The subject of organizational learning came to academic attention in 1978 when Chris Argyris and Donald Schon published *Organizational Learning: A Theory of Action Perspective*. Schon followed with the *Reflective Practitioner*, which evoked considerable interest among practitioners in the field. The momentum that was building during the following ten years culminated with the publication of Peter Senge's widely read *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. Since then, hundreds of articles and books have announced the birth of a new discipline, expanded public awareness of it, and motivated a significant number of corporations, nonprofits, and governmental agencies to set forth on the path to becoming a learning organization.

Conventional organizations are locked into a rigid view of their methods and goals. They attend only to a narrow range of experience and feedback, and encourage their managers to make only those changes that fit the current structure. Consequently, the conventional organization merely adapts or reacts to change. In contrast, the learning organization anticipates the future and strives to create new services and products before others are able to perceive those needs. They are flexible, open to new ideas, and willing to innovate because they are intensely reflexive. In other words, they discover organizational excellence by continuously rethinking what they do, how they do it, and how they might do it better.
The categorization of organizations into conventional and learning is for conceptualizing purposes only and is artificial. Few will fit into either exclusively. Many organizations have elements of both.

*Organization Development Practices* is designed to focus on both micro and macro aspects of organizational change from a managerial and consulting point of view. Using experiential learning approaches (primarily simulations) one half of the course will deal with micro issues such as motivation, leadership, decision-making, and consulting skills. Further, just as in a laboratory, you will have opportunities to experiment with, observe, and experience the relevance of several constructs related to organization development and develop critical thinking about them.

The other half of the course will focus on developing the skills needed for organizational analysis, design, and change using one of the two inter-related methodologies, *appreciative inquiry (AI)*, and *appreciative sharing of knowledge (ASK)*. Students will work in small teams with the goal of learning to function as consultants to a selected list of organizations. The anticipation is that through the project work you will acquire the competencies for diagnosing and analyzing organizations and for becoming skillful facilitators (change agents) of organization development.

**Course requirements and evaluation**

1. **Personal Reflection and Application Essay (PRAE): Analysis of an organizational systems simulation**

   Personal Reflection and Application Essays (PRAE) are assignments that integrate theory and practice. Following Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, a PRAE should have four components: *concrete experience* (CE), *reflective observation* (RO), *abstract conceptualization* (AC), and *active experimentation* (AE). The PRAE should be written based on your experiences in an organizational systems simulation (*Virginia Greetings Corp.*) that we will do in class on Saturday, February 14, its debriefing, and readings from the textbooks. The CE should be a detailed description of the class simulation experience. In RO, you should reflect on the experience from different perspectives. AC will be the place to theorize or conceptualize the simulation experience based on readings, some of which will be discussed in class. AE will be your opportunity to suggest what you will do differently in a comparable situation in the future and at your workplace.

   The PRAE should be about twenty or more double spaced pages. **Please read carefully the PRAE checklist before you start working on your assignment.** It should be self-scored and attached to your assignment. The citations in your PRAE should not have been used in any of your previous PRAE or any other assignment in SPGIA or ODKM courses.
2. Organizational Analysis and Presentation

(a) Organizational Analysis

Using the appreciative inquiry or appreciative sharing of knowledge (ASK) model each team will analyze an organization. You should choose an organization which will grant you reasonable access; that is, you can go see it, talk to people, and ask questions. It may be your place of work, other affiliations such as a nonprofit organization, or any other organizational entity that has enough structure and dynamics for analysis (at least a medium size organization of over 200 people).

After your group has collected data and analyzed them, please submit a written report that describes your assessment of the organization. It should include a short description of the model, the methods with which you collected data, your conclusions, and recommendations. This paper, about thirty-five pages in length, should be delivered both in electronic and paper format. In addition, it should contain the interview transcripts as appendix (which will not count toward the page limit). The report will be graded based on the criteria outlined at the end of this syllabus.

Due dates: Thursday, February 5 for a one-page description of your proposal emailed to thatchen@gmu.edu and Friday, May 8 for the final paper (electronic and paper copy required).

(b) Organizational Analysis Presentation

Each team will present their organizational analysis including recommendations/interventions to the entire class. An electronic copy of your presentation should be sent to thatchen@gmu.edu before the last day of class. Ideally, all group members should participate in the presentation. Teams are encouraged to be creative in designing their presentations such as using role-play and skits.

The presentations will be graded both by the instructor and the class. Richness and depth of analysis, organization of the presentation, and the degree of audience involvement will be used as criteria for evaluation.

Presentation date: Saturday, April 25
3. Attendance and participation

You are expected to take an active part in class discussions and group projects. Full attendance for all classes is required. In addition, you are expected to meet with your team members outside of class time and contribute to the project work. This includes collecting data from the chosen organization by doing interviews, analyzing them, writing an organizational analysis report, and presenting it to the class.

Class participation requires your full attention to what is being discussed and shared by the professor and your classmates during class. You should not bring a laptop or tablet to this class. Use of devices such as iPad, iPhone, and Blackberry is not permitted during class. You are encouraged to take notes using paper and pen.

Since experiential exercises, simulations, and class discussions constitute the major part of this course, missing classes will significantly reduce the learning you may derive from this class. You will lose grade points for coming late (including after breaks), or leaving early from class. According to ODKM policy you cannot miss more than one class and still receive credit for the course. You also cannot miss the class on February 14 and still receive a passing grade (since the PRAE will be based on the experiences of the simulation that day).

Evaluation:
The distribution of points will be as follows:

- Analysis of Virginia Greetings Corp simulation (PRAE) 30%
- Organizational analysis paper (group assignment) 35%
- Class evaluation of organizational analysis presentation 10%
- Attendance and participation
  - Team evaluation* 10%
  - Instructor evaluation** 15%

* Team evaluation will be based on members’ participation and contribution to the organizational analysis project and presentation.

** Instructor evaluation will be based on attendance and contribution to class discussions and organizational analysis project.
The following scale will be used to determine your grade out of a total of 100 points.

- 97-100 = A+
- 93 - 96.99 = A
- 90 - 92.99 = A-
- 86 - 89.99 = B+
- 83 - 85.99 = B
- 80- 82.99 = B-
- 70 - 79.99 = C
- 69.99 and below = F

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

**GMU & SPGIA Policy on plagiarism**

[http://oai.gmu.edu/understanding-the-honor-code/](http://oai.gmu.edu/understanding-the-honor-code/)

The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of education. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable.

Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas presented as one’s own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another’s work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources are essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one’s professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

The faculty of the School of Policy, Government, & International Affairs takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of "F." This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the university. This dismissal will be noted on the student’s transcript. For foreign students who are on a university-sponsored visa (e.g. F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.

To help enforce the SPGIA policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the
School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student’s work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The SPGIA policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it.

You must cite each time you reuse any of your own work indicating all previous uses you have made of the same work. Using the same citations (readings) from other assignments written for any other professor should be acknowledged (Please see additional restrictions in the PRAE checklist).

**Required Texts:**


**Suggested Readings:**


**Course Outline**

**Session 1: Friday, January 23, 5:00 -10:00 P.M.**

**Agenda**
- Overview of the course
- Course objectives
- The concept of the laboratory
- Managing expectations
- Introduction to appreciative inquiry

**Session 2: Saturday, January 24, 9:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.**

**Agenda**
- Appreciative inquiry and ASK workshop
- Data collection methods
Organizational analysis models

Preparation for Virginia Greetings Corporation simulation scheduled for Saturday, February 14. Participant Manual will be handed out at the end of class as well as assigning some roles.

**Read after class**
- Thatchenkery text pp.13-107
- Burke text chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-70)

**Session 3: Saturday February, 14, 9:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.**

**Read before class**
- Burke text chapters 8-10 (pp. 157-230)
- Simulation participant manual (full knowledge of all roles is required for participation in the simulation, except for the guests).

**Agenda**

*Virginia Greeting Corporation* simulation

The simulation will start at 9:00 A.M. Please arrive by 8:45 A.M to get settled into your roles in FH 125 & 126. Your PRAE will be based on this simulation. If you miss this day, you will not get a passing grade in the course.

**Session 4: Friday March 6, 5:00 - 10:00 P.M.**

**Read before class**
- Burke text chapters 5-7 (pp. 73-156)

**Agenda**

Writing possibility propositions: The mechanics and various options
The power of self-fulfilling prophecies
Ladder of inference exercise

**Session 5: Friday, March 27, 5:00 – 10:00 P.M.**

**Read before class**
- Burke chapters 11-14 (pp. 231-329)

**Agenda**

Understanding team dynamics
Discovering common ground exercise
Issues involved in designing and delivering simulations and role-play
Appreciative Intelligence, feedback, & motivating others
Appreciative Performance Improvement by Relationship Management (AFFIRM) Simulation

Session 6: Saturday, April 25, 9:00 AM. – 6:00 P.M.

Agenda

Organizational analysis group presentations
Future work
Course wrap-up
Team and course evaluation

Special note: The AI/ASK project is an extremely demanding and engaging project. As you spend a significant amount of time on the project, you may begin to think that if you do well in the project, you will get an A in the course. You may be the sponsor of the project (your organization as client) or the team coordinator spending time for the project. However, if you do not do well in the PRAE you will not get an A in the course. In the past, AI/ASK projects have received points between 30 and 35 out of 35. Team and class evaluations each have ranged from 6 to 10 out of 10 while instructor evaluations have been between 12 and 15 out of 15. Thus, even if you get 26 out of 30 in your PRAE you may not receive an A in the course. Working hard on the team project will not guarantee an A. You should do well in your PRAE too since 30 out of the 100 points are reserved for the PRAE.
OUTLINE AND GRADING CRITERIA FOR ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS PAPER

Each group should self-score this and attach to the report.

One page executive summary

Introduction
Objective of the analysis

Description of the model. 4-5 pages. 4 g.p (grade point). “Model” denotes Appreciative Inquiry, ASK, or any other model you have used.

Description of the organization chosen for analysis (Its size, nature of core task, history, etc.,) 2-3 pages. 2 g.p

Methodology

Data collect devices/ instruments
What techniques were used to collect data (Interview, questionnaire, observation)? How did you construct the instrument? Attach samples with the report. 1-2 pages. 2 g.p

Size of the sample (n), and sampling
How many people were interviewed in the study? What was your rationale for deciding on this size? What kinds of sampling techniques were used (Random, purposive, judgmental, accidental)? What was the rationale for the type of sampling used? 1-2 pages. 2 g.p

Data Collection
Describe how the data were actually collected. How many visits were made to the site? How many of you were involved in that process? *(Everyone in a group must have done at least four face-to-face interviews in the client organization in order to receive a passing grade).* High points? Surprises? Disappointments? 2-4 pages. 2 g.p

Results

Describe how the data were analyzed and your findings. For example, ---- % of respondents said X. ---- % of the responses from the interview data pertained to the theme of Y. Employees from division A and B differed in -----. In other words, use whatever quantitative measures you are familiar with to illustrate and analyze data. 3-5 pages. 3 g.p.
Interpretation and Discussion (this section is similar to the AC of a PRAE)
Give meaning to your results and numbers. Relate the findings to the organizational analysis model such as appreciative inquiry or ASK. Make sure readings are extensively used in this section. Some form of conceptualization or theorizing based on your analysis is expected here. 10-12 pages. 10 g.p

Recommendations
Assuming you were consultants, what kinds of interventions, if any, will you recommend to the organization? Make sure they are specific and supported by the data analysis. Keep in mind the distinction between pragmatic, acceptable interventions and ideal interventions. How do you propose to overcome the "resistance to change"? (Note: The “possibility propositions” section of appreciative inquiry or ASK model may support this section) 5-7 pages. 3 g.p

Implications
What are the implications of your analysis and recommendations (to the organization)? 2-3 pages. 1 g.p

Conclusions
Summarize your conclusions. 1 page. 1 g.p.

Overall grading criteria
1. Richness of description (and quality of written work)
Will a reader not familiar with the organization get a clear picture of what you have done? Your ability to use language (narratives) effectively in portraying the organizational reality will be assessed here. 2 g.p

2. Depth of analysis (and command of theory)
Overall, how well have you used theories and readings especially in the discussion and interpretation section? What is the quality of your analysis?

Superficial, simplistic, cursory _____ 0 g.p

Extensive and insightful use of data, theories, and reading _____ 3 g.p

Total = 35 g.p

Document format: 1 ½ space, 1.00” margin on all sides, & 12 font size
**ODKM 735 SPRING 2015**
**GRADING CRITERIA AND CHECK LIST FOR ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS PRESENTATION**

Please fill this out on April 25 after each class presentation.
(This is a confidential evaluation. You need not write your name anywhere.)

Group Number/ Name/ Organization studied: ___________________ : Date ____________

1. **Richness of description:** Did you get a good sense of the culture of the organization during the presentation?

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2. **Depth of analysis:** Did the presentation provide you with new insights regarding the use of AI/ASK for organizational analysis or as a consulting approach?

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3. **Organization of presentation material:** Did you get a good sense of what the group had done in this project (such as how they have collected data and analyzed them, sharing matrices one & two, and the future present scenarios (FPS) or possibility propositions (PP), if they had done them)?

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4. **Audience involvement:** Degree to which the presenters sought your involvement, reactions, or feedback during or after the presentation.

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Total points (maximum 10; Add your scores from #1 to 4 above and divide by two) = 

5. Write here any other feedback you may have for the group using the following format:

What your group has done well are ..........................................................

What your group could do differently are ................................................
ODKM 735 SPRING 2015
Confidential team evaluation: 1 of 2
Please fill this out and email to me after your group has written the organizational analysis report.

Write your name and the names of all teammates. The evaluation is confidential. Only I (the professor) will see the rating. Please assign participation/evaluation points ranging from 1 to 10 (10 being the highest) for each category in the table.

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<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Self (you) Name:</th>
<th>Person A Name:</th>
<th>Person B Name:</th>
<th>Person C Name:</th>
<th>Person D Name:</th>
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<td>Participation in data collection</td>
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<td>Participation in data Analysis</td>
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<td>Participation in writing the final report</td>
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<td>Participation in group presentation/preparation</td>
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<td>Willingness to carry out assigned tasks</td>
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<td>Ability to meet deadlines</td>
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<td>Cooperation with other team members</td>
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<td>Quality of the individual’s work</td>
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<td>Overall contribution to the project</td>
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Use the other side for confidential comments regarding your or team member participation, if any.
Do this after your group has written the organizational analysis report. Please meet as a group after you have written the report, discuss each person’s contribution, and come to a consensus. If you are uncomfortable with this peer evaluation activity for any reason, you may not do it. Only one form per group will be accepted. (Due 9:00 PM, Friday, May 8. Please scan your copy and email to me).

Please indicate the % of the group grade that each group member should receive. For example, if a group member is allocated 90% of group grade, and the group receives 30 out of the 35 points, that group member will receive 27 points (90% of 30). No member may receive more than 100% of the group grade.

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>% Group grade</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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<tr>
<td>Person A</td>
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<td>Comments by Person A and rest of the group members</td>
<td>Signature of each member of the group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Person B</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments by Person B and rest of the group members</td>
<td>Signature of each member of the group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Person C</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments by Person C and rest of the group members</td>
<td>Signature of each member of the group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Person D</td>
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<td>Comments by Person D and rest of the group members</td>
<td>Signature of each member of the group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Person E</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments by Person E and rest of the group members</td>
<td>Signature of each member of the group</td>
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ODKM 735 SPRING 2015
Organization Development Practices
Personal Reflection and Application Essay (PRAE)
Grading Criteria-Based Checklist

Due date: 5:00 PM EST, Tuesday, March 17. Only an electronic copy is needed.

Instructions: Please circle appropriate choices and attach to your assignment. A PRAE submitted without the checklist will not be graded. Please note that once submitted this assignment is final and you cannot ask for a rewrite any reason.

Concrete Experience: (6 points)

Does the paper contain an objective, thorough description of what happened in the Virginia Greeting simulation at three levels- individual, group (division) and organizational? (Narrate what happened without your interpretations. The focus should be on data and not on analysis.)

To a great extent Somewhat Only minimally

Does the paper contain a subjective description of my feelings, perceptions and thoughts regarding what happened during the simulation? (Share what you felt during the simulation. No justification or exploration of your feelings is needed at this stage)

To a great extent Somewhat Only minimally

Have I captured enough (CE) of what happened outside of my division to understand the whole system dynamics instead of just my role?

To a great extent Somewhat Only minimally

Have I used production data that were supplied by QC soon after the simulation?

To a great extent Somewhat Only minimally

Most common challenges observed:
1) Not writing about your feelings
2) Skipping important details
3) Writing too much about others and little about self.
4) Writing only about what happened in your division
**Reflective Observation: (6 points)**

Have I reflected on the simulation at three levels, -individual, group, and organizational?

To a great extent  Somewhat  Only minimally

Have I raised questions from a systems perspective?

To a great extent  Somewhat  Only minimally

Have I examined the simulation from different points view? (In addition to listing your own views consider what other interpretations might be possible, such as those from managers, workers, President of the company, etc).

To a great extent  Somewhat  Only minimally

Have I written about the role I had played and its impact on the outcomes of the simulation? (Write about the impact of what you did before focusing on others’ roles. It is a requirement that you focus on your own actions and feelings before writing about what others should have done).

To a great extent  Somewhat  Only minimally

Do the different perspectives add new meaning to my understanding of the simulation and will that be evident to the reader?

To a great extent  Somewhat  Only minimally

Have I reflected on data outside of my immediate division?

To a great extent  Somewhat  Only minimally

Have I reflected on production data that were given by QC? (Excel file)

To a great extent  Somewhat  Only minimally
Have I filtered my reflections to focus on three organizationally-focused themes for conceptualization in AC? Yes/No

Please list the themes here:
Theme 1.----------------------------------;

Theme 2 ---------------------------------

Theme 3.----------------------------------;

**Most common challenges observed:**
1) Not having multiple perspectives (Listing your personal perspective only)
2) Raising questions or issues without grounding them on data/CE (Examples: Raising questions about norms and power though there is no mention of contributing events in your CE section)
3) Not exploring the nature of your participation for the outcomes of the simulation.
4) Not reflecting on key CE events in the division or in the whole organization
5) Asking/raising plenty of questions but not answering them in AC (applicable in both RO and AC sections)
6) Asking many questions, but they are not based on multiple perspectives. The questions appear to be merely expanding the single perspective.

**Abstract Conceptualization: (12 points)**

Have I related concepts from assigned readings (texts) to the simulation experience?

To a great extent Somewhat Only minimally

In relating concepts/ readings to the experience, have I described what the readings are, or what they signify, instead of merely mentioning the concept, author, or a book?

To a great extent Somewhat Only minimally

In trying to make sense of the experiences, have I used concepts/ readings from Bruke and other sources? You may not use the Group Dynamics text book (Forsyth) to substitute for readings from Burke.

Used Burke and several sources Used Burke only

Did I conceptualize all three themes? Yes/No [Should have at least four different readings for each theme]
Did I devote equal attention to all themes? Yes/No

Have I used any citations (readings) from my past PRAEs or any other assignments from my other ODKM courses? Yes/No.

You cannot use previous citations from other assignment. If you must, please attach a special note explaining the reasons.

**Most common challenges observed:**
1) Not having enough readings
2) Mentioning readings without explication
3) Having AC based on themes that were not evident in CE and/or discussed in RO
4) Writing about theories or using readings without clarifying how they apply or relate to specific CE elements (For example, writing a whole section on theories of norms or power without showing how it applies to a specific experience related to norm or power that you must have mentioned in CE.)
5) Making use the Group Dynamics books (ODKM 705) instead of assigned text books of ODKM 735

Please note that this segment carries 12 of the 30 points of the PRAE. You must use readings/theories extensively to do well in this section. Use Burke and other readings (such as Images of Organizations- Morgan) that you may find to be relevant. Do not just mention readings. Explain what the readings or theories are and show how they apply to your experience.

**Active Experimentation:** (6 points)

Imagine that Virginia Greetings simulation is run again in the class. What specific actions would I take to improve **my** effectiveness in the simulation (individual level)?

How well have I responded to this question?

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<th>To a great extent</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Only minimally</th>
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Imagine this simulation is run again in the class. What specific actions would I take to improve the **overall effectiveness of the simulation** (group and organizational level)?

How well have I responded to this question?

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<th>Only minimally</th>
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Have I described the generalizations I can make from what I have learned from this simulation to my work situation? (If you are not working now, consider a relevant prior work environment)

To a great extent          Somewhat          Only minimally

Are my A.E. plans described specifically and concretely?

To a great extent          Somewhat          Only minimally

Have I written at least one A.E. about each of the three themes that I have discussed in RO and AC section? Yes/No

You must separate your AE section into three parts with the following headings:
AE for theme 1:
AE for theme 2:
AE for theme 3:
Do not combine all themes into one AE. Each theme should have its own separate action items.

**Most common challenges observed:**
1) Not having A.E. for each theme that was developed in RO and AC
2) A.E. looks more like an intention statement than an action step. AE expresses a desire or plan to do something different, but does not state specifically the action component.
3) Coming up with A.E. statements that are not linked to the CE->RO->AC flow
4) Not mentioning the context of application (Where and when will I practice or implement my A.E. steps?)

**Additional issues to consider for this PRAE**

1. Please note the difference between ODKM 705 (Group Dynamics) and ODKM 735 PRAE. In the former, the focus was on self and individual level issues while for the latter it should be on process and organizational and systems-level issues. Therefore, for ODKM 735 PRAE, you should first write about self and then about organizational processes. What you write about the latter should be based on observable data brought to surface in your CE.
2. In AE, students seem to write more about “if I were to do VGC again” and less about application to work environment. Both are needed. Also, writing that the simulation should have been done in a different way, such as over three days, etc., is not considered AE.

3. There has been a tendency to write about what others, especially those in other divisions and what the president should have done. You may do so, but only after you have spent adequate time focusing on you and others in your division.

4. Please remember that “multiple perspectives” require bringing more perspectives to the same data point. Use the “ladder of inference” model discussed in class to help you create multiple perspectives.

5. Writing that next time I will be a manager in the simulation is not considered AE. What would you do differently from the same role/position that you had in the simulation?

6. Please remember that I do not give rewrites for ODKM 735 PRAE. If you pay adequate attention to the instructions, the checklist, and class discussions, you should do well in this assignment.