

A Guide to Bushe & Marshak's Papers on Dialogic OD

In chronological order

Quick Overviews

[Dialogic Organization Development: Emerging Directions \(2026\)](#)

Discusses how Dialogic OD practice has advanced since the 4th edition of *Practicing OD*, in both large system change and small group interventions.

[The Generative Change Model: Creating the Agile Organization While Dealing with a Complex Problem 2021](#)

Provides a quick overview to the generative change strategy with a focus on the difference between vision and purpose.

[The Dialogic Mindset for Generative Change 2020](#)

This chapter for the *Collaborative Change Library* provides an integrated overview of the Dialogic OD Mindset and its implications for theory and practices of generative change, leadership, and consulting. It's written for those interested in Dialogic OD with at least some OD knowledge and experience.

[The Generative Change Model – Creating an Agile Organization While Dealing with a Complex Problem 2020](#)

This short blog for the UK National Health Service provides a brief overview of the Generative Change Model and some of the important steps and processes in it. It's written for those interested in Dialogic OD and differences between generative and planned change, with at least some OD knowledge and experience.

[The Dialogic OD Approach to Transformation and Change 2016](#)

This chapter from the 4th edition of *Practicing OD* provides an overview of Dialogic OD mindset, change premises, and range of methods and practices. It's written for those interested in Dialogic OD with at least some OD knowledge and experience.

[Accelerating Transformational Change 2015](#)

This summary of a talk given to the Seattle CHO Group in 2015 explains why a Dialogic Mindset and associated levers of change can help leaders respond successfully to adaptive challenges and accelerate transformational change. Originally given to help HR specialists, it is useful for leaders to understand how a Dialogic Mindset can address contemporary challenges.

[Introduction to the Dialogic OD Textbook 2015](#)

This introductory chapter to *Dialogic Organization Development: The Theory and Practice of Transformational Change* provides an overview about what led to the writing of the book and short introductions to 18 theory and practice chapters and their contributing authors. It's written for practitioners and academics interested in more in-depth learning about the theories and practices leading to and shaping Dialogic OD.

[Introduction to Special Issue of the OD Practitioner 2013](#)

This introduction to the 2013 special issue of the *OD Practitioner* on Dialogic OD is a brief overview of what Dialogic OD is and introduces ten practice-oriented articles addressing different aspects of Dialogic OD. It's written for all types and levels of OD practitioners interested in learning more about the practice of Dialogic OD.

[OD Morphogenesis: The Emerging Dialogic Platform of Premises 2010](#)

This article describes how ideas from the interpretive and complexity sciences have converged to create a platform for the emergence of Dialogic OD. Originally the opening keynote at the NTL Conference on the New OD in 2010, it's intended to invite experienced practitioners and academics to reflect on how OD theory and practice has evolved from its classical roots.

[The Postmodern Turn in OD: From Diagnosis to Meaning-Making 2008](#)

This early, and very brief article introduces the key premises and contrasts between Classical OD and the Postmodern ideas influencing what was later named and defined as Dialogic OD. It's written for those interested in current trends and issues in OD.

On the Practice of Dialogic OD

[Dialogic Organization Development: Emerging Directions 2025](#)

This chapter describes recent research and innovations in Dialogic OD including high engagement and generative change strategies, use of purpose not vision, hosting instead of facilitating, DEI applications, process consulting and team development.

[Preparing Leaders to Hold Space for Self and Others During Generative Change 2023](#)

This article discusses how to prepare leaders to lead a large group generative change event for the first time, and offers a "three-legged stool" model: conceptual alignment, embodied self-scaffolding, and contracting the 'what ifs'.

[Three Change Strategies in Dialogic OD: Data-based, High Engagement and Generative 2023](#)

This article argues that any OD method can be used from three different change strategies that have emerged over time. Two of these are associated with Dialogic OD: High Engagement and

Generative. Examples of these are provided along with a discussion of the roles of sponsors, stakeholders, and change agents in each, and when either might be most appropriate.

[Dialogic OD and the Generative Change Model: Opportunities and Challenges for Managing Global Crises 2022](#)

Requested for the book *Social Scientists Confronting Global Crises*, the article describes the possibilities for using Dialogic OD and a generative change strategy for dealing with global issues and identifies two problems with using Dialogic OD in large social systems that have still to be resolved.

[Dialogic Meaning-Making in Action 2019](#)

This article explains how coaches and consultants can use generative conversations to help clients address limiting assumptions and create new possibilities. It's written for coaches and consultants interested in how to apply dialogic methods in their day to day practice.

[Generative Leadership 2019](#)

This article identifies the kind of leadership required to sponsor generative change: Generative Leadership. It argues generative leadership is more effective for managing conditions of uncertainty, ambiguity and volatility. Key differences between top-down visionary leadership and bottom-up, generative leadership are identified as well as some of the difficulties leaders face in adopting a generative approach. It's written for leaders, consultants and coaches with at least some knowledge of OD and change theories.

[Planned and Generative Change in OD 2018](#)

This article introduces the generative change model and contrasts it with traditional planned change approaches. It identifies when to use it and the implications for leadership in utilizing it. It's written for practitioners with at least some knowledge of OD theory, history, and practice.

[Language and Organizational Agility in Practice 2018](#)

This chapter from *Agility.X* discusses how leaders, OD practitioners, change managers, and others can use a dialogic understanding of language to implement organizational agility programs, or to enhance the agility of their organizations more generally. It's written for practitioners with some understanding of OD and the constructive role of language.

[Transforming Leadership 2017](#)

This article presents and explains why a Generative Mindset versus a Performance Mindset is needed to help leaders deal with complexity and uncertainty in ways that encourage generative transformational change. It's written for change-oriented leaders, consultants, coaches, and trainers.

[Anxiety and Change in Contemporary OD 2016](#)

This award-winning article discusses why addressing anxiety, including leader anxiety, is needed in complex and uncertain change contexts. How this can be done from a Dialogic OD Mindset is discussed. It's written for consultants, coaches, and leaders with some organizational change experience and knowledge of OD practices.

[Consulting in the Moment for Change 2016](#)

This chapter from *Consultation for Organizational Change Revisited* discusses how a coach or consultant can conversationally address, in-the-moment, limiting patterns of thinking and doing by attending to the metaphors and storylines framing reality for a person, group or larger social system. It's written for practitioners with some or more understanding of OD and the constructive role of language.

[My Journey into Dialogic OD 2015](#)

This article discusses the ideas and experiences that led Bob Marshak to the collaborative conceptualization of Dialogic OD. It's written for more experienced practitioners interested in the history and evolution of OD thinking and practice.

[Working with Emergent Change 2015](#)

This article explains how merging interpretivist social science and complexity natural science can help appreciative inquiry practitioners deepen their thinking and improve their transformational change practice. It's written for an AI practitioner audience, but has information and insights for any OD practitioner.

[Dialogic Organization Development 2014](#)

This chapter from the *NTL Handbook of OD and Change* explains what Dialogic OD is, the range of methods and practices associated with it, and ways to think about when to use it. It's written for all types and levels of OD practitioners.

[Dialogic OD - A Theory of Practice 2013](#)

This article, a precursor to the generative change model, describes Gervase Bushe's approach to Dialogic OD with an emphasis on the nature of generative images and the context for dialogic transformational change. It's written for all types and levels of OD practitioners interested in learning about Dialogic OD.

[Leveraging Language for Change 2013](#)

This article discusses dialogic and discursive approaches to OD, particularly in terms of how metaphors and storylines help frame reality and response in social systems. It's written for all types and levels of OD and coaching practitioners interested in "changing the conversation."

[The Controversy over Diagnosis in Contemporary OD 2013](#)

This article summarizes the pros and cons given for why diagnosis is, or is no longer, a critical step in OD practice. It's written for all types and levels of practitioners wanting to know more about this controversy in OD theory and practice.

[Being the Container in Dialogic OD 2010](#)

This article suggests the way a facilitator or leaders shows up has a profound impact on the container that is co-constructed with participants for generative conversations during Dialogic OD interventions. It describes seven different ways in a leader's being can influence the kind of spaces that can produce transformational outcomes.

[Dialogic OD: Turning away from Diagnosis 2009](#)

This concluding chapter from the 3rd edition of *Practicing OD* reviews the developments in OD theory and practice that have led to Dialogic OD, especially the movement away from diagnosis in many contemporary methods and approaches. It's written primarily for all types and levels of OD practitioners.

[Generative Conversations: How to use Deep Listening and Transforming Talk in Coaching and Consulting 2004](#)

This early article discusses the role of language in generative conversations that help clients address limiting assumptions and create new possibilities. It's written for coaches and consultants of all experience levels interested in dialogic change methods.

[Managing the Metaphors of Change 1993](#)

This early, classic article is one of the first discussions of how different types of underlying metaphors influence the ways people assess what change is, why change may be needed, and what to do in response. It's written for consultants, trainers, and leaders of all experience levels dealing with organizational change.

Academic Research and Theory

[Thinking Analogically About Dialogic Organization Development: A Cross- Cultural Exercise \(2025\)](#)

This article presents the process and results of Marshak using classical Chinese philosophy (Confucianism and Taoism) to stimulate new ideas and insights about the theory and practice of Dialogic Organization Development (OD). Key aspects of a Tao-based world-view that rejects such concepts as individuality, universal truths, objectivity, and scientific reasoning are identified along with implications for how social and organizational situations are conceptualized and addressed.

[Three Change Strategies in Dialogic OD: Data-based, High Engagement and Generative \(2023\)](#)

This article argues that any OD method can be used from three different change strategies that have emerged over time. Their emergence is described and traced to changes in the intellectual climate of the times. Two of these are associated with Dialogic OD: High Engagement and Generative. Examples of these are provided along with a discussion of the roles of sponsors, stakeholders, and change agents in each, and when either might be most appropriate. The article concludes that that the generative change strategy is the most transformational, but cannot always be used.

[Social Construction and the Practice of Dialogic Organization Development 2020](#)

This invited chapter, written primarily for people interested in social construction with limited knowledge of OD, begins by emphasizing five qualities of OD that persist since its beginnings, and then provides a summary of the main ideas underlying Dialogic OD and the Generative Change Model.

[Individual Cognitive Effort and Cognitive Transition During Organization Development 2018](#)

This study of what caused transition and what caused transformation in individual mental maps during a Dialogic OD process was an intensive study of the change journey of 6 participants before, during and after the intervention. It found that the emergent nature of the change process was responsible for most of the transformation observed in participants' thinking.

[The Dialogic Mindset: Leading Emergent Change In A Complex World 2016](#)

This award-winning article explains why traditional narratives and mindsets of change leadership are not effective in a VUCA environment and describes the contours of a dialogic leadership narrative and mindset, including implications for leadership development. It's written for experienced OD practitioners, leadership development practitioners, and change-oriented leaders.

[The Dialogic Mindset in Organization Development 2014](#)

This chapter from volume 34 of *Research in Organization Change and Development* provides an in-depth discussion of important theories and practices that help inform a Dialogic Mindset, and proposes three enabling change processes that underlie successful Dialogic OD practices. It's written to extend academics' and experienced practitioners' understandings of the principles and practices of Dialogic OD.

[Generative Process, Generative Outcome 2013](#)

This chapter from *Advances in Appreciative Inquiry, Vol.4* provides evidence that generativity is a required element of successful appreciative inquiry and offers insights on ways to increase the generativity of all phases of the AI model. It describes the importance of generative images and offers a model for designing generative questions. Written for both OD researchers and practitioners

[Revisioning Organization Development: Diagnostic and Dialogic Premises and Patterns of Practice 2009](#)

This award-winning article is the first articulation and description of the underlying theories and practices that shape Dialogic OD in contrast to the foundational, diagnostic, form of OD. It's written to influence OD academics and experienced practitioners, and includes extensive references to OD history, theories and practices.

[Further Reflections on Diagnostic and Dialogic OD 2009](#)

This companion article to the original JABS article on Dialogic OD discusses additional background information and intentions for the original article and responds to two commentaries on it. It's written primarily for OD and Change academics and experienced practitioners interested in OD theory and history.

[Organizational Discourse and New OD Practices 2008](#)

This article proposes that the field of organizational discourse studies offers supportive, interpretivist, concepts and research to OD practices that are based more on constructionist, post-modern and new sciences premises than the assumptions of the early founders. It's written for OD and Organizational Discourse academics and experienced practitioners interested in OD theory and history.

[Emerging Directions: Is There a New OD? 2006](#)

This chapter from *Organization Development: A Jossey-Bass Reader* anticipates Dialogic OD by reviewing how beliefs and practices based on philosophical assumptions and methodologies different from foundational premises suggest the beginning of a New OD. It's written for experienced OD practitioners and academics interested in OD theory and history.

[When is Appreciative Inquiry Transformational? A Meta-Case Analysis 2005](#)

This analysis of all cases of AI published before 2002 identified which resulted in transformational versus incremental change and then looked for what made the difference. Three variables were found to strongly be associated with transformation: the use of a generative image, the emergence of new ideas, and an emergent (versus implementation) approach to creating change. A foundational study in the evolution of Dialogic OD.

[Changing the Language of Change 2002](#)

This article proposes that our conventional language about organizational change includes implicit assumptions that may not be relevant in a world of complexity and continual change; and calls for rethinking an over-reliance on implicit mechanistic, engineering or planned movement language. It's written for discursive and dialogic academics and experienced practitioners interested in organizational change.

[A Discourse on Discourse: Redeeming the Meaning of Talk 1998](#)

This chapter from *Organizational Discourse* provides a constructionist discussion of how “talk” creates social reality and containers of meaning and therefore is a form of action. Originally given as a keynote address at an academic conference on organizational discourse, it is intended for discursive and dialogic academics and theory-oriented practitioners.