

Politics, Change and Reflective Practitioners

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Abstract

In a rapidly changing work environment, OD practitioners need to be aware of political complexities in which they operate. The major point of this paper is that students learning about organizational change and OD practice would benefit from studying Politics. In the process of studying Politics and engaging with others in the classroom or on Internet discussion boards, they would increase their ability to reflect on their experiences and those of others. This paper offers suggestions for politicizing OD education.

18

Setting

I coordinate the Politics major in a School of Social and Workplace Development in a Division of Business. Most of our undergraduate students major in Human Resource Management, Human Resource Development, and Human Relations and Communications. Some go on to do graduate studies in Organizational Development, Training and Development, or Leadership in Workplace Development. Many go into the workforce as Organizational Development Practitioners (ODPs). My experience is that those students who seek careers as ODPs, or in Human Resources, mainly tend to avoid electing Politics subjects. It is as if they deem an understanding of politics as irrelevant to their needs, or minimally, as marginal. It is my aim in this article to explain why I would like to change this understanding. My central proposition is that teaching Politics to students who may become ODPs is a pedagogical commitment to educate reflective practitioners who effectively balance action and political astuteness in a fast paced, changing work climate.

Organizational Politics

As an initial point of clarification, I am not referring merely to teaching the politics of an organization; I am referring to teaching an understanding of global politics. In particular, I am referring to a way of looking at the world through a three-fold process: of being aware of how political controversies influence organizations; of daring to ask contentious political questions; and of ethically reflecting on some apt responses. If OD refers to long-range efforts to improve organizations' problem-solving and adaptive capabilities (French, 1969), then how can consultants act as change agents within a complex global world without some educational pursuit as students of the significant political issues of the day?

Before answering this question, it is worth exploring what it means to manage the political dynamics of an organization. Wherever there are clashes of interest (between senior and middle management), conflicts of power (between shop-floor worker and top executive), different priorities (between marketing, production, and manufacturers), or resources to be allocated (wages, bonuses, promotions and profits), there are political dynamics at play. ODPs who attempt to change an organization

without giving due weight to the political dynamics may threaten power balances, exacerbating internal political struggles. "Traditionally, OD has tended to neglect political issues, mainly because its humanistic roots promoted collaboration and power sharing among individuals and groups" (Waddell, Cummings, & Worley, 2000, p. 159; also Cobb & Marguilies, 1981). However, by promotion of such "collaboration and power sharing" in hierarchically structured organiza-

tions, OD is political in challenging current workplace structures and practices. My point is to make these political issues explicit.

Butcher and Clarke (1999) conducted a study of the political fluency of fifty senior managers. Their research confirmed that organizations are political, that politics are endemic to managerial relationships, and that political skill can equate to self-serving manipulation or to managerial adeptness. Working on the assumption that politics is conspicuous when change is imminent, they asked these fifty managers about resistance to change and cooperation. "The results did not reflect a world of rational change management methodologies, but one in which political

fluency was a central management discipline" (Butcher & Clarke, 1999, p. 10). After six months of implementing change, 95 percent of the managers under study "saw the need to manage political behavior as central to the job of managing change" (Butcher & Clarke, 1999, p. 11). Being a good politician clearly is part of being a good manager. Skills involved are coalition-building, reading the behavior of others, deciphering hidden agendas, and maximizing formal and informal decision-making processes.

Political Dynamics

The skills needed to practice OD have a political dimension. Many ODPs struggle with dealing with the politics of the workplace because they have a limited notion of what constitutes "politics". Most people's notion of "politics" includes a concept of power. Indeed, many define the international arena as "power politics". When power is redefined from power struggles of domination and control, or from a Weberian ability to influence people, to the power unleashed within our potential, the focus of political energy changes. With this change is a revised notion of the relation between politics and power. I like the political theorist Hannah Arendt's view that:

Power is actualized only where word and deed have not parted company, where words are not empty and deeds are not brutal, where words are not used to veil intentions but to disclose realities, and deeds are not used to violate and destroy but to establish relations and create new realities (1974, p. 200).

This energized view of power redefines politics as the public space where debate should lead to ethical action.

With this redefinition, the whole concept of political dynamics becomes entirely consis-

tent with OD principles where power can be used in positive ways (Greiner & Schein, 1988). For example, such dynamics can empower workers to be open, accountable, and ethical in striving to create inclusive political strategies that meet everyone's needs. These positive strategies counter traditional political organizational bargaining, deceit, trade-offs, and win-lose solutions. That is, "leaders can support

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creativity by encouraging information exchange and collaboration," and by minimizing any organizational politics where powerful personal agendas stifle creativity (Andriopoulos, 2001, p. 838). Creativity is more likely to emerge when workers are motivated in mutual purpose rather than

in conflicting political agendas. Organizational conflict exists, but cooperation can prevail in such a way that accommodates diverse plurality. If an understanding of politics is central to managerial work and to change interventions of ODPs, then a development of skills in Organizational Politics is as important as skills in Human Resource Management, Leadership, Managing Change, and Staff Development. However, I am suggesting more than this. In today's complex globalized world, I am making a further case for the importance of teaching some understanding of international politics in the OD classroom.

OD Political Skills

OD is concerned with systemic organizational change that is of fundamental benefit to individuals and to organizations. General change agent skills include improved problem-solving, responsiveness, quality of work practices, and overall effectiveness. Waddell, Cummings and Worley (2000, pp. 160-161) identify three key aspects to managing the political dynamics of change. First, assessing change agent power may include a department head, the ODP, or a

group of important workers. Second, change agents need to identify vital stakeholders who can thwart or support change like unions, staff groups, departmental managers, and executives. Third, change agents need to influence stakeholders, not just in traditional political ways of using social networks to maximize one's power base, but more particularly to persuade, listen, and act collectively in open, consultative, dialogic ways.

Politics is a major discipline likely to foster the skills of open dialogue in students because it accepts that contested beliefs need to be explained and defended. The hope in dialogue is that people will understand each other and be open to new ways of thinking. "To create the spaces needed for dialogue, given disagreement and dissonance, the *risk* of listening is intrinsic to the *responsibilities* of attending to difference" (Porter, 2000, p. 176). Learning to listen is as important as engaging in speech. Being prepared to revise ideas on reflection on the consequences of what we hear is an indispensable competency to ODPs. Such competency is cultivated in Politics classes and in University Internet Politics discussion forums.

In addition to the skills of logic, reflection, and consultation, an understanding of political cultural differences is a key aspect to the core skills for future ODPs. In an OD text used by our students, Waddell, Cummings and Worley (2000) spell out core skills of consultation, inter/intrapersonal dynamics, understanding organizational behavior, research and evaluation, presentation, and management. They signal advanced skills for the future practitioner, including cross-cultural theory and nonverbal cross-cultural skills, and "collateral knowledge areas," including cultural anthropology and policy analysis (2000, p. 49). Learning to respect cultural differences is imperative in a globalized world.

Some educationalists may consider that a broad, deep, theoretical, and practical base comes from organizational theory, psychody-

namics of groups and organizations, and consultancy theory. Thus studying Politics is not directly relevant. However, take as an example the importance of motivation where theories of fairness and equity can have different meanings for employees. For example, low morale accompanies downsizing, when restructuring leads to employee uncertainty, redundancies, or unease with pay inequities. ODPs "need to question decades-old assumptions about what motivates people to change and what OD methods might increase the likelihood of an effective change" (Neumann, Miller, & Holti, 1999, p. 221). While psychological theories play an indispensable role in understanding cultural, attitudinal, and organizational design changes, concepts like fairness and equity, justice and equality are rooted in political theory. These concepts have practical application for human resource management, perceptions of feasible effective organizational change, and understanding growing global wealth disparities. Consultants increasingly work across ambiguous boundaries between cultural and structural organizational issues and the political domain has a major impact on the fluidity or rigidity of these boundaries. The more ODPs have been encouraged as *students* to think through the political, ethical complexities of underlying concepts such as fairness and equity, the wiser their judgement (ought to be) once they are working in organizations.

Change as Organizational Context

The context in which organizations operate is changing rapidly. Some changes include internal factors like technology, work practices, concepts of human resources, mentoring, and women's leadership roles. There are also national considerations of economics, trade, and government policies that influence organizations. Further, world forces of globalization, economic rationalism, massive extremes between wealth and poverty, ecological crisis, armed conflict, refugees, and the security ramifications of the "war against

terrorism" affect organizations.

It is germane to remember that since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 on the Pentagon and the World Trade Centre, the saying, "the world will never be the same" is repeated often. What has been disrupted is a sense of security, exposing fully our human vulnerability. The disruption has meant that political, economic, and security-based changes have influenced most organizations worldwide in some form. When states can no longer guarantee the expectations of core values of security, freedom, order, justice, and welfare (Jackson & Sorenson, 1999, pp. 3-6), leadership in the globalized era requires a sensitive balance of "continuity, novelty, and transition" (Barrett & Peterson, 2000, p. 19). In the Politics classroom and in Internet discussion boards, we debate intensely the national considerations and world forces alluded to above. Participating students are better equipped to understand the complex nature of leadership and change compared with those students who focus solely on internal work practices. Through studying Politics, students who plan to become ODPs, enrich their professional practice by widening their understanding of not only organizational but also of global politics.

Politics, Pedagogy and Reflective Practitioners

What pedagogical practices support culturally sensitive, political learning? Pedagogy refers "to the principles and methods of teaching – the ways in which a teacher carries out the task of presenting new knowledge and

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experience and generally manages the learning environment” (Davies, 1998, p. 179). In a rapidly changing world where the certainties of tradition are being radically questioned, universities are challenged as providers of knowledge. Within such fluctuating times, “traditional organization development change methodologies based on an exogenic, objectivist notion of knowledge may be inadequate” (Tenkasi, 2000, p. 74) to adapt to global complexities. Instead, Tenkasi argues for “new methodologies that rely on an endogenic, subjectivist conception of knowledge” (2000, p. 74) that understands ways in which knowledge is constructed subjectively, and requires contextual modification. This epistemology is not unreliably biased; rather it confirms the *situation of citizens* for whom their gender, race, ethnicity, class, workplace status, and relationships are important aspects of identity.

Acknowledging the vital connection between specificity, knowledge, and possibilities of change demands that ODPs be genuinely innovative in response to difference, not merely adaptive to tradition. As educators, we can introduce pedagogical practices that make explicit these connections. For example, I remind students that we do not come to the subject of Politics neutrally; rather we approach knowledge from our stance of gender, race, ethnicity, class, religious beliefs, family influences, and political viewpoints. Our situation can constrain us, or it can enable us to challenge our views.

I remind students that we cannot assume political neutrality – we all have views on what it means to talk of justice, equality, and freedom, and we all have views on what our governments should or should not be doing with regard to topical issues. The point is to argue persuasively one’s opinion, to listen respectfully to others who have vastly different views and, herein lies the crunch, to allow oneself to be persuaded (as student, educator, manager, or future ODP) that one’s own views might need changing. I provide opportunity for discussion

in large groups, small groups, topic-based groups, and one-to-one settings. I always clarify when I am articulating my own view, and invite questions on the content of my lectures. With encouragement, students grow in personal confidence through listening and engagement in debate.

In essays, I encourage students to articulate explicitly their situation by using the personal pronoun “I”. I ask students to develop an argument that explains the reasons why they hold certain political evaluations. This self-reflection puts the onus on students to defend their position, by providing sound reasons for their views that are well supported from ideas gained from readings. Having an opportunity to listen to others’ views, and to reflect critically on one’s own views, is an important step in becoming reflective practitioners. In grading essays, I look for the careful, coherent development of an argued position well supported with literature. Many of the core and advanced skills needed in the workplace like interviewing, understanding conflict, leadership, listening, building trust, negotiating, or public speaking are learned progressively in the Politics classroom.

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Appreciative Inquiry as a Pedagogical Philosophy

This situated, pedagogical, and epistemological approach sits comfortably with

Appreciative Inquiry (AI), a familiar tool within OD. The value of AI is as a philosophy oriented to change. In AI, the focus is on the vision; the image of the situation as workers, managers, and ODPs would like it to be. Obviously, this image may differ for all involved, but the value of AI lies in seeing the solutions in desired scenarios and underlining that an organization can "change at the speed of imagination" (Watkins & Mohr, 2001). The appreciative approach involves "an ability to see radical possibilities beyond the boundaries of problems as they present themselves in conventional terms" (Barrett & Peterson, 2000, p. 11). AI fosters imagination and innovation. Much of what we do in Politics classes and in essays is directed toward exploring the vision of open, just, equal, inclusive, and free politics. A prerequisite to this exploration is some understanding of injustice, inequality, citizen exclusion, and political oppression. Our multiple perspectives highlight numerous possibilities of vision. In the keenly debated exploration, teacher and students share the learning of participative democracy in action. Such learning is intrinsic to the formative skills of AI.

The power of AI lies in being a "democratic and self-generating mode of global organizational change that spreads through positive conversation" (Mantel & Ludema, 2000, p. 42). The ability to unleash the vigor of positive conversation is a core competency for ODPs. AI builds on positive assumptions about people, their relationships and the organization. AI "generates hope in the human capacity to achieve potentialities" (Barrett & Peterson, 2000, p. 13). Clearly there is a need to support ongoing generative learning in organizations. Barrett and Peterson (2000) suggest four aspects to developing the competencies of appreciative learning cultures. First, "affirmative competence" appreciates past and current strengths and successes. Second, "provocative competence" challenges conventional practices to experiment in the margins, to stretch in new directions that inspire passionate engagement.

Third, "generative competence" recognizes members' responsibility for meaningful progress. Fourth, "collaborative competence" creates forums in which colleagues exchange diverse perspectives.

Similarly, Mantel and Ludema (2000, p. 43) point to five attributes of AI: it breaks the deadlock of hierarchies; it is inclusive; it creates a self-reinforcing learning capacity; it expands dialogue about innovative possibilities amongst equalizing relationships with broad access to decision-making; and AI strengthens the organization's "positive core" (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999). This core, "comprised of all the competencies, capacities, achievements, assets, best practices, values, traditions, wisdom, and inspired emotions that lie deep at the heart of the organization, is an organization's most potent renewable source of energy for change" (Mantel & Ludema, 2000, p. 43). Through fostering these five attributes in the Politics classroom and in Internet discussion forums, students are provided with a foundational experience with valuable competency required of ODPs. Many of our Politics graduates are employed in private volunteer organizations (PVOs) where collaboration across religious, cultural, geographic and economic status divides is imperative. Practitioners need to be adaptable to new modes of organizational change in order to respond to rapidly mobile, often volatile global problems.

Teaching Politics to Future ODPs

I have suggested that the key to developing politically reflective practitioners involves politicizing both the content and process of OD education. The pedagogical practices that support such learning include: first, exploring political controversies and debates; second, critically asking contentious questions; and third, reflecting ethically on some answers. As alluded to above, appreciative learning cultures nourish "a spirit of restless inquiry" (Barrett & Peterson, 2000, p. 20). The "restless inquiry"

of my threefold approach assumes that everything is contestable, questionable, and open to ethical possibilities.

First, in examining controversies and debates encountered in the everyday lives of people and nations in international politics, a problem-solving dimension is introduced to stu-

dents. Debates are explained and argued; strengths, weaknesses, ambiguities, and confusions are articulated. Often we conclude with no resolution or an agreement to disagree. Second, given the controversial nature of world politics, we adopt a critical approach to the subject matter. Instead of simplistically accepting givens, we try to discern what is factual or workable and keep asking questions about contentious issues over which we disagree. While the issues discussed in Politics classes include the money spent

on defense, motivations of foreign policy, differing views on justice, or reasons for military intervention, the skills used by this critical approach are essential to ODPs. It is often through articulating questions that students begin to see fresh, possible answers. Third, an understanding of national and international politics requires us to consider the above controversies in a critical fashion through asking questions that primarily are ethical in nature. I reinforce the need for students to ask not only what is happening in world politics, but also what ought to change in world politics? That is, what are the values, goals, motivations, purposes, and moral judgements that underlie the policies of actors in world politics and the directions organizations and workplaces ought to

take? This ethical evaluation requires intense personal scrutiny behind the reasons for one's moral stance.

This human evaluative dimension to OD is crucial; without it, interventions are mere mechanistic procedures. Managers seek workers who can operate in self-managed teams competent to carry out participative decision-making, empowered to be creative, and knowledgeable of cultural and political change. In diagnosing organizational problems, collaboration between organizational members and ODPs is imperative to collect and analyze data, and suggest solutions for appropriate intervention. Thus a multi-method approach is most appropriate to teaching OD and change, by placing students in the role of internal consultant through case study, role play, and group projects (Varney & McFillen, 2000). Varney and McFillen (2000) stress the importance of confronting the ethical issues that arise, noting that often the questions asked are as important as the answers received, given misinformation, accidental errors, and intentional misrepresentations that are practiced in change interventions. In such instances "judgement" or "wisdom" is crucial.

The skills developed in Politics' classes occur in group discussions where students argue different viewpoints, identify problems in their views, examine alternatives, listen, and sometimes are persuaded to change. In one particular class on the women's movement, I used deliberately controversial stances on family, gender, social norms, and work roles to provoke definite responses. I invited students to physically situate themselves on either side of the room depending on the issue we were examining. They could sit in the middle if they could explain why they were ambivalent, and anyone could cross sides if they were persuaded by someone's argument. With each new issue, there was movement. I too committed myself by moving with each new issue discussed. Being aware of the power differential, generally, I moved after the students

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moved. As there was ample freedom to be persuaded of a different view and students would change as their peers presented points of debate, I never felt I influenced their choices unduly.

The Art of OD

Certainly, the questions explored in Politics classes may differ from those that arise in organizations. However, the problem-solving and decision-making skills are indispensable to ODPs. The *art* of OD involves criticism, argument, and concept-building, the underlying philosophical and pedagogical basis also of good Politics teaching. Such teaching attempts a Socratic pursuit to draw closer to the meanings of justice, wisdom, knowledge, and contentment. Can we begin to imagine organizations that are just, wise, and full of knowledgeable, contented workers? Bowden and Craven (2001, p. 19) invite ODPs to inspire, be expressive, creative, visual, and not merely clinically technical. The formal subjects of Human Resource Management, Human Resource Development, Staff Selection, Staff Training, Supervision and Teamwork, Mentoring, Leadership, Industrial Relations, and Business, provide essential systematic foundations for future ODPs. However, it is in disciplinary areas of Politics and Philosophy, or Studies of Justice, Culture, Gender, and Communications where much of the art of OD is learned.

The science and art of OD provide needed balance. In a global context where work and organizations involve people from diverse geographic, cultural, class, religious, and ethnic backgrounds, team-building across diversities is an effective way to build strengths for diversity in the workplace. Team-building provides problem-solving skills needed to tackle increased uncertainty and complexity such as mergers and acquisitions, fast-growing industries of entertainment, IT, health and financial services, and importantly for this article, managing cross-cultural, political complexities. Encouraging diversity

interventions in the workplace involves far more than merely not discriminating. It involves actively raising the moral awareness of workers' attitudes and practices that are racist, sexist, homophobic, or unfair. It supports inclusionary new policies aimed at recruiting senior staff who are women or from minority disadvantaged groups (see Porter, 1999). Active diversity policies welcome the richness that multiculturalism affords, and seek productively to work through possible conflicting ethnic work practices such as dress, prayer-times, norms of correct behavior, extended family commitments, or work ethics. This principled approach to difference "respects diversity, makes space for different forms of individuality, and seeks grounds for commonality" (Porter, 1997, p. 92). ODPs often have to explore competing values to diagnose an organization's culture and predict the cultural risk of implementing strategic changes.

Yet curiously, "AI reveals striking similarity of ultimate concerns among people regardless of race, culture, religion, or geographic location" (Mantel & Ludema, 2000, p. 49) in terms of values like mutual respect, cooperation, dignity of work, importance of hospitality, care for the environment, peace, justice, and community. The study of Politics (and other critical subjects) encourages the exploration of generally unexamined assumptions about what constitutes a good society or polity. It is important to ask what cultural and political norms should a country and its organizations aspire toward, and whether it matters if there are enormously different views on justice, equality, freedom, rights, welfare needs, and sustainable world economics. The science of formal OD education complements the art of

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dialogic, interpretive subjects like Politics. Collaborative competence is necessary for global organizing and depends on transformative dialogue. Managers who dictate, dominate, or indulge in monologues discourage open exploration of assumptions. Creating workable dialogical spaces maximizes the interactive dynamic between attending to and being paid attention. In these spaces, ideas are exchanged, old views are revised or discarded, new possibilities arise, and visions of change emerge. How we learn is as important as what we learn.

ODPs in Global Arenas

ODPs need to be very aware that their practices and procedures are influenced heavily by assumptions of western industrialized cultures. Along with the restructuring of the socialist economies, the economic growth or depression in the Global South, the booming East-Asian economies, and the expanding global marketplace comes the development of foreign firms, creating both organizational needs and opportunities for change. The nature of optimal change is arguable. ODPs often operate in multinational corporations

(MNCs) where there is not adequate space for ethical questions to be asked about whether MNCs exploit local workers, and how ethical are operations that do not benefit the host country when profits return to the Global North?

Yet, ODPs also help workers in the public sector, aid agencies, or NGOs to gain organizational skills through highly participative approaches. Neglecting to adapt OD interventions to economic, political, and cultural contingencies is a grave mistake in failing to respect national differences. Such differences can include what is appropriate to team-building, what is realistic to local economic goals, what

is appropriate for national human resource practices, expectations of cultural work norms, and what will benefit local communities. Practicing OD in global arenas requires a commitment to a "context-based" (Schein 1992, p. 11) approach. Issues of power and authority, risk and certainty, gender and aggression, individualism, assertiveness, and materialism are all culturally specific values that influence organizations' culture (Waddell, Cummings, & Worley 2000, pp. 464-465). Some examples are the emphasis in Asian and Latin American countries on ceremony and organization customs, on informal structures in Scandinavian countries, autocratic decision-making in Eastern European countries, expert status and authority in Asia, decisiveness in South Africa, and personal initiative in the USA, UK, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. The more the cultural context differs from that of the ODP, the more the OD processes necessitate appropriate adjustment.

Thus it is my contention that students need to be *highly politically aware* and *culturally sensitive* to nuance, custom, and controversy before they plunge into uncharted territory as ODPs where inappropriate interventions harm organizations and offend individuals. While it is true that a consultant can become familiarized with each new setting, prior appreciation of political complexities, as well as exposure to the art of interpretive and dialogic participation, increases the likelihood that a consultant will seek intelligently to understand local morés. Understanding world politics and developing a respect for various diversities should be embedded in University OD curricula.

Undoubtedly, the impact of globalization on local peoples' lives has major ethical consequences for the ways in which ODPs adopt worldwide strategic interventions. ODPs need the motivation to ask crucial ethical questions about the driving forces of globalization and the consequences for local people of global corporate capital. This is

Collaborative competence is necessary for global organizing and depends on transformative dialogue.

important, given that ODPs usually share the humanistic values that promote open communication, employee participation, and personal development. Is it possible to optimize economic objectives and human benefits (Church & Burke 1995), to transform organizations to greater economic effectiveness and to improved justice and equity? Certainly Cooperrider and Dutton (2001), in their book *Organizational Dimensions of Global Change – No Limits to Cooperation*, examine the potential of cooperation as a practice, an organizational accomplishment, and a value for grasping global change. Such an emphasis is highly beneficial in opening dialogue across disciplinary and national boundaries.

Global social change organizations (GSCOs) that are non-profit international NGOs, development organizations, or international private voluntary organizations probably are best suited to OD in international settings, given their vision to cooperate with grass-roots groups for the purpose of reaching ethical goals, particularly to empower the disempowered. GSCOs are working at community levels to alleviate distress caused by political instability, armed conflict, poverty, illiteracy, disease, HIV/AIDs, homelessness, ecological degradation, unemployment, and hunger. GSCOs specifically advocate a mission for social change with more just (Amnesty International), ecologically sustainable (Greenpeace), and peaceful (International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War) communities.

Such missions are well supported by a network structure, often coordinating, like World Vision, many different organizations. GSCOs have strong values that motivate organizational behavior and permit workers to interact often with diverse stakeholders in conflicting constituencies like the rich and poor, ecologists and developers, and with churches, community leaders, and government policy-makers. Such interaction requires creative ODPs to facilitate consensual, collegial structures, given GSCOs'

opposition to hierarchy. ODPs can unleash freedom, which is imperative to maximizing local initiative, culture, and tradition. In the context of international OD, local solutions prove to be the most appropriate for local situations because a "respect for cultures, differences, and global variety is a required ingredient for change" (Mantel & Ludema, 2000, p. 49). The focus on supporting local decision-making should enable environmentally, economically sustainable solutions where local concerns can benefit substantially. The challenge is to ensure that increasing economic and workplace efficiencies occur in a just, equitable, non-exploitative manner. This is indeed a major ethical challenge for ODPs.

ODPs who have studied Politics should have a deeper understanding of what is entailed in building "a global civic culture" (Cooperrider & Thachankary, 1995), given that the content requires deep reflection on the fundamental underlying values of equality, rights, justice, participative democracy, and inclusive citizenship. A global civic culture is quite different from the unprecedented intensity of economic globalization driven by MNCs. Global civic culture involves collaborative partnerships to make the world more cooperative, egalitarian, peaceful, and ecologically sustainable. Politically astute ODPs will use their interpretations of these values to encourage organizational discussion on a shared vision. Such discussion is intrinsic to building viable global collaborative organizations and engages the change agent as co-participant. Such change agents "must also be

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adept at political compromise and negotiation...to understand the elements of the ideology that can and cannot be sacrificed" (Waddell, Cummings, & Worley, 2000, p. 488). For example, everyone working in the Hunger Project, from a receptionist to the president shares the vision to end hunger. Such a vision is non-negotiable, realizable if there was adequate political will. The idealism and desire for humanistic transformational change by ODPs can be inspirational, empowering clients to aspire toward worthwhile goals.

Empowering ODPs to be Critically Reflective

Empowering students who are studying organizational change to be critically reflective requires interdisciplinary cooperation. The challenge is to make organizational scholarship and thinking more informed by knowledge of global change. With a broad agenda and open-ended theoretical boundaries, organizational scholarship and practice can play a pivotal role in implementing ethical change that is culturally and politically sensitive to contextualized difference and to shared human needs. As I have outlined, an expanded notion of teaching not only organizational but also global change demands greater attention to political, ethical inquiry. Understanding organizations and understanding global change are so intricately connected that a broadening of pedagogical approaches is necessary to empower students who plan to become workplace professionals. What we teach and how we teach matters. Through studying Politics, future ODPs are empowered to become critically reflective, culturally sensitive, politically astute, inspirational transformative agents.

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