

Enhancing Organisational Development in English Universities

A report from LGMF-081: A project funded by HEFCE's
Leadership, Governance and Management Fund



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- Barbara Berkeley-Hill, Canterbury Christchurch University
- Professor Paul Blackmore, King’s College, London
- Jean Harrison, University of Westminster
- Clare Hetherington, University of Gloucestershire
- Dr Chris James, University of Bath
- Sandy Wilkie, University of St Andrews
- Dr Andrew Wilson, Loughborough University

The project team:

Professor José Chambers, Project Director
Assistant Vice-Chancellor, University of Winchester

Dr Lesly Huxley
Director of ILRT, University of Bristol and Director, Publications and Organisational Development, Leadership Foundation for Higher Education

Professor Philip Sullivan
Director of Projects, De Montfort University, Leicester

Professor Bob Thackwray
Director, Membership and Organisational Development, Leadership Foundation for Higher Education

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"Enhancing Organisational Development (OD) Capability in English Universities" is a project under HEFCE's Leadership, Governance and Management Fund. The project team proposed: an initial online survey; face-to-face interviews in a cross-section of HEIs; a small number of case studies; liaison with relevant professional organisations and comparison with findings from related work. Dissemination plans were aimed squarely at fostering a broad community of OD practice and included briefings, presentations, publications using the Leadership Foundation's channels and development of an online resource in the form of a directory.

The project's aim was to help English Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) become more self-sufficient in: identifying their own Organisational Development needs; managing and sustaining an effective response to those needs and recognising and learning from good practice elsewhere. We took as our definition of Organisational Development "A set of explicit processes carefully planned and implemented to benefit the performance of the organisation as a whole."

The project team conducted interviews with a cross-section of 64 staff in 23 HEIs. The online survey was launched towards the end of the project and had elicited 60 responses by 1 August 2007.

Analysis of data from both interviews and survey indicates that, in the English Higher Education Institutions, there is currently significant activity in OD, as defined by the project. 92% of survey respondents report that they are engaged in institution-wide improvement ventures.

Current OD activity across the sector is linked by respondents to the 'competitive market' in which HEIs now operate. In this market they perceive that they need to identify and make the best of their 'distinctive' offering. Asked to identify and prioritise the focus of their OD activity, 'improving the student experience' achieves the highest number of first rankings, followed closely by improvements to leadership and management. A second tier grouping includes improvements to teaching and learning provision and to administrative processes, with a third group comprising research performance, changing culture and improving competitiveness.

New Vice-Chancellors (VCs) are often seen as initiators of OD ventures. Interviews suggested that the behaviour of the most senior managers, and their capacity to learn and work as a team during the implementation phase, may be crucial to the success of any OD venture.

Whilst many suggested that the VC had at least nominal overall responsibility for OD, the question of just who are the crucial players in OD initiatives was particularly exercising those HEIs that were actively considering how they might enhance their OD capability. In a number of the HEIs we visited, people were puzzling how best to clarify the roles of those who help design, set in motion and steer to a successful outcome a complex range of OD interventions: the OD workers. There were questions around how and where to find the most appropriate people to undertake these internal 'development' roles. Although the highest proportion of our survey respondents were from Human Resources (HR) departments, many of those interviewed, including some members of HR departments, questioned whether responsibility for OD self-evidently fitted into the remit and capabilities of the HR department or, indeed, any other single professional group.

A major OD programme will often generate "a huge number of inter-related projects" and "multiple work streams". This was itself seen as an area where OD capability needed to be enhanced. Almost without exception, HEIs reported that they were not fully satisfied with their approach to project management, especially in relation to the integration and co-ordination of efforts across a complex bundle of initiatives.

A range of externally-derived OD tools and approaches is in use across the sector, but HEIs are also adapting approaches to fit their own contexts and developing their own bespoke approaches. There appears to be a diminishing emphasis on systems-led solutions and a lack of faith in the capacity of restructuring to achieve the institution's desired ends. Where progress with the chosen focus of OD, such as improving the student experience, would require changes in behaviour from the full range of staff, there is now an emphasis on

approaches designed to secure active participation and engagement across a broad front. We particularly noticed the development of approaches that bring together multi-functional, multi-status teams to work on a specific improvement effort linked to the overall focus of the OD activity.

A significant majority of institutions engaged in OD initiatives told us that they use an agreed set of performance indicators to evaluate those initiatives, drawing on a range of measures including student and staff surveys and some external evaluative mechanisms. However not all HEIs are confident that they make the best use, for OD purposes, of the data they are already collecting for other purposes.

Whilst HEIs are confident of their own capacity to manage organisational change, 80% of survey respondents also make use of external consultants, sometimes because they do not have the appropriate internal resource, but most often because they value "a detached analysis". Although competition was a theme underpinning much of the OD activity reported, OD workers are open to collaboration with their colleagues in other HEIs and trust the integrity of those colleagues sufficiently to engage them as external consultants.

An agenda for OD enhanced capability is proposed.

We recommend that **institutions**:

1. Improve the process for choosing the focus of an OD intervention.
2. Define the role of senior management in that intervention.
3. Foster an environment conducive to change.
4. Give more attention to long-term implementation and to project management.
5. Identify the most appropriate people to sustain internal development over the longer period.
6. Select, collect and make appropriate use of data at both the diagnostic stages and as a means of monitoring progress and evaluating outcomes.

We also recommend that, at **sector level**, we:

1. Acknowledge the diversity of the 'OD worker', the variety of roles involved and the full extent of the capabilities required.
2. Seek ways of bridging the gap between the various practitioner and research communities which focus on relevant areas of policy and practice in higher education.
3. Explore further the fragmentation effect of specialist professional groupings in HE – seek ways of identifying and bringing into a community of practice the 'hybrid workers'.
4. Resist the 'people like us' syndrome which prompts people to cluster together in special interest groupings – often with a particular professional focus.
5. Utilise the methodology of the Change Academy to support enhancement of OD capability, bringing together multi-functional groups.

1. INTRODUCTION

PROJECT BACKGROUND

"Enhancing Organisational Development (OD) Capability in English Universities" received an award of £65,000 under the Leadership, Governance and Management Fund (LGMF) of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to support this project, starting in May 2006. The project evolved from discussions in the Organisational Development in Higher Education (ODHE) group. It took as its definition of Organisational Development: "A set of explicit processes carefully planned and implemented to benefit the performance of the organisation as a whole".

The initial proposal was for a three-year project focussing on "institutional self-evaluation: building a network of support for continuous improvement across the Higher Education sector". The aim was to "investigate the essential features underpinning existing good practice in institutional self-evaluation and identify benefits which may be derived from that good practice". Subsequent proposal iterations, developed in consultation with Pramod Philip and Alison Johns at HEFCE, identified two complementary areas of activity: an investigatory stage and a putative second project building on the outcomes of this first stage with the aim of developing bespoke models/tools for use in Higher Education. In May 2006 an amended proposal was accepted as project LGMF-081.

Aims and Objectives

The project's aim is to help English Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) become more self-sufficient in identifying their own Organisational Development needs, in managing and sustaining an effective response to those needs and in recognising and learning from good practice elsewhere (what we call 'OD capability').

With this in mind, we wanted to identify:

- Any explicit approaches to Organisational Development which HEIs believe they are currently using, including the extent to which they use and value any externally recognised tools or techniques

- How universities choose and implement such approaches and evaluate their impact
- Where HEIs believe that their capability in Organisational Development resides
- Any steps they are taking, or wish to take, in order to extend their OD capability.

A second stage of work described in the initial proposal - to develop and trial OD approaches revealed by the investigatory stage with a wide range of HEIs - was deferred until the outcomes of LGMF-081 were known.

METHODOLOGY

The project was originally planned in three main phases:

1. Design, piloting and delivery of an online survey inviting HEIs to outline their current OD practice
2. Face-to-face interviews in a cross-section of HEIs and small number of case studies
3. Final report and dissemination including development of an online resource

Liaison with relevant professional organisations and comparison with findings from related work were to be incorporated within the second and third phases. An evaluation phase was also designed into the final stages of the project.

Dissemination plans were aimed squarely at fostering a broad community of OD practice and included regional briefings, presentations at conferences and events, cumulative and ongoing publications using the Leadership Foundation's channels. Development of an online resource in the form of an 'atlas' or directory was also proposed, drawing on survey data.

Our methodology matured and broadened in line with the development of the project and formative feedback. Discussion with the project's reference group and piloting of an initial survey led the team to re-evaluate the order of the project phases, launching the survey towards the end, rather than at the beginning, of the project lifetime.

Project Management

The project team is Professor José Chambers (Project Director), Dr Lesly Huxley, Professor Philip Sullivan and Professor Bob Thackwray. Members of the team have extensive experience of working in and with a range of institutions across the UK HE sector and with organisations outside the sector. Members of the Organisational Development in Higher Education group, comprising representatives of over 30 UK HEIs, formed the project's reference group.

The project evaluator is Professor Sir David Watson, Institute of Education. Evaluation will draw on audited self-assessment, and on examination of evaluation instruments used during the dissemination phase.

Data Collection: Interviews

Initially we conducted 64 individual interviews, over a period of several months, with a range of staff engaged in OD activity, in 23 English HEIs chosen to reflect the variety of type, location and size of institution. We then undertook further in-depth interviews in seven of these institutions, involving a wider spread of interviewees and group meetings to enable us to develop a more detailed understanding of the approaches being used. The interviews were intended to elicit perceptions and insights about current approaches to OD across the sector and help us identify areas in which HEIs might invest if they wish to improve their OD capability.

We also undertook interviews with 'key thinkers', both researchers and practitioners in the field, and video-ed some of these to incorporate into dissemination material.

The rich picture that emerges from the detail of the interviews is occasionally at odds with the survey data. This is not unexpected: interviews aimed to elicit more personal perspectives (which we promised would be anonymised before publication). We felt it important to capture some of these perceptions as conveyed in conversation, rather than in the language of systems and processes. This is why we have made use of quotes from interviews in this report, even though we are not in a position to attribute them.

Not all those institutions where interviews took place subsequently completed the survey (although by far the majority did); many more institutions completed the survey without prior contact via interview. Information gathered via the survey was also largely factual and for attributed publication in the public domain, in order to assist in the forming of collaborative networks. Where variation between interview and survey data is most noticeable, it is highlighted at appropriate points in this report.

Data Collection: Survey Design

The survey was intended to discover the current level of OD activity and the nature of OD approaches in English HEIs. It asked institutions to identify any tools or techniques they have in use, and to describe their own OD structures and capabilities, as well as the extent of their use of external consultants. A focus on where responsibility for OD is located, and with whom, was introduced after this became a key question for exploration during interviews.

The survey went through a number of iterative design stages on paper to achieve optimum length and ease of response. We had initially intended to ask two kinds of questions in a survey launched at the beginning of the project: those to which answers would be published through the online resource and those to which answers would be regarded as confidential and only published anonymously within reports and presentations.

A pilot version of the survey was tested with 30 individuals from the ODHE group who described themselves as having an OD role within their own university. Piloting raised a number of questions, one of which was where responsibility for OD might be said to reside in any one HEI and who, therefore, might be best placed to complete the survey. Our pilot respondents felt this might well be an issue of contention in their own institutions.

Also fundamental were the issues arising from the proposed combination of both public and confidential responses and the intended timing of the survey launch. Feedback at the pilot stage indicated a need to focus the online survey on those responses that HEIs were comfortable with making public, and that were easily codified. This also prompted us to defer launch of the survey

until the end of the project and after the interview phase, as we felt that the interviews were more likely to inform the survey design than vice-versa.

The final version of the online survey (see Appendix A) comprised five main sections:

1. Current Engagement with OD in your University
2. OD Tools and Approaches
3. Roles and Responsibilities
4. Planned OD initiatives
5. About you and your University

Survey Delivery and Analysis

Following discussions with the reference group and the outcomes of the pilot phase, we decided to write to all Vice-Chancellors and Principals of English HEIs –118 in total – giving background to the project and inviting them to arrange for completion of the online survey by “whoever you feel is most appropriate to complete the survey in your institution”.

The survey was launched on 20th April 2007 with an original closing date set for 8th May 2007, by which time 47 responses were received. A number of institutions contacted us to ask for an extension for various reasons including vacancies, holiday and sickness absence. The closing date was subsequently extended by two months, in conjunction with a process of reminding institutions by phone or email. Some of these exchanges confirmed the lack of clarity over responsibility for OD; in some cases, the request to complete the survey had passed through several parts of the institution and needed to be tracked down.

The total number of responses by 1 August 2007 was 60. Thus the survey data – and the resulting online directory – provide a snapshot of OD activity in around half of the English HE institutions. A list of the respondent institutions is given in Appendix B.

The online survey was delivered via the Bristol Online Survey (BOS)¹ tool developed by the Institute for Learning and Research Technology (ILRT)² at the University of Bristol with funding from HEFCE (as part of the CROS project) and available for use by all higher education institutions by licence. BOS

¹ BOS. (Bristol Online Survey). <<http://www.survey.bristol.ac.uk/>>

² Institute for Learning and Research Technology (ILRT) <<http://www.ilrt.bristol.ac.uk>>

provides automatic frequency outputs in numeric and graphic form. These are useful in providing an overview of the data, but for more detailed analysis and multivariate views of the data we used MS-Excel.

We received a small number of additional responses on paper after final closure of the online survey on 1 August 2007. These data are not included in the charts and figures presented in this report although they will be included in the online resource. All the tables and figures in this report relate to data gathered as at 1 August 2007, unless otherwise noted.

DISSEMINATION

Events

We presented our initial findings – and consulted further with HE participants – at a number of events during May-June 2007. Other events are planned in late 2007 and early 2008, focussing largely on interactive discussion of the resultant picture of OD in HE and using, in addition to the findings as presented in this report, brief composite case studies. These incorporate some of the elements of effective OD practice emerging from our findings, as well as outlining some of the problems encountered in institutions where change does not seem to have been managed so successfully. The intention is to engage with participants from a broad range of constituencies across the sector.

We also shared initial findings with the sector's Staff Development Forum and at a 'mini-summit' on OD involving the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and the Universities Personnel Association (UPA). Other dissemination events past or planned include:

- Invited keynote at Scottish Universities OD conference, March 2007
- Workshop at the *Changes in HE* conference Liverpool, May 2007
- Workshop for MASHEIN (Management in Small HEIs Network), March 2007
- Presentation to the London HEI group of Staff Developers, June 2007

- Paper at the US Professional and Organisational Development (POD) conference, October 2007
- Workshop at the national Staff Development Conference, November 2007
- Potential plenary session at UPA national conference, April 2008
- Paper at the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) HRM conference, May 2008.

Online Resources

The Leadership Foundation's website will host the project outputs, which will include:

- A brief introduction to the project
- Project report and other publications
- Links to conference papers and presentations
- A 'directory' based on survey responses.

For each institution included, the directory will allow visitors to the site to see brief details of that institution's current OD activity and approaches and provide key contact details for further information. Institutions will also be listed according to the different approaches being used and the primary focus of their initiatives.

Publications

As well as this report, the project will be submitting papers to academic and professional journals.

A Guide to this Report

Through analysis of the survey data, development of the online directory and discussion of the picture arising from interviews, our aim in this report is to promote wider debate and collaborative enquiry across the sector and to foster sector-based communities of practice, so that interested groups across the sector may develop a clearer understanding of the OD approaches which may be appropriate to their own contexts. Survey responses inevitably offer a less-rich picture than the discussion of findings from interviews, but they provide a snapshot nonetheless of which strands of their 'business' universities and colleges are currently seeking to improve and how they are approaching, organising and measuring the outcomes of that investment in improvement.

It is beyond the scope of the project to assess the eventual outcomes of the OD initiatives HEIs are currently undertaking.

In this fast-moving scene, **section 2** of this report seeks to capture, map out and discuss some of the current OD activity in the sector. We also review questions about the ownership and location of OD activity in the light of our findings.

In **section 3** we propose, as a stimulant to further debate across the sector, an emerging agenda for enhancing what we call 'OD capability'. We use this phrase as a shorthand for the capacity of an organisation to sustain its own continuing improvement.

The report concludes in **section 4** with summary recommendations for enhancing OD capability in English Higher Education Institutions and further work required.

2. MAPPING ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

CONTEXTS FOR OD IN HE

Higher Education: A Success Story?

Both the focus of the project and its findings are, understandably, reflective of the contexts in which English universities now operate; these contexts provide the backdrop to HEIs' current OD engagement. As expected, the project's investigations found significant cultural differences between HE institutions and very different attitudes to the concept of Organisational Development from one organisational setting to another, and indeed even within institutions. We also found that, in the area of OD at least, the stereotypes linked to institutions in the various groupings, of various sizes and histories, do not hold true. Preconceptions that the successful pre-1992 research-active university is the most complacent and resistant to change are misleading. OD is not always easier in the smaller institutions; bureaucracy and managerialism are

not most consistently found in the post 1992 organisations. We did find amongst the varied ranks of OD workers, and across the habitual distinctions between institutions, a conviction that, if HE institutions are to manage their own development successfully, they will need to find and adopt approaches which are carefully matched to their own context and which are rooted in a detailed, accurate and current knowledge³ of that context in all its specificity.

English universities and colleges can claim to have achieved a dramatic transformation in the last twenty or so years. With resources severely constrained, HEIs have managed to expand undergraduate provision significantly in response to nationally-imposed targets, satisfied the heightened expectations of an increasingly diverse range of 'customers,' developed and implemented the use of new learning technologies, faced up to globalisation, become increasingly entrepreneurial, and contributed significantly to economic development in their region and nationally. Throughout this period they have also been subject to unprecedented external scrutiny which, for both individual institutions and the sector as a whole, has been stressful and labour-intensive.

Universities have not only survived; arguably they have thrived. The National Student Survey shows that students' levels of satisfaction in their courses are high: in 2006 over 80% of students were satisfied with their courses. Britain's universities gained 11 places in the top 100 of the Shanghai table of universities throughout the world and 13 places in Newsweek's top 100 Global Universities. A few years ago, Lord Lambert, reporting on his Treasury-commissioned Review of Business University Collaboration, judged Higher Education a "success story":

"Higher Education is so crucial to our future economic performance that of course we need to know that it is effective. But there is no evidence that the sector is particularly prone to management or financial failings or failures to deliver on academic performance. On the contrary HE is a success story."⁴

³ Watson D and Maddison E. (2005) *Managing Institutional self Study*, Open University Press, McGraw Hill Education, Maidenhead

⁴ Lambert, Richard (2003) *Lambert Review of Business University Collaboration*, H.M.Treasury.

David Eastwood, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, asserts that the universities and colleges have now emerged as:

"... the most transformed public service
...resilient and productive"⁵

However, not everyone would accept that the kinds of achievements cited above are reliable measures of whether or not HE is "a success story". Whilst accepting that, by certain kinds of criteria, "the university seems more robust than ever", Ron Barnett has not been alone^{6, 7, 8} in arguing that the university:

"... has lost a sense as to what it is to be a university."⁹

Questions about the kinds of organisation that universities and colleges are, might become, or should ideally aspire to be, continue to perplex. These questions are inextricably bound up for our interviewees with related thoughts about how OD in HEIs might best be achieved:

"In this university there is suddenly a climate of willingness to engage with institution-wide issues – it's a combination of external and internal factors..."

"It's a fragmented place – a place of federal niches."

"We have actually created a competitive spirit..."

"It's murky beneath the headlines."

Universities are nothing if not questioning. They are professionally zones of dispute. Contestation is one of the arts they practise.

In the course of this project we met people for whom the debate about what it is to be a

⁵ Eastwood, David (2007) HEFCE conference, 07.01.07

⁶ Delanty, G. (2001) *Challenging Knowledge: The University in the Knowledge Society*, SHRE/Open University Press, Buckingham.

⁷ McNay I. and Bone J.(2005) *Higher Education and Human Good*, Tockington Press, Bristol

⁸ Fuller, S.(2005) *What makes universities unique? Updating the Ideal for an Entrepreneurial Age*, *Higher Education Management and Policy*, 17(3), 27-49

⁹ Barnett, R. (1999) in *Reconfiguring the University* in Scott, P. *Higher Education Reformed, re-shaping the Future*, Routledge Falmer

university is very much alive and, in some quarters, kicking. This debate was an integral part of the most energised OD ventures, in HEIs where, we were assured, vigorous argument was welcome. Inviting questions about the purposes of *this particular* university and its nature as an organisation is not always to engage in a search for a spurious 'distinctiveness'. Ask, as some of our respondents were doing:

"What is the primary task?
What is our work here?"

"What is important to us and to our users?
How shall we get better at
concentrating on that?"

"What really are the drivers of our
employee engagement?"

"Is our contentment [with the university]
soundly based?"

"Who are we and how do we hang together?"

and you get one set of answers from one set of workers in the academy, another answer from a different set of colleagues and still more from the many and varying 'stakeholders'. Ask:

"What must we do to survive?"

"What do we need to do next?"

"What is likely to work for us?"

and you invite further sets of answers, all possibly at odds with the first. There are some universities where the potential for "cognitive dissonance between intrinsic values and operational expectations"¹⁰ is acknowledged and explored as a central part of an OD venture; in others such debate is seen as noise and distraction.

Those taking responsibility for embarking on a programme of Organisational Development need to consider the range of standpoints from which such questions might be asked and to be aware of the predispositions of the listeners when interpreting the answers. Is there time or place for conversations between those with differing perspectives? Who mediates between views that are in conflict with

each other? Whose voices take precedence in conversations about values and purposes? There is also the question of whether consensus is necessarily what is being sought or whether the tension of difference is a desirable part of the lifeblood of any higher education institution. Is the academy moving, as has been suggested, from thinking of itself as a "community of scholars" to seeing itself as a "community of professionals"¹¹? Bearing in mind the background of the kinds of OD interventions that have brought us to this "resilient and productive"¹² moment, have the voices of all of those who work, either as employees or students, in the universities/colleges been included in the debate? Should they be?

In the course of this project we found many Higher Education Institutions with an OD story reflecting their struggles with these questions and many have provided brief information for inclusion in the online directory. In a number of the institutions we visited, despite the turbulence of the last twenty years and the cynicism of colleagues, we met people enthusiastically engaged in Organisational Development initiatives which they felt confident were demonstrably contributing to the achievement of continuing improvements across their institution.

FOCUS OF INITIATIVES: WHAT DRIVES OD?

"What themes do we need to address - to ignite?"

Within any one institution there may be sharply differing versions of what the desired ends of OD interventions in that HEI should be. The ideal "images of organisation"¹³ in the mind of one group of players can be at odds with those cherished and pursued by another group. Identifying the need for an institution-wide OD intervention and deciding on the most helpful focus is itself a complex task. Choosing what kinds of approach are likely to be most effective, given the specific culture and circumstances of each particular HEI, is another. These choices entail a

¹⁰ McNay, I. (27.10.06) We sacrifice our souls on the altar of employability, *Times Higher Educational Supplement*

¹¹ Whitchurch, C. (2006) Professional Managers in Higher Education – Preparing for Complex Futures, Leadership Foundation for HE, Research and Development Series

¹² Eastwood, D. (2007) HEFCE conference, 07.01.07

¹³ Morgan, G. (1997) *Images of Organisation*, Sage Publications, California.

subtle and continuing combination of: deciding what evidence is likely to be most useful when reaching a decision; arranging for evidence collection; engaging in analysis of that evidence; informed speculation about alternative futures; selection of priorities; knowledge of and judgements about a variety of different options for action; communicating to diverse constituencies the focus of change and the reasons for change; identifying who are the most likely key players; skilful, watchful implementation; and a readiness to change course in the light of further evidence and/or changed circumstances. These processes are likely to intermingle; each may well need to be re-visited. There was acknowledgement in some HEIs that previous planned change interventions have not always brought about their desired outcomes; instead they are thought to have had little impact, or to have had consequences different from those intended, including sometimes, negative consequences. Our interviewees stressed the importance of the personal role of those in senior positions to signpost the direction of change and to model some of the changes in behaviour which are being sought throughout the institution.

According to survey responses, 55 of 60 respondent institutions (92%) are currently engaged in OD initiatives (as defined at the beginning of the survey). This includes one institution with a 'no' response to the question about current engagement, but with responses to other questions that gave a clear indication that the answer should have been 'yes'. This leaves five institutions indicating that they are not currently engaged in OD. One of these states that the University is already engaged in a number of OD initiatives, but none on a University-wide basis – our definition of OD for the purposes of the project. Of the remaining four, three state that their University has plans for some OD activity in the next five years and one is unsure. The picture that emerges then is of a considerable proportion of the sector currently engaged with or planning institution-wide OD initiatives to develop and enhance performance. But what, specifically, are they trying to improve? What is driving organisational development in Higher Education?

Our survey asked respondents to indicate the main focus of their OD initiatives. The interviews suggested that OD activity is intended to address more than one key area; we therefore also asked respondents to rank the focus of initiatives in priority

order on a scale of 1 (highest priority) to 5 (lowest). To simplify the aggregation of data and provide a level of consistency for information presented in the online directory, we offered respondents seven 'pre-set' options for focus of initiative. These are:

- Improving the student experience
- Improving the university's research performance
- Improving the university's learning and teaching provision
- Improving leadership and management across the university
- Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative and management processes
- Changing the institutional culture
- Improving the university's competitiveness.

Figure 1 below shows each of our suggested areas of focus with the number of respondents who indicate that these have some relevance to their OD initiatives:

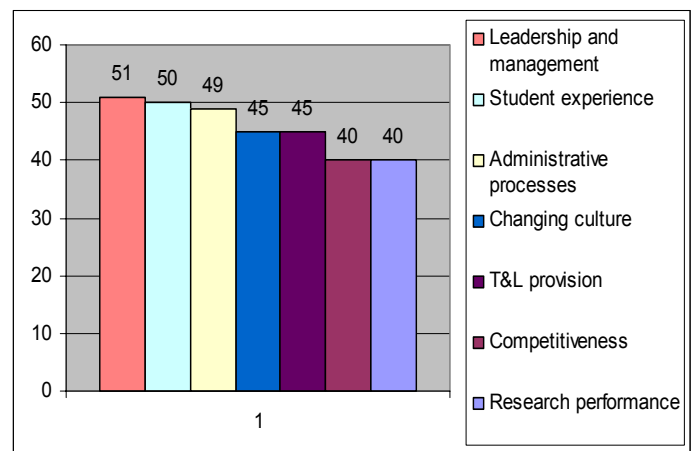


Figure 1: Number of mentions of focus of initiative

Improvements to leadership and management, the student experience and administrative processes are a focus of initiatives for over 90% of those engaged in OD, whilst research performance and competitiveness are less so (for only around 70%). The picture is not much different if we look at those areas of primary importance (as ranked first by institutions), as Figure 2 shows:

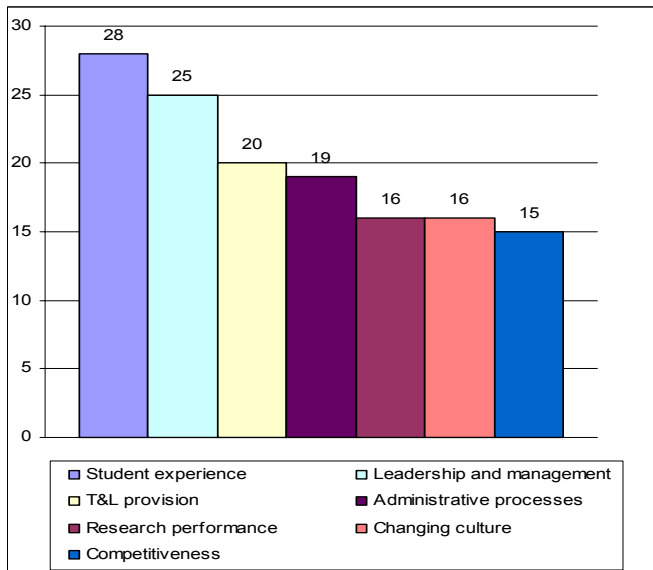


Figure 2: Number of first rankings of initiative focus

It is worth noting here that some institutions gave equal rankings, including first rankings, to more than one area of focus. Improving student experience achieves the highest number of first rankings, followed closely by improvements to leadership and management. A 'second tier' grouping includes improvements to teaching and learning provision and to administrative processes, with a third group comprising research performance, changing culture and improving competitiveness.

Whilst our interviews showed a strong emphasis on OD initiatives designed to improve an institution's competitiveness, this area of focus appears at first glance to be less strong in the survey responses. However, there is potential for a degree of overlap between some categories (for example, improving the student experience and improving teaching and learning provision) and most if not all categories could be interpreted as improving institutional competitiveness. We offered respondents the opportunity to indicate other areas of focus not covered by the seven listed above and fifteen respondents did so. The majority were in fact covered by our categories (and respondents had recognised this in their rankings). However, a small number of additional areas of focus were revealed:

- Development of partnerships (with other local HEIs or with employers) [3 mentions]
- Developing entrepreneurship and enterprise [2 mentions]
- Improving staff recruitment, retention and performance management [2 mentions]

Community engagement, ability to cope with increasing legislation, income generation, improvements to physical estate, internationalisation and improving diversity were all each mentioned once.

One respondent expressed difficulties with the language of the survey and pointed to the inter-connectedness of the areas of focus offered:

"The options above imply a separation of these factors, rather than an interlinked initiative that comprises aspects of each. The expression 'changing the institutional culture' is not one that sits well with this institution."

We also asked survey respondents whether their institution had plans to launch an OD initiative in the next five years. This question was aimed particularly at those who had responded 'no' to our very first question about engagement with current OD initiatives, but 57 out of 60 responded, with nearly 60% providing a positive response (see Figure 3 below):

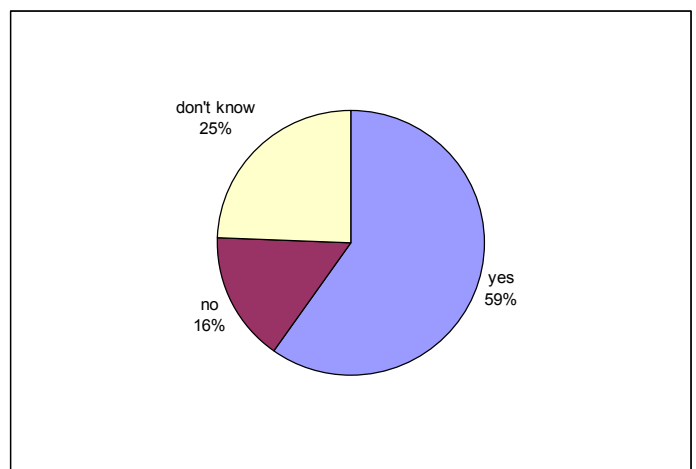


Figure 3: % responses (n=57) to 'does your university have any plans to launch an OD initiative in the next five years?'

Of the five institutions not currently engaged in OD, three indicated that their institutions had OD plans:

"One tool will be the HEFCE Self-Assessment Tool, and we are also intending to explore requirements of IiP and other Business Excellence Models, to see which of these will be best suited to our organisation"

“We are in the early stages of planning our approach ... we envisage this encompassing strategy engagement, structure re-design, job competencies, succession planning, individual leadership development and lots more”

“Still to be determined but will review the design of the organisation in light of the strategy”.

A further 31 respondents indicated that, as well as current OD initiatives, their institutions had some plans for future activity, although some were unable to be specific about their nature.

In asking about future plans, the survey did not offer any specific lists of OD focus, tools or approaches; here respondents described their institution’s plans in ‘free text’, in some cases mentioning several different areas of focus, as well as a range of tools and approaches. However, the responses generally fall into the categories offered previously throughout the survey. Analysis of the free text responses allows aggregation of the number of mentions under headings, as shown in Table 1:

| Heading | Number |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Development activity* | 7 |
| Culture change and staff engagement | 6 |
| Links to strategic plans | 6 |
| Pay, job and performance systems | 5 |
| Specific tools and standards | 4 |

Table 1: Number of mentions of planned OD activity

*Development activity here included a focus on leadership and management capability, mentoring and a development conference. Two institutions were looking at using Change Academy (internally or through the UK programme) to support staff engagement and change initiatives. With implementation of the national Framework Agreement still relatively recent, a focus on developing career and competency frameworks, contribution pay and performance management systems are high on several institutions’ OD agendas. Specific tools and standards mentioned are Investors in People, the Excellence Model, Charter Mark and a Talent Management tool.

Five respondents indicated that, although OD initiatives were likely, they could not say as yet precisely what these would be:

“No details as yet”

“Probable that further OD initiatives will be developed”

“Will depend upon current and ongoing SMT debates”.

Several respondents highlighted the link between university strategies, including the HR Strategy, and planned OD initiatives:

“Most of our stated strategic priorities have OD implications”

“Major initiatives planned under strategy map umbrella”

“Many will arise from the new University strategy”

“Part of the longer term HR strategy, recognising a single intervention will not bring about the improvements we are seeking to deliver”.

One respondent places emphasis on embedding OD longer-term, rather than a focus on one initiative:

“Our view is that Organisational Development, if managed properly, will be managed in such a way that it will be completely integrated into the normal day-to-day management”.

OD IN HE: WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

A key challenge in developing the online survey was to identify to whom we should send it, and who would be expected to complete it. The interview phase of the project revealed the range of people across an institution that might be seen by others, or might believe themselves, to have responsibility for OD.

Many people thought of the Vice-Chancellor as having at least nominal responsibility for the university’s continual task of “remaking itself”.¹⁴ In some HEIs, especially those with a recently arrived VC, current OD initiatives are thought to emanate from his or her particular vision of the changes the

¹⁴ Barnett, R. (1999) Realizing the University in an Age of Supercomplexity, SRHE and OU, Buckingham

university needs to accomplish and are seen to be driven by him or her personally:

“The driving force behind the cultural change we are trying to achieve is the VC.”

“The re-modelling is very personally being driven by the VC.”

“We have a very enlightened VC – who is very deliberate in the plan that he has ... his vision has not quite come to fruition yet, but I’ve worked in a lot of other public sector organisations and this is the first time that I’ve actually been able to observe a strategic plan following its course – you can actually see it falling into place – that’s got a lot to do with his engagement, his energy and drive.”

“She is so analytical, she reads so much – she has brought a discipline to the OD process by presenting us with the facts and presenting them in a very direct way.”

Meanwhile in other HEIs the VC was seen as a detached figure:

“...above and beyond the institution”

“It’s a ‘You get on with it’ culture”.

Of course in practice no VC is a lone player. In some HEIs, responsibility for OD is explicitly designated at one level down from the VC, sometimes to a particular Deputy VC or Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC), sometimes to a Registrar and/or Secretary. Some VCs are choosing to extend their individual OD capability by working one-to-one over an extended period with an external consultant whom they trust personally and whom they believe has relevant external OD expertise. Other VCs have adopted the model of an internal consultant, who reports directly to them and may sit outside the usual management structures. Various described to us as “eminence grise”, “minister without portfolio”, “VC’s fixer”, these people move between the various constituencies in the university, acting as persuader, listener, trouble-shooter, enforcer, process observer. Such a person may provide frank feedback to the VC about progress and identify particular areas in need of greater support. Some VCs valued highly this role of an honest broker at some distance from the internal politics and power struggles:

“What you really need is an internal consultant with some external validity and an element of independence.” (VC)

In interviews, we found that people often felt that the ownership of OD, as defined by the project, is far from clear:

“It would probably be the executive team, or more particularly I guess, the Registrar, but I’m not sure he would recognise himself as having quite this type of responsibility.”

“The PVC (Strategic Planning) would claim a lot of ownership for that, but in some spheres, whilst the PVC might have ownership, the HR Director would consider himself the key player, in practical terms.”

On the other hand, where an OD venture has been clearly labelled as an institution-wide change effort with timescales and targets, some HEIs have recruited individuals, sometimes from outside the sector, to a specific change management role. Several HEIs have established special OD project management groups or change management boards, drawing together people from right across the institution. However the remit, power and status of these groups varies. In some HEIs they are seen as the crucial co-ordinating group driving the change, in others their role is perceived as token:

“They don’t get the top-grade mayonnaise –it’s salad cream for them. They are kept in the dark, a bit like mushrooms ...”

If OD interventions are about the achievement of organisation-wide change, it would seem logical that responsibility for their implementation and eventual success must be widely distributed across the university. Some interviewees were ready to acknowledge that, in practice, responsibility for the implementation of OD will inevitably be spread across a wide range of functions:

“I don’t think there is one person, it all depends on what the initiative is, that will determine the level at which it is led.”

Then again, both survey responses and interviews indicate that some institutions have moved to a more focussed definition of responsibility for OD,

linking it to a particular set of players, within existing structures, often within the HR remit, sometimes within Staff Development, sometimes in the Planning function. We found that OD is more frequently occurring in job titles, usually describing someone who has a role associated with Staff Development, probably within a Human Resources (HR) Department. Indeed, a number of HR Departments now see themselves as having overall responsibility for OD. Just as a few years ago there was a move from the title "Personnel Department" to the new "Human Resources Department"¹⁵, there is a tendency now to attach the term OD to HR, or to position people with an OD role within HR. There are individuals whose job description includes the term OD and one interviewee answered our question "Who is responsible for OD?" with:

"Me – it says so in my job title."

Thus with no single agreed location for OD responsibility across the English universities, the invitation to complete the survey was sent to Vice-Chancellors and Principals with a request for them to arrange to have the survey completed "by whoever you feel is most appropriate to complete the survey in your institution".

As expected, heads of institution passed the request to people in a range of roles which reflected the potential range of areas of responsibility identified during the interview phase.

Profile of Respondents

We asked survey respondents to provide their job title and aggregated responses into nine broad roles for the purposes of analysis. Whilst six Vice-Chancellors or Principals chose to complete the survey themselves, the majority (90%) passed it to other officers in the institution. As Table 2 below shows, the majority of respondents have roles related to the Human Resources (HR) function:

| Broad role | Number | % |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|
| HR Director/Assistant Director | 15 | 25 |
| PVC/DVC/Vice-Principal | 9 | 15 |
| HRD/Staff Development | 9 | 15 |
| OD Director/Manager | 7 | 12 |
| Vice-Chancellor/Principal | 6 | 10 |
| Planning and Resources | 6 | 10 |
| Registry/Secretariat | 4 | 7 |
| Quality and Standards | 2 | 3 |
| Regional Affairs | 2 | 3 |
| Total | 60 | 100 |

Table 2: broad roles of survey respondents

15 HR Directors or Assistant Directors completed the survey; at 25%, this is the largest single group, followed by Pro Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors or Deputy Principals and HRD/Staff Development (both 15%).

12% of respondents have the term 'Organisational Development' or 'Organisational Learning' as part of their job title. 16 respondents fall into a broader level category of development professionals, either HRD/Staff Development or Organisational Development (26%). Aggregation to even broader groupings show that those completing the survey (and who might therefore be considered to have some responsibility for OD in their institution) fall into three over-arching roles:

- HR/Staff and/or Organisational Development (31)
- Head or Deputy Head of institution (15)
- 'Other' Registry, Planning etc (14).

Who's who?

We also asked respondents to identify who, below the Vice-Chancellor, has overall designated responsibility for OD initiatives, and to indicate to whom they report. A similar picture emerges here as above, with HR roles dominating. Five institutions, however, make the point that "it depends on the initiative" and that OD is "not centred in any one person". One notes:

"No-one explicitly. Implicitly, the Assistant HR Director (HRD)".

¹⁵ Huxley, L and Hall, V. 'Human Resource Management in Higher Education: Idiom and Incidence', *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 1, (pp. 77-85), 1996

Table 3 below shows the number of mentions for each role (some HEIs listed more than one responsible role):

| Role | Number |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Human Resources | 20 |
| PVC/DVC/Vice-Principal | 12 |
| Registry/Secretariat | 9 |
| OD Manager/Consultant | 6 |
| Not centred on one person | 6 |
| HRD/Staff Development | 3 |
| Other | 3 |
| No-one at present/under discussion | 2 |
| Vice-Chancellor/Principal | 1 |

Table 3: Roles with overall responsibility for OD (number of mentions for each role)

With the range of job titles and their varying meanings in different institutions, it is difficult to construct reliable groupings. The 'other' category includes Director of Higher Education, Director of Planning and Resources and Director, Resources and Operations, all of which could potentially also fall into the 'Registry/Secretariat' category.

49 institutions specify at least one role responsible for OD below the level of Vice-Chancellor. Just over half of these roles report directly to the head of institution. Of these, only a small number (four) are Directors of HR and only two are OD directors. The majority of those reporting directly to the head of institution are PVC/Deputy Vice-Chancellor level roles or those of Registrar, Head of Administration or Secretary. Five institutions state that those responsible for OD report to the HR Director; eight to a PVC, DVC or equivalent; nine report to the Registrar or equivalent. Where overall responsibility is with the head of institution (one institution), the reporting line is to the Chair of Council.

Key contacts

The survey also asked for a name, job title and email address which would form an institution's 'key contact' for OD in the online resource. Interestingly, the names and job titles given did not always match those of the person completing the survey, nor the job titles of those who are said to have overall responsibility for OD below the level of the Vice-Chancellor.

Seventeen institutions gave no contact information. Not surprisingly, four of the five institutions not currently engaged in OD left the contact information blank. Ten other institutions also left contact information blank, two noted "not applicable" and one "currently under discussion".

Just under half (29; 48%) of survey respondents are also the key OD contact for the institution. Thirteen institutions' named contact differs from that of the survey respondent, and one gives a job title, but states that the post is vacant. Of the 40 institutions that do provide a key contact, they appear to 'sit' with the functions listed below in table 4:

| Broad role | Number | % |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|
| HR Director/Assistant Director | 15 | 35 |
| HRD/Staff Development | 8 | 19 |
| OD Director/Manager | 7 | 16 |
| PVC/DVC/Vice-Principal | 4 | 9 |
| Other | 4 | 9 |
| Planning and Resources | 3 | 7 |
| Vice-Chancellor/Principal | 2 | 5 |
| Total | 43 | 100 |

Table 4: Broad functional areas of key contact roles

A full list of all respondents' job titles and their broad categorisation is provided in Appendix C.

OD TOOLS AND APPROACHES

Both interviews and the survey showed that institutions are making use of a wide range of OD tools and approaches, although different constituencies within each institution have differing opinions as to why these tools were chosen and how appropriate and useful they are:

"Here OD is not done against the context of a number of choices and determining which is the right one for our particular circumstances. First we all flock to one thing, say IiP, then we might move to EFQM, then push to appreciative enquiry. We tend to do things without a suitable comparison critique. HE tends to be a self-referencing sector. We all tend to follow the same path because people are unaware of what else might be available."

"HE is characterised by a mixture of suspicion, hostility and the notion that it can't possibly work in academia because academia is not like that. That is certainly the view of this institution and of particular kinds of people within it, although other institutions may well do this kind of thing without a second thought. 'Where is the evidence that it is going to work?' would be the first kind of thing that people would ask round here. Outside HE there isn't the same innate suspicion of anything that hasn't been invented within an academic discipline."

In some HEIs, at the most senior levels, there was a sceptical distancing:

"Well, we let them do that, if they really think it will be helpful..."

In a number of HEIs, externally derived tools, especially externally assessed tools, were not thought appropriate. Sometimes this was because of a perception of "audit overload". Also such tools were sometimes thought to be:

"Rather too limited in scope and predicated on a notion that change can be managed in a particular way ... which is simply not true."

Those working with a particular tool, or responsible for sponsoring its use, tended to value it more highly than those who were subject to its use or had little involvement with it. We offered survey respondents lists of 30 such tools and approaches known to us to be in use in the sector. These were clustered under the following five headings:

1. Externally-assessed standards
2. Externally-developed diagnostic tools
3. Participation and engagement
4. HR and Staff Development practices
5. Organisational re-structuring.

We asked respondents to select all those tools and approaches that they consider to be a significant part of their current OD initiatives. As with other questions, we also provided an 'other' category to capture tools and approaches not covered in our lists.

Externally-assessed standards

Because we had encountered them most frequently at the interview stage, we offered two named tools under this heading: Investors in People and Matrix. The Investors in People (IiP) Standard is possibly the most established OD tool in UK higher education, with the sector's engagement with the Standard dating back to the 1990s, when its use was recommended in both the Dearing Report¹⁶ and the Bett Report¹⁷. The difficulty of securing widespread use for IiP across the sector is illustrated by two comments from different unions at that time. The AUT suggested that:

"While this will not appeal greatly to academic and related staff, it is necessary to understand that it is regarded by manual, clerical, craft and technical staff as a well-timed and valuable scheme in areas in which they are employed in the wider economy."¹⁸

Meanwhile NATFHE asserted that the IiP Standard:

"...has too often been used as a rubber stamp, without any real investigation (or criticism) of the actual running of institutions."¹⁹

In 2005, we noted that there were "35 whole higher education institutions currently recognised as Investors in People, with as many again following the more flexible building block approach. In addition there are several hundred departments or units that have achieved recognition in their own right"²⁰. However, that IiP is in use in some places in the university does not mean that it has made a significant contribution to Organisational Development. As one interviewee suggests:

¹⁶ Dearing, R. (1997), Higher Education in the Learning Society: Report of the National Committee of Inquiry, HMSO, London

¹⁷ Independent Review of Higher Education Pay and Conditions (The Bett Report) 1999, HMSO, London

¹⁸ AUT Commentary on the Bett Recommendations, 1999

¹⁹ NATFHE Commentary on the Bett Recommendations, August 1999

²⁰ Organisational Development in UK Higher Education: Tools of the Trade. Thackwray, Bob, Chambers, José and Huxley, Lesly. In Practice. Issue Six, 2005. The Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.

“IiP is used by some parts, such as the Students’ Union and Catering and Conferences, but the university as a whole has rather set its face against IIP for at least the last decade”.

The IiP Standard²¹ essentially comprises a set of principles with a number of related indicators against which organisations are measured. It aims to provide a framework for “delivering business improvement through people.”²² The Standard has been revised several times in the last decade, with a shift towards qualitative modes of assessment and an option for using trained internal teams to gather evidence, working with an external assessor. Some of our interviews indicated that longer-term users of the Standard, even those whose initial commitment to its usefulness had been strong, are beginning to think that the external assessment element (which can be costly) has outlived its usefulness. Others felt that the revisions to the Standard had taken it in a more prescriptive direction which no longer sat happily with the practice of their institution.

31 survey respondents (56% of those with current OD initiatives) identify Investors in People as a significant tool for their current OD practice. One university had chosen to be assessed using the IiP Work Life Balance model and reported in interview that this process had proved significant in its impact on both attitudes and practice. One respondent indicates:

“We use IiP but we will not be renewing it”

whilst others note its use for internal diagnostic purposes, but not necessarily in order to achieve success in an external assessment:

“IiP [is] used internally for shaping our approach”

“[We had an] Investors in People mock assessment.”

There was a sense from some of our interviewees that IiP had initially been most helpful as a tool for communicating upwards to senior management that “people development” should be a priority. It had, therefore, helped to emphasise the importance of *all*

staff to the progress of the university. A previous HEFCE project²³ found that:

“Universities are now using IiP for different purposes from those which seemed important at first – and those purposes continue to change as they become more sophisticated users. IiP originally served the sector well in emphasising some core values and principles and insisting that the development of organisational strategy and the development of people need to go hand in hand”.

The other externally-assessed standard listed under this heading is Matrix²⁴, a national standard for ‘information, guidance and advice services’ sometimes used to measure student services. This is seen as significant for 11 respondents (20%) with current OD initiatives. Given the emphasis on improving the student experience shown overall in the survey responses, it is also interesting that the externally-assessed standards mentioned in free-text responses often have a ‘customer-service’ orientation and include:

- Customer First [2 mentions]
- ISO accreditation [2 mentions]
- Professional or vocational bodies, including the academic standards framework
- Charter Mark
- Hospitality Assured
- Race for Opportunity
- Opportunity Now

The Research Assessment Exercise and Institutional Audit were also mentioned as OD tools – but by only one respondent in each case. Given the new emphasis on enhancement in audit, this is interesting, reflecting perhaps the institutional locus of the respondents as well as a particular point in time in their institutions.

²¹ Investors in People UK. <<http://www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/>>

²² www.investorinpeople.co.uk

²³ GMP 309 - Using External Frameworks and Benchmarking: Piloting the Investors in People (IIP) Leadership and Management model and the IIP Profile benchmarking tool in a range of different HEIs – final report, September 2004.

²⁴ Matrix. <<http://www.matrixstandard.com/>>

Externally-developed diagnostic tools

We offered five options plus ‘other’ in this section. Interviews showed that the Balanced Scorecard²⁵ and the Dashboard approaches to “driving performance improvement” by making performance data readily accessible, have some enthusiastic followers, with some HEIs now making extensive use of these approaches, sometimes linked to use of the EFQM Excellence model. On the other hand, many HEIs viewed these as unlikely tools in their environment:

“... not even in the landscape here”

“ EFQM doesn’t sit particularly well here.”

According to the survey, the most-used tool is HEFCE’s Self-Assessment Tool (SAT), with 33 (60%) respondents citing this as significant in their OD initiatives. The Self-Assessment Tool²⁶ comprises a number of measures set out as questions under seven headings (dimensions) relating to people management practice, including Staff Development, leadership involvement and change management, and ‘performance management: linking people management to organisational performance’. HEFCE’s website records that “44 HEIs self-assessed their people management practices in 2007²⁷”. On the same site, guidance is offered on mapping the SAT to other frameworks such as Investors in People and the EFQM Excellence Model. 25 survey respondents are using both Investors in People and SAT, and eight use the Excellence Model and SAT. Despite the proportion of survey respondents suggesting that the HEFCE self-assessment tool plays a significant part in OD in their institution, our interviews revealed a more sceptical view of its usefulness:

“Horrendous – yet another chore”

“... an overly HR view of the world”.

Whilst the HEFCE Self-Assessment Tool is the most used of the externally-developed diagnostic tools included in the survey, others are in use. Table 5

below shows the number of mentions for each of the suggested tools:

| Tool | Number | % |
|----------------------------|--------|-----|
| HEFCE Self-Assessment Tool | 33 | 60 |
| Balanced Scorecard | 11 | 20 |
| Excellence Model | 10 | 18 |
| Dashboard | 9 | 16 |
| Baldrige | 1 | 0.2 |
| Other | 7 | 13 |

Table 5: Number of mentions of externally-developed diagnostic tools (and as percentage of those currently engaged in OD initiatives)

The ‘other’ category includes tools for personal assessment (the Myers Briggs Type Indicator²⁸, 360° feedback); the Committee of University Chairmen (CUC) Key Performance Indicators²⁹; Marshall’s Online Diversity diagnostic; Valuentis’ Human Capital Composite Index (HCCI) to measure employee engagement³⁰ and the National Student Survey.

Again, it was interesting that the National Student Survey was not cited by more HEIs as a diagnostic tool, especially in the light of the extent to which the student experience is a chosen focus of institutions’ OD activity.

Respondents reflected on the diversity of approaches used to review both institutional and individual performance:

“[We] benchmark significantly to compare our performance”

“Whole range of diagnostic tools used within our development centres”.

It is apparent that some parts of some institutions warm to the concept of using evidence as a prompt to progress, whilst others continue to see the collection of data as a peripheral and bothersome activity:

²⁵ Kaplan, R. and Norton, D. The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy into Action, Harvard Business School Press, 1996

²⁶ HEFCE Self-Assessment Tool. <<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/lgm/hr/selfassess/tool.htm>>

²⁷ Self-assessment for People Management. HEFCE. <<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/lgm/hr/selfassess/>>

²⁸ Myers Briggs Type Indicator. Myers Briggs Foundation. <<http://www.myersbriggs.org/>>

²⁹ CUC Report on the monitoring of institutional performance and use of key performance indicators. November 2006. <<http://www.shef.ac.uk/cuc/30nov2006.html>>

³⁰ Human Capital Composite Index (HCCI). Valuentis. <<http://www.hccindex.com/>>

"The Registrar has said 'We've got to measure user satisfaction', but there's no real rationale as to why and what they are going to do with the findings – none of this seems especially helpful to us....pulling all the stats together takes us a huge amount of time. What good does it do? "

"I think we've already got the data we need – we're just not using it."

"What are we really trying to measure – and why?"

Throughout the project we found that people were trying to find the right balance between an emphasis on tightened systems and the encouragement of loosened boundaries, creative engagement with an enlivened vision of the whole. It seems to us that, in attempting to achieve such a balance, the intelligent use of readily accessible, easy to understand data is crucial.

Participation and engagement

Interviews revealed that, whilst many institutions use external and internal standards and indicators to plan and measure their OD initiatives, less formal approaches, designed to engage the support and involvement of people across the organisation, seem to be gaining a following.

In institution-wide change efforts where a conscious effort is being made actively to involve people across the organisation as a whole, we found that the VC is often cast as a captain who needs to be "seen out and about", to be "positioned as aspirational", and is expected in his/her roaming around to give a few simple key messages to reinforce the desired direction of change and to inspire with a narrative of renewal. We were offered differing versions of the personal capability required of the VC in a period of planned culture change, largely dependent on the sense of what phase of development the institution was thought to have reached. The personal style of the VC was often seen as a significant contributor to the cultural changes the HEI was trying to achieve. A change of style at the top, for instance from a VC seen as "distant and remote" to one who is "here and approachable," or from "a good bloke, but with little sense of direction" to "someone who is providing us with a strong lead" was seen as a necessary source of renewal.

One institution, for instance, described the VC's public role in its OD venture as one in which he/she should be seen to be "energetic," yet also "listening," and "able to take on the emotional side." Another had spent time helping its PVCs to "talk more easily to non-academic staff". In pursuit of a more customer friendly culture, in some larger universities VCs are leaving the executive suite more often, bypassing the established repertoire of formal communication structures by holding regular 'road shows', joining increasing use of the growing array of communication technologies: inviting direct e-mail messages, taking part in live web casts featuring professionally facilitated question-time sessions, writing daily intranet reflections, starring in the DVD explaining the strategic plan to all employees, and making impromptu visits to less glamorous parts of the campus. In smaller institutions these approaches are echoed in face-to-face mode, with heads of institutions making themselves regularly available for informal meetings, dropping in to departments and spending time with them, taking part in the day-to-day bustle and conversation that is the organisation.

Such a highly personalised approach can be counter-productive. These out-and-about VCs do not always succeed in disarming the sceptics. On occasions some people put a negative spin on the new VC's high-profile involvement with a change programme:

"It seemed as if here was this stranger coming in here and telling us what to do..."

Beginning change ventures is easier than sustaining them. Where an established VC has chosen initially to attach his/her reputation to a particular set of OD initiatives and launched them with a fanfare, but where these initiatives are thought some years later to have run aground, his/her identification with the original grand intentions can hinder an honest evaluation of progress. We found some HEIs where those in the middle ranks who had carried most of the burden of implementation for several years felt that they had now to settle into the kind of silence that effectively closes down development:

"there are people who are seen to have a monopoly of wisdom – it's unwise to question them."

On the other hand, as part of their OD activity, in some institutions people were consciously setting out to avoid such silence:

“Silent dissent (quite often from people in senior roles) is the worst problem – not the nutter who through his vocal protests helps consolidate support from the rest.”

So, interviews suggested that a range of approaches designed to foster broader engagement and participation with change efforts were being used extensively in some institutions. In some HEIs, these approaches were seen as crucial to the success of the OD venture, particularly, but not solely, in planning and scoping the focus of the intervention and identifying potential key players. Appreciative Inquiry³¹ and World Café³² approaches both seem to be gaining an enthusiastic following, as does the use of internal change teams bidding for time to focus on a particular project, modelled on the Leadership Foundation/Higher Education Academy *Change Academy*³³. A main attraction of this ‘mini Change Academy’ approach seems to be that it runs counter to the often segmented culture of most HEIs:

“Particularly what we haven’t done before is bring people together across status and role boundaries for discussions about key issues – working in that way is itself quite a culture change.”

Some people interviewed ascribed the limited impact of previous change efforts to a failure to recognise the importance of fostering such face-to-face exchange in any change effort. Charting progress in its major OD initiative, one HEI uses the term “thick communication” to describe the frequent, informal, local encounters which it sees as vital to sustaining progress and in contrast to the “thin communication” – documents, announcements, formal meetings – to which organisations tend more readily to give priority.

In our survey we suggested ten approaches that we felt represented ways of encouraging participation and engagement and asked respondents to indicate all those that were significant to their current OD

³¹ Cooperrider, David L. and Srivastava, Suresh (1987). Appreciative Inquiry in Organizational Life. *Research in Organizational Change and Development*. 1987, 1:129-169

³² World Café. <<http://www.theworldcafe.com/>>

³³ Change Academy. <<http://www.hea.ac.uk/ourwork/institutions/change/>>

initiatives. Table 6 below shows the number of mentions for each:

| Approach | Number | % |
|--------------------------------|--------|----|
| Focus groups | 41 | 75 |
| Regular staff attitude surveys | 31 | 56 |
| VC roadshows | 30 | 55 |
| Web-based consultations | 23 | 42 |
| Internal marketing | 19 | 35 |
| Revised corporate identity | 18 | 33 |
| Appreciative enquiry | 15 | 27 |
| Drop-in consultation days | 12 | 22 |
| Internal Change Academy | 7 | 13 |
| World Café approaches | 4 | 7 |
| Other | 13 | 24 |

Table 6: Number of mentions of approaches to participation and engagement (and as percentage of those currently engaged in OD initiatives)

As is evident from Table 6 above, three quarters of those who responded to the survey and who are currently engaged in OD initiatives use focus groups to encourage participation and engagement. Over half make use of regular staff attitude surveys. A similar proportion have roadshows led by the Vice-Chancellor. The relatively high use of both these approaches suggests that, whilst institutions are finding it important to demonstrate a lead and a willingness to support initiatives from the top, they are also making efforts to engage with staff perceptions right across the organisation.

This priority being given to face-to-face communication is also reflected in some of the expanded responses offered in the ‘other’ section:

“Departmental whole team meetings”

“Top manager meetings with extended teams brought together”

“Focussed cross-University change programmes – engaging all staff sectors”

“Extensive strategy workshops delivered within academic units”

“Senior management roadshows”

“Structured cross-boundary events.”

However, such approaches do not guarantee engagement; interviewees were fearful that they may serve to increase cynicism unless they are accompanied by tangible evidence of continued responsiveness at the most senior level.

HR and Staff Development practices

Given the reported extent of the involvement of staff from HR and Staff Development in OD, we were interested to see what elements of HR/Staff Development practice are seen as significant in planned OD initiatives. We coupled HR and Staff Development in the survey, because in the HE sector they are increasingly linked structurally, but we noted in interviews that to some, usually those who regard themselves primarily as Staff Developers, the HR/Staff Development coupling is an uneasy one. Staff Developers are often keen to distinguish their ‘development’ role from that of HR staff. Indeed it has become clear to us that there is a set of challenges around the roles and identities of the diverse groups of staff whom we came to call ‘development workers’. One of these challenges is the varying sense of professional ownership and ‘know-how’ which some groups bring to supporting the change agendas of an HEI. Since these questions are linked to the issue of how we might enhance OD capability in the sector, we address them in Section 3.

In the survey, under the heading of HR/Staff Development practices, we offered a list of 12 practices, some of which would be claimed as Staff Development rather than HR practices, but many of which might form constituent parts of the ‘bundles’ of HR practices now routinely recommended to HR professionals as tools for improvement:

“Our research has shown that by adopting ‘bundles’ of HR practices employers are likely to improve business performance.”³⁴

These practices focus largely on individual or team performance or on the design and implementation of job and pay systems. Table 7 below shows the number of mentions for each:

| Practice | Number |
|---|--------|
| Appraisal | 49 |
| Job Evaluation | 40 |
| Mentoring | 37 |
| Flexible working arrangements | 35 |
| Coaching | 34 |
| Formal programmes | 33 |
| Other performance management techniques | 30 |
| 360° feedback | 27 |
| Competency frameworks | 25 |
| Performance related pay | 24 |
| Action learning sets | 22 |
| Job re-design | 19 |
| Other | 7 |

Table 7: Number of mentions of HR/Staff Development practices

The relative priority given to what might be characterised as ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ approaches is interesting. It is perhaps unsurprising that appraisal is high on the list and, following introduction of the Framework Agreement, job evaluation. However, the jury is still out on the impact of job evaluation across the sector and studies of the use of appraisal in the British higher education sector have tended so far to suggest that its impact on organisational performance has been limited:

“Schemes might be enhanced by forging stronger, but appropriate links between performance and Organisational Development.”³⁵

Interestingly too, it is now possible to find recommendations to business that more informal, peer-mentoring approaches may be a useful alternative to hierarchical appraisal and one more likely to promote “organisational truth-telling”.³⁶ Interviews suggested that the notion of “people measurement [turnover, absence etc] as a lever for strategic change” did seem to have followers in some HR Departments, but there were

³⁵ Beesley J., Guildford P., Nestor, R., Rex S. : Emerging Practice in staff appraisal and Review, HESDA 2004.

³⁶ Storr, F. of Sheppard Moscow: Applying complexity theory to Performance appraisal, unpublished paper delivered at the Complexity, ethics and creativity conference, LSE London, September 2003.

³⁴ CIPD website: www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/hrpract/general/hrpolproc-why.htm?lsSrchRes=1

reservations about the successful implementation of such measurement systems: "People metrics remains a challenge!"

Few of our interviewees were convinced of the usefulness of competency frameworks, except in defining a job and as an initial aid to selection, but the survey indicates that their use is still prevalent, at least in some parts of some institutions. This may be related to career development or keeping promotions in check, or both. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that job re-design is relatively low on the list, given attempts to move away from the now traditional tri-partite academic profile, to redefine administrative roles and to map out more satisfactory career development paths. For one of our expert interviewees, job design is one of the most significant challenges to the sector, both for, and within, HR departments and across universities as a whole:

"What do we actually want jobs to be like in the sector and how should they relate to each other? There's a high level of uncertainty about who is responsible for that."

Not unrelated, some interviewees reported that the development of flexible working arrangements had contributed more than expected to culture change, because it had redressed some of the perceived imbalance in conditions of service between academics and those in other roles and had helped to legitimise conversations about work-life balance.

In the area of Staff Development, the survey highlights the considerable investment in activities designed to secure individual development in order to serve organisational change agendas. Indeed improvement in leadership and management was cited as one of the key areas of focus for OD. Interviews suggested that investment in formal leadership and management programmes, where this investment had been maintained consistently over a period of years and was recognised as a habitual part of the work experience of aspiring, new and experienced managers, was now being seen to make a difference:

"We're starting to see a new breed of academic heads who see themselves as managers, and are willing to put more time into culture change – but the quality is still inconsistent – some academic departments still seem to operate in a vacuum".

Some HEIs reported in interviews that they have invested heavily in mentoring and one-to-one coaching for those in management roles, often with an emphasis on helping them "deal with difficult situations" such as change, or even with "difficult people." However they felt that the nature of these relationships, for instance the variability of the 'match' between coach and coached and the guarantee of confidentiality, meant it was extremely difficult to identify with confidence any direct contribution to the achievement of organisational goals. Nevertheless, as noted earlier in relation to senior managers, interviews suggested that changes in the behaviour of individual managers can be seen to play a crucial part in securing the progress of an OD initiative. People in development roles spoke to us of their struggles:

"...to get the senior team to acknowledge the personal side of change."

Some gave examples of the wider impact of shifts in individual managers' behaviour:

"All of a sudden the PVCs seemed to realise it wasn't just a little taskette. Until then they hadn't really realised what they were asking us to do. For one of them the Road to Damascus was the notion of emergent change and recognising the importance of creating a context in which change can happen. Once they'd sussed that out, they were much more willing to think things over and tackle them over a longer time-frame."

Also noted were reports of senior teams whose way of working had visibly shifted following a shared development experience, such as a group visit overseas:

"We've got a really good senior management team now: the enthusiasm seems to be there – they are learning from the outside, bringing ideas back in, working together".

Organisational re-structuring

Interviews indicated that some OD initiatives involved a form of organisational re-structuring, although there was considerable scepticism about the effectiveness of this approach. In those settings where organisational re-structuring was

still seen as the most likely solution to a university’s dilemmas, it was suggested that restructuring seemed to keep to a pendulum rhythm – first devolution, next re-centralisation, then a new form of devolution, followed by another version of central control. In one or two such settings, people maintained that the old ways always returned regardless of changes being initiated from the top, echoing Rosemary Deem’s finding that:

“New VCs may undertake structural changes, but it was perceived by others that the previous structures gradually crept back.”³⁷

Given the variety of organisational forms and labels that abound in UK higher education, we left this question more open in the survey, simply inviting respondents for whom this was a significant element of their OD initiatives to describe the nature of organisational re-structuring involved. Just over half of those engaged in OD initiatives (53%) responded to this question, with restructuring falling into the broad categories shown in table 8 below:

| Practice | Number |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| Reduction in faculties/schools | 7 |
| Review of support services | 6 |
| Devolution away from centre | 5 |
| Continuous review | 5 |
| Academic/admin balance | 4 |
| Restructuring senior team | 3 |
| Other | 3 |

Table 8: Broad categories of restructuring, showing number of mentions

Rather than wholesale institutional re-structuring, keeping structures under review and making changes when business needs dictate is the approach now reported by most institutions. This may reflect the emphasis that our interviewees often gave to the concept of HEIs existing in a context of constant, fluid ‘emergent change’, as opposed to the concept of more readily predictable, carefully managed, long-term strategic change. How far structural changes are opportunistic and reactive and how far proactive and planned is difficult to tell:

“Constantly under review as opportunities arise”

“Re-structuring occurs as business need identifies”

“Review of all structures as business and academic needs change”.

In the confidential interviews, more than one respondent suggested that their current OD interventions were seeking to unpick the adverse results of previous re-structuring. It was also suggested that re-structuring had previously been used as an elaborate and costly device for shifting ineffectual managers. Structural change was most frequently associated with the arrival of a new Vice-Chancellor, bringing with him/her a radically different vision of the institution. It was also a feature of some institutions hoping to deter that process by fixing a revised order before the arrival of a new VC.

Customised and home-grown OD approaches

When asked whether their institution is developing any customised in-house approaches or tools for OD, 25 respondents (just under half of those currently engaged with OD initiatives) said they were. 50% stated firmly that their institutions were *not* following this path, and 5% were unsure (see figure 4 below):

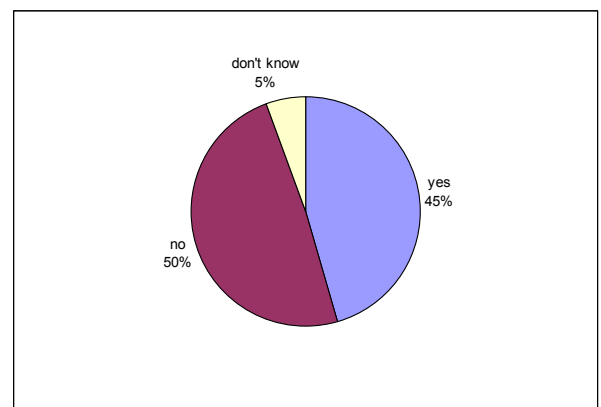


Figure 4: % institutions developing customised tools and approaches (n=55)

Respondents were also asked to describe the approaches and tools being developed. Whilst names associated with these may be specific to an institution (eg the “Big Energy Challenge”, “Behavioural Dictionary” and “Strategy Map approach”), the majority reflect the known tools

³⁷ Deem, Rosemary, 2000, op.cit.

and approaches mentioned in earlier sections of the survey, but with a customised institutional ‘twist’. One respondent notes “the whole approach is customised to our needs”.

Areas of focus for these in-house approaches include leadership and management development, particularly for senior teams, and coaching and mentoring. Some local approaches are aimed at articulating and changing behaviours and values, in some cases supported by 360° feedback. Competency frameworks are mentioned by five respondents. Two make mention of internal teams using Change Academy approaches, one focused on improvements in teaching and learning, another on cultural change.

Another area of focus is the mapping and monitoring of processes and institutional performance, with mention of “organisational performance traffic lights” and “metrics”, as well as the adaptation and “personalising of known tools” such as EFQM. Some institutions are clearly developing their own approaches:

“Own ‘Focus on Performance’”

“Managing Change Toolkit, Induction Toolkit”

“Developing staff/management programmes that suit the institution”.

Others are engaging with existing tools and approaches, but personalising and adapting them to their institutional setting and needs. Some respondents indicate that their approaches are not yet fully formed:

“Considerable thought is being given to ...”

“Intended re-engagement ...”

“Still in the early development stages ...”

“We are in the early stages ...”

The picture that emerges is of a sector engaging with a wide range of known OD tools, in a variety of combinations, often customised to their own contexts, with some institutions looking ahead to develop their own OD tools and approaches.

**CURRENT CAPABILITY:
IN-HOUSE OR OUT-SOURCED?**

With enhancement of institutions’ own capability for OD a primary focus of the project, we were interested in whether HEIs felt they needed to draw on external sources of expertise, and, if so, for what purposes. Interviewees had given a mixed response to questions about the use made and value achieved from external consultants, asking:

“Have HEIs the knowledge and capacity to recognise the external interventions which are likely to serve their own best interests?”

Whilst some were confident that external consultants had contributed expertise unavailable internally, several thought that in the past the university’s use of consultants had been naïve:

“We hired expensive consultants to undertake a specific task – it proved to be a spectacular waste of money”

“The impact has in fact been counter-productive – we’ve had to spend a great deal of our internal resource trying to mend the damage that has been done as a direct result of that intervention”

“The commission was set up naively by someone here who didn’t know the full picture – it should never have been handled that way”.

Use of external consultants

In the survey, we asked whether institutions had made use of external consultants to support their current OD initiatives and over 80% said they had, as Figure 5 below shows:

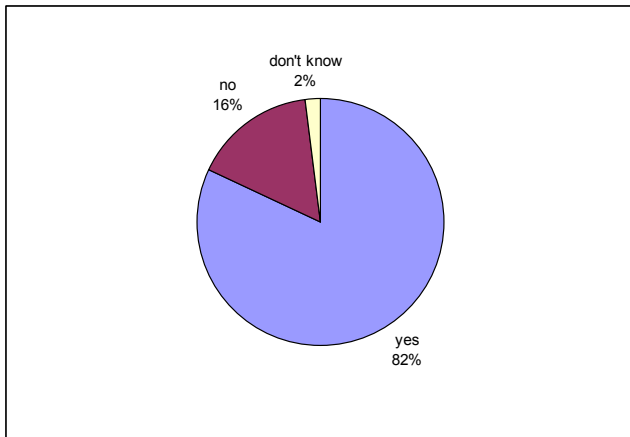


Figure 5: % of institutions currently engaged in OD that have used external consultants

We suggested four potential 'sources' of external support and advice, plus an 'other' category. Responses were as shown in Figure 6 below (respondents could select all that apply):

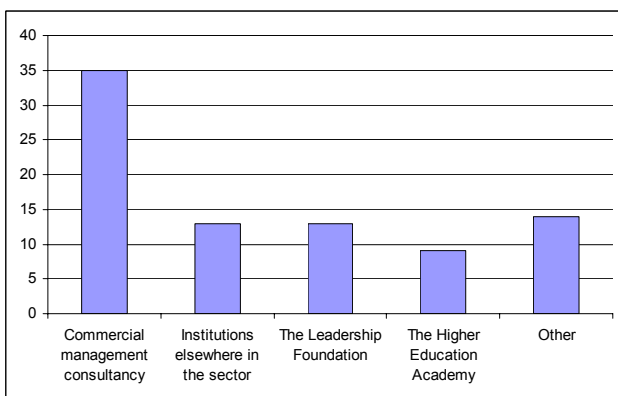


Figure 6: number of mentions of sources of external consultants

The 'other' category here included independent executive coaches, NHS partners, Southern Universities Management Services, JISC and the Learning Skills Council (LSC). Aggregating these responses further shows an equal number of institutions using consultants from other HEIs or HE agencies and using consultants from outside the sector (both 35).

With development of a 'capability agenda' in mind, we were also interested in finding out what elements of OD activity external consultants were involved in. Again, we offered a small number of suggestions derived from examples of external consultancy interventions provided by our interviewees. Table 9 below indicates number of responses to each of the suggested areas of

responsibility (respondents could select all that apply):

| External consultants responsible for: | No. |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Provision of tools and techniques | 28 |
| Implementation of key phases | 21 |
| Design of OD intervention | 20 |
| Initial diagnostic data gathering | 20 |
| Data analysis | 12 |
| Other | 12 |

Table 9: Number of mentions of areas of responsibility of external consultants employed

In the 'other' category external consultants are being use to provide advice on approach rather than to select and provide specific tools and techniques for institutions to adopt (four mentions). They are also providing Staff Development support (five mentions): for "internal change managers", individual coaching for managers and development for teams. Two institutions are using external consultants to support evaluative and audit processes.

The survey also asked respondents to indicate the reasons for using external consultants. Table 10 below shows responses to our suggestions. Again, respondents could select more than one option:

| Reason for using external consultants | Number |
|---|--------|
| Wanted a detached analysis | 38 |
| Insufficient internal resource | 25 |
| Insufficient internal skills or expertise | 17 |
| Needed to provide frank feedback | 10 |
| Other | 6 |

Table 10: Number of mentions of areas of responsibility of external consultants employed

Whilst many institutions look beyond their own resources simply to augment internal capacity or capability to support OD initiatives, the need for an independent viewpoint is the most-cited reason. This matches a recurring response from interviewees, who suggested in varying ways that in "politically sensitive issues", an external view "can give credence to what you want to do":

"Saying some hard things needs skill and has to be said from the outside"

“Fundamental change cannot be done without outside help”

“Using an external agency can contribute to the legitimacy of findings and do some things we don’t have time for”.

Free text survey responses in the ‘other’ category shed some light on variations of need and approach:

“Our model/structure is to have an internal core team of staff – as professional advisors - and to contract out relevant delivery”

“Needed guidance informed by substantive experience of what works in a range of other organisations”.

Drawing on internal OD expertise

To what extent, then, do institutions draw on perceived specialist OD expertise internally? Of the 55 institutions currently engaged in OD, around two thirds make use of internal specialists, as shown in figure 7 below:

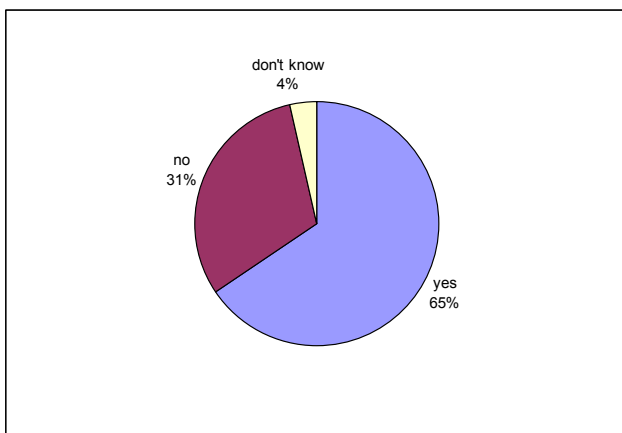


Figure 7: % of institutions drawing on internal specialist OD expertise for current OD initiatives

We suggested that this expertise might reside amongst academics from the institution’s business or management school, or amongst what we called ‘professional staff’. 50% of those currently engaged in OD told us they drew on expertise from the former, whilst 95% drew on professional staff.

We asked respondents to indicate specific organisational locations in both cases, although not all who responded ‘yes’ to either question chose to do so. Units mentioned other than business and

management schools include: Centre for Learning and Teaching; Faculty of Organisation and Management; School of Psychology and Strategic Management Systems Department.

Several institutions mentioned a whole list of professional units involved, ranging across support services, indicating the varied and distributed location of OD expertise. Two respondents are explicit about this, simply stating “various” and “a range”. Table 11 below shows the professional units mentioned, grouped into broad categories, and the number of mentions made:

| Professional unit (broad category) | No. |
|---|-----|
| Staff, Academic or Organisational Development teams | 14 |
| Human Resources/Personnel Services | 13 |
| Corporate Services/Registry | 5 |
| Strategy or Planning teams | 4 |
| Marketing | 3 |
| IT Services | 2 |
| Other | 10 |

Table 11: Professional units where internal OD expertise is located (number of mentions by broad category)

Those who completed the survey saw HR and Staff Development services as the major sources of internal expertise. Around half the mentions of HR and of Staff Development are made in conjunction with other units, but six respondents cite HR as the sole location of OD expertise, matched by another six citing Staff Development units as sole source in their institution. Other units mentioned here include Finance, Estates, Research Office, Change Management team and academic support. The final question in this section of the survey asked specifically if ‘other’ units offered internal expertise. Only six respondents said ‘yes’, although some of those units then mentioned could also be categorised as ‘professional’:

“Academics from various units”

“Governors, Academics involved in key university committees”

“Members of School Council”

“Other academics and professional support staff, Director of Teaching and Learning”.

MEASURING SUCCESS

With the evident extent of investment in OD interventions, using both internal and external tools and approaches, we were interested in understanding how institutions intended to evaluate whether such interventions had achieved their objectives. Again, we provided a small number of options from which respondents could select as many that applied, as well as the opportunity to describe any methods not covered by these. The options provided in the survey were:

- An agreed set of performance indicators
- Student surveys and/or focus groups
- Staff survey
- External evaluation.

All but one of the 55 institutions declaring a current engagement with OD initiatives responded to this question. Figure 8 below shows the number of mentions made of each of our suggested methods of evaluation:

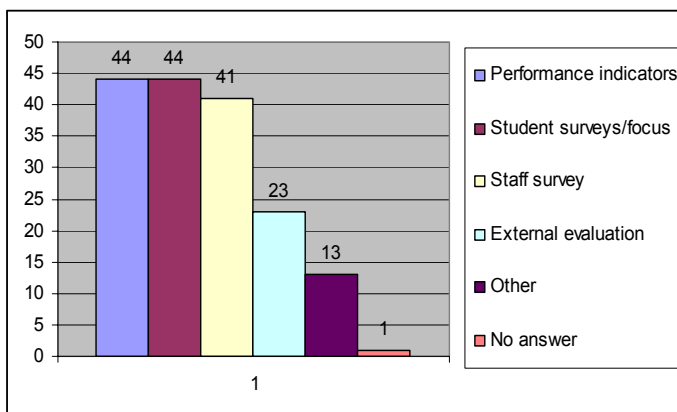


Figure 8: Number of mentions of evaluation methods

An analysis of the thirteen 'other' responses suggests that a further five institutions make use of some form of internal key performance indicator, and a further four use external assessments. One institution stated that evaluative measures had "not yet [been] agreed".

With these additions, we find that 89% of institutions engaged in OD initiatives use an agreed set of performance indicators to evaluate those initiatives, including:

"Review at committee and at SMT"

"Range of monitoring processes eg formal course monitoring, peer review, quality reviews"

"Monitor objectives in Corporate Plan and Annual Operating Plan"

"Leadership development - measuring success of objective achievements"

"University KPI set at world class target. All part of HR Strategic Plan which is reviewed, monitored and reported on widely/frequently".

80% make use of student surveys and/or focus groups whilst 75% use staff surveys: a clear indication that the views of people within the organisation are valued as measures of achievement of OD initiatives' objectives.

Just under half (49%) acknowledge the use of some form of external evaluation, including Investors in People external assessment, HEFCE assessment of CETLs, external stakeholder focus groups, and evaluation of HR Developments. Other mechanisms mentioned included market research, an internal evaluation study, financial outturns and staff appraisals.

3. ENHANCING OD CAPABILITY: THE EMERGING AGENDA

"We're doing things we'd have done anyway, but doing them differently."

"Do we go for the administratively simple – or try for the sophisticated?"

"We need to explore what are the perceived credentials of those doing OD. Where are they seen to come from? What is their claim to expertise?"

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

As a prelude to enhancing their OD capability, we suggest that, at the most senior level, institutions need to consider the following.

OD can happen everywhere

Any activities that have the potential to have an impact on the wider culture of the organisation can contribute to the success of an OD initiative. For instance, such diverse activities as the introduction of flexible working arrangements, a re-branding exercise, the use of service level agreements, race awareness work, an exploration of the National Student Survey results, the process of identifying priorities for the next strategic plan and, more recently, the work of campus sustainability coordinators and directors³⁸: all these have the potential to contribute to shifts in culture. In one HEI, our interviews showed that, whilst some people had a sufficiently broad overview to recognise the links between the development of a revised corporate identity and their declared desire to bring about a culture change across the institution, others thought of the two as quite separate. One activity was seen to belong to marketing; the other, to HR. Meanwhile, in other HEIs, the links between external marketing and internal communication were recognised. The prospectus, for example, was being planned to convey messages to all staff as well as to prospective 'customers' and news of the VC's external activities were also being used to promote the VC's role as an internal ambassador for change.

OD Capability can exist everywhere

Reflecting this breadth and range of possible OD interventions, in interviews we found that the question of just who the crucial players in OD are was particularly exercising those HEIs that were actively considering how they might enhance their OD capability. There is sometimes ambiguity, dispute even, about where responsibility for OD resides. At any one time, different constituencies appear to think that they are, or should be, responsible for the major OD interventions within their institution. Sometimes this is an issue in the senior team. Sometimes it reflects role rivalry elsewhere in the university. Sometimes OD has found its way into the title of a department or a specific role within that department. However the fact that the term "Organisational Development" crops up in a department or job title does not always convince the HEI at large that the post holder/s has/have the capability for the role inferred

by the title. On the other hand, though the effective implementation of OD must logically by its nature be a collaborative activity, we noted that occasionally individuals with little positional power, but with a potent mix of considerable influencing, negotiating and political skills, and, consequently, with extensive networks, seem able to pursue their own undeclared OD intentions to surprisingly good effect!

In a number of the HEIs we visited therefore, people were puzzling how best to:

- Clarify the roles of those who help design, set in motion and steer to a successful outcome a complex range of OD interventions
- Find the most appropriate people to undertake the wide range of internal "development" roles
- Envisage career paths for the most likely interpretations of such roles in the future.

The range of roles offered in response to our survey question about who currently has responsibility for OD perhaps also reflects that this is an emerging, even an immature area. It might be said to indicate an acknowledgment of the complexity of these issues, or, on the other hand, to suggest a lack of thought about that complexity.

A related question, and not just in the larger institutions, is whether it is helpful to have a designated OD function: if so, where should such a function be located; if not, how should different areas of responsibility be managed and co-ordinated? These questions echo themes that emerged from the Strategic Staff Development Project, which reported in 2006. Inviting HEIs to consider the full range of roles associated with the concept of development, that project team chose the phrase "capability development" to describe: "... all of the provision and processes that are designed to enrich the practice, and therefore enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and well-being of individuals, activities and the organisation." They recommended that:

"This process needs to occur within a system that is strategically managed and yet capable of responding flexibly and efficiently to change".³⁹

³⁸ Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education: <http://www.aashe.org/about/about.php>

³⁹ Blackmore, P. and Castley, A. (2006) Developing Capability in the University – strategically enhancing the efficiency, effectiveness and well-being of the institution, LFHE

They also acknowledged that:

“... there is no unified development community, but rather a number of overlapping ones. Given this complexity, making choices in organising what may be a dispersed development function is not likely to be straightforward; indeed administratively simple arrangements are not likely to be as effective as more sophisticated arrangements.”⁴⁰

OD is not just another name for HR

In the survey, we asked respondents whether their institution has a designated Organisational Development function and, if so, where it sits in the organisation. Interviews indicated that the use of the term ‘Organisational Development’ in department or unit titles is increasing.

Seventeen institutions (28%) already have a designated OD function, which for the most part is located within another ‘office’ rather than being a stand-alone organisational unit. For eight HEIs their OD function is located within HR; six have a base within staff/professional development functions (some of which are also within HR). Of the remaining three HEIs with a designated OD function, one is located with the Principal, the other within a Directorate of the Strategic Director (Resources) and one a standalone OD consultant reporting to a PVC. Respondents’ comments on the location of their OD function include:

“... it is called HR – though we have an OD strategy”

“OD consultant with access to HR and Staff Development, reporting to the same PVC”

“Is included as a key activity within HR and supported by other functions”

“Part of the role of the HR Development function, within the HR division”.

One institution, whilst not claiming to have a designated OD function, still notes that OD responsibility is:

“... located within the HR activities of the University, no dedicated individual,

but part of a specialist team, Planning and Development”.

The claims made by HR for ownership of OD were, to some of our interviewees, problematic. They were seen as part of continuing attempts to change the role of HR by shifting terminology:

“If you are going to change the role of HR, it’s no use just calling it something different.”

The debate, both inside HEIs and in the HR community, as to the nature and extent of the role of HR in organisational development, is linked to debates in which HR professionals continue to be engaged internationally^{41, 42} about the nature and scope of their expertise, the organisational role for which it equips them and the reliability of the claims that HRM contributes to improvements in organisational performance^{43, 44}. Within the HR community, Ulrich seems to have been particularly influential in setting out a vision of the HR professional as a driver of organisational performance. What does this vision really have to say to the UK HE sector? At best, the relationship between HRM and organisational performance has been demonstrated to be an association rather than a causal link and even this association has been shown to be closer in manufacturing industries than in service industries⁴⁵. Context appears to be a vital factor when seeking to identify the impact, if any, of HR practices. Reporting on the difficulty of locating empirical findings to support a vision such as that set out by Ulrich, others have pointed out that the Ulrich vision is predicated on a version of organisation which would not seem to fit many universities, one in which there is:

⁴¹ Lawson, E. et al (2005) The Dearth of HR Talent, Mckinsey Research in Brief, 2.

⁴² Ulrich, D. (1997) Human Resource Champions: the next agenda for adding value and delivering results, Harvard Business School Press

⁴³ Caldwell, R. (2003) The changing roles of personnel managers: old ambiguities, new uncertainties, Journal of Management Studies, 40, 4, pp983-1004.

⁴⁴ Boselle, P., Dietz, G., Boon, C., (2005) Commonalties and Contradictions in HRM and Performance Research, Human Resource Management Journal, 15,3

⁴⁵ Guest, D. et al (2003) Human Resource Management and Corporate Performance in the UK, British Journal of Industrial Relations, 41,2, pp291-314.

⁴⁰ op.cit.

“... an unproblematic partnership between line managers, senior executives and the HR department”.⁴⁶

They emphasise that in this vision:

“A pluralist perspective of competing stakeholder groups, not all of whom are united behind the corporate aim of increased competitive advantage, is not considered.”⁴⁷

In contrast, universities are by their nature pluralist and their “corporate aim” is routinely contested.

During the course of our investigation, we came to think that the current role discomfort which appears to be a feature of the experience of some HR professionals in HE resembles that felt by other workers in the HE sector. Related issues are further explored in Celia Whitchurch’s recent research for the Leadership Foundation⁴⁸.

Some HR staff interviewed were content with a more operational interpretation of the HR role than that envisaged by Ulrich:

“The ideas may not be ours, but we help take them and operationalise them.”

“We help find a way through, steer a bit of a path.”

However we also found other HR professionals anxious for a larger role in which they would not feel “bogged down in the rubbish of policies and procedures.” They felt their expertise was not fully recognised and were frustrated by the routine nature of much of their work:

“Why don’t they see what we have to offer?”

“They say, ‘Yes, of course we need you to work strategically’, but then there’s always, ‘Can you do this dress as well’ ...”

Still others adopted a middle position, acknowledging that they are engaging in a process of establishing credibility, which needs to be rooted

⁴⁶ Hailey, V.H., Farndale, E., Truss, C.(2005): The HR Department’s Role in Organisational Performance, Human Resource Management Journal, 15, 3

⁴⁷Hailey, V.H., Farndale, E., Truss, C.(2005): The HR Department’s Role in Organisational Performance, Human Resource Management Journal, 15, 3

⁴⁸ Whitchurch, C. (2006) Professional Managers in Higher Education – Preparing for Complex Futures, Leadership Foundation for HE, Research and Development Series

in an accurate knowledge of, and respect for, the institution’s culture, coupled with what one called “fierce efficiency”:

“You have to win credibility – it doesn’t come automatically. It’s only then that you can offer tools and support – I find that a fierce efficiency - anticipating need – gets noticed and provides you with an entry point.”

“The dilemma is how to engage at the right level – and often that’s about asking the right questions.”

In some of the HEIs we visited there did indeed seem to be a stark mismatch between the self-perception of the role of HR in relation to OD and perceptions elsewhere in the institution. In illustration here is a sample of comments given to us by people in senior positions:

“The problem is that HR has delusions of grandeur ... They seem to be looking for a larger role than we are prepared to give them.”

“They are trying to make the university fit in with their pre-conceptions, rather than finding out what is actually happening at first hand.”

“HR are the source of much negative feeling in this university at present, as a result of crude and inappropriate practices.”

“HR assume that they should be the key players in OD, when actually they are part of the problem.”

“HR think ‘We can do it right – we see it clearly’, when really they see through their own very particular lens.”

Where it had been carefully established, the model of HR working in a partially de-centralised way, supporting other specialist departments and academic faculties locally by acting as ‘strategic business partners’ (even though that terminology was not thought to be appropriate in some institutional settings) was considered to be a helpful development of the HR function and one which might well be supportive of OD ventures. This partnership model was seen to be effective partly because it required HR professionals to work close-at-hand to those whom they serve and

to lose some of their tribal identity ("They become different people when they walk into a Faculty"). These partners were seen to be getting to know 'the business' more intimately, to have a clearer understanding of how they might help and thus to be more responsive to felt needs. As another of our respondents suggested,

"When they are talking on their own issues, they are very valuable – you need them to get you through the labyrinth of legal contractual stuff, or help you handle their own complex procedures."

The conclusions of David Guest's recent research, based on responses by the HR Directors themselves and undertaken for the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, are very much in tune with the views that were presented to us:

"... it appears that university HR departments are still at the stage of introducing and applying core practices. There is a need to establish credibility in the application of these basic practices before it becomes feasible to adopt the role of business partner or change agent."⁴⁹

External OD expertise: handle with care!

OD expertise is increasingly available within the sector, but, for some situations and for some tasks, it is sometimes thought to be difficult to use the institution's own employees. As some survey respondents have indicated, a detached analysis may be obtained from consultants working for sectoral agencies and commercial organisations, as well as from people with consultancy expertise based in other HEIs. Responses to the survey and interview responses suggested that competition between HEIs is not thought to present a difficulty when considering the use of expertise from other HE institutions. Indeed, several we interviewed had very positive experiences of such support and valued highly the context-specific awareness which came with it. Interviews suggested that HEIs know that external consultants – and/or externally designed change tools or quality standards assessed by external assessors – may help to set development in motion, but will rarely be in a position to help sustain it. Though the contribution of many external

⁴⁹ Guest, David and Clinton, M. (2007) Human Resource Management and University Performance – a study conducted for the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education – as yet unpublished.

consultants is valued, interviewees were also sceptical about the contributions made by some, recalling inappropriate or mismanaged external interventions which were both costly and counter-productive. External consultants, for instance, may bring pre-packaged versions of organisation which are sometimes startlingly at odds with the native culture of universities and which underestimate the staying power of those cultures. Such interventions are easily sidelined.

Multi-functional groups are key

Sometimes the different constituencies, or 'tribes'⁵⁰, across the university/college seem to their colleagues to inhabit foreign parts and to speak an alien language. With that in mind, some of the HEIs we visited are bringing together multi-functional groups to work specifically on a major institution-wide change agenda, in order to harness the energy and skills of a wider range of individuals and groups and enable them to work across 'tribal boundaries'. They reported that, through these groups, a train of events is being set in motion in which unexpected people are proving themselves able to act as brokers of change. Such people are being allowed, as one respondent described it, to "bubble up":

"We are seeding the university with change agents."

It is characteristic of these people that they often seem to be "hybrid"⁵¹ workers with chequered careers – perhaps academics who have crossed into central support functions – who may have little positional power, but who are able to work effectively with a range of constituencies across organisational boundaries. Often in previous roles their enthusiasm, flexibility, their influencing and negotiating skills and their understanding of the university's *realpolitik*, have enabled them to build up extensive networks. Thus they achieve a greater influence than their role would imply.

People involved in such multi-functional groups acknowledge that through such involvement they are learning more about the university/college as

⁵⁰ Becher, T. and Trowler, P. (2001) *Academic Tribes and Territories: Intellectual Enquiry and the Culture of Disciplines*, SRHE and Open University Press.

⁵¹ Whitchurch, C. (2006) *Professional Managers in Higher Education – Preparing for Complex Futures*, Leadership Foundation for HE, Research and Development Series

a whole and feel engaged with it across a wider front. Steered by a shared purpose such as 'improving the student experience', initiatives which work in a particular local setting can have more impact when they allow for local difference, for autonomies, for quirkiness. The impact of bringing members of these different tribes together in the context of a collaborative effort can itself be developmental to the organisation: they grow to recognise and respect each other's contribution to a shared endeavour. On the other hand, people engaged in OD tasks by such routes usually have other jobs to do – interviewees told us that "keeping up with the day job" could be problematic.

If a person's immediate boss is not part of the project team, prioritising can be difficult. Some HEIs were using secondment mechanisms to solve this dilemma.

Project Management Matters

The intention to pursue interlinked institution-wide initiatives is implied in the project's definition of OD and such intentions certainly emerged strongly in some institutions we visited. However interviews often stressed the difficulty of achieving such interlinking and drew attention to the long-term persistence and commitment needed to establish and maintain an interconnected approach across a range of initiatives:

"We're beginning to get joined up thinking – it is starting to fall in to place. Everyone does seem to be thinking about 'our shared vision' – it's starting to become that explicit."

"We have now reached a point where we'll need a major cultural shift at every level from the top down in terms of understanding the interdependencies within the University and the need to trust each other to deliver for each other."

Interviews indicated that major OD programmes will often generate "a huge number of inter-related projects" and "multiple work streams." Almost without exception, interviewees reported that in these circumstances effective project management was an issue and that:

"It's exceptionally challenging to find a way through without over-technicising projects."

They experience a tension between "trying to use 'hard project management skills' and recognising that they are "not appropriate in all situations." Nevertheless, we were told ruefully by several respondents that the project management task had been interpreted as a technical task and given to:

"...Some poor guy in Information Services who knows how to use Prince2 and who's expected to do it part-time."

Interviewees also reported that they felt managers needed to develop a fuller understanding of the nature and scope of the tasks inside the 'projects', including their social/emotional complexity.

MOVING FORWARDS

Our investigations suggest that the following are currently useful starting points for enhancing OD capability within any institution. Under each recommended point we sketch the potential improvements in OD capability.

1. Improve the process for choosing the focus of an OD intervention:

- Recognise the need to spend time and effort identifying/clarifying purposes of any Organisational Development venture and select the focus of proposed OD activity to reflect the institution's values and strategic goals
- Use a range of methods to involve people in this task; choose appropriate methods; identify when there may be a need to use skilled facilitators
- Ensure that diverse constituencies are involved in this process
- Draw on the energy and commitment developed during this process as the implementation phase begins

Enhanced capability will include:

- A learning senior team: welcoming feedback, inviting challenge; in touch and visibly engaged with a range of constituencies across the institution and outside it
- Attention to the evidence that will be needed to evaluate success

- Effective selection, collection and thoughtful use of that evidence
- Knowledge of how and where distributed leadership works across the institution
- Increased awareness across a wider constituency of a range of approaches to change, including how to value and navigate complexity
- Identification and use of sector’s own specialist OD expertise
- Appropriate expertise in managing the early phases of internal communication; familiarity with and ability to facilitate a broad repertoire of consultation processes, such as World Café techniques; drop-in consultation days; appreciative enquiry.

2. Foster an environment conducive to change in which people are more likely to be “agile and fleet of foot” by:

- Creating a sense of urgency (but not panic)
- Providing and highlighting some examples of institutional agility in the face of new challenges
- Telling real stories of success; telling them informally
- Disturbing established silos - cultivating the hybrid university worker
- Encouraging the buzz of multi-dimensional teams
- Using the energy/commitment in such thriving ‘change teams’ to seed change elsewhere in the institution (making use of the internal Change Academy approach)
- Making specialist expertise readily available to change teams – encouraging the specialists to get out and about in an internal consultancy role
- Creating a climate in which enthusiasts feel that their energies will be welcomed

Enhanced Capability will include:

- Building a more accurate context-rich awareness of the institution across a wider constituency – explicit use of informal insider knowledge
- Finding a language for OD ventures that engages rather than alienates
- Fostering internal cross-cultural awareness – greater context agility – sensitised cultural antennae (personal styles/language)

- Drawing on a wide range of influencing roles – identifying change brokers with multiple networks and a wide repertoire of approaches to internal communication
- Identifying relevant specialist areas where people with existing expertise in the institution might contribute to a multi-functional team – inviting participation in these teams.

3. Give more attention to implementation and project management, or “Oh no, not Gantt charts”:

- Recognise the importance and complexity of the project management role; do not confuse it with a part-time monitoring task.

Enhanced capability will include:

- A fuller, and more widely shared, understanding of the nature and scope of the tasks inside the ‘projects’, including their social/emotional complexity
- The development, across a wider constituency, of a broader range of project management capabilities, focusing on communicating, especially at management level
- A focus on the development of hybrid skills – recognising and sustaining the potential connections between projects; identifying people able to nurture and maintain those connections
- Realistic assessment of likely timescales
- (The final report of an EPSRC project on project management⁵² illustrates the recognised shortcomings of technical project management and signals some of the routes to capability development in this area.)

4. Identify the most appropriate people to sustain internal development: look for the most appropriate versions of such roles: “seed the university with change agents”:

- Consider: “What do we actually want such jobs to be like and how do they relate to each other?”
- Investigate the appropriateness of a designated OD function – if there is to be

⁵² Rethinking Project Management. <<http://www.rethinkingpm.org.uk>>

one, what would be its most helpful location in the organisational structure?

- Accurately identify the capabilities needed in a specific institutional context
- Explore the likely demands on those in the most senior roles
- Provide appropriate leadership and support for those undertaking implementation tasks

Enhanced Capability will include:

- Developing and working with context-specific models of OD, drawing on a knowledge of alternative organisational models, perhaps using insights drawn from contexts in which it is necessary to foster innovation and creativity and in which knowledge workers predominate
- Recognition of the full range of functions involved and of the interrelated areas of expertise
- Intelligent job design – attention to the career framework of both academics and other higher education workers
- More informed selection, briefing and use of external consultants
- More informed selection and skilful use of OD “tools”
- Involvement of the institution’s development workers in relevant communities of practice.

5. Select, collect, and make appropriate use of data at both the diagnostic stages and as a means of monitoring progress and evaluating outcomes:

- Choose in advance a *limited* range of performance indicators, both qualitative and quantitative, which seem likely to be most helpful to gauge the progress of the OD initiative
- Make use of data already collected
- Ensure that those who collect the data know of its use for this purpose

Enhanced Capability will include:

- Facilitate regular progress checking, using this data, perhaps expressed in a simplified form, such as the use of traffic light coding
- Make the data readily and widely available across the institution, perhaps online – in order to provide regular summaries of progress

- Make use of benchmarking data, possibly derived from a sector-based benchmarking service.

4. ENHANCING OD IN HE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

What Counts as OD?

From our interviews it would seem that in the loose-coupled intra-organisational relationships that are often characteristic of universities, centrally controlled system and process-led approaches may be of limited value.

However our interviews also indicated that, in a varied range of institutions, a culture of self-help is developing, leading to a range of home-grown approaches which particular institutions are identifying as likely to help them achieve those organisation-wide improvements which they have identified as desirable. Survey respondents too give an indication of personalisation and customisation as well as development of home-grown tools and approaches.

Who are the ‘OD Workers’?

An ideal answer to that question, taken from the Kaizen, W. Edwards Deming schools of thought, might be ‘everyone who works here.’ In practice there are a number of specialised roles which have a particular contribution to make – amongst which are strategists, planners, data collectors and analysts, policy writers, systems designers, communications designers, evaluators.

Interviewees indicated that limited use is made of internal academic OD expertise; the practical know-how of academic specialists is often distrusted in their own institution. This is less evident from survey responses, where half of those currently engaged in OD say they have drawn on internal expertise from business and management schools, or other relevant academic areas of the institution. When academic constituencies are operating in relative isolation,

the potential creativity and momentum of collaborative endeavour focusing on the organisation as a whole is lost.

Building a Community of Practice

The HE sector has well-established habits of collaborative practice, both between institutions and across national boundaries. It also has an understandable tendency to value specialist expertise. How do we make best use of the tendency to collaborate, as one means of enriching practice, without constructing yet another boundary around that group of workers engaged in OD – the OD workers? Such people are likely to have a range of different and complementary specialist skills. The most effective will probably also be found amongst those “hybrid workers” – who, sometimes through a non-linear and unpredictable career path, have acquired the capacity to work across specialist boundaries.

This project has scoped some of the issues. Its online resource will help HEIs identify institutions using similar (or very different) approaches to OD and enable individuals to make contact with each other. Dissemination events will engage participants from a broad spread of constituencies. Another linked outcome will be that the national ODHE Group will be working with the findings of this project to reach out more widely across the sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that **institutions**:

1. Improve the process for choosing the focus of an OD intervention.
2. Define the role of senior management in that intervention.
3. Foster an environment conducive to change.
4. Give more attention to long-term implementation and to project management.
5. Identify the most appropriate people to sustain internal development over the longer period.

6. Select, collect and make appropriate use of data at both the diagnostic stages and as a means of monitoring progress and evaluating outcomes.

We also recommend that, at **sector level**, we:

7. Acknowledge the diversity of the ‘OD worker’, the variety of roles involved and the full extent of the capabilities required.
8. Seek ways of bridging the gap between the various practitioner and research communities which focus on relevant areas of policy and practice in higher education.
9. Explore further the fragmentation effect of specialist professional groupings in HE – seek ways of identifying and bringing into a community of practice the ‘hybrid workers’.
10. Resist the ‘people like us’ syndrome which prompts people to cluster together in special interest groupings – often with a particular professional focus.
11. Utilise the methodology of the Change Academy to support enhancement of OD capability, bringing together multi-functional groups.

APPENDIX A: ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The following represents the layout and content of the final version of the survey delivered online via the BOS software. Drop-down and free-text boxes and other online features such as radio buttons and check boxes are indicated rather than being reproduced graphically as they appeared online.

Enhancing organisational development capability in English Universities

(A project funded by HEFCE's Leadership, Governance and Management Fund)

Welcome to this survey on organisational development (OD) within higher education, part of the above project.

The project is working with this definition of OD:

"A set of explicit processes carefully planned and implemented to benefit the performance of the organization as a whole."

One outcome of the project will be an online national resource, which will:

- Be constructed so that such details may be easily up-dated
- Be housed on the Leadership Foundation web-site
- Identify a key contact person who will provide further information for interested colleagues in other institutions
- Prompt further the development of sector-based communities of practice.

This survey is designed to provide the information which will help us to build that resource.

The survey can be saved part way through and takes around 15 minutes to complete.

Note: Once you have clicked on the CONTINUE button at the bottom of each page you can not return to review or amend that page.

Closing date: Friday 6th July 2007.

[CONTINUE]

Main Survey Page

All questions are **optional**. Note that once you have clicked on the CONTINUE button your answers are submitted and you can not return to review or amend that page.

Section 1: Current engagement with OD in your University

1. Is your University currently engaged in any institution-wide OD initiatives?

Yes No

If your answer to the above question 1 is Yes, please go to question 2.

If your answer to the above question 1 is **No**, please go to question 15.

2. What is the focus of these initiatives? (Please rank 1-5, where 1 is the primary focus):

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Improving the student experience | | | | | |
| b. Improving the University's research performance | | | | | |
| c. Improving the University's provision for learning and teaching | | | | | |
| d. Improving the leadership and management across the University | | | | | |
| e. Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the University's administrative and management processes | | | | | |
| f. Changing the institutional culture | | | | | |
| g. Improving the competitiveness of the University | | | | | |

3. Please outline below any other areas of focus not mentioned in Q2 above:

**4. How will you measure the success of these OD initiatives?
(select all that apply)**

- An agreed set of performance indicators
- Student surveys and/or focus groups
- Staff survey
- External evaluation
- Other *(please specify)*:

5. Have you made use of external consultants in connection with these current OD initiatives?

- Yes No Don't know

a. Were the consultants:
(select all that apply)

- From a commercial management consultancy
- From institutions elsewhere in the sector
- From the Leadership Foundation
- From the Higher Education Academy
- Other *(Please specify)*:

b. Were they responsible for:
(select all that apply)

- The design of the OD intervention
- Initial diagnostic data gathering
- Implementation of key phases of the intervention
- Data analysis
- Provision of tools and techniques
- Other *(Please specify)*:

c. Why did you decide to use these external consultants:
(select all that apply)

- Insufficient internal skills or expertise
- Insufficient internal resource
- Wanted a detached analysis
- Needed to provide frank feedback
- Other *(Please specify)*:

6. In connection with current OD initiatives, does the University draw on any specialist internal OD expertise?

- Yes No Don't know

7. Where is this located?

| | Yes | No | Please specify their unit: |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. Academics from your business or management school? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| b. Professional staff | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| c. Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Section 2: OD Tools and Approaches

8. Please indicate which of these (if any) you consider a significant part of your University's current OD initiatives:

(select all that apply):

a. Externally assessed standards
(select all that apply)

- IiP
- Matrix
- Other *(Please specify)*

b. Externally developed diagnostic tools
(select all that apply)

- The Excellence Model
- Balanced Scorecard
- Baldrige
- HEFCE self-assessment tool
- Dashboard
- Other *(Please specify)*

c. Externally developed diagnostic tools
(select all that apply)

- The Excellence Model
- Balanced Scorecard
- Baldrige
- HEFCE self-assessment tool
- Dashboard
- Other (*Please specify*)

d. Participation and engagement
(select all that apply)

- Appreciative Enquiry
- Drop-in consultation days
- Focus groups
- Internal marketing campaign
- Regular staff attitude surveys
- Revised corporate identity
- VC roadshows
- Web-based consultations
- World Café Approaches
- Internal Change Academy
- Other (*Please specify*)

e. HR and Staff Development practices
(select all that apply)

- Appraisal
- Other performance management techniques
- Performance related pay
- Flexible working arrangements
- Job redesign
- Job evaluation
- 360° feedback
- Formal programmes
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Action learning sets
- Development and use of competence frameworks
- Other (*Please specify*)

f. Organisational restructuring

Please provide a brief description:

9. Is your University developing its own customized in-house OD approaches or tools?

Yes No Don't know

If yes, please provide a brief description:

*Section 3: Roles and Responsibilities***10. Who (please give job title) has overall designated responsibility for OD initiatives (below the VC?)****11. To whom (please give job title) does that person/those people report?****12. Does your University have a designated OD function?**

Yes No Don't know

If yes, please provide a brief description of the function's organisational location (eg HR) and title:

13. How many staff are employed in the OD function?

1-2 3-5 6-10 More than 10]

Please provide details of a single key contact for your institution's OD initiatives (this will appear in the online resource):

14. Name

a. Job title

b. Email address

*Section 4: Planned OD initiatives***15. Does your University have any plans to launch an OD initiative in the next five years?**

Yes No Don't know

If yes, please provide a brief description:

*Section 5: About you and your University***16. Name:****17. Role:****18. Institution:**

If you selected Other, please specify:

19. If you would be willing to be contacted by the project team to discuss your OD activities, please provide an email address below:

APPENDIX B: RESPONDENT INSTITUTIONS

As at 1 August 2007 there are 60 responses. 5 institutions (8%) say they are NOT undertaking any OD initiatives (according to our definition).

| Institution: | OD? |
|--|------------|
| Anglia Ruskin University | Yes |
| Arts Institute at Bournemouth | Yes |
| Aston University | Yes |
| Bath Spa University | Yes |
| Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies | Yes |
| Bishop Grosseteste University College, Lincoln | Yes |
| Brunel University | Yes |
| Canterbury Christ Church University | Yes |
| College of St Mark & St John | No |
| Courtauld Institute of Art | No |
| De Montfort University | Yes |
| Imperial College London | Yes |
| Institute of Cancer Research | Yes |
| Institute of Education | Yes |
| Kingston University | Yes |
| Leeds Metropolitan University | Yes |
| Liverpool Hope University | Yes |
| Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts | Yes |
| Liverpool John Moores University | Yes |
| Loughborough University | Yes |
| Middlesex University | Yes |
| Newman College of Higher Education | Yes |
| Nottingham Trent University | Yes |
| Open University | Yes |
| Oxford Brookes University | Yes |
| Queen Mary, University of London | Yes |
| Royal Northern College of Music | Yes |
| Royal Veterinary College | Yes |
| School of Pharmacy | Yes |
| Sheffield Hallam University | Yes |
| St Mary's University College, Twickenham | Yes |
| Staffordshire University | Yes |
| Trinity Laban | Yes |
| University College for the Creative Arts | Yes |
| University of Bedfordshire | Yes |
| University of Bradford | Yes |
| University of Brighton | Yes |
| University of Bristol | Yes |
| University of Central Lancashire | No |
| University of Derby | Yes |
| University of East Anglia | Yes |

| | |
|--|-----|
| University of Exeter | Yes |
| University of Gloucestershire | Yes |
| University of Hertfordshire | Yes |
| University of Leeds | Yes |
| University of Leicester | Yes |
| University of Liverpool | Yes |
| University of Newcastle upon Tyne | Yes |
| University of Northampton | Yes |
| University of Northumbria at Newcastle | Yes |
| University of Portsmouth | Yes |
| University of Southampton | No |
| University of the Arts London | Yes |
| University of the West of England, Bristol | Yes |
| University of Warwick | No |
| University of Westminster | Yes |
| University of Winchester | Yes |
| University of Worcester | Yes |
| University of York | Yes |
| Writtle College | Yes |

APPENDIX C: CATEGORISATION OF RESPONDENTS' JOB TITLES

| Broad role code | Actual job title |
|-----------------|---|
| 1 | Assistant HR Director (HRD) |
| 1 | Director of HR |
| 1 | Director of HR |
| 1 | Director of Human Resources |
| 1 | Director of Human Resources |
| 1 | Director of Human Resources |
| 1 | Director of Human Resources |
| 1 | Director of Human Resources |
| 1 | Director of Human Resources |
| 1 | Head of Personnel Operations |
| 1 | Head Personnel and Staff Development |
| 1 | HR Director |
| 1 | HR Director |
| 1 | HR Director |
| 1 | HR Manager |
| 2 | Assistant Director (OD), HR Department |
| 2 | Director of OD & Business Improvement |
| 2 | Head of OPD |
| 2 | OD Adviser |
| 2 | OD Manager |
| 2 | Organisational Development and Training Advisor |
| 2 | Organisational Learning |
| 3 | Assistant Principal and Secretary to Council |
| 3 | Deputy Principal |
| 3 | Deputy V-C |
| 3 | Deputy Vice Chancellor |
| 3 | Deputy Vice-Chancellor |
| 3 | DVC |
| 3 | PVC (Admin) & University Secretary |
| 3 | PVC (Administration) |
| 3 | Vice-Principal |
| 4 | Assistant Director - HR Development |
| 4 | Director of Professional Development |

| | |
|---|--|
| 4 | Head of Staff and Educational Development |
| 4 | Head of Staff Development |
| 4 | Leadership and Development Manager |
| 4 | Staff Development Manager |
| 4 | Training & Personnel Officer |
| 5 | Founding Principal/CEO |
| 5 | Principal |
| 5 | Principal |
| 5 | Principal and Dean |
| 5 | Principal/Chief Executive |
| 5 | Vice-Chancellor |
| 6 | Director of Corporate Development |
| 6 | Assistant Secretary |
| 6 | Registrar |
| 6 | Registrar |
| 6 | University Secretary |
| 7 | Director of Resources |
| 7 | Director Planning & Resources |
| 7 | Director, Planning Services |
| 7 | Planning Manager |
| 8 | Director of Academic Standards |
| 8 | Head of Quality & Standards |
| 9 | Director of Regional Affairs |
| 9 | Director of Regional and International Development |

Broad roles:

- 1 HR Director/Assistant Director
- 2 OD Director/Manager
- 3 PVC/DVC/Vice-Principal
- 4 HRD/Staff Development
- 5 Vice-Chancellor/Principal
- 6 Registry/Secretariat
- 7 Planning and Resources
- 8 Quality and Standards
- 9 Regional Affairs