Chapter 1
Organizational Change and Development:
The Case for Evidence-Based Practice

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ABSTRACT

This chapter first discusses the complexities of change in organizations and why so many OCD programs fail and makes the case for change agents to become evidence-based in their change agency practice. The author then offers a definition of evidence-based organizational change and development (EBOCD) and outlines the types of "best evidence" that can be used to inform and shape the formulation and implementation of OCD strategies and to critically evaluate the associated processes and change agency practices. Various distinctive evidence-based initiatives for OCD are discussed and several case examples from the United Kingdom are presented. The chapter closes with a discussion of the specific merits of "design science," "professional partnership" research, and "replication" research.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980s, organizations in all organizational sectors have had to react to huge environmental pressures for change, the main drivers of which have been: *Technology*, particularly IT; *Governments*, which in all parts of the globe have until recent times increasingly embraced notions of deregulation, privatization and free trade; and *Globalization*, where private sector companies have had to compete more aggressively, and public sector organizations have had to deliver more value for money services and products (see Barkema, Baum, & Mannix, 2002; Champy & Nohria, 1996; Dess & Picken, 2000; Smith, Lewis & Tushman, 2016; Yukl, 2006). These pressures have resulted in mergers, acquisitions, amalgamations, decentralization, flatter structures, downsizing, multidimensional restructuring, increased flexible work practices, drives on quality and value, greater emphasis on customer/client/consumer orientation and care, and increasing stress levels at work (see, for example, Hamlin, 2001a; Gunnigle, Lavelle & Monaghan, 2013; Shook & Roth, 2011). Furthermore, since the early 2000s most organizations have been operating

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increasingly in VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous) environments where: *Volatile* refers to the pace of change which is rapid and unrelenting, and the associated challenges which are unexpected or unstable; *Uncertainty* refers to the difficulty in getting clarity and certainty about what is going on in business contexts through incomplete or insufficient information, which is complicated by opposing views and opinions; *Complexity* refers to the many interconnected parts and variables that can have a 'cause-effect' impact in a given situation, and to the volume or nature of the available information that can be overwhelming to process thus making diagnosis difficult; and *Ambiguity r*efers to causal relationships which are completely unclear because no precedents exist and leaders/managers are faced with 'unknown unknowns' (see Bennett & James Lemoine, 2014; Mack, Khare, Kramer & Burgatz, 2016).

In response to these trends of change, most executives in the 21st century recognize that their respective organizations need to adapt continuously to constantly changing environments. However, they tend to struggle with the transformational changes that are necessary for ensuring the survival of their respective organizations, or they fail to raise their game to the higher levels of performance that are required (Rogers, Shannon, & Gent, 2003). Therefore, when they initiate programs of organizational change and development (OCD) they tend to rely on lower level managers to facilitate and implement the change processes. Thus, in a very real sense, most managers in most organizations are agents of change (Axley, 2000). Furthermore, in some organizations where the modern-day conceptualization of human resource development (HRD) is well embedded into the fabric of managerial thinking and management practice, managers proactively use the services of HRD colleagues possessing strong change agency capabilities to help them formulate and implement OCD plans, strategies and interventions. In so doing they treat them as 'strategic partners', just as they do with external OD specialists and management consultants whose change agency services they use.

However, as I have discussed elsewhere, "one of the major challenges facing contemporary managers and HRD professionals is how best to help people through the transitions of change, and to survive or thrive in working environments that are in a constant state of flux." (Hamlin, 2016a, p.121). Hence, this chapter is concerned with: (a) the challenges that confront managers and the various 'strategic partners' they turn to for help in bringing about effective and beneficial organizational change, and (b) the practical contribution that management research and specific OCD-related research can make toward improving the efficacy of their respective change agency endeavors. The specific purpose can be summarized as follows:

1. To outline the extent to which organizational change programs fail and why they fail.
2. To argue that managers and their strategic partners should adopt an 'evidence-based practice' (EBP) approach to organizational change agency.
3. To highlight certain obstacles to 'evidence-based' OCD, and to describe and illustrate how these may be overcome through 'professional partnership' research and empirical generalization 'replication' research respectively.
4. To highlight and discuss other 'evidence-based' initiatives for facilitating effective and beneficial OCD programs.

BACKGROUND

Although it may be widely recognized that most managers in most organizations are to a greater or lesser extent agents of change, this cannot be assumed to be the case for most HRD practitioners. However, as Stewart (2015) claims, modern-day HRD professional practitioners are change-agents skilled in advising and helping managers with the facilitation of OCD programs, either in their capacity as a colleague or as an external consultant. Indeed, Stewart and others have argued that HRD is of itself a strategic function which, when fully utilized, can have a significant impact on the survival and long-term business success of organizations (see Fredericks & Stewart, 1996; Stewart & McGoldrick, 1996). This view is reflected in an 'all-embracing', 'catch-all', 'composite' but 'non-definitive' statement of HRD offered by Hamlin and Stewart (2011) which asserts that, in essence, *"HRD encompasses processes, activities or interventions" which "enhance organizational and individual learning, develop human potential, improve or maximize effectiveness and performance at either the individual, group/team and/or organizational level, and/or bring about effective, beneficial personal or organizational behaviour change and improvement"* (p. 213*)* within, across, and/or beyond the boundaries of private, public and third sector organizations, entities, and other types of host system. This understanding of HRD is consistent with Phillips and Shaw's (1989) 'consultancy approach for trainers' which involves HRD practitioners increasingly operating not only as 'training consultants' and 'learning consultants' but also as 'organizational change consultants'. Thus, both in theory and practice, the contribution of appropriate HRD consultancy type practices can be a major influence on the interplay of culture, leadership, and commitment of employees through: a) shaping organizational culture; b) developing current and future leaders; c) building commitment among organization members; and d) anticipating and managing responses to changed conditions (Gold, Holden, Iles, Stewart, & Beardwell, 2009). This view accords with McKenzie, Garavan and Carbery's (2012) observation that "the shift from operational and tactical HRD to *strategic* HRD has witnessed a metamorphosis for HRD practitioners increasingly becoming partners in the business tasked with aligning people, strategy, and performance rather than simply promoting learning and development" (p. 354). It also chimes with Kohut and Roth's (2015) view that "HRD practitioners and scholars need [increasingly] to enter the fray of the discussion on change management" (p. 231).

As happened during the last three decades of the 20th century, the need for managers to initiate and facilitate 'organizational change' (OC) and 'organization development' (OD) programs effectively and beneficially in the 21st century is increasing in frequency, pace, and complexity (see Hamlin, Keep & Ash, 2001). In this context, a major challenge facing modern day managers and HRD professional practitioners is how best to help staff cope effectively within working environments that are in a state of constant flux and with the transitions of major change programs. Unfortunately, many OCD programs fail because managers and their HRD colleagues, as well as many external professional change-agents (e.g. OD specialists, management consultants, executive coaches, etc.) whose services are used in support roles, find themselves unable to rise to the challenge. However, for those organizations that do facilitate OCD programs effectively and beneficially, change initiatives become welcomed as opportunities for increasing efficiency and for building new organizational success.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

This section explores the reasons for the failure of so many OCD programs, and then discusses the case for EBP approaches to OCD change agency.

Past and Current Failure Rates of OCD Programs

It is of crucial importance to all those who have a stake in the success of an organization that OCD processes are managed effectively and beneficially. Sadly, the success rates of planned OC strategies have been poor with over two thirds or more of OC and OD programs having failed to achieve their intended aims (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Burnes, 2004; Choi & Ruona, 2011; Stanford, 2016; Szabla, 2007). As I have claimed elsewhere, based on a comprehensive review and synthesis of OCD context and practice that I conducted in 2001, "the majority of 'downsizing' and 'delayering' initiatives were unsuccessful, with few ever reaching the aimed for goals of increased competitiveness and profitability, and with many ending up with lower profit margins and poorer returns on assets and equity than achieved by equivalent firms that had not downsized" (Hamlin, 2016a, p.122). Furthermore, based on a review of more recent literature "downsizing (now more frequently referred to as 'right sizing') brings with it largely negative outcomes that adversely affect the entire workforce in a profound manner" which include, for example, "the destruction of morale and organizational commitment; decreased levels of productivity, efficiency, job performance, innovation, employee effort and quality of work, and increased levels of staff absenteeism, staff turnover, sabotage, fraud, embezzlement and theft (see Fong & Kleiner, 2004; Gandolfi, 2006; Nutt, 2004; Thornhill, Lewis, Millmore, & Saunders, 2000)" (In Hamlin, 2016a, p. 122). Similarly, during the 1980s and 1990s, over 50% of Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) and Total Quality Management (TQM) programs were reported as having failed, with a further 20% or more failing to produce the full benefits (Hamlin, 2001a). As will be discussed later, there is little contemporary evidence to indicate there has been any substantial increase in the success rate of OCD programs during the first two decades of the 21st century. However, although the historical success rate of IT-related change programs has been dismal with less than 30% of new project investments succeeding in meeting their performance goals (see Hamlin, 2001a; Sirkin, Keenan, & Jackson, 2005), in the USA the success rates have increased somewhat over time-from 27% in 1996 to 39% in 2012 (Standish Group, 2013).

According to Pfeffer and Sutton (2006), most organizational mergers fail to deliver the expected benefits; instead, the ways they are facilitated tend toward a destruction of the combined economic value of the merged businesses. Walker and Price (2000) had earlier suggested that such failures are caused not so much by financial issues but rather by the incompatibility of the merging cultures, the clashing of management styles, and the lack of skill of those managers implementing the change. Furthermore, they argue that these problematic issues are not addressed early enough or effectively enough in the merger process.

Recent literature also reports that overall 70% or more of rightsizing, mergers acquisitions, and other types of organizational change programs, either fail or are just partially successful, and that the workplace challenges posed by OCD initiatives typically have a negative impact on employees (Carnall & Todnem By, 2014; Shook & Roth, 2011; ten Have, ten Have, Huijsmans, & Otto, 2017). However, the volume of empirical evidence supporting such reports has been questioned by Hughes (2011) who claims that the 70% OC failure rate rhetoric has been informed more by magazine articles and practitioner books than by academic studies. Indeed, as Candido and Santos (2015) revealed from their comprehensive review of the literature, recorded failure rates of OC programs have spanned from as low as 7% to one as high as 90%, with some rates having been derived from outdated or fragmentary empirical evidence lacking in scientific rigor, or based solely on subjective opinion. Nevertheless, they argue that strategy implementation failure is a persistent problem which remains an important and ongoing concern for researchers and practitioners.

However, as Stanford (2016) observes, although leaders, talent management professionals and others within organizations may realize that change is needed, they often fail to grasp the complexity of what change management entails. Furthermore, they tend not to recognize that their expectations are not aligned with what is feasible within the organization, particularly when the change leaders fail to take the time necessary to understand the scope of the change, the involved stakeholders, the environmental complexity, and the impact of the change from a systems perspective. Unfortunately, many OCD programs fail badly with unintended and damaging consequences which increasingly take a psychological toll on both the ‘victims’ and the ‘survivors’, not least the surviving managers (see Hamlin, 2001a; Hareli & Tzafrir, 2004; Worrall & Cooper, 1997-2001, 2007).

From the foregoing it is unarguably the case that too many organizational change initiatives fail and/or lead to outcomes that are largely negative. As I have claimed elsewhere, the “weight of evidence suggests that the process issues associated with formulating and implementing organizational change initiatives are far more complex and difficult than is often supposed, and that both managers and HRD practitioners [and those other OCD-related strategic partners] are generally insufficiently skilled in the practice of organizational change agency” (Hamlin, 2016a, p.123).

Reasons for OCD Program Failure

Bearing in mind the plethora of books on ‘organizational change management’ authored by management consultants and high-profile academics who offer ‘how to’ advice and guidance, it is surprising that so many OCD programs fail. Some of the books can be criticized for being too pragmatic, prescriptive, or simplistic, whilst others for being too theoretical and philosophical. All can be of some help when change agents are thinking through the issues that need to be considered, and/or when they are developing and implementing an OCD intervention strategy. Many of these books describe ‘planned change management’ approaches based on Lewin’s ‘*unfreeze-move-refreeze’* model and incorporate a processual ‘stage by stage’ procedure for managing the change. Drawing upon the various models offered in the 1990s, Hamlin (2001a) created a composite ‘generic model for managing planned organizational change’ comprised of six phases, adapted versions of which are as follows:

Phase 1: Diagnose/explore the current organizational state and define what the future organizational state should be
Phase 2: Create a strategic vision that gives focus to the intended direction of travel
Phase 3: Plan the change management strategy
Phase 4: Secure ownership, commitment and involvement from all stakeholders affected by the change, and ensure there is support from top management
Phase 5: Project manage the implementation of the strategy and sustain the momentum
Phase 6: Stabilize, integrate and consolidate to prevent regression and perpetuate the change

The implicit assumption when managers and their strategic partners utilize any change management model is that they have the knowledge and expertise to apply it effectively. However, the rates of OCD program failure discussed in the previous section suggest they do not, and that most managers are perhaps deficient in the requisite change agency skills. Although most if not all offered models are basically sound with high face validity, in many cases their simplified diagrammatic/summary formats can appear overly simplistic and just plain common sense. Regrettably, this can lead to important phases being 'skipped' or to a lax application of the model; and this can be made worse by the manager's and his or her strategic partner's lack of change agency expertise. Based on a review of organizational change management studies from various researchers in the USA, the UK, and from various other European countries I have identified six root 'failings' of managers and HRD practitioners which help explain why OCD programs fail (Hamlin, 2001a). Five of these 'failings' relate to managers and the sixth to HRD practitioners, as follows:

Failing 1: *Managers not knowing the fundamental principles of change management.*

Managerial 'complacency' and 'ignorance' are two of the most significant factors which can contribute to the failure of OCD programs; yet this should not be the case when professionally qualified managers are acting in the role of a change agent. A significant reason for their failings can be attributed to insufficient attention having been given during their professional education and training to the 'soft stuff' of management, to the 'behavioral aspects' of change management, to the training and development of their people, and to the interpersonal communication skills required for managing change effectively. As various writers have claimed, much of what is taught and delivered in university business schools is not perceived to be part of the manager's real world, or of practical relevance (Bones, 2007; Mintzberg, 2004).

Failing 2: *Managers succumbing to the temptations of the 'quick fix' or 'simple solution'.*

Going through all six phases of the change process normally requires a substantial amount of time if the change strategy is to be implemented successfully. However, driven by 'short termism', many managers are tempted to adopt 'simple' or 'quick-fix' solutions that skip through the phases. Such approaches rarely deliver the results required, but instead lead to failure. As Kotter (1996) argues, although the skipping of phases can create the illusion of speed it never produces satisfying results; and omissions or critical mistakes in any of the phases can devastatingly impede or even negate further progress.

Failing 3: *Managers not fully appreciating the significance of the leadership and cultural aspects of change.*

The three factors that many expert commentators regard as most important in a fully functioning organization are 'the leadership', 'the culture' and 'the management of change'. In the absence of strong strategic/organizational leadership, and managers who lead effectively using the right style of supervisory leadership, OCD related initiatives and interventions designed to change and improve the organization will underachieve the desired outcomes and will most likely make things worse. To bring about significant organizational change requires the commitment of top management; but this needs to be clearly in evidence, consistent, and sustained throughout the change process. Additionally, managers need to recognize that if they pay insufficient attention to the cultural issues of change, the organization could risk suffering from 'cultural lag'- a term coined by Bate (1996) to describe the condition when a culture becomes 'out-of-fit' with the needs of the changing organization and thus impedes the change process. For OCD programs to succeed, adequate attention must be given to the 'cultural' issues and to the style and quality of the 'leadership' manifested by managers.

Failing 4: *Managers not appreciating sufficiently the significance of the people issues.*

In many OCD programs insufficient attention to the associated people issues is given by those who develop the change strategy and those who implement it. These issues include the psychological processes that employees experience in dealing with change and in coping with the change transition. Employees need to be enabled: a) to let go of the past ways of working and their memories of the old culture (*endings)* whilst holding on to certain still relevant aspects; b) to engage with the required new ways of working (*in-between time*), and c) to fully embrace the new direction and organizational culture (*new beginning*). This means managers need to understand the distinction between 'change' and 'transition' and recognize the critical importance of paying sufficient attention to the 'soft' human aspects in the change management process.

Failing 5: *Managers not knowing the critical contribution that the HRD function can make to the management of change.*

When managers strive to address the 'soft' human aspects of change management they tend not to use to best effect the services of HRD practitioners. This is despite the acknowledged critical importance of preparing employees adequately for change by giving sufficient time to training them (Cornell HR Review, 2013). The reason for the omission is because too many managers and HR professionals view HRD as one of many sub-sets of administrative activities that constitute the HR function, with the training specialism responsive only to immediate knowledge and skill deficits. Indeed, for many if not most organizational leaders, HRD does not register very much on their radar screens and is very much a third or fourth order consideration (Gold, Rogers, & Smith, 2003). Furthermore, this is exacerbated by the fact that although HR has long been claimed to be strategic in focus, evidence suggests it remains more rhetoric than reality (Hamlin, 2001a; Power, 2011). As Power observes, it is hard to find leaders of the HR function who are active in helping their organization improve the way it works, and this is because: a) top management often view HR as an expense with a transaction focus rather than an adding value contribution with a strategic focus; b) historically HR has been mainly engaged in personnel, compliance, and transactions, and c) HR professionals without operational experience have less credibility and are not comfortable giving operational advice.

However, as discussed briefly above, and in considerable depth elsewhere (Hamlin, 2001a, 2002), it has long been the case that various HRD professional practitioners have practiced at a strategic level, have made pivotal contributions towards the achievement of organizational effectiveness and success, and have helped create the critical capabilities and competencies required for the organization to change and develop. Unfortunately, "many managers have 'blind spots' regarding HRD, seeing it only in terms of high-cost external training courses, or long-term development/qualification programmes for young and new employees" (Hamlin, 2001a, p. 27). Furthermore, managers remain largely ignorant of modern day conceptualizations of *strategic* HRD. Yet there are HRD implications implicit in all organizational change whether at the individual, group, or organization level. As Hamlin also argues:

For every change, both large and small, either 'new' knowledge, attitudes, skills and habits (KASH) have to be acquired, as in the case, for example, when new products, services, technologies, structures or systems are introduced; or alternatively 'existing' knowledge, attitudes, skills and habits must be re-distributed, as in the case of downsizing or when mergers or acquisitions take place. Unless the KASH gaps flowing inevitably from organizational change initiatives are bridged efficiently and effectively, whether at the organizational, group or individual level, the organization will not develop the critical capabilities [and competencies] required to make a successful transition from an [undesired] present state to the new [desired] future state. (Hamlin, 2001a, p. 27)

The extent to which appropriate HRD effort is incorporated into OCD programs will critically determine whether a planned change program succeeds or fails. Hence, for managers to be in control of OCD initiatives they must be 'learning focused', which means being in control of the KASH issues associated with change itself. Thus, sufficient time and attention needs to be given to the 'soft' HRD aspects of managing the change process (Hamlin, 2001a, 2002; Ning & Jing, 2012; Thornhill et al., 2000). For managers to manage change effectively and beneficially they need consciously to incorporate HRD into the very 'fabric' of their everyday management practice, and to use it as a tool for managing change. However, if they have not already done so, they need to stop thinking of HRD merely as traditional 'training and development', and instead recognize the 21st century understanding of the whole HRD domain of study and practice, as reflected in the following definition:

Contemporary HRD is: the study or practice concerned with the diagnosis of performance-related behaviour change requirements at the individual, group and organizational level within any host entity, and the design, delivery and evaluation of formal and/or informal learning activities to meet the identified needs. (Copyright © r.g.hamlin, 2017)

The sixth failing relates to HRD practitioners in general:

Failing 6: *Trainers and developers lacking credibility in the eyes of line managers.*

Historically, many if not most HRD practitioners have lacked high 'credibility' in the eyes of line managers. For some, this has not been helped by being part of HR departments which have also lacked status due to: a) the dominant focus on personnel administration, and b) line managers being frustrated with their experience of HR staff who are too rigid, do not understand the business, and who seem always about to say 'no' when they need them to figure out how to make things work (Hamlin, 2001a; Cardillo, 2012). Thus, managers have placed uniformly low role expectations on the HR function (Thornhill et al., 2000; Ulrich, 1997), and by association also on the HRD function. Additionally, this lack of credibility has been exacerbated in countries such as the USA where HRD-related postgraduate professional qualifications offered by universities are predominantly delivered by Schools of Education rather than by Schools of Business or Management as in the UK. In those countries, HRD practitioners are often perceived more as 'adult educationalists' or 'specialized teachers/instructors' rather than as 'people and organization development specialists'. Furthermore, as Gubbins, Harney, van der Werff and Rousseau (2018) suggest, the HRD function has not yet made sufficient inroads in demonstrating its ability, competence and value from a business and management perspective, and the perception of many if not most executives and managers is that the costs of HRD outweigh the benefits. Consequently, it behoves all

HRD professionals, both practitioners and scholars, to become concerned with the mainstream business and management of organizations if they are to maximize their contribution to organizational effectiveness and sustainable business success (see Stewart & Hamlin, 1990).

One of the most significant ways of achieving this is to engage in the change management process of: a) initiating and conducting organization wide performance diagnostic 'health' checks to identify required changes and the concomitant learning and development needs at the individual, group, and organizational level, b) providing 'expert' advice on how best these needs should be met; c) taking or recommending appropriate action to meet these needs, and/or to needs relating to 'top down' organizational change initiatives; and d) developing the ability and skills of managers and others to facilitate the associated change processes, and to handle effectively the intended and unintended consequences of the planned changes. But to do so, much depends upon how successful they can be at improving their 'credibility' in the eyes of line managers. Hence, it is incumbent upon HRD professional practitioners to 'sell' themselves as worthy strategic business partners of managers in the formulation and implementation of OCD programs.

Unfortunately, traditional approaches to the education, training and development of managers have not addressed adequately the five manager-related OCD 'failings' outlined above. Although some in-house and commercial management and leadership development (MLD) programs are effective, many others are not and result in little or no noticeable change or improvement in managerial effectiveness and performance (see Alimo Metcalfe & Alban Metcalfe, 2003; Collins & Holton, 2004; Gurdjian, Halbeisen, & Lane, 2014; Hamlin, 2010). Furthermore, as previously mentioned, much of what is delivered on management and leadership in business schools is not perceived to be part of the manager's 'real world' or of practical relevance (Bones, 2007; Mintzberg, 2004). Hence, the 'leadership' and 'culture' manifested in many organizations are not conducive for HRD professional practitioners to operate strategically as change agents.

More recently, informed by their empirical research, Burnes and Jackson (2011) have argued that a significant reason for the failure of so many change [OCD related] initiatives is the lack of alignment between the values held by those organizational members undergoing the change, the values that underpin the objectives and content of the change intervention, and the value system of the selected approach and processes by which the OCD is facilitated and managed. As these writers have claimed, the difference between the values may explain many of the problems that can arise during an OCD initiative, and "the value system alignment may be an important factor in the success of organizational change initiatives." (Burnes & Jackson, 2011, p.133) (See also Chapter 11 of this book).

The Case for Evidence-Based Organizational Change and Development

Drawing upon the views of numerous well-respected writers, I have argued in the past that for managers, trainers, and developers (including other 'people and organization developers' such as OD specialists and executive coaches) to become truly expert, they need to use the findings of high quality 'management' and 'HRD-related' research to inform, shape, and evaluate the effectiveness of their change agency practice (Hamlin, 2001b). More recently, I and other authors have argued that HRD professional practitioners should strive to become more critically reflective and truly evidence-based so as to improve their effectiveness and credibility in the eyes of senior executives and managers (Gubbins, Harney, van der Werff & Rousseau, 2018; Hamlin, 2007; Holton, 2004; Kearns, 2014). Similarly, Rousseau and Barends (2011) have argued the case for HR [HRM] practitioners in general to become evidence-based, and Grant

(2003) has called for evidence-based approaches to practice in the field (and business) of professional coaching. Subsequently, Grant coined the term *evidence-based coaching* to 'distinguish between professional coaching that is explicitly grounded in the broader empirical and theoretical knowledge base, and coaching developed from the "pop psychology" personal development genre' (see Stober & Grant, 2006). According to the latter writers, applying evidence to coaching practice allows for improved practice; and understanding is a valuable aim in the development of coaching as a discipline.

Similar calls have been made for managers and leaders to advance their professional practice using high quality research to become evidence-based practitioners, and there are many advocates of evidence-based management (EBMgt) including Axelsson (1998), Brewerton and Millward (2001), Briner, Denyer and Rousseau (2009), Latham (2009), Pfeffer and Sutton (2006), Rousseau (2006, 2012), and Stewart (1998). Bearing in mind the various understandings of the term 'evidence-based practice' (EBP) within different occupational fields, including medicine, nursing, healthcare, and management, I offered in 2002 a working definition for *'evidence-based HRD'* as follows:

Evidence-based HRD is the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the development of individuals, groups, and organizations, integrating individual HRD practitioner expertise with the best available external evidence derived from systematic research. (Hamlin, 2002, p. 97-98)

Now, based on my past and current on-going personal experience of using research to inform, shape and evaluate HRD, as well as my understanding of what is currently happening in other fields, I have concluded that 'best evidence' in support of evidence-based human resource development (EBHRD) could and should include: a) Mode 1 research which is concerned with *conceptual knowledge* production and the testing of theory, b) Mode 2 research which is concerned with *instrumental knowledge* production to solve real-life problems, and in some cases contribute to theory development, and c) individual descriptive studies or the consensus of experts in the field. Thus, as in the field of medicine, the concept of EBP in the HRD domain including OCD does not need to be predicated on bodies of 'best evidence' derived solely from 'normal science' (Kuhn, 1996) based on positivist philosophical/paradigmatic assumptions. Instead, lesser strengths of 'best evidence' can be used including the findings of any good/high quality research that has been based either a) on the ontological and epistemological assumptions and methodologies/methods privileged by any one of the four main research paradigms, namely: '*Positivism/Functionalist*'; '*Post positivism/Radical structuralist*'; '*Critical-idealogical/Radical humanist'* and '*Constructivism-interpretivism',* or b), on the philosophical choices of particular researchers who are guided by pragmatism and the 'pragmatic approach' (Morgan, 2007) which allows the nature of the particular research purpose and the posited research questions to determine the particular paradigmatic assumptions to be adopted, whether for 'mono-method' or 'mixed-method' research designs (see also Hamlin, 2015). Furthermore, following the example of what applies in the field of EBM, other types of lower strength 'best evidence' can be used including: a) 'descriptive studies and/or self-report stories' and 'the opinion of respected authorities or expert committees without additional data', which are regarded as the weakest types of evidence in EBMgt (Reay, Berta, & Kohn, 2009), and b) 'situated expertise' based on the proficiency and judgment that individual managers acquire through experience and practice (Morell, 2008). These various understandings of what can constitute the differing strengths of *best evidence* are consistent with Tourish's (2013) view that evidence-based managers should "make use of a wide range of evidence types-including qualitative and quantitative research, case studies, journalistic accounts and anecdotes" (p.13); and with the opinions of various other experts as reported in Rynes and Bartunek (2017) who argue that "a much broader view of evidence must be taken for many of the problems confronted in EBMgt if advocates hope for a positive reception by practitioners and non-positivist researchers" (p. 251).

Thus, in the absence of large and significant extant bodies of relevant Mode 1 and Mode 2 research in the field of 'evidence-based' OCD practice, there is a strong need for gathering from nationally and internationally renowned OCD practitioners such as the contributors to Section 2 and Section 3 of this book who offer and critically reflect upon examples of *situated expertise* regarding what works and does not work in practice. From such evidence 'new' generic insights and common lessons about effective and ineffective change agency practice can often be identified.

Coupled with the insights gained and lessons learned in 2001 from the 'reflections on practice' of eighteen research informed managers, trainers, and developers who had facilitated significant OCD programs within a diverse range of private, public and third sector organizations in the UK, Ireland and the Netherlands, as reported in Hamlin, Keep and Ash (2001), I concluded that *critical reflection* is a very important feature of evidence-based change agency. However, to give recognition to the fact that *action research* had been an integral and essential part of the change management process of some of the afore-mentioned 'reflections on practice' case histories of OCD programs, I offered subsequently a working definition of what I termed *'research-informed HRD',* as follows:

Research-informed HRD is the conscientious and explicit use of research findings and the research process to inform, shape, measure and evaluate professional practice. (Hamlin, 2002, p. 98)

This conceptualization of 'research-informed HRD' can be regarded as an aspect of Hamlin's (2002) working definition of 'evidence-based HRD', and is also reflected in the definition of evidence-based management (EBMgt) as offered by Briner, Denyer and Rousseau (2009):

Evidence-based management is about making decisions through the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of four sources of information: practitioner expertise and judgment, evidence from the local context, a critical evaluation of the best available research evidence, and the perspectives of those people who might be affected by the decision. (p. 19)

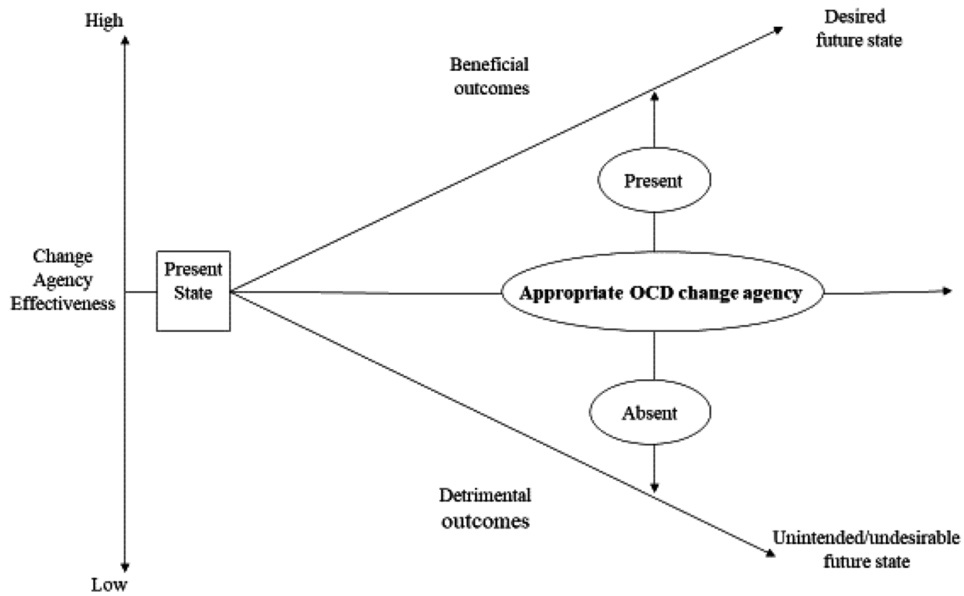
The argument that managers and HRD professional practitioners should be critically reflective and evidence-based in their professional practice is compelling bearing in mind the increasing complexities, contradictions and paradoxes of organizations which make the tasks of facilitating OCD complicated (Hatton, 2001; Vince, 2014). These tasks invariably include the taking of action to: a) understand and make sense of the organization and what is going on; b) formulate appropriate well-informed change strategies; c) implement these strategies effectively and efficiently; d) critically evaluate the effectiveness of the change process; and e) reflect critically upon their own professional practice to draw lessons for the future. Some commentators have argued that there is nothing difficult or intellectually demanding about managing and facilitating major change, and that what needs to be done is usually obvious (Rogers et al., 2003). However, organizations and the people employed within them are far more complex than can often be inferred from much of the change management literature. Furthermore, the proffered 'solutions' to OC 'problems' are also more difficult to grasp than many practitioner 'experts' imply.

To meet the challenge of implementing complicated change agency tasks caused by the potential complexities, contradictions and paradoxes of OC settings, evidence-based managers and evidence-based HRD practitioners (including OD consultants and executive coaches) need increasingly to consider: a) adopting *action research* approaches to OCD, and b) using not only the findings of extant Mode 1 'scientific research' but also conducting (or instigating) internal Mode 2 'applied research' for the purpose of better informing, shaping, and evaluating their change agency practice. Furthermore, regardless of the approach they adopt to facilitate an OCD program, they need in general to build into their planned change agency activities sufficient time for review and critical reflection. From such reflection new theoretical insights can be gained as to why particular aspects of OCD programs succeed or fail. Furthermore, new ways of approaching the problems of change may emerge through the development of 'lay theories' informed by their own professional practice. These are the types of key lessons that resulted from the practitioner 'reflections on practice' reported by Hamlin (2001b) in Hamlin, Keep and Ash (2001). The practical importance of internal/in-company Mode 2 research, and in particular 'design science' research as defined by van Aken (2005, 2007) and advocated by this and various other writers (Hamlin, 2007; Kuchinke, 2013; Sadler-Smith, 2014) to generate *instrumental knowledge* to better understand the change context and help solve context-specific real-life problems, cannot be over stated.

The case for evidence-based approaches to OCD practice is supported by the recent research of ten Have et al. (2017). These researchers examined the extent to which the assumptions underlying modern 'best practice' prescriptions and dominant beliefs about OC management practice are based on solid and convergent [scientific] evidence, and thus hold true in all or most change circumstances. Their research involved critically reviewing 23 of the top 100 bestselling 'popular press' books on change management, plus 31 other relevant books from which they identified 18 common assumptions that influence professional change consultants' approaches to change management practice. They found that 6 of these claims are not supported by any scientific evidence at all, which suggests these assumptions do not hold true; and the evidence supporting 7 of the other claims appear weak, limited, or conditional upon the described circumstances, which suggests these assumptions are only somewhat likely to be true. More details of ten Have et al.'s (2017) research will be found in Chapter 3 of this book. Their findings indicate that 'best practice' approaches to managing change are based mostly on assumptions that are either untrue or unlikely to be true. This brings into question the change agency effectiveness of many if not most managers and change consultants who rely on 'bestselling' books to inform and guide them on what works and does not work for managing change. Adopting change management prescriptions and beliefs based largely on invalid or only partially valid assumptions might explain why so many OCD interventions fail; and this provides a further argument for adopting 'evidence-based' approaches when facilitating OCD programs.

In summary, as I have asserted elsewhere (Hamlin, 2016a/b), if managers, HRD practitioners, and other professional 'people and organization' developers consciously use good/high quality Mode 1 and Mode 2 research, whether conducted from the philosophical perspective of a particular research paradigm or the pragmatic approach, or if they use other forms of lower strength 'best evidence' to help inform, shape, and evaluate their change agency practice, then it is more likely that their resulting 'evidence-based OCD' interventions will be more effective in bringing about beneficial change that leads to the intended desired state, rather than to an undesired and unintended state (see Figure 1). In support of this assertion, I have offered a working definition of 'evidence-based OCD' as follows:

Figure 1. Critical contribution of EBOCD related change agency
Adapted from: Hamlin (2001a & 2016b)



Evidence-based OCD is the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence and/or of action research to inform, shape, critically reflect upon, and iteratively revise decisions made in relation to the formulation and implementation of OCD interventions and the associated change management processes. (Hamlin, 2016, p.129)

This definition, in which 'current best evidence' implicitly refers to both Mode1 and Mode 2 research, individual descriptive studies and the consensus of OCD experts, is consistent with the most recent and most comprehensive definition of EBMgt as offered by the Center for Evidence-Based Management:

Evidence-based practice is about making decisions through the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of the best available evidence from multiple sources by: asking an answerable question; acquiring research evidence; appraising the quality of the evidence; aggregating the evidence; applying the evidence in decision-making, and assessing the outcomes of the previous steps. (see Rynes & Bartunek, 2017, p. 239)

However, a major obstacle to implementing evidence-based OCD is the continuing paucity of relevant and usable management and OCD related research. How this obstacle to EBP in the field of OCD might be overcome is discussed in the following section.

Evidence-Based Organizational Change and Development Practice

Attempting to overcome the afore-mentioned obstacle begs the question as to what research topics and what types of research are most likely to be of greatest relevance to managers in performing their respective evidence-based change agency roles, and also to those OCD-related professionals who advise and support them.

Relevant Research Topics

Of primary importance in this regard is the need to better understand the factors within specific organizational contexts, including those aspects of the prevailing *organizational culture*, *management culture* and *leadership* that have the potential either to help or hinder the OCD process (see Chapter 2). Extant OCD-related 'best evidence', albeit limited in range and scale, can provide valuable *context-general* knowledge to inform OCD strategy formulation regardless of an organization's context specificities. For example, there are small bodies of literature that have explored 'employee resistance to change' (see Garcia-Cabrera & Hernandez, 2014; Szabla, 2007), 'employee readiness for change' (Choi & Ruona, 2011), 'coping with the stress of transformational change' (Robinson & Griffiths, 2005), 'the use of social support to cope during organizational change' (Lawrence & Callan, 2011), and 'how employees perceive the emotional intelligence (EI) of change leaders' (Smollan & Parry, 2011). And there are larger bodies of literature that have explored the related issue of *organizational dynamics* in general, and other research on the specific issue of *emotion*, *power relations* and *political dynamics* in the context of HRD which can either enhance or inhibit the learning and development that needs to take place, and thus either support or undermine the possibility of planned OCD transformations arising effectively (see Vince, 2014).

However, such generalized knowledge can only go so far in helping to identify and better understand the many specific complexities, contradictions, and paradoxes that tend to limit the successful implementation of an OCD program within particular organizational settings. Hence, what is called for is *context-specific/case-specific* internal research that is instigated as part of the design of an OCD initiative and conducted either by managers and/or those HRD colleagues who are 'scholar-practitioners' with sufficient research expertise, or in partnership with qualified academic researchers or by commissioned outside professional researchers. Such research can help make change occur; and when conducted with appropriate academic rigor it can lead to deep seated fundamental issues concerning the effective functioning of the organization being brought to the surface and being confronted. Surfaced issues can be those ineffective aspects of organization and management culture and of managerial and/or employee behavior which impede or block organizational change and innovation. Sponsored in-company research that is recognized and accepted by employees and other managers within the organization as being relevant, rigorous and of a high ethical standard is most likely to 'strike a chord'. And in research designs where strict anonymity rules are applied, managers and employees are more likely to admit in public their own individual performance or behavioral deficiencies contributing to identified generic ineffective features of organizational life that impact or are likely to impact negatively on the OCD process; this is because there is no possibility of direct personal attribution. Furthermore, employees are more likely to advance personal theories, reactions, and opinions which otherwise would not be revealed. Such research gives managers and evidence-based HRD practitioners the empirical evidence (the 'hard facts') required to hold a mirror up to the organization that will reflect accurately the truth and realities of organizational life, and thus help surface organizational taboos or latent and un-discussed sensitive issues that need to be addressed (Bruce & Wyman, 1998). Becoming 'evidence-based' with the ability to think and act like an academic researcher can give managers, HRD professional practitioners, OD consultants, executive coaches and other OCD practitioners the additional skills and expertise required to be fully effective as change agents.

Types of Empirical Research

Most of the management and OCD-related empirical research that is currently available as 'best evidence' has been derived from Mode 1 "normal science" studies (Kuhn, 1996, p. 5) that generate bodies of context-general *conceptual knowledge* which Pelz (1978) defines as 'knowledge for understanding'. Most of this research has been conducted in the USA and other Western countries. Of the few studies that have been conducted in non-Western countries, most have been imposed-etic deductive inquiries using extant Western theories, constructs and methods (see Leung, 2007; Tsui, 2006; White, 2002). This has been a cause of concern because, as various writers claim, researchers risk making discoveries that only fall within the domain covered by the applied theories, and these may have very limited applicability in non-Western economies and cultures (Tsui, 2009; Zhang et al., 2012). Indeed, various writers have argued that management and leadership are culture-specific/context-specific (Brodbeck et al., 2000; Wendt, Euwema, & Emmerik, 2009). However, other writers have argued that logic suggesting the cultural and context universality of management and leadership is compelling (Bass & Riggio, 2006; House & Aditya, 1997; Robie, Johnson, Nilsen, & Hazucha, 2001), though empirical evidence demonstrating the reality of this is quite sparse. Consequently, there is a paucity of extant OCD-related generalized 'best evidence' that can unreservedly be translated and transferred to nations and societies other than those where it has been generated. This means that, for several years to come, evidence-based managers and OCD practitioners will need to instigate and/or conduct Mode 2 studies within their own (or host) organizations to generate 'best evidence' for informing their change agency practice. Unlike Mode 1 research, Mode 2 studies generate bodies of context-specific *instrumental knowledge* which Pelz (1978) defines as 'knowledge for action'. Besides *action research* involving *critical action learning* as advocated by Vince (2008) and *collaborative management research* (CMR) as a modality within the broad family of action research approaches (Canterino, Shani, Coghlan, & Brunelli, 2016), this author strongly commends *design science* as advocated by van Aken (2005). And from his personal experience he advocates the merits of *professional partnership research* and *replication research* as discussed below. These approaches are wholly consistent with the recent thinking of Brown and Latham (2018) on 'how we bridge the practitioner-scholar divide within human resource development', which by definition includes OCD as one of its core components.

Design Science Research

Design science research is primarily aimed at developing 'general substantive and procedural design science' to solve common field problems within a particular discipline/field of study and practice, but can also be used in the explanatory sciences to develop 'general solution concepts' and field 'tests' (van Aken, 2007). van Aken provides a compelling case for using design science research in the field of organization and management to generate *general knowledge* that can be used in organizational contexts other than the ones in which it has been produced, as happens in medicine and engineering. He explains that Mode 2 *prescription-driven* research based on the paradigm of the *design sciences* can produce *solution-oriented* knowledge comprised of *technological rules.* These rules are *general statements* based on stable patterns of human conduct observed in one or more specific contexts; and through a process of redesign from the general to the specific they can be translated and transferred to other specific contexts (van Aken, 2005). He defines a *technological rule* as "a chunk of general knowledge linking an intervention or artifact with a desired outcome or performance in a certain field of application" (van

Aken, 2004, p. 228). This means it is not a specific prescription or solution to a specific problem in a specific organizational setting, but rather a general prescription or solution for a class of field problems manifested in multiple organizational settings. Thus, a *technological rule*-which van Aken and Romme (2009) alternatively refer to as a *design proposition*-is a mid-range theory, the validity of which is limited to a certain field or domain of practice.

The significance and viability of design science concepts in relation to HRD in general [and by inference to OCD] have been well articulated by Kuchinke (2013) and Sadler-Smith (2014). Indeed, van Aken (2007) argues design science is highly relevant to OD because of its interest in applying behavioral science to solve [field] problems, and because there is far greater interaction between researchers and practitioners than found in most other subfields of management. And according to Rynes and Bartunek (2017), drawing upon the work of various essayists, design science research "might work harmoniously with EBMgt to improve the relevance of management research for practice" (p. 244) including, it is suggested, evidence-based initiatives for OCD. In Chapter 5 of this book Joan Ernst van Aken elaborates further on the relevance of EBP and 'design science research' within the context of OCD.

Based on the experience of the author of this chapter, another Mode 2 research approach well suited for exploring OCD related problems within specific single organization settings is collaborative *professional partnership-research* as conceptualized by Jacobs (1997). Should the problems be occurring also in other organizations, then conducting *empirical generalization* replication studies (Tsang & Kwan,1999) in those organizations and subjecting the results to *multiple cross-case comparative analysis* (Eisenhardt, 1989) in search of commonalities can lead to the emergence of mid-range theories, which can then be further developed into bodies of OCD related generalized 'best evidence'.

Professional Partnership Research

In this type of partnership-research arrangement which is different from a research service agreement, a university and an organization engages in a collaborative partnership within which individual scholars and practitioners jointly conduct programs of pragmatic research focused on issues of concern to management. However, they do so with their own mutually exclusive yet complimentary goals. Maintaining the integrity of both sets of goals for the common good is considered important. Thus, there is a dual goal to change and improve the organization through the application of academically rigorous but timely applied Mode 2 research. Depending upon the focus of such research, the results can be used either to inform the initial design of an OCD program or inform the subsequent critical evaluation and redesign that should take place at each iterative stage of the OCD process until the planned desired future state has been reached. If the research focus is not uniquely context-specific, then the scholar partner can adopt a *design science* orientation with an expectation to test the validity of any emergent technological rules/design propositions in different but comparable specific contexts.

The author has been involved as the scholar partner in several professional partnership research studies carried out in various UK public, private, and third (non-profit) sector organizations, all of which have been reported in the academic literature. Each study generated *instrumental knowledge* that was used by the respective practitioner partner to inform directly or indirectly an OCD initiative, and/or some other aspect of management or HRD policy and practice within his/her respective organization. To illustrate the nature and impact of professional partnership research, four of these collaborative studies, which are referred to here as cases, are presented below. For each case the research focus, goals, and process are briefly described including where the study has been published. To illustrate the practical relevance and impact of the research within the respective collaborating organizations, each case also includes 'testimonial evidence' from the respective practitioner partner(s).

As will be appreciated, the focus of all four cases was on the topic of perceived *managerial and leadership effectiveness,* and the respective researchers adopted the same methodology and methods which had also been used for previous single organization replication explorations of the same topic. However, because the research focus is not organization-specific but common to many other private, public, and

Table 1. Case testimonial

Case Testimonial
HM Customs and Excise: Anglia Region This was primarily a collaborative study of perceived managerial and leadership effectiveness commissioned by Dick Shepherd, the Head of the Executive Unit of HM Customs and Excise (Anglia Region)-a major department of the British Civil Service-which I carried out in partnership with his Research Officer (*and OD Consultant*)- Margaret Reidy from 1994 to 1998. During this same period Margaret Reidy was undertaking a parallel program of doctoral ethnographic longitudinal qualitative research into cultural change. The application and practical impact of the results of the replicated managerial behaviour research have been published in several academic journals and conference proceedings (see Hamlin, & Reidy, 1997; Hamlin, Reidy, & Stewart, 1998; Hamlin & Reidy, 2005).
Extract from Personal Testimonial of Dick Shepherd "I was accountable to the Board of Customs and Excise for achieving operational targets within the region. To cope with the demands for ever-increasing outputs and for more openness in our dealings with the public I needed to change the culture of the organization. I used seminars, walking the floor, publishing my *Expectations* document and was making progress and lifting outputs. But I felt that I did not really know how deep the changes were penetrating- there was always an element of telling me what I wanted to hear in the feedback I was receiving. I commissioned the Critical Incident/Factor Analytic Research [on managerial and leadership effectiveness] from Bob Hamlin at Wolverhampton University, [and it was] my initial hope to find the patterns of strengths and weaknesses among the managers and team leaders. The results exceeded my expectations for I felt I was getting the real behaviors and attitudes prevalent in all the various parts of the organization for the first time. I was able to use the emerging results very quickly at my annual management conference where it made a big impact. This was no consultant's abstract interpretation using the latest business management technique. This was real. This was us. I had a profile of the attitudes and behaviors in the organization for the first time based on fact rather than intuition. A key factor right through this whole process was the close partnership between me and the research team. The clear understanding was that the research should be carried out independently with rigour and integrity to as high an academic quality as was necessary to provide provable results. My part was to commission it, facilitate its freedom in operation and ensure that the [research process and] results were directly related to the working life of the Department. In fact the research team went on to develop a set of (*management*) competencies that we were able to use in our local appraisal system to improve managerial effectiveness. They also developed specifically targeted team building and managerial effectiveness workshops". **R. C. Shepherd** Date 21st May 2002
Extract from Personal Testimonial of the Practitioner Partner- Margaret Reidy The data that resulted from the professional partnership-research "was so rich that it's preliminary findings were immediately and effectively used by Dick Shepherd and Margaret Reidy to inform and shape a number of OCD/HRD interventions for managing the (*organizational*) change, including workshops and local initiatives"…… "The preliminary findings helped people to assess their behaviors and attitudes in newer and more in-depth ways. This was invaluable to the everyday work of the organization as managers could effectively identify and curtail or harness those behaviors (*associated with effective or ineffective management respectively*). This was achieved with the support of [OD/HRD] tools developed from the research findings to improve the rapidly transforming organization. The finalized data took this further. As a direct result of the managerial [and leadership] effectiveness research, a new set of behavioral management competencies were developed exclusively for the organization"……. "The findings of the overall research [i.e. the ethnographic 'cultural change' study and replication 'managerial behavior' study], that were both positive and negative in terms of people's attitudes and behaviors, were accepted in a highly positive manner by the (*Anglia*) people. The reason for acceptance was because the research had been conducted in an impartial and objective manner, and names were never used. This created, on the whole, trust between the interviewers and the interviewees and elicited interest and co-operation in the research on a wide scale"…… Over the four years of study and practical application "the research found that the culture was adapting and changing in a very real and measurable sense. This was reassuring for the management *(in particular for Dick Shepherd*) who had doubted that cultural change could be effectively measured. The research also helped to prove to management that an in depth knowledge of their organizational culture was one of the most effective tools in organizational change. It became understood that cultural change was not a 'soft issue', but an integral practical issue with very real rewards in bringing about successful organizational change". **Margaret Reidy** Date June, 2002
Note: Full details of these testimonials can be found in Hamlin (2009, pp 125-131)

Table 2. Case testimonial

Case Testimonial
Wolverhampton City Council This local government example of collaborative partnership research, which was a managerial behavior study carried out within the Social Care Department of the Wolverhampton City Council in the UK, had two aims. The first was to explore what behaviorally differentiates effective managers from least effective/ ineffective managers as perceived and judged both by managers and non-managerial employees of the organization. The second aim was to compare and contrast the findings against those obtained from the near equivalent study carried out within the Anglia Region of HM Customs and Excise in search of commonalities and relative generalizations across the two cases (see Hamlin & Serventi, 2008)
Personal Testimonial of the Practitioner Partner-Susan Serventi By undertaking the partnership–research study I was able to validate the credibility of the 'Leadership and Management' framework within the social care service area within Wolverhampton City Council. The evidence-based practice approach underpinned by robust collaborative research methods served to help me gain the confidence and commitment of managers and employees within all social care disciplines to the framework and the development activities that followed. This was evidenced in the feedback from contributors and participants who felt the framework offered them reassurance that they were clear about organizational expectations and culture. They were also able to recognize the transferability of the behavioral expectations into their generic rather than service specific role as a manager. As an HRD practitioner I was confident that I could evidence that on the whole the identified effective and least effective/ineffective managerial behaviors were not unique to the social care setting, and could be transferred across the wider council. It was difficult to influence the corporate center as the senior managers in post at the time were reluctant to believe that a framework developed within a service group could have validity across the wider council despite the evidence of underpinning research. Although disappointing, it did prompt me to reflect upon the reasons why it was difficult to engage senior council leaders at the time. I was able to recognize that the senior leadership was not ready to engage and therefore not receptive to the concept. Timing is important. In more recent times in my current role [within the council] I have been able to use my earlier partnership research experience to confidently negotiate and develop the procurement of a leadership program intended to support the council to reinforce the transformation agenda. The learning from the previous partnership-research experience has allowed me to plan, evidence, and present my case with confidence and clarity. This has helped me to secure buy-in from current senior leaders in the council to embark on a program that will build on previous learning and experience in developing the organizational behaviors and culture for the future. It is already recognized that many of these behaviors will be generic and that the program will be transferable and deliverable across all service sectors. Timing is everything! **Susan Serventi**, ***Strategic Workforce Development Manager, WCC*** Date 18th October 2013

Table 3. Case testimonial

Case Testimonial
TLFN Group plc This collaborative professional-partnership research was conducted within a large UK-based multi-national retail telecommunications company which, for purposes of anonymity, is referred to as the TLFN Group PLC. The primary goal of the study was to gain a better understanding of the managerial culture at the executive leader level of the company, and the results have been published in the academic literature (see Hamlin & Sawyer, 2007)
Personal Testimonial of the Practitioner Partner-Jenni Sawyer The trigger for this research was the need to conduct a research project as part of the MSc in HRD and Organizational Change study program that I was undertaking at the University of Wolverhampton Business School. At the time I was employed within the HR department of TLFN Group PLC. I chose to conduct a replication study of 'managerial and leadership effectiveness', and I found the extensive experience and knowledge gained through the process of selecting this research topic and methods of great benefit when it came to building a business case for conducting the research within my organization. This was a highly commercial environment, so it was important that I was able to demonstrate a projected return on that investment in time and resource. Following the identified need for a 'one-company' organizational and management approach, we needed to acquire a better understanding of the evolving culture within our UK business, as reflected by the behavior of senior people. The key aim was to identify a set of behavioral criteria of managerial and leadership effectiveness that reflected 'best practice' within the company. The findings of the research challenged various aspects of the existing company-wide competency framework and raised a number of important questions to be explored. Most significantly 'customer focus' was found to be so core to the culture and values that the associated behaviors had become inherent and were therefore no longer recognized by senior people as indicators of managerial and leadership effectiveness. The findings were used to inform and shape the ongoing development of the company's Executive Leader Development Programme. This research-informed program was then planned to be applied across Europe. **Jenni Sawyer,** ***Senior HR Manager: TLFN Group plc*** (when the research took place) Date 25 October 2013

Table 4. Case testimonial

Case Testimonial
ABC Charity This collaborative professional-partnership research was conducted within a large registered charity in the UK which for purposes of anonymity is referred to as the ABC Charity. The organizational goal was to identify what was seen as effective and least effective/ ineffective managerial behavior at the senior levels of management within the organization. The research design replicated as closely as possible the approach and methods adopted by the practitioner research partner for a study which she had conducted in her previous organization-TLFN Group PLC. Full details of this ABC Charity study can be found in Hamlin, Sawyer & Sage (2011)
Personal Testimonial of the Principal Scholar-Practitioner Partner-Jenni Sawyer This research took place when I was employed within the HR department of a large not-for-profit organization providing housing and care for older people (ABC Charity). When it became apparent to our Board that there was a need for more corporate leadership and for de-centralized business units to adopt a more centralized approach, I was well placed to instigate a piece of internal applied management research to help inform the development of a bespoke 'evidence based' management development program for over 400 senior and middle managers. This led to a partnership-research arrangement consisting of Professor Bob Hamlin as the HRD scholar partner, me as the HRD practitioner partner and an assistant co-researcher. Without my practical experience of conducting academically rigorous research within my previous organization in the UK private sector, plus the credibility that an academic research partnership brings, this piece of in-company applied research would have been outsourced at considerable expense. I am currently employed at Centro, the passenger transport executive for the West Midlands in the UK. My previous partnership research experience has shaped and informed our ongoing Operating Board Development Program and Leadership Team development. The research is a constant source of reference in my work as OD Manager, and has given me the confidence to challenge the use of 'off-the-shelf' competency frameworks and management and leadership development in preference for bespoke, tailor-made products. Effective leadership and management within this organization has led to external recognition and accreditation of Centro as a best in class organization. In 2012 we achieved Investors in People Gold status and were recognized as one of The Sunday Times Best Not-for-Profit Companies to Work For in the UK. **Jenni Sawyer,** ***OD Manager, Centro, Birmingham*** (when the research took place) Date 25 October 2013

third sector organizations interested in and concerned with understanding better what behaviorally distinguishes 'good/effective' managers from 'bad/ineffective' managers, the phenomenon explored could be described in van Aken's terms as a 'management and HRD' field problem. *Professional partnership research* of the kind illustrated here is consistent with recent "encouraging developments in EBMgt and A-P gap research" which sees an "increase in field studies examining the co-creation of evidence by academics and practitioners" (Rynes & Bartunek, 2017, p.252)

Replication Research

Being the respective scholar partner in the four cases outlined above, the author's long-term goal has been to search for evidence of the existence of generic or universalistic *behavioral criteria of perceived managerial and leadership effectiveness* through a process of derived etic research (Berry, 1989) based on replication logic and *multiple cross case comparative analysis* (Eisenhardt, 1989). Consequently, each new and cumulative study has replicated as closely as possible an earlier equivalent replication study carried out in the same organizational sector, the aim being to maximize the comparability of findings obtained from each study. This type of replication research is consistent with what Tsang and Kwan (1999) refer to as *empirical generalization* replication. This involves studying the same phenomenon in multiple contexts using the same research focus, philosophical perspective, methodology, and methods to develop mid-range theory. It is also consistent in some respects with van Aken's (2009) notion of *design science research* in which emergent design propositions (technological rule) arising from one or more specific contexts are tested and refined in other specific contexts to develop *general design propositions* and mid-range theory.

Based on the author's original study of managerial effectiveness within UK secondary schools (Hamlin, 1988) and 8 subsequent UK replication studies, including the 4 already mentioned, an emergent *British taxonomy of perceived managerial and leadership effectiveness* has been developed by Hamlin and Hatton (2013). In addition, using the findings from 4 of these 8 UK studies plus 2 replication studies carried out in Germany and Romania respectively, an emergent *EU related taxonomy of perceived managerial and leadership effectiveness* has been developed by Patel and Hamlin (2012). These two behavioral taxonomies, plus a previous precursor taxonomic structure offered by Hamlin (2004), can be regarded as sets of technological rules (design propositions) which could be used to support the design and evaluation of management and leadership training interventions in a range of public and private sector contexts (Sadler-Smith, 2014). As design propositions, these taxonomies could also be used either directly or indirectly as 'best evidence' in support of OCD interventions within various organizational contexts. For example, as in the case of the 'Anglia' case testimonial, they could be used by managers and HRD professional practitioners acting as change agents to help challenge and change a management culture associated with the 'traditional bureaucratic management paradigm' of command, control, compliance and coercion, to that associated with the 'new management paradigm' of openness, involvement, participation and delegation. Alternatively, they could be used by management and leadership development (MLD) practitioners to maximize their contribution to improving organizational effectiveness and performance through the formal training of managers and leaders. Such MLD interventions could or should result in the type of 'leadership' and 'culture' that are conducive to learning and effective OCD change agency. In summary, the cumulative series of replication studies outlined above support: a) Barends, Janssen, ten Have and ten Have's (2014) call for 'the production of replication studies' as one means for improving the quality of the 'organizational change management' research base; and b) the notion that cross-case comparative analysis of evidence resulting from multiple replication studies is particularly generative for mid-range theory development (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007)

CONCLUSION

A key message for both managers, HRD professional practitioners, OD professionals, executive coaches and other OCD-related change agents is that by being at least 'critically reflective' and 'research informed' but ultimately fully 'evidence-based' in their change agency practice through engagement in professional partnership research as illustrated in this chapter, or through action research, or through design science research, it is likely they will be even more effective in facilitating and bringing about beneficial OCD. Another key message is that the context-specific *instrumental knowledge* resulting from replication research carried out in multiple specific organizational settings, whether through professional partnerships or other approaches, can potentially lead to theory development and the generation of *conceptual knowledge*. Hence, by adopting these approaches, OCD practitioners can not only enhance their professional change agency practice but also advance the OCD-related knowledge base and body of 'best evidence'. In addition, by so doing they can make a significant contribution to 'bridging the scholar-practitioner gap' that currently exists in management and HRD related fields. However, this is unlikely to become a reality unless line managers overcome the five OCD 'failings' as outlined earlier in this chapter; and unless HRD practitioners significantly improve their 'credibility in the eyes of line managers' and thereby become accepted as strategic business partners. Herein lies a major challenge for all those involved with the education, training and development of managers and HRD practitioners and other 'people and organization' developers, particularly those in higher education institutions who teach on professional qualification programs including the MBA and other management, leadership and HRD-related Master level degree courses (see Hamlin, 2002). They themselves need also to become evidence-based in their professional practice as management and HRD scholars if they are to act as role models. An important message for business/organizational leaders and other top managers who are change leaders is that they need to: a) become more cognizant of the 'soft' issues of management that should be considered when formulating OCD strategies; b) give those line managers who implement their OCD strategies sufficient time to attend to the 'soft' human side aspects of the change management processes; and c) increasingly recognize the value of evidence-based management and evidence-based HRD for bringing about effective and beneficial strategic organizational change and development. However, it may fall to you, the reader, to ensure that this message gets conveyed to and 'strikes home' with the top management of your own [or host] organization. In conclusion, this author strongly urges line managers, HRD professional practitioners and external HRD/OD professionals, executive coaches and other professional change consultants who wish to maximize their contribution to the effective and beneficial facilitation of evidence-based OCD initiatives, to embrace the concepts of evidence-based management, evidence-based HRD and evidence-based coaching.

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