Organization
Development
Network

In an Era of Transformative and Traumatic Disruptions… What Can OD Bring?

Call for Articles

We have been experiencing what living in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world (VUCA) looks and feels like in recent years, and especially 2020! Many old practices have become ineffective, much of what we think we know is challenged-- how we do work, how organizations (and societies) configure, organize and adapt to new normals are all in the spotlight. Every day, we experience, see or learn more about global health threats, major economic upheavals, inequalities, injustice, flaws in human relations, racism, equity, and our hallmarks of governing. Many communities have been disrupted, businesses have ceased to exist, and we can't agree on how to respond.

For example, one of the many impacts of Covid-19 has been the rapid expansion of working, meeting and learning virtually as social distancing became the norm. Organizations and individuals have experienced gaps in technology, skills, communication, relationships, and comfort. Some organizations are considering long-term or permanent work-from-home arrangements, modified work arrangements, and reduced in-person interactions, or reduced workforces.

Institutionalized and systemic racism permeated the news globally following the 2020 death of George Floyd in the United States. The divisions and inequalities of racial privilege have been revealed in the impacts on the black, indigenous and people of color as compared to white communities, both to the anti-black racism incidents and covid-19 outcomes. The field of diversity, equity

and inclusion (DEI), while it has been around for decades, has risen in awareness and understanding; and is sparking new conversations, considerations, actions and changes that won't wait any longer.

We are navigating into an unknown future with heightened uncertainty, questioning leadership, norms of the past, what is now needed, and how to survive and thrive. Organization Development (OD) has seen some of these types of disruptions and changes many times before. We helped in early civil rights endeavors; Lewin began early versions of OD in work in racial conflict situations. We've had major economic jolts and recoveries before. We've seen great technological transformations shift how we do nearly everything. And, OD has been involved!

So, in our conceptual backpack, methodological tool kits, and behavioral science roots, we have ways to help in any situations. We may not have answers, but that was never our flag! We understand the socio-technical world we live and work in and how humans need to relate, collaborate, connect, and make meaning to align to a shared purpose and well-being in order for organized systems to succeed.

Lets' look to the future for all of us, our field and our planet. How can we help now?

As Organization Development (OD) practitioners, scholars, and educators, our work and the way we do the work of OD will be impacted. What will need to change and how, are again new critical questions! In this special issue, we

invite you to explore and present your best thinking and practice responses to questions/topics *such as*:

» What are the new (or re-surfaced) issues, questions and propositions that need our attention now and for the future?
» What is the difference that will make a difference for the world now?
» How can we reverse the trends of persistent inequity and injustice and resulting inequalities?
» What OD interventions need to be developed or current ones need to be adapted to address the emerging challenges and opportunities in a socially distanced, anxious and virtual world?
» What needs to be adapted or created in order to educate and train OD practitioners about and in the virtual environment?
» How can we tackle work at different levels of society?
» How do we acknowledge traumatic impacts, heal, bridge divides and move forward together?
» What positive elements have emerged from the crises and disruptions that we must amplify and implement for the future?
» What are the implications for OD in a world with increased virtual interaction?
» What competencies are needed to apply OD interventions virtually?
» How can we teach the next generation of leaders and change agents who will need and use OD thinking and practices?
» How can we build on the strengths of OD, developed over our history, to serve the needs of the future?
» How do we lead/facilitate for transformation in these times?
» What new or reimagined practices are already having an impact? (case studies)

» What does use of self mean in the current state of complexity and how is it showing up?
» What role(s) can OD take on going forward?

We encourage submissions from around the world and the inclusion of global perspectives

The articles submitted can be:
» Regular length articles (up to 5,000 words)
» Shorter articles (1,500-2,000 words)
» Brief notes/thought pieces/provocations (approx. 500-1000 words)

SPECIAL ISSUE GUEST EDITORS

John L. Bennett, **Ph.D.**, a professor of business and behavioral science at the McColl School of Business at Queens University of Charlotte where he holds the Wayland H. Cato, Jr. Chair of Leadership and serves as director of graduate programs. He teaches executive coaching, leadership, and interpersonal and group dynamics. Prior to forming Lawton Associates, an executive coaching and consulting firm, in 1997, he was an executive with the American Red Cross. For more than 10 years he taught in the American University MSOD program. He is a scholar-practitioner who has written three books and numerous articles. In addition, he is on the editorial board of two journals. He is a past president of the Graduate School Alliance for Education in Coaching (GSAEC), and in 2010 was named a Charter Fellow by The Lewin Center and Founding Fellow of the Institute of Coaching, which is an affiliate of Harvard Medical School. Currently, he serves on the Board of Trustees of Fielding Graduate University. He can be reached at *bennettj@queens.edu*.

Yabome Gilpin-Jackson, **Ph.D.**, is a scholar-practitioner who enjoys applying the behavioral and organization sciences to the areas of leadership development, organizational development, facilitating strategic change and systematic organizing for social change and transformation. She has worked with corporate, non-profit/social profit and public sector organizations, internationally. She is also adjunct/guest faculty for undergraduate and graduate courses in her areas of expertise at various universities such as Simon Fraser University, Concordia University and elsewhere. Yabome has been named International African Woman of the Year by UK-based Women4Africa and was the first ever recipient of the US-based Organization Development Network's Emerging Organization Development Practitioner award. She also received the prestigious Harry Jerome Professional Excellence Award in Canada. She is the Vice-Chair of the Organization Development Network Board. She can be reached at *yabome@sldconsulting.org*.