



# An Experiential Approach to Organization Development, 8th Edition

By Donald R Brown

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A conceptual and experiential approach to understanding organizational development.

With a focus on the development of readers' interpersonal skills, *Experiential Approach to Organization Development* provides a comprehensive, realistic, innovative, and practical introduction to the field.

The eighth edition presents new and revised information, keeping the material fresh and relevant.

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### **Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #259400 in Books
- Published on: 2010-01-16
- Ingredients: Example Ingredients
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.60" h x 1.10" w x 8.50" l, 1.95 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 454 pages



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## **Editorial Review**

### **From the Publisher**

This innovative experiential introduction to the field of OD offers a practical managerial approach to improving organizational effectiveness in a changing world. It differs from most OD texts in providing students with: 1) a strong conceptual framework, 2) descriptions of the most current, state-of-the-art approaches, techniques and methodologies for implementing OD programs, 3) current empirical findings, and 4) learn-by-doing behavioral skill simulations for each major stage of an OD program.

### **From the Inside Flap**

#### **Preface**

The first edition of this text appeared over two decades ago, and what changes have taken place! We live in a world that has been turned upside down. Fortune 500 companies are pouring money, technology, and management expertise into regions that were once off limits, acquiring new enterprises, forming joint ventures, or creating new global businesses from the ground up. Many major companies are going through significant changes, including downsizing, reengineering, using self-managed work teams, flattening organizations, and doing routine jobs with automation and computers. The added stress on people makes it increasingly difficult to create and maintain a culture that motivates and satisfies human potential.

The sixth edition has undergone major changes, much like the world we live in. In the past, managers aimed for success in a relatively stable and predictable world. However, in the hyperturbulent environment of the twenty-first century, managers are confronting an accelerating rate of change. They face constant innovation in computer and information technology and a chaotic world of changing markets and consumer lifestyles. Today's learning organization must be able to transform and renew to meet these changing forces.

This is a book about organization development: The management discipline aimed at improving organizational effectiveness by means of increasing use of human resources. It is also about managing in a changing world. We have tried to make this the most "user friendly" text available.

This text offers a practical and realistic approach to the study of organization development (OD). Through the application of a new paradigm—the OD process model—each of the OD stages is described from the standpoint of its relationship to an overall program of change. The book is written primarily for students who are learning about organization development for the first time. The text relates the student to the real world through the use of numerous illustrations and company examples showing how organization development is being applied in today's organizations.

Organization development is an emerging behavioral science discipline that provides a set of methodologies for systematically bringing about high-performing organizations. The goals of organization development are to make an organization more effective and to enhance the opportunity for the individual to develop his or her potential. It is our view that these organization development goals can best be accomplished by using the experiential approach to learning.

This text differs from most organization development (OD) texts in providing both conceptual and experiential approaches to the study of OD. A revolution is under way in how individuals use education to improve their performance. Our approach focuses on the development of interpersonal skills. Students are provided with a conceptual framework necessary for understanding the relevant issues in OD. In addition,

individuals will actively participate in individual and team exercises that require the application of chapter content to specific organization situations. This approach is aimed at developing those critical interpersonal skills needed to manage in a changing world. The word that best summarizes our beliefs about teaching and learning is encounter. Encounter captures the importance of engaging with new ideas, and new personalities. It also implies a deeper involvement in the learning process that will produce a lasting impact or meaning.

This text is the first to directly relate student learning experiences in OD with these skills judged by experts to be essential for potential OD practitioners and consultants. As noted in chapter 1, recent studies have been critical of today's business graduates for deficiencies in a number of areas, including communication skills, problem solving, decision-making ability, and leadership potential. This approach provides coverage of OD topics while also developing student skills in a "learn by doing" context. **THE EXPERIENTIAL APPROACH TO LEARNING**

To learn OD techniques, a manager or student needs both the knowledge of content material and the experience of putting theory into practice. Consequently, to create a learning environment for the field of organization development at either the undergraduate or graduate level, the emphasis should be on experience. In this book you will be experiencing OD techniques by means of behavioral simulations at the same time that you are learning OD theories.

You will perhaps discover a different approach to the study of organizational change. Many courses in OD approach change in a structured and traditional manner. By means of lectures and readings, useful concepts and theories are presented to the student, whose role is largely passive. This book utilizes an innovative and significantly different approach to teaching OD: the experiential approach. It is based on learning OD techniques by experiencing simulated organizational situations. You will experience situations in which you are developing a relationship with a client or diagnosing a problem rather than simply reading about them.

Experiential learning is based upon three basic concepts:

You learn best when you are involved in the learning experience. Concepts have to be experienced or discovered by you, the learner, if they are to change your behavior. Your commitment to learning will be greatest when you are responsible for setting your own learning objectives.

In the experiential approach, the major responsibility for learning is placed upon you, the learner. You will determine your own learning objectives and influence how the class goes about achieving these objectives. You set your own goals, decide which theories you want to learn, practice the skills or techniques you want to improve, and develop the behavioral style you want to develop.

Experiential learning also involves an active, rather than a passive role. Often you may sit in a class, listen, take notes, or perhaps daydream while the instructor "does his or her thing" for an hour. In this class, you will be actively deciding what to do and how to do it. You will be doing, communicating, and participating in learning. You will find that you cannot learn in isolation. As in a job situation, you are dependent upon others and they upon you for ideas, reactions, experiences, and feedback about behavior. The same will be true in this class. Experiential learning is also the method most corporations use to teach OD concepts to their employees. So, you will be experiencing the same kinds of activities that occur in most "real world" OD programs.

What is different about the experiential learning process? First, you will generate from your own experience in this class a set of concepts that will guide your behavior. These concepts will be continually modified over time and in various managerial situations to improve your effectiveness. The experiential learning process can be presented as a four-stage cycle (see Figure 1):

Gaining conceptual knowledge and theories—you will be reading about OD concepts and theories and doing preclass preparation. Activity in a behavioral simulation—you will be problem solving, making decisions, communicating, and actively practicing the concepts and theories. Analysis of activity—you will be analyzing, critiquing, and discussing the way you solved problems, and comparing the results of different approaches. Connecting the theory and activity with prior on-the-job or life situations—you will be connecting your learning to past experiences, reflecting upon the results, and generalizing into the future. The end result should be improved skill and performance in applying these learnings to life and job situations.

"Student-centered" learning places the learning responsibility upon you. There will be an opportunity in the class for a high level of participation and for a challenging learning experience. Small-group learning environments will be formed wherein you may share learning with others, thus encountering feedback. Each of the learning units presents a conceptual background and a framework for a behavioral simulation. The focal point for each chapter is the action-oriented behavioral simulation. As part of the experiential learning model in OD, feelings and emotions represent important data for learning. Open and authentic relationships in which you share your feelings with others and provide honest feedback are a necessary part of the learning situation. Each chapter is organized to help you learn concepts and skills, and each provides cases, simulations, and diagnostic instruments to help you learn more about OD. Although experiential learning can be stimulating and often fun, it is important to remember that you learn from the combination of theory and experience.

**NEW TO THIS EDITION**

The book is organized into six major parts. Part I, *Anticipating Change*, has been revised in a substantial way, primarily by the more complete explanation of organization transformation and the systems approach in chapter 2 and organizational renewal and corporate cultures in chapter 3. Part II, *Consulting for High Performance*, focuses on the skills, techniques, and roles of the OD practitioner and includes expanded material on consultant styles. Part III, *Developing High Performance*, has been revised and updated to reflect the state-of-the-art in the field of OD. Part IV, *Motivating for High Performance*, covers self-managed teams and team development. Part V, *Changing for Success*, presents TQM and other system change programs. Finally Part VI, *Focusing on the Future*, examines future trends and challenges of the field.

The text contains 16 chapters to fit a one-semester course, and has been thoroughly edited to improve readability. Illustrations and figures add to the book's visual appeal. All tables, facts, figures, references, and dozens of current examples are provided within the text materials. Chapter objectives and a list of key terms are supplied for each chapter to enhance learning.

*An Experiential Approach to Organization Development* offers substantial new coverage on several important topics: the learning organization, organization transformation, organization renewal, changing the corporate culture, self-managed work teams, managing diversity, total quality management, and empowerment.

Many other important changes have been incorporated into this edition.

One chapter builds on Peter Senge's work on learning organizations. The nature of open systems and contingencies have more thorough coverage. Cases have been added at the end of chapters on topics directly related to the text material. The endnote references have been updated and expanded. There is an opportunity to incorporate video cases into the learning situation. The cases are readily available commercially.

#### **LEARNING AIDS**

Many learning aids are provided within this book to help students learn about OD. The main ones are:

Chapter Objectives. Each chapter presents objectives that prepare the student for the chapter material and

point out learning goals. Figures and Illustrations. Throughout each chapter, key concepts and applications are illustrated with strong, visual materials. OD Applications/Highlights. Current examples of OD practices and important information are highlighted in boxed exhibits throughout the text. Summaries. Each chapter ends with a summary that wraps up the main points and concepts. Review Questions. Each chapter has a set of review questions covering the main chapter points. Key Terms. Key terms are highlighted within each chapter, and a list of key terms is provided at the end of each chapter. OD Skills Simulations (Exercises). These self-learning, experiential exercises include both individual and team learning. The exercises take theories and principles covered in the text and bring them to life in team activities. The hands-on, team interaction serves to generate feedback, lively discussions, the testing of personal ideas, and the sharing of information. Case Studies. Cases for the class discussion or written assignment are provided at the end of each chapter. The cases challenge students to apply OD principles to real companies in real situations. Index. A subject index helps students quickly find information and examples in the book. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to the many people who contributed to this sixth edition. Andy Hardin and Stan Roy provided extensive help in reviewing and editing the manuscript. Leroy Nehen, Lori Ryberg, and C. Lawrence Yonke also contributed valuable research assistance. Special thanks go to Professor Thom Sepic of Pacific Lutheran University for his suggestions and comments and Professor John Hulpke of Hong Kong University, for "Our Changing World"; to Donna Meyer, Antelope Valley College; and to Doreen Madden. Many students and managers have been involved in the development of the simulations and cases.

The authors would like to thank the following reviewers: Albert Smith, Radford University; Crystal Owen, Wright State University; Frank Jeffries, University of Alaska-Anchorage; Jarold Abbott, Florida Atlantic University; Bill Stratton, Idaho State University; Michelle Pettaway, University of Houston-Clear Lake.

#### From the Back Cover

With a focus on the development of interpersonal skills, *Experiential Approach to Organization Development* provides a comprehensive, realistic, innovative, and practical introduction to the field.

Organizational Development and Reinventing the Organization; Organization Renewal: The Challenge of Change; Changing the Culture; Role and Style of the OD Practitioner; The Diagnostic Process; Overcoming Resistance to Change; Intervention Strategies; Process Intervention Skills; Employee Empowerment and Interpersonal Interventions; Team Development Interventions; Intergroup Development; Goal Setting for Effective Organizations; Work Team Development; High-Performing Systems and the Learning Organization; Organization Transformation and Strategic Change; The Challenge and the Future for Organizations

This book is intended to assist the student, manager, and future OD practitioner in understanding the strategies and techniques of OD and moves from the more basic elements to the more complex.

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### **Craig Nazario:**

Do you have favorite book? When you have, what is your favorite's book? Reserve is very important thing for us to be aware of everything in the world. Each book has different aim or maybe goal; it means that guide has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. These are reading whatever they consider because their hobby will be reading a book. How about the person who don't

like reading a book? Sometime, person feel need book if they found difficult problem or maybe exercise. Well, probably you will want this An Experiential Approach to Organization Development, 8th Edition.

**Kenneth Kan:**

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The reserve with title An Experiential Approach to Organization Development, 8th Edition contains a lot of information that you can understand it. You can get a lot of profit after read this book. This particular book exist new know-how the information that exist in this reserve represented the condition of the world currently. That is important to you to understand how the improvement of the world. This book will bring you in new era of the global growth. You can read the e-book in your smart phone, so you can read that anywhere you want.

**Elaine Woodring:**

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