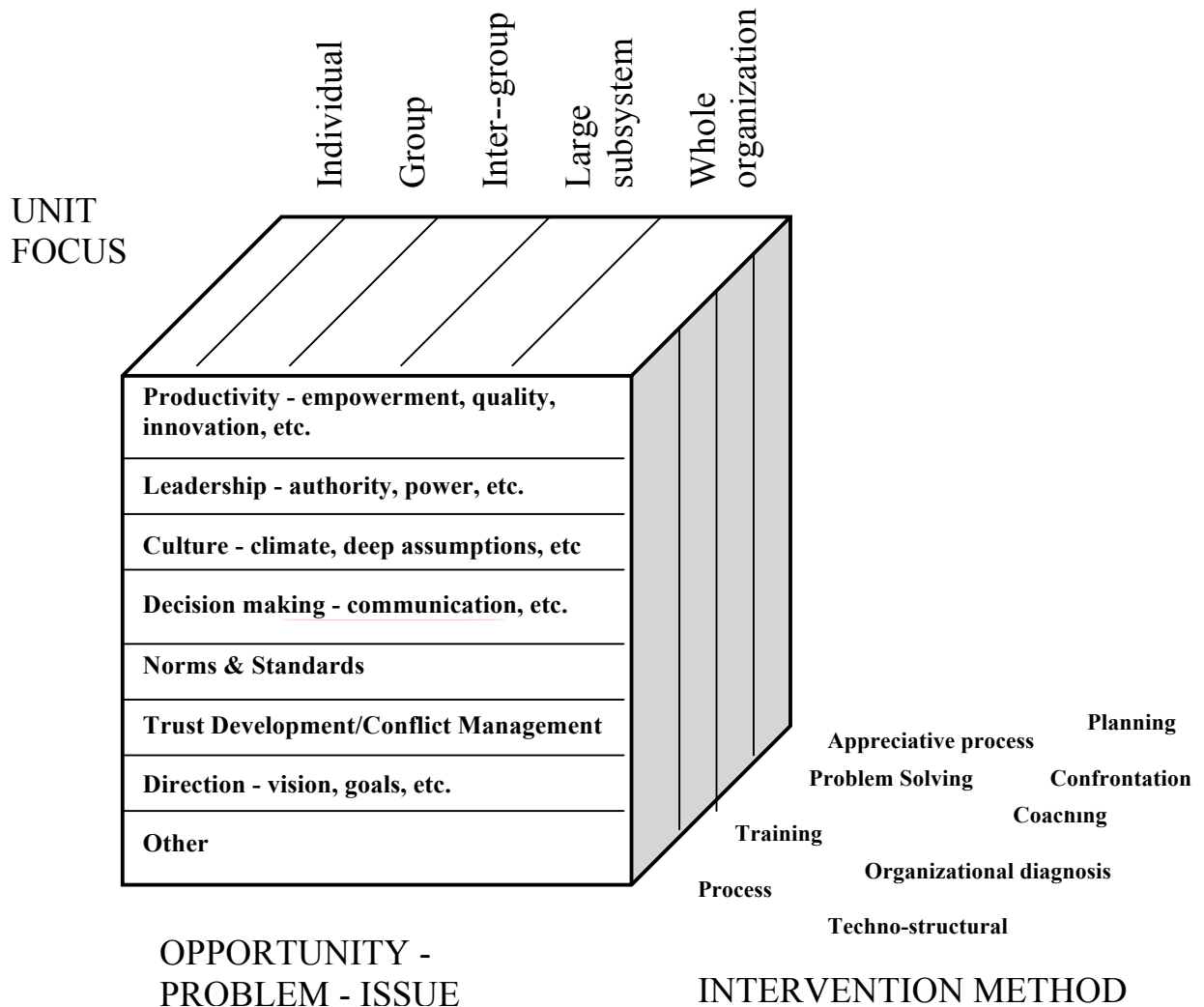# Intervention Choices

OD practitioners are constantly making choices about interventions. Who to involve - just the leadership, a working group, everyone in the organization? What to focus on - the issue it would be easiest to make headway on or the most strategic opportunity? The style of work - do we take a problem solving approach or use some appreciative process? How deep shall we go - are we working on deep underlying assumptions about how we work and relate with one another or are we simply trying to get this problem behind us?

Various cube models have been used to understand the range of intervention options. Here's an example.

UNIT FOCUS

Individual · Group · Inter–group · Large subsystem · Whole organization

- Productivity - empowerment, quality, innovation, etc.
- Leadership - authority, power, etc.
- Culture - climate, deep assumptions, etc
- Decision making - communication, etc.
- Norms & Standards
- Trust Development/Conflict Management
- Direction - vision, goals, etc.
- Other

OPPORTUNITY - PROBLEM - ISSUE

INTERVENTION METHOD

Planning · Appreciative process · Problem Solving · Confrontation · Coaching · Training · Organizational diagnosis · Process · Techno-structural

The use of a cube model is more to get perspective on your approach to interventions than it is as a planning tool. The model can help practitioners:

• Identify if they are using too narrow a range of interventions; suggesting they may need to expand their range. The concern here is that the practitioner may be relying on just a few familiar methods whether or not those methods fit the need.

- Clarify areas where they are especially gifted. It allows the practitioner to put a name to it, e.g., "I'm especially good at helping leaders develop strategies for marketing, culture change, etc."
- As a scanning tool when they are seeking a different approach in a particular case. It may stimulate thinking about options.

Other forms of the cube model
- Robert Blake and Jane Mouton developed the "Consulcube" which has three dimensions and 100 cells of possible interventions. They look at 1. What the consultant does (e.g., catalytic, confrontation, etc.); 2. The focal issues (e.g., power/authority, goals/objectives, etc.); and 3. The unit of change (e.g., individual, group, etc.)
- "The OD Cube: A Scheme for Classifying OD Interventions" is the creation of R. Schmuck and M. Mills. They especially used it in relation to work with schools.

Interventions
- All interventions will come within some form of the process of planned change (e.g., diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation).
- There are a number of standard interventions in the field. Here are a few examples:

| **With Individuals** | - T-group |
	- Training & education to increase skills and knowledge related to the person's assigned task, relationships, decision-making, etc.
	- Coaching, counseling
	- Career/Life Planning
With Groups	- Team building
	- Process consultation
	- Self-managing teams
	- Role negotiation
	- Action planning
	- Skill training
Inter-group	- Mirroring
	- Process consultation
	- Conflict management
With the Total Organization	- Visioning; Strategic planning
	- Appreciative Inquiry
	- Quality of Work Life programs
	- Physical settings
	- Training
	- Parallel structures
	- Techo-structural
	- Employee/member involvement
	- Organizational learning

Practitioner Competency for Interventions

- The practitioner needs the capacity to identify when an intervention fits the situation and to implement it competently. It is also essential that the practitioner have the skills to modify standard interventions, and to create new interventions, appropriate to the need. Just using "off the shelf" interventions will prove to be inadequate. Training in design skills and intervention theory will provide two of the building blocks for developing interventions.
- The broader issue is that of the competencies needed to design and implement effective interventions. I'd suggest four areas of need:

1. Self-awareness	This includes an awareness of: the impact of their behavior on others, their communication styles, how they deal with differences and resistance, openness, authenticity, etc.
2. Theory	Practitioners need a theory base in group development, systems, interventions, etc.
3. Methods - Structured Activities	Small & large group processes; instrumentation; survey feedback, etc.
4. Skills	The ability to give & receive feedback; group facilitation skills; design skills, observing, listening, presentation skills, etc.
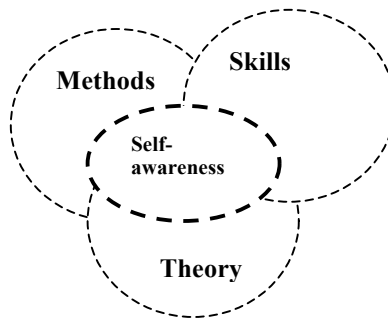
Making effective interventions is a complex process involving organizational purposes and needs, the organization's culture, and the competencies and values of leaders and consultants. The practitioner's awareness of the intervention possibilities is dependent on the depth and broadness of her or his competency.