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EIP 17

Organisational Development: from insight to action

What is OD?

It can be confusing!

Because...

- It is both a process for the evolution of the whole organisation
- AND
- A function / dept / team with particular responsibilities

OD as a process

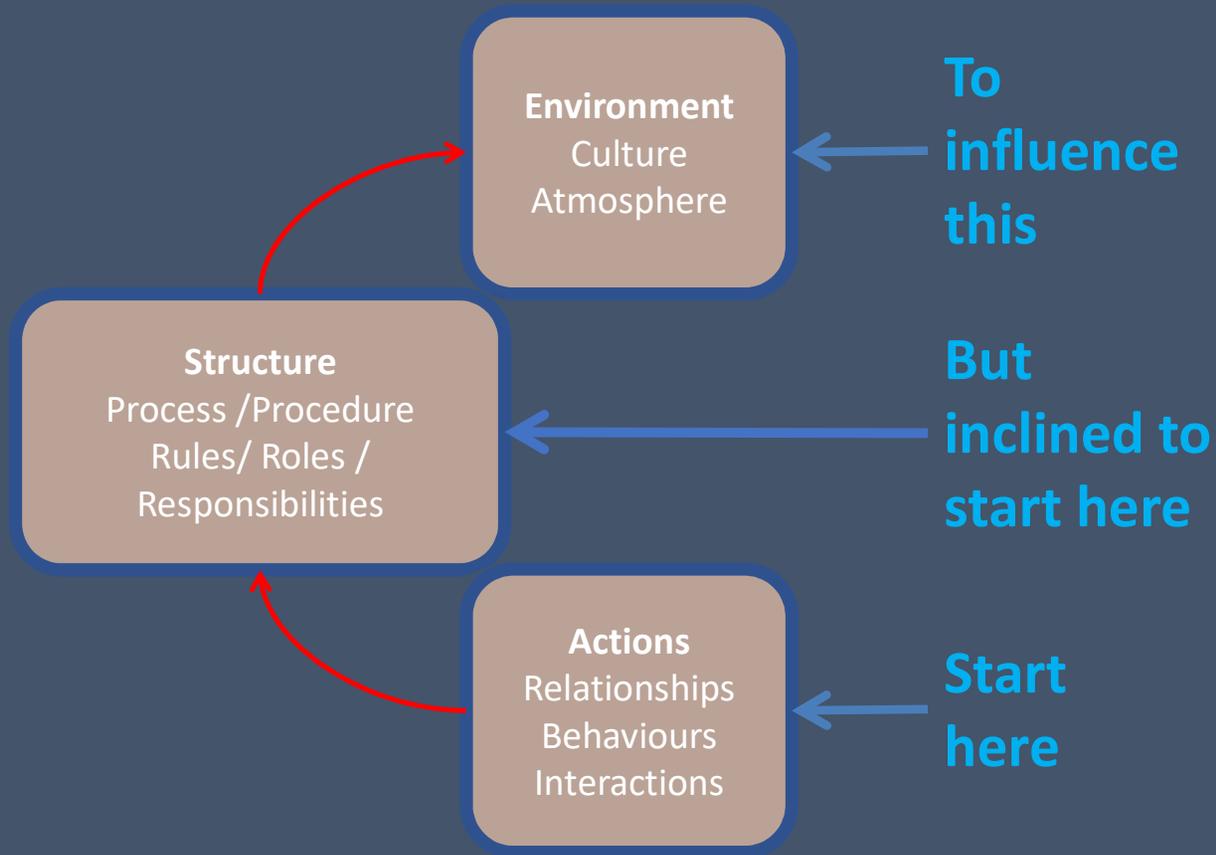
A planned and systemic approach to achieving sustained organisational performance by aligning strategy, people, process and culture

OD as a function, team or dept

- The *traditional* model: OD as function of HR
- The *de-centralised* model: OD practitioners in business units, with a link to a corporate lead
- The *strategy* model: OD as an integral part of strategic-planning
- The *change* model: OD as an integral part of change programmes
- The *independent* model: free-standing, arms-length, operates like an internal consultancy

What do OD people do, and how do they work?

- Organisational design
 - Operating models
- Workforce planning
- Leadership and team development
- Process re-engineering
- Facilitation and mediation
- Consulting to key transformation projects
- Sounding board for the Exec
- Provide methodological leadership to change programmes
- Glue in between
- Court jester
- Travelling minstrel
- Buyer of OD services
- Managing external suppliers
- **Leadership, change and people are central & relationships are key**
- **OD is a model that implies involvement**
- **Expertise in human dynamics and intervention processes**



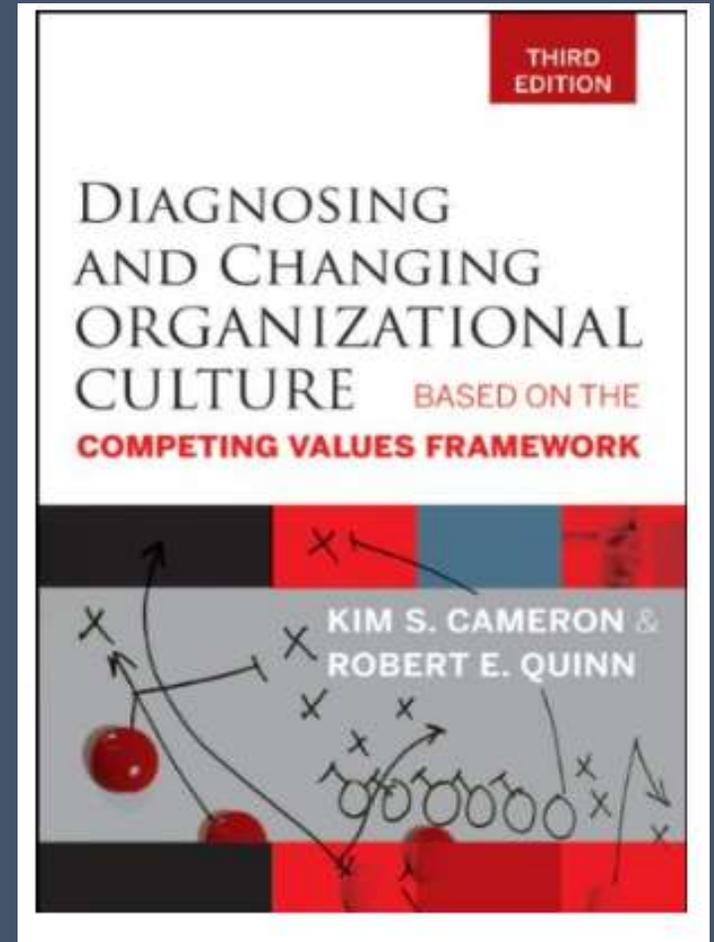
Why would we pay attention to this?

...because most change fails:

- Interventions are designed to solve the wrong problem
- Change is often seen as applying to only structures and processes
- Structural and process changes are not usually effective at dealing with complex situations such as behavioural issues
- Organisations often favour structural and process change because it fits with how the organisation is perceived
- Structural and process change creates an illusion of change, but a real organisational shift requires a change in behaviour at all levels within the organisation.

Insight into culture

- Diagnosing and Changing Organisational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework', Cameron and Quinn, 2011
- ...tells us 'what is' and 'what could be'
 - Prompts discovery
 - Prompts participation
 - Builds consensus
 - Guides development



...Yes, and we need more

- Reliance on quantitative methods risks limiting the understanding and constraining solutions
- If we are to achieve true transformation we need to identify, understand and work with behaviours too
- Much of what we do is tacit
- There's a whole world of behaviours that we take for granted and don't talk about
- Need to bring these to the surface so that we can work with this too (using a systematic methodology)
- We can all do this just by noticing and naming behaviours

Examples of what you start to notice

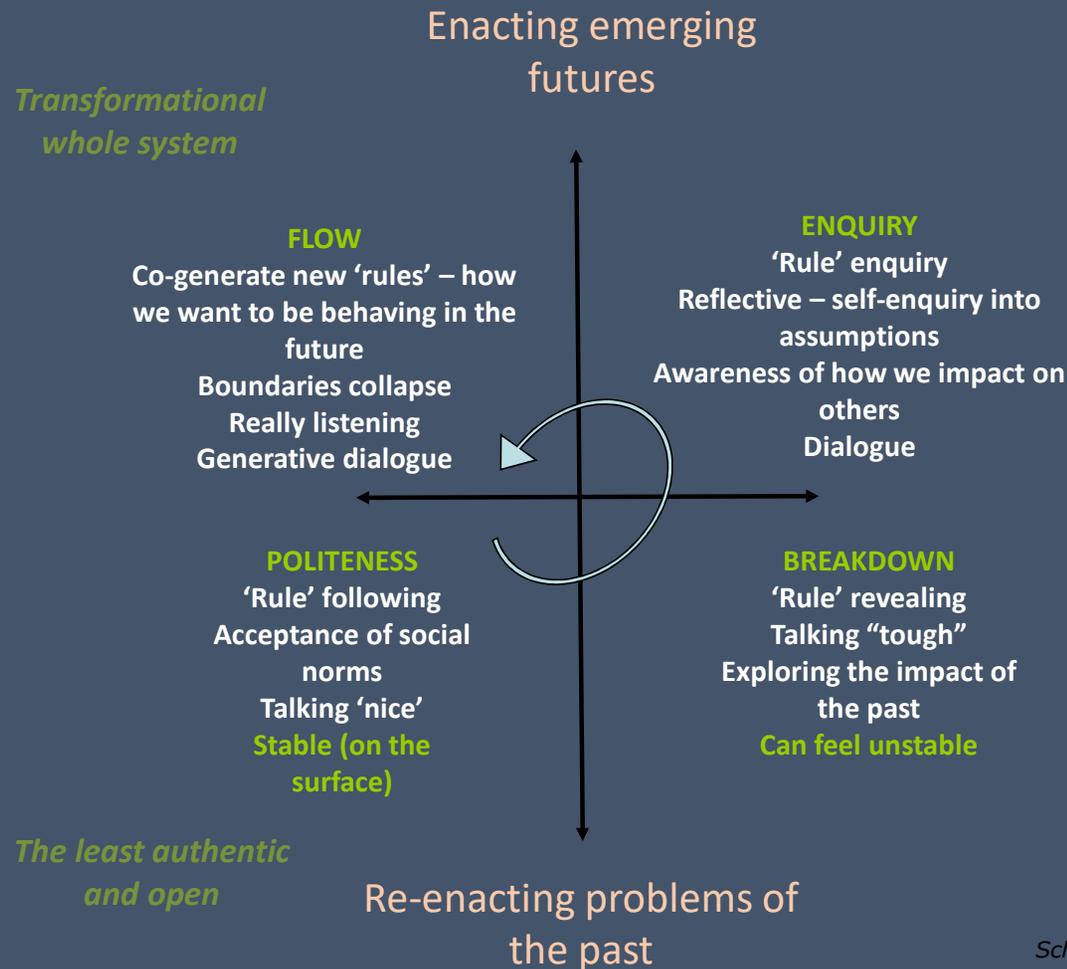
- 'Holding' jobs to appear busy
- Booking leave in anticipation of demand
- Officers refusing or delaying training so they can't be deployed to specific duties
- The real decisions get made outside meetings – courteous compliance and covert opposition

Courteous compliance and covert opposition

Description:

Someone sets a *direction*, and people publicly, overtly *support*. Underneath their outward *support*, people are actually sceptical of or have concerns about what is being proposed. However, there is very little, if any, open *opposition*. Out of the room people are at best sceptical and, at worst, sabotage the initiative. All the time the person who set the direction believes that they are being supported.

David Kantor, 2015



Scharmer, 2003

What's it like to do this?

- We can't work with what we can't talk about but ...
 - Not everyone wants to talk about it
 - Raises some really tricky issues
- Regression and resistance
 - Poses a threat...
- Working with and counter-culture
 - Not always easy to identify or agree the action
- So why...?
 - Because organisational cultures will continue to 'trump' any other development / change activity

**Two key
goals for OD
practitioners**

To build an
organisation's ability
to self-organise

To help an
organisation to
reveal itself to itself

Use of self

- Clear knowledge of who you are – willing to go deeply in to this
- Able to put self on the line to create the impact the system needs

Skills

- Know how to work with emergence
- Savvy in designing living system interventions

Knowledge

- Knowledge of change / nature of change
- Applied behavioural science

What does a future ready OD practitioner look like?

Characteristics

- Humble enquirer
- Confident (not seeking approval)
- Not a high need for control
- High level of self-awareness
- Passionate about human system development

Values

- Have clear practice values that help to ground practices
- Know what system outcomes you can contribute to

Mindset

- Comfortable with living in constant ambiguity
- Know how to work with polarity
- Learning vs performance stance

Ongoing reflection for leaders

01

Consider how your own leadership characteristics will help and hinder you working in a way that achieves the transformation required

02

Find / build on your ability to notice

03

Consider how you might find ways to name and work with the issues that present

- With culture and counter-culture

04

Take care...