"Organization Development" is a form of applied organizational psychology. By *applied* is meant that organization development is concerned with changing organizations, not just understanding them. It takes for granted, however, that one has to understand organizations in order to change them. Organizational psychology is different from industrial or business psychology. An organization exists wherever two or more persons act together to meet a human need. Although many organizations are industries or businesses, by no means is this true of the majority of them.

**Types of Organizations**

There are many types of organizations, yet all involve people acting in concert together to accomplish a task. Amatai Etzioni has provided a helpful model for understanding these differences. Defining organizations in the manner of Talcott Parsons as "social units [for human groupings] deliberately constructed or reconstructed to seek specific goals,"¹ he suggests that all organizations share several components: (1) assignments of tasks and powers in a deliberate effort to accomplish certain objectives, (2) leaders whose task it is to coordinate and control the work of persons in the organization, (3) and a means for rewarding or sanctioning

performance in order to enhance the effect of people working
together toward a common goal.

Churches share these characteristics with all other organiza-
tions, but they differ in the means they use to reinforce or sanction
the behavior of their members, as Etzioni's model will illustrate.

He concludes that there are three ways organizations control
the behavior of their members: physical, material, or symbolic.
Churches use symbolic power. They use persuasion, rather than
force, as is typical of armies or prisons. They use encouragement,
rather than money, as is typical of factories and businesses. The
symbolic means that churches employ to assure that the work gets
done are intangible. Persons who participate in the life of the
church receive approval, esteem, and status. Others receive criti-
cism, depreciation, and accusation. The church does not force or
pay its members to participate. Its members are volunteers who
give their time because of their interest and who accept approval
as their reward for membership. Living up to ideals and prin-
ciples is the goal. Personal satisfaction and the esteem of others is
more important than money or physical comfort.

Thus, the church is a particular type of organization, namely a
symbolic organization that uses normative or social power to con-
trol its members' behavior. Although it shares other characteristics
with armies and industries, it differs from them in the way it
enhances individual performance among its members. These dif-
f erences make individual perceptions and group cohesion of prime
importance in the life of the church.

How Organization Development Can Help the Church

Discussion of this issue should begin with the prior question,
What is it that organizations need help in doing? The answer is,
They need help in accomplishing their goals. For example, cur-
rently, American automakers need help because they are having
difficulty selling their cars. Organization development would as-
sist them in considering all facets of their organization toward the
end that they might better meet their sales objectives.

The same is true of the church; it, also, exists for a purpose.
Who is there who would suggest that the church is as effective as
it should be? No one in my acquaintance. It needs help in doing
what it should have been doing since the time when Jesus, in good organizational terminology, first decided to “build” His church on the basis of Peter’s statement that He was the Christ (Matt. 13:13–20). And what is it that the church should be doing? One of the better statements of the goals of the church is found in the United Methodist Book of Worship, which proposes: “The church is of God and will be preserved to the end of time, for the promotion of His worship and the due administration of His word and sacraments, the maintenance of Christian fellowship and discipline, the edification of believers and the conversion of the world.” ²

These, then, are the four goals of the church: worship, fellowship, teaching, and conversion. Organization development can assist the church in accomplishing these goals.

To better understand what it is that organization development can do it needs to be noted that organization development (or OD, as it has been called) is a technical term describing a type of consultation that has come into vogue since the 1960s. Defined as a method wherein organizations are helped to improve all facets of their life in order to produce more efficiently and fulfill their members’ lives more fully, OD has been preceded by at least two other developments in this century.

The History of Organization Development

Early in this century, Frederick W. Taylor published his book *Scientific Management* ³ and thereby initiated the classical or formal approach to managing organizations. Based on the assumption that workers were interested in economic rewards and that what the worker did was of less import than what he or she was paid, this analysis suggested that profits could be maximized by dividing the labor into small parts and having clear lines of authority by which to coordinate these tasks. The underlying assumption here was that organizations could be treated mechanistically by considering their several components and logically relating them into a working machine.

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²1965, p. 12.
The *human relations* approach was born out of a reaction to the classical-formal approach. Such writers as John Dewey, Elton Mayo, and Kurt Lewin instigated a reconsideration of the rational approach, suggesting that the amount of work a worker was able to perform depended at least as much on satisfaction with social relationships on the job as it did on the pay received for the work. The pyramid/machine model of the classical-formal approach was less efficient than a group model wherein persons did things together rather than in isolated cubicles. The most significant turning point in this regard came with the publishing of Roethlisberger and Dickson's *Management and the Worker*.

This volume reported the famous studies at the Hawthorne Works of Western Electric Company in Chicago from 1927 to 1932. Women who assembled telephone equipment were subjected to studies, based on the classical-formal model, designed to change their work conditions so that they would be more productive. Working conditions were changed systematically, such as the length of the work day, the number of rest periods, lighting over the work space, and other variables. The women chosen for the study were placed in a special room under one supervisor. With each major change—either for better or for worse—their production increased! The researchers could not understand this from a rational point of view. They concluded that it was not the work conditions as such that accounted for the high morale observed among the women; rather, it was the sense of distinction and camaraderie they experienced at being singled out for the research. Thus, they concluded that the on-the-job satisfaction workers received was just as important as money.

In many ways the classical-formal and the human relations approaches were diametrically opposed. One considered the important variable to be the formal organization, and the other considered it to be the informal relationships beneath the structure. Although both were concerned with increasing production, the classical-formal approach emphasized structure whereas the human relations approach emphasized people.

There was no reason why these two could not be combined, however, and that is just what the systems approach did. This was a synthesis of the classical-formal and the human relations approaches that drew on the writing of Max Weber. He suggested that both the work that was done and the fellowship that was experienced were important. Persons should have a sense of being involved in something important and be satisfied with their on-the-job relationships if an organization were to be successful. Therefore, change in organizations was best achieved by looking at them as a system of relationships in which personal as well as organizational goals were being met.

It is out of this third approach, the systems model, that organization development came into being. Organizations were hereby conceived as organic, systemic, and alive entities that could be improved by intentional efforts. The goal is to improve the way they are organized, the jobs they provide, and the relationships they engender, so that they function more efficiently and fulfill their members’ lives more fully. It is important to note that organization development consultation assumes that the “fulfilling of the members’ lives” is just as important as increasing production. More important, it assumes that participation in the organization is the way that the members’ lives will become more satisfying. It is a mutually dependent and necessary relationship because nowhere else in modern society is it possible to increase life satisfaction so fully as in organizational life.

When the church is perceived through this systems approach, it is seen as a place where the importance of fulfilling lives is probably more important than any program the church may produce or any building it may construct. As I have said in an earlier essay:

The church most resembles educational institutions whose products are the people they train or graduate. The church produces people. It is not a coincidence that the church has been called the people of God (1 Peter 2:9–10).

So the church, like other organizations, produces things through people. However, unlike other organizations, the church produces people through people. Here the distinction between product and process vanishes. The church tries to produce persons whose lives are filled
with God's grace THROUGH persons whose lives are being filled with God's grace. This is the church's unique, paradoxical and awesome task.⁵

So organization development consultation, which emphasizes people as well as product, is uniquely appropriate to the life of the church. This type of assistance emphasizes helping the church accomplish its mission through, as well as in addition to, the redemption and sanctification of its members.

This point of view has important theological implications. It puts a radical, if not almost exclusive, emphasis on the group life of the church as opposed to the individual experience of persons apart from the organization. The implication is that the church is the place where the kingdom of God is to be worked out on this earth. The church is not simply a means to an end. In a sense, it is an end in itself. The Christian faith is more social than individual. Theology is less something people bring with them to church than something that is worked out in the relationship at church. As the Gestalt psychologist, Fritz Perls, reportedly said, "He who has a how to live can live through any why!" This was a reversal of Nietzsche's well-known dictum, "He who has a why to live can live through any how"—a maxim that puts the emphasis on individual, as opposed to group, experience. Thus, focusing on social processes, as the organization development consultant does, is not peripheral. It is central and critical because the church is where the kingdom of God is being realized. The Christian faith is unique among the world's faiths in its historical emphasis. The church as an organization is the embodiment of that emphasis. Its "products" are the people of God.

Consulting on the organization life of the church, as OD consultants do, is directed, therefore, toward helping the church become the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12–27) and the fellowship of faith (Acts 4). It may be the prime means whereby the Great Commission can be accomplished and the channel par excellence by which Christ can continue to build His church (Matt. 16:18).

How Does Organization Development Consultation Work?

Having established that organization development consultation is uniquely applicable to the church, it remains to detail how it is done. As could be predicted from the above discussion, when they are asked for advice, OD consultants do not simply attend to the formal structure and environmental conditions of the organization nor do they ignore these variables in a focus on member satisfaction and group relationships. They do both. In an effort to consider the experience and feelings of the members, they do not ignore the way in which the organization is organized or the procedures for communicating and exercising authority—and vice versa.

More specifically, the OD consultant believes that every feature of the organization’s life is a possible focus for consultation. Among these features are: formal structure or polity, leadership tasks and styles, planning and problem-solving procedures, job definitions, program effectiveness, satisfaction with roles and relationships, methods for reducing conflicts, expectations of leaders and members for each other, program production costs, and marketing procedures. To reiterate, the OD consultant constantly keeps in balance the importance of product, of process, and of people. While attending to any one feature of the organization he or she does not lose sight of this larger perspective.

The assumption that organizations (and churches) can be changed underlies the word development in the phrase organization development. Development attests to the importance of time and history in human life. It takes for granted that human organizations, like human beings, can change for the better or for the worse. Development implies change that enhances adaptation. Helping churches become more adept at doing what they were created to do while increasing the inner satisfaction of their members—that is the genius of organization development consultation.

Churches engage an OD consultant because they are experiencing some breakdown in their functioning. For example, a conflict may have arisen between certain groups or they may have become stagnant in their growth or they may have become dissatisfied with their leadership. The OD consultant realizes that the church
is an open system in the sense that attending to any one of these problems will have its effect throughout all other facets of the organization and, in fact, that the identified difficulty may not be the main problem the church is experiencing. Thus, the presenting problem is seen as merely one way to help the church. However, the consultant takes the matter seriously and works on the identified problem, hoping that these efforts will have their effects throughout the system. Furthermore, the consultant realizes that everything that needs to be done cannot always be done in the time allowed, which is limited by the economics of the situation and the willingness of the church to engage in total re-evaluation. OD consultants never forget that they are outsiders to the system and that they must facilitate a process that can be sustained and incorporated into the ongoing life of the organization long after the consultation is over.

**OD Consultation with Wiltshire Church**

For example, in considering the situation at Wiltshire Church, it appeared as if there were two areas where an OD consultant could be of help: dissatisfaction with the leadership style of the minister, and lack of agreement on what the minister should be doing. In consultation with the minister, it was decided to focus on these matters, since they seemed to be impeding the work of the church. We felt these were key areas in organizational cohesion.

In an effort to assess perceptions of what the minister should be doing, the pastor and a voluntary sample of seventy-one persons completed the Webb Inventory of Religious Activities and Interests—a 240-item scale in which a person indicates how important he or she feels it is for the minister to engage in certain tasks. This scale yields a profile showing the rated importance of the pastor’s performing ten roles: counselor teacher, administrator, evangelist, spiritual guide, preacher, priest, reformer, musician, and scholar. The ratings by the pastor and the church members are included in Table 11.1. Roles are listed in order from a rank of 1 (most important) to 10 (least important). This comparison yielded a measure of the extent to which the pastor and his parishioners agreed on how he should be spending his time.

Although there were ties in the pastor’s second and third, fourth
Table 11.1  Webb Inventory Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Pastor</th>
<th>Parishioners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Preacher</td>
<td>Counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.38)</td>
<td>(3.60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Spiritual Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.29)</td>
<td>(3.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>Priest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.29)</td>
<td>(3.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.25)</td>
<td>(2.87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Spiritual Guide</td>
<td>Reformer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.25)</td>
<td>(2.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>Priest</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.17)</td>
<td>(2.58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh</td>
<td>Scholar</td>
<td>Evangelist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.79)</td>
<td>(2.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth</td>
<td>Reformer</td>
<td>Preacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.62)</td>
<td>(2.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth</td>
<td>Evangelist</td>
<td>Scholar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.62)</td>
<td>(2.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth</td>
<td>Musician</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.00)</td>
<td>(1.48)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and fifth, and eighth and ninth rankings, there is still a marked discrepancy between the judgments of the parishioners and the pastor.

If rated importance relates to how the pastor spends his time, he would be doing much that the parishioners would perceive to be of lesser importance. They agreed with each other on only 18% of the rankings. For example, in spite of the fact that both pastor and parishioners considered counseling to be of great importance, they would prefer that he spend much more time helping them through the crises of their lives than in sermon preparation—a task he rated as most important.

Past studies have suggested that support and participation in churches is based, in part, on the degree to which members agree with what the leaders consider important. This is a crucial matter, since the work of the ministry is always more than can be done in an eight-hour work day. Many individual decisions are involved.

The consultative task with the pastor revolved around how to deal with this lack of agreement on ministerial role priorities. Several means for managing these differences were suggested. First, the differences could be publicly faced and discussed. Wiltshire Church has a history of planning conferences. One of these conferences could be directed toward a discussion of the task of ministry and the priorities for the pastor. Both the pastor and his parishioners would have a chance thereby to express their opinions and to discuss openly why they rated certain roles as they did.
Second, since pastors often do not rate as important those roles they feel they do less well, the pastor might consider some skill training in those roles the parishioners considered important but that he has de-emphasized. He could engage in an effort to learn better how to lead people in community social action and how to carry out better the tasks of routine pastoral care. He might learn to like and to rate as important these new skills. Perhaps his entering into the doctor of ministry program at a local seminary was a step in this direction.

Thirdly, the pastor could put his leadership into a different perspective and decide to accommodate himself to the ratings of the parishioners in order to build up their confidence in him. Hollander's theory of idiosyncrasy credit suggests that leaders serve two functions in organizations: they help organizations do better what they are already doing, and they guide organizations into doing what they are not, but should be, doing. If the pastor assumes that his ratings of role priorities are the "correct" ones, then his job becomes one of how best to lead his parishioners into agreeing with him and supporting his judgment of how he should use his time. In order to lead them toward supporting him he would need to invest himself in doing what they think is important, because this would build up the "credit" he needs to guide them into supporting his priorities. One illustration is the letter of support that a parishioner wrote on behalf of the pastor at the time he was criticized. She noted that the pastor had ministered to her family in a time of crisis, and she supported him in the present because of this experience. He had credit with her.

The second part of the consultation was concerned with leadership style—the way a pastor did what he did. In an attempt to understand this, the pastor and several key leaders, as well as his spouse, completed the Life Orientations Survey (LIFO)—a 45-item scale in which a person indicates the way in which the pastor handles a number of leadership events. The pastor rated himself, and we compared his perceptions with those of the leaders. Two basic types of leadership situations were judged: success situations,
Table 11.2  LIFO Leadership Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Supporting Giving</th>
<th>Controlling Taking</th>
<th>Conserving Holding</th>
<th>Adapting Dealing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Success</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All scores in a given situation add up to 90. The higher the score, the stronger a given leadership style.

in which people follow the leader with little or no resistance, and conflict situations, in which people resist and refuse to follow the leader. These comparisons are given in Table 11.2.

The four leadership styles are defined as follows: The supporting/giving style depicts leadership through others and accomplishing goals through encouragement; the controlling/taking style depicts leadership by direct command and accomplishing goals by strong authority; the conserving/holding style depicts leadership by cautious deliberation and accomplishing goals by careful attention to traditional procedures; and the adapting/dealing style depicts leadership by friendliness and accomplishing goals through emphasizing good feelings and group cohesion.

As can be seen, the pastor sees his dominant style in success situations as controlling/taking (high score of 34) and his least preferred style as supporting/giving (score of 15). There is no back-up style because no one of the other two scores is within ten points of the controlling/taking score of 34.

This same pattern emerges in conflict situations, save for the fact that the pastor sees himself as having weak back-ups in the conserving/holding and the adapting/dealing styles.

The ratings of the leaders and the pastor’s spouse are presented next (see Table 11.3). Of interest is how much they agree with the pastor’s perception of himself.

Differences and similarities among the ratings were analyzed and discussed with the pastor. There is a continuing dialogue among scholars as to whether what persons think about themselves is more, or less, real than what others think about them. However, in leadership in voluntary organizations, such as the church, there is a great need to understand and evaluate one’s
Table 11.3 LIFO Leadership Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Supporting Giving</th>
<th>Controlling Taking</th>
<th>Conserving Holding</th>
<th>Adapting Dealing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Success</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spouse  2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leader 1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leader 2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leader 3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leader 4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spouse</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leader 1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leader 2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leader 3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leader 4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

impact on others, because the prime goal of all leadership is influence. Of course, style is only one part of the picture, because even where there is perfect agreement on the style of a given leader there is the further question of whether people approve or disapprove of that style.

The raters were in perfect agreement that in success situations the pastor’s dominant style was controlling/taking—a style that leads by direct commands, strong opinions, and clear task demands. However, there was disagreement as to whether the pastor had any back-up styles (scores within 10 points of the highest score) that he used on occasion. One or more of the leaders thought he exhibited the adaptive/dealing style (a style that leads by emphasizing good feelings and group consensus) or the supportive/giving style (a style that leads by staff encouragement and trust).

On his style in conflict situations there was much greater consensus between the pastor and the raters. All raters save one agreed that the pastor’s dominant style was controlling/taking with a back-up style of conserving/taking (a style that leads by careful analysis and a commitment to well-thought-out procedures).
These issues were discussed with the pastor, and recommenda-
tions were made as to how he might become more conscious of his
style and manage it more effectively in doing the work of the
church and in understanding his impact on those with whom he
worked.

No ideal pastoral style was assumed. Five means of managing
his leadership style were suggested to the pastor. These proce-
dures were offered to him in an effort to make his leadership more
effective. First, he was encouraged to capitalize on his strengths in
success situations. This meant that he should intentionally use his
dominant style in a self-conscious manner even at times when he
had not done so before. Second, he was encouraged to avoid excess
use of his dominant style in conflict situations. This meant that he
should become more conscious about those times when he became
anxious and stressed. Having done this, he was encouraged to
change his style and become a more cautious, methodical, and
careful, or sociable, gregarious, and friendly leader—qualities
characteristic of his back-up styles. This suggestion was based on
the finding that persons who persist in using their dominant style
in conflict often are at a disadvantage. Third, he was encouraged
to develop his least preferred style in success situations. This
meant he should identify a low-risk situation in which his leader-
ship was not at stake and intentionally try to be supporting/giv-
ing—supportive and collaborative. This procedure would allow
him to increase his repertoire of available styles. Fourth, he was
encouraged to supplement his dominant style in success situations
by agreeing with other leaders in the church to intentionally allow
their differing leadership styles to be expressed in organizational
meetings. By consciously agreeing that group decisions will in-
clude the exercise of different leadership styles by the various
persons who are present, the decisions of the group will be en-
hanced and the leaders will not feel in competition with each
other. The fifth suggestion was that he augment his leadership
style by agreeing with other leaders in the church. He would
moderate his dominant style by intentionally cultivating in himself
qualities of their style. By this give-and-take he could reach a
better style for himself and for those with whom he worked.
These options were discussed with him, and the importance of working with his style was agreed upon.

**Underlying Assumptions of OD Consultation**

A word needs to be added concerning the substantive and functional assumptions I make as a consulting organizational psychologist who is a Christian.

Although most organization development consultants have skills that can be applied to a wide range of organizations, they evaluate the purpose of the organizations that request their help and determine whether they can identify with them or not. Personally, as a Christian, I have determined that I can enthusiastically give myself to helping the church. However, I would decline the offer to assist such organizations as the Ku Klux Klan, the CIA, or the Mafia. I have no doubt that most of my colleagues in these endeavors function in much the same manner. Using one's values as a basis for accepting consultations is part of what it means to be professional.

Again, although most OD consultants have knowledge of and skill in administering numerous measures for assessing various dimensions of organizational life, their use of these instruments should not be interpreted simplistically. On the one hand, they know there is no perfect scale, and they utilize their instruments merely to order reality, such as style of leadership, in some manner. The dialogue that is prompted by the administration of such instruments is far more important than the measures themselves. On the other hand, though the issues to which the consultant attends through the use of these scales are strategic, they are not exhaustive. They do not tell us all we need to know, nor were they meant to do so. They do provide an arena for dialogue. The OD consultant is a skilled facilitator of group process—not a technician.

Finally, the OD consultant makes certain presumptions about reality that denote specific psychological as well as theological points of view. In a pervious article entitled "1 Plus 1 = 0 (Organization),” I concluded that reality was social and that personal

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identity was acquired through the roles persons play. Most OD consultants agree with this assumption and insist that truth exists in the interaction *between* persons rather than inside them. They resist the temptation to say that truth is private and that change comes by the achievement of rational insight. Instead, they suggest that truth is discovered in the dialogue persons have with one another and that change comes through group action rather than individual insight. I believe this is good psychology and good theology in the sense that it takes seriously the doctrine of creation and the understanding of the church as that arena in which persons become the people of God. The Christian church gives persons status through divine acceptance and gives them roles to play that are significant through time and circumstance. Furthermore, as Jesus said, “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20). I work under the assumption that God is present and active when Christians get together. OD consultants to churches take organizational life and group process seriously and trust them to be revelational in a theological sense and cohesional in a psychological perspective.

**The Limits of Organization Development Consultation**

No one approach is ideal or exhaustive or perfect. There are limits to all approaches and to all perspectives. By being conscious of their limitations, organization development consultants try to minimize the negative possibilities. For example:

1. Initially there is the problem inherent in approaching organizations as a consulting psychologist who has the “client” perspective. Like attorneys, applied psychologists function on the basis of hourly fees. The importance of time may lead OD consultants to be less relaxed and more impulsive in their evaluations of what is needed. By being aware of the danger, OD consultants attempt to counter this in their professional behavior.

2. OD consultation tends to place more emphasis on inner dynamics as opposed to situational conditions. This may result in an organization that functions well but has no impact on its environment. In response, OD consultants intentionally call the organization’s attention to market realities.

3. History assumes less importance in OD consultation than in
some other approaches. This does not mean that tradition and past experience are ignored, but it does mean that present functioning assumes priority. This could limit the impact of the consultation in situations where change appears to be occurring but in which long-term habits or history regain control after the consultant leaves. Once again, the OD consultant hopes to counter this tendency by calling it to the attention of the congregation.

In summary, organization development consultation has much to offer as a framework for understanding and helping the local church. This approach was illustrated through an actual consultation with Wiltshire Church. Some of the underlying assumptions and limitations of the approach were discussed to encourage dialogue and further study in this field.

SUGGESTIONS FOR RELATED READING

The unique value of this volume is its emphasis on the importance of people in the organization mix and in its examples of companies that have included personal fulfillment in their statements of purpose. Another feature of the book is the seven case studies of how OD can be applied to organization life.

The author has written a longer volume, *The Planning of Change*, that develops the theme of this book, namely, that OD is the most appropriate means for dealing with historical change. Another feature of the book is its useful critique of sensitivity training as an OD methodology.

This is a seminal volume on the nature of organizations and includes many of the ideas referred to in his longer treatise entitled *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations*. He includes many useful taxonomies for understanding the differences among various types of organizations as well as helpful insights regarding the manner in which organizations control the behavior of their members.

This book is one of the most comprehensive texts, covering all the major topics in the field. The book also includes selected readings at the end of each section plus a group of case studies that illustrate the several technological applications of methods in OD. As an encyclopedic text it has no equal.


As compared to the book on organizations by Etzioni (noted above), this volume includes a more general survey of the field and is noteworthy for its coverage of the theories of others more than for any new ideas of its own. It is probably the most quoted text in the field because of its readability and its brevity. It is the best available introduction to the field.