ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

CREATING & RECREATING THE LEARNING ORGANIZATION

IOB, GBS, FGSIB

FALL 2000

CAN ORGANIZATIONS LEARN?

- ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOT ANIMATE OBJECTS, ARE THEY?
- ORGANIZATIONS LEARN BY CREATING ROUTINES, PROCESSES, SOPs, RULES, ETC.
- THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE ROUTINES NEED TO MAKE SENSE AND BE FOLLOWED; IF NOT ‘LEARNING’ COUNTERPRODUCTIVE

DIFFERENT TYPES OF LEARNING

- SINGLE-LOOP & DOUBLE-LOOP
  - LOCAL VS GENERAL
  - UNCORRECTED VS CORRECTED
- INCREMENTAL & RADICAL
- NEW LEARNING & UPGRADING OF EXISTING LEARNING
- LEARNING & UNLEARNING

LEARNING & ADAPTATION

- BOTH SINGLE- & DOUBLE-LOOP LEARNING INVOLVE ADAPTATION
- AS THE NUMBER & VARIETY OF ORGANIZATIONAL SUBUNITS GROW, MORE CONSCIOUSLY PLANNED ADAPTATION BECOMES NECESSARY
- WHEN DOES MANAGEMENT BEGIN MANAGING ORG LEARNING?

COMPETENCY TRAPS

- AN ORGANIZATION OBTAINS SHORT-TERM GAINS WITH CURRENT ROUTINES & CAPABILITIES BUT LOSES OUT ON NEW, MORE SUBSTANTIAL ROUTINES & CAPABILITIES

TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

- ARGUES BOTH INCREMENTAL & RADICAL LEARNING CAN ENHANCE ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE
- NEW EXTERNAL TECHNOLOGY CAN BE CAPABILITY ENHANCING OR CAPABILITY DESTROYING
- NEED CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT, TQM, & BREAKTHROUGH LEARNING

KEY QUESTIONS IN ORG LEARNING I

- LEVELS OF LEARNING
  - INDIVIDUAL
  - GROUPS (TEAMS, SECTIONS, DEPTS, ETC)
  - ORGANIZATIONS (INTER & INTRA)
  - POPULATION LEVEL (SHARED EXPERIENCE AMONG ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE LINKED TOGETHER)

KEY QUESTIONS IN ORG LEARNING II

- KEY LEARNING PROCESSES
  - TRIAL-AND-ERROR LEARNING
  - INFERENTIAL LEARNING
  - VICARIOUS LEARNING
  - GENERATIVE LEARNING

KEY QUESTIONS IN ORG LEARNING III

- FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNING'S IMPACT
  - PRESENCE OF SUPERSTITIOUS LEARNING
  - MYOPIC ORGANIZATIONS
  - LEVEL OF NOISE
  - # OF INDEPENDENT SUBUNITS
  - EPISTASIS OR ONE ROUTINE DEPENDS ON PRESENCE OF OTHER ROUTINES
  - TIMING
  - INTERACTION BETWEEN LEVELS