

# **ORGANISATIONAL DIAGNOSIS QUESTIONNAIRE (ODQ)**

**Robert C. Preziosi**

Both internal and external organization development (OD) consultants at some point in the consulting process must address the question of diagnosis. Recently the need for two levels of diagnosis, preliminary and intensive, was addressed (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1978). The purpose of the Organizational Diagnosis Questionnaire (ODQ) is to provide survey-feedback data for intensive diagnostic efforts. Use of the questionnaire either by itself or in conjunction with other information-collecting techniques (such as direct observation or interviewing) will provide the data needed for identifying strengths and weaknesses in the functioning of an organization and/or its subparts. The questionnaire produces data relative to informal activity.

A meaningful diagnostic effort must be based on a theory or model of organizational functioning. This makes action research possible as it facilitates problem identification, which is essential to organization development. One of the more significant models in existence is Weisbord's (1976) Six-Box Organizational Model (Figure 1). Weisbord's model establishes a systematic approach for analyzing relationships among variables that influence how an organization is managed. It provides for assessment in six areas of formal and informal activity: purposes, structure, relationships, rewards, leadership, and helpful mechanisms. The outer circle in Figure 1 determines an organizational boundary for diagnosis. This boundary clarifies the functioning of the internal environment, which is to be analyzed to the exclusion of the external environment.

## **THE INSTRUMENT**

The Organizational Diagnosis Questionnaire (ODQ) is based on Weisbord's practitioner-oriented theory. The ODQ generates data in each of Weisbord's suggested six areas as well as in a seventh, attitude toward change. This item was added as a helpful mechanism for the person involved in organizational diagnosis. In attempting any planned-change effort in an organization it is wise to know how changeable an organization is. Such knowledge helps the change agent understand how to direct his efforts.

Thirty-five items compose the ODQ, five in each of the seven variables. Respondents are asked to indicate their current views of their organization on a scale of 1 to 7, with a score of 4 representing a neutral point.

## **USES OF THE ODQ**

The ODQ can be administered to a work unit, an entire organization, or a random sample of each. It might also be used to analyze staff or line functioning as well as to assess the thinking of different levels of management or supervision. It should be administered by the consultant or process facilitator in order to insure that an adequate explanation of the questionnaire and its use will be given. The consultant could also train others to administer the questionnaire.

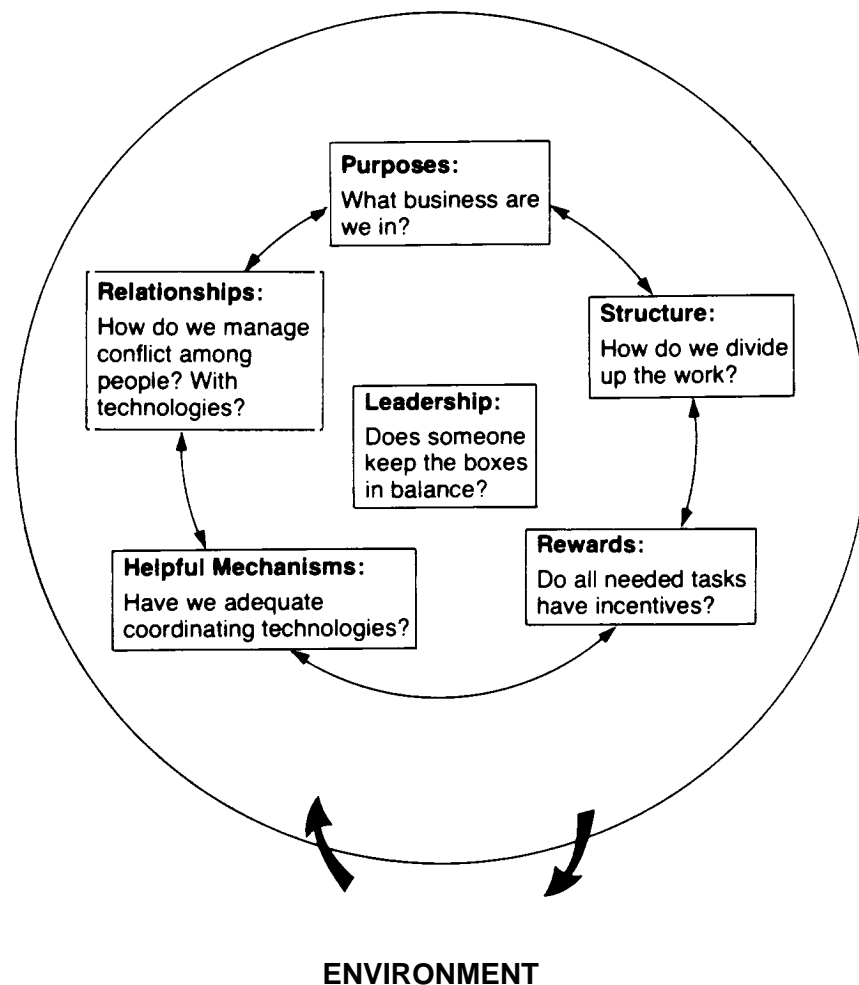
## Administration and Scoring

The administrator of the questionnaire must emphasize to the respondents that they be open and honest. If they are not, data that yield an inaccurate assessment of the organization on any or all of the seven variables may be produced. All ODQ statements are positive and can easily be discerned as such, which may influence the manner in which the respondents react to the questionnaire.

Scoring the questionnaire may be done in more than one way. Aggregate data will be most useful; an individual's set of responses is not significant. A self-scoring sheet is provided for each individual. Individual scoring sheets could then be tabulated by the consultant, an assistant, or, for large-scale studies, a computer.

## Processing the Data

Once aggregate data have been collected, they must be processed. The first task is to prepare a bar or line graph (or any similar technique) to present the data so that they can be readily understood. The consultant/facilitator should present the data first to the organization's president or the work unit's supervisor (whichever is applicable) to establish understanding, commitment, and support.



**Figure 1. The Six-Box Organizational Model'**

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Next, a meeting with the work group is essential. During this meeting the consultant/ facilitator must weave a delicate balance between task and maintenance issues in order to be productive. During this meeting a number of things take place: information is presented (feedback); information is objectively discussed; group problem solving is encouraged; brainstorming for solutions is facilitated; alternative solutions are evaluated against criteria; a solution is chosen; an action plan is developed; and a plan for future evaluation is determined. This process is presented in detail in Hausser, Pecorella, and Wissler (1977).

The ODQ produces information about the informal system. As Weisbord's suggested, the formal system must be considered also. A consultant/facilitator may review' an organization's charter, operations manual, personnel policies, etc. Caps between the two systems lead to a diagnosis of what is not happening that should be happening, or vice versa.

In sum, the ODQ is useful for diagnostic efforts insofar as it provides data about people's perceptions of their organization. It is an instrument that maybe used separate from or in addition to other information-collecting techniques.

## REFERENCES

- Hausser. D. L., Pecorella. P. A., & Wissler, A. L. *Survey-guided development: A manual for consultants*. San Diego, CA: University Associates, 1977.
- Lippitt. C.. & Lippitt. H. *The consulting process in action*. San Diego. CA: University Associates. 1978.
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## ORGANIZATIONAL DIAGNOSIS QUESTIONNAIRE

### Robert C. Preziosi

From time to time organizations consider it important to analyze them selves. It is necessary to find out from the people who work in the organization what they think if the analysis is going to be of value. This questionnaire will help the organization that you work for analyze itself.

*Directions:* Do not put your name anywhere on this questionnaire. Please answer all thirty-five questions. *Be open and honest.* For each of the thirty-five statements circle only *one (1)* number to indicate your thinking.

		Agree Strongly	Agree	Agree Slightly	Neutral	Disagree Slightly	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
1	The goals of this organization are clearly stated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	The division of labor of this organization is flexible.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	My immediate supervisor is supportive of my efforts.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	My relationship with my supervisor was a Harmonious one.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	My job offers me the opportunity to grow as a person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	My immediate supervisor has ideas that are helpful to me and my work group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	This organization is not resistant to change.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I am personally in agreement with the stated goals of my work unit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	The division of labor in this organization is intended to help it reach its goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	The leadership norms of this organization help its progress.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	I can always talk with someone at work if I have a work-related problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	The pay scale and benefits of this organization treat each employee equitably	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	I have the information that I need to do a good job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	This organization introduces enough new policies and procedures.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

		Agree Strongly	Agree	Agree Slightly	Neutral	Disagree Slightly	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
15	I understand the purpose of this organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	The manner in which work tasks are divided is a logical one	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	This organization's leadership efforts result in the organization's fulfillment of its purposes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	My relationships with members of my work group are friendly as well as professional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	The opportunity for promotion exists in this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	This organization has adequate mechanisms for binding itself together	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	This organization favors change	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	The priorities of this organization were understood by its employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	The structure of my work unit is well designed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	It is clear to me whenever my boss is attempting to guide my work efforts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	I have established the relationships that I need to do my job properly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26	The salary that I receive is commensurate with the job that I perform	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27	Other work units are helpful to my work unit whenever assistance is requested	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	Occasionally I like to change things about my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29	I had enough input in deciding my work-unit goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30	The division of labor in this organization actually helps it to reach its goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31	I understand my boss's efforts to influence me and the other members of the work unit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32	There is no evidence of unresolved conflict in this organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33	All tasks to be accomplished are associated with incentives	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34	This organization's planning and control efforts are helpful to its growth and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35	This organization has the ability to change	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## ODO SCORING SHEET

*Instructions:* Transfer the numbers you circled on the questionnaire to the blanks below, add each column, and divide each sum by five. This will give you comparable scores for each of the seven areas.

Purposes	Structure	Leadership	Relationships
1 _____	2 _____	3 _____	4 _____
8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____
15 _____	16 _____	17 _____	18 _____
22 _____	23 _____	24 _____	25 _____
29 _____	30 _____	31 _____	32 _____
Total _____	Total _____	Total _____	Total _____
Average _____	Average _____	Average _____	Average _____

Rewards	Helpful Mechanisms	Attitude Toward Change
5 _____	6 _____	7 _____
12 _____	13 _____	14 _____
19 _____	20 _____	21 _____
26 _____	27 _____	28 _____
33 _____	34 _____	35 _____
Total _____	Total _____	Total _____
Average _____	Average _____	Average _____

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## ODQ PROFILE AND INTERPRETATION SHEET

*Instructions:* Transfer your average scores from the ODQ Scoring Sheet to the appropriate boxes in the figure below. Then study the background information and interpretation suggestions that follow.

### BACKGROUND

The ODQ is a survey-feedback instrument designed to collect data on organizational functioning. It measures the perceptions of persons in an organization or work unit to determine areas of activity that would benefit from an organization development effort. It can be used as the sole data-collection technique or in conjunction with other techniques (interview, observation, etc.).

Weisbord's Six-Box Organizational Model (1976) is the basis for the questionnaire, which measures seven variables: purposes, structure, relationships, rewards, leadership, helpful mechanisms, and attitude toward change. The first six areas are from Weisbord's model, while the last one was added to provide the consultant/facilitator with input on readiness for change.

The instrument and the model reflect a systematic approach for analyzing relationships among variables that influence how an organization is managed. The ODQ measures the informal aspects of the system. It may be necessary for the consultant/facilitator also to gather information on the formal aspects and to examine the gaps between the two.

#### Instrumentation Kit

Using the ODQ is the first step in determining appropriate interventions for organizational change efforts. Its use as a diagnostic tool can be the first step in improving an organization's or work unit's capability to serve its clientele.

### INTERPRETATION AND DIAGNOSIS

A crucial consideration is the diagnosis based upon data interpretation. The simplest diagnosis would be to assess the amount of variance for each of the seven variables in relation to a score of 4, which is the neutral point. Scores above 4 would indicate a problem with organizational functioning. The closer the score is to 7 the more severe the problem would be. Scores below 4 indicate the lack of a problem, with a score of 1 indicating optimum functioning.

Another diagnostic approach follows the same guidelines of assessment in relation to the neutral point (score) of 4. The score of each of the thirty-five items on the questionnaire can be reviewed to produce more exacting information on problematic areas. Thus diagnosis would be more precise. For example, let us suppose that the average score on item number 8 is 6.4. This would indicate not only a problem in organizational purpose, but also a more specific problem in that there is a gap between organizational and individual goals. This more precise diagnostic effort is likely to lead to a more appropriate intervention in the organization than the generalized diagnostic approach described in the preceding paragraph.

Appropriate diagnosis must address the relationships between the boxes to determine the interconnectedness of problems. For example, if there is a problem with relationships, could it be that the reward system does not reward relationship behavior? This might be the case if the average score on item 33 was well above 4 (5.5 or higher) and all the items on relationships (4, 11, 18, 25, 32) averaged above 5.5.