

Redefining “Good” in Today’s Organizations: Insights from the ODPN ODLab 2025 Conference: “A Force For Good”

The ODPN ODLab 2025 Conference, held in Zamboanga City last July 31 to August 1, brought together Organization Development (OD) practitioners, leaders, and change-makers to reflect on a timely question:

What does it mean to be “good” in today’s organizations?

As economies, workplaces, and societies undergo rapid transformation, the conference highlighted the urgent need to revisit traditional definitions of “good” and to align them with values and practices that foster both human well-being and organizational effectiveness. Several key insights emerged that point to the future of OD and its role in shaping sustainable, values-driven organizations.

1. Rethinking “Good” Through Filipino Values

The notion of “good” has long been framed around ideals such as hard work, honor, excellence, and service. While noble, these concepts often remain abstract and transactional.

Panel speaker Bobby Galvez emphasized that the deeper anchors of Filipino culture— **malasakit (empathy)**, **pananagutan (accountability)**, and **bayanihan (collective collaboration)**—offer a more grounded and actionable definition of “good.”

For organizations, this reframing shifts the focus from compliance and output to relationships, responsibility, and shared purpose. Embedding these values in systems and everyday practices can reshape organizational culture into one that is both people-centered and performance-driven.



2. The Kapwa-Centric Model: From Transactions to Relationships

The conference also introduced the **Kapwa-Centric Model**, rooted in the Filipino worldview of *kapwa*—the recognition of shared identity and

interconnection. Applied to organizational life, this model calls for environments that:

- Encourage empathy-driven decision-making,
- Reinforce accountability as a shared standard, and
- Enable collaboration across levels and functions.

The implication for leaders is clear: organizational transformation is not achieved by enforcing new processes alone. It requires the deliberate integration of cultural values into structures and behaviors, making values a lived experience rather than aspirational rhetoric.

3. Clarity as an Organizational Imperative

Another recurring theme was **clarity**—a critical but often overlooked enabler of organizational effectiveness. In times of rapid change, assumptions and unspoken expectations create friction, erode trust, and weaken collaboration.

Clarity in communication and leadership goes beyond transmitting information; it is about setting shared expectations, aligning intentions, and bridging understanding. For organizations, clarity ensures that employees know their roles, teams grasp the rationale behind decisions, and relationships are strengthened rather than strained. When paired with empathy,

accountability, and collaboration, clarity becomes a cornerstone of organizational health.

4. OD as Everyday Practice, Not Occasional Intervention

The conference reinforced that OD is not confined to consultants, HR teams, or episodic interventions. Rather, OD is reflected in daily practices: how conflicts are resolved, how employees are onboarded, how leaders provide feedback, and how teams collaborate.

This perspective elevates OD from a specialized discipline to an organizational way of life—woven into everyday interactions and decisions. It challenges leaders and practitioners to move beyond frameworks and tools and instead create cultures where values consistently translate into action.



5. The Evolution of OD: Guiding Organizations Through Change

As workplaces are reshaped by shifting economies, generational transitions, and emerging technologies, OD itself must evolve. The future of OD lies not only in driving performance but also in helping organizations live their values in sustainable, human-centered ways.

At NRI, this means partnering with organizations to embed cultural values into systems, processes, and leadership practices. By integrating empathy, accountability, collaboration, and clarity into organizational design, NRI helps leaders ensure that “good” is visible in the everyday experiences of employees—ultimately aligning people and performance.

Closing Reflection

The insights from ODLab 2025 underscore a powerful shift: being “good” in today’s organizations is not about tradition for tradition’s sake. It is about **living values with intentionality, clarity, and collaboration.**

For OD practitioners, the challenge is both a privilege and a responsibility: to design organizations that allow people to thrive while advancing collective goals. As OD continues to evolve, its essence remains constant—the

creation of systems where people can contribute their best work and feel genuinely valued.

About the Contributor



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Claire joined NRI Manila in 2025 as a Business Development Consultant for Human Capital Strategies. She brings over nine years of experience spanning the public and private sectors, with a track record in business development, project management, and human capital initiatives. She previously served as Program Operations Head, where her projects earned national recognition in Corporate Social Responsibility and Business Communication, as well as the WHO Western Pacific Innovation Award for mental health initiatives.

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