Rationale:

The following assignment was selected from the Leadership and Organizational Management in Health Care class. It shows some of the skills and competencies I have learned in the Health Policy and Management domain of public health. For this assignment, we had to write a paper on organizational development and how it helps to enhance practices and make an organization stronger. In this paper, I explained what organizational development was and the various tools it used to make businesses more efficient and effective. I explained a couple of interventions including team building and total quality management. I explained how these two interventions work well together by providing a team with a vision and tools to help identify and improve problems and developing the strengths of a team and how they work together. I also provided an example of both of these interventions and how they have been used in the hospital I work at. This fits with several of the competencies in this domain: identifying main components and issues of an organization; applying principles of program planning, development, and evaluation in organizational and community initiatives; applying principles of strategic planning and marketing to public health; applying quality and performance improvement concepts to address organizational performance; apply systems thinking for resolving organizational problems; and demonstrating leadership skills for building partnerships.

Paper:

Organizational Development Strategies:

Team Building and Total Quality Management

Tara Sheets

Leadership & Organizational Management in Health Care/MPH 543

February 21, 2014

Dr. Shantel Anderson
Organizational Development is a process that is used to enhance business practices, make them more efficient and effective, leading to an overall stronger organization and individual workforce (ODN, 2011). These are planned efforts by leadership to build healthier organizations with people that can work together developing solutions to daily problems and being innovative with future goals and ideas. There are several different organizational development initiatives that can be used to strengthen a company. These should be selected based on the needs of the organization. Some organizations may only need to improve in one or two areas; others may need several. The selection should be based on what is needed in present situations, but with a look to future goals and advancement of the quality of the organization. In this paper, two of these interventions are compared, examining how they are similar and different, and when they might be used.

Team building is one intervention that can be used in a number of situations to help an organization with people from diverse backgrounds, cultures, values, education levels, attitudes, and disciplines work together, gain an appreciation for the diversity, and recognize how essential it is. It is often used when team members or leaders are new, when there is conflict between some members, to improve the morale of employees and strengthen their support of the organization’s vision, and when specific improvement projects are needed (Tearle, 2011). Team building interventions involve developing and discovering ways the team can work together, helping teams find common values, building a vision and role for the team, etc (Tearle, 2011). The overall goal of team building is to increase the cohesion and, ultimately, the effectiveness of a team (Borkowski, 2011).

Another organizational development intervention that helps teams work on a project or problem is total quality management (TQM). TQM develops the techniques of an organization
to look at processes from a proactive approach, improving the quality of the process before it
may be necessary (Inc, 2014). This is done by having an organization think about improvement
continuously and in all areas of the organization. This intervention can be used to develop the
techniques of a team, to make them stronger by giving them tools that help with problem solving.
It teaches brainstorming, flowchart use, diagrams, benchmarking, etc. A primary objective is to
make sure data is involved in the process and helps to inform the practice; those on the team are
taught the basics of reviewing data through different types of charts and graphs. It is used to
teach people on teams techniques that will enhance the effectiveness of their team. Often, TQM
is used to focus a team on one particular process improvement project at a time. Teams meet
regularly sometimes for long periods of time to work on the project, come up with ideas to
improve the process, and then review those ideas to see if they were successful after
implementation (Borkowski, 2011). TQM can be used to develop new improvement ideas for
the organization, help a team get creative, to help solve a negative trend occurring in the
organization, to focus a team on developing a new vision for the organization, when the
environment changes and new strategies are needed, etc (Tearle, 2011). This intervention builds
on the team dynamics and provides opportunities for employee participation with the overall
goal of strengthening a team’s problem solving ability and process improvement skills
(Borkowski, 2011).

A major strength of team building is building a stronger team that can work together on
problems, have different points of view, but find some common ground. It can help with
conflicts between members and increase a team’s cultural knowledge. It makes a team more
cohesive and can give new team leaders strength and confidence in working with the team.
However, team building may never be able to turn a deviant nonconformist into a productive
member of the team. Also, if the organization does not have a vision that the team members can aspire to, it will not matter if the team develops a vision for themselves. In that sense, team building does not provide a team direction. It makes them stronger and more efficient, but it is really some of the other interventions that will give the team the direction it needs to make improvements to the organization.

Unlike team building, TQM’s strength is that it helps to develop a vision for the entire organization. By giving groups specific tools and processes and increasing their problem solving ability, the intervention begins to increase the number of employees that are trained to look for continuous quality improvement. It gives people skills to identify trends and work through processes. This intervention helps an organization work on specific problems through assigned teams. Another strength is that this intervention provides opportunities for employee involvement because if an organization is looking to continuously improve, it will require many teams to help with that process. While team building helps to give strength to a team, actually solving problems in the organization empowers the team. An empowered team is stronger and more productive and is likely to take on and be ready for more challenges. One weakness is that TQM is not designed to make a team more cohesive or effective. Team building is the intervention needed if a team is not able to work together due to conflicts, cultural differences, etc. Another concern with TQM is that it is a long-term process. Process improvement takes time which can be discouraging. Also, the idea behind TQM is that an organization should never rest, there is always something to improve or evaluate, and that mentality can be exhausting. Celebrating achievements is more of a strength in team building.

These two interventions because of their different strengths and weaknesses work very well together. Where one is weaker, the other is strong. A team is not strong without a vision
and the tools to identify and correct problems, but it also is not strong if its members are not able
to work together effectively. TQM can help a team solve specific problems and team building
can make the members appreciate each other and their team accomplishments. Together, these
two interventions are very effective in strengthening an organization.

One example of team building, involved a team at our hospital that I was put in charge of.
The Joint Commission, the primary accrediting body for hospitals, had just issued a set of new
standards on effective communication. The emphasis was on improving communication
between providers and patients, especially for patients who might have communication
difficulties due to language barriers, being deaf, coming from different cultures, etc. So, the
team that was assigned to develop strategies to address these new standards was extremely
diverse. We had members of the executive team, nurses, a physician, a deaf consumer peer
specialist and an interpreter, a client advocate, a Chaplain, an African-American Muslim man,
and the Director of Social work. The first few meetings were really just devoted to team
building. We reviewed the standards together and talked about why good communication
between patients and their providers is important. I encouraged team members to give examples
from their own backgrounds or about people they knew. We watched a webinar together and
then discussed the examples that were shown. As the team bonded, we began to develop a vision
of actions our hospital should take to meet these new standards. It was a very interesting and
rewarding experience.

An example of TQM, comes from the hospital I work at that has been struggling for the
past decade to reduce the use of seclusion and restraint while maintaining a safe environment.
This hospital has the only maximum and intermediate security units in the state, serving about
350 high security patients at any given time. Many of our patients are severely mentally ill and
violent. About 10 years ago, we formed a series of TQM teams to address various aspects of the hospital’s culture, clinical services, crisis management techniques, etc. Each team used a variety of TQM techniques, like brainstorming, fish bone charts, reviewing data, multi-voting, etc. New policies and procedures, staff training programs, and changes in clinical services were developed. Then, data was monitored and analyzed using control charts and statistical techniques to see if the actions taken were effective or if further improvements were needed. Although it has taken many years, very significant reductions in seclusion and restraint use have resulted from these teams, and there have been some excellent changes in our hospital culture.

Through the use of organizational development interventions, the hospital I work at has made important changes for the better. Organizational development interventions are designed to help improve problems or achieve goals (Tearle, 2011). However, its emphasis is on the process involved, not the problem, and focuses on applying different theories and activities based on what is needed to improve that process (Inc, 2014). There are many different interventions that can be used depending on the problem or specific need. Some improve problem solving abilities; others improve the cohesiveness and effectiveness of a team and its members, and others will look at specific processes or train on specific techniques like conflict resolution. The key in this concept is that this process involves changing and improving the effectiveness and functioning of the entire organization.
References


