



# Organisational Development

OD is a planned, evidence-based approach to improving an organisation's effectiveness and the experience of the people within it. Drawing on behavioural science, OD practitioners work with organisations as living, interconnected systems: diagnosing what is really happening, designing interventions grounded in theory and evidence, and working alongside leaders, teams, and people to enable lasting change. OD focuses on the whole system including culture, capability, leadership, change, and the conditions that allow people and organisations to thrive together.

## WHAT ACTIVITY LOOKS LIKE

- Culture and values work: diagnosing the current culture and designing interventions to close the gap with the desired future state.
- Change and transformation: supporting people through restructures, mergers, and strategic pivots.
- Leadership development: building capability through coaching, action learning, and peer development.
- Team effectiveness: facilitating team diagnostics, away days, and team coaching.
- Staff experience and engagement: designing listening programmes and acting on survey data.
- Talent and succession: identifying and developing future leaders and critical capability.
- Learning strategy: designing ecosystems that build individual and organisational capability over time.

## RESOURCES TO HELP

- [CIPD](#): Profession Map, OD&D specialist knowledge, research and guidance.
- [OD Network](#): global practitioner community, events and resources.
- [The OD App](#): global OD competency framework and practitioner resources.
- [AIHR](#): OD research and practitioner guides.
- [Avant People](#): OD practitioner self-assessment and tools.
- [Distinction Consulting](#): OD consultancy, resources & insights.

## DEVELOPING OD PRACTICE

There is no single mandatory qualification for OD practice. Most practitioners build expertise through a combination of formal study, practitioner programmes, and supervised experience:

- [CIPD Level 7 Advanced Diploma](#) in Strategic People Management: covers OD and change as a specialism.
- [Roffey Park OD Practitioner Programme](#) and their Making Sense of OD research guide.
- [NHS Leadership Academy](#) OD practitioner development programmes.
- MA/MSc in OD, Change, or Behaviour from UK universities including Birkbeck and Brighton.
- [NTL Institute](#): internationally recognised applied behavioural science programmes.

## OD ACROSS SECTORS

### PUBLIC SECTOR

In the NHS, local authorities, and central government, OD supports workforce strategies, staff survey action planning, and large-scale transformation. NHS organisations draw on the People Promise, People Plan, and equality standards including WRES and WDES.

### THIRD SECTOR

In charities, housing associations, and social enterprises, OD focuses on values alignment, staff engagement, and building resilient, mission-driven cultures.



Are you an OD practitioner? Explore and assess your skills using the OD Practitioner Self-Assessment at [avantpeople.co.uk/resources](https://avantpeople.co.uk/resources)