# 2024 Annual Report
# Organization and Professional Development
*Issued April 2025*

MSU Human Resources

# Executive Summary

We are pleased to present the 2025 Executive Summary for the MSU Human Resources Organization and Professional Development (OPD) Department. This report highlights our achievements, strategic direction, and commitment to equipping leaders with the tools, language, and support necessary for operational efficiency and institutional success.

## Strategic Focus: Aligning Action with Strategy

In 2025, OPD will focus on driving operational efficiency through proactive change management and a new approach to strategic planning. This shift ensures that leaders are responding to change and actively shaping the future by rethinking and replanning work to maximize impact. Our strategic priorities include:

- Change Management as a Leadership Skill – Embedding structured change management into leadership development, ensuring leaders drive transformation rather than react to it.

- Operational Efficiency Through Tools & Processes – Utilizing frameworks, actionable tools, and common language to enhance execution and decision-making across units

- Proactive Strategic Planning – Moving beyond static planning models to dynamic, action-oriented approaches that better align with EVPA and MSU objectives.

- Strengthening the Academic Mission – Supporting the development of leadership capacity across all levels.

## Key Achievements & Progress

Throughout 2024, we made significant strides in professional development, organizational efficiency, and leadership support:

- Learning & Development Expansion – Our redesigned programs, including the New Leader Development Series, resulted in increased participation and measurable performance improvements.

- Strategic Organizational Development – Enhanced process optimization, restructuring efforts, and leader support have strengthened cross-functional collaboration and innovation.

- Skill-Building for Leadership & Inclusion – Training in communication, DEI, and interpersonal relationships provided leaders with essential tools for managing diverse teams effectively.

- Performance Culture Alignment – We emphasized accountability, resilience, and continuous improvement, reinforcing the link between unit strategy, people management, and the MSU 2030 plan.

## The Year Ahead: 2025 & Beyond

As we move into 2025, OPD remains committed to fostering a high-performing, agile, and resilient workforce. We will focus on scaling leadership development, embedding strategic planning into daily operations, and driving efficiency through targeted OD interventions. We will continue to strengthen MSU's ability to adapt, innovate, and lead by rethinking systems and their impact on people and results.

Our Commitment: Enabling Leaders, Driving Change, and Advancing MSU's Mission.

**Sincerely,**
**Sharri Margraves, EdD, SHRM-SCP**
**MSU Human Resources – Organization and Professional Development (OPD)**

# Organization Development in Academic Organizations

## Summary

Organizational Development (OD) is a strategic function that aligns people, processes, and systems to drive operational excellence. By fostering adaptability, efficiency, and continuous improvement, OD plays a pivotal role in helping organizations achieve their mission and sustain long-term success.

Organization and Professional Development (OPD) is comprised of Learning and Development and Organization Development. Services include program management of Performance Excellence for staff and program management for educational assistance and the tuition benefit program for employees.

OD support and services are performed at the request of leaders. The reasons vary from simple strategic planning to more complex reorganization and structuring. A recent client (chair): "They are the partner I didn't know I needed," sums up a common sentiment.

The relationship between OPD and leaders and staff are critical, built through trust and understanding. The stress, vulnerability, and desire for better results and outcomes are real, and it takes a good leader to see the process through. At the end of the day, we want the client to have the skills and abilities to carry forward. We are not an "extra pair of hands" typically, all our work is done mainly through the client's team. 93% of clients would likely utilize our services again.

## How we approach our work:

1. Strategic Alignment

- OD helps leaders ensure changes are effectively implemented by understanding the real problem(s), identifying the gaps, prioritizing and then strategically planning implementation to align action with strategy.

- OD is aware of the many competing forces that can impact the leader, unit and the results.


2. Change Leadership& Agility

- MSU should make the people side of change awareness a top priority. Proactive change and support can improve outcomes. Research shows that 70% of change initiatives fail to meet their stated goals due to poor planning and resistance (Kotter, 2022). OD provides structured methodologies to navigate change successfully.

- By fostering an adaptive culture, OD helps organizations remain resilient in rapidly evolving environments.

- It gets worse before it gets better, staying with a team while they do the heavy lifting of decision making and implementation provides the continuity needed to not bail.

3. Leadership Development

- Strong leadership is a cornerstone of operational excellence. OD helps develop leaders by equipping them with essential skills in strategy execution, team building, and problem-solving. Most often, there is a need to either build or rebuild a leadership team because of organizational changes.

- Our OD business partner model means we work with key staff to help teach and coach them to improve their results and the organization's impact.

- Recognition that MSU is a complex leader environment.

- Recognition that many MSU leaders need support while they build the skills and experience needed to lead and manage in a complex environment.

4. Culture & Employee Engagement

- We start where they're at. Building trust begins with individuals, their roles in the organization, and how they interact with each other.

- Employee engagement is a key driver of productivity and retention, contributing 21% more profitability in highly engaged organizations (Gallup, 2022).

- OD initiatives cultivate a culture of trust, and shared purpose, which enhances collaboration and performance.

5. Operational Efficiency & Process Improvement

- A hallmark of our work is connecting the "dots" for people. We link strategy, action and performance so that the leaders and the employees can better have a sightline between what they are doing and the overarching goals of the institution.

- OD leverages methodologies such as Pro-Sci, Lean, design thinking, strategic planning to eliminate inefficiencies, optimize workflows, and enhance decision-making.

- Cross-functional collaboration, facilitated by OD, strengthens operational processes and fosters innovation. Teaching collaboration has been a hallmark of the sustainability of the changes.

6. Data-Informed Decision Making

- OD employs diagnostics, assessments, and feedback mechanisms to ensure data-driven strategy execution.

- OD utilizes data on the unit such as turnover, number of employees to supervisor, performance excellence.

- Evidence-based decision-making helps organizations focus on high-impact initiatives that drive performance improvements.

7. Balancing High-Level Vision with Tactical Execution

- High-level managers must avoid getting lost in day-to-day operations, ensuring they focus on strategic priorities rather than acting as hourly employees. Building a concept of

a leadership team is often a key aspect of the work. This includes various dean roles, chief of staff, HR, Finance, communications—getting the people around the leader to build trust, support ongoing improvement.

- OD helps coach leaders develop the ability to delegate effectively, empower teams, and maintain a strategic perspective while still ensuring operational success.

- A good deal of time can be spent with the leaders on recognizing their role in shaping structured decision-making frameworks that allow leaders to shift focus from abdicating or micro-management to big-picture thinking. Doing so helps develop leaders at all levels.

8. ROI & Business Impact

- Projects with excellent change management are six times more likely to meet or exceed objectives, according to Pro-Sci®. Companies with robust OD practices experience up to 30% higher revenue growth than competitors (McKinsey, 2023).

- OD clients have told us we are a lifeline on multiple projects. The partner they didn't know they needed and have helped to retain them at MSU.
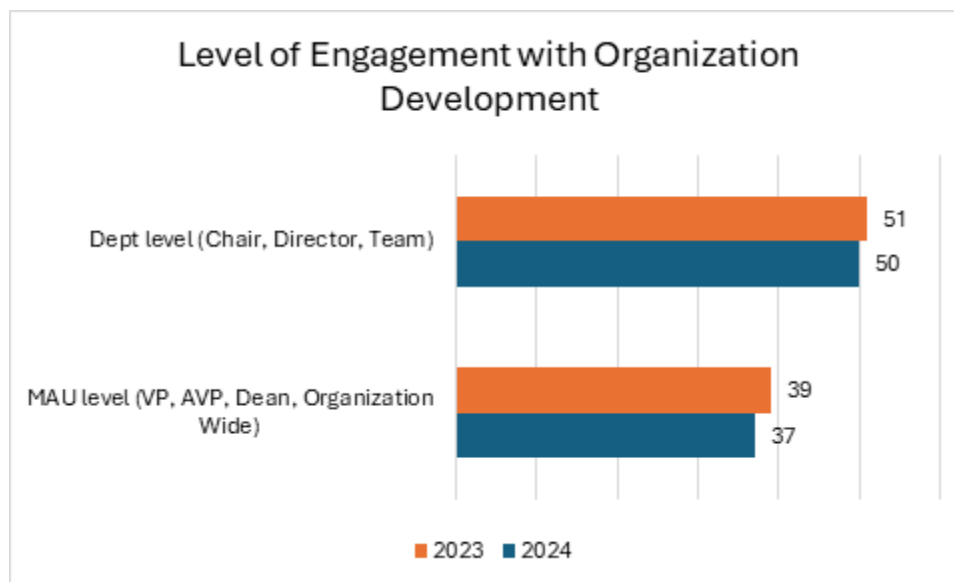
## Preliminary Data on OD work 2024



**Table 1. Level of Engagement with OD.**

Who engages us in our work? 2024 data show at least a two-year similarity of where the work is launched. While there are instances where individuals will inquire about services, typically the referral will need the support of leadership. OPD anticipates a continued trend or greater, given the number of new administrators hired in the past year. Additionally, some work flows directly to

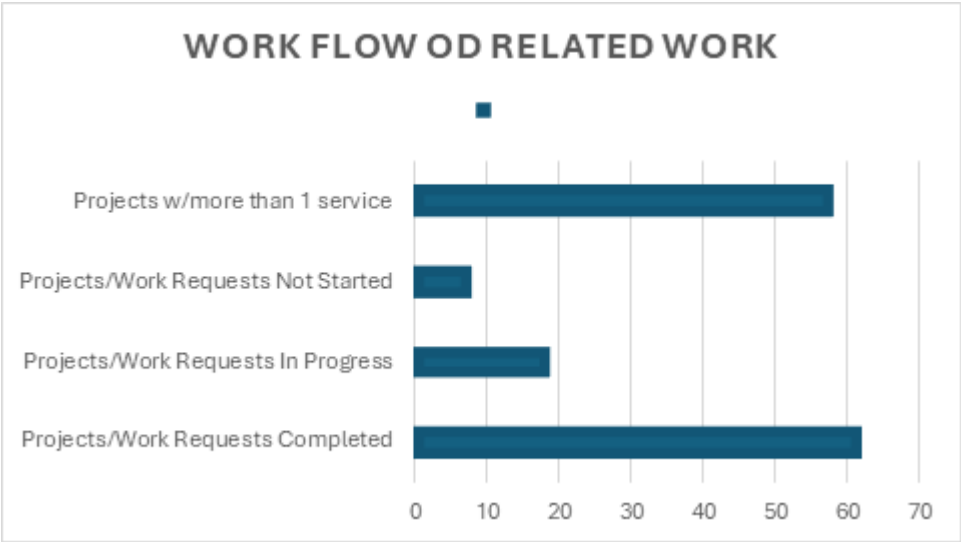the L&D side if determined that training is in fact the solution and will be capture in subsequent reports.



*Table 2. Work flow*

What is the work flow and what is a typical job? The rudimentary tracking of our work presents challenges. However, we know that a typical time for a moderate to complex project is about 18-24 months from start to finish and is based on the unit business cycle and priorities. Multiple concurrent projects are possible due to the varying needs and flexibility in scheduling.
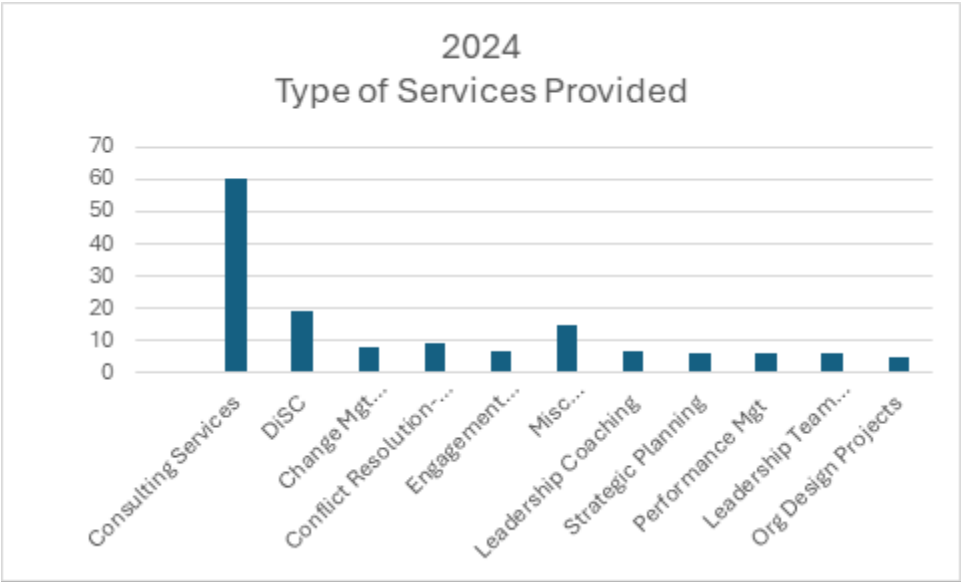
## Service Categories



*Table 3. Types of Services*

In 2024, we further refined the categories of work to those shown in Table 3. Similar types of work are performed each year and have been consistent over the past several years. Consulting can be minor or more extensive. Each project will have a business partner assisted through the project and will coordinate with others on the team in OPD or in other service areas of HR, Audit, EAP, or other. Our data collection does not categorize the work by complexity or scope.

In 2023, 115 services were noted compared to the **148 for 2024**, an increase of **28.7% with one fewer FTE**. In both years, the work most often involves multiple approaches and services toward operational effectiveness. The data does not include teaching courses or seminars through our L&D department or "casual" consultation.

The illustration below summarizes our approach, borrowed from pro-sci®--it is the integration of leaders, support, and sound practices that make real change possible in the most efficient way. Removing one of the key parts causes harm, distrust, missteps and lack of results.



*Illustration from Pro-Sci®*

## Closing

In 2025, OPD will focus on driving operational efficiency through proactive change management aligned with strategic imperatives. The launch of the comprehensive campaign will add additional stress to the system, not to mention the volatility in the federal government that will impact MSU at all levels. This shift ensures that leaders are responding to change and actively shaping the future by rethinking and replanning work to maximize impact.

# Strategic Learning and Development

## Summary

The Office of Organization and Professional Development (OPD) at MSU Human Resources continued its mission in 2024 to support professional growth, foster a culture of continuous learning, and enhance leadership development across the institution. This year saw significant progress, including an increase in learning participation, the introduction of new training programs, and the expansion of self-directed learning initiatives.

Notably, participation in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programming more than doubled compared to the previous year, reflecting a growing institutional commitment to inclusive excellence. Additionally, ElevateU self-directed learning saw substantial increases in engagement, with recorded learning hours nearly doubling. The launch of the New Leader Development Series (NLDS) further demonstrated OPD's dedication to leadership excellence, while process improvement initiatives enhanced learning accessibility and efficiency.

This report provides a detailed analysis of these achievements, offering insight into participation trends, program effectiveness, and key areas of growth.

## Key Initiatives and Achievements

### 1. Implementation of the New Leader Development Series (NLDS)

A major milestone in leadership development, the New Leader Development Series was launched with a restructured curriculum, offering expanded learning tracks tailored to the needs of MSU's emerging and established leaders. While ongoing evaluation is still in progress, initial engagement indicates strong interest and participation.

### 2. Strengthening Campus Collaborations

OPD expanded its partnerships in 2024, working closely with campus initiatives such as the MSU Ethics Institute, Prevention, Outreach & Engagement, and MSU Dialogues, MSU Travel Office, University Health and Wellbeing, EVPA, and more. These collaborations enriched learning offerings and allowed OPD to contribute to meaningful events, including New Administrator Orientation, Creating and Sustaining a Positive Work Environment, and the MSU Extension Conference.

### 3. Improving Learning Accessibility and Evaluation

Efforts to enhance accessibility and effectiveness continued through the Process Documentation Project, which aims to improve resource organization and availability. Additionally, OPD introduced a new streamlined program evaluation process, ensuring that feedback data is efficiently collected and analyzed to drive continuous improvement.

# Instructor-Led Training

## Overview

Instructor-led training remains a cornerstone of OPD's offerings, providing structured learning opportunities tailored to the evolving needs of MSU employees. In 2024, OPD hosted **125 training sessions**, attended by **2,676 learners**, covering **49 unique courses**. The total learning hours logged by participants reached **11,353**, with **526.5 hours of direct facilitated learning** provided by expert instructors.

New course development continued to be a priority, with **11 new courses** added to the training catalog to address emerging institutional and professional development needs.

## Participation Trends

A wide range of subject areas were covered in this year's training sessions, with some topics attracting particularly high engagement. Courses in **Finance & Accounting** drew the largest audience, with **538 participants**, followed closely by **Operational Excellence** courses with **447 learners**. DEI-focused training experienced significant growth, with **412 attendees**, up from **199** in the previous year, indicating a heightened interest in fostering an inclusive workplace culture.

Among the most popular courses in 2024 were:

- Maximize Your Concur and Travel Skills (288 participants)

- EBS Financial System, Roles and Onboarding (145 participants)

- KFS Transactional Edocs (128 participants)

- Cultural Competency (113 participants)

- Implicit Bias Certificate (103 participants)

## Demographic Insights

The diversity of participants in instructor-led training remained strong. Women accounted for **82.7%** of attendees, while **17.3%** were male. Racial and ethnic representation included **7.5% Hispanic/Latino, 7.3% Black/African American, 5.1% Asian, and 1% American Indian/Alaska Native**, with White participants making up **81.2%**. Additionally, **10.3% of attendees reported having a disability**, and **2.1% identified as holding some veteran status**.

## Evaluation and Impact

Feedback from participants underscored the value of instructor-led training. Survey results indicated high satisfaction with the learning experience, with:

- **94.5% of participants** agreeing that the learning environment was safe and inclusive.

- **92.3%** finding program delivery effective.

- **92.3%** reporting accessibility of materials.

- **94.5%** stating that the training was applicable to their role.

- **87.9%** expressing overall satisfaction with the program.

Additionally, the **Net Promoter Score (NPS)** for OPD's training programs was **56**, with **68% of respondents** classified as promoters and only **12% as detractors**. A score above 50 is considered excellent.

## Self-Directed Learning – ElevateU

**Growth and Usage Trends**

Self-directed learning through **ElevateU** continues to be a major area of growth, with increased engagement across various learning modalities. In 2024, the platform recorded **8,427 learning hours**, a significant rise from **4,986 hours** the previous year, a remarkable 69% increase. Similarly, total course completions increased from **4,616 to 6,386**, demonstrating a growing reliance on self-paced learning options and an increase of nearly 40%.

Skill development remained a priority, with **384 skill benchmark assessments completed**, more than tripling from **126 in 2023**. Employees also accessed a total of **15,708 learning assets**, leveraging the platform's diverse resources to advance their professional knowledge.

| | **Total** | **Asset Type** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Courses | Live Courses | Books & Summaries | Audiobooks & Summaries | Resources | Skills Benchmark |
| Views | 15,708 | 10,830 | 1525 | 2,005 | 310 | 534 | 504 |
| Hours | 8,427 | 3,526 | 4,062 | 573 | 144 | 62 | 57 |
| Learners | 2,363 | 1,772 | 585 | 340 | 86 | 224 | 219 |
| Unique Titles | 2,550 | 1,613 | 94 | 483 | 133 | 100 | 127 |
| Completions | 6,386 | 4,588 | 788 | 237 | 89 | 299 | 384 |

**Most Accessed Courses**

The top courses completed through ElevateU in 2024 reflected both institutional priorities and individual professional development goals. The most accessed courses included:

1. MSU Performance Excellence: Employee Course (533 completions)
2. MSU Performance Excellence: Supervisor Course (122 completions)
3. PCI Compliance Training (86 completions)
4. Process Mapping 101 (74 completions)
5. Recognizing and Addressing Micro-behaviors in the Workplace (70 completions)

**Badges and Recognition**

In recognition of their learning achievements, MSU employees earned **4,047 digital badges** through ElevateU. The most frequently awarded badges related to:

- Recognizing and Addressing Micro-behaviors in the Workplace

- Embedding Inclusion into Everyday Experiences

- Workplace Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Action

- Customer Service: Discovering Customer Needs

- Building Up Your Emotional Intelligence

## Educational Assistance Benefits

In fiscal year 2024, MSU employees utilized a total of **$501,553** in Educational Assistance Benefits to support their continued learning and development. Of these funds, **$99,090** was used for MSU professional development opportunities, **$114,530** for non-MSU credit courses, and **$287,932** for non-MSU non-credit courses. While spending on MSU credit courses remains unreported this year, the data clearly indicates strong utilization across learning types. The **APA employee group** accounted for the highest share of usage, drawing **$202,723** in support for their professional growth.

|  | Learners | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| MSU Credit Course SS, US 2023 | 223 | $ 337934 |
| MSU (OPD) | 559 | $99,090 |
| Non-MSU Credit Course | 168 | $114,530 |
| Non-MSU Non-Credit | 765 | $287,932 |
| **Total** | **1,715** | **$736,409** |

## Process Improvement & Management

**Enhancing Organizational Efficiency**

The integration of process improvement strategies continued to be a core focus in 2024, with new training and system enhancements supporting campus-wide initiatives. Nintex Process Manager usage expanded, with **3,110 total documented processes** and **127,181 process views**. Additionally, **114 new users** were trained in the process documentation system, with **68 participating in team-based sessions** and **46 attending public training classes**.

Multiple units successfully adopted Process Manager to facilitate organization-wide process initiatives, ensuring greater efficiency and alignment with institutional goals.

### Conclusion

The 2024 Strategic Learning and Development Report reflects an impactful year of growth, engagement, and transformation. With continued investment in learning programs, process improvements, and leadership development, MSU HR OPD is well-positioned to support professional growth and institutional success. Future priorities include ongoing evaluation of NLDS, expanding digital learning resources, and refining strategic learning initiatives to align with MSU's 2030 vision.