

Free research paper on organizational development

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The field of organizational psychology involves the scientific study of workplaces, employees, and organizations with the aim of improving the conditions for the organization to succeed in attainment of its objectives (Anderson, 2012). Such conditions include having satisfied employees whom their wellbeing is taken care of by the management, and efficient work processes. Therefore, organization development is defined as a complex set of behavioral theories, strategies, values, and technologies put in place to alter an organizational work setting that is known already to have failed with the purpose of improving performance and the employees' morale.

The organization development process follows pre-defined steps. The process of is founded on the action research model that starts with the identification of a challenge facing the organization that necessitates the need for change. The process can also begin if the management holds a better vision and wants to work towards achieving it. The next step is the assessment stage, planning of intervention and its implementation, collection of data for evaluation purposes and intervention, and lastly analyzing whether satisfactory progress has been made, and whether further intervention is required to improve conditions (Anderson, 2012). During the assessment stage, techniques that are employed include surveying, use of focus groups, interviewing, and organization sensing. The intervention planning stage is determined by the nature of change that needs to be implemented. Options to be followed include team intervention measures such as team building for employees, training, and development. During the implementation of intervention measures, the experts involved in the exercise gather relevant data that is used to determine if there is any

progress being made in the improvement of the organization's processes. If other changes need to be implemented, the management follows the same cyclical process until the desired results are achieved.

Diagrammatic Representation of the Organization Development Process

Source Image: Office of state personnel, North Carolina

Theories associated with organizational development

Several researchers have postulated theories related to the organization development process. We start by mentioning the general system theory that dwells on the importance of the external environment in the process of organization development. According to this theory, the organization picks something from the external environment, develops and transforms it in the organization's internal environment, and then returns this transformed thing back to the environment (Anderson, 2012, p. 64). The idea is that the organization holds a symbiotic relationship with the environment.

The other theory is called three-step that was postulated by Lewin's.

According to Lewin, organization development is valuable but yet very simple. The process of change involves three major steps and these are unfreezing, transformation, and freezing (Cumming & Worley, 2009, p. 23).

During the unfreezing stage, the management discovers there is a need for a change. The actual changes occur during the transformation phase, and finally implemented during the refreeze phase to become an organization routine. Lewin also postulates another theory called the action-research model. According to this theory, organizational development is achieved through the steps of problem identification, development of hypothesis and

testing, and finally data analysis (Burke, 2009). The action-research model is cyclical and can be applied severally when instituting organizational change. Lastly, we look at Burke's theory, which analyses how leadership, mission and strategy, organizational culture, the external environment, and organizational and individual performance go hand-in-hand (Burke, 2010, p. 148). According to Burke, the factors influence each other therefore are related.

Conditions necessary for successful organizational change and development

For major initiatives to succeed in an organization setting, there needs to be support from the top management. Lack of it is almost a guarantee of failure (Jex, 2002, p. 456). Consultants involved in the exercise must be flexible, capable, and competent enough to carry out all the necessary activities for the organizational change to be actualized. Employees should be involved where necessary so that the resistance, which is a natural tendency towards change, does not clog their minds. If they are involved, then implementation of change will run smoothly as it will counter lesser resistance. The top management should take ownership of the change process for them to be viewed seriously by the junior employees.

References

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