



Dedicated to the development of critical competencies
in adults for change and growth.

A Wetherhaven Production

Action Research Project ED 501

I closely aligned the focus of this project with my passion for organizational transformation. I have asked many questions of myself as a businessperson, consultant, and trainer that have demanded answers for which I do not have answers. I believe that creating organizational change is critical to the survival of organizations and doing so fast is necessary. For team members to not only survive change, but for them to be ready to embrace change is one of the major challenges that has confronted me in my work. When I asked myself what was important, these three issues emerged as most important:

- How do I create readiness for change in adult organizational team members?
- How do I accelerate the rate of change?
- What intervention is most effective in the creation of readiness for change?

Participating in this project will also support my development as a social cognitive practitioner. I believe that preparation for change is as much a self-efficacy issue as it is an issue of fully integrating the learner with the environment within which he or she is learning. Through this work, I hope to discover how an adult organizational team member will self regulate their thoughts, feelings, and actions when they need to change based on the self-efficacy developed through Experience-Based Training and Development.

Action Research Question

"Does participation in Experience-Based Training and Development Programs help prepare adult organizational team members for change?"

Discussion

I discussed this researchable question with Larry Wilson, founder of Wilson Learning Institute and Pecos River Learning Centers this week. Pecos River is heavily involved in organizational change and uses Experience-Based Training and Development to help in the change process. When I asked Larry Wilson about my question, he said that is exactly why Pecos River uses Experience-Based Training and Development. I have also approached Larry to do an internship with his team. The answer to that question is pending Larry's team discussing the possibility. I have also initiated a conversation with Dave Schrader Ph.D. the curriculum developer for Pecos River about my project and he is willing to assist when he gets back in the country.

Evaluation of the Question as Researchable

1. *Feasibility*

The feasibility of this research project will depend on my ability to do an internship so that I can observe the intervention in action and participate in the delivery of the intervention. Considering Pecos River works with organizations such as Dupont and has ongoing interventions, the opportunity is there. If I can not create an internship that allows me to observe and participate in the delivery of Experience-Based Training and Development, this question may be more difficult to answer.

2. *Clarity*

After conversations with Larry Wilson, Dave Schrader, and a review of current articles, I believe the question is clear and accurate. However, most of the research revolves around other aspects of the success of Experience-Based Training and Development Programs and it may be more difficult to find calibrating articles for my question.

3. *Significant*

I believe this is critical work as pressure to change is increasing on adult organizational team members. Those that can not learn to effectively change, are moved out of the system at a high cost to the individual, their family, community, and society as a whole. There is also a high cost to the organization in lost social and intellectual capital that might be saved, if team members can build self-efficacy leading to self-regulation of their ability to change.

4. *Ethical*

There have been instances of injury or death during participation in Experience-Based Training and Development, however this is rare. Through a quick scan of the literature, the quality of the trainer and organization facilitating the program has a profound impact on the program success. Experience-Based Training and Development is designed for individual improvement and is ethical given the ethical intent and careful facilitation of the delivery organization.

5. *Relationship*

When discussing change, significant variables can influence the individual adult organizational team member. Not the least of which is the starting point of the individual. Through my research, observation, and participation, I expect to question the impact of these different variables. These variables could include:

- Design of the Experience-Based Training and Development Program
- Delivery of the Experience-Based Training and Development Program
- Individual differences in emotional and intellectual starting points
- Support mechanisms for change within employer
- Learning culture of employer
- Follow up programs within employer

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- Other stresses within employer such as lost market share, slow sales, poor product performance
- Dynamics of the individuals within the specific Experience-Based Training and Development Program

Conclusion

Based on these dialogues, my question is valid and researchable.

I have conversations with Larry Wilson and with Dave Schrader scheduled for the coming two weeks. I hope to explore further the validity and researchability of my question during these conversations. There are numerous other organizations delivering Experience-Based Training and Development Programs and these might be options for research if my connections with Larry Wilson and team fall through. However, these organization's may or may not have the same focus that the Wilson team has and it is the specific focus of the Wilson team that is of critical interest to me. Given this close tie to the Wilson team for research, I will move ahead assuming that I will be able to create the research with the Wilson team that is needed for the successful completion of this project.