



# International Society for Organization Development and Change

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NEWSLETTER

January 2016



## In This Issue

From the Editors...	3
Holacracy: a 21st Century Way of Organizing   M Bremer	5
An Introduction to Teams   J Renlund	5
Defining the End in the Beginning: The Power of the First Question   L Godwin	6
The Ability to Right This Ship is Going to be a Test for Mankind   T Marks	6
Clear Leadership Conference with Gervase Bushe	7
Save the Date – Upcoming Conference	8
Call for Papers and Articles The <i>OD Journal</i> Special Issue	9

## From the Editors...



We would like to start by wishing everyone a very Happy New Year! Now that the holiday season is behind us, we hope that you have had a wonderful beginning to 2016 and are motivated to achieve any new goals or resolutions you have set for yourself this year. 2016 is shaping up to be a sweet and exciting year for ISODC!

In the spirit of renewal, please invite a friend or colleague or a corporate entity to join our dynamic organization. We want to infuse our membership with new people and ideas! If each of us brings on one new member, we will have many new colleagues to collaborate with!

In this issue, Marcella Bremer's article entitled "*Holacracy: a 21<sup>st</sup> Century way of organizing*" discusses the origin and broadening appeal of Holacracy as business operating system for organizing. The article explores the case of Ruben Timmerman and his company Springest to help describe how Holacracy can be adopted and applied by a diverse array of companies worldwide.

James Renlund launches his series related to teams, with the article titled "*An Introduction to Teams*" wherein the difficulty to provide a uniform definition of a team is contemplated. In this article, some thought-provoking questions are posed in an effort to clarify what makes a team, indeed a team. Additionally, a preview is offered of the next article in the series regarding teamwork.

Dr. Lindsey N. Godwin offers an insightful view into organizational change in the article "*Defining the End in the Beginning: The Power of the First Question*". This article considers the importance of asking the right questions from the onset when instigating change and concentrating on the positive aspects of what is desired to create more of, not be reduced via change initiatives.

Terri Marks' article titled, "*The ability to right this ship is going to be a test for mankind,*" gives a review of Dr. Susan Mohrman's inspirational talk at last Fall's Benedictine Lecture Series. The talk focused on stewardship, sustainability, dwindling resources, overpopulation and human rights, among other things. She also previewed her new book, *Corporate Stewardship: Accelerating Fundamental Organizational Evolution*.

Reminders: A great deal is being given to ISODC members only on the Leadership and Change magazine by our friend Marcella Bremer. The half price deal, found at the end of her article, is only good until the end of January, so you need to act fast! The Clear Leadership Course with Gervase Bushe is next month in Vancouver for those who are interested (see inside newsletter for more information).

Save the Date: for the Hawaii, Pacific & Global Breadfruit Summit in Partnership with ISODC this coming August 27 - 31, 2016 at the Turtle Bay Resort on the North Shore of Oahu. This conference will be a



truly International conference with the closing to be with Dwayne Johnson/ aka. The Rock/ aka. Seiuili.  
This is a conference not to miss!

Additionally, if you would like to provide any suggestions for upcoming webinars, please feel free to contact myself or Kimberley via email. Our aim is to provide webinars that are both interesting and valuable to our members, so we would look forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas.

As a reminder, we still have a call for papers with the deadline of April 10, 2016. The topic is on *Lessons Learned from Failure*. If you would like to participate please go to [www.isodc.org](http://www.isodc.org) for more details, we hope that you will consider making a submission!

We are always wanting to hear from you on the work you are doing both for newsletter articles (email [cezbo@hotmail.com](mailto:cezbo@hotmail.com) and [kimbarker@gmail.com](mailto:kimbarker@gmail.com)) and for the Organization Development Journal ([www.isodc.org](http://www.isodc.org) in the members' only section). Please share what we are doing with a friend and invite them to join our growing and vibrant organization by going to [www.isodc.org](http://www.isodc.org)!

Cheers,

Kimberley Barker and Rebecca Minor

## Holacracy: a 21st Century Way of Organizing

Ruben Timmerman shares the case of his company Springest

By Marcella Bremer

“What are the painful challenges of organizational life?” asks Brian Robertson, an American entrepreneur, to many audiences. The answers: Silos, lack of trust, lack of decision making, politics, bureaucracy, communication issues, overwhelm, difficulty with change, rigidity and more... “Everywhere in the world, I hear these same answers all the time. Big, small, profit or not-for-profit organizations suffer from this. I find this fascinating. Why haven’t we solved this yet? Think of the human and economic cost!” says Robertson passionately. “Organizations are designed to produce these painful results; the power structure itself creates these unintended consequences.”

It was 2001 when Robertson decided there must be a better way of running a company. “Order doesn’t require a boss.” He used his own company as a laboratory and built and crafted “Holacracy” – after years of trial and error. Since 2007 Robertson spreads this organizational system all over the world, supporting organizations to implement it and selling the software to smoothly run Holacracy. Now that famous companies such as Zappos have adopted it, the method is becoming better known.

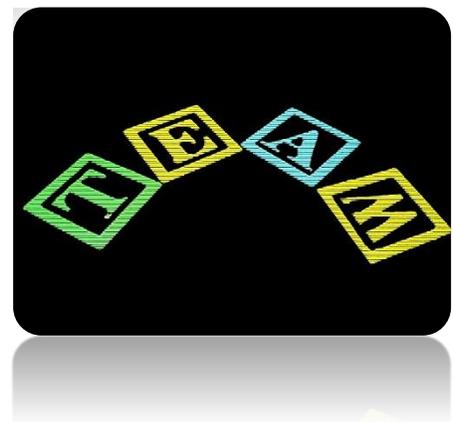
[READ THE ENTIRE ARTICLE](#)

## An Introduction to Teams

By James Renlund

Welcome! This is the first article in a series that explores teams, teams<sup>1</sup> research and their place within organizations. In the spirit of Mohrman and Lawler’s *Useful Purpose: Advancing Theory and Practice* (2011); this series sets out to actively engage, explore, debate and learn about teams. The articles in the series may have an academic flavor, but they are not meant for publication. Instead, the intention is to create a thoughtful and purposeful place for dialogue that engages the ISODC community in developing new ideas and practices for teams research.

[READ THE ENTIRE ARTICLE](#)



## Defining the End in the Beginning: The Power of the First Question

By Dr. Lindsey N. Godwin



What if I told you that the questions we ask in organizations are fateful? Our inquiries and organizational outcomes are eternally entwined. Our questions not only shape, they truly determine what we find. Leaning into this idea, I invite you to begin your next organizational change process by asking the initial question, “What do we want to *create* here?” Notice the verb in that question. It is not “find,” or “fix,” it is “create.” This may seem like trivial linguistic

nuance, but it is actually much, much more than that. It represents a fundamental shift in how we approach organizational change.

Bringing the postulates of quantum physics, we now know to be true to bear on our organizational systems— that the measuring particle A actually brings into being particle B— we must realize that the focus of our inquiry serves to not only shine a spotlight on existing organizational dynamics, it actually brings them into being.

[READ THE ENTIRE ARTICLE](#)

## The Ability to Right This Ship is Going to be a Test for Mankind - Dr. Susan A. Mohrman

By Terri Marks



I had the opportunity to attend the Fall Lecture Series at Benedictine University this past October. The guest speaker was Dr. Susan A. Mohrman and her lecture was entitled *Corporate Stewardship: Accelerating Fundamental Organizational Evolution*. This lecture was timely, inspiring and informative because the topic was relevant to the current state of affairs we (both locally and globally) find ourselves in. This article will briefly summarize the key points of her lecture and from a chapter she wrote with

James O’Toole and Edward E. in the new book called *Corporate Stewardship: Achieving Sustainable Effectiveness*.

[READ THE ENTIRE ARTICLE](#)

## Clear Leadership Conference with Gervase Bushe



Don't miss this rare opportunity to take the highly rated Clear Leadership course with its creator, Dr. Gervase Bushe, professor, consultant and author of *Clear Leadership: Sustaining Collaboration and Partnership at Work* (Davies-Black, 2009).

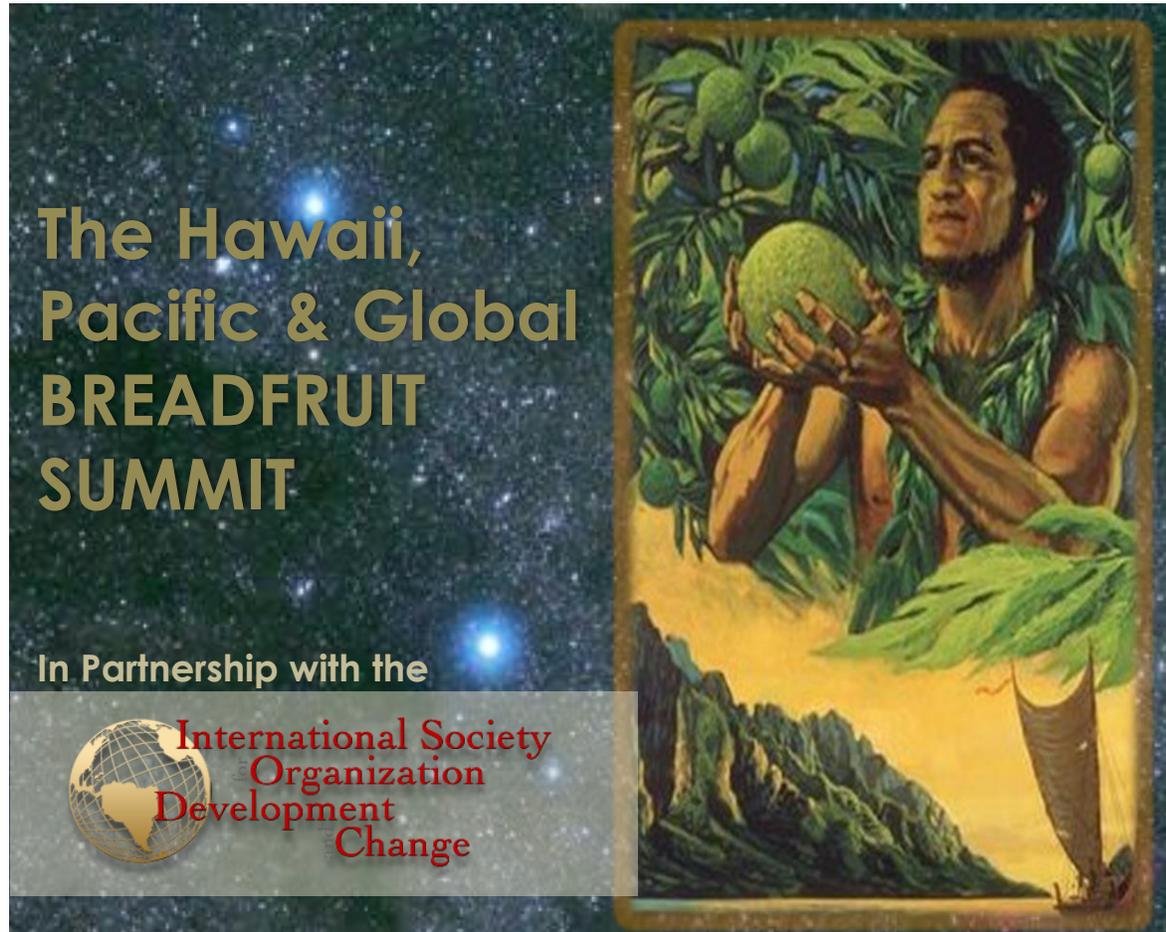
**February 23-26, 2016**

**Vancouver – Canadian Memorial Church**

To Register send an email to [info@clearlearning.ca](mailto:info@clearlearning.ca)

[CLICK HERE FOR BROCHURE](#)

## Save the Date – Upcoming Conference



**The Hawaii,  
Pacific & Global  
BREADFRUIT  
SUMMIT**

In Partnership with the

 International Society  
for Organization  
Development  
Change

## Save the Date:

**August 27-31, 2016**

**Turtle Bay Resort on the North Shore of Oahu.**

Keynote theme: Breadfruit, food for thought. Expanding appreciation for the cultural & spiritual significance of the Ulu (breadfruit) in Hawaii and the Pacific - Traditional Wisdom affirmed by modern science and knowledge. *We are creating a context where profit is not defined exclusively in economic terms, but expanded to also include caring for the environment, our elders and children, improving the health of mother earth and creating a better world.*



## Call for Papers and Articles

### The *OD Journal* Special Issue

*“Lessons Learned from Failure” in OD projects.*

Anticipated publication date: October, 2016.

**That may seem like a long time off, but the process of getting the journal out is a long one.**

The OD profession has a long and enviable history of helping organizations and individuals deal with change. However, OD projects sometimes don't go as well as planned, or achieve the hoped for outcomes the consultant and the client system anticipated. Some question whether the OD profession is failure-phobic? Does the OD profession ignore failures?

Here is an opportunity for you to analyze an OD project failure in which you may have been involved, and share some lessons learned from the experience.

We are seeking submissions from OD practitioners and from academics. Paper topics may address any of the following questions:

- What factors in the OD process tend to contribute to failed projects and how to avoid them?
- How can failed OD projects inform future action for consultants and clients?
- What assumptions at the entry and contracting stage of an OD process may have contributed to a less than desirable outcome, and how to avoid them in the future?
- What part does billing and other contract misunderstandings play in the failure of an OD project?
- How does “scope creep” contribute to the failure of the OD project?

Papers examining topics of a similar nature are also welcomed and will be considered. Papers should be 3,500 to 7,000 words long and must meet the criteria of the OD Journal Guidelines for Publication. Prospective authors should consult with the Guest Editor to discuss proposals for submission. Prospective authors may also submit a brief proposal for consideration, prior to full submission. Authors of similar proposals may be offered the opportunity to co-author.

**The deadline for submission of an article is August 1, 2016.**

For any questions and to submit your proposal, please contact:  
Roland Livingston at [rolandel16@yahoo.com](mailto:rolandel16@yahoo.com).

## **Be Sure to Look for Our Next OD Journal Special Edition**

*Developing Culturally Adaptive Leaders for Turbulent Times*

*Coming in February 2016*