

## Leading Change: An Organizational Development Role for Educational Developers

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While educational development has long been aligned with organizational development in the literature (Berquist & Phillips, 1975; Gaffe, 1975), in practice this link has faded with time. Schroeder (2011) has recently asserted that given the broad-based changes in teaching and learning that are taking place at universities, it is important that educational developers take an organizational development role and lead institutional level changes in teaching and learning (p. 1-2). For many of us, it has not been apparent how to initiate or clarify a leadership role in organizational development. We share the story of how we came to recognize that our role in leading an institutional change initiative to re-envision classroom spaces was organizational development. We contextualize our experience in a way that makes it meaningful for practitioners seeking to clarify or enhance their own organizational development roles. From our experience, we have gleaned lessons that might be of use to colleagues in the field. First, organizational development should become part of a curriculum for educational developers. Second, we should move from intuition to intention in our organizational development efforts.

Educational development has long been aligned with organizational development. Forty years ago, the field was conceived of as comprising interrelated areas of faculty development, instructional development, professional and/or personal development, and organizational development (e.g., Berquist & Phillips, 1975; Gaffe, 1975; Professional and Organizational Development Network (POD), 2016). The purpose of the organizational development area was generally defined as trying to foster a better institutional environment for teaching and learning. While the link between educational development and organizational development might persist in the literature, it seems to have faded in practice. Schroeder (2011) indicates how disconnected these have become when she names organizational development as the “missing prong” (p. 17) of educational development. She stresses that educational developers should not stay in the comfortable niche of instructional development, primarily providing instructional consultations, services and support, nor is it sufficient to consult about, or provide programming and resources for, institutional initiatives. Educational developers and directors must instead take an organizational development role and lead institutional change initiatives that “bring about shifts in values, boundaries, and paradigms required for broad-based changes in teaching and learning that are taking place at universities” (Schroeder, 2011, p. 1-2). For some of us, it is not apparent how or where to begin: whether we wish to initiate leadership in organizational development or clarify a role in which we are already engaged. Berliner (1992) argues that telling stories is a way to contextualize experiences to make them more meaningful for practitioners. In this paper we share one story of how we came to lead institutional change and how we later realized it was organizational development.

We recount how, as educational developers, we took a leadership role in an institutional initiative to re-envision classroom spaces. We then retrospectively examine where we made decisions and acted in ways consistent with an organizational development model and where things might have been done differently had such a model been used explicitly from the outset. From our experience we have gleaned lessons that might be of interest to colleagues in the field: first, organizational development should become part of a curriculum for educational developers; and second, we should move from intuition to intention (Weston & Gosselin, 2004) in our organizational development efforts. Until carrying out this examination of our work, we felt like the teaching and learning center director who said, “I didn’t know that was what I was doing. I didn’t know that was organizational development” (Schroeder, 2011, p. 12).

### **Leading Change at the Institutional Level**

Our teaching and learning center (TLC) is located at McGill University, a large, publicly funded, research-intensive university in Canada. The TLC has been in operation for several decades and has offered a large range of programs, resources, research and services to enhance teaching and learning at the University. A change in the structure and mission of the TLC in 2005 provided an opportunity for us to rethink our work.

Two areas of conversation in educational development caught our attention. The first was Taylor’s (2005a, 2005b) examination of educational development as institutional leadership. The field of faculty/educational development has changed in significant ways over the past 40 years (e.g., Gibb, 2013), and we have concurrently evolved during that time. Nonetheless, considering ourselves institutional

leaders was a confronting concept. The importance of assuming a more significant leadership role certainly resonated, but how to do so was not immediately apparent. The second area of conversation was the notion of framing levels of educational development impact (e.g., Berthiaume & Arikawa, 2006; Timmermans, Jazvac Martek, Berthiaume, McAlpine, & Arcuri, 2005). We also identified four levels of impact: (1) micro, or level of individual professors and courses (e.g., course design workshops); (2) meso, or level of departments and Faculties (e.g., curriculum design); (3) macro, or level of institutional systems (e.g., course evaluations); and (4) mega, or level of the educational development field in higher education (e.g., organization of a conference). The resulting map of TLC projects by intended level of impact (Weston, Matshita, Berthiaume, & Timmermans, 2008; Weston, Winer, Berthiaume, & Timmermans, 2010) instead of by activity (e.g., workshop, consultation, committee) revealed an abundance of projects at the micro level and far fewer projects at the meso and macro levels. We decided it was time to move into a more intentional role of leading change in departmental, faculty, and institution-level teaching and learning initiatives.

This decision coincided with an invitation from the Provost to lead an institution-wide initiative for re-envisioning teaching and learning spaces (henceforth, “classroom spaces”) on campus. In previous years, such an invitation might have been declined due to concerns about diverting precious resources from current projects and going beyond the TLC’s mission as it had been previously understood. However, given the desire to increase the TLC’s leadership role at multiple levels of the University, and to move “from the periphery to the center of the academy” (Dawson, Mighty, & Britnell, 2010, p. 69), we accepted the invitation, perceiving it as an access point for enhancing teaching and learning at the institutional level.

### **Re-envisioning Classroom Spaces**

At the time this story begins, 2006, many of our 475 classrooms were old or in poor condition. The Provost conceived a Teaching and Learning Spaces Working Group (TLSWG) with a mandate to craft a vision for classroom spaces based on sound pedagogical principles, as well as to create a process for aligning teaching and learning space development with the University’s strategic directions. This group would be responsible for consolidating a formerly fragmented budget process into a single central fund and allocating funds annually for all classroom renovations and upgrades. The Provost constituted the TLSWG with stakeholders from across the University. The Director of the TLC and the Director of an operations unit were appointed Co-Chairs (hereafter referred to as Chairs).

The TLSWG began meeting monthly and, as intended, it became the central source for annual requests and funding for classroom renovations. Because the majority of classrooms did not support what we currently know about how students learn (e.g., Christensen Hughes & Mighty, 2010), a vision of classroom design was created that would support student learning. Processes were developed for transparently sharing all requests and transforming the approach to classroom design. The entire working group arrived at consensus as to which classroom renovations should be funded each year and eventually established a five-year plan. This paper deconstructs the first six years of the TLSWG (2006-2012), during which over 350 of the 475 classrooms were improved.

### **Using an Organizational Development Model to Re-construct the Process of Re-envisioning Classrooms**

Five years later, seeking to understand if and how educational developer leadership might have facilitated the re-envisioning of classrooms, we consulted established change models (e.g., Beckhard & Harris, 1977; Kotter, 1996; Schroeder, 2011). Schroeder’s work, in particular, resonated for us. Her conception of educational development coincided with the notions of leadership and levels of impact that we had been exploring. She recommends that TLCs “merge the traditional responsibilities and services of the past several decades with a leadership role as organizational developers” (p. 7), which she defines as bringing their knowledge and skills to decisions about the institution and student learning and collaboratively planning initiatives, rather than solely programming and consulting about them (p. 6). She encourages TLCs to move towards a more institutional vision of their work, while concurrently cautioning that this should not eliminate the instructor-level role and support offered. Among the change frameworks/models she discusses, one struck us as particularly relevant for our context: Ready and Conger’s (2008) “Five-Phase Model for Enabling Visions” (p. 73). Although initially developed for corporate settings, Schroeder introduced it into conversations framing educational development leadership as organizational development.

The confluence of these concepts – leadership, levels of impact, and organizational development – led us to wonder if the approach we took to leading the re-envisioning of classroom spaces might be considered organizational development. In the next sections, we re-construct our decisions and actions according to the five phases of Ready and Conger’s (2008) model: (1) framing the enterprise agenda; (2) engaging multiple layers of the organization; (3) building mission-critical capabilities; (4) connecting the dots by creating alignment; and (5) energizing the organization through

the power of the people (p. 73). This re-construction revealed where the ways in which we led the re-envisioning of classrooms were consistent with organizational development as defined by Schroeder and with the phases described by Ready and Conger. It also revealed where things might have been done differently had such a model been used intentionally from the outset. The re-construction begins below, with examples provided for each phase.

### Framing the Agenda

This is the first phase of Ready and Conger's (2008) model. It entails three components: developing a vision by framing organizational challenges as an agenda for action, finding pathways to the future while maintaining the organization's proud heritage, and creating an organizational climate suitable to achieving the vision (p. 71).

First, several sources contributed to developing a vision for classroom spaces. The Provost's creation of the TLSWG, with stakeholders from across the University and a central budget for renovations, provided a vehicle for university-wide re-envisioning of classroom spaces. When the TLSWG began meeting, compelling stories emerged: classrooms with ventilation so inefficient it affected student concentration and led to an instructor dismissing class more than once; students sitting on lecture hall stairs because so many seats were broken; and professors feeling chained to the podium by old-fashioned corded microphones. Such stories created a collective concern about the quality of the teaching and learning environment.

The research and practice in teaching and learning in higher education was a critical source for creating the vision; we studied these to identify sound pedagogical principles and craft a vision for classroom spaces. The research describing the relationship between instructors' approaches to teaching and students' approaches to learning was crucial (e.g., Biggs, 2003; Christensen Hughes & Mighty, 2010; Entwistle, 2010; Trigwell, Prosser & Waterhouse, 1999). The well-known finding that students tend to become more active constructors of knowledge and adopt a deeper approach to learning, when instructors use teaching approaches that facilitate and guide learning, was especially important. Similarly, best practice principles for teaching and learning in higher education (e.g., AAC&U's High Impact Practices, 2008; Chickering & Gamson, 1991; National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), 2008) point to the importance of active and collaborative engagement for student learning. Among these, the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE, 2008) emerged as particularly relevant for re-envisioning learning spaces at our

institution. They consolidated a great deal of the research on student learning into clear benchmarks, and University administrators were already familiar with the benchmarks because the University was a regular participant in the biannual NSSE survey. Because these benchmarks provided a language and metric familiar and credible to academic administrators, the five NSSE benchmarks were adopted as a way to express the vision for classroom spaces: level of academic challenge; active and collaborative learning; student-faculty interaction; enriching educational experiences; and supportive campus environments. The NSSE benchmarks were subsequently revised in 2013 (McCormick, Gonyea & Kinzie, 2013).

Research on classroom spaces and the practices of peer institutions was a significant source of concepts for translating these five NSSE benchmarks into classroom design guidelines. Dori and Belcher (2004) confirmed our sense that the nature of the physical environment can influence students' experience, noting that the "fairly passive lecture discussion format where faculty talk and students listen, is contrary to almost every principle of optimal settings for student learning" (Guskin, 1994, p. 13-14). As learning spaces can be seen as "authorising and enabling certain behaviors over others" (Jamieson, 2003, p. 122), they need to be designed to foster and support behaviours that promote student learning, including "interaction, collaboration, physical movement and social engagement" (p. 121). This called into question the traditional design of large lecture halls, typically structured to support one-way communication from instructor to students, with the podium acting as a barrier between them. Peer institutions provided concrete examples of how design decisions could lead to classroom spaces that foster students' active engagement with content and with each other (e.g., University of Melbourne (Trelogan, 2007); University of Tokyo (2013), SCALE-UP classrooms (NCSU Department of Physics, 2007), TEAL classrooms (Dori & Belcher, 2004), and Active Learning Classrooms (University of Minnesota, 2009). From this research, we created a document, *Principles for Designing Teaching and Learning Spaces* (hereafter, "the *Principles*," Finkelstein, Ferris, Weston & Winer, 2016), which defined each of the NSSE benchmarks in terms of space, and provided instances of how each could be manifested in design features. For example, the themes of *active and collaborative learning* and *student-faculty interaction* led to a notion of classrooms designed with movable furniture to foster students' active engagement with the content and each other, and a reduction of physical barriers to interaction between instructors and students. We believed that transforming the physical classroom had the potential to prompt instructors and students to re-think approaches to teaching and learning. Classroom spaces are an

essential part of campus infrastructure that communicate the purpose, meaning and value placed upon the teaching and learning mission of the university (Helgesen, 1995), and students are “likely to adopt the mode of learning signalled by the existing layout and type of furniture” (Joint Information Systems Committee, 2006, p. 25). The *Principles* framed the vision simply and became a key communication tool that provided “a powerful leverage point...[that] allows us to effectively articulate to all constituents what we are trying to accomplish” (Brown, 2005, “Learning Space Implications,” para. 2).

The second component of “framing the agenda” entails finding pathways to the future while maintaining a proud heritage. We felt it was vital to honour the University’s heritage as part of re-envisioning classrooms. One aspect of our heritage as a campus-based institution was that many faculty members were accustomed to traditional methods of teaching in traditional classrooms. We did not wish to alienate professors, so extreme care was taken when introducing classroom features that supported the *Principles*. Less dramatic changes (more comfortable seating, larger work areas for students, smaller podium, larger aisles, and better acoustics) characterized the first renovations introduced in the more traditional lecture halls used by professors in many disciplines. More transformational changes (e.g., round tables, a podium in the room’s center) were made to some smaller classrooms (< 80 seats), which were renamed Active Learning Classrooms (ALCs). We invited selected professors interested in active learning and pedagogical experimentation to teach in the first ALCs. Full pedagogical/technical support was offered to these professors during the first weeks of the semester, to increase the likelihood that their teaching and learning experiences would be positive.

Finally, creating a suitable climate at numerous levels is part of framing an agenda to achieve a vision. We wanted to create a climate across Faculties that would favour acceptance of the classroom vision. Before the TLSWG, Faculties were largely unaware of renovations being funded for other Faculties. Thus, an early decision was to make the funding process more transparent and equitable across Faculties: all renovation requests were integrated in a document and shared in advance by email to provide time for representatives to review and consult. At the TLSWG meetings, discussions revolved around which requests should be prioritized and why. The inclusiveness of the TLSWG minimized the potential for feeling that funding was unfair, and ensured that stakeholders’ different perspectives and possible concerns were addressed early in the prioritization process. As well, TLSWG members were invited to annual site visits of classrooms proposed for renovation. Through these

visits, they developed a better sense of the scope of needs. Some TLSWG representatives ultimately delayed their own renovation requests after seeing the dire state of other classrooms on campus. Such sharing of resources was unprecedented and was labelled “the site visit effect.”

### **Engaging Multiple Layers of the Organization**

Phase two of Ready and Conger’s model requires authentically distributing ownership of the vision through collaboration, broad based engagement, and inviting differing views. Many of the more effective strategies for re-envisioning classroom spaces were later recognized as typical of this phase.

The initial composition of the TLSWG engaged a unique range of stakeholders from across the University (i.e., the TLC, IT, Library, Planning Office, Facilities, Provost’s delegate, and three academic staff members). Additional representatives could be invited as needed. We quickly recognized the need for additional input and began inviting associate deans and building directors from each Faculty, representatives from Enrolment Services / the Registrar, IT, Finance, and undergraduate and graduate student organizations. Their contributions were so useful that the membership was permanently expanded to more than 30 representatives, most of whom regularly attended monthly TLSWG meetings. The entire committee participated in decisions as to which classrooms would be prioritized and funded each year. When necessary, those with differing views – sceptical of the directions being proposed – were invited. For example, when a respected senior professor pushed back against the new ALC designs, out of respect, we convened a special TLSWG meeting so this professor’s concerns could be heard by the TLSWG. A spirited discussion concluded with a decision by TLSWG members to move forward with the controversial design based on its potential to foster student learning. This was a remarkable moment in the re-envisioning of classroom spaces at the University. It was clear that TLSWG members had taken ownership of the vision and that their decision was based on their understanding and commitment to supporting the student learning experience over traditional approaches to teaching and classroom design.

We also felt that it was essential for the operations side of the University (Facilities architects and project managers) to partner with academics (faculty members and educational developers) in re-envisioning classroom spaces. We launched this collaboration in an unprecedented meeting with Facilities project managers where the nascent *Principles* were shared and the implications for their work were discussed. Although the unfamiliar concepts initially caused some distress for

project managers, months later some of these same project managers were heard using the language of the *Principles* with their teams and external architects. They also began to shift their conception of “client” from a specific Faculty or department, to the TLSWG at large.

### **Building Mission-critical Capabilities**

The third phase of Ready and Conger’s model entails identifying capabilities that need to be developed and addressing capability gaps necessary to achieve the vision in a way that avoids assigning blame for those gaps. This was done in several ways that mirror the steps Ready and Conger recommend. As discussed earlier, we began building mission critical capabilities by advancing our own expertise through reading the literature, visiting classrooms and participating in intensive learning space visioning/planning exercises with colleagues from other universities worldwide.

As multiple layers of the institution were engaged in most TLSWG activities, some expertise and service gaps surfaced that were previously unrecognized because work had been done largely in operational silos. It didn’t take long to recognize that instructors required additional, and sometimes immediate, support for the new instructional approaches they were enacting, often with more sophisticated technologies, in the renovated classrooms. To respond to this need, we launched a group to envisage a comprehensive teaching support system for faculty that would integrate services provided by separate teaching support units at the University. The TLC, three IT service units, and the Library were identified as partners in teaching support. As such teaching support cuts across the traditional division between technology support and pedagogy, we engaged the units in developing a multi-unit shared vision, being extremely careful not to assign blame for any gaps in service. As a better understanding of the commonalities and differences in the views of the participating units emerged, a user-focused teaching support system was developed that remains in place today. The outcomes of this multi-unit partnership included: regular meetings among the Directors of the units, the IT groups taking a more active role on the TLSWG, the development of classroom support teams, IT training sessions for instructors in specific classrooms, and overall a higher level of support for the largest classrooms on campus, and the instructors teaching in those rooms.

Developing expertise that transcends a single unit is part of building capacity for implementing a vision. One example of this is the successful case we made for creating a project administrator role because everything required cross unit coordination. Annual renovations required cross Faculty integration, prioritization and funding. Budgeting

for renovations involved the TLC, the Budget Office, and financial officers from the different units. Scheduling renovations involved Enrolment Services, Faculties, Facilities, and the TLC. A project administrator was needed to handle the logistics involved in prioritizing classroom improvements, ensure that all parties had access to relevant information for productive conversations and decision-making and evaluation, and ensure that all processes undertaken by the TLSWG continued moving forward. As the impact of the renovations was felt across Faculties and met with largely positive feedback, the critical role of the project administrator was acknowledged by all concerned, and other units were keen to replicate this kind of support role.

### **Connecting the Dots by Creating Alignment**

The fourth phase entails aligning systems, processes and mind-sets with the vision. Educational developers intuitively addressed alignment in several ways that reflect Ready and Conger’s (2008) recommendations. For example, a robust collaboration was established between academic and administrative divisions. It became increasingly evident that the financial logistics of stewarding university-wide classroom improvements necessarily involved finance planners and administrators in multiple units, at multiple levels of the University. We began to hold twice-yearly meetings to help finance professionals better understand the vision for classrooms spaces and processes required to achieve this, and to help us better understand multi-year budgeting, use of operating funds, and other logistical considerations. Subsequently, we were able to use the terminology of the finance professionals, which greatly enhanced communication, decreased confusion, and gave way to a stronger sense of collaboration among units and collective commitment to a common vision.

Alignment is also fostered when emerging leaders exhibit cross-boundary behaviours. While many TLSWG projects included a technology component (e.g., computers, projectors, screens), regular technology upgrades were also done through university IT services. At the beginning, there was sometimes overlap between the plans of IT services and TLSWG projects, which was only made apparent once projects were in progress. To avoid this, we decided to schedule annual meetings during which the two units (who previously communicated little) reviewed all projects planned for the subsequent year. The result was a better understanding of the lifecycle needs of existing technology, and clarification of roles with regard to classroom technology for all involved.

### **Energizing the Organization through the Power of People**

Phase five of the model entails building enthusiastic support and following through to

implement and sustain the vision. This was done in a number of ways when re-envisioning classrooms.

We knew it was important for TLSWG representatives to get on board with the vision, so a decision was made to hold TLSWG meetings in classrooms slated for funding as well as those that were newly renovated. In this way, members experienced first-hand the problems in existing classrooms, such as difficulty hearing and speaking to others in the room, insufficient ventilation and lighting. Meeting in a classroom after renovation provided an entirely different experience. Representatives talked enthusiastically with each other and pointed out design features in the room that they had helped design.

We made it a point to share the classroom vision and positive feedback about classroom transformations in meetings with departments and Faculties, University committees, at national and international conferences (e.g., Finkelstein, Tovar, Ferris & Weston, 2011; Finkelstein, Weston & Ferris, 2013; Weston, Ferris & Finkelstein, 2012), in invited presentations, and with local and international visitors. Images of classrooms provided concrete examples of how the *Principles* were being implemented. We held events in the new classrooms where professors demonstrated how they used the new spaces and technologies to enhance their teaching. We also documented instructor and student perspectives about teaching and learning in active learning classrooms (e.g., video commentaries [<https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/spaces/alc>], teaching snapshots [<https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/spaces/alc/videos>], which were effective communication tools that were also inspiring and widely shared. Our five ALC videos have received over 54,700 views collectively on YouTube in the last five years, which points to the interest they have garnered within and beyond our university. These videos and snapshots were powerful in communicating that the new spaces were achieving what the vision and *Principles* intended. Positive comments received during and after presentations were energizing and motivating for us, for TLSWG representatives, and for members of the University at large.

### Discussion

We have provided examples of our role in leading an institutional initiative to re-envision teaching and learning spaces during its first six years. Our decisions and actions have been re-constructed using Ready and Conger's (2008) five phase model to assess how the ways in which we led the initiative were consistent with the model. We now summarize these and consider where things might have been done differently, had such a model been used explicitly from the outset.

A number of decisions and actions were consistent with *framing an agenda for action*. The development of

research based *Principles for Designing Teaching and Learning Spaces* served as a simple statement of the vision for classrooms. A suitable climate for achieving the vision was created and pathways for renovating classrooms were developed while maintaining the University's proud heritage. Upon reflection, the *Principles* for re-envisioning classrooms should have been identified from the outset as "a new vision for teaching and learning spaces." Because an agenda/vision was not explicitly named, we essentially operated "under the radar" (Schroeder, 2011) rather than explicitly as change agents for classroom spaces. Schroeder strongly cautions against staying in this comfortable niche to avoid the potential conflict of being identified as change agents, and instead encourages us to step fully forward from the "margins" into an institutional leadership role.

*Engaging multiple layers of the university* was an area in which decisions and actions were most consistent with Ready and Conger's recommendations. The decisions to expand the composition of the TLSWG meetings to include over 30 representatives and to partner Facilities and academics engaged multiple levels of the University in authentic broad-based collaboration. Those who had succeeded under the old model were intentionally included in discussions, and became supporters of the new vision (Ready & Conger, 2008, p. 73). Notably, there was almost no attrition on the large committee over the six year period. The language of the *Principles* provided common ground for cross-unit collaboration, buy-in and agency. These were essential for engaging multiple layers of the organization and "distribut[ing] 'ownership' of that vision" (Ready & Conger, 2008, p. 73). Even so, in retrospect, we should have been more intentional in making connections between TLSWG representatives and their Faculties. This might have accelerated the change process.

*Mission-critical capabilities were built* by identifying and addressing capability gaps necessary to achieve the vision, in a way that avoided assigning blame for those gaps. We first advanced our own knowledge about learning spaces, then encouraged development of the knowledge base of the TLSWG, which exposed some expertise and service gaps. New positions and processes were developed to address these gaps. Increased classroom technology support for instructors and the creation of a TLSWG administrator position to coordinate logistics and communication about learning spaces across the institution allowed for development of expertise that transcended individual units.

Ready and Conger (2008) emphasize the importance of identifying and nurturing a sufficient number of suitable, competent individuals in order to execute strategies (p. 7), and add that sometimes this doesn't happen because leaders do not pay attention to

the connection between talent requirements and capability requirements. In retrospect, the educational developers should have done better in identifying and nurturing talent pools among TLSWG representatives.

*Alignment was created* through robust collaboration among divisions (e.g., financial, operations and academic arms of the University) and emerging leaders were encouraged to exhibit cross-boundary behaviours. Ready and Conger (2008) indicate that alignment of vision and processes can be reinforced by changing organizational structures and support mechanisms (p. 75). New support mechanisms fostered the alignment of the vision with the University teaching mission, classroom infrastructure, and the budget processes. An important change to organizational structure was when budget signing authority was given to the Director of the TLC, greatly enhancing alignment of vision and budget. One alignment issue remained unresolved during the first six years of the initiative. Some Faculties persisted in self-funding classroom renovations outside of the TLSWG process and therefore didn't feel obligated to take the *Principles* into consideration. If the alignment phase had been explicitly named in the re-envisioning of classrooms, perhaps we would have addressed this lacuna more directly.

The *University was energized* to implement and sustain the vision in a number of ways. A program of major and minor renovations ensured that each Faculty benefitted annually, which garnered support for the vision. Members of the TLSWG were stunned when experiencing first-hand the sad state of many classrooms across campus, and later became enthusiastic upon seeing these same classrooms renovated based on their own decisions and design principles. Finally, the decision to document perspectives of professors and students using new classrooms resulted in a better understanding of the significance of the classroom vision and its impact on teaching and learning.

Regarding the *sequence of the model*, Ready and Conger (2008) state that their "five critical activities [phases], performed in sequence...together form a systems approach to enabling visions" (p. 71). They lay out the five phases as roughly following a continuum from inspiration (*Framing the Agenda*) to implementation (*Energizing the Organization through the Power of People*) (p. 76). Based on their research with around 40 companies across the globe, they recommend that the phases be undertaken in sequence, as each phase builds upon and is supported by the previous phase(s) (p. 71, 72).

The sequence presented in this paper represents a reconstruction of decisions and actions in relation to Ready and Conger's phases, rather than the sequence in which these actually occurred. In retrospect, naming the phases

and carrying them out in sequence would likely have made actions more intentional and efficient. The very act of naming the phases from the beginning would have brought awareness and intentionality to the overarching purpose of each process as it was undertaken. Further, had we carried out the phases in sequence, it is possible that this would have improved efficiency. For example, if we had made connections between TLSWG representatives and their Faculties early on (*Engaging multiple layers of the university* phase), we might have been more effective in *Creating alignment* with Faculties. Then these Faculties might have been more inclined to partake in the TLSWG process instead of self-funding renovations of some classrooms that did not take the *Principles* into consideration.

### **Conclusions: Organizational Development as a Key Role for Educational Developers**

Organizational development has been defined as a planned, organization-wide effort that is led from the top, which involves working with beliefs, attitudes and structures, leading to increased organizational effectiveness (Beckhard, 1969; Bennis, 1969; Cummings & Worley, 2014). Such leadership takes a "vision from its birth to a new way of doing business" (Ready & Conger, 2008, p. 76). Within the field of educational development, Schroeder (2011) defines organizational development as bringing educational developer knowledge and skills to decisions about the institution and student learning, and collaboratively planning initiatives, rather than solely programming and consulting about initiatives.

Accepting leadership for the initiative in 2006 was an intentional decision to move into a multi-level approach to educational development. Interestingly, this corresponds with Schroeder's (2011, 2015) later proposals that educational developers serve as multilevel change agents. We drew on our professional knowledge and skills to lead institution-wide decision making about classroom design. The vision, as represented in our research-based *Principles for Designing Teaching and Learning Spaces*, was implemented through carefully crafted processes that favoured inclusion, transparency and fairness for all stakeholders. This vision and these processes resulted in new approaches to the conception, design, construction, financing, and support of classrooms that would better support what we know about how students learn. The new connections and partnerships created were positive and productive: it was sometimes said that the TLSWG was one of the best committees on campus because members felt they were making a contribution and things really got done. Documented perspectives from students and professors in some renovated classrooms demonstrated that they came to re-think their own

approaches to teaching and learning. Evidence of impact at the institutional level was also demonstrated when, two years after the timeframe being explored in this paper, a new Principal picked up on the importance of teaching and learning spaces, and on the notion of active and collaborative learning that we had sought to embed in the University's vision of teaching. This language was reflected in the Principal's major priorities, which included "improving the University's classrooms and teaching labs [...] and including 'active,' collaborative and innovative teaching environments" (Fortier, 2014, p. 1).

Schroeder (2011) draws on Land's (2001) work to suggest that by looking for "hot button issues", educational developers can have an attitude of vigilant opportunism as they work to identify strategic events and opportunities for impact (p. 56). The invitation to lead the re-envisioning of classroom spaces provided just such a strategic access point, not only to enhance the environments in which professors teach and students learn, but as a way "to influence the strategic direction of teaching and learning" within the institution (Jamieson, 2003, p. 123). This examination of the decisions and actions during the first six years of the initiative leads us to conclude that our role in re-envisioning classroom spaces was organizational development. Our intention in telling this story was to contextualize our organizational development experience for ourselves, and hopefully for others, in a way that might make it meaningful for practitioners seeking to clarify or enhance their own organizational development roles. Two lessons have emerged from our experience.

First, organizational development should become part of a curriculum for educational developers. Despite the early alignment with organizational development concepts and language, a formal knowledge of organizational development practices, interventions, and strategies is not necessarily part of the common knowledge and skill base of developers (Schroeder, 2011, p. 25). Although educational development might not yet have an agreed upon curriculum, researchers are making progress in that direction (e.g., Dawson, Britnell, & Hitchcock, 2010; Diamond, 2005; Taylor & Rege Colet, 2010). Common knowledge bases include learning theory, instructional design, adult learning, and higher education. Organizational development leadership should be added to this developing curriculum. For example: the relationship of organizational development to the more traditional aspects of our work (e.g., Diamond, 2002, 2005; Gaffe & Simpson, 1994; Gillespie & Robertson, 2010); our institutional leadership role (e.g., Dawson et al., 2010; Schroeder, 2011; Taylor, 2005a, 2005b); and organizational change/development models (e.g., Beckhard & Harris, 1977; Cummings & Worley, 2014; Kotter, 1996; Ready & Conger, 2008; Schroeder, 2011).

Second, it is necessary to move from intuition to intention in organizational development. We, like many educational developers, did not have formal knowledge of frameworks for change and organizational development leadership. Our specific decisions and actions were intentional based on our knowledge, competencies and experience as educational developers. But the manner and sequence in which the initiative evolved were based on intuition and common sense. Trowler, Saunders and Knight (2003) warn that "common sense thinking about change is fit for some purposes but can be very limiting" (p. 11). Because it is often difficult to articulate what is being done as a practitioner due to its tacit nature (e.g., Schön, 1983), reflecting on educational developer actions and decisions within the frame of an established model can make things explicit and intentional. Doing so made explicit for us things we had done but hadn't named, and that were so intuitive they were invisible. Schroeder (2011) asserts that:

Although this organizational role is clearly emerging, this field as a whole seems hardly conscious collectively that its role is changing. It appears to have one foot in and one foot outside the threshold between fully stepping forward and maximizing the potential of an institutional leadership role and remaining comfortably in a niche it has successfully carved...there is a price to be paid as a field for an organizational development role to remain unnoticed and indistinguishable from the instructional work traditionally done (p. 12).

To that end we recommend reflecting upon and examining our work with reference to a chosen model in order to identify and name where actions and processes are consistent with recommended organizational development practices, and where they differ. Further, model(s) should be used to intentionally frame our organizational development efforts.

In some situations, educational developers need to get out of the way to facilitate change and allow participants to flourish (e.g., Timmermans, 2014). Our examination suggests that educational developers need to get *in* the way as organizational developers, to lead institutional change initiatives that impact teaching and learning.

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