

OUTDOOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT –

A Critical Introduction for the Intelligent Practitioner

Final Draft Copy

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INTRODUCTION

A Personal Story

Two learning experiences have changed my life. One was a Lewinian “T” Group which I attended, ostensibly on an evaluative basis, at the behest of my employers, and from which I took much. The other was an outdoor programme I attended in 1978. I had mixed feelings, looking forward to a week of exciting activity, but having no idea what the real benefits of were meant to be. My less optimistic colleagues muttered about “brainwashing” and expressed fears that the programme’s objective was to exhaust us, thus making us open to company indoctrination.

Reality was different to all our expectations. We carried out a series of absorbing tasks which required (at the very least) some creativity in their solving. Physicality was at the level of a welcome incidental - adding an element of fun, rather than exhaustion. The emphasis on process and review was high. As time passed, the exercises became more complex, culminating in one lasting 24 hours in which we were able to explore layer after layer of task-complexity, circumstances pushing us towards adopting a managerial approach which emphasised flexibility, communication, and the need to make decisions on incomplete information. By this time we had become accustomed to review, and incorporated it into our performance.

I found the experience deeply seductive, and as the week progressed I became more and more excited. Even now, I can recall specific moments from the programme in graphic detail, yet find it hard to record what I *actually* learned. My learning could not (cannot) be summed up in a list of competencies, and was (and is!) hard to put into words. Whilst researching for this book I found a summary of what happened to me:

“...a profound kind of learning which is readily sensed, but can be difficult to articulate: It is a kind of learning which is fundamental, which is holistic, which is closely linked to personality, and which affects how people learn. ‘Development’ is typically less specific but more substantial

and more central to a person's make-up than 'learning'. (It is) a change in a person's core construct system"

Roger Greenaway (1995)¹

Such changes have consequences: On return to the office I found the routine of my job less congenial than before. My eyes had been opened to a new world, and the day-to-day palled. Acting as a staff member on further outdoor programmes only served to heighten this feeling. Going back to the office felt like going back to unreality. In due course I accepted an invitation to join a development training organisation. From there I built a niche for myself.

The point is, I found that what happened on OMD programmes was more impactful, more significant, than the day to day "reality" which was my lot as a company training manager. When reading this book you should keep this in mind. I'm a deep believer in OMD.

But a critical one. OMD is a highly fragmented business and has its fair share of chancers, exploiters-of-trends and downright fools. Sometimes the connection between outdoor training and management development is tenuous. Sometimes it doesn't exist at all. Sometimes, indeed, it's just outdoor pursuits at silly prices.

One of the reasons for this book is to try to raise OMD's game. I believe the medium is potentially immensely powerful, but that many providers, anxious to seem relevant to the latest HRD fad, have succeeded only in weakening its impact.

Reflection in recent years has brought to me a belief that many OMD efforts, for one reason or another, fail to achieve what they could. This book reflects that belief and challenges a number of taken-for-granted both in the OMD world and, by extension, in the wider world of management development.

¹ GREENAWAY, R., 1995. *Powerful Learning Experiences in Management Development and Learning* Thesis (PhD). Lancaster University

I've also included a practice-based chapter in which a number of exercises, together with possible applications are included, together with tips on course (rather than just exercise) design.

Although each Chapter has been written as a "stand-alone", I hope there's enough narrative unity for the book to be read (not all in one go!) from start to finish without appearing too disjointed.

Stylistically, I've tried to pitch the book somewhere between two extremes. Academic books are full of useful information but often are so hard to read. Popular management books frequently oversimplify. Both are unsatisfactory one way or another. Add to that the fact that human beings are *complicated*. Helping them to learn and develop is a complex, many-layered business in which there are few easy answers and the style to adopt becomes self-evident. Something that's readable but doesn't insult the intelligence with oversimplifications. That's what I've aimed for. I hope I've achieved that aim.

OMD deserves more than the quick-fix "teambuilds" which have become its most-sold product recently. If this book has helped you to see greater potential than that, it's been time well-spent for me.

Reading this book

although it's my fervent hope that readers will read the whole of this book, it's possible that people will come to it from a variety of backgrounds, and may wish to partake only of the parts that directly concern them. Some will be engaged in critical enquiry, others for hints as to practice, yet others to consider whether or not they should buy OMD. Some may be students.

Different Chapters may appeal.

The critical enquirer may wish to first turn to Chapters two and three, which look behind the practice of OMD to seek to identify the currents of thought which underpin it and to compare critical views on it. Not that it's just summaries of other people's writing – the chapters also develop arguments based around my belief that OMD

suffers from a poverty of ambition and challenges – sometimes bluntly - some of the “taken-for-granted” of OMD.

Practitioners and buyers may wish to turn straight to Chapter 4, which examines outdoor media, looks at course design and spends a little time on review.

Appendices D to G may also be of use to the practitioner and buyer.

I hope everybody reads Chapter 1. OMD doesn’t exist in a vacuum – it’s part of the world of experiential learning and an understanding of the underpinning theories of that world is vital to all who wish to do their work intelligently. OMD is a method. Experiential learning is the context within which that method works.

Appendix “B” will also be interesting to some, especially students, and can be treated as a fifth chapter. It’s an essay on the roots of OMD which turned into a – for me at least – thoughtful critique of where OMD came from. For me it was revealing to discover, for example, that the U.S. roots of OMD are *very* different from their British counterparts. It was also revealing to identify the idealism which was the sub-plot to the pioneer outdoor development organisations. Whatever, read it for yourself and see what reflections you have.....

I’ve also included an extensive **bibliography**, primarily, I guess, of use to students but also as a kind of acknowledgement of those who contributed to my own reflection on OMD. Others especially deserving of acknowledgement are Steve Goodwill, co-author of my first book (see bibliography – it’s very practice-based...), my long-suffering wife, my colleagues in Lindley Lodge, ADAPT, ADEPT and QED Training (you know who you are!) and - of course - delegates from Barnsley to Bucharest – *they* did the real work!

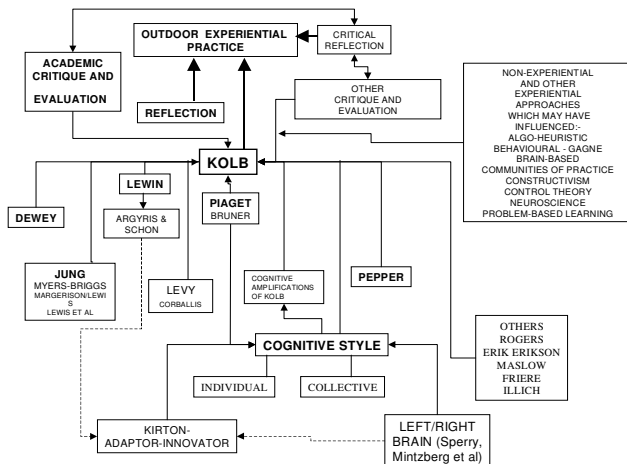
Bill Krouwel
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June 2002

CHAPTER 1 - EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

OMD is a branch of experiential learning, and it's clearly important to any study of the subject to know something of related theory....at which point many may react by saying something like “*Oh yes, experiential learning... I know about that.....it's the Kolb cycle and those questionnaires to see where you fit in, isn't it?*”

Well, actually, no - Kolb didn't invent experiential learning. What he *did* do – and most thoroughly - was to encode knowledge on the subject, drawing especially on the three pioneers Jean Piaget, John Dewey and Kurt Lewin, as well as developing a model of experiential learning which synthesises the work of many.

Kolb's importance is thus as a synthesist rather than an originator of learning theory² and his work provides an excellent focus for understanding experiential learning. Those who reduce his work to a simple 4-stage cycle do a disservice to a complex process. Just *how* complex can be illustrated by the diagram below which attempts to plot just how many influences Kolb cites:



Experiential Learning Theories – Root and Branch

² KOLB, D.A., 1984, *Experiential Learning*, Englewood Cliffs N.J., Prentice-Hall

Kolb considers the intellectual origins of experiential learning to be the work of three people: John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget. Their contributions were:

John Dewey

“For Dewey, knowledge is not absolute, immutable, and eternal, but rather relative to the developmental interaction of man with his world as problems arise to present themselves for solution”

Anonymous introduction to John Dewey’s *“How We Think”*,
Prometheus, New York.

Dewey (1859-1952) was the leading American philosopher of his day, professor of philosophy at Columbia, and a pioneer experimental educationist. Arguably, it is in this area that he most influenced the world, particularly through his perception that learning is a thoroughly experiential activity:

“An infant does not even begin to reach definitely for things that the eye sees till he is several months old, and even then several weeks’ practice is required before he learns the adjustments so as not to over-reach nor to under-reach.....final mastery requires observing and selecting the successful movements, and arranging them in view of an end”

The Deweyite approach is a means of teaching which takes “ordinary” experience and turns it into learning. This is done through a variety of methods including apprenticeship and internship programmes. The general objective is not to change the world (or even the way one sees or interacts with the world), but to learn the prosaic or exotic, simple or complicated, skills of a trade or profession by interaction with the world of that trade or profession. Dewey’s legacy lives on in the widespread application of a variety of experiential education methods. The apprentice working to a planned programme of experience, the medical student learning by

dealing with the actual problems of patients, both owe something to John Dewey.

What they learn may well be extremely useful to them, but may be unlikely to change the way they actually perceive the world. On the other hand.....

Kurt Lewin (1890 –1947)

According to Kolb, Lewin was no less than “the founder of American social psychology”, described by others as having an influence “comparable to Sigmund Freud”. Lewin’s continued influence on the fields of social psychology and organisational behaviour is based on the action-research method he pioneered.

The approach adopted by Lewin was to develop actual group experiments of change, carried out in the laboratory or field, viewing group life *in its totality* rather than focusing on particular aspects.

Part of his contribution to experiential learning was quite simply that he presided over the discovery of a method of group reflection which, in evolved forms, is in common use today. This came about as the result of a group of three participants on a leadership and group-dynamics programme seeking to join in the discussions in which experts analysed their behaviour during the day³. The participants found the experience so useful that next day, practically the whole course turned up to participate in the review with Lewin enjoying this different source of data.⁴ His view that “...*people are more likely to accept and act on research findings if they helped to design the research and participate in the gathering and analysis of data*”⁵ was born out by such occurrences and his valuable contribution to experiential learning can be summarised as:

³ KOLB, D.A., 1984, *Experiential Learning*, Englewood Cliffs N.J., Prentice-Hall

⁴ LIPPITT, RONALD 1949, *Training in Community Relations*, New York , Harper and Row, 1949

⁵ ARGYRIS, CHRIS AND SCHÖN DONALD A., 1996, *Organisational Learning II*, Reading Mass., Addison-Wesley

- The involvement of his experimental subjects as *active, inquiring participants* in the conduct of those social experiments
- The view that people are more likely to adopt beliefs in whose development and testing *they have been active participants*

This approach took experiential learning into a wider realm than that of “formal” education, and gaining the potential for experiential learning to become the foundation for group-based development.

As a word of testimony, my own experience on the receiving end of a methodology which can trace its roots directly back to Lewin changed the way I dealt with the world.

Jean Piaget

Whilst working with Binet on intelligence tests for children, Piaget found himself less interested in the results than in the processes through which the children went to arrive at them. Research led to the conclusion that intelligence is shaped *by experience*.

Although Piaget’s work was in child development and has attracted criticism for a rigid approach to categorising development by age, one part of it is a key to designing effective development experiences for adults: Piaget found that during *all* development stages, children experience their environment using whatever mental maps are currently available to them. If experiences are repeated, they fit easily into that cognitive structure. If experiences are different or new, the cognitive structure is altered to accommodate them.

This is important knowledge for designers of experiential training. If we provide new experiences for people, we assist the further adaptation of their cognitive structures, helping them to cope with the shock of the new in a non-threatening way. That this happens was made clear to me early in my career in OMD when a former participant in an outdoor programme recounted his experiences in a meeting where half the participants had gone through an outdoor

programme aimed at helping them to cope with the shock of change and to move their company forward. They tried to focus on solving problems; the other participants reflected an outdated political attitude by seeking merely to place blame.

Cognitive Style

Individual cognitive style is a key influence on the learning people take from experience because it governs and interprets the evidence of eye, ear and hand to define the lessons absorbed by the experiential learner.

Kolb asserts, and Jungian type questionnaires (for example) illustrate that individuals' cognitive preferences vary widely. This variety has prompted much enquiry into cognition, and cognitive style.

A number of characteristics of cognitive style can be discerned:⁶

- It is concerned with *form* rather than *content* of information processing
- It is a *pervasive* dimension that can be assessed using psychometric techniques
- It is *stable* over time
- It may consist of a number of bipolarities
- It may be *value differentiated* (i.e. 'different' rather than 'better' thinking processes)

Cognitive Style – management applications: Sadler-Smith⁷ argues that there are three models of cognitive style which have been widely used in organisational and educational contexts:

Intuition-Analysis: The idea of the dominance of one or other of the

⁶ SADLER-SMITH, E. & BADGER, B., 1998. Cognitive Style, Learning and Innovation. *Analysis & Strategic Management*, 10 (2)

⁷ SADLER-SMITH, E., 1998. Cognitive Style: Some Human Resource Implications for Managers, *International Human Resource Management Journal*, 19, 185-202

two hemispheres of the brain comes from 1960's work on 'split-brain' patients. Management theorists recognized the potential of this work and in 1976 **Mintzberg**⁸ wrote about "*planning on the left, managing on the right*". Levy (1980) and Corballis (1980) summarised this work⁹. Allinson and Hayes speculate that hemispherical differences in the brain are a possible basis for a variety of cognitive styles¹⁰, using the term 'intuition' to describe *right brain* thinking (i.e. immediate judgement based on feeling and the adoption of a global perspective) and 'analysis' for *left brain* thinking (judgement based on reason and focussing on the detail).

Adaptor – Innovator: Kirton's adaption-innovation theory¹¹ states that individuals differ in their preferred ways of dealing with change, creativity, problem-solving and decision making. This dimension of cognitive style is bipolar, with no particular position on the scale being 'better' than any other although one style may be more effective in particular situations. *Adaptors* are characterised by precision, reliability, efficiency, discipline and conformity, whilst *Innovators* are typified by undisciplined thinking, and tangential approaches to tasks and problem-solving, cutting across accepted paradigms.

Wholist-Analytical: Riding's¹² wholist-analytical dimension aims to describe the habitual way in which individuals process information in another bipolarity than that presented by Jung and his successors.

The lesson for OMD: Cognitive diversity is of immense importance

⁸ MINTZBURG, H., 1976. Planning On The Left Side And Managing On The Right, *Harvard Business Review*, 49-58

⁹ KOLB, D.A., 1984, *Experiential Learning*, Englewood Cliffs N.J., Prentice-Hall

¹⁰ ALLINSON, C.W. & HAYES, J. , 1996, The Cognitive Styles Index: A measure of Intuition-analysis for Organisational Research, *Journal of Management Studies* 33, 119-135

¹¹ KIRTON, M.J., 1976. Adaptors and Innovators, A description and Measure, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 622-669

¹² RIDING, R. J. & CHEEMA, I., 1991. Cognitive Styles – An Overview and Integration *Educational Psychology*, 11, 193-215

to OMD simply because individual learners may perceive the same experience in a multitude of ways, getting different learning from it. Even in short OMD exercises one can observe a wide variety of learning outcomes, each dependent on delegates' cognitive styles, as well as the problem solving etc. competencies displayed by them. Two illustrative examples are set out in Appendix "A".

Cognitive style can have a massive effect on what people actually learn. The extent to which it is taken into account by designers and deliverers of experiential training will have a strong bearing on the effectiveness of that training. This particularly applies to two things:

1) Desired Outcomes: There is currently a fad for training in which, if you can't predict and measure training outcomes, the training is judged to be no good. This is fine for skills training – it is right to expect that courses claiming to teach supply chain management or accounting skills should impart measurable competency in these areas.

It is *not* right to adopt such an approach to work aimed at personal or team development. OMD providers who offer tightly tailored "solutions" to people's developmental needs deserve contempt. They lack any trust in the fact that delegates have the ability to know what they need to learn.

In OMD, one size doesn't fit all, and each person takes different lessons from the experiences. That's the point. It's an experiential method that can meet the idiosyncratic needs of different individuals and groups. It sells itself short by limiting itself to predetermined (and limited) outcomes.

2) Review: Most "predictable outcomes" training ignores the variety of cognitive preference, with the risk that review can be crippled by being forced into preordained competency-dictated paths. Far better to keep review as open as possible, seeking people's views on what they have learned rather than telling them what they *should* have learned.

Reflection

“Experience plus reflection equals learning”

John Dewey (1938)

All human beings need to become competent in taking action and simultaneously reflecting on this action to learn from it.¹

Argyris and Schön (1974)

Why Reflection?

Kolb sees reflection as the opposite and natural foil to action¹³. There can be no experiential learning without action, but experiential learning is stunted without the opportunity to reflect and resolve. Dewey emphasised the importance of reflective thought,¹⁴ stating that active, persistent and careful consideration includes a conscious and voluntary effort to establish belief upon a firm basis of evidence and rationality¹⁵. Schön encapsulates reflection as a process in which the participant:

- Draws on experience to understand the situation
- Attempts to frame the problem
- Suggests action
- Re-interprets the situation in light of the consequences of action

Without reflection, the experiential process does not meaningfully exist; experience remains mere experience.

OMD applications of Reflection

¹³ KOLB, D.A., 1984. *Experiential Learning – Experience as The Source of Learning and Development*, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall

¹⁴ DEWEY, J., 1933. *How We Think*, New York, Prometheus

¹⁵ DEWEY, J., 1933. *How We Think*, New York, Prometheus

Although many OMD programme designers recognise the need for reflection, application is often reduced to a post-exercise “review” slot, wherein (typically) a group is asked to discuss three things it did well and two upon which it could have improved. This is a very tidy way to do things. Sadly, the human brain doesn’t work so tidily. With experience, one can identify key moments when learning is triggered in individuals. In inflexible programmes it’s easy to lose these moments, so it pays to remain flexible in the timing and frequency of one’s reviews. If something needs to be explored, give more time. If nothing’s emerging, move on.

I also recommend the use of quiet time (perhaps structured) to enable delegates to reflect on what they are learning. Many people only truly reflect when free from the interference of having to interact with others.

Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle

“.....there may be a great payoff in the integration of findings from these specialised areas into a single general adaptive model such as that proposed by experiential learning theory.....When learning is conceived as holistic adaptive process, it provides conceptual bridges across life situations such as school and work, portraying learning as a rich new perspective for the conduct of education”

David Kolb, 1983

Weaving from a rich diversity of threads, David Kolb provides us with that general adaptive model. Insufficient space is available in this book to give it the justice it deserves, and too many people have already reduced Kolb’s work to a simplistic cycle, so instead I prefer to recommend Kolb’s book, *Experiential Learning – Experience as The Source of Learning and Development* (Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1984).

Significance to OMD

For OMD, Kolb's learning cycle is significant. OMD relies for its effectiveness on lessons learned through experiences in the outdoors which (it is hoped) will effect some change in delegates' behaviour at places other than those in which the lessons were learned. An understanding of *how* people actually learn through experience is thus a useful tool.

The connection between Kolb and OMD was made long ago: In 1983¹⁶, Chapman and Lumsdon claimed that *"Very few management development activities comprise all four of the elements described by Kolb in his model of "Circular Learning".....Most programmes rely on the prior existence of Element 1, Concrete Experience, in participants. [outdoor]"*¹⁷Development training creates it by providing experience in an environment which can be uncomfortable, uncertain, unfamiliar and sometimes hostile."

Chapman and Lumsdon remind us that OMD, if used effectively and imaginatively, is a unique way of helping managers to develop. It reminds me of how I first became involved in the medium. My boss said to me *"go and find something with the power of a "T" Group but without the casualties!"*. I did. It was OMD - in a very sophisticated form.

But OMD is a wide church. Just *how* wide is explored in the next Chapter....

¹⁶ CHAPMAN, A. & LUMSDON C.A., 1983. Outdoor Development Training, a New Tool for Management. *Leadership and Organisation Journal*, 4, 4

¹⁷ My insertion for purposes of clarity

CHAPTER 2 – CLASSES OF OMD

From its earliest days, OMD combined elements from the two worlds of outdoor and organisational development. This is illustrated graphically by two articles which appeared in the same edition of the same magazine. The first is by David Williams¹⁸ and is interesting in that it describes Mortlockian Adventure Education – pretty much at the Davie Crockett/Horatio end of the development training spectrum. The author speaks of transitional learning for those on the threshold of adulthood more than of OMD. The focus is clear: *“The courses are designed to develop personal qualities, attitudes of mind, and skills in those attending them.....a progression of experiences and situations in a number of contrasting environments can bring about an increase in personal and social awareness....The aims and objectives of courses of this nature vary according to the position of the employee and the particular requirements of the industry involved, however they can best be described as involving social needs of the individual, e.g. creating a sense of achievement or an increase in self-confidence....”*

Rhetoric largely of the old paradigm – of bringing out personal qualities, of the *environment* delivering increases in personal and social awareness.

I wrote the second article¹⁹, and (at the time) had far greater “Indoor” provenance than outdoor. The rhetoric is strikingly different:- *“Our objective is to provide a framework of exercises within which managers can test their powers to cope with an accelerating rate of uncertainty and change.....other management development needs can be satisfied by the outdoor programme.....These include the ability to organise, to persuade, to motivate others and to work as a team.....”* and *“That’s where much of the learning takes place – in review sessions. It’s vital that these are given as much consideration*

¹⁸ WILLIAMS, D.H., 1980. Adventure With a Purpose. *Training Officer*, 16,10

¹⁹ KROUWEL, Bill (1980). Management Development Using the Outdoors. *Training Officer*, 16,10

as the actual exercises.....it is important to get the right balance between exercises and review". Different rhetoric – recognisable for a competency-driven approach, management-development jargon, and emphasis on review....

Within a few years, the latter approach was in the ascendant as the basis for a business which experienced mushroom-like growth, incidentally transforming the approach adopted by the likes of Brathay and (eventually) Outward Bound. It also gave birth to a host of organisations whose brutal names - Challenge, Adapt, Impact – often belied some subtlety of approach.

Nevertheless, some survivalists survived and prospered during the OMD boom years. The result was the coming into being of a range of OMD offerings, the differences between which were not always apparent to prospective users. A number of writers have therefore attempted to sort OMD into classes, although without complete success.

Dainty and Lucas highlighted one of the problems:

"Programmes can differ quite considerably not only in terms of the type of tasks that participants are asked to perform, but also in terms of the type of review process utilised, and the overall outcomes that are intended by the course organisers.....the problem is that there is a real danger that its diversity is misunderstood rather than managed, ignored rather than used for improving programmes, and can lead to confusion rather than clarity about the advantages and disadvantages of using this development activity",²⁰

Others have also recognised this issue, and writers have attempted to throw some light on what Beeby and Rathborn (1983) termed *".....uncertainty and confusion about the operation of the outdoor approach and what it seeks to achieve with relevance to the*

²⁰ DAINITY, PAUL AND LUCAS, DONNA, 1992. Clarifying the confusion: A practical framework for evaluating outdoor development programmes for managers, *Management Education And Development*.

workplace”²¹. Beeby and Rathborn also noted “....the very richness and variety of programmes, reflected in.....numerous objectives, make the outdoor approach a difficult one to communicate easily.....the immediate requirement is for greater clarity of terms in future discussions and presentations of the approach”

Doughty²² succeeded in encoding some commonly-held views, declaring that “Perhaps some of the discontinuity between the understanding of providers and clients lies in the confusion over the differing outcomes of management development and personal development”. His categories are:

First Generation: Growth through physical challenge, Little review or facilitation. Participants take from the experience as they are able. A confused and painful experience for many. Trainer-centred and didactic style for inputs.

Second Generation: Growth through physical activity. Process assisted by facilitation - review may take a large part of the course indoors. More participant-centred than the first Generation. Delivery more interactive.

Third Generation: Seeks to balance physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects of personal development – indoor or outdoor as need dictates, in a programme aimed at holistic learning. Equality-centred style. Power lies equally with the trainer and the participant

²¹ BEEBY, J.M AND RATHBORN, S., 1983. Development Training – Using the Outdoors in Management Development, *Management Education and Development* 14, 3

²² DOUGHTY, S., 1991. Three Generations of Development Training, *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Leadership*, 7, 4

Without a specifically management agenda, Priest and Gass (1993)²³ also adopt a generational approach. They list five of which the first three are similar to Doughty's. The others are:

Frontloading: In which the instructor: *“(before the briefing, possibly during, or just after it) explains several key learning points. These points may include, but are not necessarily limited to: sharing the learning objectives for the activity and any related motivational benefits, stressing the desired positive behaviours in advance, warning learners of the consequences of negative behaviours and asking learners to review or revisit earlier commitments to change before beginning an activity”* .

Isomorphically framing the experience: Trying to turn the experience into a metaphor for work, for example by reframing a rope spider's web as a distribution network.

What's interesting about the generational approach is that it encodes a “taken-for-granted” that had emerged during Development Training and OMD's early battles to differentiate itself from traditional outdoor pursuits: That review of processes is *automatically* a good thing. Certainly, the conventional wisdom is that a tidy plan-do-review model is somehow more “objective” than the rather untidy process wherein people undertake tasks without reviewing them, or review them in an *ad hoc* way.

This represents a gross oversimplification of the experiential process. People learn at the most inconvenient of times and to think that formal, offline review is *indispensable* to learning perhaps reflects a failure to accept the complexities of the human learning process. I have spent many a dull hour watching earnest facilitators religiously reviewing every twist and turn of a 15-minute “grounds” task, often to the despair of the people who actually performed it. Formal review of every task is *not* indispensable. What *is* vital is for the

²³ PRIEST, SIMON AND GASS, MICHAEL, 1993. Five Generations of Facilitated Learning from Adventure Experiences. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Leadership* 10,3

facilitator to be close enough to the group to sense those key moments when light has dawned and to honour the group by ensuring that the learning is captured. Groups and individuals learn at their own pace, and attempts to “hothouse” learning can actually get in the way.

Priest and Gass’s additional classes are problematical, offering the potential for instrumentalism. The fourth generation (front loading) is particularly open to this, seeming to enable trainers to tell people what they will learn. Ersatz experientialism, substituting free group process with a procedure set up to prove the trainer’s point. The main objective can only be to send delegates home carrying with them *exactly* the lessons the designer wanted them to take away, whether or not these are relevant to them.

Their fifth generation (isomorphic framing) is more pathetic than problematical. Telling people that a rope spider’s web is a distribution network is silly. They can *see* that it’s an arrangement of ropes and frames. If the experience doesn’t have the capacity to be an effective metaphor, no amount of window-dressing will make it so.

Non-Generational Classifications

Other writers have attempted to classify OMD by non-generational means.

Beeby and Rathborn (1983)²⁴ cite two classes of OMD:

Adventure Education – where the medium (the outdoors – climbing, caving and so on) is the message – so review is seen as unnecessary.

Development Training (in an employment context) as a training method which is “.....a *special class of experiential learning which*

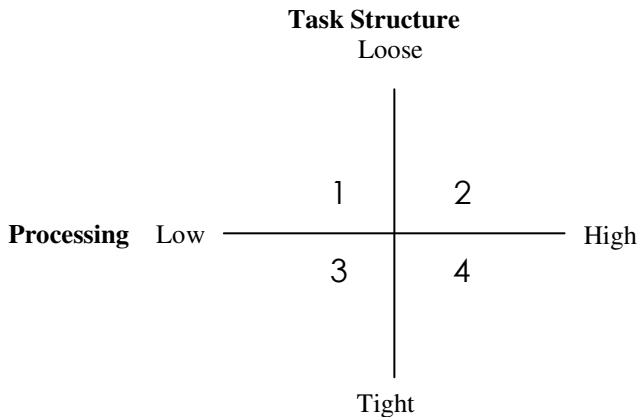
²⁴ BEEBY, J.M. AND RATHBORN, S., 1983. Development Training – Using the Outdoors in Management Development. *Management Education and Development*, 14 (3)

distinctively incorporates use of the outdoors (experience) with process reviews (assessment)”

Dainty and Lucas (1993)²⁵ present a framework for evaluating Outdoor Development (their term) rather than defining classes. They suggest that evaluation should come from looking at three continuums, one of which (outcomes) is dealt with in the next section. The other two are:

Tasks undertaken - from highly prescribed (high technical support required, structured, narrow objectives) to very flexible (low technical support, unstructured, broad objectives);

Review Processes - from low intensity (General focus, low personal focus) to high intensity (specific focus, personally challenging and direct). With seeming inevitability, these two are combined to form a matrix:



Task/Process structure (After Dainty and Lucas)

²⁵ DAINTY, Paul and LUCAS, Donna (1992) *Clarifying the confusion: A practical framework for evaluating outdoor development programmes for managers*, Management Education and Development, Lancaster.

Whilst perhaps more satisfactory, these classifications still leave something to be desired. Dainty and Lucas, for example, classify abseiling as an activity requiring high technical support and structured, narrow objectives. To limit the learning to that dictated by one's narrow objectives seems to be a remarkably confining thing to do. A first-time abseiler might experience a wide variety of thoughts, feelings, emotions; the learning potential for each individual is different. For one, the support of team members may trigger-off reflection about their behaviour in managing people. For another, it may provoke reflections on trust. For yet another, ways of coping with fear. The experience of abseiling (or of choosing *not* to abseil) provides a wide range of learning opportunities. If we then review the exercise around structured, narrow objectives, we limit the experience. We dictate the learning agenda by only *allowing* people to learn what we wish them to learn.

The idea that an activity can meet structured, narrow, learning objectives denies the essential autonomy of human thought – the “*active sense-making process which addresses itself to all experience, external events impinging on the person, sensations of seemingly inner awareness and offered pre-structured knowledge*”²⁶ It also limits the potential of outdoor development to meet real (but different) people's real (but different) needs.

Although Dainty and Lucas provide a convenient example, this underplaying of human autonomy also applies in varying degrees to my own earlier writings, to Priest and Gass, and to Doughty. We all imply that people only learn (or at least learn best) through some form of structured “review” process when an expert – a teacher or facilitator - is present.

This case seems to be most strongly presented by Doughty, who demonises the purely activity-based approach as “*a confused and painful experience*” (Doughty, 1991). It may be, but powerful

²⁶ BURGOYNE, JOHN, Learning from experience – From Individual discovery to meta-dialogue via the evolution of transitional myths. *Personnel Review*, 24, 6

transformational learning is often, whatever the medium, confused and painful.

Another problem with categorisation is that it impoverishes perception by lumping together various characteristics which may have nothing to do with each other. Thus Doughty's "generations" ignore the fact that it is perfectly possible to combine little formal review and facilitation within a warm and caring atmosphere which utilises outdoor activities.

To summarise, dividing OMD into hard classes is unhelpful in that it unnecessarily "freezes" various approaches to the medium into "good" and "bad" classes and does the same for the media themselves, for example by characterising a particular technique as having "narrow" or "broad" objectives. Some of the classes seem to provide the potential for subtle forms of manipulation. Others are simply asinine.

CHAPTER 3 - USES OF OMD

Applications Of Outdoor Management Development – Theoretical Perspectives

In 1993, in an attempt to establish the applications and outcomes of OMD, Philip Jones and Clifford Oswick²⁷ conducted a thorough review of the available literature. They found “*a bewildering array of beneficial training outcomes being attributed to this form of training intervention...*” , identifying more than 200 different claimed benefits. Therein lies one of the problems facing OMD. What is it for? This was always a concern – writers in the eighties and nineties often noted it - and is a real issue in today’s competency-driven HR world, in which buyers expect immediate and measurable behavioural and bottom-line payback.

Much of OMD has reacted to demands for instant applicability by attempting to play the HR-niks at their own game, learning the jargon and offering the nostrums.

The results can be laughable. The blurb for one provider (taken more or less at random from a sheaf of brochures) avers that “*The working combination of established and new staff will give us a market lead in the Team building field....and help you develop your staff through competency lead (sic) initiatives and personal aspiration that provides for a competent and flexible workforce of the future*”²⁸ and proves its ability to talk the impenetrably jargonistic talk by claiming to “*...deliver a step change in performance, linking strategic business objectives with on-the-ground actions so important for delivering a seamless transition and workforce participation*”²⁹

²⁷ JONES, PHILIP J. AND OSWICK, CLIFFORD, 1993. Outcomes of Outdoor Management Development: “Articles of Faith?”, *Journal of European Industrial Training* 17, 3

²⁸ ANONYMOUS (2000) *Welcome to Whitwell*, Rutland: Whitwell News, Summer/Autumn

²⁹ Ibid

Other organisations offer competency-based programmes using less extreme versions of HR rhetoric: *“.....we can help you to create a realistic competitive advantage. Plus, by showing you how to develop continuous improvement tools and techniques for your organisation, you can ensure that your advantage is sustainable”*³⁰

Yet others make bold – even rash - claims for OMD. One organisation rhetorically asks *“What will your organisation get out of the day?”*³¹ and responds: *“Improved – Teamwork – Planning – Communication; Help employees manage change within an organisation more effectively; A neutral base for learning and team building; Cost effective and flexible training programme; Help staff work towards a common goal; Course participants will learn to think on a more lateral basis; Progress from working as individuals in an organisation to working as a team”*³²

Not bad for a one-day team challenge event.....

Another set of organisations offer a whole range of diversions - Lawnmower racing, paint-balling, archery, quad-bike races – marketed as “teambuilding”. Taken to extremes, this is both elaborate and grotesque:-

“Former SAS soldiers faked the kidnap of a senior partner in an accountancy firm while shocked colleagues watched in horror, reports today’s Daily Mirror. The ‘kidnapping’....was all part of a team-building exercise.....executives of the accountancy firm thought that they were attending a black-tie dinner when six men burst through false windows into the hotel conference suite, firing sub-machine guns (loaded with blanks) over the diners heads. The 250 guests were plunged into darkness whilst around them gunfire and flares exploded. Four of the six-man team continued to fire over

³⁰ ANONYMOUS (2000) *Lakeside Management Development – a great source of ideas and inspiration for your business*. Brochure of Lakeside Management Development.

³¹ THE ACKERS TRUST (2000) *Is your team on the right track?* Brochure

³² Ibid

the heads of the diners whilst the other two 'snatched' the firm's senior partner..... After the kidnap, the exercise continued with a mission to rescue the partner and defuse a nuclear bomb”³³

This mess of competency-driven nostrums and “fun” activities seems to be OMD’s response to the brave new world of HR. Ask practitioners what OMD can do and many answer “whatever you want!” Dainty and Lucas point out that *“There are a number of commonly held beliefs..... about outdoor development programmes. These range from a view of it as a masochistic experience and SAS training, to claims that it can foster emotional rebirth.”*³⁴ The problem isn’t so much that the beliefs are erroneous – it’s that you can find the whole range being offered in the marketplace.

In attempts to shed some light on things, a number of academics have examined applications of OMD and arrived at conclusions that it can be categorised into the two distinct classes of *management skills development* and a wider, more ambitious type of *human development*.

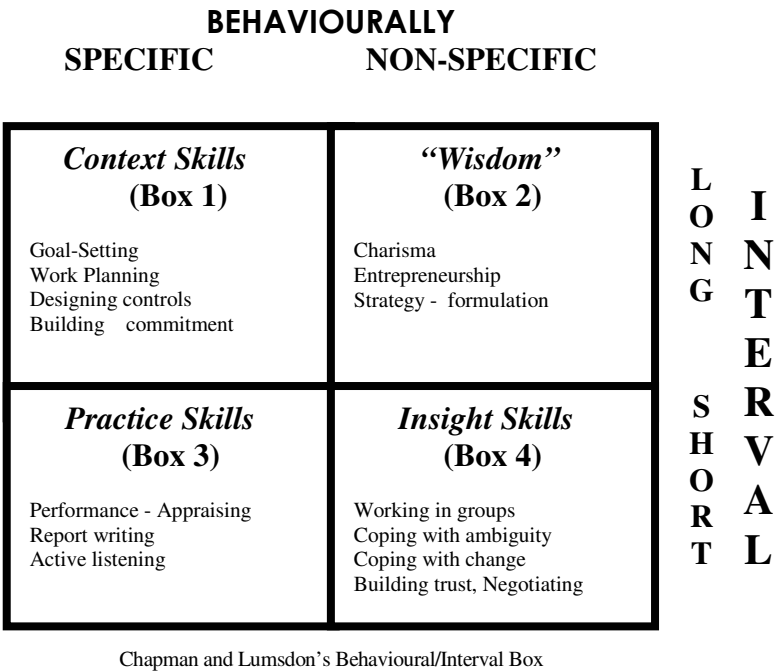
As long ago as 1983 Chapman and Lumsdon characterised these as behaviourally *specific* or *non-specific*.

They develop these thoughts in a construct (see next page) which seeks to categorise learning into four classes, and add that they believe that development best addresses quadrant 4 - behaviourally non-specific short-interval “insight” skills such as coping with ambiguity, and change, building trustful relationships, developing realistic negotiating skills, and working effectively in groups. They interestingly speculate that these are important **but more difficult to**

³³ From “HR Briefing”, Issue 46 (19 July 2001)

³⁴ DAINTY, Paul and LUCAS, Donna (1992) Clarifying the confusion: A practical framework for evaluating outdoor development programmes for managers, management education and development, Lancaster.

evaluate than the Quadrants 1 and 3 skills that many traditional management development programmes seek to address.



Chapman and Lumsdon’s Behavioural/Interval Box

Dainty and Lucas (1992) categorise four classes of outcome from OMD:

Development of self and other awareness; Broad concrete skills; Narrow concrete skills; Fun/enjoyment.

Bank’s³⁵ claims for OMD rather underline Dainty and Lucas’s (1992) comment that some see the outdoors as all things to all men.

³⁵ BANK, John (1985) *Outdoor Development for Managers*, Aldershot, Gower

Mossman³⁶ (1983), like Dainty and Lucas, notes a dichotomy in OMD, claiming that it works at two distinct levels: “*There seem to be two distinct manager development philosophies at work outdoors just as there are in more conventional MD....the **Management Training** approach and the **Self-Development** approach.... At the most basic level two questions distinguish Management Training from Self Development (after Boydell and Pedler 1981 p7):*

- *To what extent are learning needs defined by the delegate (as opposed to the trainer or manager?)*
- *To what extent does the delegate take responsibility for meeting those learning needs (as opposed to the trainer)?”*

He asserts that it’s important to take the orientation (towards self-development or management training) into account when selecting programmes and compares the two in a table, summarised below¹ . He also helpfully characterises OMD as a combination of “- *tasks designed to simulate the process involved in tackling typical problems back at work; - tasks which require the participants to engage their whole selves – intellectual emotional and physical – fully and with great intensity; - tasks that often do this outdoors (cf. Beeby and Rathborn 1983, p174); - tasks that often put delegates under pressure”*

In highlighting approaches which “*require the participant to engage their whole selves*” Mossman takes a different tack to those classifiers who specify particular skill-sets or areas of competence. Mossman specifies the benefits of the *medium*, not the *messages* for which it might be a vehicle.

This has the virtue of emphasising intensity of experience over a competency-driven approach. In a rather shaky analogy, the difference between the various “what you can use the outdoors to

³⁶ MOSSMAN, Alan (1983) "Making Choices about the Use of the Outdoors in Manager and Management Development" *Management Education and Development*" 14, 3 pp 182-196

¹ the original table also includes two other categories - adventure education and assessment centres, which I have omitted as *ultra vires*.

teach” approaches and Mossman is like the difference between ways of viewing the advent of the internet. One group says “*you can use it to advertise, send cheap mails, join chat rooms, post bulletins, read academic papers, research any topic you like, buy books!*” Another group says “*it can transform your life!*” Mossman supports this approach to OMD by asserting that “*in pursuit of certain of the personal growth objectives the programme may also include various activities designed to stimulate individual creativity or personal awareness.....*”

Mossman raises issues which were practically forgotten by OMD in the rush to commodify itself - that there are options other than competency development which can be fulfilled by the medium. One of these is self-development, the importance of which is addressed in the next section.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT AND THE WHOLE PERSON – A “LEAST STRAIGHTFORWARD OUTCOME”

“.....without judging me, diagnosing me, appraising me, evaluating me.....When someone really hears you without passing judgement on you, Without trying to take responsibility for you, without trying to mould you, It feels damn good!”³⁷

In attempting to facilitate self-development,, practitioners might make a more long-term and far-reaching contribution to human potential, fulfilment and, (who knows?) happiness.

A quotation from Mossman is apposite:

“David Hall has the nice notion of the difference between the role-person and the whole-person. Role-persons have a restricted set of behaviours open to them – those that they perceive as appropriate to their role. It is almost as if the whole-persons hang up a certain range of behaviours with their

³⁷ MOSSMAN, Alan (1983) "Making Choices about the Use of the Outdoors in Manager and Management Development" *Management Education and Development* 14, 3

coats when they arrive in the morning and only resume them when they leave in the evening.”

OMD is capable of releasing the whole-person, rather than just making better role-persons. As Dainty and Lucas say:³⁸ *“The development of self and other awareness is possibly the least straightforward outcome, yet potentially the most important. Nevertheless, it is an aspect which seems to be minimised by executive developers Without this self-understanding and an ability to be “other” centred, it is difficult to see how the development of skills in other areas will necessarily be effective”*

As Philip Kirk (1986)³⁹ puts it:-

“Pre-prepared packages of outdoor management development events which are applied in the same way to any and every group of participating managers will limit the usefulness of the programme, especially if the design rests on the premise that managers are the same everywhere”

and echoes Creswick and Williams and Chapman and Lumsdon in declaring that *“By the very nature of the outdoors and its immediate and direct impact on participants, the OMD programme has the capacity to address all the dimensions of management: physical, intellectual and emotional”*.

Of particular interest, he also cites Stuart and Binsted⁴⁰ in raising one of the more exciting potential outcomes of OMD:-*“they may suddenly realise that their new behaviour as learners (which may be very tentative and experimental) could perhaps be put to some future*

³⁸ DAINTY, Paul and LUCAS, Donna (1992) Clarifying the confusion: A practical framework for evaluating outdoor development programmes for managers, management education and development, Lancaster.

³⁹ KIRK, Philip (1986) Outdoor Management Development: Cellulose or Celluloid? In MEAD 17,2 pp 85-93

⁴⁰ STUART, R AND BINSTED, D (1981) “The transfer of learning: Designing reality into management learning events”, In Nixon, B (Ed.), *New Approaches to Management Development*, Farnborough: Gower.

role and experience at work. In this case, there will be what Stuart and Binsted call a “flash-over” and the learners’ perception of the learning event will change from one of low reality to one of high reality and with it will come the prospect of increased learner-transfer.....”

These “flash-overs” (evidenced by unsolicited and embarrassingly gushing testimonials) are recognisable as a phenomenon which sometimes occurs during longer programmes. For me, they generate an exciting fulfilment which transcends professional satisfaction. They rarely occur on the one or two-day programmes which are currently the OMD staple.

Two Worlds

Chapman and Lumsden, Mossman, and Dainty and Lucas all in their own ways point to two schools of practice in OMD.

The first - which Mossman has termed management training - is one in which delegates learn, through a process of activity and review, what the sponsor wants them to learn. The most extreme manifestation of this is frontloading, but a more subtle approach, with cunningly designed exercises and review questions crafted to bring out the “right” answers amounts to much the same thing.

There are all kinds of good reasons for this approach – it can help people to understand how best to work in organisations which have travelled the “downsize-and empower” route; it smooths the path of reorganisation; it allows practice in externally-imposed new ways of doing things; It can level the path of imposed transition; It is a useful tool of HRM.

The second school of practice – akin to Mossman’s self-development holds out a different promise. Chapman and Lumsdon allege that

OMD is more effective than traditional management development at
*“dealing with the idiosyncratic needs of the individual”*⁴¹.

MANAGEMENT TRAINING	SELF-DEVELOPMENT
Uses outdoors to help delegates learn specific skills. The needs of the delegates are assumed to be similar. Tasks and activities are formally reviewed, focussing on social and interpersonal issues of a group or inter-group nature Based on a desire to improve delegate behaviour in the workplace Delegate is seen as a manager There are experts who know what is best. Objectives pre-set by trainers and/or sponsors Tasks are pre-set to meet trainers/sponsors objectives Delegates control the way in which they tackle the task (no frontloading), which may be influenced by trainer inputs/learning from previous tasks Review dominated by trainers who draw out the learning points they wish to emphasise Group tasks, with little individual focus in review. Course designed without reference to delegates Limited programme flexibility Delegates can choose to opt-out of a given task. A straight on/off decision. Staff roles are safety, technical instruction, and process consultancy. Attitudes: Staff - “we know what you need”	Uses outdoors to help delegates develop in areas identified by delegates as important. Serendipitous learning is also experienced and welcomed. Review focuses on personal as well as interpersonal / Intergroup issues. Based on holistic ideas of humanistic psychology Delegate is seen as a person The delegate knows more about their own needs than do others. Objective are negotiated personally by each course member with staff /course members Delegates work with tutors to select tasks to explore the issues they have decided upon. Specific tasks may surprise, but the learning objectives will not. Delegates control the tasks, but roles may be set within them based on individual learning objectives Management of the review process is shared by all – delegates and trainers. Group tasks, with individual, as well as interpersonal and intergroup matters reviewed. Course designed with delegates High programme flexibility. Event process can be re-negotiated Delegates decide which needs they should work on and the tasks and activities to meet those needs Staff roles are safety, instruction, technical instruction, process consultancy, and feedback Attitudes: Staff – “delegates know what they need, our job is to help them find it”
Delegates – “How can we help?” CHAPMAN, A. and LUMSDON, C.A. (1983) <i>Outdoor Development Training: A New Tool for Management Development</i> Journal 4,4	Delegates – “How can you help me?” Sponsors – “How can you help me?”

This is widely acknowledged by the thoughtful - Dainty and Lucas, for example, state that “*the development of self and other awareness is potentially the most important*”⁴² application of OMD. So it seems that OMD has (at least potentially) an application beyond its competency-fulfilment and coping-with-change functions.

Does it often attempt to do this?

If not, what might the reasons be?

I will briefly explore these questions in the next section

Does OMD explore self-development?

In the twenty or so years in which British OMD has been active, several things have happened which may have worked against its use as a vehicle for self-development: In HRD, there has been a change in how people view their function; in business, there is a shift towards a shorter-term focus on the bottom line; in general, there is a perception that people are much more busy these days....

Domination and Submission – OMD and the business scene

The notion that organisations have responsibilities other than to their shareholders has taken something of a pounding in recent years. Lewis and Lawson⁴³ assert that individuals feel alienated as their

⁴² DAINTY, Paul and LUCAS, Donna (1992) Clarifying the confusion: A practical framework for evaluating outdoor development programmes for managers, management education and development, Lancaster.

⁴³ LEWIS, R. and LAWTON, J. (1992), The Four Functions of Organisations - Where does the Individual fit in ? Journal of Strategic Change

employer's expectations become more task-centred. My own work in career development confirms this – people often complain of overwork, and of a feeling that they are a disposable function, not valued for themselves. They also complain of policy being subject to wild swings, apparently dictated by the needs of a short-termist bottom line (typically of capital expenditure and recruitment policy being governed by quarterly results).

Such short-termism militates against the long-term view (and reasonably long periods away from the job) that self-development implies and requires. Greenaway⁴⁴ notes that staff at Brathay remarked in the 1980's on the diminution of course duration from four weeks to five days. Five days? *luxury!!* – courses now usually last one or two days, sometimes three. In such circumstances OMD providers are more likely to sell (and clients more likely to buy) the ever-popular "teambuild". Self-development becomes a back number by default – hard to sell, no apparent demand.

Providers are anxious to meet whatever the clients say are this year's (or this decade's) needs. One successful provider acknowledges this pragmatism: "...if we look back on course content and titles we can see that it has reflected the themes that have been prevalent in training in recent times: *Leadership in the 70s – Team-Building in the 80s – and Empowerment in the 90s*"⁴⁵

Disturbingly, by taking the easy options, OMD doesn't meet its full potential. Something like self-development offers a way for managers to truly grow as people, enabling them to build attitudes and develop the in-depth skills necessary to thrive in an uncertain future. An investment of five days could pay dividends for years to come.

⁴⁴ GREENAWAY, Roger (1995) *Powerful Learning Experiences in Management Development and Learning* Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Lancaster University

⁴⁵ NEAL, A (1992) *From panacea to pragmatism*, Training Officer 28,7

Selling and delivering such programmes is difficult in the short term but the effort is worth it. Once OMD starts to make that effort, its true value will be released. In the meantime, easy markets for the obvious (teambuilding), and slightly less easy ones for the slightly less obvious (managing change, for example) serve to keep OMD afloat. But such options reinforce some rather shallow “taken-for-grantedness”. They shore up the whole built-on-sand structure of modern HR practice.

In effect, many OMD practitioners act like Reed and Anthony’s “management teachers and trainers who intentionally perpetuate morally impoverished programmes of education for managers” and as such are “*deserving of contempt and working against their own interests*”⁴⁶.

Far better, through longer, reflective, programmes to “*work to help managers: . . . to an awareness of their own significance and responsibility by encouraging in them a consciousness of the difficulties with which they are engaged.....the unprogrammable complexities which face them - without the distracting and specious assistance of codes, competencies, catch phrases and mission statements*”⁴⁷

Without that consciousness, we will simply continue to develop irresponsible and short-termist management attitudes which help no-one.

I recently attended a course which had the modest but useful aim of re-qualifying me as a basic first aider. The course lasted four days. The following week I assisted in a course which had the ambitious aim of radically changing the values and attitudes of a senior management team. *That* course lasted two days.....

Go figure.....

⁴⁶ REYNOLDS, M (1998) Reflection and critical reflection in management learning *Management Learning* 29, 2, Thousand Oaks

⁴⁷ Ibid

OUTDOOR MEDIA AND COURSE DESIGN

In this chapter the balance moves from underpinning theories towards the practicalities of running OMD programmes. In consequence it has a slightly different tone and is based on reflections on my own practice.

It's more "technical" than the rest of the book and I've illustrated the chapter with some of my favourite exercises, - but be aware that it's easy – but risky - to use favourite exercises and media indiscriminately. Exercise choice should always be subordinated to the needs of the delegates and the overall aims of the programme. Not only should individual exercises reflect this but the mix of exercises and media is also vital. The admirable trainers at *Prazdninova Skola Lipnice*⁴⁸ in the Czech Republic are the best I've met at getting this mix right – but at the expense of immense amounts of offline reflection and discussion. They've even coined their own term for the mix. They call it the "*dramaturgy*" of the programme.

In many ways the mix is more important than the individual exercises. Wise trainers spend time and energy fine-tuning, responding to delegates' emerging needs and also seeking to meet the needs of the client.

Nevertheless, and using a different metaphor, it's impossible to bake a cake without knowing the ingredients, and these form the first part of the chapter. In each category I've appended a typical exercise to

⁴⁸ For a detailed look at this unique organisation (which has an attractive *logique des mondes* based more on Woody Guthrie than Tom Browne or Davie Crockett), see MARTIN Andrew and LEBERMAN, Sarah (2000) *Adventure the Czech Way*, Scisco Conscientia (website)

act as further illustration of the uses to which each medium can be put.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

It's important to have a clear agreement with sponsors regarding programme objectives before setting out to design programmes. It's rather too easy to simply fall unquestioningly in line with what sponsors *say* (and even *think*) they want. It's well worth taking time to explore their needs, seeking out the roots rather than just accepting things at face value. It's probable that your own knowledge of the potential of OMD is greater than theirs and Exploration and clarification gives better value to the client and probably better learning for the delegate.

Once you know what you're trying to achieve, design or use exercises which are metaphors for the required learning, allowing sufficient space for review, discussion and input. I also try to ensure that space is left (either within exercises or written into the programme) for reflection. Moving from task to interactive review without leaving this space is the training equivalent of rushing through a three-course meal.....

It's also important to accept learning other than that set out in the course objectives. Learning (whatever it is) should always be more important than the blind fulfilment of contractual obligations.

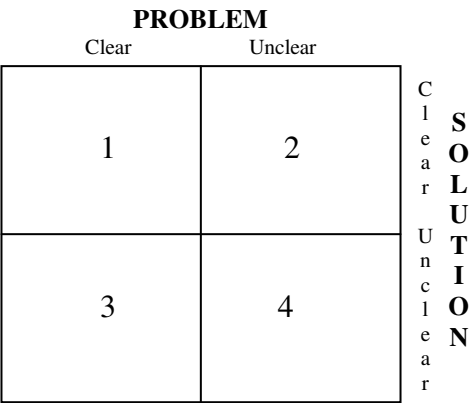
In the actual programme, I find that a rising level of exercise-complexity is useful, and tend to work through the Creswick-Williams window (see below) in programme design.

The Creswick/Williams Window

Developed⁴⁹ in the late seventies, the window is a useful tool in designing programmes. It's a way of defining what level of complexity is represented in an exercise and what level of process-complexity the delegates might have to handle.

BOX 1 is the area of *routine decision making*. This is of limited usefulness in OMD programmes but is a useful measure of exercises. Many “thrillers” for example, such as aerial runways and ropes courses fall into this category. One might therefore usefully speculate as to why they are being used. There’s nothing for delegates to manage (except their own understandable fear) so they are of limited relevance as management development tools. The stress felt by delegates has little to do with managerial complexity. I try to keep box 1 out of programme design as much as possible.

BOX 2 is *the area where the problem needs diagnosis*, but where once it’s been clarified, a solution is fairly obvious. This a quantum leap in complexity from box 1 and has managerial relevance.



⁴⁹ CRESWICK, C and WILLIAMS, R (1979) *Using the Outdoors for Management Development and Team Building*, Gloucester, Food, Drink and Tobacco Industrial Training Board

BOX 3 is where *the problem is clear but there are a variety of solutions* from which to choose. Again, this is an upward step in complexity and managerially relevance.

BOX 4 is the area of ultimate ambiguity - where *neither the problem nor possible solutions clearly present themselves*. In a world in which change is a constant, this is an area in which managers find themselves operating, and one for which little conventional training prepares them. Exercises which work at this level of complexity have to remain constantly ambiguous, allowing genuine choices to their participants and ambiguity right up to (and at) the very end. They should not have tidy, closed answers. Life - especially in Box 4 - isn't like that. We often never know whether the decisions we made actually *were* the best ones, and have to learn to live with rising levels of ambiguity.

Box 4 exercises are difficult to design and run, so most OMD providers don't bother. This is a pity because the potential for learning by operating in this area is massive. My own box 4 exercises tend to pitch delegates into a complex (but credible and internally consistent) plot of some sort, with which they must interact. At no time do the delegates, incidentally, have to assume roles - they stay themselves and, as themselves, address the complexities of the task in hand.

Learning can be powerful in box 4. It's a stressful place to be but one in which more and more managers find themselves. And OMD provides a unique arena for box 4 without the need for role-play.

OUTDOOR MEDIA

THE "NEAR-DOORS"

One of the few areas of OMD that has migrated to the wider world of management development is the use of small outdoor exercises to illustrate particular points or highlight issues within a group. These have been aptly termed "near-doors" exercises and have been a

staple of outdoor youth activities for many years⁵⁰. Uses to which they are put include:

- To energise groups/break the ice in the early stages of a programme.
- As a quick introduction to outdoor methodology for group members.
- To focus on some aspect of problem-solving, communications, planning etc. which may be particularly relevant to the group at the time.

A simple “Near-Doors” exercise

An example of a simple exercise with wide application is the blind-square task. The only equipment required for this is a length of rope (around 30 metres) and a blindfold for each of the eight or more participants. All participants are blindfolded and then asked to turn the rope (which has been laid out on the ground near them) into a perfect square. This is not as simple as it sounds, and is made more complicated by the rule that once someone touches the rope they must continue to hold it until the end of the exercise.

A variation is to ask the group to turn the rope into a perfect equilateral triangle. The exercise has seemingly endless applications and raises a wide variety of issues within groups, ranging from the simple need to plan and organise through to the requirement to give reassurance to those who feel uncertainty when left in the dark. The managerial relevance of these extremes should be fairly clear...

A More Complex “Near-Doors” Exercise

A slightly more sophisticated “near doors” task which I find useful is variously described as “Electric Fence” or “Berlin Wall”, although I prefer the less contentious “Poacher’s Escape”. A written brief for this task is attached as appendix “B”, but the core is for a group of

⁵⁰ Some exercises have a dark past. In a recent documentary on life in the third Reich, female members of the Hitler Youth are shown working on the well-known (and not terribly safe) “trust fall” task.

between five and eight to cross an area of ground which neither they nor their equipment may touch, cross a fence (which again they may not touch), and traverse a second area of ground. 45 minutes is allowed for this.

There are no penalties other than that if anyone breaks the rules, the whole group goes back to the start. Lateral thinking is required to cross the first piece of ground, and this often leads to heavy expenditure of mental effort on solving the initial problem without much consideration of the very careful scheduling of people through the system which is required later. This often leads to crowding in the area around the fence, broken rules, and a return to the start for the group.

The exercise resembles to a production process in that the further down the line problems occur, the more is lost. A first attempt costs the group little – perhaps one member goes back to the start line; If all delegates have crossed the fenced when a rule is broken, all efforts up to that point are wasted.

The exercise has many applications, often focussing on lateral thinking, detailed planning, and the provision of support for one another. Like all better OMD exercises, it acts as a blank canvas onto which delegates project their behaviour and from which they take a motivation to learn.

The Temptations of Role-Play

With many exercises there is some temptation to build in a little more excitement by re-framing them within some kind of fantasy scenario so that, for example, a fence-crossing is reframed as an escape from a prison camp.

This looks like harmless fun and it's *so* tempting to play..... but I prefer to avoid fantasy reframing because by assigning delegates to unreal roles we run the risk of reducing the task to a game. Review may suffer and delegates can rightly point out that they “weren’t themselves” when doing the task. Delegates rarely have to act as SAS people at work.....

NAVIGATION EXERCISES

Navigation exercises are useful if they contain elements of managerial complexity. They also have the advantage of being used in any terrain - urban or rural - requiring no special geographical features to be successful. They also have the advantage of replicating the common experience (for the manager) of having to work with, and persuade others, at a distance.

Depending on the needs of the group, navigation exercises can be designed or incorporated into all the Williams-Creswick boxes:

- **Box 1:** Simple A to B travel
- **Box 2:** Multi-choice orienteering task, where careful planning will lead to the best sequencing of sites to visit.
- **Box 3:** Orienteering exercise where there is a cash/time matrix (see appendix “D” for an example) as well as a (perhaps emergent) selection of sites
- **Box 4:** Complex exercise incorporating some navigation

Group dynamics can change a simple task into a complex one. On one occasion I set a group a box 2 navigation exercise. All they had to do was work out a sensible sequence for finding cards placed at various points on a hillside. By splitting into groups of four the task would have been simplicity itself and not particularly physically onerous (I’d actually put it into the programme to give people the opportunity to talk and reflect whilst gently strolling through the woods).

Two things happened to make the task both more onerous and more complex. Firstly, one very assertive character took charge of the group, insisting they stay together *“because teams stick together”*. Secondly, this self-appointed leader decided that, as the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, the group would navigate by compass to the various checkpoints. The fact that this meant struggling through closely planted pine trees rather than taking the available pleasant tracks was ignored.

We accompanied the group into the jungle and allowed the task to take its course, only intervening to suggest halts when people began to tire. At closedown time, we stepped in and conducted the group to the nearest track. They were tired and thirsty. They had found one of the possible twelve cards. The review (conducted after tea and a shower) was valuable, focussing not only on the need for planning, consultation and organisation, but also addressing such issues as the value of an open style of management, the need for assertiveness in followers as well as leaders.

Whilst the experience was powerful for the group, it also highlighted the need for trainers to be flexible. The issues that arose were important and needed more time to review than had originally been written into the programme. In such circumstances one can feel a pressure to stick to the timetable. Don't. One should make the most of learning opportunities as they present themselves. All but the most rigid sponsors will understand.

HEAVIER OUTDOOR MEDIA

Perhaps more than in other areas, the heavier media of OMD – ropes, rocks, caves, water-based activities – are the most misunderstood. On the face of it, there's not much connection between abseiling (rappelling in the U.S.) down a cliff and working as a manager within an organisation, and it's these "heavy" areas that conjure up images of loudmouthed instructors pressurising people to do things that normally only happen to them in nightmares. It shouldn't be like that. The heavy media can be very useful tools for learning, so long as some basic ground rules are followed with sensitivity:

- Never allow pressure to be put on people to undertake heavy tasks.
- Always write exercises so that there are useful roles for people who don't want to actually do the "exposed" tasks. In any group there are almost certainly enough people who *want* to do the task not to need to pressurise anyone. If there aren't (this has never happened to me in 20 years!), then do something else.

- Adopt a sympathetic and supportive attitude at all times. Although this can sometimes be emotionally laborious, a little calm empathy does much more than a lot of hearty cajoling in making people feel assured when facing tasks which are, after all, very frightening.

ROPES AND ROCKS

Much debate surrounds the use of climbing, abseiling and mountain rescue techniques in OMD. Detractors point to the fact that rock-face exercises require a high degree of staffing (ratios of 1:6 or better) and quite a heavy investment in materials. Whilst this is perfectly true, others point out that the *verité* of the medium is invaluable. As one instructor with whom I work put it, “*It’s really real....*”

If one of the strengths of OMD is in avoiding the trap of role-play, then cliff-face exercises are useful. Even the simple act of taking a group for a day’s climbing may confer the benefits that arise from shared strenuous relaxation – recognition of the benefits of mutual support and encouragement, and of time spent amiably with colleagues focussing on something other than the details of the job.

With imagination, more can be achieved. I often use an exercise in which a group is divided into two sub-teams of between five and eight people. Each sub-group is given a written brief inviting them to complete a number of abseils and mountain rescue hauls in a given time (usually about 2½ hours). They earn (for charity) a small sum for each “unit” completed during the time allowed, and manage their own safety (under the very close eye of qualified and skilled outdoor instructors). The cash result for each group is multiplied by that of the other at the end of the exercise. This has the unstated effect of making co-operation between the groups desirable on financial and philanthropic grounds, as well as for social reasons....

The task has no “typical” outcomes. I like it because how it is managed and what is achieved depends entirely on the groups.

Management-related issues which groups have addressed in this exercise so far include:

- **Action-Centred Leadership:** If a group takes a totally task-focussed approach, the way to make the most money quickly is to have one person do all the rock-face work. This is fine for the first few iterations, but thereafter those consigned to the repetitive and heavy work of hauling might feel that it would make a pleasant change if they too had an opportunity to be the hauler. A failure by whoever is in charge to take account of this may lead to dissatisfaction expressing itself in reduced haulage-rates. Thus the group finds itself becoming aware of a need to address the interlinking factors of individual needs (“I’d like to have a go”), group needs (“We’d like to see fair play”), and task needs (“we need to make a profit”).
- **Leadership Style:** Leaders react in different ways to the task. Sometimes people adopt a highly authoritarian approach. Given the quite stressful nature of the work being undertaken, this can lead to anything from grudging and slow compliance to outright withdrawal of labour.
- **Competition/Co-operation:** Given the inter-group nature of the task, assumptions regarding the desirability of competition between groups can be challenged. Task outcomes range from outright competition through to total integration of the two groups. Learning is thus around the benefits of working co-operatively to get the best (in task and human terms) result.
- **The distracting effect of stress:** Groups often fail to study the written brief in depth. This may be because of perceptions of the limitations on time (in fact the time allowed is quite generous), or because the task itself is stressful (hanging on a rope over a cliff is hardly everyday behaviour for most of us). Whatever the reason, the subtleties of the brief are often overlooked until the task is well under way. This can result in groups making assumptions which they may come to see later as being unnecessary and counterproductive.

I emphasise that the exercise doesn't have all (or any) of these process outcomes every time it runs, and may have others. What happens, happens and a wise trainer reviews that reality, not one which is imposed by his or her preconceptions about what the group *should* have learned. As the old saying goes *trust the group – trust the process!*

That isn't to say that review and reflection are unimportant. One should help the group to draw parallels between learning in the task and its application in the wider world. Time must therefore be made in programmes to enable reflection to take place. Review is useful in this context as a means of capturing the outcomes of reflection, whatever they are....

CAVES AND MINES

The interaction of water and limestone, combined with the extractive activities of the human race has led to much of Britain being endowed with exciting and interesting underground places. By no means all are safe enough for group work, as both visible (loose rocks) and invisible (Radon gas) hazards can be present. It is therefore necessary to be sure that any location you plan to use is safe, and that instructors are fully qualified and fully capable of working underground.

Having said that, the underground can be an exciting, testing and stimulating place and I've found it extremely useful in mounting box 3 exercises and as a component of box 4 exercises.

Given that many people have real fears about the underground, I never run an underground-focussed exercise without there being a real need for overground work to take place. In practice, this means that exercises often take the form of some kind of feasibility study.

Such exercises are useful because they require the group to co-ordinate activity across a variety of roles, and to set and keep schedules, aiming for a fixed time at which to give a presentation to an audience. It's useful if this audience contains people other than the course staff, and I find that it's not particularly difficult to

interest people of local prominence to act as audience members. In one case, the end-of-exercise presentation included a dramatised re-enactment of a mine survey, together with re-enactments of scenes from the life of the early miners. These were accurate as well as entertaining, leaving the locals impressed enough to write to the employing organisation later.

In summary, the underground can be a surprisingly successful tool for building effective and absorbing exercises, particularly if groups work at their own pace, not one set by outdoor instructors who may be rather more fit than the average delegate. It is not our role to humiliate people.

WATER-BASED MEDIA

A variety of water-based media are used on OMD programmes. In particular, large and small boat sailing, canoeing (open “Canadian” types and enclosed kayaks), and rafts. I have experienced all but the first, and have clear views about their OMD utility. These are:

Large boat sailing: Potentially useful in building teamwork, giving people the opportunity to work together to achieve clear, shared, goals. The unpredictability of the weather can cause real problems with this, so that, for example, a planned “run” to a French port becomes a less-than-memorable skulk around the Solent.

The apparent need for a rigid organisational structure on sailing vessels means that delegates may have little opportunity to exercise real control over the vessel and might find themselves reduced to the role of rope-pullers and potato-peelers whilst the professionals get on with the real work of navigating the vessel.

Canoeing is an old standby of the outdoor pursuits world and, the boats being available at centres, has often been utilised in the cause of OMD. In the case of open multi-person Canadian canoes, there is some justification for this, and water-based navigation exercises can make a refreshing change from the landlocked variety. Kayaks are another matter. Most are single-person craft, used to teach beginners

the basics. That's how they tend to be used with managers – to paddle around a pond learning the safety drills, occasionally indulging in some instructor-driven aquabatics. The opportunity for meaningful interaction with anything other than boat, paddle and lifejacket is minimal, presenting little opportunity for real development. Much the same is true of small sailing vessels.

Rafting has more potential. Groups have real power (for example to build a good or bad raft) and quality process is often generated in raft-based exercises, especially if the building of the raft is incidental to a larger task rather than an end in itself. In pursuit of the need to give groups as much autonomy as possible in tasks, I strongly discourage standardised teaching of raftbuilding skills to groups – the resultant vessels are often exercises in compliance rather than creativity. I prefer to teach basic knots, lashings and buoyancy calculations, largely allowing groups the responsibility for design. For safety reasons, I usually ask questions of a group that has built a below-par raft (“do you think this will do the job?”), and ensure safety staff, safety boats and safety equipment are at the ready.

Facilitating OMD Exercises

Kurt Lewin⁵¹ identified four factors which lead to psychological success in learning:

- That learners are able to define their own goals
- That these goals are related to learners' central needs and values
- That learners are able to define the path to accomplishing their goal
- That those goals represent a realistic level of aspiration for the learner

Whatever the current fashion, I recommend this approach to facilitation. In my experience it stands a greater chance of leading to learning that is of real benefit to the delegate than anything externally imposed.

⁵¹ Lewin, K., A Dynamic Theory of Personality, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1935

As an example, I once (as a subcontracted associate consultant) had the task of facilitating a number of groups in a week of tasks aimed at imparting (sponsor defined) attitudes of enterprise and customer service, and building a realisation that the group members no longer had a job for life (in a high street bank). The sub-text was that to survive in the new world, new attitudes would have to be adopted. In effect, it was a programme in which:

- The sponsors (rather than learners) had defined the goals, which were in effect “shape up or ship out”.
- The goals for at least some of the group were in contradiction to their central needs and values, but were closely related to sponsors’ perceived needs to change the behaviour of delegates.
- Paths to learning were pre-defined by agreement between provider and sponsor (*“This exercise will produce this learning, and then that exercise will produce that learning....”*)

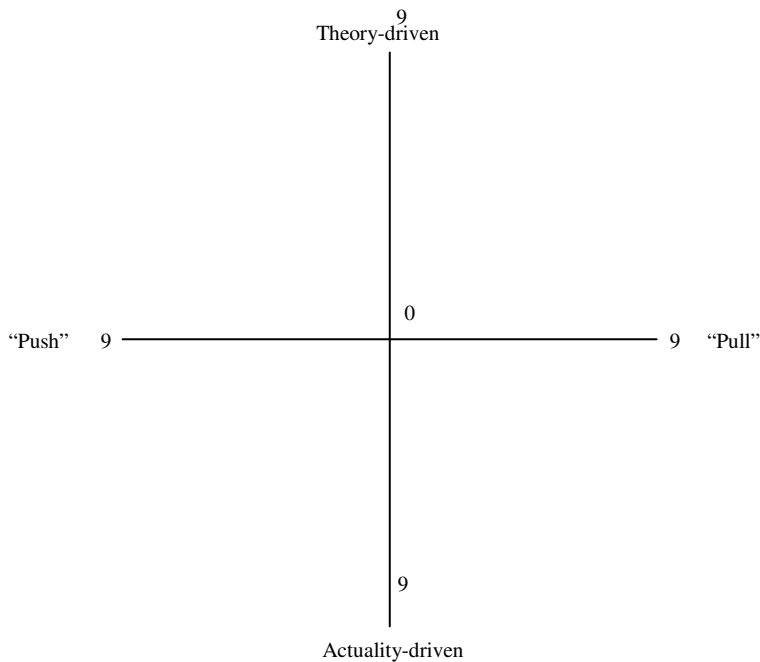
The programme worked well for those groups in which the members were in favour of the cultural change, most of whom saw the bank as finally coming into line with their own thinking. There was, however, a significant minority who hadn’t accepted any need for change (let alone the one the bank was imposing). They were a problem to the facilitators, showing cynicism and negativity at every opportunity, undermining the cunningly-crafted process. They were unlikely to learn anything from the programme as written, and were doomed as far as career (or even job) prospects were concerned. What to do?

The answer was to take a step back, explore the needs and feelings of the groups as they were, and work at jointly addressing these. This was a laborious and sometimes difficult process, but it had beneficial outcomes, enabling people to explore feelings of betrayal (*“The deal was, “we give you a job for life, and you work steadily for a passable salary and don’t complain if you get moved around the country at short notice”..... now they want us to act like yuppies!”*) and work through to their own solutions (look for another job, accept that the

change was going to happen, whatever). This was better value for the individuals and bank than going through the motions of a culture change programme, ticking the box, and then watching the disaffected groups subvert the organisation.

REVIEW

Exercises, however complex, form only a part of the learning process. Review is equally important and for many people is where the *real* learning takes place. There are a number of ways in which review can be conducted. These are illustrated in a continuum below:



“Push” v “Pull”: The “push” style is one in which the trainer, working to a preordained agenda, manipulates the review so that the lessons conveyed, whatever actually happened, are the ones he or she *wants* to convey. An advantage of the pure “push” style is that it can be demonstrated that the delegates learned what was wanted by the client. Disadvantages are that sometimes this may ignore the learning as actually experienced, undermining the credibility of the process in delegates’ eyes by appearing to be focussed round a hidden agenda. At its worst, the style is known as “frontloading”, in which the trainer tells the delegates what they will learn, gives them an exercise, and then reviews it around what s/he told them earlier.

The “pull” style is one in which review focuses around what actually happened, and delegates’ views and feelings about that. The trainer’s job is to “pull” these from the delegates by asking open, probing, and (occasionally) closed questions, helping the group to find its own way to articulate the learning. An advantage of the style is that it draws out real learning. A disadvantage is that the learning may not be what the customer wanted.

“Theory” v “Actuality”: A simpler continuum. Some reviewers prefer to place the learning into a context based on current theory, others on their perception of actuality. Thus (at the extremes), one reviewer relates expressed learning to a body of knowledge, the other seeks to place it in the “here-and-now” context of management life as it is lived by the delegates.

I am no fundamentalist, and am thus able to move within the continuum. Nevertheless, I believe that there are advantages to the “pull” style, in that there’s little point in sticking rigidly to a fixed learning agenda if delegates are actually learning other, perhaps more powerful, things. Thus my approach is fundamentally “pull” *but with a high expectation that properly designed exercises will highlight appropriate learning*. In terms of methods, that might mean:

- Open questions, small group discussions, plenary reports

- Facilitators working at drawing out the learning
- Focus in review on asking questions which help the group to relate back their on-course learning to life at work

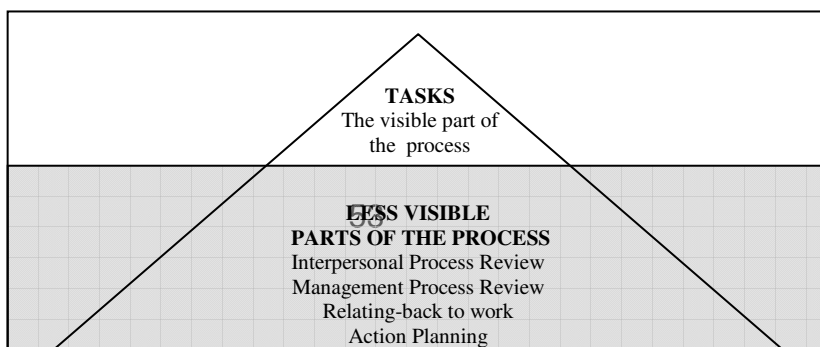
In terms of “theory” v “actuality”, it may be wise to cultivate an ability to occupy the whole continuum, but to bias review towards the actuality sector, relating actuality to theory rather than the other way around.

In summary, delegates should find themselves working hard during review, being strongly encouraged to think for themselves about their actions, probing deeply into this and working to relate the learning back to the working world.

Links between exercise and review: Neither exercise nor review takes place in isolation. In particular, people often reflect whilst in the middle of an exercise (a characteristic which I recognise, providing useful pocketbooks in which delegates can record in-task reflection for later use during review). Similarly, the extremes of the “push” style can be avoided by exercise design – build elements into exercises which provoke desired learning – but in a way that helps delegates to see the learning for themselves, and therefore “own” it that much more.

I find that the small group/plenary approach works well, allowing better air-space for individuals and provoking interesting and useful discussion if separate groups have different perceptions of what happened and the learning to draw from it.

PROGRAMME COMPONENTS: The components I use in OMD programmes are summarized in the iceberg diagram below:-



RELATING BACK AND ACTION PLANNING

The espoused objective of much OMD is to enable people to change behaviour in their everyday world. The idea is that by reflecting on programmed activities and exercises they will perceive new, different, better, ways of going about their daily business.

If this theory is to have any chance of becoming a reality, people need to make connections between how they behave in exercises and how they behave in the day-to-day. If these connections are not made, the course is a waste of money.

Time should therefore be devoted to enabling people to make the connections. An action-planning session at the end of the programme isn't enough; links should be made throughout the programme. Some ways of doing this:

- Frequently ask variations on the question “*In what ways is behaviour in tasks (a) like work and (b) not like work*”. This is extremely useful in helping delegates to make connections and to explore ways of transferring learning to the work environment.
- Encourage delegates to form self-help groups at work. One company with whom I worked allowed and encouraged delegates to meet weekly to examine how their learning was being put into practice. In another, informal (but planned)

“curry-groups” were set up to discuss further learning on a monthly lunchtime basis.

- Use electronic media – I have a colleague who uses email as a very effective follow-up tool
- A useful old standby is to encourage delegates to write a letter to themselves, address it, and pass it to the facilitator. After a suitable period (say three months), the facilitator posts the letter to the delegate who thus receives a self-penned reminder of their intentions.

There are many other ways of building learning-reinforcers. The key is to ensure by whatever means that learning is retained and transferred.

PSYCHOMETRICS

Psychometric questionnaires such as the ®Myers-Briggs Type Indicator⁵², the ™FIRO B,⁵³ and many others purporting to measure various aspects of human personality have attained such a pitch of popularity in the HR world that it is likely that almost anyone providing programmes with a developmental aim will experience pressure to include them in the mix.

They have their uses, but in programmes which aim to focus on the here-and-now and to have a firm basis in actuality, they may prove to be distractions. Use them (providing you have, or have access to, someone suitably qualified), but do so with care and discernment.

⁵² ® MBTI and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator are registered trade marks of Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc. OPP Limited is licensed to use the trade marks in Europe.

⁵³ ™FIRO-B is a trade mark of Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.

I have found that in OMD programmes, psychometrics are best used as supports to the overall process, providing amplifying food for thought rather than being a central part of the programme. As such, they can enrich processes of self-discovery. Certainly, on events with a career-development focus they are excellent tools.

But be discerning in their use. Just because you *can* doesn't mean you *must*!

INPUTS

The same is true of inputs.

Before giving an input, ask yourself "*why am I doing this?*" "*Does it add value?*" "*Whose needs am I meeting?*" If any of the answers are unsatisfactory, think again. If still in doubt, ask a question instead!

I find that a good knowledge of a range of learning and management development models is useful, but rarely plan in great detail which inputs I am to give. It depends on the emerging needs of the group – a timely input can act as a reinforcement and legitimisation (for those who need it) of learning as it is being experienced. This puts some pressure on the facilitator, as a wide range of theories need to be understood in order to give the right input at the right time. Nevertheless, acquiring and maintaining a high level of theoretical knowledge is important if delegates are to be given inputs which illuminate rather than dazzle.

Inputs have their place in experiential events, but are subordinate to the experience (and the task-review-relate cycle) itself. And OMD is above all an experiential medium.....

AFTERWORD – A FUTURE FOR OMD?

The most difficult piece to write in this book was the chapter on outdoor media and course design. This was because I became aware whilst writing that the focus on particular media and exercises together with suggested applications, might give the impression that all one has to do is design a programme to highlight particular issues, make sure that review and relating back are taken care of, and all will be well.

Things aren't that simple.

Being competent at exercise design, delivery and review isn't enough.

If OMD is to have a future, practitioners need to reframe their ambitions. Making money isn't enough. The enjoyable lifestyle isn't enough. In OMD we potentially have a medium which can disturb, provide "flashovers", help people towards self-actualisation, perhaps help them to change the way they view the world.

Provision of such training requires a radically different attitude to that adopted by most OMD suppliers. An attitude in which, instead of complying with a mindset wherein "*codes, competencies, catch phrases and mission statements*"⁵⁴ are held to be the key to

⁵⁴ REYNOLDS, M (1998) *Reflection and critical reflection in management learning* Management Learning 29, 2 , Thousand Oaks

management success, we try to help managers *“to an awareness of their own significance and responsibility by encouraging in them a consciousness of the difficulties with which they are engaged.....the unprogrammable complexities which face them”*⁵⁵

How might one go about doing that?

Firstly, by educating our customers. It is possible, even probable, that many buyers don't really appreciate the potential of OMD, perhaps seeing it as a quick-fix “fun” medium in which people can become teams by playing outdoor games. Worse, some may still see it as SAS-style training useful for toughening-up the troops, sorting out the sheep from the goats etc.

Overcoming these attitudes requires a raising of awareness of the value of self-development, the other use to which OMD lends itself. The benefits, simply stated are that a self-development approach treats individuals and their needs as unique, and addresses those unique needs. It also addresses something deeper than competencies – what have been termed “capabilities”. The difference is akin to the old Oxfam slogan – *Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; give him a fishing rod and the skill to use it and you feed him for life.* The self-development approach is a fishing rod.....

Secondly, by challenging the oft-expressed view that people are too busy to spend quality time away from work. Organisations somehow manage when flu epidemics break out. Short quick-fix programmes are the *real* waste of money because they often fail to achieve anything other than the shallowest of objectives.

Thirdly, sell an integrated approach to training, aiming to be involved with delegates before and after the actual residential part of the programme, helping them to “bed” learning into behaviour. The most effective courses with which I have recently been involved are career development efforts which involved two-hour interviews

⁵⁵ Ibid

before and after the programme, a one-day follow up six months after the event and open email and telephone contact with delegates at all times (At ADEPT consulting, we started running these in 1994 and I'm *still* in regular e-contact with some people from back then...)

An incidental benefit of this long-term approach is that one builds deeper relationships with whoever are the buyers of the training, getting “inside” their organisations and gaining ever-greater understanding of peoples’ needs.

Selling OMD that is “*both potent and perturbing*”⁵⁶ is not easy. But it *is* worth the effort. How else will we effectively contribute to the “*development of self and other awareness (which) is possibly the least straightforward outcome, yet potentially the most important (for OMD)*”⁵⁷?

The alternative is a further descent into wargames and “*It’s a Knockout*” derivatives which are of only marginal help to anyone.

Put simply, do we want the gunge-tank, or do we want to contribute something of value to people’s lives?

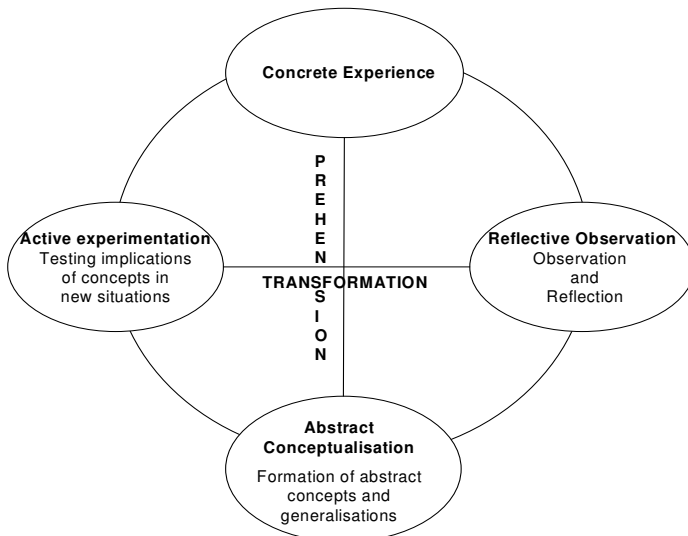
⁵⁶ BEEBY, J.M AND RATHBORN, S (1983) *Development Training – Using the Outdoors in Management Development* in Management Education and Development 14 (3)

⁵⁷ DAINITY, Paul and LUCAS, Donna (1992) *Clarifying the confusion: A practical framework for evaluating outdoor development programmes for managers*, management education and development, Lancaster

APPENDIX “A”: KOLB’S LEARNING CYCLE

KOLB LEARNING CYCLE

(Characterised by Kolb and Honey & Mumford as learning "styles", later by DeCiantis and Kirton* as a unidirectional model of the learning process, with each stage being capable of being accomplished in a range of styles and with the most successful outcome being undertaken in a style appropriate to the situation in hand)



PREHENSION = two different and opposed processes of grasping or taking hold of experience in the world either through reliance on conceptual interpretation (*comprehension*) or reliance on tangible, felt qualities (*apprehension*)

TRANSFORMATION = transforming that grasp of experience by *INTENTION* - internal reflection or *EXTENSION* - active manipulation of the external world

* S.M. deCiantis & M.J Kirton: "A psychometric re-examination of Kolb's Learning Cycle Construct: A Separation of Level, Style, and Process" Educational and Psychological Measurement, 56, 1996

APPENDIX "B": THE ROOTS OF OMD

Root Worlds And Logique Des Mondes

It's helpful to identify the "root world" of a movement or organisation; the world which encapsulates the fundamental principles and values upon which it was founded. It has been convincingly argued⁵⁸ that the "root world" of a movement or organisation attracts respect and adherence because it expresses what, in the final analysis, the people are about. A classic example of this *Logique des Mondes* is the constitution of the United States in which a root value - "The pursuit of Life, Liberty and Happiness" – is expressed. One hopes, forlornly, that "the right to bear arms" will one day be seen as an outdated temporary expression of the way to achieve that root value.

When the need to change arises, the existence of a root-world enables the organisation to deconstruct current practices and see the basic patterns through which its people think and behave. This enables the organisation to embrace a new, emergent, world which is congruent with its root-values.

Which raises the question, what are the roots of OMD?

1) Philosophical Roots

Jasper Hunt⁵⁹ goes as far back to Plato and Aristotle in claiming ancient roots for adventure education. The Greeks certainly had things to say about bringing up the young, but their connection with experiential education is tenuous. Plato was no proto-Piaget; for him "*....the essence of knowledge and truth is to be achieved by thought*

⁵⁸ COLLIN, Beatrice, DELPLANCKE, Francois, and RAIMOND, Paul (1999) *Précis of "The Process of Internationalisation in Three French Companies: A Process of Changing the Dominant Logic"* paper presented to the 6th EIASM workshop on Managerial and Organisational Cognition. Paris

⁵⁹HUNT, Jasper S (1990) "Philosophy of Adventure Education" in *Adventure Education* (Eds. Miles, John C and Priest, Simon) Venture, Philadelphia

*and contemplation....*⁶⁰ This is a prescription for review and reflection, not the all-out immersion in action which Hunt prescribes. Aristotle *did* make a case for exercising skills as a way of learning, but not for a special time or place (such as a course) in which to do it. The leaps of faith required by Hunt in his attempt to give ancient roots to the philosophy of adventure education seem too large to me.

What of more modern philosophers?

A root for the idea of adventure-based training is presented by William James, who proposed that war provides a unique theatre for the exercise of certain virtues and that if these virtues are desirable, it would be a good idea to retain them (but lose the need to kill and maim people) by some form of adventurous service⁶¹

This philosophy is directly echoed in the practices of such ventures as Operation Raleigh. It was also influential on Kurt Hahn, the practitioner who more than any other pioneered the prototype for all outdoor development (and by extension OMD) organisations.

2) Philosophy into Practice – Kurt Hahn

Born in Berlin in 1886, Hahn was a man of wide accomplishments – a keen athlete, able scholar who at an early age gained a position of influence in the Imperial German Foreign Office⁶². A restless pragmatist by nature⁶³, he built his life around education. Influenced by visits to progressive and traditional British public schools, he founded Salem Schule in Germany, aiming to combine the best of both. His objectives were to provide an approach to young peoples' development which aimed to “...*build up a tradition of self-*

⁶⁰ WEBB, Graham (1996) *Understanding Staff Development* (p 11) Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press, Buckingham/Bristol PA

⁶¹ James, William (1949) *Essays on faith and morals*, New York: Random House

⁶² FLAVIN, Martin (1996) *Kurt Hahn's Schools and legacy*, Middle Atlantic Press, Wilmington, Delaware

⁶³ *Ibid*

discipline and vigorous but joyous endeavour”⁶⁴ through a curriculum which equally valued the pursuit of personal interests, athletics, community service, the development of the imagination, and periods of reflective silence.

A long-term opponent of Nazism and Fascism, Hahn was deported to Britain in 1933 and set up Gordonstoun School along Salem lines. Later he founded the first Outward Bound school at the invitation of the shipowner Lawrence Durning Holt. It was the product of reflection and practice at two other establishments over a period of twenty-two years. It also benefited from experience gained in the County Badge Scheme, a precursor to the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme.⁶⁵ All these were informed by Hahn’s view that “*we consider it palpable neglect not to impel every youngster into health-giving experiences, regardless of their inclination*”⁶⁶, further elaborating that it was “*... culpable neglect not to guide and even plunge the young into experiences which are likely to present opportunities for self-discovery....*”⁶⁷

Hahn reasoned that this impelling into experience/self-discovery was necessary to counteract the malign influence of a civilisation suffering from⁶⁸ a decline in physical fitness, initiative and enterprise, memory and imagination, skill and care, self-discipline and compassion.

Hahn, who was *revolted by fascistic movements with their disregard*

⁶⁴ Attributed to HAHN, Kurt (1930) Memorandum found in the archives of Salem Schule

⁶⁵ MINER, JOSHUA L (1990) "The Creation of Outward Bound" in *Adventure Education* (Eds. Miles, John C., and Priest, Simon) Philadelphia, Venture Publishing.

⁶⁶ HAHN, Kurt (1935) Report to annual meeting of Gordonstoun School, London.

⁶⁷ HAHN, Kurt (1967) Letter to Robert Skidelsky

⁶⁸ RICHARDS, Anthony (1990) "The Creation of Outward Bound" in *Adventure Education* (Eds. Miles, John C., and Priest, Simon) Philadelphia, Venture Publishing.

for justice,⁶⁹ wanted to use adventure education as a tool to arm young people against the allure of fascism and war, found that his educational thought rapidly evolved into the Outward Bound programme.

“A FINE BUNCH OF FELLOWS” – BRITISH ROOTS

The term “outward bound” is used in two ways: firstly as a catch-all to describe outdoor education. (*cf* Huczynski (1983⁷⁰) and secondly as a trade mark for a worldwide federation of organisations, most of which can trace their roots to the first Outward Bound School. This commenced operations in 1941 and from its earliest days (Hahn, a restless initiator, didn’t overly trouble himself with the day-to-day workings of the programme) may not have fully reflected Hahn’s anti-fascist, holistic educational philosophy.

Early writings on the Outward Bound programme describe a limited if challenging programme of sailing, mountain expeditions, climbing and athletics. There is no description of formal or informal review.

We learn that “*the boys who had kept training conditions (no drinking or smoking, daily cold shower/dip) and in addition had reached certain standards in...athletics and seamanship and had proved themselves on expeditions by sea and land....received badges...*”⁷¹ Indeed, early non-Hahn writings on Outward Bound give more than a whiff of an institutionalising process: “*You can well imagine the medical inspections, the interviews, the issue of equipment, the allocation of “watches” and dormitories, the search for leaders....*”⁷²

⁶⁹ HUNT, Jasper S (1990) "Philosophy of Adventure Education" in *Adventure Education* (Eds. Miles, John C and Priest, Simon) Venture, Philadelphia

⁷⁰ HUCZYNSKI, Andrzej (1983) *Encyclopedia of Management Development Methods* Aldershot, Gower

⁷¹ HAHN, Kurt (1957) *Origins of the Outward Bound Trust* in Outward Bound (Ed. JAMES, David) London, Routledge and Kegan Paul

⁷² FULLER, Capt. J.F. (1957) *From the Bridge* in Outward Bound (Ed. JAMES, David) London, Routledge and Kegan Paul

Geoffrey Winthrop Young, an early Outward Bound figure, goes further: “*Boarding schools are...costly; and the system demanded years to produce its results. Was it a system capable of compression into shorter periods? And could it be made of wider application?*”⁷³ It seems that the post-war Outward Bound movement was initially powered by a desire to disseminate the benefits of the public school system (of which many of its founders were either products or admirers) to a wider public. To produce people whom, one imagines, would be a kind of cross between Tom Browne and the young Horatio Hornblower. Fit successors, as Young himself put it, to “*the great empire-builders*”⁷⁴

Outward Bound is merely an early, not the only, provider of development training. What of the others? The more established organisations band together as the Development Training Agencies Group. Of those in the first wave, Lakeside, as part of the YMCA, shares some of the muscular Christianity values of Outward Bound as does Brathay. Everard (1993) notes that “*Both (Outward Bound and Brathay) have their roots in the ideals that the English public schools took from ancient Greece, which sent Whymper up the Matterhorn, Scott to the South Pole and inspired Baden Powell*”⁷⁵”⁷⁶

Outcomes Of The Early British Forms Of Development Training

The training was popular. Outward Bound, for example, experienced rapid growth, opening a second school in 1950, commencing overseas and girls’ work in 1951, opening a third school in 1952 and a fourth in 1954. By then, in Britain alone, over 700 young people each year experienced the month-long Outward Bound programme.

⁷³ YOUNG, Geoffrey Winthrop (1957) *The Message of the Mountains* in Outward Bound (Ed. JAMES, David) London, Routledge and Kegan Paul

⁷⁴ *Ibid*

⁷⁵ EVERARD, Bertie (1993) *The History of Development Training*, Welwyn, DTAG/ICI

⁷⁶ It is uncharitable but irresistible to recall that of these role-models, Whymper was responsible for the deaths of half the group he led on the first ascent of the Matterhorn and Scott forfeited the lives of ALL his team whilst achieving *second* place in the race to the South Pole.

Evidence of the effects of these programmes is limited. A desk at Outward Bound Eskdale contains logbook entries compiled by delegates at the end of all its courses through the Fifties and Sixties. These are overwhelmingly positive, overwhelmingly platitudinous (a sample:- *“There has never been a finer bunch of fellows working together”*) and are silent as to the effects of the programme on the people concerned.

James (1957)⁷⁷ reprints extracts from six delegate accounts of the experience. Although all differ, an interesting point is that three specifically mention a greater understanding or tolerance for their fellows:

*“.....you learn to laugh at steep waves when out in a small boat when really you are very much afraid, you carry 35lb. in a rucksack for fifteen miles and still find time to smile; You work hard for no apparent reward but the satisfaction of a job well done. You meet people with points of view wholly unimaginable to you. In short, the course gives you 26 days of life as it ought to be...”*⁷⁸

*“Another thing is my tolerance towards people. I never used to take anybody else’s feelings into account....”*⁷⁹

*“....I have learnt, through necessity, how to live, understand and get on with people that I would never otherwise have wanted to associate with...I used to think it a point of honour to do better than these chaps but now I consider it an honour to have the chance to run and jump and throw together with them..”*⁸⁰

⁷⁷ JAMES, David(1957) *From the Half-Deck* in Outward Bound (Ed. JAMES, David) London, Routledge and Kegan Paul

⁷⁸ *Ibid*

⁷⁹ *Ibid*

⁸⁰ *Ibid*

Another source quotes a recipient of peer-praise:⁸¹ *“This is the first time in my life I have seemed to matter....”*

To me, these testimonies represent quite a vindication of the original Outward Bound programme. For all the passion for athletic achievement; for all the desire to replicate the public school system; for all that teaching forbearance was not part of Hahn’s original case - respect for different others seems to have been a key outcome of these programmes.

Kings Of The Wild Frontier - American Roots

If Britain’s development training is rooted in an understanding of the Public School ethos, relevant American rhetoric makes it clear that another root- paradigm operates there:

*“To engage in adventurous activity and to fail will necessitate some sort of loss. But what is the price of choosing not to seek or purposely avoiding tenuous situations? The price is torpidity, and the result is stagnation. One must actively seek an adventurous way of life; otherwise there is only a small and narrow world to explore. A diminutive existence then ensues.”*⁸²

This gives clues to an American paradigm in which a belief that danger (*“tenuous situations”*) is good for you, because without danger there will only be *“torpidity and stagnation”* and which is underpinned by a belief that an adventurous way of life is the only way to avoid *“a diminutive existence”* and that therefore one *“Must actively seek an adventurous way of life”* .

Other American writers confirm this, mostly using “Adventure” rather than, say, “development” as the key descriptive term: *“One of the special feelings experienced by outdoor adventurers is the sense*

⁸¹ MINER, Joshua L (1990) "The Creation of Outward Bound" in *Adventure Education* (Eds. Miles, John C and Priest, Simon) Venture, Philadelphia

⁸² Quinn, Bill (1990) “The essence of Adventure” in *Adventure Education* p 147 (Eds. Miles, John C and Priest, Simon) Venture Publishing, Philadelphia

of euphoria that is so often felt at the end of a successful expedition”⁸³

Another oft-used American term rarely, if ever, committed to print in British descriptions of outdoor training is “wilderness”, as in “*Wilderness Challenges are high in ambiguity....*”⁸⁴, “*The wilderness is a classroom*”⁸⁵ and “*Surely someone has tapped the potential of the wilderness lab?*”⁸⁶

Such rhetoric gives a whiff of a very American archetype – self-reliant souls braving the backwoods to expand the frontiers of the nation ever-westward. The danger for outdoor development is in failing to recognise the differences between the roots of U.S. and U.K. development training. Whilst methods and even outcomes may exhibit similarity, their emotional roots are as different as Tom Browne and Davie Crockett.

This may affect desired outcomes: Early British delegates talk of learning tolerance, of working with a “fine bunch of fellows”. Americans, on the other hand, talk of “...*an opportunity to understand, test, and demonstrate their own resources*”⁸⁷. Similarly, U.S. research often looks at the effect of outdoor training on self-concept and self-efficacy. What is missing is significant – work on the ability to build relationships with others. In a nutshell, British outcomes often seem to be “we” focussed, American ones often “I” focussed.

⁸³ ROWLEY, Jim (1987) *Adventure Education and Qualitative Research*, Journal of Experiential Education 10, 2

⁸⁴ KIMBALL, Rocky (1990) The Santa Fe Mountain Center in *Adventure Education* (Eds. Miles, John C and Priest, Simon) Venture, Philadelphia

⁸⁵ GREEN, John H. and THOMPSON, Donna (1990), Outward Bound USA, in *Adventure Education* (Eds. Miles, John C and Priest, Simon) Venture, Philadelphia

⁸⁶ LONG Janet W (1987) *The Wilderness Lab Comes of Age*, Training and development Journal, 41,3

⁸⁷ GREEN, John H. and THOMPSON, Donna (1990), Outward Bound USA, in *Adventure Education* (Eds. Miles, John C and Priest, Simon) Venture, Philadelphia

Understanding that there is an essential difference between American and British roots is vital – experience in Britain may not, at root, be appropriate to the U.S., and vice-versa.

What is clear is that in Britain, the Outward Bound method – month-long courses high on experience, low on formal reflection, and aimed at young people remained virtually unchanged until the mid-1970's. Outward Bound was still heavily promoting its 26-day programme as late as 1977.

A PARADIGM SHIFT

In Britain, three things happened which caused a paradigm shift in development training. These are the advent of Lindley Lodge, State sponsorship of a “systematic” approach to defining training needs, and the colonisation of the outdoors by management development.

1) Lindley Lodge: Lindley was the first development training organisation to thoroughly adopt an approach in which review was seen as crucial, and in which a more cerebral attitude to development was adopted. As Everard puts it *“Lindley.....adopted a more sophisticated approach, using behavioural science concepts, theory and techniques such as organisation development (OD), personality theory, Gestalt, transactional analysis, clinical theology, group dynamics, team roles, counselling, authority and power, decision-making and leadership...”*⁸⁸. As early as the mid-1970's, Lindley staff were routinely using such instruments as FIRO B to supplement their experiential work.

By this heady mix of (then) leading-edge methods, by the offering of a twelve-day course as standard¹ and by adopting a coherent training cycle, Lindley helped set off seismic changes in British development training. After a thirty-year predominance of 26-day

⁸⁸ EVERARD, Bertie (1993) *The History of Development Training*, Welwyn, DTAG/ICI

¹ Although 12 days seems an impossibly long time nowadays, the author recalls that as late as 1989, such a duration was being criticised by Outward Bound instructors as “too short to get anywhere”.

programmes, Outward Bound had to offer a twelve-day programme to industry. Review (“soft skills”) became an item on both Outward Bound and Brathay’s agenda.

2) The Medium as Vehicle: In 1970, the Industrial Training Boards began to exert strong influence on the way industry trained its people. They adopted a “systematic” method wherein companies wishing to avoid a hefty levy were expected to take a methodical and transparent approach to analysing training needs and setting training plans. One result was that medium-based approaches became less acceptable to levy-risking sponsors, who wanted more focussed efforts for their money.

Lindley and others reacted accordingly, offering to tailor courses closely to sponsors’ needs⁸⁹, adopting such employer-friendly themes as communication, teamwork, and leadership. Even Lindley’s more “far-out” offerings, in which group process was explored in a way that was “*as near as development training has got to the “touchy-feely style of a Tavistock or NTL T-group*” (Everard, 1993) were governed by learning objectives agreed with the client. The basic approach had shifted from “We do *this*, and we’d be delighted if you’d like to buy some....” To “What would you *like* us to do?.....”

This apparently improved customer service masks the less attractive fact that in adopting a more “customer-facing” stance, outdoor development (and come to that OMD) organisations runs the risk of failing to maintain a particular philosophical stance, becoming commodity providers whose wares change with every whim of HR fashion.

Most long-established OD/OMD organisations were formed as a result of crusading attitudes emanating from their founders. Outward Bound had Hahn’s theories; Brathay had the thoughts of (the splendidly-named) Dick Faithfull Davies and Francis Scott. Both had

⁸⁹ MARSH, Ian (1974) *Influencing Attitudes towards Work and Society*, Industrial and Commercial Training, May, 1974.

overtly religious components to their work. Endeavour Training had the inspirational attitudes of Dick Allcock. Lindley went further, being organised as a Christian Community. The rhetoric surrounding the work of all of them was couched in the language of evangelism: “*Endeavour*”, a “*mission*” to “*spread the word*”. Whether or not we agree with these attitudes, all involved had enthusiasm and a sense of calling not primarily connected to financial or lifestyle reward. And what they were purveying was, in every case, a “method” of their very own. The attitude was “this is what we believe in, this is what we do...” ...the subtext was “take it or leave it”, with the key underlying factor of a desire to see lives enriched and enhanced.

Once the distinctive philosophies had been abandoned, OD organisations had to compete with each other to meet needs expressed by their clients. Courses became “products” and the *essential* difference between one organisation’s offerings and the next became less easy to discern.

3) Outdoor Management Development: At around the same time that development training was in the throes of change, a growing interest in using the outdoors as a vehicle for developing managers began to manifest itself.

Why this should have happened may be a comment on the state of *indoor* management development at the time: Beeby and Rathborn⁹⁰ note that Creswick and Williams, two early practitioners with extensive conventional management development experience, were drawn to the outdoors through “*complaints from managers of unreality, of lack of bite, of a lack of relevance to their jobs*”, of (indoor) training which seemed “*inadequate when dealing with issues related to managers’ actual*

⁹⁰ BEEBY, J.M. and RATHBORN, S(1983) "Development Training – Using the Outdoors in Management Development" *Management Education and Development* 14, 3 pp 171-181

behaviour”⁹¹ Others (myself included) echoed that dissatisfaction: “.... it became clear to me that what those for whose training I was responsible were experiencing was seen as very separate from the job, and with no bearing on it....”⁹² and found a rationale: “The power of the outdoors comes from the immediacy of the consequences of success and failure. The tasks involve the whole person, not just the intellectual part”⁹³

Outward Bound began to offer “adult” programmes which largely transferred the content of young peoples’ programmes into an adult setting. More promisingly, Brathay and H.P. Bulmer ran a series of ten-day “Management in Action” programmes from 1971⁹⁴. Although these focussed on action-centred leadership, they still, as late as 1977 harked back to an earlier era, featuring daily early-morning cutter races and “pure” outdoor activities.

A more avowedly “management” focus, drawing on extensive experience in group process work was promoted by Roy Williams and Chris Creswick⁹⁵. This approach was developed and given tangible form by John Herbert and others, and was highly influential in shaping British OMD. By 1980 sufficient interest had been generated for the Leadership Trust to have become an established and active participant in the U.K. management development scene, and for Challenge Training to have commenced operations.

⁹¹ CRESWICK, C and WILLIAMS, R (1979) *Using the Outdoors for Management Development and Team Building*, Gloucester, Food, Drink and Tobacco Industrial Training Board

⁹² KROUWEL, Bill (1980) "Management Development Using the Outdoors", *Training Officer* 16, 10

⁹³ MOSSMAN, Alan (1983) "Making Choices about the Use of the Outdoors in Manager and Management Development" *Management Education and Development* 14, 3 pp 182-196

⁹⁴ EVERARD, Bertie (1993) *The History of Development Training*, Welwyn, DTAG/ICI

⁹⁵ CRESWICK, C and WILLIAMS, R (1979) *Using the Outdoors for Management Development and Team Building*, Gloucester, Food, Drink and Tobacco Industrial Training Board

The triple influence of Lindley, OMD, and the need to demonstrate a systematic approach to training led to a major change in the way that outdoor training was conducted. In retrospect, that change wasn't an unmixed blessing. Although some outdated attitudes went, greater pragmatism led to a loss of control by the providers and outdoor development became something of a commodity. The change is summarised below:

OLD PARADIGM	NEW PARADIGM
Medium contains message Long courses (26 day norm) Client buys-in to offered objectives Heavy physicality Absence of process review Limited media (outdoors, athletics) Root worlds– public school team players/ wilderness pioneers	Medium is vehicle for message Shorter courses (12 day norm) Client dictates objectives Wider physicality range Presence of process review Wider media Emergent World – social psychology

The first and second development training paradigms

APPENDIX “C”

Two outcomes from the same OMD exercise, performed by different groups

The task is for a team to cross a given piece of ground using three barrels and two planks. Only the barrels may touch the ground,

Outcome 1: The group was composed of occupational psychologists, counsellors, and a smattering of training practitioners, united by nothing more than an interest in Jungian Type. They were given 20 minutes to complete the exercise. Although we can assume that their cognitive universes differed in many ways from one another, pre-task sharing had highlighted a preponderance of people who preferred to make decisions through the application of personal values (feeling), rather than through a judicial weighing-up of the facts (thinking)

A written brief was issued to the group, and there followed around 19 minutes of reflection, punctuated by fitful discussion. With one minute left they started, without much display of conviction, to attempt the task. Time ran out and I convened a review session, for which I'd allowed 20 minutes. It was still running forty minutes later, at which point the delegates elected to forego morning tea in order to continue the review. For them, it seemed, the exercise had revealed a panorama of metaphors about the ways they worked, communicated, interacted. The drawing-out of these (excellent) metaphors seemed *much easier* than the task itself.

We might conclude that the shared parts of their cognitive universe had much to do with the discovery and examination of learning metaphors, of applying imagination to observation. Success or failure at the activity was in itself not particularly important to them.

Outcome 2: The group concerned was composed of production supervisors from a large automotive components factory. They only had a passing acquaintance with one another, being from a variety of departments and shifts. Although it can be assumed that their cognitive universes were different from one another in many ways, a

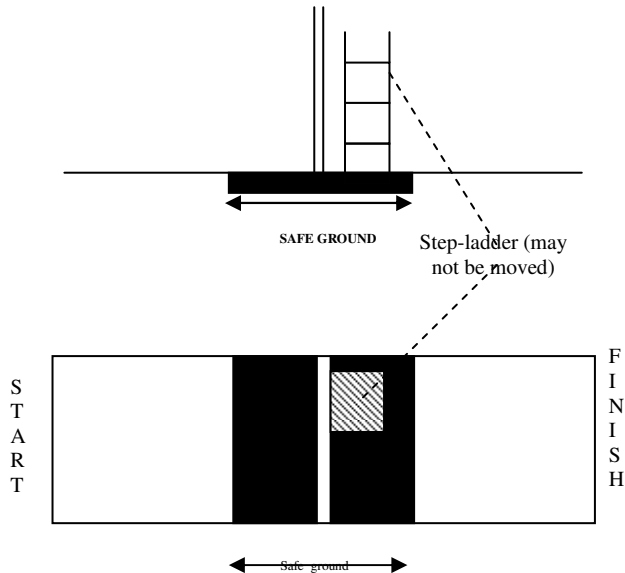
pre-task Belbin team-types questionnaire had highlighted a preponderance of implementers in the group.

The group set about completing their task in the allotted twenty minutes with impressive efficiency, but limited effectiveness. Their timed planning session (they allotted five minutes of the available 20) led to nothing more likely to succeed than a colourful attempt to cross the gap by putting people inside the barrels, rolling them down a gentle slope, and hoping they would continue to roll across the marked gap. This tactic having failed, they gave up.

At the end of the task, review was a stunted affair until one of them asked the question “what’s the right way to do it?” There are, in fact, a number of “right ways” and I don’t like to act as a *deus ex machina* by divulging them to groups. The review, however, was going nowhere, so I broke my own rule and told them. This released the review as they were able to approach it from the angle of “why didn’t we come up with that solution? This led to learning around brainstorming, mind-maps and other tools for stimulating creativity.

It seems that the shared parts of their cognitive universe had much to do with the application of technique and the valuing of timeliness, largely precluding the use of creativity and imagination. When given a set of tools and mechanisms, they were able to access the creativity which had, presumably, been dormant inside them all along.

APPENDIX “D”: GROUP BRIEF - EXERCISE “POACHER’S ESCAPE”



THE TASK is for your whole group and a bucket of water to travel from **A** to **D** without the group, the bucket or the equipment touching the ground in the areas shown above outlined by double lines, and without either yourselves or your equipment touching the fence. You and your equipment may touch the ground at points **B** and **C**. The penalty for breaking the rules is for the whole team to return to the start.

EQUIPMENT provided is as follows:

- One plank.

- 2 x 25 gallon (125 litre) containers

- One short ladder (Placed and anchored as shown in the diagram above. It may not be moved).*

- 1 x 100ft. (30m) rope

You may not supplement this equipment.

TIME ALLOWED for this task is 45 minutes.

SAFETY RULES: Tutors’ rulings on safety matters are final and binding.

No-one may jump a vertical height greater than one metre.

Secured safety helmets and gloves will be worn at all times

Appendix “E”:

GROUP BRIEF: EXERCISE “RIOTOUS ASSEMBLY”

In this activity you will need to work as a team, making the best possible use of individual skills, the best use of the group, and also focusing on the task.

The task is:

- A) To RETRIEVE vouchers which have been placed in and around the area and which represent parts of a disassembled collection of objects. Vouchers are small cards with a “Training Exercise - please do not remove” sticker on them. Each voucher also has a codeword written on it and may also contain further task-related information.
- B) To trade either the voucher itself **or the relevant codeword** for parts of a set of objects. This is done by presenting the voucher or speaking the appropriate word to reception.
- C) To ASSEMBLE the objects. Note that **All your profits come from assembly**, so retrieval of vouchers is merely a step towards profit. It does not in itself make money. The objects can be built-up, decorated and arranged so as to present a pleasant and memorable whole. In addition to the sums mentioned below a discretionary bonus of up to £2.00 is payable for high quality work and use of imagination.

The profits you make or the losses you accrue depend on your effectiveness as a team and your strategy.

Profits/losses are real. Profits will be paid by staff to a charity of your choice; losses are paid by you to a charity of the staff's choice.

We have attached a financial/time breakdown chart. This only applies during the final 120 minutes of the task.

TRANSPORT: Some vouchers are some distance from the start-point of the exercise. To help you retrieve these we will provide you with two vehicles and drivers, at a cost of 3p per mile or part thereof. Use of the vehicle's telephone (for task related calls only) is allowed at a cost of 5p per call. The driver will not help with navigation but will obey all instructions given to him provided they are legal and safe. A pager is also available at a rate of 5p per hour.

OTHER RULES

- 1) People leaving the building must do so in groups of 3 or more (if in the vehicle the driver doesn't count!), and must stay together for reasons of safety.
- 2) You may not use your own, hired, or each others' vehicles.

3) Your whole team needs to be together at the times set out below, for the reasons listed. Failure to comply leads to a fine of 50p per person per MINUTE late.

A) 09.00 - to start the exercise.

B) From 10.45 to 11.15 to review. Coffee will be provided.

C) From 13.00 - 13.45 to review over lunch.

The clock will be stopped for periods (B) and (C), but you **MUST** review.

START INFORMATION

1) Junction of road and Public Right of Way at _____

2) Road crosses dismantled railway at _____

3) Corner of the hotel grounds at _____

You have 285 minutes (excluding review time as set out above) to complete the exercise - Good hunting - Good building - Good luck!

PROFIT AND LOSS

<i>% completed:</i>	50	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
<i>TIME IN MINUTES</i>										
150	£9	£10	£11	£12	£13	£14	£15	£16	£17	£18
170	£7	£ 9	£10	£11	£12	£13	£14	£15	£16	£17
190	£4	£ 5	£ 6	£ 7	£ 8	£ 9	£10	£11	£12	£13
210	£2	£ 3	£ 4	£ 5	£ 6	£ 7	£ 8	£ 9	£10	£11
230	£0	£ 1	£ 2	£ 3	£ 4	£ 5	£ 6	£ 7	£ 8	£ 9
250	(£2)	(£1)	£0	£ 1	£ 2	£ 3	£ 4	£ 5	£ 6	£ 7
270	(£3)	(£2)	(£1)	£0	£ 1	£ 2	£ 3	£ 4	£ 5	£ 6
285	(£4)	(£3)	(£2)	(£1)	£0	£ 1	£ 2	£ 3	£ 4	£ 5

VEHICLE CHARGES: 3p per mile or part thereof.

MOBILE PHONES: 5p per call.

PAGER- 5p per hour to hire

MAKE SURE that you understand the implications of this brief before taking any other action. You might also find it useful to fully examine the resources available to you.

You may need to reconsider and redefine objectives as time goes by.

Appendix “F”: Group Brief for Exercise “Haul Of Fame”

TIME LIMIT: The exercise will close 150 minutes after you arrive at the site detailed below, unless you are otherwise informed. All the necessary equipment has already been taken to the site. All you need is waterproofs and boots.

The site is at **NGR** _____. You will be driven to the nearest point of vehicular access.

Earlier in the programme some of you will have received instruction on the theory and practice of abseiling and upward hauling. It is now time to put that theory into practice. Your task is to produce as large a profit as possible by producing “units” of abseils and hauls. You will be paid 60p for each completed “unit” of one abseil **AND** one haul up to a maximum of 8 units. A bonus of £1.20 is payable if each group member completes either one abseil or one haul, or handles the safety rope for 15 minutes or more.

As always, the word of **safety staff must be obeyed at all times**. As an added incentive, your team will be fined 1 unit (i.e. 60p) for each infringement of safety rules which are as follows:

- 1) All karabiners must be safely secured.
- 2) No-one except staff members may go closer than 2 metres from the edge of the cliff unless correctly roped-up.
- 3) No stepping on ropes.
- 4) No smoking near ropes at any time, even when ropes are coiled and not in use.
- 5) Helmets will be worn at all times, and gloves when indicated by staff.

Other safety conditions may be applied depending on circumstances at the time. These will be communicated verbally to all. Safety staff will be observing at all times. You may not proceed over the edge or commence a haul without prior checking by a member of safety staff.

Additional tuition on ropework can be purchased from safety staff at the rate of one additional unit for each five minutes. Tutors will otherwise only volunteer information for safety reasons.

At the end of the time allowed, your score will be multiplied by that of the other team (except if both groups sustain a minus score), and the final figure paid to a charity of your choice.

Should you sustain a loss, you will have to pay a charity of our choice.

Note that Group A total x Group B total gives the final payment

Appendix “G”: Brief for a Romanian-Based Underground/Above Ground Exercise (The Pestera Project)

NOTE: The cave in question has a very large Orthodox monastery at its mouth and a long history of human occupation, and is thus perfect for project-based exercises....

The task is quite simple: All you have to do is make a presentation about the cave to which we will take you.

The presentation should include:

- Items of general and speleological interest
- A detailed survey of the cave (in plan and section), on A1 paper
- Detailed recommendations for improvement of access for the disabled
- Areas where access is difficult or dangerous
- A section on the history of the cave, including any architecture that may be associated with it.

The presentation earns money, depending on how much it is:

- Accurate and factual
- Entertaining and original (but not silly!)
- Based on genuine research
- Professional in quality

If you have any questions, please discuss these with us.

EQUIPMENT

1 x long tape-measure
1 x clinometer
2 x 100m ropes
Sufficient head lamps etc.

SAFETY

The instructions of all staff on matters of safety should be obeyed at all times. In particular, when inside the cave you should be within sight and sound of an instructor at all times.

The presentation should last between 15 and 30 minutes, and takes place at _____ in the hotel

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