CHAPTER NINE

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

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This chapter describes multicultural organization development (MCOD). MCOD refers to building organizations and organizational cultures that include people from multiple socially defined group identities: race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, class, religion, and other social and cultural groupings. The chapter begins with a history of this approach to organization development (OD). Then the theoretical tenets of MCOD are examined. This is followed by a discussion of MCOD practice, including the MCOD goal, development stages, and process for fostering change in organizations.

Historical Overview

More than thirty years ago, practitioners in the field of organization development and system's change joined with those who focused on social and cultural diversity issues in the workplace to explore how to address social and cultural diversity, justice, and change in organizations. This union, although seemingly natural and obvious today, was slow to develop. Prior to this connection of OD with social and cultural justice and diversity, internal and external organization change agents typically addressed social justice and diversity issues in the workplace only as a module in a larger system

change initiative. Social justice and diversity issues were not an integrated part of the overall change effort.

In actuality, even those social justice and diversity modules focused only on issues pertaining to what is more commonly referred to as "social justice" rather than "social diversity." The terms social justice and social diversity are often used interchangeably. In MCOD terminology, the terms are meant to describe aspects of the social or organizational change agenda. Organizational change interventions focused on social diversity tend to address issues related to "group inclusion." The goals of social diversity interventions focus on building an organizational culture that includes people from various social and cultural identity groups that are based on such human differences as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, social or economic class, religion, nationality, age, physical and/or developmental ability, and other socially defined group identities. A change effort focused on social justice would emphasize elimination of racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, anti-Semitism, and other manifestations of social oppression or social injustice. These forms of social injustice are also based in human differences. Although MCOD acknowledges the difference between the justice and diversity agendas, many practitioners use the term diversity to refer to both social justice and social diversity concerns.

Those diversity practitioners who saw their work as assisting organizations to become more just, inclusive, and humane places to work described themselves as working toward and managing diversity in the workplace. This was typically approached through the use of seminars and training sessions focused on an individual's exclusionary behaviors, attitudes, and limited awareness of the nature of discriminatory practices. Their goal was to change individuals, with the hope that this change would establish a supportive workplace climate in organizations that was conducive to appreciating individual differences and capitalizing on the strengths of a socially and culturally diverse workforce.

Practitioners who were grounded in both OD and diversity were the first to consider integration of these two change agendas, notably Kaleel Jamison (1978), Bailey Jackson and Rita Hardiman (1994), Roosevelt Thomas (1992, 1996), Elsie Cross (2000), Taylor Cox (2001), and Frederick A. Miller and Judith H. Katz (2002). Jamison was one of the first to write about the possibility of justice or affirmative action work in organizations as having a positive effect on organizational health throughout the organization. Jackson and Holvino (1988) first presented the eventual work of Jackson and Hardiman (1994), who were among the first to bring OD, social

justice, and diversity together as multicultural organization development (Jackson & Hardiman, 1994).

Jackson and Hardiman recognized that their work in organizations to address behaviors and attitudes related to various forms of discrimination manifested by individual managers and workers was indeed necessary. But it was not sufficient to produce the kind of organizational change that would result in a socially just organization, or to move the organization to becoming a multicultural organization (MCO). Grounded in both OD and diversity or social justice in the workplace, they theorized that to achieve the vision of an MCO it would be necessary to view the organization or system as the target of change. In other words, the organization is the client, rather than the individuals in the organization. Since this fusion of approaches to organizational change in the area of diversity and social justice some thirty years ago, MCOD has developed and evolved into a practice that continues to show promise and grow as an approach for change agents who are working with organizations seeking to become multicultural organizations.

Assumptions Behind the Theory and Practice of MCOD

Certain key assumptions are imbedded in MCOD theory and practice:

1. *Individual consciousness raising and training activities for individuals in organizations may be necessary but are not sufficient to produce organizational change.* Organizations must also change the policies and practices that support the status quo around diversity issues.
2. *Organizations are not either "good" (multicultural) or "bad" (mono-cultural).* They exist on a developmental continuum with multicultural and mono-cultural on opposite ends. It is important to understand what the other points on the continuum are and where the client organization is on that continuum. Then, and only then, will MCOD practitioners be able to help organizations operate from an accurate diagnosis when developing change goals and intervention plans.
3. *The change process needs to be pursued with a clear vision of the "ideal" end state, or the multicultural organization, in mind.* A well-articulated and owned vision of the ideal organization, one that is a manifestation of the ideal MCO, must inform all aspects of the change process. Only with a clear sense of the ideal can the data describe the current or real situation or have any meaning. It is only when one juxtaposes the

      ideal with the real and considers the discrepancy that the problems and issues to be addressed emerge.

4. *The picture of the real should be derived from an internal assessment process.* A structured assessment that can be used to identify and describe the current state of diversity and social justice in the organization should be used to establish the baseline or current state of what "is" in the organization.

5. *Ownership of the MCOD process is a key to success.* A significant majority of the members of the organization must own the data that describe what is, the vision that describes the ideal or the "ought," and the problems that have emerged from comparing the real to the ideal. For an MCOD initiative to be a success, organization members must also own the change goals and any sense of priority in working to remove identified problems or address named challenges.

6. *Significant organizational change in social justice and diversity will occur only if there is someone monitoring and facilitating the process.* The health of the organization is served when there is a commitment to stay with the change effort over time and where the goals are linked to and facilitate the overall success of the organization's mission.

The Practice of MCOD

The practice of multicultural organization development is based in MCOD assumptions and involves three major elements: (1) the MCOD goal, (2) the MCOD development stages, and (3) the MCOD process. These three elements of MCOD practice are described in the next subsections of this chapter.

The MCOD Goal

The first element focuses on the goal of any MCOD effort. Typically, an organization enters into an MCOD process because it is understood or believed that a system that manages its human resources well has a greater chance of gaining and maintaining a competitive advantage or achieving its overall mission. A system that is invested in its human resources also recognizes that to develop and maintain a strong, productive, and high-performing human resource system there must be effective management of social justice and social and cultural diversity in the organization. Organizations invest in becoming an MCO for other reasons

as well. Some believe that it is the right thing to do. Others believe they have evidence that an organization with a diverse workforce and a socially just workplace will enhance the quality of the product or service that is produced.

The MCO is an organization that seeks to improve itself or enhance its competitive advantage by advocating and practicing social justice and social diversity internally and external to the organization. Specifically:

- The MCO is an organization that has within its vision, mission, goals, values, and operating system explicit policies and practices that prohibit anyone from being excluded or unjustly treated because of their social identity or status. A multicultural organization not only supports social justice within the organization; it advocates these values in interactions within the local, regional, national, and global communities, with its vendors, customers, and peer organizations.
- The MCO is an organization that has within its vision, mission, goals, values, and operating system explicit policies and practices that are intended to ensure that all members of the diverse workforce feel fully included and have every opportunity to contribute to achieving the mission of the organization. This organization also appreciates all forms of social diversity and understands the strengths and advantages that social and cultural diversity brings to the local, regional, national, and global communities.

When applying this two-part goal to an MCOD effort, it is important for MCOD practitioners to recognize that a level of social justice must be achieved before social diversity can be pursued. Many have tried unsuccessfully to move directly to social and cultural diversity objectives—for example, building a climate of inclusion in the workplace—without adequately attending to the absence of social justice (the existence of sexism, racism, classism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism, and other manifestations of social injustice). The goal of becoming an MCO involves achievement of social justice (an anti-exclusionary objective) and social diversity (an inclusionary objective).
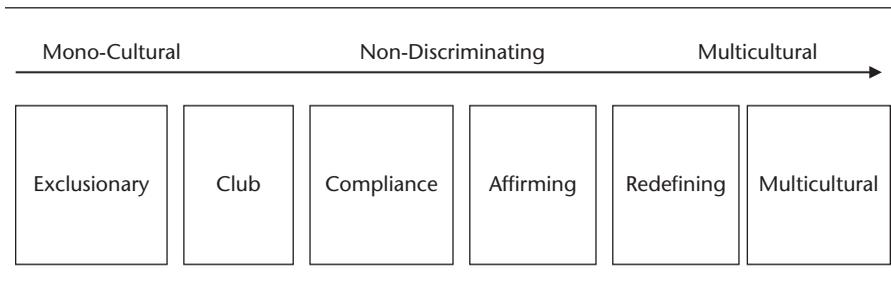
The MCOD process can begin when there is evidence of a significant investment on the part of the leadership and key parts of the organization's workforce in becoming an MCO, or at least in exploring the possible benefits of becoming such an organization. The first steps are often to engage the leadership and as many of the workforce-at-large as possible in developing the MCO goal in their own words and then owning it.

MCOD Development Stages

One of the core assumptions of MCOD is that most organizations are neither all good nor all bad. In the language of multicultural organization development, organizations are neither purely multicultural nor purely mono-cultural. Organizations are in various places on a continuum that has these two points at the ends. They generally are not simply stuck on the "embracing diversity side" of the continuum, nor are they stuck on the "rejecting diversity side." In most large organizations, divisions, departments, groups, or other organizational units will be in differing places from each other and from the larger organization on this developmental continuum with respect to the strength of their affinity for (or against) the MCO goals of the organization. The MCOD Developmental Stage Model is a significant element of MCOD theory and practice (1) because it is essential in MCOD theory and practice to be able to assess the developmental issues, opportunities, and challenges of an organization as it attempts to move toward becoming an MCO and (2) because it is also essential that the change process be guided by a conceptual framework that helps in identifying change strategies that are consistent with the developmental readiness of the organization.

Bailey Jackson and Rita Hardiman developed the MCOD Development Stage Model (Figure 9.1) on the basis of their work in social identity development theory (Jackson & Hardiman, 1997) and racial identity development theory (Jackson & Hardiman, 1983; Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 2001). They coupled their research and writing on individual development with their work and observations as OD practitioners. The MCOD Development Stage Model identifies six points on a developmental continuum, each describing the consciousness and culture of an organization with regard to

FIGURE 9.1. CONTINUUM OF MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Mono-Cultural		Non-Discriminating		Multicultural	
Exclusionary	Club	Compliance	Affirming	Redefining	Multicultural

issues of social justice and diversity and where the organization is relative to becoming an MCO.

Stage One: The Exclusionary Organization The exclusionary organization is openly devoted to maintaining the majority group's dominance and privilege. These values are typically manifested in the organization's mission and membership criteria. It is usually openly hostile to anything that might be seen as a concern for social justice or social diversity. An organization that is rooted in this stage of development is unlikely to entertain anything like an MCOD process. Most large organizations can identify a department, group, or some other unit that embraces this developmental perspective even within a more enlightened organization.

Stage Two: "The Club" The organization or organizational unit that is at the "club" stage can be thought of as stopping short of explicitly advocating anything like the majority group's supremacy, but seeking to maintain privileges for those who have traditionally held social power. This is done by developing and maintaining missions, policies, norms, and procedures seen as "correct" from their perspective. The club allows a limited number of people from other social identity groups into the organization if they have the "right" perspective and credentials. The club is seen as more "liberal" with regard to social justice issues, compared to the exclusionary organization. It engages with social justice issues only when they can be approached with comfort and on club members' terms.

Stage Three: The Compliance Organization The compliance organization is committed to removing some of the discrimination inherent in the club by permitting access to members of social identity groups that were previously excluded. It seeks to accomplish this objective without disturbing the structure, mission, and culture of the organization. The organization is careful not to create too many waves or offend or challenge its majority employees' or customers' bigoted attitudes or behaviors.

The compliance organization usually attempts to change its social diversity profile by actively recruiting and hiring more non-majority people at the bottom of the organization. On occasion, the organization will hire or promote tokens into management positions (usually staff). When the exception is made to place a non-majority person in a line position, it is important that this person be a "team player" and "qualified" applicant. A qualified team player does not openly challenge the organization's mission and practices, and is usually 150 percent competent to do the job.

Stage Four: The Affirming Organization The affirming organization is also committed to eliminating the discriminatory practices and inherent advantage given members of the majority group in the club by actively recruiting and promoting members of those social groups typically denied access to the organization. The affirming organization takes an active role in supporting the growth and development of these new employees and initiating programs that increase their chances of success and mobility. All employees are encouraged to think and behave in a non-oppressive manner, and the organization may conduct awareness programs toward this end.

Stage Five: The Redefining Organization The redefining organization is a system in transition. It is not satisfied with merely being socially just or non-oppressive. It is committed to working toward an environment that goes beyond managing diversity to one that "values and capitalizes on social and cultural diversity." This organization is committed to finding ways to ensure full inclusion of all social and cultural identity group perspectives as a method of enhancing the growth and success potential of the organization.

The redefining organization begins to question the limitations of relying solely on one cultural perspective as a basis for the organization's mission, operations, and product development. It seeks to explore the significance and potential benefits of a multicultural workforce. This organization actively engages in visioning, planning, and problem-solving activities directed toward the realization of a multicultural organization.

The redefining organization is committed to developing and implementing policies and practices that distributes resources and opportunities among all of the socially and culturally diverse groups in the organization. In summary, the redefining organization searches for alternative modes of organizing that guarantee the inclusion, participation, and empowerment of all its members.

Stage Six: The Multicultural Organization The multicultural organization reflects the contributions and interests of diverse cultural and social groups in its mission, operations, products, and services. It acts on a commitment to eradicate social oppression in all forms within the organization. The MCO includes members of diverse cultural and social groups as full participants, especially in decisions that shape the organization. It follows through on broader external social responsibilities, including support of efforts to eliminate all forms of social oppression and to educate others in multicultural perspectives.

This description of the multicultural organization represents the vision for an MCO. It must remain a vision and a statement of the ideal, because

there are no known MCOs. This is a vision for the organization to reach for. When MCOD practitioners see parts of this vision manifest in an organization or organizational unit, it is important for that organization to be recognized and celebrated, even if it is not a perfect representation of the vision. Organizations need to know they can get there.

Using the Developmental Stages

The MCOD developmental stages are most useful in the assessment and planning phases of the MCOD process. The stage model presents a framework for designing assessment instruments and techniques, which can help the organization, identify its stage of development and construct a beginning benchmark for the organization's diversity and social justice initiative. MCOD assessment instruments have been developed by most of the MCOD practitioners mentioned in this chapter. Generally, these instruments are proprietary, have been adapted for use in specific organizations, and are not available for broad use.

Once an organization has determined where it is on the continuum with the help of MCOD practitioners, the next task is to develop a change plan. The change plan addresses specific aspects of that stage as demonstrated by this organization and guides strategies to help the organization move to the next stage on the developmental continuum. The overall MCOD process is described next. The assessment and change planning process needs to be understood in the context of the overall MCOD process.

The MCOD Process

Once the organization has made the decision to pursue the goal of becoming multicultural, the MCOD change process begins. The change process has four components (with a number of subcomponents): (1) identification of the change agents, (2) determination of the readiness of the system for a diversity and social justice change initiative, (3) assessment or benchmarking of the organization, and (4) change planning and implementation.

Identification of the Change Agents

There are three primary actors or change agents involved in the change process: (1) the internal change team, (2) external MCOD practitioner consultant(s), and (3) the leadership team.

The Internal Change Team The internal change team is a group of people from within the organization who agree to take on the responsibility of managing the MCOD process for the organization. Managing the process can take a number of forms. For some change teams, it means hiring an outside MCOD practitioner consultant who comes into the organization and runs the process for the change team. The team's role at this level of involvement is to hire the consultant, monitor the consultant's activities, offer input to the consultant when necessary regarding the best way to negotiate the organizational culture, and report on the progress of the initiative to the leadership. In other organizations, the change team may take a more involved in the change process. In this case, the team may have the internal competence to conduct its own assessment, develop its own change plans, and implement those change plans with only minimal technical assistance or guidance from outside sources.

In many organizations, a change team manager or diversity manager position is created to shepherd the MCOD process. This person is generally the link between all of the other components of the MCOD change agents and the change process as a whole. The diversity or change team manager is often a senior person in the organizations human resources area. In those instances when this person is chosen from the line of business, it is often an announced part-time or temporary appointment of eighteen to twenty-four months.

Once the team is formed, a first task is to determine how involved it wants to be or feels capable of being. The level of involvement of the change team should also influence the level of involvement of the outside consultant team.

The internal change team should:

- *Be of a manageable size, usually no more than twelve members.* They should understand that all team members will come to every meeting, except in case of emergency.
- *Understand that this is now part of their job.* This is regular work. Team members should be released from some other task assignments so that their team membership is not an overload. Because this is part of their regular job, team members can and should be evaluated on their performance and rewarded consistent with the regular merit and recognition system in the organization.
- *Have good connections with as many constituencies as possible within the organization.* Because the size of the group is limited, not all constituencies can be represented on the team, but it is possible to have the voices of all

constituencies heard through those who are chosen to serve on the team. The team should represent a horizontal and vertical cut of the organization as much as possible.

- *Comprise people who are opinion leaders in the organization.* Opinion leaders are not always in a position of authority. Their legitimacy comes from the trust their peers have in them.
- *Understand that the diversity and social justice effort involves at least a two-year commitment from each member.* Supervisors need to be supportive of team member assignments.
- *Be supportive of the organization's intention and commitment about engaging in this MCOD process and becoming a multicultural organization.* The voices of those who are opposed to this effort need to be heard and their concerns addressed, but it will not help the process if they are on the change team.

Once assembled, the change team and external consultants meet to review the MCOD process. The external consultants can also carry out some of the team building work with the change team. It is often helpful if the leadership announces formation of the change team, expresses gratitude for team member contributions, and uses this moment to proclaim the beginning of the MCOD initiative.

The External MCOD Practitioner Consultant Team The external consultant team brings an outside perspective about the MCOD change process. It is imperative that the external consultants be familiar with MCOD or MCOD-type change processes. In addition to extending guidance on the best way to conduct an MCOD change effort, the external MCOD practitioners:

- Assist with development of assessment instrument(s) for the assessment phase, conduct interviews and focus groups, and collect sensitive data where it might be difficult for change team members to do so.
- Act as a buffer between the leadership of the organization and members of the change team. The external consultant is often better able to deal with the leadership of the organization than are the members of the change team who more than likely report to people on the leadership team.
- Help facilitate team building among change team members. The external consultant should be able to help the change team with its own team building and group dynamics. MCOD change teams typically need an outside consultant's help with their own group process. Social

justice and social diversity issues bring their particular tension to any group. It is difficult for a group to manage these issues for itself. An external consultant can be a valuable resource to the team when help is needed to guide the group when it is working through these issues.

- Understand that part of their charge is to build internal capacity for the organization. This means internal change team members and consultants understand that the MCOD process will need to go on for a long time, and it is not the intention of the organization to have the external practitioners become part of the organization. The external MCOD consultants guide the change team through the change process. They also furnish the skills and knowledge necessary so that on the next round the change team has the capacity to manage the change for the organization. At that point, the change effort will require external resources for only those tasks where an external presence or perspective is required.

One of the keys to being an effective external practitioner is to stay clear of the organization's internal politics. The apolitical perspective of the external consultant can be both an asset and a liability. Because external consultants are not part of the power politics that exists in any organization, their credibility is not questioned in the same way as the credibility of internal change team members. However, external consultants can lack understanding of all the organization's history and internal politics; this can cause blind spots that could hurt the change effort if not recognized. Missing historical and political cues and nuances can negatively affect any MCOD effort. It is therefore imperative that both internal and external perspectives be available to this effort at all times.

The Leadership Team The third primary agent in the MCOD change process is the leadership team. The term "team" is used here because in most organizations, especially larger systems, the leadership is typically made up of a group of individuals. These organizational leaders (president, CEO, CFO, chancellor, vice president, and so forth) usually have primary responsibility for and authority over all internal policies and procedures. They are responsible for their own area and collectively responsible for leading the organization as a whole. For an intervention like MCOD, it is important that this leadership team knows what is going on and has direct involvement in the manner in which the initiative is carried out. The leadership team must be involved in the initial decision to engage in an MCOD initiative. Although one key officer often brings a process like MCOD to the

organization, this person must receive the approval of the leadership team before going too far with the process. This is one place where an outside consultant can be a significant help to the organization by helping the leadership team understand the MCOD change process and what its role will be. The leadership team must decide what level of involvement it wants to have in the process. Like the change team, the leadership team can decide to be highly involved in conceptualizing the initiative and the activities of the MCOD process, or it can decide to bless the process and charge the change team with moving forward and reporting to the leadership team from time to time. The more direct the involvement of the leadership team in this initiative, the faster it will move and the greater the chance of success.

Organization Readiness One important component of the MCOD process is a test of the readiness of the organization for a change initiative that focuses on an area as volatile as social justice and diversity. This test asks critical questions about the level of awareness and support in the workforce for an MCOD initiative and the leadership's readiness to support and engage in this process.

The purpose of the MCOD readiness inventory is to assess at the very beginning of the process how best to enter into an organization with an intervention of this kind, since it ultimately calls for an intensive data-collection phase. The readiness inventory is given to a sample of the organization, and to all of the change team and leadership team. The typical MCOD readiness inventory asks six basic questions:

1. How are manifestations of social oppression (sexism, heterosexism, classism, and so forth) handled when discovered or reported?
2. Is support for diversity a core value in this organization?
3. Is there a clearly expressed commitment to social justice in this organization?
4. Does the leadership express or demonstrate its support for social justice?
5. How well does the leadership model a value for diversity and social justice?
6. Is the commitment to diversity and social justice clearly stated in the mission and values of the organization?

These and other questions help the change agents gain a sense of the organization's readiness to move forward. No organization at this point

is going to score very well on a readiness inventory, but a minimum score (equivalent to a 50 percent positive response) should be attained to assume readiness. Less than a 50 percent positive response indicates that a stronger base for an MCOD initiative is required before moving forward.

This type of readiness inventory can also provide beginning data about existing organizational issues. On rare occasions, work may be needed to bring the leadership or the workforce up to another level of awareness before trying to fully engage in the MCOD process. This might require awareness seminars as well as clarification and enforcement of existing policies and procedures that support social justice pronouncements from the leadership about their commitment and intent for the organization to become a multicultural organization. The organization could address long-standing social justice issues in the organization that, when taken on, send a message throughout the organization that something serious is happening. The additional work might involve conducting harassment training sessions for the workforce. As soon as the organization is sufficiently ready to begin the MCOD change initiative, the next step is assessment and benchmarking.

Assessment and Benchmarking MCOD is a data-driven process. Establishing a benchmark for where the organization begins its journey to becoming an MCO is critical to the MCOD process. It is essential to understanding how far the organization has to move to become an MCO and how the organization is progressing as it implements the action or change plans.

The initial assessment accomplishes a number of objectives. It establishes the benchmark and engages the system in naming and owning the current developmental stage of the organization. Data are needed to yield a detailed description of how the organization manifests its stage of development. This detailed description assists the change team in identifying issues and problems that need to be addressed, determining the priority for each issue and problem, and developing a focused set of strategies and criteria for measuring success.

The assessment methodology used in most MCOD initiatives is based on survey feedback. The MCOD assessment process involves collection of three types of data: (1) survey data, (2) interview data, and (3) audit data.

Survey Data An MCOD assessment questionnaire is used to inform construction of a change plan and is administered to everyone in the organization. The assessment survey is keyed to the MCOD developmental stages, which makes organizing the data less difficult and developing a change plan easier.

Interview Data Interviews help flesh out quantitative data from the survey and provide a backdrop or context for data that can sometimes appear confusing or contradictory. Because there is rarely enough time or resources to collect individual interview data, focus groups are typically used at this stage. Focus groups are formed from the various social groupings in the organization (gender, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, class) and from organizational groupings (secretaries and administrative staff, managers, engineers, part-time workers, instructors, counselors, and so forth).

Two types of data are usually collected in these focus groups. First, the group is asked to talk about their perception of the organization relative to social justice and diversity. The data collected from these discussions help flesh out what is known from the survey instrument. Second, the focus groups are presented with survey data that are not clear, or that seem to contradict other data; they are asked to give their perspective on the apparent contradictions.

Audit Data Finally, the MCOD assessment process includes audit data. Audit data are information gleaned from a review of the organization's records. Specific sets of questions are asked about the organization records, particularly records of the organization's personnel and budget offices. Audit data are collected about hires, terminations, resignations, grievances, promotions, and performance evaluations. These data are aggregated by race, gender, physical or developmental ability, sexual orientation (when available), religion (when available), and other social identity groups. The data are also aggregated by organizational unit (division, department, workgroup) and by job grade or classification. The survey and focus group data are impressionistic. Audit data either support those impressions or highlight serious questions about the organization's performance around social justice and diversity issues.

After the assessment data are collected, the data are "sanitized" and compiled for presentation to the organization. Sanitizing involves removing any language or names that might compromise the anonymity of respondents. In some cases this can eliminate a group from the data; for example, if there is only one African American woman in a unit, this person's identity cannot be protected and will need to be included with responses from "people of color," or removed altogether.

The change agents compile and organize the data for presentation to the organization. They do not analyze the data, and the data are organized in a format that all organization members can understand. The primary purpose for the presentation of the data is to give organization members

an opportunity to hear what was said in the assessment, offer any major adjustments or corrections, and ultimately own the data. Once the data are owned and the group has indicated that "yes, the data represent our organization," the next step is to identify those things that must be changed so that the organization can become an MCO. Involving organization members in exploring the data and defining the MCOD initiative differentiates the MCOD approach to systems change from others that tend to be either top-down or bottom-up. This process is all-inclusive.

Change Planning and Implementation

After the assessment is completed and the data have been presented and owned, the change agents and MCOD practitioner consultants assist each organizational unit in building change plans and goals. The units are encouraged to identify those issues and problems that when addressed will be affected in an observable and measurable way. Change goals are based on the issues and problems that have been identified. Issues are prioritized by focusing on those that can be addressed and significantly affected within eighteen months to two years. It is critical that results of the MCOD initiative be seen and measured and that the organization and those responsible for the initiative are accountable for its success.

When the change plan has been implemented and the results evaluated, it is time to redo the assessment, renew the organization's commitment to becoming an MCO, develop the next change plan, and implement it. With successive completion of these rounds of assessment, commitment, change plan development, and change plan implementation, the MCOD process becomes internalized within the organization; its culture and the internal capacity of the organization to run and monitor its own MCOD process develops and takes root (see Figure 9.2).

Conclusion

Multicultural organization development has been in practice for more than two decades. How it is practiced and the theory behind the practice continue to grow and evolve. Some of that growth is represented in this description of MCOD. MCOD emerged from the work of diversity practitioners and OD practitioners who share a commitment to social justice and social diversity in systems and in society. Because this is a commitment to the health of human systems, both the theory and the practice of MCOD

FIGURE 9.2. MCOD SYSTEMS CHANGE PROCESS
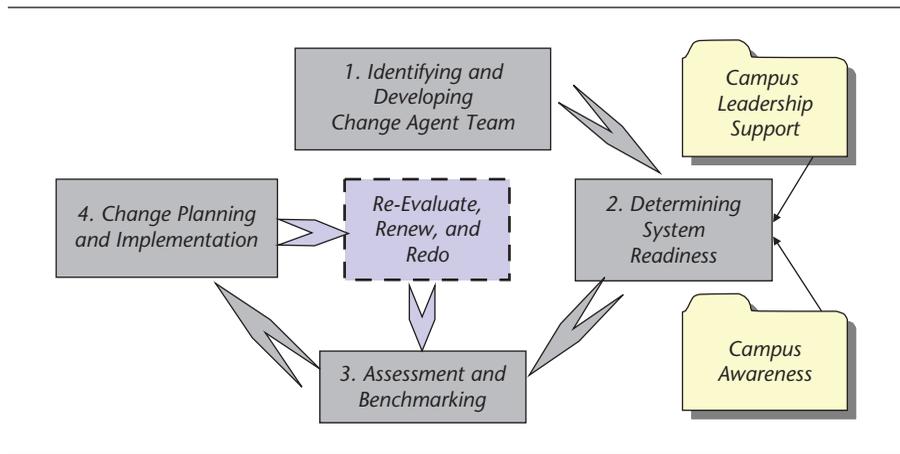
will necessarily evolve over time. What remains to be seen is the long-term effect of MCOD as a change model. Will systems that use this model indeed become MCOs and therefore come significantly closer not only to achieving their social justice and diversity vision but also to enhancing their ability to realize the bottom-line mission for the organization?

Understanding the impact of MCOD on the organization's bottom line is only the first question to be answered. Transforming what looks like the obvious answer to "Will it work?" to the statement "It does work" will take some long and rigorous study. While this type of inquiry is conducted, we should also pay attention to how the practice of MCOD changes MCOD theory, and the theory and practice of OD. Since MCOD was in part an invention intended to fill a perceived gap in the theory and practice of OD, it might seem that as MCOD continues to evolve not only will that gap be filled but the theory and practice of OD and MCOD will be thought of as one rather than two separate or overlapping fields.

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