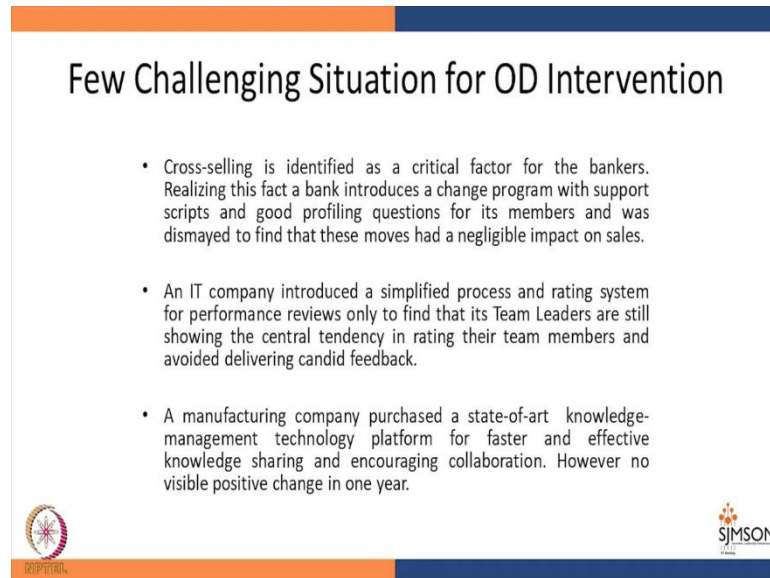**Organization Development and Change in 21st Century**
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Lecture – 10
Different Kinds of Individual Level OD Interventions

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So, till now we were looking at the general conditions in the society. Now, we look at a few situations in the organization. Cross-selling is identified as a critical factor for the bankers, not only selling the FDs or saving accounts, but selling a larger number of products is recognized as an important factor for the profitability of any bank.

That is why you see banks are selling loans, or different type of loans, and the insurance products, investment products etcetera. So, how you cross-sell along with the core product is identified as a very important factor in the success and profitability of a bank. Realizing this fact, a bank introduces a change program with support scripts and good profiling questions for its members and was dismayed to find that these moves had negligible impact on the sales.

So, you make the check list, you make the support script that is how you will approach the customers, that is what you will ask, that is how you will make the profile, and then you propose a product, try to cross-sell it, it did not work. What do you think? In the class room, they did not show any disagreements, they were given the script, they were given

some relevant questions to be asked for profiling the customers and still it did not translate into sales. An IT company introduced a simplified process and rating system for performance reviews, only to find that its team leaders are still showing the central tendency in rating their team members and avoided delivering candid feedback.

You might have seen at your work place as well, average ratings are given, team members are not comfortable telling the hard facts or the tough messages to their team members. They circumvent their message, do not give the straight forward negative feedback, and still follow the central tendency. In this situation, do you think the performance management system can work?

It becomes a matter of adjustment. This year you get the good rating, then next year some other team members will get good rating, and that is how team leaders are still managing their teams, because they have to face them regularly. So, they do not want to give the negative feedback, how can we change this kind of behavior.

When is ranking a good mechanism, when ranking can work? So ranking will work when there are individual performances. But there is one more situation where ranking method can work, when the task is similar. All of you get same question paper, all of you suffer from the similar teacher, have go through the same book, all that is similar, then the ranking may work

But in a work place generally it is not the case, someone is doing some job where he or she is specialized, someone else is specialized in something else. There might be a difference in the market value of the skills people possess in a team. So, you see different types of assignments and work being carried out. So, the ranking is difficult. We have to make people willing to give the candid feedback. How we can do that?

A ranking in a critical incidence method ok, but still if we want people to give feedback whenever it is necessary, is not it an important competency for a team leader to give a candid feedback?

Even if we make everything objective, still there is a competency requirement to be candid and forth right in my ability to give feedback, can we deny that? How to build that when team leader is not demonstrating that?

A manufacturing company purchased a state-of-art knowledge management technology platform for faster and effective knowledge sharing and encouraging collaboration. You purchase it, you install it, still people do not use it; and there was no positive change in one year. How to make people use that knowledge management platform and actually demonstrating the faster and effective knowledge sharing and collaboration?

Many years ago, may be 15 years ago, I was doing some work with the R and D firm in a very big public sector company. And I entered the field with the objective of studying the knowledge management, because there was a course in my Ph.D, program knowledge management and organization learning. I said, let me study the knowledge management system.

A similar thing was there. A state-of-art knowledge management system not being used very frequently, but still the collaboration was there, still knowledge sharing was happening. That made me realize, there is not knowledge management system which can make people collaborate and share, it is the organization learning culture which makes people to share and collaborate.

And when I dug deeper, I found that it is not only the culture. This culture is strengthened by certain positive emotions, the emotions of addressing a challenge, emotion of gaining respect, emotion of getting recognition. So, I entered the field to study the technology of KM system, what I came out with the insights were more related to emotions and culture.

So, the title of this paper which I wrote based on this was The Special Role of affectivity in the Knowledge Management and Organization Learning. Still the role of affectivity is not well documented in organization learning and KM.
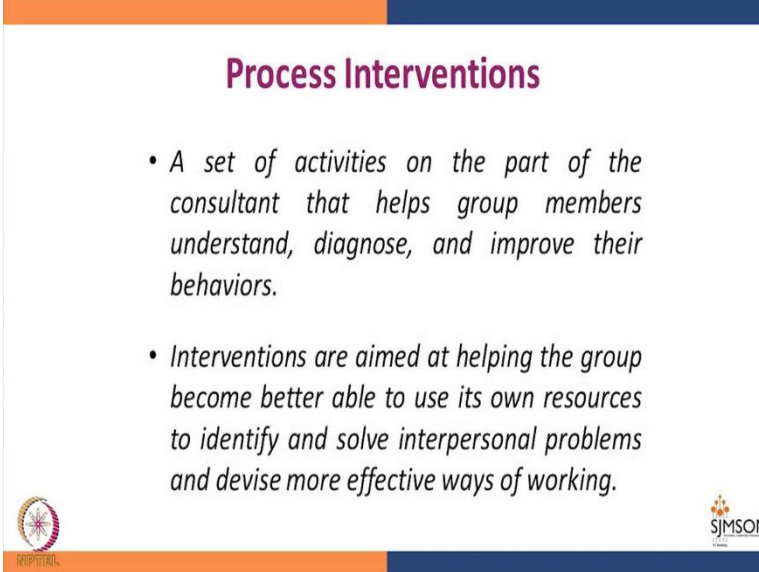
If you look at these situations, these situations are there because people operate on certain basic assumptions, they hold on to certain type of belief. And until those assumptions and beliefs are not replaced with a different beliefs and assumptions, behavior cannot be changed. So, for example, in the cross-selling people are operating on a belief that we have to give what customers ask.

In an IT company if the supervisor is not giving feedback; they are actually operating on a belief that criticizing is bad for relationships. If a manufacturing company is having a

sophisticated KM system, still I am not using it, most likely I am operating on a belief that knowledge gives you power, not knowledge sharing, but knowledge hoarding is important.

So, until these beliefs are not replaced with different beliefs, behavior, behavioral change is not possible. How to reach those?
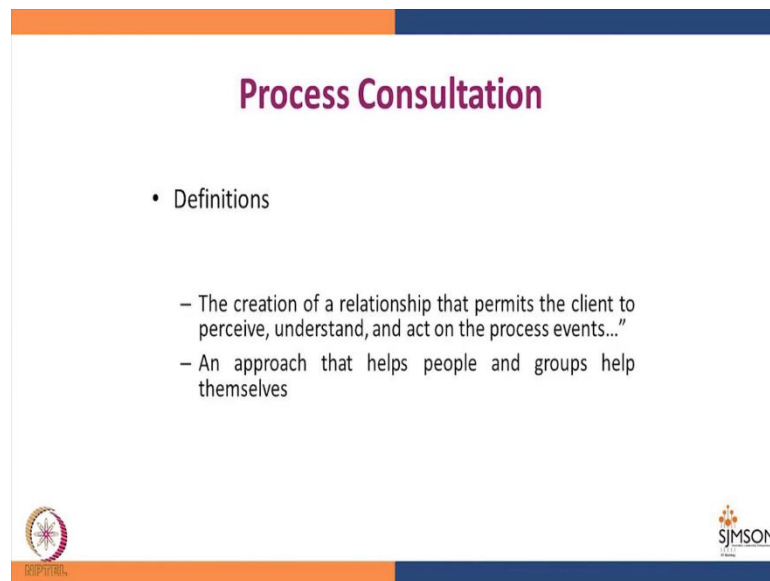
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There are certain methods that is called process intervention. Process intervention is a set of activities on the part of the consultant, and this can be internal or external consultant that helps group members or organizational members to understand, diagnose, and improve their behavior. So, these are the interventions that are aimed at helping the group to better use its own resources, to identify and solve interpersonal problems and devise more effective ways of working.

It is called process intervention, because behavior is the outcome and underneath the behavior, there is a process and process starts with certain assumptions; assumptions give birth to certain beliefs; beliefs give birth to certain morals and principles and values, and these are reflected in the norms I follow and behavior I demonstrate.

So, if I have to change the behavior what I need to work upon? Something which is below in the hierarchy, that is what values and morals. And if I have to change the values and morals all I need to work upon is something deeper, that is belief.

So, beliefs are the basic notions how this world works, and values are what is valued what is right and wrong that is ethics. And values are what is to be valued, what is preferred disposition, preferred objective or preferred way of achieving objective that is value. So, we need to look at what are the operating beliefs, and we need to change those operating belief with the better or more functional beliefs and that is the job of process consultation.

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Process consultation is the creation of relationship that permits the client to perceive, understand, and act on the process events. You look at this, it is not the consultant who does the processing, that is why here he is called facilitator, because they build the relationship. And in that relationship, some interactions happen where client, the individual, is able to look at their own behavior, reflect on what was the underlying values, and morals, and norms, and beliefs of their behavior.

Until a positive relationship and a trustworthy relationship is not build, people will not be willing to reflect; or even if they reflect they will not be willing to articulate. And if they do not articulate what they reflect upon, they cannot refine their reflections. So, process consultation is an approach that helps people and groups to help themselves. So, in that way, it is a process of empowerment where people get empowered in the process consultation.

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That is aimed at helping people to better communicate with others, adopt the right attitude, enhance the personal managerial effectiveness, go for motivation and go for innovation.

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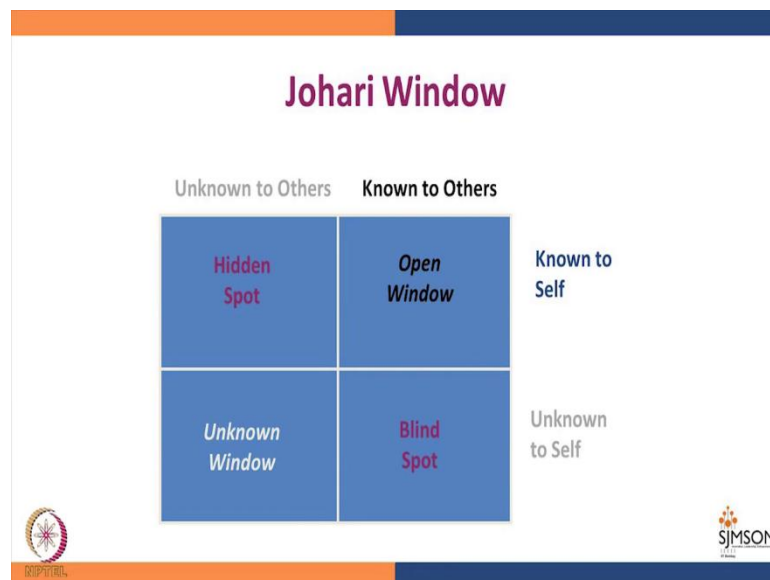
One example you might remember is the Johari Window. Johari Window helps us know something more than what we knew till now. If you remember the exercise we did, there were list of the adjectives probably 60 adjectives.

I choose the 10 adjectives which I think best describe me. Then I ask my friend to choose the 10 adjectives which best describe me. And then I ask someone with whom I have some

level of familiarity, but not very close association or relationship or friendship, I also ask this person to look at the 10 adjectives from the same list which define me, which are the major characteristics.

And I see what is common in all the adjectives as something which is known to me, and known to others that is called open window. There are some aspects which people are aware of, but I am not aware of, that is blind spot unknown to self, but known to others.

And then there are hidden spots, unknown to others, but I know about it. This is one way of exploring oneself. And then I can connect some of the things what I do or do not related to how I perceive myself.

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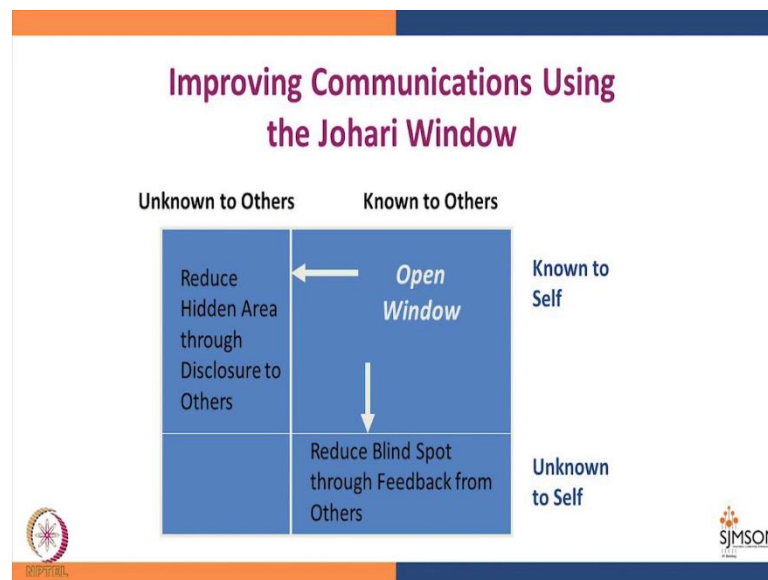
So, in this exercise, we try to expand the open window. To bring more and more data in the open window which is known to me as well as known to others, and that helps in building more authentic and functional relationship with others. It also helps in communication. When the window is open, window is wider, I am able to communicate more freely and naturally that has impact on the quality of relationships.
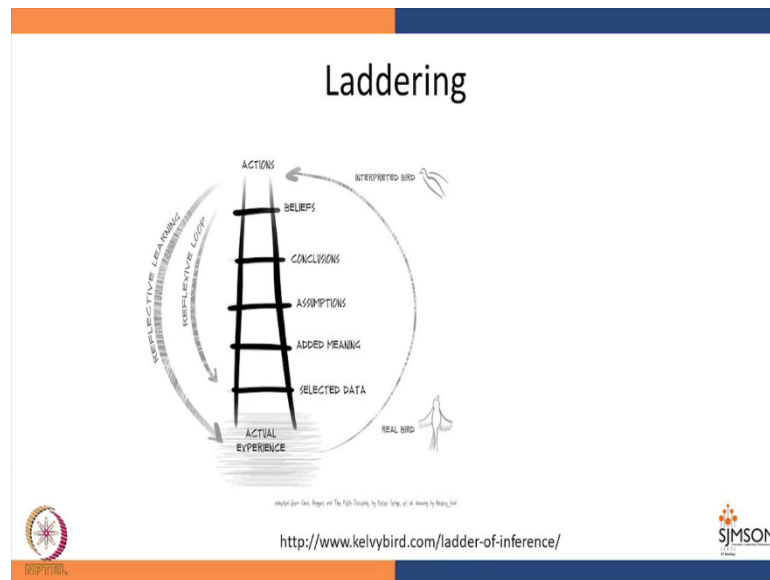
Another way of looking at my basic assumptions and working around it is a method called ladder of inferences or laddering. What it simply says, it can be compared with these two diagrams. The real bird may look like this, but I interpret the bird like this. Can you connect this situation with your real life? Does not it happen quite often that I see some situation in certain way, but others may see and the situation itself may different.

I am not able to communicate with someone; I am not able to appreciate someone; I become little disturbed by what someone else says, or someone else becomes disturbed by hearing what I said wherein I did not mean anything wrong or ill about the person, lot of these miscommunications happen.

How do we deal with that? And because of this miscommunication, we are not able to appreciate each other, and understand the reality. So, wherever there are conflicts or discomfort, we need to look at data. What actually happens, we experience something, and we select data. We choose to look at some particular data. I may look at just tone; I may pickup only those words which are more hurtful to me.

In all the situations, we cannot collect and have all the data. So, every time we pick up some data which is of my perception. We add meaning to it. And we assume based on those meanings, what this person and what the situation is doing to me, is it favorable or unfavorable to me, all that meaning is assigned based on those assumptions. And that

becomes our conclusion. And then we believe that this person is not friendly to me, or this organization, or this group is not open for new things.

I give one example. I joined a team fresh. I see something in my manufacturing company, some process which can be changed, which can be improved. I give this information in my enthusiasm to the team leader. Team leader's response is not very warm. I assume that probably this person is not open minded, and there is no point in giving suggestion to this person.

And then I conclude that the best way of working in this team is do whatever is given to you, do not apply your mind, and do not think something innovative. Here things will go on as they are going on, because supervisor is not very open for any change or modification, and that becomes my belief about the team, may be about the department or organization.

What laddering method says is that we need to have not only one side of the loop, but also a reflective loop as well. It means whenever I am acting in a certain way, I need to look at what is the experience which made me to behave like this.

And then I reflect whether I assigned the correct meaning to that situation or not, meaning I might have gone to the supervisor with the advice, and the supervisor might be dealing with a crises at that moment and that is why he was not able to give sufficient attention to my advice or my idea, whereas, I have made the conclusion that this person is not open minded.

So, like that we can help people in the process consultation to look at their experience, my relationship with my supervisor is not good, my relationship with my pear is not that great. We look at all this data and examine, can there be a different meaning, could I perceive something which I did not perceive, could I look at the data in a different way. So, in the process consultation, these kinds of conversations take place. And as a result of that we can shift some of our nonfunctional beliefs with more functional beliefs.

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Then there is an example of visual explorers. But these are the cards which have very different colors very different pictures and not apparently correlated with each other. We pose a question for example, pick up a card which describes your experience in the performance appraisal conversation. Pick up a card which in some way reflects your experience of working in a team like that, and these are open ended questions.

People are more frank and forthcoming when describing their experiences, sometime people are able to access their own experience by some of these artefacts. I might be feeling something, it is reflected in my energy level, but that does not come to the level of articulation. I might be feeling uncomfortable, but I am not able to sense why I am not able to identify why I am feeling uncomfortable in the situation.

These kinds of methods particularly the visual explorer method help us to connect that unstated unexpressed experience to the expressed experience. And when we express our experience, that expression has certain assumptions, has certain beliefs, that brings out my values as well.

When these things come out in my expression, there is a chance I can critically look at those beliefs, values, norms and my assumptions. And if required, we can replace those new assumptions to the old assumptions which might be more functional in nature, which may make me more effective in that situation.

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So, we come back to the example we started with. Bank seemingly good ultimately performance-limiting mind-set. Why they were not able to do cross-selling, probably because they were operating on a belief that my job is to give the customers what they want, I am not able to push for the cross-selling. At the company, I am not giving the feedback, because I am operating on an assumption that criticism damages relationship.

And likewise, in the manufacturing company example in spite of a sophisticated KM system, I am not giving and sharing information, because I operate on a belief that information is power and good leaders are powerful leaders.

So, through the ladder of inference, through the process consultation, through these conversations, different set of assumptions can be provoked. So, instead of thinking about my job is to give customers what they want, there is a possibility we can replace this assumption with another which is- help customers fully understand their needs rather than giving customers what they want.

So, I might not be cross-selling because I am trying to follow a script. But if I develop this listening capability and sensing capability to look at what might be useful product for my customers in context of the customers need, customers responsibility, age, income, etcetera then I can help the customers to fully understand their needs. Many times, customers are not able to understand their needs. They are not able to plan their finances well. I can do that.

But for that I need to have more empathic and replacing. But if I am not operating on this assumption, and if am operating on the assumption that I have to gave what they want, then I will not indulge into the active listening and empathic listening. Similarly, if I am operating on the assumption that criticism damage a relationship, I will not be giving honest feedback, so that assumption must be replaced with another assumption, that honesty combined with respect does not damage the relationship, in fact, it is essential to building strong ones.

So, instead of just looking at the relationship and criticism angle, we need to look at there is another factor of operating in this interaction that is call honesty and respect. So, criticism is there. But if it is given with the honesty supported with the data and with respect, it may not damage relationship, it might in fact strengthen the relationship. Similarly, around here information is power and good leaders are powerful leaders. This assumption should be replaced with sharing information rather hoarding it is the best way of magnifying power.

So, initially people do not, people do not feel enthusiastic about sharing information. But the good thing about sharing information authentically is that there might be other people who might be thinking like that, and this positive behavior of sharing information may provoke the goodness and authenticity in others, and that will provoke more sharing of information and that may result in more collaboration. So, this is the essence of individual level intervention we looked at.

So, in today's session, we looked at how the psychology of the change works. And the elephant rider model gives us a few insights about how to direct the rider, how to motivate the elephant, and how to clear the path for the successful change intervention. In the second half of the session, we looked at the individual level intervention. Individual level interventions are generally called process interventions. Process interventions aim at replacing the dis-functional or nonfunctional beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, and beliefs with more functional and more positive beliefs, assumptions, attitudes and values.

Ladder of inference, Johari Window, visual explorer, general counselling and many different types of coaching methods have evolved in the current times around the process intervention area which aim at making people more functional, effective and joyful in their roles, that is one set of OD intervention which operates at the individual level.