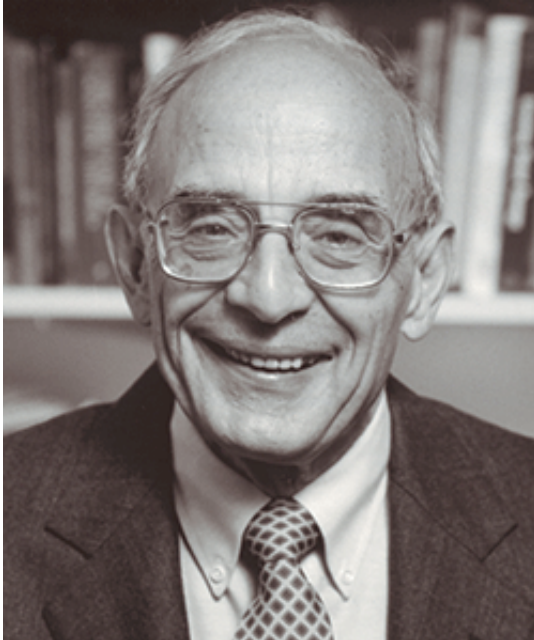


Chris Argyris

May 10, 2013



Harvard University

James McKeen Cattell Fellow Award

Chris Argyris is one of the world's most respected management thinkers. A behavioral scientist, he has devoted his career to understanding how organizations operate and how managers learn.

Argyris's early research focused on the impact of formal organizational structures, control systems, and management on individuals — and how those individuals respond and adapt to them. He was an early adopter of the ground-breaking T-group experiments in the 1960s. T-group training involves increasing trainees' skills in working with other people, and Argyris found that T-groups successfully melted the rigid, authoritarian behavior of many managers. But to his chagrin, most T-group trainees reverted to their former behaviors once back in the workplace.

He has also focused his research on organizational change, in particular the behavior of senior executives, and on individual and organization learning.

Argyris is best known for his theory, in collaboration with the late philosophy scholar Donald Schön, on the two types of learning — single-loop and double-loop. This theory refers to the way people respond to changes in their environment. Single-loop learning is the repeated attempt at the same problem by an organization or individual, without varying the method or questioning the goal. Double-loop learning goes beyond that, modifying the goal in light of the experience.

Argyris's work raises profound questions about how organizations run, and casts doubt on what is widely accepted as good practice. But he offers management a profound exploration of the fundamental

principles of organizational behavior and human interaction in the workplace.