

CHAPTER 16

Organization Change and Development: In Practice and in Theory

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The field of organization development continues to evolve (e.g., Bushe & Marshak, 2009). The continued shifts in the field have triggered numerous discussions of the future of organization development and questions about its role as a professional field (Bradford & Burke, 2005; Burke, 2011). In this chapter, we continue the discussion by examining recent research and theorizing. We build from the framework we introduced in our chapter in the first edition of this handbook (Austin & Bartunek, 2003).

In 2003, we observed that academic theorizing in organizational change and development tended to focus on theories of change process while practitioner theorizing tended to focus on theories of change implementation, both of which we discuss below. We examined the state of change process theorizing using the four motors of change—the teleological motor, the life-cycle motor, the dialectic motor, and the evolutionary motor—introduced by Van de Ven & Poole (1995). The teleological motor describes organizational change as the result of purposeful social construction by organizational members. Because of the purposeful, goal-focused nature of this change, the teleological motor is found within most models of planned

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organizational change. The life-cycle motor describes change as a progression through a predetermined sequence of stages. The dialectic motor describes organizational change as the result of conflict between opposing entities. The evolutionary motor examines change in a given population over time.

While Van de Ven and Poole placed organization development (OD) within the teleological motor, we suggested that, given the disconnect between change process theory and change implementation, it was valuable to examine the motors of change implementation separately. We introduced four motors of change implementation that emerged from an examination of current theory: participation, self-reflection, action research, and narrative–rhetorical intervention.

In 2003, we mapped the links between implementation motors, interventions, and change processes. This mapping indicated that implementation strategies have been developed primarily for the teleological motor, as this is expressed in multiple forms. However, at least one organization development intervention potentially applies to each of the other change process motors.

We continued this examination in a subsequent 2008 book chapter (Bartunek, Austin, & Seo, 2008). Seo, Putnam, and Bartunek (2004) had reviewed the history of OD and suggested that OD interventions could be sorted into

We are grateful to Scott Highhouse for his helpful comments on our chapter.

TABLE 16.1 Implementation Motors Associated with Generations of Interventions

Generations of Interventions	Implementation Motors			
	Participation	Self-Reflection	Action Research	Narratives
First-generation approaches				
Sensitivity training	x	x		
Team building	x	x	x	
Sociotechnical systems	x		x	
Quality of work life	x		x	
Second-generation approaches				
Organization transformation	x	x		
Large-group interventions	x		x	x
Third-generation approaches				
Learning organizations	x	x	x	x
Appreciative inquiry	x	x	x	x

Source: Bartunek, Austin, & Seo (2008).

three temporal generations. First-generation OD interventions included sensitivity training, team building, socio-technical systems, and quality of work–life interventions. Second-generation OD interventions included organizational transformation and large-group interventions. Third-generation OD interventions included learning organizations and appreciative inquiry. Our analysis revealed growing connections between the motors in implementation theorizing as theorizing worked through the generations. The most recent OD generation is characterized by extensive use of all four motors of change implementation. Table 16.1 summarizes these findings. We noted that though three of these motors played a role in interventions throughout generations, the rationale for their use evolved over time. Participation was initially used as a way to build acceptance but more recently has been used as a way to incorporate a wider range of knowledge and perspectives in the intervention design. The rationale for self-reflection has shifted from an open-ended focus on human potential to a technique for developing leaders and, even more recently, as shared reflection to enable alignment of future plans with organization history and identity. The action research motor, a cornerstone of OD throughout its history, has shifted from an episodic, problem-driven process to a strength-building continuous learning process.

Taking these developments into account, in this chapter we first revisit the change implementation motors framework to examine recent research. Next, we identify several new areas of focus that show robust interest among practitioners. Finally, as we did in our 2003 chapter, we identify several key challenges that limit continued development of the field and continue to inhibit the transfer of knowledge between academic and practitioner. We also suggest some positive developments.

ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT TODAY, NOT YESTERDAY

Early approaches to OD centered primarily on the implementation of humanistic ideals at work. The types of values emphasized included personal development, interpersonal competency, participation, commitment, satisfaction, and work democracy (French & Bell, 1999; Mirvis, 1988). The focus generally was within the workplace.

Over time, however, there has been a shift in OD emphases. In comparison to its early formulations, OD now pays much more attention to the larger environment in which the business operates and aims at helping businesses accomplish their strategic objectives, in part through organizational alignment with the larger environment (e.g., Bunker & Alban, 2006; Holman, Devane, & Cady, 2007; Seo et al., 2004).

Early approaches placed considerable emphasis on individual and group development within the organization (e.g., Harrison, 1970), and, although the words “the whole organization” were used, the types of change fostered by OD often focused more on the group (e.g., team building) or other organizational subunits. Given the organizational environment of the 1980s and beyond, individual and group development became less emphasized unless they were treated within the context of large systems change and the adjustment of an organization to its larger environment. Such adjustment often involves radical departure from the organization’s prior strategic emphases (Nadler, Shaw, & Walton, 1995), and is sometimes referred to as organizational transformation (e.g., Nadler et al., 1995), or radical organizational culture change (e.g., Cameron & Quinn, 1999). In recent years, the roles of external stakeholders in major organizational change have been appreciated much more (Bunker & Alban, 2006).

Despite the shifts that have occurred in understanding of OD's focus, there remains an emphasis on OD as **humanistically oriented, as concerned about the people who make up an organization, not just the strategic goals of the organization.** Thus, for example, Church, Waclawski, and Seigel (1999) define **organization development as the process of promoting positive humanistically oriented large-system change.** By humanistic they mean that the change is **"about improving the conditions of people's lives in organizations"** (p. 53). Beer and Nohria (2000) include OD within the category of capacity building interventions in organizations, not as primarily economically oriented.

THE CONCEPTUAL KNOWLEDGE OF ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Contemporary as well as past approaches to OD are based on more or less explicit assumptions about **(a) the processes through which organizations change and (b) the types of intervention approaches that lead to change.** These two phrases, which seem quite similar, actually represent two different conceptual approaches, one that is more likely to be **addressed by academic writing on OD** and one that is more likely to be addressed by practitioner writing. Early approaches to action research likely treated these as congruent (e.g., Highthouse, 2002), but that has not been the case for several decades (Beyer & Trice, 1982). We will use them to frame approaches to change that are presented primarily for academics and primarily for practitioners.

In 1966, Bennis distinguished between *theories of change* and *theories of changing*. Theories of change attempt to answer the question of how and why change occurs. Theories of changing attempt to answer the question of how to generate change and guide it to a successful conclusion. Porras and Robertson (1987, p. 4) expanded on Bennis's notion, relabeling the two different approaches as **change process theory** and **implementation theory.** (Though the categories are essentially the same, we will use Porras and Robertson's terms, since they are much easier to distinguish.)

Porras and Robertson (1987, 1992) described **change process theory as explaining the dynamics of the change process.** This approach centers around the multiple types of variables involved in the accomplishment of planned change. In contrast, they described **implementation theory as "theory that focuses on activities change agents must undertake in effecting organizational change"**

(p. 4). They included strategy, procedure, and technique theories as examples of implementation approaches.

Porras and Robertson's focus was primarily on OD interventions as explicitly defined. As noted earlier, however, the understanding of dynamics of change has been widened well beyond OD (e.g., Van de Ven & Poole, 1995; Weick & Quinn, 1999). Porras and Robertson also asserted that change process theory should inform implementation theory; that is, **the findings of academic research should inform practice.** There is awareness now that **OD practice should also have an impact on academic knowledge** (Bartunek & Woodman, in press; Rynes, Bartunek, & Daft, 2001).

In this chapter, we expand on the understandings of change process theory and implementation theory. We will describe an array of change process theories, using the model developed by Van de Ven and Poole (1995) for that purpose. We will also describe several implementation models and suggest possible links between them and change process models.

We noted above that academic writing tends to focus more on change process theory while practitioner writing focuses more on implementation theory. There has been relatively little interaction between the two types of theories; to some extent they occupy separate intellectual spaces and are held in more or less separate "communities of practice" (J. S. Brown & Duguid, 1999; Corley & Gioia, 2011; Sandberg & Tsoukas, 2011; Tenkasi, 2000). Change process theories tend to draw from empirical work grounded in academic fields such as psychology, sociology, economics, and anthropology. Implementation theories tend to draw from practitioner-oriented experiential work; they may emerge from the same academic disciplines as change process theories, but do not make the connections explicit. Hopefully, this chapter will suggest useful connections between the two.

Change Process Theories

Porras and Robertson (1992) concluded their review of organizational change and development research with a call for increased attention to theory in change research. Through attention to the variety of ways organizations might change, scholars have answered this call.

Researchers have approached the task of **understanding organizational change from a wide array of perspectives.** In their interdisciplinary review of about 200 articles on change, Van de Ven and Poole (1995) identified four ideal types of change theories that encompass many of these perspectives. **They labeled them as life-cycle, evolution, dialectic, and teleology,** and located OD primarily within

the teleological framework. These four types are distinguished by their underlying generative mechanisms, or motors. Van de Ven and Poole suggest that most change (process) theories can be understood within one motor or a combination of motors.

We found evidence of extensive theory development pertinent to OD based on each change motor. Below we summarize change research categorized by primary underlying motor of change. With Van de Ven and Poole (1995), we recognize that most change theories capture elements from different motors, although one motor is typically primary.

The Teleologic Motor

The teleologic motor describes organizational change as the result of purposeful social construction by organization members. The motor of development is a cycle of goal formation, implementation, evaluation, and modification. Organizational change is goal-driven; impetus for change emerges when actors perceive that their current actions are not enabling them to attain their goals, and the focus is on processes that enable purposeful activity toward the goals. The teleologic motor can be found in most contemporary theories of organizational change. For example, recent extensions of evolutionary theories and institutional theories—evolutionary innovation and institutional agency—have adopted a teleologic motor. Change leadership theories rely on the teleologic motor as well. We summarize some teleologic change theories that have emerged or reemerged.

Strategic Change

Rajagopalan and Spreitzer (1996) observe that strategic change primarily deals with teleologic change. Underlying most strategic change theories is the understanding that planned change triggered by goal-oriented managers can trigger change in both an organization and its environment. Following this teleologic logic, several researchers have sought to understand the role of leadership in generating organizational change (Doz & Kosonen, 2010). Bass's transformational leadership framework (Bass & Avolio, 1994) posits that organizational change emerges as the result of leaders' attempts to develop their followers and transform follower goals to more closely match those of the organization. Other researchers view organizational change as the end result of cognitive development of organizational leaders (Hooijberg, Hunt, & Dodge, 1997; Torbert, 1991). Strategic change underlies most practitioner work in change management and is the place of intersection between the teleologic motor and change

management practice. Popular books on leading change have in common a central focus on strategic change (Heath & Heath, 2010; Kotter, 2008; Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Patterson, Grenny, Maxfield, McMillan, & Switzler, 2008).

Cognitive Framing Theories

Several studies emphasize the importance of cognitive change by managers in creating organizational change. Reconceptualization of the context then leads to further cognitive change in a continuing iterative process (Barr, Stimpert, & Huff, 1992; Bartunek et al., 1999; Levinthal & Rerup, 2006; Weick, 1995). Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991) found that managerial efforts to communicate a planned change built cognitive consensus, which further enabled the change. Issue reframing is another cognitive framing theory of change with growing interest. Change is enabled through the active framing and reframing of strategic issues by organization leaders (Doz & Kosonen, 2010; Sonenshein, 2009). Reframing has been of particular interest to researchers seeking to understand emergent innovation (Jansen, Vera, & Crossan, 2009) and has formed the basis for techniques designed to trigger creative strategic thinking (Day & Schoemaker, 2008; Kim & Mauborgne, 2004).

Theories of Innovation

Several researchers consider how individual attempts at innovation combine with environmental characteristics to generate organizational change (C. M. Ford, 1996; Glynn, 1996). Innovation emerges from an alignment of numerous actions and environmental factors such as social networks (Lee, 2007; Owen-Smith & Powell, 2004), information flows (Miller, Fern, & Cardinal, 2007; Soh, Mahmood, & Mitchell, 2004; Zaheer & Bell, 2005), climate and existing knowledge (Smith, Collins, & Clark, 2005), organizational design (Westerman, McFarlan, & Iansiti, 2006), and collaboration and alliances (Sampson, 2005, 2007). Glynn (1996) proposes a theoretical framework for how individual intelligence combines with organizational intelligence to generate creative ideas. These ideas are then implemented, provided certain enabling conditions (adequate resources and support, incentives and inducements) are present. This process presents a model of organizational change that is driven by individual cognitions and collective sensemaking processes within the organization. Types and directions of search activities also can drive innovation (Siggelkow & Rivkin, 2006) and influence the manner and content of the change. Amabile and her colleagues (Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby, &

Herron, 1996) build from an individual level of creativity to identify group- and organization-level constraints on individual creativity and subsequent organization-level innovation.

Taken together, research on innovation and creativity reveals a complex mix of predictors of organizational change. At the center of these predictors is the teleologic assumption of goal-driven, purposeful action. As Orlitzkowsky and Hofman (1997) note, the specific decisions and immediate strategies may be unplanned improvisations, but they are guided by a goal-driven theme. Recent theorizing on organizational innovation highlights the interaction between purposeful action, sensemaking, organizational settings, and environmental jolts to trigger organizational change (Ahuja, Lampert, & Tandon, 2008; Drazin, Glynn, & Kazanjian, 1999).

OD reflects many of these approaches. As noted earlier, there is much more emphasis now on OD accomplishing strategic ends (Jelinek & Litterer, 1988; Bartunek et al., 1999) and on the role of leadership in these processes (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). There has also been some attention paid to cognitive framing of different participants in a merger process (Marks & Mirvis, 2001). Such framing is one of the hoped-for outcomes of large-group interventions (Bunker & Alban, 2006; Holman et al., 2007).

The Life-Cycle Motor

The life-cycle motor treats change as a progression through a predetermined sequence of stages. The ordering of the stages does not change, but the speed of progress and the triggers that lead to advancement through the process vary. Van de Ven and Poole (1995) note that the “trajectory to the final end state is preconfigured and requires a specific historical sequence of events” (p. 515).

While life-cycle models of organizational change proliferated in the 1970s and 1980s (Quinn & Cameron, 1983), we found little continued theoretical development of this motor since 1995. One exception is in the area of entrepreneurship, where theorists continue to use a life-cycle motor to understand the creation, development, and failure of new ventures, including ventures that arise out of the death of prior ones (Alvarez & Barney, 2007; Hanks, Watson, Janson, & Chandler, 1994; Walsh & Bartunek, in press). Variations of the life-cycle model, especially in conjunction with the teleologic motor, are also apparent in research on punctuated equilibrium. It emerges as a motor in several OD approaches, discussed in the next section, such as transforming leadership (Torbert, 1989) and advanced change theory (Quinn, Spreitzer, & Brown, 2000).

Punctuated Equilibrium

The evolution-revolution framework of organizational change (Greiner, 1972) has formed the foundation of many organizational change theories (Mezias & Glynn, 1993) that have been used to describe dynamics in organizations. Greiner described the typical life cycle of an organization as consisting of extended evolutionary periods of incremental change interspersed with short revolutionary periods. This framework provides the basis for theories of strategic redirection (Doz & Prahalad, 1987), transformation (Laughlin, 1991), punctuated equilibrium (Tushman & Romanelli, 1985), and change archetypes (Greenwood & Hinings, 1993). During reorientations, large and important parts of the organization—strategy, structure, control systems, and sometimes basic beliefs and values—are expected to change almost simultaneously in a way that leads to very different organizational emphases.

Tushman and Romanelli (1985) suggested the effectiveness of punctuated equilibrium approaches to change, but others suggest some cautions in the use of this approach. Previously established competencies may be threatened by transformations (Amburgey, Kelly, & Barnett, 1993). In addition, Sastry (1997) found that reorientation processes increased the risk of organizational failure unless evaluation processes were suspended for a trial period after the reorientation. However, certain change processes may enable successful reorientations. Mezias and Glynn (1993), for example, suggest that previously established routines may guide reorientations in such a way that competencies are not destroyed.

There have also been questions raised about how frequent true reorientations of the type suggested by Tushman and Romanelli are. Cooper, Hinings, Greenwood, and Brown (1996) have suggested that, instead of true reorientations, the types of change that typically occur involve one layer of orientation placed on top of another layer that represents the prior orientation. Reger, Gustafson, DeMarie, and Mullane (1994) have also suggested that changes may often also include this type of middle ground. Questions about punctuated equilibrium approaches have been raised in recent years by those who emphasize that change is likely more continuous than episodic (e.g., R. Thomas, Sargent, & Hardy, 2011; Weick & Quinn, 1999).

The Dialectic Motor

The dialectic motor describes organizational change as the result of conflict between opposing entities. New ideas and values must directly confront the status quo. This motor builds from the Hegelian process of a thesis and

antithesis coming into direct conflict. There are then several paths that may be taken, including separating the thesis and antithesis, attempting to create a synthesis of them, and/or attempting to embrace the differing perspectives (e.g., Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Seo et al., 2004). Some argue that achieving a synthesis that appears to close off change may be less productive than developing organizational capacity to embrace conflicting approaches (cf. Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey, 2000).

The dialectic motor often drives cognitive and political change theories and plays a prominent role in schematic change theories and communicative change models. It also forms the basis for a number of the OD approaches outlined in the next section of this chapter.

Schematic Change

Schematic models of change build from an understanding of individual cognitive processing to understand how changes occur in shared schemas. Schemas are cognitive frameworks that provide meaning and structure to incoming information (Mitchell & Beach, 1990). Organizational change is categorized by the level of change in the shared schemas. First-order change occurs within a shared schema and second-order change involves change in the shared schema (Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974).

Change in schemas typically occurs through a dialectic process triggered by the misalignment of a schema in use with the context (e.g., Labianca, Gray, & Brass, 2000). If a situation does not fit within an expected schematic framework, the person shifts to an active processing mode (Austin, 1997). In this mode, the individual uses environmental cues to generate a new schema or modify an existing one. The direct comparison of the schema (thesis) with the context (antithesis) creates the change.

This schematic dialectic is applied to organizational change through change in shared schemas (Rerup & Feldman, in press). Bartunek (1984) proposed that organizational schema change required a direct conflict between the current schema and the new schema. Such conflict between schemata underlies large-scale organizational changes, including major industry change (Bacharach, Bamberger, & Sonnenstuhl, 1996), organizational breakup (Dyck & Starke, 1999), organizational identity change (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Reger et al., 1994), and organizational responses to new economic systems (Kostera & Wicha, 1996).

Identity and Change

Another dialectic tension can emerge between organizational identities and shifting environments or new

knowledge. Patterns of change can emerge from these interactions. This work tends to view change as a tension between existing identities and external pressures that challenge those identities (Corley & Gioia, 2004; Nag, Corley, & Gioia, 2007).

Communicative Change Theories

Drawing from notions of social construction (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) and structuration (Giddens, 1984), several theorists have begun to consider change as an element of social interaction. Change is recognized and generated through conversation and other forms of communication (Bushe & Marshak, 2009; J. D. Ford, 1999a; J. D. Ford & Ford, 1995, 2008; 2009; Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004). Organizations consist of a plurality of perspectives that are revealed through conversation (Hazen, 1994) that forms the context for all organizational action. When different perspectives meet through conversation, either a synthesized perspective is generated or one perspective is spread. New and old perspectives coexist within the organization at the same time as the newer synthesized understanding diffuses through multiple conversations (Gilmore, Shea, & Useem, 1997). Whether the end result is synthesis or diffusion is partially determined by the significance of the perspectives and interaction to the identities of the participants (Gergen & Thatchenkery, 1996). Significant organizational change typically requires new organizational language that results from the conversational dialectic (Barrett, Thomas, & Hocevar, 1995) and that realigns discordant narratives and images (Faber, 1998).

The Evolutionary Motor

The evolutionary motor focuses on change in a given population over time. It involves a continuous cycle of variation, selection, and retention. Evolutionary theories of organizational change focus on environmental conditions that create inertial pressures for organizational change. Change theories built around this motor begin with the assumption that one must understand the environmental setting of an organization in order to understand the dynamics of change. Organizations evolve based on their ability to respond and adapt to these powerful external forces. In the early 1990s, the evolutionary motor was most evident in population ecology models. However, it is also the driving force in recent research on the rate of organizational change and in theories of institutional change.

Internal Change Routines

Research on organizational routines applies variation, selection, and retention to intraorganizational processes

by considering how individual actions are selected and retained within the population of organization members.

Nelson and Winter (1982; also see Feldman, 2000; Feldman & Pentland, 2003) propose that organizations develop routines, or patterns of action, that drive future action. Routines become more developed and complex as they are used. Routines that involve changing current routines are called modification routines. Like other organizational routines, modification routines can be relatively stable over time, leading the organization to approach organizational change in a consistent manner. Well-developed routines of organizational change enable an organization to adjust to different demands for change by modifying the content of the change but using a consistent process to manage the change (Levitt & March, 1988).

Experience with a certain type of change enables an organization to refine its routines for implementing that type of change. As a result, the organization develops expertise with that type of change and may be more likely to initiate similar changes in the future. For example, in their study of the Finnish newspaper industry, Amburgey et al. (1993) found that experience with a certain type of organizational change increased the likelihood that a newspaper would initiate a similar type of change again. They argued that this process occurs because the organization develops competence with the change type. Thus, costs of change are lowered and the organization is likely to see the change as a solution to an increasing number of problems.

Hannan and Freeman (1984) use the notion of organizational routines to explain how organizations attempt to increase the reliability of their actions and create conditions of stability in relatively unstable environments. They posit that these routines institutionalize certain organizational actions and create organizational inertia, which hinders the organization's ability to change. Kelly and Amburgey (1991) extend this model by showing that the same routinization processes that create inertia can also create momentum. Routines that institutionalize a certain rate of change create conditions that encourage change consistent with those routines. While disruptions in routines brought about by organizational change can destroy competencies (Levitt & March, 1988), that same organizational change can create competencies that make future organizational change more effective (Amburgey & Miner, 1992).

Brown and Eisenhardt (1997) found that organizations establish an internal pacing mechanism to operate in a constantly changing environment. For example, managers plan to release new versions of their products every nine months or set goals targeting a certain amount of

income that needs to come from new products each year. While organizations continue to respond to environmental changes they may devote a larger percentage of their resources to developing internal capabilities to change regardless of industry pressures.

Institutional Change

Institutional theory is often associated with stability rather than with change. Organizations grow more similar over time because the institutional environment provides resources to organizations that conform to institutional norms that create barriers to innovations (North, 1990; Zucker, 1987). However, as Greenwood and Hinings (1996) note, theories of stability are also theories of change.

Institutional theory proposes that organizational actions are determined by the ideas, values, and beliefs contained in the institutional environment (Meyer & Rowan, 1997). Strong institutional environments influence organizational change by legitimating certain changes and organizational forms (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). In order for an organizational change to be successful, it needs to be justified within the institutional system of values (D'Aunno, Sutton, & Price, 1991). In addition, broader institutional forces sometimes trigger organizational change (Greenwood & Hinings, 1993) or provide comparisons that in turn prompt such change (Greve, 1998; Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007).

Institutional change theories rely on the evolutionary motor to understand the dynamics of change. Isomorphic pressures on organizations act as a selection and retention process for validating organizational changes. However, institutional theorists emphasize that organizational actors play a part in creating the institutional forces that restrain them (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Elsbach & Sutton, 1992; Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2006; Oliver, 1991; Suchman, 1995). Thus, institutional models of change have begun to build teleological motors into theories of institutional change by considering the strategic actions of institutional actors (Bloodgood & Morrow, 2000; Creed, DeJordy & Lok, 2011; Creed, Scully, & Austin, 2002; Johnson, Smith, & Codling, 2000).

Integrating Change Process Motors: Institutional Entrepreneurship

Since 2003, institutional entrepreneurship (Battilana, Leca, & Boxenbaum, 2009; Hardy & Maguire, 2008) has been one of the most active areas of organizational change research. Institutional entrepreneurship models are particularly fascinating because of their multiple motors of change. Writers have begun to expand upon the

conventional evolutionary motor of institutional change by integrating institutional models with the dialectic motor (Mutch, 2007; Seo & Creed, 2002), teleologic motor (Phillips & Tracey, 2007), and even the life-cycle motor (Misangyi, Weaver, & Elms, 2008). The resultant models explore how change agents are simultaneously constrained by and influence their environment. The integrated motors of change have led to connections between institutional change and strategy (Jarzabkowski, 2004), power (Levy & Scully, 2007), discourse (Lawrence & Phillips, 2004; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), and organizational routines (Reay, Golden-Biddle, & GermAnn, 2006).

Summary of Change Process Research

Change process theory continues to develop and evolve. New approaches to understanding change processes continue to emerge from each change motor identified by Van de Ven and Poole. Contemporary theorizing frequently draws from multiple motors with comparatively more attention to the teleologic motor. Attempts to understand such multilevel issues as institutional entrepreneurship, innovation, and strategic change require that researchers build links between theories of individual change and theories of organizational change. Interactions between research on individual resistance to change, organizational-level political pressures, and institutional constraints have led to further clarification of change process at each level. Thus, **multilevel theorizing can expand our understanding of change processes and may lead to the identification of additional change motors.**

SAMPLES OF CONTEMPORARY OD INTERVENTIONS

Several approaches to intervention characterize contemporary OD. It is neither possible nor desirable to give a complete list here. In this section we identify some OD interventions that have been prominent in the past 15 to 20 years. Our review includes articles published in both academic and practitioner journals. It is not meant to be exhaustive, but illustrative of the implementation approaches that have drawn the most attention in the early 21st century. These approaches include appreciative inquiry, learning organizations, large-scale interventions, and employee engagement.

Appreciative Inquiry

Cooperrider and Whitney (2007, p. 75) described appreciative inquiry as “the cooperative, co-evolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations and

communities, and the world around them. It involves systematic discovery of what gives ‘life’ to an organization or community when it is most effective, and most capable in economic, ecological and human terms.”

Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) introduced appreciative inquiry (AI) as a complement to other types of action research. Since that time, AI has emerged as a widely used OD intervention. According to some practitioners, appreciative inquiry is one of the most widely used OD interventions in the world (Watkins & Mohr, 2001).

Appreciative inquiry builds from several important assumptions. First, **social systems are socially constructed; people create their own reality through dialog and enactment.** Second, **every social system has some positive working elements and people draw energy for change by focusing on positive aspects of the system.** Third, **by focusing on building consensus around these positive elements, and avoiding discussion of the negative aspects of the system, a group will create momentum and energy toward increasing the positives there.**

Recent writings on appreciative inquiry highlight the social constructionist focus on dialog as a way to enact a reality. Most articles and books on appreciative inquiry use case studies and frameworks for appreciative discussions to help practitioners lead appreciative inquiry interventions (Barrett, 1995; Bushe & Coetzer, 1995; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Rainey, 1996; Srivastva, Cooperrider, & Associates, 1990). Driving these case studies is the observation that by focusing on the positive elements about “what is,” participants create a desire to transform the system. The close relationship between the appreciative inquiry process and organizational culture and language invites strong transformations in mindset and action. This can have unintended consequences, positive and negative (Bushe & Kassam, 2005; Fitzgerald, Oliver, & Hoxsey, 2010), and calls for skillful facilitation.

Appreciative inquiry is playing an increasingly important global role. It has been successful as an approach to global consultation efforts (e.g., Barrett, 1995; Barrett & Peterson, 2000), in part because it emphasizes appreciation of different approaches. Mantel and Ludema (2000), for example, describe how appreciative inquiry creates new language that supports multiple positive ways of accomplishing things. This is particularly important in a global setting in which people are operating out of very different perspectives on the world (Tenkasi, 2000).

Large Group Interventions

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the primary conceptual basis for OD has been action research. As it was

originally designed, action research customarily begins by searching out problems to be addressed. However, Bunker and Alban (1997) recounted that by the 1970s some concern had been raised about this approach; Ronald Lippitt believed that starting with problems caused organization members to lose energy, and to feel drained and tired. (Similarly, appreciative inquiry starts with positive, rather than negative features of an organization.)

Lippitt saw problem solving as past oriented. He believed that focusing on the future, rather than the past, would be more motivating. Thus, he began to engage organization members in thinking about their preferred futures (Lippitt, 1980, 1983). Attention to future organization members' desire is a first major emphasis of many large group interventions. A second emphasis is on gathering "the whole system" or, if the whole system is not possible, representatives of a large cross-section of the system (at least 10% of it), to contribute to future planning. One reason for the prominence of large-group interventions is recent emphasis on organizational transformation. Many (though not all) large-group interventions are designed to help accomplish transformation, based on the expectation that in order to transform a system, sufficient numbers of organization members with power to affect transformational processes must participate in change efforts.

Filipczak (1995) notes that the typical aims of large-group interventions include such foci as changing business strategies, developing a mission or vision about where the company is headed in the next century, fostering a more participative environment, and/or initiating such activities as self-directed work teams or reengineering the organization.

A wide variety of large-group interventions have been developed in recent years (e.g., Bunker & Alban, 1997, 2006; Holman et al., 2007; Weber & Manning, 1998). One useful classification scheme for them was developed by Bunker and Alban (1997, 2006), who distinguish large-group interventions according to whether they are focused on proactively creating a desired future together, redesigning work together as a whole system, and bringing the system together to work on immediate problems and issues. A list of many of these, along with a very brief summary description of each, is presented in Table 16.2. To give a more concrete sense of the large-group interventions, we will briefly introduce two of them: Open Space Technology and the World Café.

Open Space Technology

Open Space Technology (OST; www.openspaceworld.org/) was developed by Harrison Owen (1991, 1992)

TABLE 16.2 Examples of Types of Large-Group Interventions and Summaries of Their Uses

Examples of Large-Group Methods for Proactively Creating the Future	Examples of Large-Group Methods for Work Design	Examples of Large-Group Methods for Whole-Scale Participative Work
The Search Conference: Participative events that enable diverse organization members to identify their desired future and develop strategic plans they will implement that they expect to accomplish this future.	The Conference Model: A series of conferences through which organization members study the correspondence between their own work and their desired future and develop new designs for work.	SimuReal: Workshops in which organizational members work on real problems in simulated settings that enable them to learn how their organization approaches tasks and to determine what they would like to change.
Future Search: A 3-day conference aimed at helping representatives of whole systems envision a preferred future and plan strategies and action plans for accomplishing it.	Participative Design: Workshops based on the search conference model in which groups of employees participate democratically in designing, managing, and controlling their own work.	Open Space Technology: A loosely structured meeting that enables groups of organization members ranging in size from a small group to 1,000 develop their own agendas in relationship to prespecified organizational concerns.
Whole-Scale Change: A flexible approach involving interactions of large and small groups to allow an organization to build a common database and form a common intention for action.		Work Out: Meetings in which groups of organization employees brainstorm ways to solve an organizational problem. Managers must accept or reject solutions in a public forum at the conclusion of the meeting.
ICA Strategic Planning Process: A method designed to maximize the participation of community members in change processes that affect them by means of focused conversation, workshops, and event planning.		The World Café: Engages people in dynamic conversations around questions that matter to their lives and work.
Appreciative Inquiry Summit: Method for conducting appreciative inquiry in short, focused sessions.		

Source: Adapted from Bartunek, Balogun, & Do (in press). More information about each large-group intervention may be found in Bunker & Alban (1997, 2006), Holman et al. (2007), and www.change-management-toolbook.com/mod/book/view.php?id=74&chapterid=6

and expanded over time (Owen, 2007; Seo et al., 2004). Its purpose is “to enable groups to address complex, important issues as a high-performing system by inviting people to take responsibility for what they love for a few hours, a few days, or as an everyday practice” (Holman et al., 2007, p. 677). It is appropriate “in situations where a major issue must be resolved, characterized by high levels of complexity, high levels of diversity (in terms of the people involved), the presence of potential or actual conflict, and with a decision time of yesterday” (Owen, 2007, p. 139). Its (loose) conceptual basis lies in research dealing with “self-organization, complex adaptive systems, dissipative structures and the like” (Owen, 2007, p. 145), as introduced by natural scientists such as Kaufmann, Prigogine, and Gel-Mann.

OST has been used in more than 140 countries in a large variety of groupings. A group of 5 to more than 1,000 people assemble in a room that has enough chairs for all participants. The facilitator describes the reason participants are gathered. Second, after briefly describing the process, rules, and norms, the facilitator asks participants to identify issues related to the theme for which they have genuine passion, and for which they will take real responsibility. They are asked to come out into the center of the circle, take a piece of paper and a magic marker, and write down a short title and their name. Then they announce their topic and name, and post the piece of paper on a wall labeled “Community Bulletin Board.”

The next step is to invite the participants to approach the board and sign up for any and all discussions that they are interested in attending. Based on the sign-up, people form small groups, discuss the issues, and construct written reports. Finally, the reports are collected from all groups, summarized, and fed back to the entire assembly. One law and four principles guide the group discussion. The law of the two feet encourages people to use their two feet and go to some more productive place if during the course of the gathering they find themselves neither learning nor contributing. The four principles increase flexibility and creativity: (a) whoever comes are the right people (free composition), (b) whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened (free content), (c) whenever it starts is the right time (little time constraint), (d) when it is over, it is over (free closure).

According to its Web site and published articles (e.g., Owen, 2007), OST is being used in businesses, in local communities and, particularly at this moment, to provide space for “peace and high performance,” especially but not only with regard to the Middle East.

World Café

As its Web site (www.theworldcafe.com/what.htm) notes, the World Café is “an innovative yet simple methodology for hosting conversations about questions that matter. These conversations link and build on each other as people move between groups, cross-pollinate ideas, and discover new insights into the questions or issues that are most important in their life, work, or community.” Conceptually it is based, at least loosely, on the work of Maturana and Varela (1987) regarding the power of conversation to shape the future (Brown & Isaacs, 2005).

The World Café focuses around sets of table conversations. The World Café process works as follows: A group of participants sit at a table and discuss an important topic. There is butcher paper available there for the participants to leave notes. Then all but one of the participants, the host, move on to another table, to deepen the conversation, either about the original topic or about a related one whose answers build on the first set of answers.

In order for the conversation to be productive, the World Café process uses seven principles outlined in detail by Brown and Isaacs (2005).

1. *Set the context:* Clarify the purpose and broad parameters within which the dialogue will unfold.
2. *Create hospitable space:* Assure the welcoming environment and psychological safety that nurtures personal comfort and mutual respect.
3. *Explore questions that matter:* Focus collective attention on powerful questions that attract collaborative engagement.
4. *Encourage everyone’s contribution:* Enliven the relationship between the “me” and the “we” by inviting full participation and mutual giving.
5. *Cross-pollinate and connect diverse perspectives:* Use the living system dynamics of emergence through intentionally increasing the diversity and density of connections among perspectives, while retaining a common focus on core questions.
6. *Listen together for patterns, insights, and deeper questions:* Focus shared attention in ways that nurture coherence of thought without losing individual contribution.
7. *Harvest and share collective discoveries:* Make collective knowledge and insight visible and actionable.

Brown, Homer, and Isaacs (2007) note that the World Café has been used successfully in a wide variety of contexts. These include teachers and administrators inquiring together into improving student performance, a consumer products company planning to improve market share,

member associations discovering what is important to members, and planning retreats and meetings.

Learning Organizations

The idea that organizations and/or their members learn has been present for decades. However, most scholarly attention to learning focused on learning as an adaptive change in behavioral response to a stimulus, particularly the learning of routines (e.g., Levitt & March, 1988). Learning was not necessarily viewed as desirable for the organization.

In the 1970s, however, Argyris and Schön (1978) introduced learning in a positive way, as a means of improving organizations. Argyris and Schön and others (e.g., Feldman, 2000) argued that learning must include both behavioral and cognitive elements and involve the capacity to challenge routines, not simply enact them. This formulation was the basis for the learning organization, which in recent years has been one of the most popular business concepts. Communities of researchers and practitioners who study and practice learning organizations have emerged and grown rapidly (Easterby-Smith, 1997; Tsang, 1997).

Peter Senge's best-selling book, *The Fifth Discipline*, and workbooks that have followed, including *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* (Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, & Smith, 1994) and *The Dance of Change* (Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth, & Smith, 1999), have been the written source most responsible for bringing the learning organization into the mainstream of business thinking (Seo et al., 2004). For Senge (1990), a learning organization is "an organization that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future" and for which "adaptive learning must be joined by generative learning, learning that enhances our capacity to create" (p.14). Senge described five different "disciplines" as the cornerstone of learning organizations:

1. *Systems thinking*: Learning to better understand the interdependencies and integrated patterns of our world.
2. *Personal mastery*: Developing commitment to lifelong learning and continually challenging and clarifying personal visions.
3. *Mental models*: Developing reflection and inquiry skills to be aware of surface, and test the deeply rooted assumptions and generalizations that we hold about the world.
4. *Building shared vision*: Developing shared images of the future that we seek to create and the principles and guiding practices by which to get there.
5. *Team learning*: Group interaction that maximizes the insights of individuals through dialogue and skillful

discussion and through recognizing interaction patterns in teams that undermine learning.

The workbooks describe ways to accomplish these disciplines and challenges to sustain the momentum of learning. For example, Senge et al. (1994) describe "left-hand column" and "ladder of inference" methods to help increase the ability to recognize one's mental models. They describe dialogue as a way group members can learn to think together to foster team learning, and they describe ways people might draw forth their own personal visions as a way of developing personal mastery.

In recent years the emphasis of learning organizations, especially those associated with the Society for Organizational Learning (www.solonline.org), has expanded. The SOL Web site, for example, emphasizes "Conscious learning in three domains: collective knowledge creation; practical application of knowledge; and community building." Further, these emphases are being expressed in movements toward sustainability around the world (e.g., Senge, Smith, Kruschwitz, Laur & Schley, 2008), under the assumption that such sustainability is crucial for organizations' continued learning and development.

Employee Empowerment

Although there have not been agreements on standard intervention processes to develop employee empowerment, there is little doubt that achieving empowerment is a major emphasis of much OD and similar consulting. OD work in employee empowerment connects authority and accountability with engagement. It has been emphasized since Peter Block's (1987) influential book, *The Empowered Manager*.

There is considerable variation in how empowerment is understood. For example, Ein (1995) describes empowerment as a frame of reference that incorporates deep, powerful, and intimate values about others, such as trust, caring, love, dignity, and the need for growth. In the context of work teams, Mohrman, Cohen, and Mohrman (1995) describe empowerment as the capability of making a difference in the attainment of individual, team, and organization goals, and suggest that it includes adequate resources and knowledge of the organization's direction. Thomas and Velthouse (1990), followed by Spreitzer (1996), focus on empowerment in terms of cognitive variables (task assessments) that determine motivation in individual workers.

Just as there are multiple definitions of empowerment, there are multiple mechanisms in organizations that may be used to help foster it. These may include structural

factors (Spreitzer, 1996) and attempts to redesign particular jobs so that they include more of the individual task components that make up empowerment (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Most frequently, the means by which empowerment is discussed as being fostered in organizations is through participation in organizational decision making (e.g., Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998), and enhancement of the organizational mechanisms (such as knowledge, resources, or teams) that help enable employees participate in decision making (Bowen & Lawler, 1992). In recent years, there has been recognition of the important role of social media in engaging and empowering employees (Bernoff & Schadler, 2010). Further, contemporary discussion of empowerment sometimes uses the language of engagement (e.g., Axelrod, 2010), referring at least in part to ensuring that employees' voices count in conversations and that there is fairness in their exchange with their superiors.

IMPLEMENTATION THEORIES

Implementation theories address how actions generate change and what actions can be taken to initiate and guide change. Porras and Robertson distinguished types of implementation based on whether they focused on intervention strategy, procedure, or technique. Similar to the approach taken by Van de Ven and Poole (1995), we focus on four "motors" of change, four primary implementation approaches that are expected to accomplish the desired change. These motors come primarily from literature written for practitioners rather than literature written for academics. They are participation, self-reflection, action research, and narrative. Participation and action research have been cornerstones of OD practice for decades (French & Bell, 1999). However, what they mean in practice has evolved. Self-reflection and narrative, while implicit in some earlier OD work, have become much more prominent recently. Not surprisingly, these methods play prominent roles in the OD interventions we described above.

Participation

Participation in organizational change efforts and, in particular, participation in decision-making formed the earliest emphases of OD (French & Bell, 1999). Such participation is still viewed as important, but there has been expansion in ways such participation is understood and takes place, along with a greater awareness that

employees do not always wish to participate in change efforts (Neumann, 1989).

Earlier rationales for participation often centered around the expectation that employees were more likely to accept decisions in which they had participated. Now, however, the rationale for participation is somewhat different, as expectations of the role of employees in participation expand. In particular, there is now much more explicit emphasis on employees participating in *inquiry* about their organizations and contributing necessary knowledge that will foster the organization's planning and problem solving. This is illustrated in the roles of employees in the various large-scale interventions, as various participants are expected to reflect on and contribute knowledge about the organization's past as well as its future (e.g., in search conferences). It is also illustrated in the expectation that employees contribute to learning processes in their organizations, for example, through the various exercises designed to foster their own capacity and in their contribution to learning histories. Creative new means of participation such as General Electric's workout sessions give employees much more responsibility for solving problems and acknowledge much more employee knowledge than was often the case in the past.

Self-Reflection

The growing interest in large-scale change in organizations has been accompanied by a similar interest in leadership of organizational transformation, and, thus, in the development of leaders who can blend experience and reflection in order to create lasting organizational change. Torbert (1999) and Quinn et al. (2000) suggest that a primary means by which leaders accomplish this is through self-reflection and self-inquiry.

Torbert (1999) suggests that leaders need to develop the ability to reflect while acting so that they can respond to changing conditions and develop new understandings in the moment. Individual transformation involves an awareness that transcends one's own interests, preferences, and theories, enabling more holistic understanding of patterns of action and thought. Transformational leaders determine the appropriate method of transformation by cultivating a strong understanding of the context, including tradition, vision, and organization and individual capabilities. The exercise of transforming leadership affects the organization's capacity for transformation.

Advanced Change Theory (Quinn et al., 2000) proposes that by modeling a process of personal transformation, change agents enable deeper organizational change.

This process demands that change agents be empowered to take responsibility for their own understanding (Spreitzer & Quinn, 1996) and develop a high level of cognitive complexity (Denison, Hooijberg, & Quinn, 1995). This generally requires a change in values, beliefs, or behaviors, which is generated by an examination of internal contradictions. The leader creates opportunities for reflection and value change through intervention and inquiry. The leader is constantly shifting perspectives and opening up values and assumptions for questioning. The more skilled organization leaders are at generating deep personal cognitive change, the more likely it is that the leaders will support and/or create deep organizational change.

One particularly interesting development is that of “presencing,” based on assumptions of “Theory U” (Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski & Flowers, 2004; Scharmer, 2007), that the way we attend to a situation determines how it unfolds. As stated on its Web site (www.presencing.com), “Presencing,” a blend of the words *presence* and *sensing*, refers to “the ability to sense and bring into the present one’s highest future potential.” It is based on the assumption that leaders typically have a “blind spot” regarding the source from which effective leadership and social action come into being. It involves a series of “movements,” including holding the space of listening, observing, sensing, presencing, crystallizing, prototyping, and performing, aimed at helping individuals (and groups) come over time to understand this source and develop capacities to bring their deepest selves to the situations they encounter in order to foster their working with others to cocreate a desired future.

Action Research

Action research consists of a set of theories of changing that work to solve real problems while also contributing to theory. While the original models of Action Research emphasized the solution of problems, models of action research developed in later years include a wider array of emphases. In particular, many contemporary action research models propose that change can be triggered through a process of direct comparison between action and theory.

Participatory Action Research

Participatory Action Research (PAR) was developed largely by Whyte (1991) and his colleagues. It refers to a process of systematic inquiry in which those experiencing a problem in their community or workplace participate with researchers in deciding the focus of knowledge

generation, in collecting and analyzing data, and in taking action to manage, improve, or solve their problem.

Action Science

Dialectic change theories envision change as the outcome of conflict between a thesis and antithesis. Action science focuses on how to bring the thesis and antithesis into conflict. Argyris and Schön’s (1974) Model II learning and Argyris, Putnam, and Smith’s (1985) Action Science model provide a common base for dialectic action science methods. Change is triggered by calling attention to discrepancies between action and espoused values. Highlighting differences between “theories in use” and “espoused theories” generates the impetus for change. Argyris focuses on processes that enable double-loop learning and awareness of underlying values guiding action. Individuals work to expose the mental models driving their action and to identify the values and actions through which they influence their context.

Several other writers have expanded this approach to change by highlighting the importance of understanding how action is embedded in a broader system of values and meaning. For example, Nielsen (1996) calls for “tradition-sensitive” change dialectic strategies in which the change agent directly links the change with biases in the shared tradition system.

Action Learning

Action learning, like action science, has a goal of changing behavior by comparing behaviors and theories. In an action science intervention, the individual compares theories in use with espoused theories. In an action learning intervention, the dialectic is between theoretical knowledge and personal experience. Revans (1980) outlines a process in which action learning groups work to understand social theories and ideas by applying them to a real situation. Participants use the theory to understand the logical implications of their experience and use the experience to internalize, refine, and make sense of the theory. Because of its group emphasis, action learning focuses on interpersonal interactions and their effect on project outcomes (Raelin, 1997).

Narrative/Rhetorical Intervention

Narrative interventions highlight the role that rhetoric and writing can play in generating organizational change (J. D. Ford & Ford, 2008; Oswick, Grant, Marshak, & Wolfram Cox, 2010), and are probably the predominant type of intervention motor currently in use. This approach to

change finds its theoretical roots in sensemaking (Weick, 1995) and interpretive approaches to organizations (Boje, 1991). Organizational actors partially create their reality through the retrospective stories that they tell about their experience and through future-oriented stories that they create as a pathway for action. Convergence of narratives by organization members drives collective sensemaking (Boyce, 1995).

Organizational change can be generated through sharing of stories and building consensus around new images of the future in which the stories shift (J. D. Ford & Ford, 2008). The stories, thus, offer a goal toward which organization actors can work, and the role of the change agent is to assist organization members in reconceiving their understandings (Frost & Egri, 1994) by creating new stories. This approach also opens up our view of organizational change as something that is continuous rather than episodic. The sensemaking process captured in stories generates change within the continuous "organization becoming" process (Peirano-Vejo & Stablein, 2009). J. D. Ford and Ford (1995) identify four types of conversations that drive change: initiative, understanding, performance, and closure. Initiative conversations start a change process, understanding conversations generate awareness, performance conversations prompt action, and closure conversations acknowledge an ending.

Several current OD practices rely on a narrative theory of changing (Ford, Ford, & D'Amelio, 2008; Marshak

& Grant, 2008). Appreciative inquiry draws on narrative OD theories by challenging organization members to generate local theories of action. Barry (1997) identifies strategies from narrative therapy that can enable organizational change. These include influence mapping, problem externalization, identifying unique outcomes, and story audiencing. Using the case of a high-technology research organization, O'Connor (2000), illustrates how stories told during a strategic change link the change with the past to highlight anticipated future problems and accentuate how the past and present differ.

These interventions, and similar ones, continue to grow in popularity. However, there is little to no scholarly research being carried out to assess their effectiveness and little to no change process theorizing being used to understand their underlying dimensions (Bartunek et al., in press), and this reinforces separations between change process and implementation theory.

THE IMPLEMENTATION/CHANGE PROCESS THEORY CONNECTION

It is possible to construct a rough map of the links between particular implementation motors, interventions, and change processes, especially as implementation motors would likely occur in the interventions described above. Such a rough map is depicted in Table 16.3. It

TABLE 16.3 Possible Relationships* Between Change Process Models and Implementation Models as These Are Expressed in Contemporary Intervention Approaches

	Implementation Models			
	Participation	Reflection	Action Research	Narrative
Types of Interventions in which Each Implementation Model Is Used	Often used in: Appreciative Inquiry, Large-Group Interventions, Learning Organizations, Empowerment	Often used in: Appreciative Inquiry, Large-Group Interventions, Learning Organizations	Often used in: Learning Organizations, Empowerment	Often used in: Appreciative Inquiry, Large-Group Interventions, Learning Organizations
Change Process Motors				
Teleological (e.g., strategy, cognitive framing, change momentum, continuous change)	xx	xx	xx	
Life cycle (e.g., punctuated equilibrium/transformation)		xx	xx	
Dialectic (e.g., schema change, communication change)			xx	xx
Evolutionary (e.g., internal change routines, institutional change)			xx	

*Possible ways of implementing each change process model by means of one or more of the implementation approaches are indicated by xx.

indicates that implementation strategies have been developed primarily for the teleological motor, as this is expressed in its multiple forms. However, at least one OD intervention potentially applies to each of the other change process motors.

THE CHANGE PROCESS THEORY/ IMPLEMENTATION THEORY DIVIDE

The fact that some OD interventions are applicable to the different change process theories means that they represent potential means for fostering these different types of change. It does not mean that authors who describe the different types of change motors reference OD work or that the implementation models reference the change process theories. In the great majority of cases there is no explicit connection between them. To the contrary, we believe that there is a fairly strong divide between those who focus on change process models and those who focus on particular interventions and their underlying implementation models, with relatively little information passing from one knowledge network to the other. In this section of the chapter we will describe some indicators of this divide. However, we will also suggest some signs of optimism that it might be bridged.

Indicators of the Divide

Journal Publication

In 2003, we used the journal *Organization Science* as a model of a type of “bridge journal” that was publishing articles using both change process and implementation theory approaches. This dual publication was intentional. As its first editors noted at the beginning of publication of the journal, *Organization Science* was founded to “enhance research relevance . . . encourage the joining of theory to practice, and anchor organization research in relevant problems” (Daft & Lewin, 1990, pp. 2, 9).

However, over the years *Organization Science* changed its focus. This was recognized in Daft and Lewin’s (2008) acknowledgment that *OS* has stepped back from its original objective to “enhance research relevance . . . and encourage the joining of theory to practice” (Daft & Lewin, 1990, pp. 2, 9). They argued that this goal “was unrealistic and has not been realized . . . *OS* has not been and should not strive to be an immediate source of knowledge for practical implications” (Daft & Lewin, 2008, p. 177).

Other top-tier journals also do not focus on practice. Rynes (in press-a) notes that one reason is that top-tier

journals tend to hold to “scientific” models of publishing more than others do, while another is such journals’ “growing emphasis on theoretical contribution as a publication requirement” (Rynes, in press-a). This tends to make top-tier journals less accessible to practitioners.

Orientation of Universities

There is considerable awareness of the strong emphasis of universities on top-tier publication, and strong incentives for academics to publish in such journals as much as possible. These are “countable,” and a means, however crude, of comparing academics’ output with each other. Such publications are also much more visible than other types of work (e.g., teaching, service) that academics do, and thus are more likely to facilitate movement across universities for those who seek to advance their careers by this means.

Orientation of Practitioners

Even if academics were to write more for practitioners, it isn’t clear that this would have immediate positive impacts. For example, practitioners often do not read scholarly work, or if they do, they may not believe it (Rynes, Colbert, & Brown, 2002). This is even true of organization development practitioners who as part of their membership in their professional organization, NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science, do not always read the bridge journal, *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, that they receive as part of their membership (Bartunek & Schein, 2011). This appears to be, at least in part, because many practitioners have not had the kinds of academic training that would make the writing and epistemological style of such journals accessible to them.

Indicators of Optimism That the Divide May Be Crossed

The issues listed above are serious. However, they are not definitive. There are many signs of hope as well (cf Rynes, in press-b).

Evidence-Based Management

One sign of hope is the recent development of Evidence-Based Management (Rousseau, in press) and its associated movement (www.evidence-basedmanagement.com/index.html). This movement, which is consciously including practitioners as well as academics, is aimed at helping to communicate across academic-practitioner boundaries in ways that are fruitful for both theory building and practice.

Scholar-Practitioners

Another sign of hope is the increasing number of people who are referring to themselves as scholar-practitioners (e.g., Wasserman & Kram, 2009). Many of these scholar-practitioners are being trained in executive and practitioner-oriented doctoral programs, where they are learning to read scholarly literature, so do not find it as foreign as many practitioners (including consultants) do. There is at least a potential that, to the extent they develop change initiatives and implementation theories underlying them, they will be able to communicate these across boundaries more effectively than has often been done in the past.

Journals

We noted the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* as an intended bridge journal between academic scholarship and practice. Other journals with this intended purpose are beginning to emerge as well, including, most prominently, the Society for Industrial & Organizational Psychology's (SIOP) *Industrial and Organizational Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practice*. This journal, which began publication in 2008, focuses on "interactive exchanges on topics of importance to science and practice in our field" (www.siop.org/journal/siopjournal.aspx). It includes focal articles and commentaries from both academics and practitioners.

While this journal does not yet focus directly on implementation theory, it does open up the possibility of work based on such theories being used to comment on models arising from change process theory perspectives.

Insider/Outsider Joint Research

Further, various types of collaborative research involving both academics and practitioners (e.g., Bartunek & Louis, 1996; Shani, Adler, Mohrman, Pasmore, & Stymne, 2008) have become more and more acceptable as legitimate types of scholarship. In publications of such collaborative research, it is possible for change process theorizing to be combined with descriptions of implementation theories and their enactment. This type of bridging shows particular promise in enabling implementation and change process approaches to be in dialog in some way.

Tempering the Optimism

While there is reason for optimism that the academic/practitioner divide can narrow, there remains a significant barrier that remains as strong as ever. Mindsets regarding credibility remain entrenched on either side of the divide. Academics and practitioners alike continue to discount the quality and relevance of their counterparts' work. One

can see this barrier on display in executive education programs. These programs bring together academic faculty and practitioner faculty and often the participant evaluations tell an interesting story. The academic faculty are faulted for not making connections to the real world and the practitioner faculty are faulted for not offering new conceptual insights. When confronted with these comments, executive faculty, who are usually quite successful in their chosen field, appear to discount them. The academic faculty are tempted to claim that their job is to instill critical thinking skills and the participants should be able to make connections on their own. The practitioner faculty are tempted to claim that their experience is hard-won and should provide key lessons for the participants. There are, of course, successful executive educators who have learned to speak both languages. However, as long as the prevailing academic mindset continues with the unstated assumption that idea creation should be held in higher regard than idea translation, we temper our optimism for greater knowledge movement between academics and practitioners.

In our 2003 chapter, we discussed differing knowledge validation methods as a barrier to knowledge transfer between academics and practitioners. The epistemological differences we observed in articles at the time are also consistent with the executive education example. Geertz's (1983) distinction between "experience-near" and "experience-far" concepts captures this difference. People use experience-near concepts to explain what they experience and describe the experience to others. The goal is to communicate a sense of the immediate context. Specialists use experience-far concepts to map their observations and categorize them as part of a larger abstract body of knowledge. Academics often dismiss experience-near approaches as not rigorous enough; practitioners often dismiss experience-far approaches as not applicable to many contexts. The choice of experience-near or experience-far communication is not just a simple communication choice but rather it is a reflection of deeper mindsets about credibility. These mindsets must be confronted and questioned in order to generate sustainable linkages between academic knowledge and practitioner knowledge. The growing numbers of self-identified scholar-practitioners could contribute to this mindset shift through their work actively translating across the divide.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have revisited change implementation and change process theories to examine recent research,

including identifying several new areas of focus that show robust interest among practitioners. We have also identified several key challenges that limit continued development of the field and inhibit the movement of insight between academic and practitioner. Some of these challenges are new; some apparently promising directions of several years ago (such as a “top-tier” bridge journal) have not continued. They represent very strong challenges. At the same time, however, we have identified some contemporary currents that foster more bridging between academic scholarship and practice. These suggest optimism that there is still considerable desire that such bridging be accomplished. They also suggest some creative ways that were not present when we first wrote this chapter (e.g., *Evidence-Based Management*, a new journal with intentional bridging purposes).

We believe that change process theories and implementation theories, potentially, at least, offer a lot to each other. As we noted in 2003, how much they can be helpful to each other has not yet been fully realized. But the possibilities, the incipient seeds of their joint contribution, are alive and well.

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