

## Report #4

### Interviews with 4 OD Professionals

*Where they were educated, what they thought of the programs then and now,  
and what they are doing today...*

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Four outstanding professionals in Organization Development who live and work in New Jersey were interviewed to gain a better understanding of their background, education, training and perspective. The following anonymous profiles will provide a picture of the individuals and their contribution to the field of OD today.

- All four interviewed chose a Masters or Doctoral program in Organization Development
- Two of the four graduated from American/NTL and are currently employed in high-level corporate positions managing workforce change
- One of the four graduated ten years ago from American, two graduated within the past five years (from NTL and UGA) and one is a doctoral candidate at Columbia University.

The following are the questions and unedited responses:

#### 1. How much did you spend on the entire program?

- a. Too much... \$137,000.00 (including cost of books, registration fees, etc.) and counting...(Columbia)
- b. UGA University, my employer, paid almost \$10,000 7-8 workshops, plus hotel/airfare (workshops appx \$6-7000) / [appx \\$4,000](#) / Tuition appx \$30,000
- c. I just paid for books. My company picked up the cost of the degree (NTL/AU).
- d. Company I worked for paid for it(NTL/AU).

#### 2. Why did you choose that programs/institution/organization?

- a. Great reputation, great program, close to work (at the time) and I liked the professors and students. (Columbia)

- b. Time and cost. also considered a Linkage program. This is a weekend program for two years: 1 weekend per month: Friday Sat and Sunday plus two full one weeks in Bethel Maine and Washington DC.(NTL/AU).
- c. It was a well recognized university, that partnered with NTL, also a very well know and well respected leader in the fields of OD/ OB. (NTL/AU).
- d. Cornell has an excellent certificate program-bring real life problems to the table / ProSci was recommended by AVP of IT at UGA based on his experience at Purdue / UGA has excellent HROD program where I can focus on OD/change – Action Research opportunities (working as OCM Team Lead on ERP implementation while completing Med HROD)

### **3. Did the program meet or exceed expectations?**

- a. Exceeded (Columbia)
- b. I could have not anticipated how valuable this would be to me.(NTL/AU)
- c. UGA has exceeded my expectations due to my ability to apply what I am learning on the project. Also, my advisor and professor, Dr. Wendy E. A. Ruona, is ahead of her time in OD/Change – excellent HROD program)
- d. Definitely has exceeded my expectations. Great program with amazing courses and professors. (NTL/AU)

### **4. Which courses had the greatest value - to your personal development, career development, etc?**

- a. (Columbia) Strategy as a Way of Learning; How Adults Learn; Developing and Managing Learning Programs; Human Resource Development; Facilitating Adult Learning; Group Dynamics; Advanced Learning Theory.
- b. (NTL/AU)Metrics/ Human Capital; Use of Self; Systems Thinking and Design
- c. (UGA)Strategic HROD, Leadership, Change in Organizations, The Art of Consulting
- d. (NTL/AU) (1) Diagnostics. She described this program as “Excellent”. Provided various components and areas of theory with application:
  - work/group process
  - Organization diagnosis,
  - socio-technical systems,
  - strategy in planning change,
  - personality theories
  - Human Relations/Power Struggles

Basic theories are applied in the diagnostics program than interventions are developed to understand the following from the individual's perspective, the team's perspective and the organizations' perspective.

- How Organizations operate
- How organizations Change

(2). Consulting and contracting. Setting clear expectations, engaging, clarity in addressing goals and engaging others.

(3) Facilitation Skills.

- Strategic Goals and Planning - -with an HR component, talent management
- Group/team project on site. Assigned to work with a company and work through a problem:
  - Build diagnostic plan
  - Conduct the diagnostic
  - Plan for the intervention
  - Carry out the intervention --Rosa explained that it was typically not a complicated project, and quite often the team did not complete 5d, advising client of options/solutions

**5. Were the programs offered in a sequential format? Did you follow that sequence? Was the sequence important to your learning and application of the skills?**

- a. (NTL/AU) Yes offered in sequence, and it was a cohort program which added tremendous value as we became our own "human research lab" which enriched the learning.
- b. (Columbia) No, there was no sequential order for taking classes. I had to transfer my MA credits in and once I knew what buckets I had to fill, I had to create a program plan for the office of doctoral studies based on class availability.
- c. For the UGA HROD program, there was a sequential format; however due to my schedule, I probably did take a couple of classes out of sequence. It is very important to take Research Methods in the beginning.
- d. (NTL/AU) Embedded throughout the entire program was the importance of self-knowledge, personal growth and development
  - Each 'class' became a cohort group, working through the program as a team. She found this extremely effectively and whenever possible recommends maximum relationship building.
  - The most productive program length was a three day course over a period of three weeks. Much like a single module: greater depth in one phase of a subject as opposed to the tradition general topic with modules.

**6. What ratio of on-line and face-to-face learning was incorporated into the program? Was this a good ratio?**

- a. (NTL/AU) 80/ 20 face to face vs. on line.
- b. (Columbia) Almost all courses were offered in person. Very few were online due to the complexity of the topics being discussed. I took most of my classes face-to-face. The only ones that I took online were my Stats courses, Fostering Transformative Learning, and Staff Development and Training because of my work schedule
- c. Most of the UGA MEd HROD program was F2F with materials posted on WebCT occasionally. Sometimes a professor would use WebCT to supplement class time by having us post answers to questions and responding to one another (once we were assigned to smaller groups).
- d. (NTL/AU) Most of the programs were face-to-face, a few were on-line, but supplemented with on-site working field projects

**7. What courses did you find more effectively offered on-line? Face-to-face?**

- a. (NTL/AU) Not applicable – all courses were face to face
- b. (Columbia) I found that the theory classes were easier to take in person due to the complexity of the information and dialogue going on. I was actually quite surprised how easy it was to take stats online...
- c. All of my UGA courses were F2F with an occasional requirement to post discussions online. For online courses to be effective, it is critical to get the students engaged (break them in smaller virtual groups), let them know the expectations/guidelines for posts, and to provide them with feedback to let them know the professor is engaged.
- d. (NTL/AU) Only on-line programs were part of project; not relevant here

**8. How much time did it take you to complete the program?**

- a. 2 ½ years (NTL)
- b. Going into my 7<sup>th</sup> year. (Columbia Doctoral)
- c. UGA – about 2.5 years
- d. Two years (NTL/AU)

**9. What you would do differently (i.e.: attend the same program?) if you had to begin again? Would definitely attend the same program?**

- a. Would definitely attend the same program. (NTL/AU)
- b. If I had to start all over again, I wouldn't do anything differently other than starting the program earlier in my career. (Columbia)
- c. Attend the same program. (UGA)
- d. I would gladly attend the same program. (NTL/AU)

**10. What other OD Certificate programs are you familiar with and how would you rate the program you completed to that program?**

- a. This was a Master's degree not certificate program, however I am aware of Linkage as an organization (not a university) that runs an OD certificate program, as well as single courses within OD. (NTL/AU)
- b. I know ASTD offers a certificate program. However, I personally don't know anything about it or know anyone who has participated in the program. (Columbia)
- c. UGA HROD is excellent and I have a paper I will share with you on my thoughts for OD/Change: It's an initial proposal for some research I may do next semester. (I plan to begin writing a book next semester and this may be one component of it.)
- d. Linkage(NTL/AU)

**11. How has the program affected your career success in terms of level of employment and income?**

- a. Very positive impact as it developed my capabilities in the OD space faster and more comprehensively than I would have solely on the job. (NTL/AU)
- b. Only in positive ways ... Personally, I've met some wonderful and extremely intelligent people during this journey. These are people that I plan on doing research with and will stay in contact with them for life.

Professionally speaking, it has been a journey. I figured out what I wanted to do/passionate about later in my education and was working in Business and Legal Affairs at the time. I'm still trying to build my HR/OD work experience but my education in the program has definitely put me over the edge and has slowly helped me build my level of employment and income. (Columbia)

- c. Because of my UGA internship (Finance Professionals' Institute Business Plan and Framework) and several other UGA OD type projects completed at my place of Employment (UGA University), I ended up being asked to work on Project Compass for two years as OCM Team Lead. The UGA program was critical in me being able to put together a holistic organizational change management strategy for UGA University and UGA Healthcare on a project impacting almost 30,000.
- d. I am recognized for my ability to work with teams, to diagnose problems and implement creative solutions. "It has been a tremendous help to me and has resulted in both recognition and career progress". (NTL/AU)

**13. What other insights or perspectives are you willing to share about the OD Certificate program you attended?**

- a. n.b.: Do not include how to create and conduct training or presentations as it not always necessary and there are better programs focused on exactly those topics. (NTL/AU)
- b. I love my program and the people I work with during my time at TC. Everyone was super helpful, friendly, supportive, and inspiring. The coursework is very extensive from coaching to emotional intelligence, action learning, etc. All professors are very easy to work with. They have high standards for their students but very fair and extremely knowledgeable in their fields. (Columbia)