Managing Organizational Change

Process, Social Construction and Dialogue

Second Edition

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THE PROBLEM-CENTRIC MODEL OF DIAGNOSING CHANGE

Learning objectives

By the time you have completed your study of this chapter, you should be able to:

- Appreciate the importance of differentiating between problem-centric and dialogic models.
- Differentiate between symptoms and causes.
- Discuss the role of climate audits in the conduct of diagnosis.
- Differentiate between data and information.
- Discuss levels of diagnosis.
- Outline the use of the entity approach for conducting diagnosis.
- Outline the use of total quality management for leveraging change.

In this chapter we then identify two different orientations:

The first is about the 'problem-centric' model … That is where change is framed in terms of symptoms and causes.

The second is about 'dialogic' model … That is where change is framed as an opportunity.

Importantly, there is scope to apply the two in some complementary way.

To draw a contrast between the two models, we use the everyday expression:

'Is the glass half-full or half-empty?'

Under the problem-centric the emphasis is placed on conventional problem-solving, such as:

1. identifying the key problems (symptoms);
2. analysing the causes;
3. analysing the solutions;
4. developing an action plan.

We need to think of diagnosis in terms of levels.

Individual

Making sense of how job variety, identity, significance, autonomy and feedback are supporting individual performance

Group

Making sense of how goals, roles, procedures and norms are supporting group functioning

Organization

Making sense of how structures, behaviours and technology are aligned with strategy and systems

Schein (1988) notes that the act of describing 'symptoms' is often associated with feelings of frustration and tension.

When symptoms become the subject of a conversation, individuals are more likely to talk about these symptoms with disappointment and even hostility.

As with medical diagnosis, symptoms have a cascading effect: one symptom may well be associated with another symptom.

For example
A symptom such as lack of collaboration in a team setting could be associated with increased sickness absence.

Under a problem-centric orientation, diagnosis and data-gathering (e.g., voice surveys) go hand in hand.

A voice survey (audit) provides a useful source of information aimed at facilitating diagnosis.

In voice surveys we ask members to describe their work situation and so we use such perceptions for initiating diagnosis
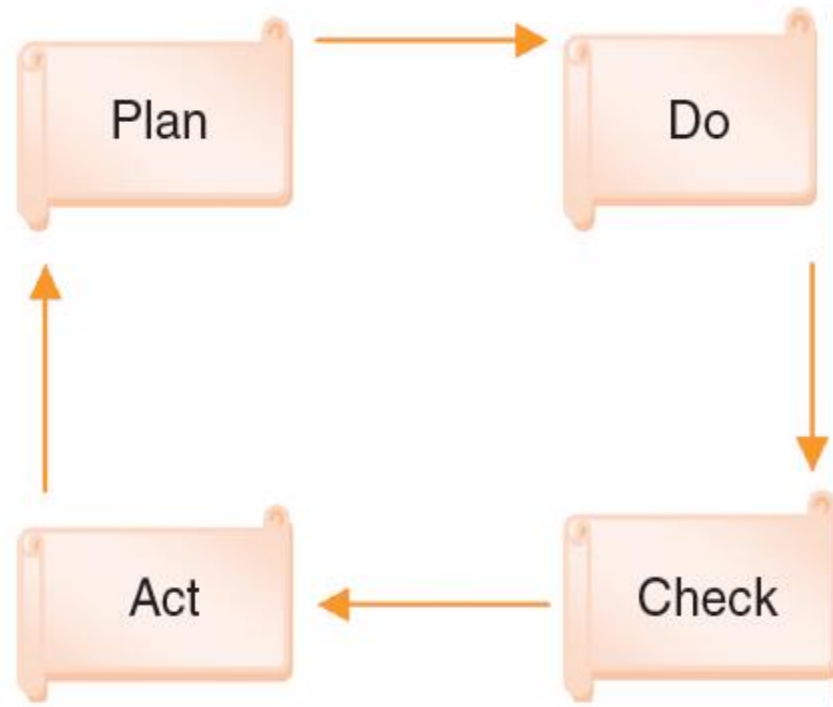
TQM has a special role in diagnosing

TQM strives to make the best of resources.

TQM is about responsiveness to customers.

TQM is also about continuous improvement. zed through the so-called
'plan–do–check–act' (PDCA) cycle.

Let's discuss the role PDCA in diagnosing?

Thank you