

ORGANIZATIONAL CONSULTATION: CULTURE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT:

Organizational Development (OD) concepts and principles are essential for institutions due to rapid change and movement in higher education pertaining to online and blended learning, and the need for sustainability. Organizations that strive for success in the 21st century must adopt effective and innovative practices if they want to achieve their goals. Oftentimes, this involves some changes to an institution. As institutions adopt disruptive technologies and increase online modalities, internal consultation may be a viable option. Organization Consultation is a process and discourse about data and measurement pertaining to an organization and its operations that leads to a decision. A successful organization implements different strategies for change. Edgar Shein in his book *Humble Consulting* and Peter Block in his book *Flawless Consulting* both provide a theoretical, conceptual and practical understanding of organizational consultation, and its role relating to organizational change. As pioneers of the field both authors also provide an understanding of the basic consulting process, the common roles and styles that are current, and the skills that are used by effective consultants. Change is inevitable in the business arena. This is why organizations oftentimes call on consultants to help them with problems or issues. Consulting is truly about action, relationships and results. In order for a consultant to improve their ability to define key factors, and pertinent issues that are relevant to a particular client, they must understand how to examine their interrelationships, along with learning to work with them conceptually and practically. This also has a lot to do with ethics, culture and the consulting process. Therefore, understanding OD consultation and its dimensions will help with managing challenges when on a consulting engagement.

Keywords: Organizational Consultation, Innovation, Organizational Development, Change Management, and Higher Education.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, offering classes online is important for institutions of higher education. Institutions offering online courses creates an opportunity for expansion, and according to (Allen & Seaman, 2011), academic leaders understand the importance of offering classes that support online and blended

learning. There is a gap in the literature pertaining to the relationship of organizational culture and how instructors address their challenges when adopting technology integration and online courses. This is where consultation is needed. However, according to Bogle et. al., when conducting research there are a myriad of studies that examine student outcomes, learner support and rubrics associated with online learning (2011). Innovation in Organizations, West and Farr (1990) define innovation as follows: “the intentional introduction and application within a role, group or organization of ideas, processes, products or procedures, new to the relevant unit of adoption, designed to significantly benefit the individual, the group, organization or wider society”. Innovation is used to refer to e-learning and the adoption of online instruction. According to Martins (2003), the context in which technology is implementation is an innovation.

Organizational culture and climate is a critical factor in the success of any organization, including institutions of higher education. Organizations that are successful, typically intertwine innovation into the organizational culture and management processes (Park, 2009; Towndrown, 2009; Turney, 2001; Stringer, 2002; Tushman; Christensen, 1999; Cameron, 1999; Ethers; O’Reilly, 1997). The culture of the organizations is the nucleus and major part of an organization, according to (Schein, 1985; Tushman 1997; Cummings, 2014). The fundamental elements of organizational culture, which are used in this study influence e-learning in two ways: 1) Through a process of socialization pertaining to the behaviors that are acceptable and how things are ran in the organization. This is where norms are prominent and embedded in the culture. According to Tesluk et al., in accordance with shared norms, individuals will make assumptions about whether innovative behavior forms part of the way in which the organization operates (1997). The assumptions, beliefs and values, are acted out through behaviors and the activity is reflected through the structures, procedures and policies of the organization. Overall, culture affects the magnitude of which innovative resolutions are stimulated, reinforced and implemented. A culture that is reassured of innovation does aide in innovative ways of representing problems and finding solutions, and regards innovation as favorable (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996). That is why it is important that technical innovation and online learning is embraced in institutions.

The acceptance of emerging technologies and innovation can be a bit of a paradox because online learning offers wonderful opportunities and flexibility, but cannot be approached by the same methodology used when teaching classroom based courses. Appropriate pedagogical and andragogy teaching methods must be incorporated for system wide success (Nachmias, 2004; Soffer, 2010; Miller, 2014). Highly complex institutions are much more than the incorporation or use of technology, but it almost always will need the cooperation of the entire system from leadership, faculty and the understanding of the cultural aspects of the institution (Miller, 2014). To understand institutional complex organizations and the culture associated with them, and by accepting the redesign and organizational development changes, then the traditional lens of pedagogy and institutional current practices must be resurfaced, examined and changed. It may be difficult to improve learning outcomes and growth at the same time (Bates, 2011; Jenkins, 2010; Martin, 2003). Higher education institutional cultures are seemingly resistant to change, yet change has occurred as institutions blend online courses and traditional based

courses. This is not an easy task, flexibility and a great deal of resilience is needed to create a new system, while at the same time individuals must go against the grain of past practices. This must be done while maintaining perseverance, utility and sustainability (Miller, 2014).

Overall, what drives change in these institutions can be a complex task. A positive attitude and the fervent desire and intent to progress is needed. Also, evading questionable dichotomies between the two objectives and understanding that these higher learning institutions are still businesses can prove to be rewarding. Oftentimes, the goal is to reach more students at a lesser cost, but offer better education. It should be noted, that proper environments drive higher standards with the student's experiences as priorities (Miller, 2014). Online learning may be prevalent in higher learning institutions but there is a deficiency of institutional learning from insulated experiments and innovations. As with many institutions, systemic change or constant experimentation is not promoted (Law, 2005; Lawless, 2007; Miller, 2014). Oftentimes, institutions need whole system changes for successful transitions to occur. Administrators and faculty may focus on the unambiguous attributes of e-learning rather than the inherent pedagogical traditions, their fundamental possibilities, and their value for the development and achievement of new concepts, missions, markets and improvements in quality. Learning technologies are not transparent, so therefore digging deeper is a necessity pertaining to understanding the culture. E-learning will always need the support of a solid foundation, good facilitators and progressive environment. Well-supported faculty, human intervention, solid learning design and proper teacher training is needed. It appears awareness has been established and the move to understand that current and future practices needs to be created through solid design, external and internal teaching practices., i.e. consultation. It is not just about the progress of teaching practices. Consultants are hired for possessing expertise, and technical skills. Furthermore, having a partnership with the client for a joint discovery of the "real problem" and the "solution", is what is needed for effective consulting (Block, 2011). Which may be in contrast to the status-quo and the traditional "pair of hands" model of consulting. In order to understand how consultation works, oftentimes a simulation or mock demonstration helps. Block goes on to discourse about the art and effectiveness associated with listening and being authentic. He presents a case for being authentic with the client and how authenticity always resonates with the client from multiple perspectives (Block, 2011). This is the same approach that Schein takes in his book *Humble Consulting*. Edgar Schein is currently a professor at MIT's Sloan School of Management. A lot of his research is about organizational culture, change management and consulting. Circa 1969, he developed models of consultation that can better assist consultants when approaching different organizations. His focus is on organizational models, Content and Process. Content, involves problems and tasks that are needed for effective performance. Process focuses on how individuals and groups approach and proceed with issues and relevant tasks. It should be noted, that these concepts or variables are all related and interconnected, however, there may be different focuses pertaining to different models. For example, depending on the models, the approach may have a stronger content focus as opposed to process, or the other way around. In general, there are three Models of Helping. The first is a Purchase of Expertise

(Content), the second is the Doctor-Patient (Content), and the third, Process Consultation (Process). These models are carried out when the consultant is called in, usually due to a problem or issue within the organization. The Purchase of Expertise states that if there is a problem that the organization needs to address, and must be fixed, then they employ a consultant. This example is considered to be a content focused model. When the client seemingly views the consultant as the solver of all problems and removes themselves from the issue, then the consultant is almost always assigned with the task of finding the solutions. There are several assumptions associated with this model that sometimes cannot be met.

There is this understanding that the client knows exactly what the problem is, and that they have effectively articulated what the problem actually is. Additionally, there is this assumption that the consultant has the right information about the client, and that the client has put forth time and effort into the consequences associated with the problem (and is asking the question to receive the right answer to fix the issue). In general, the focus has then shifted from the actual content of the issue to actually solving the problem. Schein discourses about the only way to be action oriented and arrive at an effective solution is to involve the client in the process, essentially marrying the two. The client needs to be a part of the process when diagnosing the problem and generating solutions. When this happens, the client is not as dependent on the consultant and is more invested in the process toward a solution for the organization. The Doctor Patient Model, which was talked about briefly, is when the client actually has no idea what the problem is. The consultant is then brought in to identify the problem and provide a remedy. The assumption is that the client has a complete understanding of the actual problem, and that the client is trust worthy, and that all information is revealed.

For a great diagnosis, the client will actually accept the prescription and will remain in a healthy state once the consultant leaves. Lastly, Process Consultation is when the focus shifts from the content stage to actually solving the problem. In general, the solution is associated with involving the client. The key assumptions are associated with client expectations associated with the consultant. More assumptions with this model is that the client will benefit from participating with the given diagnosis and process. Clients may be willing and open to learning and be a part of the process in order to solve problems, for an organization to be ran effectively in the future. Lastly, another assumption is that only clients want forms of interventions, and that these interventions will work effectively in their organization, and can accurately function when up against issues in an organizations culture.

Edgar Schein's book *Humble Consulting* presents a continuation and adaption of research from his last book *Helping and Humble Inquiry*, which focuses on adaptive moves to refine his work with real life examples, and lessons learned. This book is a great resource for assisting in developing an organizational culture that thrives in an atmosphere of mutual trust and teamwork. The techniques introduced are based on the spirit of inquiry, and dialog that designs better ways of working cohesively. Schein's insightfulness, and wealth of experience, as well as his expertise in consulting helps to incorporate consulting into my current reach on education, culture and technology. The clarity and examples that are presented in the book help to provide a deeper understanding of what consulting

is all about. Reflecting on the stories and putting myself into his shoes really did prove to be a beneficial exercise. I find his approach presented ways of working with clients that are more effective, enthusiastic, ethical and more authentic. My belief is that Shein, consistent with the theme of the book, was not apprehensive about disclosing vulnerability. He admits that there are times he simply did not know what the answer to a particular problem was, and that there is nothing wrong with that. Shein's main theoretical approach to consulting is about Process and Content, basically the consultation models. Typically, in these models, the consultant is hired to identify the issue and at the end of the consultation provides a prescription or remedy of the problem (Shein, 2016).

PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Organizations function properly due to effective strategy, design and culture of the organization. Change is needed and is essentially constant in the current business arena. Therefore, it is a necessity that organizations are prepared and equipped for changes when they transpire. Organizational development (OD) techniques are concepts and theories that can assist with change management strategies, that can aide in a more fluid change management process within organizations. By using OD techniques and having a working knowledge of the principles, an organization will be most effective and most likely lead to sustainability in the market. The goal of OD methodology is to increase the efficacy of individuals and teams in organizations by providing tools to help solve problems.

OD really is a field that spans across numerous disciplines. It consists of a multidisciplinary field that includes core foundations from the behavioral sciences. OD is involved with a myriad of issues such as reduced efficiency, team conflict, consumer relationships, consultancy, change management and others. The use of OD principles does require practice and a foundation of its core concepts. Management in organizations play a major role in how organizations operate. Managers have to demonstrate patience toward ambiguous outcomes that could potentially happen when the OD practices are implemented. Organizations also need to train and follow-up with their top managers to make sure the execution is being implemented properly. External agents are also important when executing an OD plan. A skilled external agent helps to execute and create order for OD interventions. Oftentimes managers are faced with ethical dilemmas, especially when changes occur within organizations. An OD consultant will implement a change management plan with applications that are clear and simple in nature. If the first attempt is successful, then the following attempts may increasingly become more complex in nature. An organization may construct a group that consists of individuals from a particular administration, inside and outside specialists, and some senior managers. In larger organizations, there are design groups that include employees from different levels of an organization. This group has a clear view of set goals an organization is attempting to obtain. When conducting an intervention, the OD consultant and team members must manage their emotions. Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, K. J., & Sideman, (2005) suggests that "managing emotional expressions" can prove to be rewarding when conducting interventions or

working on teams. If implemented properly, it can aid in an organization reaching their set goals.

Organizations can globally increase change initiatives formed by them with interventions and the use of organizational change strategy. This can occur during a consulting assignment. Change management techniques have two primary premises which are: the experiences associated with the problem, and implementation of interventions. An organization has three phases when implementing change. The first phase demonstrates that an organization relies on the systemic process of inputs, outputs and outcomes. The second phase consists of an organizational strategy that takes into account the business environment and politics that are relevant. This approach has to include different methodologies that are parallel with the organization's vision, mission and principles. Lastly, the third phase, is where the design is a conclusive approach to different elements in the system. These elements are referred to as "socio technical" in the OD field. Strategy and system mechanisms within an organization attribute to the development that affects the status- quo of organizations. An organization's past history and their culture is essential to what is needed to understand every organization. Different types of methodologies pertaining to organizational change can be explained as rapid change. Organizations experience rapid change that is either extreme, incremental or disruptive. OD has different theories that are continuously growing. According to Sosenshein (2009), employees view and reframe from issues that may be sensitive areas to the individual. Like most individuals, they just want their voice heard. Participating in group dialogue is a must and a critical part of addressing any issues.

Responding to ethical issues in the workplace and implementing strategies can help to alleviate problematic situations. Organizations must also do their part, especially, since voice is shaped by individual attitudes and perceptions of the work context and group-level beliefs (Vogelsang, 2013,).

According to Vogelsang (2013), OD has elements from human resource management (HRM). Often times, HRM has similar experiences that the OD consultant, especially concerning organization strategy, but mainly relates to policies and methods in order to handle features of HRM attitudes. Currently, the field of OD is steadily increasing providing research across the range of employment, instruction, rewarding, and investigating. One of the main key features is to keep in mind that OD is strategic. Vogelsang (2013) ruminates that the practical links between organizational development and organizations are prevalent through strategy. Strategizing and aligning OD principles and concepts is important in the implementation process of change management. OD applications help to provide knowledge to advance an organization, and provide effective and efficient ways for organizations to adapt to constant environmental changes. Although applying OD principles to environmental changes will help an organization improve their external and internal relationships while increasing the organization's ability to problem-solve successfully (Weisbord, 2004). OD is an application of strategic effective practices. Organizations typically operate from a pyramid structure focusing on top level management. These one sided practices create problems when rapid change occurs. OD applications offer organizational effectiveness through the implementation of interventions in order for OD to be effective in top management organizations. Organizations that are

managed from the top must pledge to make an effort and thoroughly understand the knowledge given to them. They must understand the goals and vision of their organization, and they must actively contribute to an improved workplace. It should be noted, that OD focuses on the entire organization holistically. OD is indeed applications and concepts as well as a specialized “field of social action and a range of scientific inquiry” (Weisbord, 2004). It includes the formation and the consequent strengthening of change management by utilizing the foremost interventions of OD such as: strategic interventions, techno structural, and human resource management. In addition, not all OD programs practice the exact same applications. Some OD programs concentrate on different change management techniques than others (Weisbord, 2004). Overall, the intent is to get an organization to achieve success by increasing productivity and obtaining their goals.

In the entry stage of applying OD concepts, organizations must implement a form of change management techniques such as interviewing and survey information. Another approach is to implement OD practices through different projects within subsystems of the customer's organization. Normative change measures also can be used when attempting to change the culture of an organization. Lastly, structural change is used by OD professionals for conducting projects that help an organization become more productive and effective. This includes employing advocates of OD to put them in a leadership position where they have the ability to effect change. They also need to be flexible in order to carry out OD projects.

OD STRUCTURE AND TECHNOLOGY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Technology and change management is relevant in today's organization to increase efficiency. Technology disrupts and helps organizations run fluid. Changes often occur when a problem arises or an organization wants to become more effective and strategic in nature. E-learning is an example of how organizations incorporate technology and knowledge management under one roof. OD principles recommend that when technology changes within an organization, it is more effective if organizations start from top to the bottom. Most change in organizations point to the structure. In order for changes to be effective, structural changes focus on top-down organizational structure. Organizational structure consists of task orientation, self-contained units and patrons. The hierarchical structure is widespread and standard across many organizations. Organizations are sectioned-off into different departments and units, which can be effective or create silos. Change can be managed more effectively if there is a common theme in the organization. For example, if managers and subordinates are within the same field and department. Another important part of the design is called functional. This structure is considered to have greater advantages than disadvantages. One of the most effective functional design uses is that there is a concentration of services and resources that can be used to increase efficiency. This structure promotes communication within an organization and oftentimes aides in career development (Thach, 1994; Weisbord, 2004). On the other hand, there are disadvantages to the structure that is quite restrictive to an organization. This structure focuses on employee operations instead of the entire organizations goals and tasks. This type of

system also leads to conflict. Using OD methods that promote teamwork would be rewarding when an organization is operating under this structure. Another structure within organizations is the divisional structure, which brings together organizational movement pertaining to goods, services and clients (Weisbord, 2004). Smaller or provisional organizations are oftentimes formed, with different specializations. Overall, regardless of an organizational structure, there are key interdependencies with different structures which can be an advantage or disadvantage.

Technology has essentially changed the foundation of innovative instructional learning in higher education. The instructional and socio-economic forces that are associated with driving colleges and universities to implement and integrate e-learning into the curriculum, have made a major impact on the transforming of institutions. Online and blended courses offer unparalleled opportunities for knowledge building, and can be accessible and convenient for students, however, if universities do not have effective leadership and administrative policy into place, then bringing about institutional change will be problematic (Miller, 2014). As institutions change, structural and skill development is needed. The power of technology lies in stretching the boundaries of formation and development of new ideas. The integration of technology in institutions, along with the process of planning and execution has become more innovative and resourceful (Markus & Robey, 1988). Its presentation can be pretentious by centralized issues associated with different organizations, but the decision and the ability to execute, which lies with administrative entities, can highlight whether or not an institution will handle change well.

Most higher learning institutions offer online and/or blended courses. These types of courses were not recognizable or as popular a decade ago. Focusing on higher education and OD theories, I will briefly outline the transition from traditional knowledge based learning, to courses that implement technology and delivery of institutions, as new periods of progress. According to Christensen & Raynor, innovations may fail not because of technology, but because institutions fail to make the necessary changes to stay abreast (Miller, 2014). Presently, higher learning institutions around the world are offering some form of technology infused courses within their curriculum. Also, because the landscape of higher education is changing, there is a need for universities to reinvent themselves in order to meet the needs of the stakeholders, especially the students. These higher learning institutions are not only focusing on incorporating technology into the classroom, but they are attempting to meet the request of the student's educational needs, however, the rapid pace and the need for technological based learning and instruction is growing regardless of unsettling and beneficial methodologies, which is causing challenges and problematic transitions. E-learning directly affects and challenges traditional based classroom learning along with the thought process of traditional teaching methodologies (Miller, 2014). Emerging technologies used as educational resources can be a paradox to some, due to technology based instruction offering wonderful opportunities, and convenience that essentially can make instructional delivery problematic when teaching traditional based courses. Appropriate pedagogical teaching methods must be incorporated for the educational system to experience world-wide success. Educational institutions can be very complex and problems can arise beyond incorporating the use of technology, but it almost always will

need the cooperation of the entire system from leadership, faculty and the understanding of cultural aspects within the institution (Thach, 1994; Miller, 2014). To better understand academic institutions and accept technology, redesign and organizational development changes, then the traditional lens of pedagogy and institutional current practices must be resurfaced, examined and changed to fit the current academic environment. It may be difficult to improve learning outcomes and growth at the same time (Zang, 2002, 2006; Miller, 2013). There is research that supports difficulty in attempting to change traditional structures in academic institutions, but yet change has occurred and is disruptive in nature, due to technology.

As higher learning institutions continue to offer blended or online courses, there will be a need for greater flexibility, resilience towards keeping up with technology, and also change management techniques, due to the changes that constantly occur because disruptive technology. This has to be done while maintaining perseverance, utility and sustainability (Zang, 2006; Miller, 2013). Maintaining any type of change is going to be a complex task. It is a must that everyone involved keeps a positive and proactive attitude. Also, keeping in mind problems will occur but evading questionable dichotomies between numerous objectives, and understanding colleges and universities are still businesses that operate because of funding. Oftentimes, in higher education, the overarching goal is to deliver good education to students at a cost that is worth the degree that students are working toward. It should be noted, that proper settings increase standards with the student's involvements as priorities (Miller, 2013). According to Allen et al., e-learning may be prevalent in higher learning institutions, but there is a deficiency of institutional learning from insulated experiments and innovations. As with many institutions, systemic change or constant experimentation is not promoted (Miller, 2012). As technology disrupts the landscape of higher learning, whole systems change becomes prevalent. This is where OD's consulting techniques may prove to be rewarding.

An OD consultant takes into account a hierarchical structure that addresses change from a top-down approach. In the case with higher education, that would mean that administrators, deans and directors would be the first to address problematic situations pertaining to e-learning. It is helpful to outline the benefits of e-learning techniques and features, the fundamental possibilities associated with using technology, and the importance for the growth toward innovation and developments. Learning technologies do not come with a manual that explains how to address perceptions or challenges associated with execution, therefore digging deeper and understanding the real issue and culture of the institution is necessary. E-learning will always need the support of all involved accompanied by a solid foundation, good instructors and flexibility. Well-supported instructors, design and proper professional development is a must. Also, an understanding of how e-learning may play a role in a particular environment is vital as well. When implementing new tools there is almost always an understanding that issues may arise. These issues have a lot to do with communicating change effectively. After awareness has been established and the move to understand that current and future practices need to be created through solid design, external and internal teaching practices, then the implementation process can begin. It should be noted, that it is not just about the progress of teaching practices, but understanding the environment is vital (Miller, 2014).

Traditional institutions as well as non-traditional instructional delivery methods can almost always drive change when there is proper communication, an effective strategy, and buy-in from leadership. Transparency is a key major factor that should happen before and continue after the change. It is imperative that when changing institutional practices; knowing and interacting with all the key stakeholders can prove to be rewarding. Having a clear strategy and defining key goals along with following the institutions mission statement, are steps that need to be thoroughly understand before beginning the change. The main key stakeholders in the process will be the instructors and administrators. Faculty and administrators need support to deliver resolutions to innovative tasks rather than known as the blockers to change. The whole system must work together cohesively in order for successful changes to occur, and there should be an understanding that some issues may occur do to implementing something new. Costs, usually are a problem when technology is involved, although the main investment derives from numerous resources, connecting many specialists and e-training, and to increase the probabilities of success. Another main key is to make sure that every step of the way the instructors are engaged. Most problems occur with how the instructor perceives the implementation and how well they know how to use technology.

There are studies that show higher learning institutions have unsatisfactory scores (Towndrow, 2009; Albright, J. 2009). Many institutions are prone to interior and exterior drivers, but normally have a high resistance to organizational change. Online learning, whether joined with other methods of learning and education, is almost always multidimensional and involves modifications both in understanding and performing (Salmon, 2013). Also, if faculty members have not made the proper shift, then salient issues may occur. In order to enable sustainability in a technological era, then implementation of improvement into institutional management strategy is vital (Miller, 2014). Possibilities pertaining to staff development for instructional innovations needs effective and efficient online course design, may need to focus on the former traditional preparation of the industrial tool, and to the practical and pedagogy characteristics that may have an effect on technology (Salmon & Wright, 2014). It is realistic to identify and implement technology based learning in a highly complex system that has multiple frameworks and participants (Miller, 2004). Presently, individuals and entities (departments in colleges), have their own requirements, capabilities, pasts and inclinations. Institutions involve cultural, ancient and power driven contexts (Salmon & An good, 2013). The initial emphasis of e-learning has helped to create awareness and discourse on educational design, connectedness and in unifying teaching methodologies (Thach, 1994; Miller, 2013; Figg, 2013). There is significant indication that technology based education over the last few years has become concerned with analyzing on a micro level, the amount of currency valued, integration and assimilation of multimedia, e- learning and devotion to ideals and branding (Miller, 2014). Online or distant learning is not new to the educational landscape. There is research and reports that present findings that are parallel to some of the same problems as a traditional based classroom teaching design. An although new approaches to implementing knowledge based technologies and their role as drivers of novelty are almost are all well known, seemingly institutions still have problems with transitioning effectively and engaging both instructors,

administrators and staff beyond a specific project. This is an opportunity for the introduction of new research, that that is able to fill a gap in the literature and provide assistance with the implementation of e-learning methodologies. In addition, models and techniques that are essential for success in the use of technology in online and blended courses. As change is constant and there is a paradigm shift that occurs in structural innovation, then managing change will prove to be pivotal for effective knowledge management in the future. According to Salmon et al., there are a couple of ways to help approach how e-learning is introduced into traditional instruction, whether in a traditional setting and online (2014).

According to research there are different lens to implement changes in higher education institutions pertaining to online and blended learning. There has to be a focus specifically on design that involves majority of staff and faculty members to make their impact, particularly with a design focus (Miller, 2014). This may include, simply incorporating technology into a curriculum, or professional development sessions. Training is effective and has the capacity to be long-term when implementing change in higher education.

Change is constant, so being prepared for challenges can prove to be rewarding when the change is complete. Having a strategic plan and making sure you have a clear goal can help to alleviate future issues. Also, parallel to training, a research program that transports advancing indications from the knowledge based technological setting, may suggest a more thought-provoking method to variations in the use of different skills and e-learning (Miller, 2014). Typically, this approach is successful when institutional structures need to be changed or altered. Approaches that are transparent, and communication is effective is needed. It should also be noted, that although research may state that certain theories may work, it is vital that when going through a change, the culture of your particular institution must be taken into account. The core principles of your institution must be in alignment with the goals, the university's mission, and with the current state of instructional opportunities that the institution offers. Keeping in mind there are large ranges of learners, customers, partners, resources, both perceived to be a certain way and are often times valued in high regard (Miller, 2014). The transition into technology is slow and decreases the life cycle of many e-learning resources, but as discoursed, most institutions do not accept change well in their daily practices. When using technology for a class, and when using modalities such as Blackboard or Engage, rarely do higher learning institutions change from their current modalities. For example, some institutions do very well with preparing instructors for teaching online or blended courses, others may have partnerships and tools that side in growing personal learning networks among instructors.

Associations with others, or associations and dual developments offer ways to discover improvement and marginal technologies that are not as risky. Each scientific expansion must be positioned in its environmental framework. Each specific institution has need based e-learning in order to facilitate the culture of the institution, but within an inclusive framework of mutual improvement (Miller, 2014). The instructional innovation framework must match the culture of the institution. The framework must first identify, then incorporate an institution's core capabilities, and existing strength. Encompassing these dimensions together is an effective way to manage change. The incorporation of

e-learning must meet the institutions goals and help to clarify the strategy in place. Organizational development principles can help, whether it is through consulting or incorporating a theory. Sociotechnical theory as a technique in the OD field, describes a longstanding, institutional wide application of social science techniques to escalate systems, but none of the systems should function at the expenditure of the other (Hackman, 1980). This theory can work well pertaining to higher education and instructional innovation, because changes tend to affect or influence all subsystems. Changes due to technology do not just affect a particular person or department, but change in one area may influence or affect another area because systems are interdependent.

On the other hand, socio-technical systems, do take into account the needs of personnel-in this case instructors in educational institutions. It delivers a sense of accepting, importance to the work and accountability for results (Miller, 2014). The collective system is known through the institution's culture, norms, beliefs and statement type patterns, as well as a network of social interactions and behavior practices that progress (Thach, 2004; Harvey, 1992). The result is work procedures that relates entities to the organization's technical structure. An additional vital feature for sociotechnical strategy is that the institution is rooted in and affected by the exterior setting. This codependent relationship can affect the execution of any one of the structures and objectives. Authors Emery and Trist focus on institutional exposure to socio-technical systems.

Changes in the exterior surroundings are influenced and essentially housed by the institution. Emery and Trist propose that comprehensive consideration to the desires of the social and technical methods are essential, if the institution is to maximize its entire production structure (Miller, 2014). Integrating OD principles and methodologies into a whole system change process is not an easy task to achieve. Expertise and skills are needed in order for STS to be effective in practice. Change can be complex because of an elusive procedure. Complexity increases because of the diversity of different structures. It is elusive because of the connection amid these systems inside the institutional setting. Changes that are parallel with OD theories may help to determine how the whole system is affected. Organizations main concern has a lot to do with sustainability. Gaining a competitive advantage by introducing new technology may prove to be effective. Institutional culture takes into account many different features and is directly affected by technology. As a result, effective change procedures and best practices have to be set goals for the entire staff, administrators and other stakeholders. Organizational change, pertaining to technology, requires flexibility and is examined to customize the communal network of the exact institution into which technology is present (Woodman, 1994). STS theory and OD consulting can help in terms of design, data and process.

CONSULTING, ONLINE-BLENDED LEARNING AND HIGHER EDUCATION

OD Consultation in learning institutions focuses on the relationship in which the consultant works with the educational institution solely in an effort to solve a particular issue. Consultants work in an effort to promote and solve problems that affect all stakeholders in an institution. Examples are: students, staff, teachers, administrators, as well as the community and parents. Consultants are

often times brought in for professional development. Organizational consultants can help instructors by intervening on all levels to help facilitate effective organizational functions pertaining to technology: and because technology changes constantly along with the landscape of higher education and its knowledge delivery methods, then OD consultants can really make a difference in educational institutions. They can work and on issues such as: administration, team building problem solving, interpersonal relationships, organizational culture, academic performance of students, and program implementation. In an academic institution, organizational consultants examine the culture and environments to determine what the dynamics at play that support consultation goals (moving forces) and what is presently standing in the way of institutions reaching their academic their goals (restraining forces). Typically, action plans can then be developed in order to create change and improve moving forces while reducing forces that are seen as restraints to progress. Interventions must be developed by collaborating both the decision makers and consultants in the academic setting. The ultimate goal is for the instructors and administrators to identify problems and endure a process of developing their own interventions.

According to Schein's Process Consultation model, typically, organizational consultants may be experts but they essentially do not know enough about an organization, the culture or their procedures to make effective suggestions alone (Schein, 2016). When developing an intervention, and using a consultant in an educational institution there must be an understanding of the environment, and because organizational consultation is recursive in nature, some consultants do not necessarily progress through problem-solving stages. Still, effective work at a later stage is unlikely if there are unresolved issues from an earlier stage. Outlining the components Block mentioned in his book, Entry would be the first on an organizational consultants list. Consultants need to understand the environment including the politics and culture. It is also in the best interest of the consultant to formulate their own problem and definition based on the case and stakeholders involved at the problem site. Typically, in institutions there almost always needs to be an assessment after collecting data by using numerous methods such as interviews or surveys. After the data is collected, then both the consultants and stakeholders will present the findings together. The next stage will be to form an Intervention. Interventions are typically based on the findings and delivered by the client and the consultant. For example, some interventions in educational institutions are staff training pertaining to technology, changing the actual structure of the institutions due to technology and individual interventions that focus in on particular decisions makers in the institution. There is also a component pertaining to evaluations. After the intervention is complete, their needs to be a systemic evaluation of the completed interventions. This is important because it is the stage that allows for changes to be made to an intervention if needed.

Organizational consultation is quite useful in educational institutions due to the focus on different variables, such as technology and the organizational culture that directly impacts administrators, instructors, and the outcome of the students because of the inherent focus on the systemic variables of the school environment that can directly impact students' growth, development, and achievement. In general, organizational consultation can work very well in an educational institution. The consultant will most likely carry out the intervention

so it is imperative that there is an open relationship between the consultant and clients. The clients in an educational setting will most likely vary but may include, instructors, and administrators due to the nature of how institutions are ran. The consultant maybe left with the task of carrying out the intervention on their own, but the data is gathered by having a working relationship. Organizational consultation involves using different methodologies, which allows for much better data and strategies to be implemented at different stages of the actual process. Overall, the consultant and client has a better chance of using what is best for the institution. There is always a process with organization consultation. From identifying the problem, to an analysis of the problem, to implementation, and lastly evaluation. Identifying the problem is the key stage in attempting to solve the problem. Understanding the culture and building relationships are also needed when understanding that being ethical is at the forefront of good consulting. It is very important to build a relationship with the client, because the client is the one that knows what is happening at their organization. Also, considering that consultants only know exactly what clients know before they obtain data. Consultation can be a very effective way to address challenges that instructors may experience when implementing technology. A mixture between content and process models are a start to effective, and an ethical way for taking actions to solve problems. Working together, planning an intervention, understanding the culture, and building relationships can provide to be rewarding when consulting in an academic institution.

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