensuring individuals have opportunities to make meaningful contributions; and finally, on sustaining employee growth.

Assessment instruments provide a launching pad for engaging work units in participatory, planned change interventions. These assessment instruments were developed by statistically linking organizationally defined indicators of productivity, with measures of employee satisfaction, commitment and perceptions of work unit quality. Only those dimensions of employee engagement and climate determined to correlate with indicators of productivity, profitability, employee retention and customer satisfaction/loyalty were retained.

Increasingly the challenges of fostering an engaged work force in higher education mirror those of the corporate world. At the very basic level, there is a startling need to clarify changing expectations. To the extent that familiar value systems of the academy have been transformed, faculty and staff need to understand what the new reward systems entail, and investments of time and energy will be supported and recognized by the institution. Academic employees require increasingly specialized technological tools and resources, and the increasingly collaborative nature of their work requires assurances that others are equally committed to quality standards of productivity (Hilliard & Lynne, 1999). Beyond these basic needs, those who carry out the work of the academy require ongoing opportunities to learn and grow. They must be provided opportunities to contribute their best ideas and talents, in a forum in which their opinions count, and where they can make meaningful contributions to institutional mission. Increasingly, successful corporations are seeking to embody these same characteristics (Senge, 1990; Buckingham & Coffman, 1999).

But that does not necessarily mean that organizational assessments and interventions developed for the corporate environment can necessarily be applied successfully, without modification, in the academic community. This case study derives lessons from a pilot project at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to adapt a set of corporate OD tools and strategies for application in the academy. Particularly because this model of OD rests upon norms that were developed to correlate with corporate measures of success, it is unclear how well they will serve as a basis for planning OD interventions in higher education institutions.

Gallup Impact Planning and Action Research Model

The Gallup assessment and organizational development tools were developed in the corporate environment to address underlying factors relating to employee management that impacted company productivity. By studying differences between highly productive and under-productive work units, Gallup has operationalized the concepts of employee engagement and workplace inclusiveness. Thirty years of Gallup research has statistically construed the engaged employee as one who displays a narrowly defined set of characteristics associated with high levels of productivity in the workplace (Harter, 2002). Similarly, the concept of inclusiveness has been operationalized ten characteristics of the work environment correlated with high levels of diversity. Both engagement and inclusiveness are thus taken to be predictors of productivity, by virtue of the way they have been defined. Highly productive employees are more engaged than those who demonstrated less positive impact on company output, and more inclusive work environments promote employee productivity (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999).

As with any action-research based intervention strategy, assessment is only the first step in the Gallup model of organizational development. The real strength of the Gallup approach lies in the development of intervention strategies within work units, designed to affect positive change. This process embodies the principles of normative-re-educative change strategies, calling first for a thorough assessment, followed by open discussion and interpretation of results, with the goal of developing an agreed upon set of issues and interventions to implement. The most salient characteristic of the normative re-educative approach embodied by the Gallup process is the recognition that "nonconscious elements which impede problem solution must be brought into consciousness and publicly examined and reconstructed" as the unit develops intervention strategies (Chin & Benne, 1976). The focus of the resulting change strategies, called "impact plans" is on building organizational capacity for solving problems and improving performance at the unit level. True to the action research model, progress is assessed periodically, with feedback serving both formative and summative objectives. Unit supervisors are held accountable for progress toward identified goals, not raw assessment scores.

Despite its origins in the corporate world, the Gallup Impact Planning process has much to offer as a strategy for change in organizations such as institutions of higher education that value creativity and self-reliance. It offers the holistic approach to change that Lucas (2000) identifies as paramount in addressing the challenges facing higher education institutions. And, it centers the change effort squarely within the academic units, where she points out change must occur, noting that "this is where change initiatives "are translated into what it good – and realistic – for the discipline, and where the way to implement such change is determined" (p. 3). As Chin & Benne (1976) observe, "great emphasis has been placed recently upon the releasing of creativity in persons, groups, and organizations as requisite to coping adaptively with accelerated changes in the conditions of modern living" (p.15). They point out that change initiatives such as the Gallup process, that emphasize normative-re-educative approaches to building problem-solving capacity within individual work units have the greatest utility for releasing the creative potential of individuals in the work place.

Research Questions

The decision to implement Gallup's planned change strategy at UNL raised a number of theoretical issues worthy of study. The Gallup assessment instruments and organizational development (OD) process had never before been applied in the higher education arena. Assumptions about the relationship between employees and both their products and the customer base they served were built into the Gallup model of OD. These concepts were foreign, or even offensive to many in the academic community, where education was predominantly viewed as a public good, and the pursuit of knowledge valued for its own sake, rather than being driven by market forces. Also assumed was a different set of relationships among supervisors and employees. A more top-down, prescriptive model of leadership and relationships among supervisors and employees were reflected in the Gallup process than typically exist in the academic environment. The nature of communication, and even the language of the training materials reflected a corporate mentality actively rejected by many members of the academy.

Beyond these obvious barriers to implementing the Gallup process at UNL, were fundamental empirical questions about the veracity of applying these tools to the academic environment:

- Could an assessment tool and institutional change strategy developed and validated for the corporate environment be successfully adapted for institutions of higher education?
- What modifications would be necessary to make OD tools/strategies developed for the corporate environment adaptable to the university setting?
- To what extent would the constructs developed to assess employee engagement in the corporate setting apply to faculty and staff in the academic environment?
- What structural modifications within the organization would be required to implement the planning process and sustain the cultural changes wrought by the Gallup impact planning?
- What insights for HRD in academic environments/academic units emerge from this implementation process, and the Gallup Impact plans developed as a result of the intervention?

Methodology and Research Design

The impact of implementing the Gallup Impact Planning process at UNL will be analyzed in terms of both the cultural and structural changes resulting from the pilot project. The organizational change model developed by Bate, Khan & Pye (2000) provides a methodological framework for this analysis. Their culturally sensitive restructuring model melds traditional organizational development with structural design process. This model of OD, grounded in the action research model, emphasizes cultural change in organizations as an antecedent to structural change. The four-staged model of organizational change commences with cultural framing, followed sequentially by "soft structuring" which focuses on increasing institutional capacity, then "hard wiring" which introduces structural design changes into the organization to sustain that capacity. The final stage involves "retrospecting", a process of interpretation that imbues the new cultural and structural changes with meaning.

This case study employed a participative research design in which the author served first as one of 22 campus facilitators who helped implement the Gallup Impact Planning process, then as an academic administrator involved in the follow-up strategic planning process, in which specific change initiatives were outlined. As a facilitator, she met with Gallup representatives to address the challenges of modifying their proprietary assessment and intervention tools for the academic environment. Each facilitator subsequently worked with a subset of department chairs to implement the action-research type Gallup Impact Planning process. Impact plans submitted by academic units were later reviewed for evidence of activities that fit the three stages of Bate, et.al.'s (2000) organizational change model: soft-structuring, hard-wiring and retrospecting.

Adapting Gallup for the Academy

To adapt the Gallup process for application in a university environment, an implementation team was assembled, composed of a representative of each of the major functional areas within the institution: academic affairs, business & finance, research, student affairs, and agriculture. This group initially worked with Gallup to adapt its documentation and training materials to reflect language more consistent with the culture of the academy. A larger group of "facilitators" was also assembled to serve as trainers and consultants to department chairs for implementing and interpreting survey results, and developing unit impact plans. This group further helped modify Gallup's materials and processes prior to the first implementation of the survey and impact planning process. Workbooks and training materials were also revised to reflect academic structure and culture. There were efforts to revise the wording of individual questions on the assessment instruments, but Gallup resisted.

The facilitators lead training sessions to help unit leaders understand and interpret the assessment results. Beyond this, however, resources to assist units in developing change strategies were minimal, and no systematic

guidance was provided to help unit heads identify campus resources to assist with implementing their change agendas. Substantive concerns were also raised regarding the validity and interpretation of assessment results, and the impact planning process that followed. The power of Gallup's technique lay in its claim that higher scores on its instruments of engagement and inclusiveness were correlated with higher measures of productivity as defined by the corporations with which its instruments had been validated (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). The assumption that the same components of engagement would correlate equally well with measure of productivity considered meaningful to higher education institutions was widely questioned by members of the academic community. Moreover, the implementation of the Gallup assessment proceeded in the absence of any attempt to engage the campus in discussions about what output measures would be considered meaningfully relevant for defining employee engagement and inclusiveness in the academy.

Results and Findings

While institutional scores on the Gallup assessment instruments are confidential and proprietary, the lessons learned from adapting Gallup's model of OD for implementation in an academic setting, as well as the impact of Gallup's planning process on the culture and structure of the institution are not. These reveal valuable insights for researchers, academic administrators and OD practitioners. Results are analyzed from three perspectives: implementation challenges, cultural impacts, and structural responses.

Challenges of Implementing the Gallup Assessment in an Academic Environment

The challenges addressed by university leaders in adapting Gallup's OD strategy from the corporate environment for application in the academic community have been detailed elsewhere (Latta, 2005), and will only be reviewed briefly here. External pressures and shifts in funding were already shaking the balance of power among the multiple cultures within the academy, and the Gallup OD process threatened to imposes a new set of power relationships derived from corporate values. Internal pressures emanating from recent policy changes designed to strengthen the role of administrators in enforcing productivity standards and more tightly controlling the allocation of faculty time had rendered faculty wary of centrally mandated change initiatives.

The structure of the academy, too, with its tradition of shared governance, also raised questions about how well the Gallup process could be applied in the academic environment. While universities typically foster a high degree of decentralization regarding programmatic design and mission strategies, academic units are nevertheless dependent upon centralized services to provide the infrastructure, faculty lines and resources necessary to deliver those programs. This decentralized governance structure renders academic units unable to affect change relative to many elements of the environment construed by Gallup as critical to fostering employee engagement. At the same time it hinders strategic planning by limiting the opportunity for input to help define infrastructure needs.

Finally, the Gallup assessment instruments had been developed based upon norms of productivity and outcomes established within the corporate environment, raising questions of both validity and credibility. Not only had the Gallup tools not been validated against university measures of productivity, but existing University output measures could not be meaningfully employed to assess productivity in individual work units: these metrics had been developed as institutional measures of excellence, but had not yet been adapted to serve as measures of unit success. Nor was Gallup prepared to establish new sets of norms for the academic community. Implementation was thus hampered by widespread skepticism and a perceived lack of face validity among the faculty.

While it was unclear what impact these challenges might have on participation and interpretation of results, Gallup implementation proceeded in 2002, and participation on the climate assessment surveys has been consistent at just over 70%. Nevertheless, significant confusion arose over the interpretation of specific items on the assessment instruments. The wording of these items, developed for use in the hierarchical corporate environment, was open to ambiguous interpretation in the more fluid, distributed and interdependent structure of the academy.

A modification was subsequently introduced in the impact planning process to address the structural differences between the academy and the corporate environment. Although Gallup argued it would reduce local accountability, academic units were permitted to "elevate" factors affecting unit engagement or climate that were beyond local control. Subsequent modifications intended to adapt the Gallup process to the fluid nature of faculty collaborations, and the distinction between faculty and staff roles, have nevertheless failed to make it possible for informal work groups and interdepartmental teams to engage in impact planning.

The question of validity remains an active one for the UNL community. The Gallup assessment instruments have yet to be validated against academic metrics of institutional success. Nevertheless academic units have been asked to interpret the results as if they had been, making it impossible to determine whether members of the academy are finding face validity in dimensions. As the results of impact planning reveal, some units are acting upon their interpretations of the assessment feedback, and are implementing OD plans that address documented

deficiencies. Whether these areas of development will ultimately ensure a healthy future for UNL, or increase institutional capacity for confronting challenges, remain topics of active debate, subject to empirically testing.

Cultural Impact of Gallup Impact Planning

The full impact of Gallup OD planning on the culture of UNL will take many years to unfold; nevertheless, there is value in assessing interim effects. Despite relatively high participation in the climate assessment, faculty skepticism about the value of impact planning remains widespread. The initial impacts can be seen, however, in the themes that emerged as foci for development from academic units. While a detailed analysis of change in departmental culture is beyond the scope of this paper, four areas of emphasis are evident in the consolidated plans reported as part of the university's 2005 strategic planning initiative: Improve the adequacy of facilities and equipment; increase communication, teamwork and information dissemination; heighten faculty involvement in decision-making; and improve the alignment of faculty attributes with apportioned duties.

The first of these reflects a heightened awareness of the importance of work place quality and the perceived inadequacy of the university's facilities and equipment for carrying out the work of academic units. The shortage of computing equipment and faculty offices, and the inadequacy of instructional and research space, emerged as particularly critical concerns in several colleges. On Gallup's hierarchy, the adequacy of materials and equipment represents one of two critical factors forming a foundation for employee engagement and institutional effectiveness. Awareness of the significance of this gap between infrastructure and expectations for productivity at UNL has emerged from the Gallup impact planning process as an issue to be addressed openly, instead of being pushed aside.

Equally pervasive is a heightened awareness of the importance of communication and teamwork in the academic environment. Yet the cultural implications of efforts to improve the vertical and horizontal flow of information in the organization are multifaceted. Fostering collaborative teams and creating effective partnerships reflect priorities of an administrative culture focused on enhancing productivity, while efforts to improve the formal and informal exchange of information reflects the collegiate culture's emphasis on participatory governance. The former represents a third-tier factor on the Gallup engagement hierarchy, while the latter is a core concept in fostering a climate of inclusiveness. OD theory suggests these challenges should be addresses sequentially.

The third cultural theme that emerged centers on recognizing and valuing the contributions of all members of the academy, and providing meaningful opportunities for involvement in decision-making processes. Feeling valued and being recognized for one's contributes are aspects of culture that are reflected in several items on the Gallup assessment instruments. These values, traditionally embodied in the collegiate culture of the academy, have been threatened in recent years by the increasing competition for external resources and the emphasis on public accountability. UNL's Gallup impact planning reflects efforts to reaffirm these values and counter the recent trends.

Similarly, an interest in clarifying roles and ensuring a match between faculty expertise and assigned responsibilities within the academy, emerged as concerns for both administrative and collegiate culture. Administratively, efforts to permit faculty to focus on what they do best is reportedly undermined by shortages and disproportionate distributions of FTE. Teaching loads in many units are too heavy to permit faculty with promising research agendas the time to realize their full potential, while the lack of agility an appropriate reward structures often disallows the reallocation of faculty with exceptional teaching skills to provide instruction for undergraduates. Both the engagement and inclusiveness hierarchies support development of these aspects of organizational culture.

Structural Changes Resulting from Gallup Impact Planning

Structural changes emerged at several levels within the institution following the implementation of the Gallup Impact Planning process. At the unit level, these structural changes emerged spontaneously in response to perceived insufficiencies in the existing organizational structure for sustaining the cultural changes that resulted from their Gallup feedback and impact planning processes. Several colleges created regular processes and designated groups to monitor the implementation of impact plans. One college incorporated the cultural goals that emerged into a formal mentoring program to inculcate the emergent values into new recruits. An internal consultant from another academic unit was brought in to facilitate the development of one college, while another brought in an outside consultant to train department chairs in strategies for leading institutional change. One college implemented a formal restructuring of departments, while others undertook less radical realignments of faculty or staff.

Significant structural changes also resulted at higher levels within university administration. In the third year following implementation, impact planning was incorporated into a comprehensive strategic planning process coordinated by the Office of Academic Affairs. Climate, diversity, facilities & equipment, hiring and enrollment management were identified as the five areas of strategic focus within the overall strategic planning process. In addition to reporting on the goals of their impact planning, units were asked to indicate how improvement in climate would be tied to strategic planning, and what steps were being taken to "insure that faculty and staff are placed in roles that maximize their individual strengths" (Climate Template, 2005). A design team was put in place to review that status of Gallup planning reported through the strategic planning process and to provide support and follow-up

as appropriate. This structural change served to reinforce the importance of the Gallup Impact Planning process, and affecting cultural change, as part of an overall strategic planning process.

Other structural changes will increase institutional support for units developing effective implementation plans. An outside consultant, formerly associated with the faculty roles study that provided impetus for the Gallup initiative, will be brought back to work with academic unit heads. Additionally, the Office of Human Resources has hired a director of organizational development to help units connect with university resources for implementing their intervention strategies. Each of these structural changes signals an increase in the value assigned to investing in human resource development as a means of developing institutional capacity, and together they constitute a significant effort to ensure that the cultural changes emerging from the Gallup Impact Planning process will be sustained. It is unlikely that either of these developments would have materialized without the Gallup initiative.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Gallup Impact Planning has provided a framework for academic units to discuss aspects of their working conditions and relationships in the context of the changing internal and external pressures affecting the academy. Although not yet validated empirically in relation to academically meaningful performance outcomes, some units are embracing the Gallup assessment tools as a useful starting point for planning OD interventions. In some cases, impact planning has legitimized the articulation of needs not formerly acknowledged relating to infrastructure, distribution of faculty load and succession planning. Most significantly perhaps is the explicit acknowledgement of the importance of ensuring the best match possible between faculty talent and expertise, and their role within the university. This issue, more than any other, has served to bring together the managerial and collegial cultures of the academy over an issue that was formerly divisive.

Equally significant is the shift that has taken place among university administration regarding accountability for institutional climate. When the Gallup process was introduced, senior leadership emphasized the responsibility for improving university climate rest with individual academic units. However, through the modifications introduced to permit the elevation of issues beyond the purview of local units, awareness has been raised about the dependence on centrally administered resources and infrastructure for fulfilling institutional mission. The way in which these elevated issues are dealt with by university administration in the coming months will determine the long-term success of efforts to reshape the culture of the academy.

The strongest evidence for the impact of Gallup Impact Planning on the university, however, comes from the structural changes enacted to help academic units plan effective interventions. The strength of the Gallup OD process derives from the action-planning units engage in once their assessment results are disclosed. Yet the university was ill-prepared to provide the support and follow-through necessary for units to develop effective interventions. Both the involvement of an outside consultant to work with unit chairs, and the creation of an OD position within HR represent steps toward creating the capacity to sustain planned change initiatives at UNL. These and other structural changes adopted since Gallup was implemented signal an increased awareness on the part of administration of the importance of supporting organizational development efforts throughout the university.

Implications for Further Research and Practice

Reflecting upon UNL's experience implementing Gallup Impact Planning in light of the culturally sensitive models of organizational development suggests that planned change initiatives that focus initially on changing institutional culture can provide an effective means for higher education institutions to adapt to the external and internal challenges facing them in the 21st century. Grounded in an action research paradigm, these change paradigms focus first on cultural adaptation, then introduce structural changes designed to sustain the developmental advances implemented. At UNL, the Gallup process provided a mechanism for introducing academic units to alternative cultural frames at a time when external and internal pressures had destabilized the existing frame. In terms of Wilkins & Dyers (1988) model, the fluidity of the existing cultural frame(s) within the academy had increased, and individuals' commitments to them had been reduced. Introducing alternative frames into this environment provided the catalyst for affecting cultural change. Some academic units have responded by developing OD impact plans that focus on strategic dimensions of the Gallup engagement and inclusiveness hierarchies. Several structural changes have also been introduced that will help sustain these planned change initiatives, but these will need to be tested for effectiveness and impact before being solidified, a process Bate, Khan & Pye (2000) refer to as moving from "soft structuring" to "hard wiring".

Now it is vitally important for the UNL community to begin the process of "retrospecting". This final phase of culture change involves "reflecting in a deeper sense about the change programme [sic], where it was leading, and

what could [be] learned from it; a process of reexamining the initial assumptions, expectations and beliefs that had driven the process" (Bate, Khan & Pye, 2000, p. 207). The change strategies academic units are initiating will only have a lasting impact on the culture of the academy if they are embraced and afforded meaning by the faculty. Because culture is learned, this interpretive process, "with its emphasis on ongoing and retrospective sensemaking" (Bate, Khan & Pye, 2000, p. 207), is essential for ensuring that cultural changes instigated by the OD initiative have taken root. Currently the Gallup Impact Planning process does not include such a reflective component, suggesting a potentially valuable focus for further development of the model.

Four imperatives emerge from this study as fertile ground for further study by OD practitioners and researchers:

- The OD community should cultivate opportunities to further validate the Gallup OD strategy as an action research model of OD. What strengths and limitations does it embody, and how can it be improved?
- What outcome measures are needed to benchmark Gallup for the academic community?. Without these benchmarks empirical questions will remain about whether the Q12 and I10 has predictive validity for outcomes valued by academic institutions.
- Can the Gallup model of organizational development serve as an effective tool for enabling higher education institutions to affect the transformations necessary to adapt to the new pressures on the academy?
- What will be the effects on the creative intellectual character of the academy of applying corporate tools and solutions to the intellectual enterprises of higher education?

As Amabile (1998) points out, "creativity is undermined unintentionally every day in work environments that were established – for entirely good reasons – to maximize business imperatives such as coordination, productivity, and control" (p.77). While it is possible to design work environments that sustain high levels of productivity and creativity, this outcome will not obtain without careful planning. As institutions of higher education adopt corporate OD strategies such as the Gallup impact planning process, assessing the impact of these efforts on academic culture and the intellectual character of the institution are matters worth investigating.

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