Organizational Development and Change: Cornerstones and Future Perspectives

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years people in organizations have encountered turbulence in the environment in which they operate. Globalization, digitalization, market forces, systemic changes in finance, climate and health all contribute to dynamics hitherto unknown. The interaction within and among organizations is changing. There is more cooperation in networks. The work of the professionals is changing as well. These developments have led to changes in many organizations. These changes are not simple as there are contradicting demands from customers and business partners, and tensions between stakeholders within and around organizations.

Interactive change occurs in a situation in which people learn to deal with uncertainty and create new realities together. This approach toward change requires the courage to confront an uncertain situation and acknowledge tensions. Then in-depth change and innovation become possible through interaction and learning. This view implies that the development of organizations and humans go hand in hand.

In an ambiguous and dynamic business environment HRD professionals may contribute to change and development based on organizational change as collaborative play. This approach does not mean that all expertise of HRD professionals with planned change, organizational development, cultural change, leadership development, and talent management is not needed any more. The challenge for HRD professionals is to build onwards on existing expertise and add new ways of working related to agile organizations rooted in society.

This first section of this chapter offers an overview of cornerstones for human resource development which are rooted in organizational change as a planned process. This traditional approach to organizational change still offers valuable insight in human resource management. The second section is about organizational development. Attention

is given to team development, conflict management, and action learning. The following section offers an actual perspective on organizational change as collaborative play, which opens new perspectives for HRD-professionals to play a role in preparing their organization for the future. This chapter concludes with future perspectives and competences for HRD professionals.

PLANNED CHANGE AND THE HUMAN FACTOR

This section discusses the insights that can be derived from theories of organizational behaviour, human resource management and planned change. It offers an overview of proven interventions used by HRD professionals in organizational change processes.

The Management of Change

In the management perspective, organizational change is a planned process aimed at achieving strategic goals for the organization. Planned change is seen as a conscious and deliberate effort to adapt and improve the operations of a human system through the utilization of scientific knowledge (Bennis et al., 1961). It concerns how change is created, implemented, evaluated, and maintained. To achieve adaptations and improvements, managers take a rational approach: they analyse the surroundings, formulate goals, develop a strategy, and then implement the change (Kotter, 1999). This approach assumes that the organization is in a state of stable equilibrium and that the relationship between the organization and its surroundings must be kept in balance. If the surroundings change, then the organization must move from equilibrium state A to a new equilibrium state B in which the organization will again be able to fulfil the requirements of its surroundings. The change process can

be planned and controlled by means of feedback mechanisms and interventions.

In planned change, the changes are initiated, guided, and controlled by top management. Experts play an important role in problem analysis and in the guidance and implementation of changes. The change process usually has a linear structure with a clear beginning and end and with strict standards and planning. In the course of time, the approach was directed more and more at the development of an expert-driven methodology in which change agents initiate and guide changes with the aid of social theories and behavioural knowledge.

Planned change may be useful in stable and predictable situations in which the problems are well defined. From an HRD perspective this often means increased attention to human needs and behaviour. Improvements can be realized by way of technical solutions and changes in the structure. The HRD professional plays the role of an expert who applies his or her knowledge in a goal-oriented way to bring about improvements.

Human Resource Management

The planned change perspective focuses on applying behavioural science techniques aimed at changing organizational work setting for the purpose of enhancing individual capabilities and improving organizational performance. Interventions focus on designing human resources systems to create a healthier and more productive environment with more satisfied and effective employees (Jacobs, 2014).

Selection
Selection, as a topic, has migrated somewhat into a traditional HR area. However, most organization development authors note that the composition of teams, including selection of members, is vital to organization effectiveness (Ployhart, 2012). A profound selection process starts with a thorough sense of what the job is and how success in it can be

measured before the actual selection process begins. It is not possible to select the optimal candidate for a job when the job itself is imperfectly understood. The job description should also harmonize with the strategy and values of the organization. Once the candidate is selected, the selection process itself is not over. To ensure success, managers, and HRD professionals prepare the individual for the job. This involves integrating the individual into the organization's processes and culture, communicating the individual's role to the organization, and providing tools and training to ensure successful performance.

Motivation

Understanding what motivates workers is critical to thinking analytically about behaviour in organizations and making organization-design decisions. Lawler (1994) introduced an expectancy-theory framework to explain how behaviour is directed, placing substantial emphasis on job satisfaction. Lawler focused on extrinsic rewards, from a somewhat paradoxical position: though workers can clearly be motivated by compensation, research also shows that pay for performance can cause people to stop finding intrinsic pleasure from doing work, causing them to do things only when they are paid specifically for doing them (Lawler, 2003). Both accurately grading performance and consideration of alternative reward systems based on team rather than individual performance can help address this paradox.

Career development

Individual careers develop through the abilities a person brings to an organization and the work. Since careers are defined by experiences and events, the ongoing interaction between individuals and the organization shapes both the career and the individual's sense of self over time. Accordingly, the career paths that are made available by an employer have a significant impact on employee development. There are many tools available for employee development, like education and training, assessment centres,

career development, compensation and reward systems, and improving labour relations (McDonald & Hite, 2014). The key is to develop career paths that help employees and managers develop in a way that harmonizes with company goals. Career development has emerged as a powerful motivator for employee commitment (Davis, 2015) and there seems to be a clear relation between career management, employee development and performance (Noe, 1996). Career and talent development has been a continuous activity of HRD professionals for decades.

Organizational Structures and Cultures

Many HRD scholars have expressed the ability to help an organization move to a new and different pattern of functioning. From a planned change perspective, the focus of HRD scholars and professionals has been on creating effective organizational structures and embedding organizational cultures to support collaboration and personal development.

Organizational structures

In the theory and practice of organizational change attention has always been paid to the importance of structure in achieving organizational goals. The understanding of structural choices has improved dramatically. The increasing variety and complexity of organizational forms arise from the realities of corporate life. Far from being monoliths, most large corporations are dynamic assemblies of enterprises within enterprises, frequently situated in dozens of regions. As our knowledge of the capabilities and performance parameters of various organization structures improves, HRD professionals need to build greater depth in the understanding of multiple layered organization structures and how different functions best serve the overall organization purpose and professional development (McGoldrick et al., 2001). Many organizations have identified core staff

functions as network functions such as finance and HRD – those which inherently belong to a corporate network but must also serve local business needs.

Organizational Cultures

Culture has long been a domain for HRD practitioners, with an early emphasis on ideal cultures and the best company to work for, as well as corporate cultures best suited to specific business models or strategies (Plakhotnik, 2014). At the same time, many senior managers have perceived culture as being hard to measure and even harder to fix. Cultural change is not reserved for the top of the company or HRD professionals. Leaders are the bearers of culture. This means that developing leadership is a long-term intervention for shaping and adjusting a culture. Leadership development can be given shape in many ways, such as setting up learning processes or offering a coherent career programme. Many cultural changes are set in motion and carried by managers at lower levels, by professionals or employees who believe that things are going wrong or who feel their professional honour is challenged. HRD professionals may recognize and support these bottom-up initiatives in creating cultural awareness and development.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

This section provides an overall picture of the dynamics of organizational development and learning over the past twenty years and the contemporary challenges that face the discipline of human resource development.

Human Beings in Organizations

Various authors have pleaded for a developmental approach in organizations where there are several perspectives on the problems and where the direction of change is not yet completely clear. Organizational development is defined by French and Bell (1998) as a systematic process for applying behavioural science principles and practices in organizations to increase individual and organizational effectiveness. In their view, the change process is started and supported by top management. They see an important role for HRD professionals who support the change process by applying theories and methods from social and behavioural science. Cummings and Worley (2019) state that organizational development applies behavioural-science knowledge and practices to help organizations change themselves to achieve greater effectiveness.

In general, a process of organizational development starts with an analysis of the problems and the possible solutions by all parties concerned. The changes are realized gradually, and the members of the organization are involved in all phases of the change process. HRD professionals provide support by contributing their experience with change processes and by facilitating the changes (Lynham et al., 2004). Guidance of the process by managers and consultants is often necessary to accomplish the changes. The approach of organizational development is reasonably effective in the realization of changes and human development (Gupta et al., 2020).

Groups and Individuals as Focus of Change

The organizational development approach has contributed to our knowledge of working in teams and team development. This knowledge assumes that most work is done in teams as social systems.

Team Development
Organizational development involves changes in groups to which people belong. Groups have powerful effects on behaviours,

beliefs, and values of individual group members. This can make changing individual behaviour extremely difficult, as members are likely to resist organization changes that run counter to group norms and expectations. To overcome such resistance may require changing the group itself, thus making it the focus of change. When group members perceive the need for change, pressure for change is likely to emanate from within the group. A key method for creating shared perceptions of the need for change is to engage members in analysing their own situation. This can create ownership over the diagnosis and the conclusions drawn from it, therefore promoting a shared readiness for change among members. Similarly, member participation in developing organization changes can help to assure commitment to implementing them. There are many methodologies for team development to support organizational change, like team building (Gilley et al., 2010).

Conflict Management

In every organization, conflict emerging during a change process will take place. In realizing changes, cooperation is necessary; however, this need for cooperation is not always obvious. Making tensions manageable starts with strengthening mutual acceptance and developing trust. This can be done by looking for common interests and emphasizing mutual dependence. If there are personal irritations and emotions, it is necessary to discuss these to reduce tension and foster cooperation. Cooperation in groups often creates a team spirit and mutual loyalty. These emotional ties can become so close that a group develops its own identity and distances itself from other groups. To make these frictions visible and manageable, motivation, and learning activities are often used. Specific support activities from an HRD perspective are making uncertainties open for discussion, creating more openness to each other, and investing in learning to express feelings and deal with them. HRD

professionals have developed various methods for resolving conflicts including collaborating, compromising, and negotiating (Trudel & Reio, 2011).

Employee and Leadership Development

Several HRD scholars express the need to create learning spaces to develop new practices and invite employees to experiment with innovation and change (Argyris, 1994). Learning activities are not solely training programmes or standard courses that focus only on behavioural change. In-depth learning involves learning processes that focus on what is necessary and desirable and in which people seek new methods of cooperation. From these experiences new work practices with corresponding values arise, which contribute to the co-workers' own identity and that of the organization. Learning activities are rarely isolated and are suited to open dialogue, especially when professionals from different backgrounds want to work together. Many methodologies to foster human development are elaborated in Chalofsky, Rocco, and Morris (2014), including leadership development, competence development, career development, talent management, coaching, and mentoring.

Action Learning

One interesting area where HRD professionals are contributing to organizational development is in the field of action learning and professional development (Freedman, 2011). Learning environments that are based on action learning are seen as particularly suitable for management and professionals, as they enable each person to reflect on the action they have taken and the learning points that arise (Marquardt, 2014). Learning takes place in the workplace and is done by people who cooperate and learn from each other (Poell, 2014). Action learning helps members acquire the skills and expertise to design their own innovations and to manage their own change processes. In action learning, participants learn how to change and improve the

organization including their own work behaviours and interactions. The key objective is to achieve sufficient value agreement among people involved in the change process so they can proceed with changing the organization in a shared and committed direction.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AS COLLABORATIVE PLAY

This section provides a future perspective for HRD professionals in organizational change and development. Using the concept of play implies that there are players playing together in transformations. Players envision the future, try to find their way in an uncertain world, and make a collaborative effort to shape their future.

Collaborative Change in Dynamic Environments

The play perspective on organizational change reveals that change is not the task of the individual, but rather an adaptive quality of many to collectively shape their environment (Eberle, 2014). People enjoy tackling challenging situations in which they can develop themselves together with other people (Hendricks, 2014). Change as collaborative play means that players deal with unexpected events and unpredictable moments, while creating opportunities to develop themselves and enjoying doing so. In change as play, the purpose of an organization is part of a dialogue about the meaning of organizations within society. This opens new perspectives on corporate social responsibility as a collaborative and meaningful approach for all stakeholders involved (Fenwick, 2014).

Collaborative play arises in dialogue between people from different backgrounds who work together and challenge each other. They create new opportunities in an ongoing process of change and development. The fun of playing grows when players know how to create space together and can influence their lives and well-being. Collaborative play may just be the most adequate way to deal with ambiguity and uncertainty in the world around us. The difference between planned change and change as collaborative play is shown in Table 32.1 (Boonstra, 2019).

Cultural Development, Self-Organizing, and Learning

In play, people make choices about how they interact with each other. This creates social groups that together create and maintain cultural norms and values. In the play we discover and experience the world around us, and we give meaning to what we see and find relevant. From this perspective, HRD professionals are one of the player groups in change and development.

Cultural Development

Playing is part of our culture. It is about what we consider valuable and how we interact with each other. The play perspective helps to understand the play patterns in organizations and adapt them if necessary. Rules in organizations are indispensable to produce quality and maintain a certain stability. If existing rules and ingrained play patterns are the source of problems, it is necessary to bring them up for discussion and change them. Changing play patterns is also necessary to be able to respond to unexpected events and to make room for innovation. In this play, people work together and they develop new approaches. At any given moment these new approaches automatically become part of new rules and patterns. This will lead to a flow of constant innovation that may contribute to human development (Hendricks, 2014).

Self-organizing and Learning

Self-organizing and learning are inextricably linked. While we organize ourselves and experiment together, we learn best how to

Table 32.1 Change as planned process and change as collaborative play

Change as planned process	Change as collaborative play
External environment Analysis of the environment to determine one's own position and set a strategic course.	**Exploring the playing field** Adding meaning to the dynamics in the environment to create room to play.
Interest groups Parties that influence or are influenced in the realization of organizational goals.	**Players on the field** People within and outside the organization who can contribute to a valuable future.
Change objectives Setting preconceived goals on managing change as a project steered on a basis of time, money, people, means and results.	**Envisioning play ambitions** Collectively searching for the meaning, shared values, uniqueness and strategic position of an organization.
Problem analysis Analysing an existing situation based on tested methods and expertise.	**Analysing play patterns** Collectively discovering events, basic assumptions and the dynamics involved.
Change strategy Management choice for a defined and planned change strategy that suits the problem analysis and the pre-set goals.	**Modelling the play concept** Developing an approach in which players combine change strategies in order to make successful changes.
Implementation plan Defining a plan to overcome resistance and implement changes.	**Participating in play** Inviting people to join in and contribute to change, resulting in increased change power.
Interventions Actions taken by change managers to keep the change process going and steer the change in the desired direction.	**Interactions** Useful activities and supporting actions performed by the players together in order to progress.
Monitoring Measuring progress and adjusting the change when results are not achieved.	**Experiencing play** Gaining experience in a change process, reflecting collectively and learning from it.
Change agents Managers, staff members and advisors with a steering role in the change.	**Players** Everyone can take initiatives, make contributions to a change, and learn from it.
"Homo economicus" Man as an economic being who makes rational calculations and only wants changes if that is advantageous for him.	**"Homo ludens"** Playful persons who enjoy playing, collaborating with others, contributing to transformational change and helping to create a collective future.

understand and handle reality. We learn from our mistakes and are invited to change our behaviour. Playing helps to prepare for the future and to deal with the challenges we face in our lives. We learn to deal with the unknown by trying something new. We are intrinsically motivated in play because we enjoy it. There is room for wonder and discovering how things come together. People have fun playing because they gain new insights and learn new skills. Playfulness makes room to develop and apply new ideas. A playful attitude helps people adapt to rapidly changing circumstances by finding creative solutions to problems that arise. Playful behaviour can generate radically new ideas and those new ideas can lead to new forms of behaviour by which we approach the world. Playfulness is combined with a positive and optimistic outlook and an open view of the world (Brown, 2009).

Creativity and Innovation

A playful attitude helps people adapt to rapidly changing circumstances by finding creative solutions to problems that arise. Playful

behaviour can generate radically new ideas and those new ideas can lead to innovation, which helps organizations to stay viable in a turbulent world.

Creativity

Creativity is about developing ideas and creating new views and behaviours that can be applied in new situations. Creative people are original thinkers. They have many ideas, can quickly change mindsets, and come up with new combinations. Groups are often more creative than individuals because more ideas arise in groups and those ideas are combined. The most creative groups consist of people with different backgrounds and a diversity of knowledge, experience, and skills. They give each other space, every idea is valuable, there is no competition and there is a great willingness to play together. Diversity in a team increases the chance of refreshing and useful ideas (Bateson & Martin, 2013). HRD professionals can support creativity in organizations by bringing creative people together in an open space (Berdrow & Evers, 2014).

Innovation

Innovation starts with curiosity about how something works. Curious people are interested in new concepts and experiences and try to avoid boredom. Innovation is about realizing a new idea with a practical value that is embraced by others. Converting new ideas into successful innovation often requires tremendous effort. Innovative people are analytical, persistent, and resilient. They take a positive attitude and are willing to play collaboratively (Hargadon & Sutton, 2000). Collaborative play often starts with curiosity about what is going to happen. There is a sense of the unknown and excitement about the possibilities that the play offers for new ideas and perspectives. Innovation means finding new opportunities in an uncertain situation. These kinds of innovations require courage and initiative. Professionals in HRD can play a supportive role in fostering innovation (Sheehan et al., 2014).

Ownership and Human Development

Every professional in organizations can initiate change and have an impact in a change process. This is not linked to a formal position. Players in organizations are people who follow their ambitions and sincerely feel that things can and must be done differently. This creates ownership in change and development and contributes to human development.

Ownership

Professionals who participate in developing a vision of the future make themselves owners of the ambition and direction of the change: they want to work with it. The use of expertise can lead to ownership if it is used in the search for solutions or the realization of innovation. Players with expertise on change processes and communication like to participate, especially if they are called upon to use their professionalism (Hendricks, 2014). In general, ownership develops when people play an active role in change. That is why it is useful to look at roles that can be fulfilled in change and how self-organizing can be shaped in continuous interaction of the players. HRD professionals may stimulate ownership by supporting self-organizing teams and invite people to take initiative in transformational changes.

Human Development

Players who want to realize change are socially aware. They talk with colleagues and create meaning together about the world around them. They know about the play patterns and how things work. This allows them to connect with the emotional world and ambitions of fellow players and how to direct the energy of people in their environment towards the future (Bates et al., 2014). They realize that transformational change requires teamwork, and they are prepared to invest in it. Players who are socially aware usually know themselves, realize what has shaped

them, and know which values they find important (Nafukho et al., 2014). Social and self-aware players know how to bring people together in a shared ambition and create ownership and commitment in a learning process where organizational, professional, and personal development are intertwined (Boyatzis et al., 2020).

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

In this concluding section change is seen as a collaborative process. The question is raised what HRD professionals may contribute to organizational change and development and what is needed to play a supportive role in transformational change.

Change as Collaborative Process

Planned change in organizations may be suitable when problems and solutions are known. Behavioural scientists and HRD practitioners try to achieve results with the aid of proven techniques. When the changes to be made are far-reaching, the problems are not entirely clear but still recognizable, and there are ideas as to the direction in which the solutions must be sought, then organizational development is a more successful approach than planned change. In organizational development, suitable solutions for shared problems are generally looked for together with the members of the organization. In this process, the organization undergoes a transition in which the organization responds to the demands made by the environment. Planned change and organizational development are both rooted in a systems approach to HRD (Jacobs, 2014).

In change as a collaborative process, organizational development and human development go together in a continuous and ongoing process (Boonstra, 2019). It helps to understand the complexities organizations have to deal with and gives an understanding of the dynamics in organizations and the relationships between people. Organizational cultures and patterns become visible. New patterns are created, and the people involved get better and better at their play while developing themselves and the organization they are part of. Being able to contribute to this process is a rewarding challenge for professionals in human development. Since this change is interactive, HRD professionals can play a role in the complete change process, together with other players.

Challenges for HRD Professionals

When change is seen as a collective process, it requires that players commit to exploring new ways together. Players who play a role in change influence each other. Together they can share observations, interpret uncertain situations, create meaning, and make agreements on how to act and thus change the existing context. Connecting these actors is a condition for giving meaning to events, discussing the change ambition, and starting the change process as an adventure (Boonstra, 2015).

Especially in organizations with highly skilled professionals from different backgrounds, players in change will be aware of other players and use their social networks carefully to have an impact. Every player in an organization can take the initiative to change and have an impact in a change process: it is not linked to a formal position, but to action logics (Yorks, 2014). It is concerned more with finding it worthwhile to put yourself on the line and run a risk. HRD professionals who want to have impact in collaborative change are socially smart, good at networking, influential, and sincere (Ferris et al., 2005).

Curiosity is at the heart of organizational transformation and professional development (Harrison, 2011). Being curious means daring to ask questions without hesitation and

daring to question existing rules and habits. Curiosity is stimulated by visiting unknown places, entering relationships with other people, and experimenting with new ideas. Curiosity helps to discover unwritten rules in play patterns. It is not possible to realize profound changes until the starting points of a culture can be questioned. Many managers lack this cultural curiosity because, as designers of the culture, they have become the defenders of the existing culture and prefer to stick to existing rules. HRD professionals may invite members in the organization to be more curious with an open mind to discover new possibilities.

With organizational changes, most managers and their consultants often start with a problem diagnosis. They use analytical skills and tools to find out what is going wrong and what needs to be improved. It is remarkable that they often forget to observe without prejudice and with an appreciative attitude. From an appreciative perspective you ask yourself and others what is going well in the organization, what creates energy, what inspires people and where change is already under way (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). Unbiased observation, appreciative exploration, and curiosity are helpful in realizing transformational changes. HRD professionals could play an initiating and facilitation role in appreciative inquiry.

Within organizations, people from different cultural backgrounds work together. Many international organizations are active in multiple countries and cultures and work together in international alliances. Curiosity is needed to understand and appreciate the cultural customs and values of colleagues. International alliances are successful when the partners are curious about each other with sincere interest. When people from different cultures work together, they get to know the values of other cultures. In that way they also discover and learn about their own cultural values, because those unwritten rules are primarily observed in contrast with those of other cultures. HRD professionals can bring people from different professionals and cultural backgrounds together.

Three kinds of curiosity are useful for success in organizational change. First, curiosity about the world around you. Second, curiosity about others related to social awareness. Third, curiosity about yourself, your motives, your fears and where you are coming from, which is related to self-awareness. Curiosity about who you are in relation to others and the world around you is essential for organizational innovation and professional growth for HRD professionals and all people in transforming organizations.

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