

Organization Development Review

JOURNAL OF THE ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

ISSN 2640-0650

OD: Research, Careers, and Perspectives

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“The dynamism of our field, including the diverse backgrounds and motivations of those who wish to enter it, calls for an equally dynamic tool for helping aspiring change agents, employers, and educators improve the efficacy of their efforts.”

Charting a Meaningful OD Career

A Novel Framework and Assessment for Aspiring Practitioners

By William Brendel

This article is dedicated to OD pioneer, Mee-Yan Cheung-Judge

Abstract

Comparative analysis of 500 Organization Development (OD) job descriptions, 144 universities and associations with OD curriculum, 40 operational definitions of OD, and 31 OD competency publications reveals a complex career landscape for aspiring OD professionals. It also exposes an elegant pattern of career characteristics, which can help individuals effectively tailor their OD career development plans in personally meaningful, practical, and economical ways. The M.O.S.T. Assessment, which stands for Mastering Organizational & Societal Transformation, measures individual differences regarding desired career *Outcomes* (Societal vs. Organizational), *Identities* (Pure vs. Hybrid), *Mastery Levels* (Broad vs. Specialized), and *Approaches* (Classic vs. Innovative). Depending on an individual's unique combination of preferences, one of 16 different OD Career Callings becomes clear and is matched with specific career path overviews, customized learning resources, and a network of like-minded practitioners and employers. This free assessment (opensourceod.com/assessment) is the first of its kind to provide a personalized gateway to OD career discovery and differentiated professional development planning.

Keywords: meaningful work, organization development, career development, hybrid OD

Introduction

Constructing a state-of-the-field report for a discipline as dynamic as OD would be a colossal task. This has not stopped experts from trying. There are at least 40 definitions of OD (Jamieson & Worley, 2008) and 31 OD competency model publications in circulation (Cheung-Judge, 2020). Nonetheless, employers continue to craft hybrid OD positions with competencies that run like ink into the fabric of Talent Development, Human Resources (HR), and I/O Psychology careers. Though this trend is not new, the *Association for Talent Development* (2022) now claims OD as a Talent Development competency. Similarly, the *Society for Human Resource Management*

(2022) claims OD as a core discipline of HR. The U.S. government does not recognize OD as a career choice in O*Net, and instead lists it as a competency under the career heading *Industrial/Organizational Psychology* (Cady, 2022; O*Net, 2022). In addition to major consulting firms who have cornered the market on change work, Information Technology (IT) consultants have also successfully swarmed the traditional territory of OD practitioners including “mission, values, and culture” transformation (Burke, 2018, p. 196). Further, the Design Thinking approach to organizational change (Brown, 2019), which concentrates on empathy-first problem solving and innovation with stakeholders, appears to be a virtual lithograph

of OD. Finally, social change organizations who utilize OD, such as the Presencing Institute led by Otto Scharmer—winner of the 2021 OD Network Elevating Humanity Award—do not use the OD label at all (2022).

The diffused professionalization of OD into adjacent fields is particularly frustrating for OD purists who cringe at the term “Organizational” Development. It also creates complex challenges for organizations who wish to assimilate OD with established career ladders and lattices, and form OD departments. At the same time, clients often ask external OD consultants for business-oriented work that is tied to OD but is not adequately covered in OD graduate curriculum or certificate programs. Finally, the unintended consequences of broad-spectrum consulting competency models such as the *Global Competency Framework* developed by the OD Network (2022), is that many emerging practitioners often feel overwhelmed and struggle to see themselves in the work, a critical first step toward formulating meaningful, economical, and practical career development pathways. The dynamism of our field, including the diverse backgrounds and motivations of those who wish to enter it, calls for an equally dynamic tool for helping aspiring change agents, employers, and educators improve the efficacy of their efforts.

A Meaningful Opportunity

Anecdotally, OD is considered by many to be a deep personal calling that fuels continuous learning, creativity, and positive client outcomes. This presents a unique opportunity to attract more individuals to the field as it coincides with rising desire amongst the workforce to develop and enjoy the benefits of meaningful work (Abdelsalam et al., 2020; Belwalkar et al., 2018; Giacalone et al., 2010). A meta-analysis of 44 different studies demonstrates strong positive relationships between meaningful careers and job commitment, satisfaction, and general life satisfaction (Allan et al., 2019). In this context, helping individuals measure and develop the competencies they need is just the beginning of a relevant career assessment. A more authentic approach to career

development for OD might also include the aim of helping professionals through a process of deep personal discovery, aligning what is most personally meaningful to them with different variations of OD work, and potentially transforming their careers into callings.

With the above challenges and opportunities in mind, what if there were an assessment that balanced what experts suggest should be characteristic of an OD position with evidence of what is actually represented by job market data and consultant feedback? Also, rather than asking OD career-seekers to adopt a one-size-fits-all approach to developing OD consulting competencies, what if this assessment utilized an algorithm that equally valued an individual’s existing talents, sources of inspiration, the types of change they wish to influence in the world, and the unique career identity they are most interested in cultivating? These questions led to the development of the *M.O.S.T. Meaningful Careers Assessment*, which aims to help practitioners develop their OD careers in a highly meaningful, efficient, and practical fashion. The following article highlights how this free assessment, now in beta testing, was developed, including the selection of a theoretical framework, research methodology, and initial implications as a research team begins the journey of ongoing psychometric validation.

Theoretical Framework

Adopting a framework that merges competency development with meaningful work led this author to an ancient wisdom tradition called *Ikigai* (roughly translated from Japanese as: Reason for Being), which asserts that a meaningful livelihood may be cultivated by finding work that combines (Garcia & Miralles, 2016; Kondo, 2007; Mitsuhashi, 2018):

1. What you are good at
2. What brings you joy
3. What you believe the world needs
4. What you can get paid for.

Sources that evoke an individual’s perception of *Ikigai* vary widely, and are based on “... experiences, present life situations,

and aspiration, and integrates various emotions evoked by the sources, such as self-realization, motivations, life satisfaction, vitality, a sense of existence, and a sense of agency” (Hasegawa, Fujiwara, & Hoshi, 2001, p. 5).

This framework was chosen as the basis of this assessment for numerous reasons. First, it aligns closely to address the specific challenges and opportunities mentioned in the introduction. Finding work that you are good at may begin with an assessment of OD talents, benchmarked against a full-spectrum competency framework. Discovering what it is that brings an individual joy may be gauged by matching them with personally appealing approaches that are enjoyed by OD practitioners. Identifying the type of change our world needs may be accomplished by understanding the various needs and settings OD practitioners prefer. Finally, understanding which job or consulting role fulfills these aspects of meaningful work, may be accomplished by continuously analyzing the OD job market, consulting opportunities enjoyed by OD practitioners, and research on the profession produced by OD scholars.

Many characteristics of this theoretical framework are also observable in the essential values of future OD practitioners, which according to a recent global study includes integrity, growth and development, awareness of self and system, continuous dialogue and learning, and strategic practicality (Yoon et al., 2020). First, this approach includes inquiry that focuses on the relationship between one’s work and positive and ethical change outcomes. It also emphasizes agency in shaping one’s life purpose in ways that pre-date the work of Frankl’s (1984) logotherapy and Maslow’s (1968) concept of self-actualization by over 750 years. Similarly, it focuses on meaningful work, which has become an attractive employee value proposition. This framework is also an excellent object for continuous dialogic reflection, so that an individual may over time, change their mind about what type of OD livelihood is most meaningful to them. Finally, securing a livelihood based on this framework is demonstrated to have benefits to

psychological well-being, including “feelings of accomplishment and fulfillment” (Kumano, 2018). In this way this framework may also be integrated with meaningful job-crafting. Finally, it stands to reason that this model may be a helpful tool for transforming OD departments and organizational culture through dialogue based on common, simple language about what is most meaningful about change between individuals.

Methodology

This author sought a research methodology that would allow for triangulating the way OD stakeholders (Experts, Employers, and Educators) represent their fundamental perceptions regarding the four characteristics described above. This is initially accomplished through a two-year comparative analysis approach that focused on recognizing patterns of career characteristics represented by these stakeholder groups. Utilizing basic contours of the comparative analysis approach popularized by Durkheim (1895), this required studying the nature of OD as a field through facts that indicate its coherence as a society, more or less, in a fixed period (2021–2022). Second, it required identifying adjacent societies, which share characteristics with OD, but also differed in specific ways. Durkheim’s methodology is a helpful approach to understanding what holds society together and also where key differences exist, allowing for researchers to understand collective currents as well as degrees of freedom (individual agency) within a given society.

To do so, the author identified logical units of comparison that are represented to the general public as artifacts such as reports, publications, websites, and job descriptions. Collectively, units discussed below indicate a spectrum of “classifying social facts along a continuum from maximal to minimal ‘crystallisation’ or ‘institutionalisation’” (Lukes, 1982, p. 9). According to Durkheim (1895), when it comes to these social facts, on one end of the spectrum there are *morphological facts*, which include:

“... the number and nature of the elementary parts which constitute society, the way in which they are articulated, ...the degree of coalescence they have attained” (p. 57).

In other words, together these facts tell us what is most fundamental about OD.

On the other end of the spectrum, are what Durkheim called institutionalized norms, which include “formalized” rules, regulations, and systems that are brought about by the “political” dimension of a given society (Durkheim, 1995, p. 5). For example, these might include accreditation criteria or government reports on the tasks that are associated with specific jobs (see O*Net).

Finally, there are *social currents*, which, “may be relatively stable ‘movements of opinion’ or, at the extreme, ‘transitory outbreaks’ such as occur when ‘in a public gathering ... great waves of enthusiasm, indignation and pity’ are generated” (pp. 52–53). An example of such a wave includes substantial shift in the desire of OD practitioners to lead societal change, which this author discusses below by drawing evidence from journal articles on emerging trends in the field of OD.

Expert Artifacts

As is customary, inquiry began with a review of extant publications and research produced by OD experts who represent influential views on the questions explored above through their deep familiarity with OD competency models, values studies, and differentiated approaches. Emphasis was placed on identifying literature produced by individuals known for their broad and integrative OD expertise spanning Diagnostic, Dialogic, and Conscious OD paradigms (Bushe & Marshak, 2009; Brendel, 2022). Though this review did not explicitly seek expert literature in Strategic OD (Dickens, 2015) or Holistic Embodied OD (Matthews & Szewach, 2021), the overall depth of acumen represented in the literature did encompass these variations. Most of the literature informing the selection of experts included germinal contributions by scholar-practitioners, with dozens of years’ experience, who serve as

thought-leaders, authors, and consultants. In line with the methodology outlined above, experts were chosen for their publication and speaking records which convey an intricate understanding of the evolving competencies that are required to meet the needs of client organizations and internal stakeholders. This required a meticulous review of authors and editors of commonly used OD texts who focus not only on OD research but also practice (Burke & Noumair, 2015; Cheung-Judge & Holbeche, 2011; Cummings & Worley, 2014; Gallos, 2006; Jones & Brazzel, 2012; Rothwell et al., 2016). Research also included more recent articles on the evolving identity, career contexts, and competencies of OD practitioners (Burke, 2018; Cooperrider & Godwin, 2022; Minahan, 2018; Rothwell et al., 2021).

Additionally, this researcher analyzed 31 OD competency publications and presentations (see: Cheung-Judge, 2020), noting similarities, differences, and universal aspects that should be present for a career to be considered pure OD. The author then compared these common OD competencies against competency models established by premier adjacent professional associations including the *Association for Talent Development* (2022), the *Society for Human Resource Management* (2022) and *Society for Industrial/Organizational Psychology* (2022), and the *International Federation for Coaching* (2022) to establish what is both similar between and unique to the OD competency terrain. This analysis also included a review of O*Net classifications (2022) on adjacent job classifications including: Management Analyst, HR Specialist, Training & Development Specialist, I/O Psychologist, and Business Intelligence Analysts.

Employer Artifacts

Next, research examined over 500 employer job descriptions (between 2021–2022), which indicate the specific competencies that must be mastered to attain actual careers that match competencies distinct to OD, the change outcomes that the job has influence over, and the approach to change that the hiring department privileges. Job descriptions also provide helpful

Table 1. *Examples of Hybrid OD Positions*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People & Culture Consultant • Business Transformation Specialist • Manager of Culture Change & Teaming • Organizational Strategy & Culture Consultant • Director of DE&I and Organizational Development • People & Organizational Performance Manager • Global Organizational Culture Business Partner • Director of Organizational & Leadership Development • Learning & Organizational Development Consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Global Talent & Organization Development • VP of DE&I and Organizational Effectiveness • Organizational & People Development Specialist • Director of Culture & Organizational Effectiveness • Organizational Design & Transformation Manager • Organizational Transformation Manager • Organizational Design & Effectiveness Manager • Future of Work Strategy Consultant • Excellence, Strategy, & Innovation Consultant
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information regarding the career identity associated with the position, typically indicated through the job title and department home. These included but were not limited to Organization Development, Human Resources, Organizational Effectiveness, Talent Development, DE&I, Organizational Change, Organization Design, and Change Management. Research utilized job websites including Indeed.com, LinkedIn.com, and Jobs.google.com. Search terms drew from a diverse and inclusive range of vocabulary indicated by expert consultants and educators mentioned above. These search terms included: Organization Development, Organization(al) Development, Talent and Organization Development, Learning & Organization Development, Leadership and Change, and Leadership & Organization Development. As searches continued, new and related job titles appeared, and these terms were then included in future key word searches. Some examples, which demonstrate the complexity and hybrid nature of many OD positions (Table 1).

Research also included terms that might indicate hybrid OD positions that overlap with Talent Development, HR, and Organizational Effectiveness. These included: Talent & Organization Development, Design Thinking and Organization Development, Learning & Organization Development, and numer-

ous additional variations. In addition to utilizing these terms, research sought to identify positions that influence change in organizations that support societal flourishing, including K-12 and higher education, hospitals, conservation agencies, social enterprises, charity organizations, non-profits, NGOs, community services & development, and B-Corps. Social change organizations were incorporated due to a substantial shift (Burke, 2018) and resounding call to apply OD to a wide variety of wicked social challenges (Cooperider & Godwin, 2022; Shufutinsky et al., 2022) To identify these positions, in addition to Google, Indeed, and LinkedIn, research also utilized job sites such as Idealist.org, Jobs.Greenbiz.com, Netimpact.org, Bcorporation.net, and Devex.com.

Educator Artifacts

Finally, research identified 144 OD and OD-related graduate program websites, representing both pure and hybrid OD curriculum, as well as certificates in higher education and professional associations (Table 2, next page). Analysis of the four “Career Calling” criteria discussed previously, included the educational program’s vision or high-level description, often accompanied by a statement regarding the difference students make in the professions they assume after graduation or certification. Research also examined the program’s

mission or charter, often highlighting the preferred approach or emphasis areas in OD, that appeal to different student personas. For instance, some programs tend to focus more on social justice, relative to others that focus more on organizational performance. Analysis also included a review of coursework and objectives that indicate the talents that students are supposed to develop to attain a career in (and sometimes adjacent to) OD. Finally, these programs often include information about the types of jobs that successful graduates have attained.

To identify these programs, research started with member schools that are part of the *OD Education Association*, which together crafted *OD Program Essential Elements* (2014), which presents a standard for graduate program foundations, theories, and models in OD. Next, research fanned out to include other programs that may or may not go by the name “Organization Development,” but nonetheless represented the competencies surfaced earlier in the research protocol. This author decided not to ‘judge a book by its cover’ because a considerable number of programs that do not use the term Organization Development offer highly similar if not identical coursework and textbooks that satisfy all or part of the OD Program Essential Elements (2014) and requirements of employers. Regardless of whether coursework and texts were the same, this author recognized the need to filter out programs when they were not “OD enough.”

Findings

Comparative Analysis of OD Competencies

This author’s comparative analysis of 31 OD competency publications, which were further reduced to 11 competency models (see: Cheung-Judge, 2020), confirms that universal aspects of OD can still be traced back to the elementary foundations set by many of the field’s founders. Since its inception, OD has distinguished itself by approaching organizations as socio-technical systems, which may be influenced through numerous activities that bring about effective change, including the facilitation of learning,

Table 2. *Analysis of Global Graduate Programs, Certificates, and Institutes in Organization Development, Leadership, Learning, and Change*

Aalto University, MS	Indiana Wesleyan University, MA	St Scholastica, MBA
Abilene Christian University, MS	INOC Think Tank for OD and Coaching	Tata Institute of Social Sciences, MA
Abu Dhabi School of Management, MSLOD	INSEAD Executive Master in Change, EMC	Technische Universität Berlin, MA
Advanced Management Institute St Petersburg	International Coaching Federation	Temple University, BA
Assumption University, MM	International OD Association (IODA)	Temple University, BEd
Avila University, MS (MSOD)	International Psychoanalytic University Berlin, MA	Texas A&M, Grad Cert
Azusa Pacific University, MA	Johns Hopkins, MS	The New School Milano, Grad Cert
Azusa Pacific University, MS	Lewis University, MA	Touro University, PsyD
Benedictine University, PhD	Liberty University, PhD	TSM Business School Netherlands, MA
Birkbeck, University of London, MSc	Lincoln Christian U, MA	U Minnesota, Grad Cert
Bologna Business School, MA	Malardalen University Sweden, MS	U of Wisconsin - Platteville, MS
Boston College, Grad Cert	Manchester, MSc	UMass Global, MAOL
Bowling Green University, MOD	Manhattan College, MS	Universidad del Desarrollo Chile, MDO
Brandman U, EdD	Marymount University, Grad Cert	University of Amsterdam, MSc
Cabrini University, PhD	Middle Tennessee State University, MS	University of Arizona Global Campus, PhD
Cairn University, MS	Mount St Mary's U, Grad Cert	University of Asia and the Pacific, MSHCOD
California Baptist University, MA	Mount Vernon Nazarene, MBA	University of Barcelona, MA
Case Western University, MS	National University, MS	University of Calgary, BComm
Central Penn College, MPS	Newberry College SC, MS	University of Colorado, MS (MSOL)
Champlain College, MS	NHS Employers Do	University of Denver, Grad Cert
Charleston Southern U, MA	North Central University, MS	University of Denver, MA
CMI Business School Madrid, MA	Northwestern University, MS	University of Exeter, London, MSc
Colorado State University, MA	NTL.org	University of Georgia Gwinnett Campus, Med
Colorado Technical, Doctor of Mgt	Oakland University, MOL	University of Georgia, EdD, PhD
Columbia Southern U, MS	Oasis School of Human Relations	University of Kansas, MS
Columbia University, MA	ODN Europe	University of Limerick, Kemmy Business School, MS
Concordia - Irvine, MA	Penn State University, MPS	University of Monterey, MDO
Convertas (Dubai) Organizational Development	Pepperdine University, MSOD	University of New England Australia, Bachelor's
Cornerstone University, MA, EdD	Peres Academic Center, MA	University of New Mexico, MA
Crown College, MA	Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (Georgia), Grad Cert	University of North Carolina, BA
Drury University, BS	Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (Philadelphia), MS	University of Oxford, PGDip (Post Grad Diploma)
Eastern Illinois U, BA	Pittsburgh State U, MS	University of Pennsylvania, MPhil
Eastern Michigan U, MS (MSHROD)	Queens University, MS (MSTOD)	University of Pennsylvania, MS
Eastern Washington University, MS	Quinnipiac University, MS	University of S Dakota, MS Admin
Edgewood College, MS	Regent, MA	University of Southern California, EdD

continues next page

Table 2 continued

ESIC Valencia Spain, MS	Regis, MS	University of St Thomas, Grad Cert
European Association for Supervision and Coaching	Rider University, MA	University of Texas at Dallas, MS
European Org Design Forum	Robert Morris University, MS	University of the Incarnate Word, MS
FH Wien Vienna, MA	Roffee Park Institute/University of Sussex, MSc	University of Valley Forge, MAOD
Fielding, MA	Roosevelt University, MA	University of Warwick, Exec Diploma
France University Schools of Management, MSc	Southeast Asia Interdisciplinary Institute, MA-PhD	Upper Iowa University, Grad Cert
Fresno State U, MA	Schulich School of Business, York University, Masters Certificate	US International University of Africa, MS
Friedrich-Alexander University MA	Sciences Po School of Management and Innovation, MA	Valdosta State University, BS (ORGL)
Friends University Kansas, MS	Shippensburg, MS	Vanderbilt, Ded
George Mason University, MA	SIM Global Education, Cert	Vanderbilt, MED
George Washington University, MA, PhD	Sonoma State University, MA	Villanova University, BIS
Georgetown University, Grad Cert	Southern New Hampshire University, MS	Webster University, MA
Gonzaga University, MA	St Catherine University, MAOL	Western Kentucky U, MA
Goodwin University, MS (MSOL)	St Joseph's University, MS	Western New England University, MS
Graduate School of HRD, MA, PhD	St Louis University, MA	Widener, ODL MA
Hawaii Pacific University, MA	St Scholastica, Grad Cert	Wilmington University, EdD

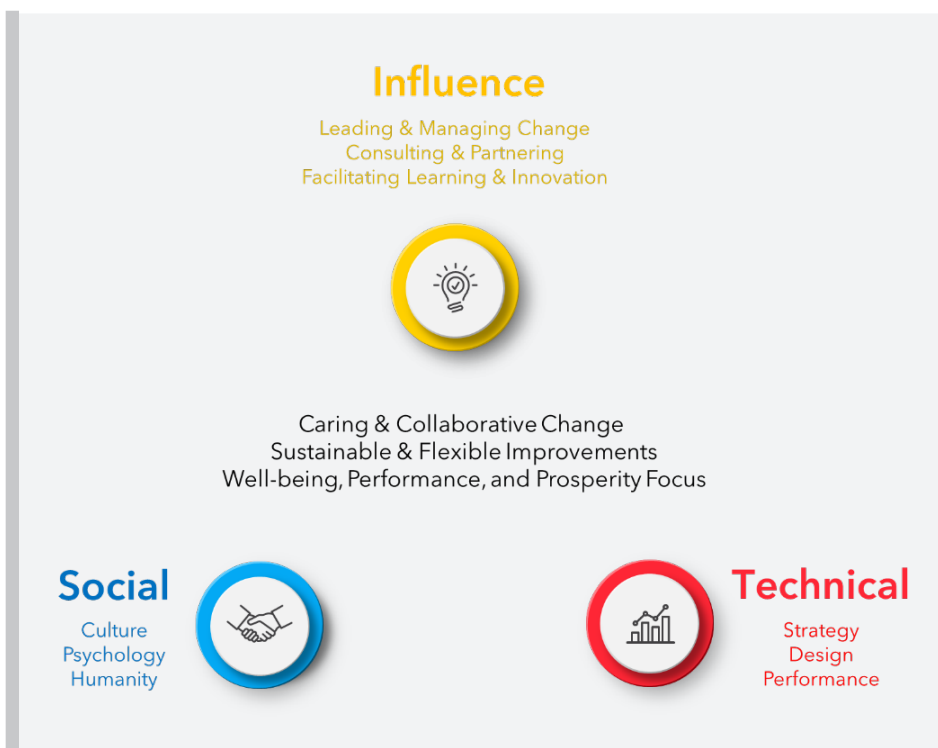


Figure 1: ODCC Competency Domains Categories

problem-solving, decision making, relating with others, resolving conflict, and creative thinking (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Katz & Kahn, 1966; Roethlisberger & Dickson, 2003; Homans, 1951). Kurt Lewin's (1936) foundational equation, $b = f(P, E)$, suggests that behavior is a function of the fluid and complex interplay between a person and the forces present in their environment. As not to compete with, but rather trace back to many of these prominent OD competency models, this author developed a "Supra-Competency Model" (SCM) framework based on Durkheimian morphological facts. The SCM is organized by three elementary domains, which coincide with Durkheim's notion of morphological facts: *Social*, *Technical*, and *Influence*. Each domain is comprised of three competency categories, and further still into three competency clusters.

Competency Domains. The SCM framework (Figure 1) is helpful because it reveals how some existing OD competency models

Table 3. *Tracing M.O.S.T. Domains & Categories Across Competency Models*

	M.O.S.T. Categories	Knowledge and Skill Requirements for OD Practitioners (Cummings & Worley, 2008)	Competencies of ODPs (Worley, Rothwell, & Sullivan, 2010)	OD Network Global Competencies (Minahan, 2018)	8 Competency Domains (Cheung-Judge, 2020)
Social	Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational Behavior (Culture) Comparative Cultural Perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other (Cultural Dynamics) Other (Cross Cultural) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture Builder Cross Cultural Navigator 	
	Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational Behavior Individual Psychology Group Dynamics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpersonal 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well Trained in Applied Behavioral Science Strong Group Process Skills
	Humanity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational Behavior (Conflict, Ethics, Power, and Politics) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity Advocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics & Values
Technical	Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management & Organization Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Catalyst Credible Strategist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual Competencies on how an Organization Works (strategy)
	Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational Behavior (Work Design) Management & Organization Theory 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient Designer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual Competencies on how an Organization Works (design)
	Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Methods/ Statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mini-Assessment Diagnosis Evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Synthesizer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual Competencies on how an Organization Works (evaluation)
Influence	Leading & Managing Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functional Knowledge of Business Org Behavior (Leadership) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-Awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems Change Leader Results Oriented Leader Credible Influencer Self-Aware Leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of Self Change Competency
	Consulting & Partnering		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing; Enrolling; Contracting; Feedback; Participation; Follow-up; Separation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trusted Advisor Collaborative Communicator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultancy & Process Skills
	Facilitating Learning & Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual Psychology Learning Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovator Life-long Learner & Practitioner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialism Skills & Knowledge

focus more heavily on certain aspects of OD than others (see *Table 3* for comparison with more recent models). For instance, some models heavily emphasize organizational behavior, while others stress aspects of the consulting process. Some do not address culture as much as others, but instead focus on understanding applied behavioral science. Some do not pay as much attention to facilitating dialogue and learning, but do stress related

competencies including self-awareness, ethics, and equity. To develop robust and relatable criteria for an assessment that identifies OD career preferences described earlier, required a model that incorporates all these characteristics so that in addition to being helpful as a standalone competency framework, the SCM may be used to match both Pure and Hybrid OD careers with competency interests and strengths amongst individuals.

Competency Categories. Competency domains (Social, Technical, and Influence) are comprised of three competency categories, which represent types of work that an OD practitioner may or may not be called to perform. For instance, within the Social Domain, three categories are fundamental to developing the well-being and cohesion of people in organizational systems, which include: *Psychology*, *Culture*, and *Humanity*. Similarly, the Technical

Domain is comprised of three elementary categories centered on developing the effectiveness of organizational systems in which people operate. These include *Strategy*, *Design*, and *Performance*. Finally, the Influence Domain includes categories that are critical to the integration and synergy that may be developed between people and the system, which include: *Leading & Managing Change*; *Consulting & Partnering*; and *Facilitating Learning*. Although Competency Domains, Categories, and Clusters are separated to make learning more manageable, they are ultimately interrelated. By remaining mindful and developing the habit of reflecting on experience, OD practitioners can spend an entire lifetime discovering new connections between each category and cluster. In this way, just as OD practice is anchored to these elementary features, they also afford space for differentiation and agency in OD represented as a coherent society.

Competency Clusters. Finally, competency clusters refer to the specific sets of knowledge, skills, and abilities that are required to effectively carry out the work of a given category. These include action-oriented groupings of behaviors and outcomes germane to the specific domain they belong to (Tables 4–6). Although competency domains, categories, and clusters are separated to make learning more manageable, they are ultimately interrelated and present understandable overlap from time to time. By remaining mindful and establishing a reflective practice, it is likely that practitioners may spend a lifetime discovering new connections between each category and cluster. Analysis also demonstrates that across all clusters, two distinct approaches to the work of OD become apparent. For the sake of classification, this author refers to these approaches as “Classic” versus “Innovative.” Those who prefer a Classic approach are more likely to enjoy a step-by-step, scientific, and objective approach to change that engages in diagnosis, problem solving, and changing behaviors. This is now referred to widely amongst OD academics and experts as the “Diagnostic” approach to OD (Bushe & Marshak, 2009), and it still has a very large following. On

Table 4. *Social Domain*

Category	Cluster
Culture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Helping leaders identify and address characteristics of organizational culture that require greater attention and alignment with the organization’s stated vision, mission, and values. 2. Creating a safe space for employees to discuss, challenge, and transform widely shared assumptions that drive common helpful and unhelpful behaviors. 3. Addressing common anxieties and attachments that inhibit organizational health and effectiveness.
Psychology	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Drawing from concepts and practices in social psychology to help motivate employees, address resistance to change, navigating complexity and uncertainty, and inspiring peak performance. 2. Drawing from concepts and practices in social-organizational psychology and group dynamics to develop high performing, cohesive, and adaptive teams with clear charters, boundaries, authority, roles, decision making, and tasks. 3. Drawing from frameworks and practices in group dynamics to address dysfunctional characteristics of groups including scapegoating, anti-task behaviors, sabotage, and bad politics.
Humanity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspiring, developing, and sustaining genuine and measurable characteristics of diversity, equity, and inclusion. 2. Cultivating a mindful and ethical workplace marked by ethical decision making and citizenship. 3. Cultivating meaningful work by aligning individual and team’s deepest sense of purpose with the organization’s mission or cause.

the other hand, those who prefer an Innovative approach are more likely to enjoy a “Dialogic,” subjective, and emergent approach to change that facilitates sense-making and the transformation of mindset (Bushe & Marshak, 2009, 2014; Marshak & Bushe, 2018). The Innovative Approach includes both “Dialogic” OD and relatively newer “Conscious OD” paradigms (Brendel, 2022), which both entail perceiving the world outside of the prism we have become accustomed to and in many cases take for granted.

Comparative Analysis of Job Descriptions

Moving further into analyzing and refining the SCM model through comparison with data gleaned from job search engines, this author discovered that although competency categories remain universal to “Pure OD” positions (i.e., internal, and external consultants), not all are required by “Hybrid OD” job descriptions. Therefore,

while analyzing 500 job descriptions, the inclusion criterion was that the job description must explicitly call for at least one competency category within each of the three competency domains: Social, Technical, and Influence. In this way, analysis was able to draw a line between Hybrid OD positions and those that fall too far outside of SCM parameters to be considered OD at all. This author also discovered that for both Pure and Hybrid OD jobs, descriptions either explicitly called for knowledge across a “Broad” number of interventions versus just one or two “Specialized” interventions that have been successful in that context. For instance, a “Broad” preference would desire a job that employs a wide variety of OD approaches, including Action Learning, GE Workout, World Café, Theory U, Future Search, and Narrative Mediation. Specialized interventions might simply include Lean Six Sigma or Appreciative Inquiry.

Table 5. *Technical Domain*

Category	Cluster
Strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing a clear, widely understood, and relatable vision, mission, strategic initiatives, cultural imperatives objectives, performance indicators, and resource allocation. 2. Implementing a transparent strategic change process with clear benchmarks that include aligning and developing talent, IT, HR, organizational structures, and budgets. 3. Continuously inviting feedback, adjusting the plan, and rewarding success in a manner consistent with the organization's values.
Design	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design agile organizational systems that observe and respond effectively to changes in the external and internal environment. 2. Developing effective organizations structures, which account for span of control, chain of command, networks for learning and innovation, and talent career ladders and lattices. 3. Improving upon the efficiency and effectiveness of organizational processes by mapping and assessing inputs, throughputs, outputs, clients, and feedback systems.
Performance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Using surveys, focus groups, and interviews to formulate valid and actionable data and insights regarding organizational performance. These may include operational efficiency, leader and team effectiveness, quality of customer interaction, speed of innovative products and services to market, as well as internal and external stakeholder satisfaction. 5. Demonstrating, monitoring, and managing the impact of organizational interventions on performance variables over time including those typically monitored by human resources. These may include voluntary and involuntary attrition, absenteeism, presenteeism, employee engagement, longevity, wellness, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. 6. Developing new performance indicators and reward systems that balance strategic initiatives with and cultural imperatives, which may include innovation, inclusion, belonging, citizenship, meaningful work, sense of community, and addressing bias.

Table 6. *Influence Domain*

Category	Cluster
Leading & Managing Change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Helping employees create a strong case for change, which outweighs resistance by facilitating dialogue and consensus around current industry and demographic data, success stories/benchmark organizations, and stakeholder demand. 2. Analyzing resistance and mobilizing a critical mass of influential internal and external stakeholders who are clear and committed to their roles, goals, and objectives in the change process. 3. Cultivating momentum by celebrating and rewarding progress toward benchmarks and building upon the momentum of initial successes to achieve longer-term, high-payoff initiatives.
Consulting & Partnering	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding how organizational strategy, systems, structures, culture, teams, leadership, and operational functions collectively contribute to the health and performance of organizations. 2. Sensing the needs of the client or partner, identifying a sponsor, clarifying roles, contracting, diagnosing organizational needs, entering dialogue around strategy, developing interventions with diverse stakeholders, executing interventions, carrying out evaluation, and either exiting the organization or re-contracting. 3. Familiarity and adherence to OD values throughout the engagement, including awareness of self and system, continuous learning and innovation, integrity, courageous leadership, trust and respect, diversity and inclusion, collaborative engagement, strategic practicality, client growth and development.
Facilitating Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitating regular inquiry, dialogue, creative thinking, and experimentation to advance the organization's desired strategy and culture. 2. Assisting in the creation of learning opportunities and processes that draw from adult learning theory that strengthen the competencies and capabilities of the organization's future talent. 3. Helping leaders manage unexpected challenges through dialogue and informal coaching, by drawing from cognitive development.

Findings also confirm a recent conversation amongst experts in the field about the way jobs focus not only on organizational but societal outcomes. This indicates an important distinction between organizations focused on outcomes related to what this author labels “Organizational” vs. “Societal” positions. As can be expected, some of these positions blend organizational outcomes with societal outcomes—these primarily included healthcare and B-corps. As these organizational outcomes are primarily in service to basic human needs and rights, analysis positioned these jobs as primarily Societal. As one of the aims of this assessment is to draw individuals to the type of change outcomes they ultimately wish to influence, this author classified these job descriptions as Societal in nature as well.

Though extensive in nature, this research made it possible to develop a taxonomy for Career Calling Preferences in OD (Table 7, next page). Below, is a description of each of these key characteristics. When combined there are 16 Career Calling Preferences, each represented in the current job market, universities, and publications on OD. Although some careers classified as “Pure” may have titles other than “Organization Development,” they nonetheless match criteria for Pure OD, which indicates misalignment between an employer’s understanding of OD and adjacent titles. The key for this table is as follows: O = Organizational; S = Societal; H = Hybrid; P = Pure; Sp = Specialized; B = Broad; I = Innovative; C = Classic.

Organizational vs. Societal. Individuals who prefer *Organizational* outcomes experience a greater fulfillment by working on projects related with organizational change, which includes the development of a competitive strategy, employee engagement, business performance, agility, design, ethics, employee wellness, and process efficiency. On the other hand, those who prefer Societal outcomes experience greater fulfillment by improving organizations that work on societal issues. Satisfaction is derived from working directly on societal

change efforts such as community development, social justice, environmental sustainability, income equality, establishing healthy food sources, and addressing unethical governments.

Hybrid vs. Pure. Individuals who gravitate toward a *Hybrid* OD Identity tend to feel more at home in career roles that are adjacent or partially overlap the OD pro-

approaches (e.g., Appreciative Inquiry), and many with great success! However, they do not prefer to possess the remarkably extensive, Broad mastery of knowledge, skills, and abilities that represent all three core competency domains discussed above (Social, Technical, and Influence). Those who prefer a Broad Mastery may serve a wide range of organizational roles as they have an ample number of OD frameworks,

... competency clusters refer to the specific sets of knowledge, skills, and abilities that are required to effectively carry out the work of a given category. These include action-oriented groupings of behaviors and outcomes germane to the specific domain they belong to. Although competency domains, categories, and clusters are separated to make learning more manageable, they are ultimately interrelated and present understandable overlap from time to time. By remaining mindful and establishing a reflective practice, it is likely that practitioners may spend a lifetime discovering new connections between each category and cluster. Analysis also demonstrates that across all clusters, two distinct approaches to the work of OD become apparent.

profession, marked by a preference for some but not all OD job characteristics. According to this analysis, OD is now diffused or merged into professions that include Talent Development, Human Resources, Human Resource Development, Management Consulting, DE&I, and Executive Coaching. Still, those with a Hybrid preference may still appreciate and adopt additional characteristics of *Pure* OD practitioners, who identify only as OD professionals (i.e., “OD Proper”), and hold titles that are strictly named OD and attend only to matters of OD as defined mainly by university educators and experts. They may also find ways to infuse with adjacent and sometimes combined professions, like Talent Development and HR.

Specialized vs. Broad. Individuals who prefer a Specialized mastery of OD tend to gravitate to just one or two specific

tools, and approaches. Broad Mastery also requires a deep knowledge of the theoretical and psychological underpinnings of OD work.

Classic vs. Innovative. Individuals who prefer a Classic Approach are more likely to enjoy a step-by-step, scientific, and objective approach to change that engages in diagnosis, problem solving, and changing behaviors. This is also known as the “Diagnostic” approach to OD, and it still has a very large following. On the other hand, those who prefer a more Innovative Approach are more likely to enjoy a “Dialogic,” subjective, and emergent approach to change that facilitates sense-making and the transformation of mindsets. The Innovative Approach includes both “Dialogic” OD and relatively newer “Conscious OD” paradigm.

Table 7. *M.O.S.T. Preferences and Examples*

	Outcome	Identity	Mastery	Approach	Titles & Organizations
1	O	H	S	I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant Vice President of Organization Dev., TJ-Maxx Companies Consultant, OD Consultants Consultant, Cleveland Consulting Group
2	O	H	S	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager of Organization Dev., Blue Shield of California Organizational Management and Dev. Analyst, Walt Disney Company Learning & Organization Dev. Specialist, HORNE
3	O	H	B	I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager of Culture Change & Teaming, Nike Organizational Transformation & Change Strategist, Booz Allen Hamilton Innovation Facilitator, US Bank
4	O	H	B	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Organization Dev. Consultant, Edward Jones Senior Organization Dev. Consultant, Harvard University Organization Dev. & Training Specialist, Honda
5	O	P	S	I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent Consultant, Spartina Consulting Independent Consultant, JP Consulting Human Centered Design Consultant, Deloitte
6	O	P	S	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Organization Dev. Consultant, Medical College of Wisconsin Organizational Dev. Consultant, Lockheed Martin Associate Director of Organization Dev., Humana
7	O	P	B	I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultant, Transformative Learning Institute Consultant, Kaleel Jamison Consulting Group Consultant, ChangeMaker(s)
8	O	P	B	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational Dev. Consultant, Dynamic Corporate Solutions Organizational Effectiveness Consultant, Northrup Grumman Organizational Effectiveness Specialist, Tiffany & Co.
9	S	H	S	I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sr. Design Strategist, Design Thinking & Innovation, Johns Hopkins University Home Office Talent & Organizational Culture. Partnership for LA Schools Innovation Manager, The Nature Conservancy
10	S	H	S	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of DE&I and Organizational Dev., Teach for All Senior Director Talent & Organizational Dev., Back on my Feet Organizational Dev., American Red Cross
11	S	H	B	I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sr. Learning and Organization Dev., Consultant, Farber Cancer Institute Learning & Development Manager, DEI & Belonging, Stanford University Consultant, Roadmap Consulting
12	S	H	B	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dir. Strategic People & Organization Dev., American Cancer Society Director of Strategy & Learning, The Klarman Foundation Director of Organizational Dev., Partnership for Safety & Justice
13	S	P	S	I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultant, Luma Consulting Consultant, The Social Change Agency Consultant, Community Resource Exchange (CRE)
14	S	P	S	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational Dev. Consultant, Cottage Health Organization Dev. & Change Consultant, Legacy Health Consultant, United Nations Development Program
15	S	P	B	I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultant, Brighter Strategies Consultant, The Lindsay Group Consultant, TSNE.org
16	S	P	B	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director, Organizational Dev. and Culture, Habitat for Humanity Organizational Dev. Consultant, National Institutes of Health Organizational Dev. Sr. Specialist, Employment Security Department

O = Organizational; S = Societal; H = Hybrid; P = Pure; S = Specialized; B = Broad; I = Innovative; C = Classic

Discussion

Developing the M.O.S.T. Assessment

Utilizing the findings discussed above, this researcher created a 45 item self-assessment, comprised of four subscales. Two “Career” subscales include *Mastery* and *Identity*, which help determine an individual’s unique blend of competency-based strengths and interests. Two “Calling” subscales, *Approach* and *Outcome*, help determine an individual’s preferred method for leading OD efforts as well as the type of impact they would like to have. *Table 8* demonstrates the connection between this theoretical framework and each subscale.

Career Subscales. To help identify characteristics of a successful and meaningful career, this researcher first distinguished *Mastery* and *Identity* subscales. Both utilize Likert-scale response items to measure the degree to which an individual believes they are competent and interested in utilizing various competencies. The *Mastery* subscale is designed to help identify an individual’s perceived abilities across all 27 competency clusters in our model. Respondents are asked to read and share their perceived level of competency in an honest fashion. They are reminded that their competency level refers to the degree to which they are experienced and capable of doing something effectively or efficiently. Choices for each of these items include “no ability,” “low ability,” “average ability,” “moderate ability,” and “high ability.” A respondent may be designated as having *Broad Mastery* if they score high across multiple competency categories. If they do not meet these criteria, they are instead classified as having a *Specialized Mastery*, which positions them better for positions that require some but not all OD competencies present in the SCM.

The *Identity* subscale is designed to help identify an individual’s level of genuine interest in regularly engaging in each of the 9 competency categories in the SCM model. This subscale utilizes the question stem: “Imagine your ideal career. How often would you like to engage in each of the following activities at work?” Respondents are asked to respond using

Table 8. *Framework, Common Characteristics, Preferences*

Career Calling Characteristics	OD Characteristics	Preferences
What type of change do you wish to influence?	Outcome	Organizational vs. Societal
What can you get paid for?	Identity	Pure vs. Hybrid
What are your unique talents	Mastery	Broad vs. Specialized
What interactions bring you the most joy?	Approach	Classic vs. Innovative

Likert-scale options: “Never,” “Seldom,” “Sometimes,” “Often,” or “Always.” Examples of items include: “Working on organizational strategy, including strategic thinking, planning, and implementation,” “Consulting and partnering,” and “Improving aspects of humanity through the work you do (such as ethics, diversity, inclusion, justice, and equity).” A respondent will receive the designation of “Pure” OD identity if they demonstrate a high level interest across a majority of competency categories. Respondents receive a designation of “Hybrid” OD identity if they indicate an interest level in as few as one competency category per domain.

Calling Subscales. To help identify characteristics of an individual’s calling, the assessment includes *Outcome* and *Approach* subscales. Both utilize a forced-choice response methodology to stimulate cognitive processes associated with interviews as they require participants to “deeply process each question and response option” (Allen, 2017, p. 1553). The *Outcome* subscale begins with the stem question, “If you could choose, which type of outcomes would you like to pursue through work?” Respondents are forced to choose between two items. For example, a respondent may either prefer to pursue outcomes that include: “Developing competitive organizational strategies and performance” or “Developing sustainable strategies that help to improve our society and environment.” Similarly, they may choose between “Developing efficient and ethical business processes” or “Dismantling structures that lead to societal problems such as racial injustice.” To score the five-item *Outcome* subscale, participants are designated as

having an “Organizational Outcome preference if they choose classic responses over 50 percent of the time. Otherwise, they are designated as having an “Innovative Approach” preference.

The *Approach* subscale begins with the stem question: “If you could choose, how would you prefer to facilitate change?” Again, the respondent is forced to choose between two items. For example, they may prefer to “Take a linear, scientific approach to change, by facilitating fact finding and objective measurement to drive new employee behaviors,” or “Take a subjective and emergent approach to change by inviting employee narratives and facilitating sense-making to inspire new employee mindsets.” Another example includes the choice between “Address common organizational challenges by planning and facilitating well-tested solutions.” To score the five-item *Approach* subscale, participants are designated as having a “Classic Approach” preference if they choose classic responses more than 50% of the time. Otherwise, they are designated as having an “Innovative Approach” preference.

Following the creation of the assessment items, this researcher conducted a content validity survey and follow-up interviews with eight experts in the field, including lifetime achievement award winners from the OD Network and other highly regarded thought-leaders from diverse backgrounds and locations throughout the world. The updated version of this assessment is now live at opensourceod.com/assessment, and researchers are now conducting an initial psychometric validation study of the M.O.S.T. assessment.

Developing the M.O.S.T. Report

The M.O.S.T. is designed not only to identify but also to match an individual's unique combination of preferences with actual jobs, resources, communities, and learning opportunities. There are 16 combinations in total, and just as job descriptions and consultants resemble career calling preferences, so too do books, podcasts, university programs, and career coaches. After a participant submits their survey item, they receive an email confirmation with a link to their unique report. Each report contains a detailed descrip-

The *Outcome* subscale begins with the stem question, “If you could choose, which type of outcomes would you like to pursue through work?” Respondents are forced to choose between two items. For example, a respondent may either prefer to pursue outcomes that include: “Developing competitive organizational strategies and performance” or “Developing sustainable strategies that help to improve our society and environment.” Similarly, they may choose between “Developing efficient and ethical business processes” or “Dismantling structures that lead to societal problems such as racial injustice.”

tion of the types of work contexts (Organizational or Societal) are most likely to bring them the greatest sense of career fulfillment. It also includes descriptions and examples of organizations and businesses that are dedicated to societal good (e.g., B-Corps and Social Businesses), as well as departments within corporations that are solely dedicated to social change. This is followed by links to recent OD job postings that fit their preferences, as well as learning resources and links to related articles in the *OD Review* and *OD Journal* to deepen their understanding of these unique professional contexts. Next, the report contains an overview of common tools, approaches, and frameworks that are utilized by others who fit their preferred approach (Classic or Innovative). It also includes information on the type of tools that they are most likely

to enjoy. The report concludes with an opportunity to join a free learning community of OD practitioners that are grouped by preference.

Benefits & Implications

The above analysis confirms what many in the field know intuitively, that OD is a fluid, multiplex profession, and a one-size-fits-all approach to developing OD careers, departments, job descriptions, and educational programs is unrealistic and, in many cases, inefficient. The Durkheim methodology utilized in this study reveals patterns

shared by three of the field's primary stakeholders: aspiring practitioners, graduate programs, and employers. Utilizing the taxonomy informed by this study, each of these constituencies may better differentiate their strategic growth and partnerships in ways that are meaningful, economical, and practical.

Aspiring Practitioners. This study demonstrates that well over half of the jobs in the OD market do not require full-spectrum OD acumen. The M.O.S.T. takes into consideration that entering or transitioning into the field of OD may not require an entire degree; for some earning a certificate with a specific focus that satisfies employer expectations can be both meaningful and economical. For others who do earn degrees, the M.O.S.T. provides tailored

insight as to which course electives and extra-curricular learning would be most helpful and meaningful. For advanced students, the M.O.S.T. has already served as a helpful methodology for accelerating the formulation of personally meaningful, practical, and theoretically grounded dissertation topics and research methodologies. The M.O.S.T. can also be used to produce cohesive and focused pairings between aspiring practitioners, OD career coaches, and peer mentors.

Graduate Programs. Aspiring practitioners interested in developing personally meaningful and marketable OD competencies are more likely to be attracted to and retained by graduate programs that not only build upon their unique strengths and engage their interests, but also increase their chances of securing future careers that do the same. Great OD graduate programs stick to the essential foundations of an OD education, while also differentiating themselves from other programs, often emphasizing different experiences and frameworks that set them apart. In this way, it can be said that of the 144 pure and hybrid programs that exist, whether intentional or not, each tends to attract specific personas. The M.O.S.T. provides a way for these programs to identify which of the 16 preferences their vision and curriculum most closely represent. It stands to reason that using the M.O.S.T. as a strategic program planning and marketing tool may not only increase enrollment and decrease attrition, but also increase confidence in students who are appropriately concerned with the ROI of an expensive education.

Employers. The M.O.S.T. provides a strategic and efficient way for both pure and hybrid OD hiring departments to recruit talented and motivated employees who not only fit the competency requirements but also the ethos of the organization and motivations of a particular job. Employers may also utilize the M.O.S.T. to reverse engineer job descriptions that attract the type of OD professionals that would be most engaged and effective in their work. Finally, the M.O.S.T. makes it possible to match employers with graduate programs

who share their preference, so that pathways between talent pools and employment opportunities may be institutionalized through university partnerships, scholarships, and reimbursement programs. Ideally, the M.O.S.T. could serve as a pipeline that moves aspiring practitioners into programs that fit and accelerate their pathways to OD research and employment.

Limitations

The Durkheim method itself is flawed insofar as most data analyzed for this study does not necessarily fall into the category of “true facts,” because for the most part, they are subjective interpretations of what OD is, made by communities of practice, employers with different needs, and educators who have specific biases. However, this same limitation, according to Lukes (1982) also presents a strength of this approach in that it is: “... meaningful, that is, for subjects whose shared understandings of their meaning are constitutive of practices, norms, and institutions, i.e., essential to their being the realities they are” (p. 12).

Another current limitation of the M.O.S.T. is that some aspiring practitioners are likely to have what you might term “deutero-preferences,” where one equally prefers both societal and organizational outcomes, or both classic and innovative approaches for instance. In cases where an individual enjoys deploying OD toward any outcome, it is through skillful dialogue (not the assessment itself) where deepening of meaning would take place. This can be assisted by coaching participants who are “on the fence” to identify their “Sister” Career Calling Preference. For instance, if someone scores “Org, Pure, Broad, and Classic,” they may, with the help of a facilitator or coach, also review a profile that is Societal, Pure, Broad, and Classic. This would provide a wider variety of career development resources that span both Organizational and Societal Outcomes. Participants are also given an extra section on their report, which shares basic resources for preferences they did not score high on, to expose them to ways in which they

might create a more balanced approach to their craft, such as combining Classic and Innovative approaches. It is also conceivable that there are some consultants who are competent in and enjoy all combinations of OD Career Callings, however it stands to reason that this would be rare according to our analysis, and there are already resources available to satisfy these individuals, including full-spectrum competency models.

Conclusion

The idea of developing an assessment that reveals effective and differentiated career development pathways, arose from persistent hallway debates amongst professors, career angst amongst students, confusion amongst clients, and an overall love for this field. As the field continues to evolve over time and new tools and paradigms are introduced, the M.O.S.T. will also continue to update. Periodically, participants are encouraged to bookmark and check-in with their “living reports” for updates. Despite the complexity explored above, one’s definition of OD depends in part upon the prism through which they interpret the world. For this reason, there are many gateways to choose from before stepping into the world of OD. To accommodate complexity the M.O.S.T. will undergo continuous validation to help educators, employers, and aspiring practitioners better define their own unique relationships with the field.

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