

Arbinger's Academic Underpinnings

A Survey of Scholarly Publications and Validating Research



ABOUT ARBINGER

The Arbinger Institute delivers training, consulting, coaching, and digital tools to help individuals and organizations change mindset, transform culture, accelerate collaboration, resolve conflict, and sustainably improve results.

Arbinger's work is based on the robust intellectual underpinnings developed by its founder, Dr. C. Terry Warner, and validated by multiple third-party research studies.

As a result of its thirty-five-year track record with clients, Arbinger is recognized as a world leader in the areas of mindset change, leadership, team building, conflict resolution, crisis management, and culture change.

Arbinger has offices in over twenty countries, including throughout the Americas, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, India, Oceania, and Asia.

This paper provides a summary of the publications, studies, and academic research which have validated and made accessible to a scholarly audience the foundational theories that form the underpinnings of the work of the Arbinger Institute.

The Arbinger Institute is based on a model of change that is grounded in over 45 years of research in psychology and human behavior, and over 35 years of experience in applying this model to effect change within organizations. This extensive research has led to something considerably more than just a new arrangement of standard ideas about leadership and organizations. It has also led to something more than just a new communication skill or technique.

This research has led to something that can only be called a *new psychology*—a revolutionary set of principles for understanding human behavior and for bringing about fundamental change in both individuals and organizations.

The Arbinger Institute was founded by Dr. C. Terry Warner in 1979. Educated in philosophy at Yale, Dr. Warner was a professor of philosophy at Brigham Young University and served as a visiting senior member of Linacre College, Oxford University. Warner's philosophical work forms the theoretical foundations of the work of the Arbinger Institute and explores the possibility that we humans are in large part self-deceived about why we act as we do.

In addition to speeches delivered by Arbinger facilitators to organizations and associations, Warner himself has presented the results of Arbinger's academic inquiry into the foundations of human behavior to scholarly audiences through a steady stream of lectures, papers, and seminars over nearly five decades. The following are a sampling of these academic papers. Because many of these samples, among others, were all prepared as part of Warner's work at Oxford—either presented in lectures there, or prepared in response to colleagues there—they have been compiled into a single volume, "The Oxford Papers," published by Linacre Prince Press and available through the Arbinger Institute.



ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS (SAMPLES)

“Anger and Similar Delusions,” Published in Rom Harré, ed., *The Social Construction of Emotion* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

“Locating Agency,” published in Daniel N. Robinson and Leendert P. Mos, eds., *Annals of Theoretical Psychology*, vol. 6 (New York: Plenum, 1990).

“Self-deception as Vacuous Experience,” published in C. Terry Warner, *Oxford Papers* (Salt Lake: Linacre Prince Press, 1997).

Elements of this paper were delivered previously in lectures at the University of Manchester in 1985 and the University of Warwick in 1987.

“The Social Construction of Basic Misconceptions of Behaviour,” originally published as “La construcción de los errores básicos en la conceptualización de las conductas,” in Tomás Ibañez Gracia, ed., *El Conocimiento de la Realidad Social* (Barcelona: Sendai Ediciones, 1988).

This paper was presented at Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona and Universidad País Vasco in 1987.

“Irony, Self-deception, and Understanding” published in C. Terry Warner, *Oxford Papers* (Salt Lake: Linacre Prince Press, 1997).

This paper was originally presented to the Linacre Philosophical Society, Linacre College, Oxford University, October, 1986.

“What We Are,” published in *BYU Studies Quarterly*: Vol. 26 : Iss. 1 , Article 6., 1986, 39-63.

Although the papers above are more technical than extant popular treatments of Warner’s work, none of them attempts to supply a summary of the theory per se. Each paper is informed by the full theory, and in one form or another expresses it, but none attempts to explicate the theory beyond the requirements of the particular paper.

For this reason a systematic presentation of at least the central thread of Warner’s theory was developed as a whitepaper, “Arbinger’s Intellectual Foundations.” This whitepaper is available to the public on arbinger.co., Additionally, Warner’s core argument, as presented by himself in “What We Are,” is also available as a whitepaper on arbinger.com.

RESEARCH

In addition to Arbinger's own research, third parties have developed academically rigorous and research-based studies on the efficacy of Arbinger's underlying theory and impact in organizations. The following represent a sampling of these studies:

Agentive Theory as Therapy: An Outcome Study

Daniel K. Judd, PhD, Ronald D. Bingham, PhD, & Richard N. Williams, PhD
AMCAP Journal, Vol 14, No. 1, 1988

This study, the publications states, "evaluated the efficacy of a four-week seminar which emphasized the principles of Agentive Theory. This theory, compatible with theories of a phenomenological-existential perspective, was first developed by C. Terry Warner.

"Agentive Theorists/Therapists emphasize that our negative emotions (depression, anger, etc.), are assertions or judgments we make and not feelings which happen to us, and thus call for control or expression. Forty-eight outpatients who sought help with personal/emotional problems from a department of behavioral medicine were assigned to either a Treatment or Waiting-list Control Group. Following a four week treatment seminar, the Treatment Group made significantly greater improvement than the Waiting-list Control Group with respect to general mental health, somatization, depression, anxiety, hostility, phobic anxiety, psychoticism, and anger reduction."

Report on the Organizational Efficacy of Arbinger's Programs

Richard N. Williams, PhD

The study states that, "the Arbinger program at a major telecommunications firm undergoing reengineering was sponsored by a 25,000-employee division and conducted by organizational managers and the Arbinger Institute. It consisted of a five-day workshop, follow-up implementation workshops at one month intervals, and a process that helped participants teach their own workgroups. Virtually all of the division's 3,500 managers completed the Arbinger program in a three year period. Feedback from program participants as well as independently gathered data was correlated with data from the Internal Employee Survey, a tool used across the organization to measure employee satisfaction, to track marked differences between those who participated in the program and the control group who did not.

"Additionally, control group vs. treatment group differences were measured in the following three areas: General Process Improvements, Mitigation of Negative Effects of Downsizing and Reengineering, and Improvements in Managerial Work."

A summary of these research findings is provided in the appendix of this document.

Arbinger's Contagion Effect in Healthcare

Wayne Johnson, MA, Cornell University, and Cameron Cozzens, MBA, Georgetown University

This long-term study, conducted by researchers at Georgetown and Cornell Universities, will conclude mid-year 2018, after which the final results and full analysis will be published. The results of the study thus far demonstrate that Arbinger's training and implementation programs significantly improve employee performance and attitudes, increasing several variables that positively impact organizational culture and employee engagement. A summary of the research results gathered thus far is provided in the appendix of this document.

APPENDIX

The following provides, in summary form, the findings of the independent researchers who have conducted studies within organizations to validate the efficacy of Arbinger's underlying change models and implementation technologies. Additional smaller-scale studies can be found in Arbinger's case studies available at arbinger.com.

Summary of Report on the Organizational Efficacy of Arbinger's Programs

Richard N. Williams, PhD

A major telecommunications company had announced plans to undertake a massive reorganization. The reorganization entailed layoffs, relocation, increased workloads, and fewer resources, leading to significant job insecurity and an extremely charged atmosphere among the company's employees. The company's largest division had 25,000 employees, and its management was particularly concerned about the success of the reorganization as well as its impact on productivity and employee morale. Realizing they needed to enlist the employees' support in order to make the reorganization successful, the division's management turned to Arbinger for a solution.

The work with the division began with training conducted jointly by Arbinger and internal company facilitators who had been trained by Arbinger. This training was followed by three implementation workshops held at one-month intervals and conducted by Arbinger consultants. Virtually all of the division's 3,500 managers completed the Arbinger training. Following this training, team managers were provided with advanced training, teaching plans, workbooks, and videos to further drive the Arbinger way of working within their teams. Following the Arbinger intervention, division managers reported significant process improvements in a wide variety of areas. They reported that the division—which had been characterized by feuding, competition for limited resources, and conflicting objectives—was now moving toward an environment of collaboration, resource sharing, and harmonized objectives. They attributed this to the

fact that the Arbinger ideas provided common ground on which to identify and solve problems in a very difficult environment. Importantly, this change was felt at even the most senior levels, including among the organizations corporate officers. Arbinger's work also had a strong, positive impact on employees' morale and well-being. Many reported feeling more in control of their lives and better able to cope with the changes taking place in the company. They also reported less stress, less anxiety, and increased ability to deal with common problems. Because of this, work satisfaction among employees increased by 20%.

Results of the company's internal employee survey helped quantify the impact of Arbinger's work when the responses of employees with whom Arbinger worked were compared to the responses of employees with whom Arbinger did not work. Despite the fact that this survey was conducted more than a year after the Arbinger intervention, those who worked with Arbinger responded more favorably on all questions (see chart below). As a result, despite the difficulties posed by the reorganization, work groups experienced gains in productivity and customers' needs were proactively anticipated and met. Because people at all levels were working more effectively together, business results dramatically improved. The division president reported, "As a direct result of implementing Arbinger's process and human technology, at the very time we were going through massive organizational changes and downsizing, we delivered the product our company depends on for its revenue more efficiently, at lower cost, and with higher quality than ever before, as measured by the following:

- Revenue grew by 17%
- Customer satisfaction increased by 21%
- Efficiency improved by over 10%
- Materials cost through improved supplier relationships decreased by 23%
- Capital efficiency improved by 50%
- Inventory reduced by \$45 million."

Employees with whom
Arbinger worked vs.
employees with whom
Arbinger did not work

Positive difference in Arbinger participants

Overall, how good of a job do you feel is being done by your immediate supervisor?	+16%
How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?	+15%
How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a better job with this company?	+20%
How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management regarding what's going on in the company?	+19%
Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?	+10%
Top management is not reluctant to make difficult decisions	+10%
Management informs us about the company's goals and objectives for the future	+12%
Sufficient effort is made to get the opinions/thinking of people who work here	+9%
Our products and services meet our external customers' expectations	+5%
My work group uses external customers' feedback to improve our work quality	+17%
My work group celebrates its successes	+21%
The person I report to really tries to get my ideas about things	+25%
My supervisor recognizes me for continually improving the quality of my work	+22%
I understand the customer-focused goals for my business unit	+17%
I have enough information to do my job well	+20%
I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things	+19%

Summary of Arbinger's Contagion Effect in Healthcare

Wayne Johnson MA, Cornell University, and Cameron Cozzens MBA, Georgetown University

In a staggered rollout across 1400 employees of a military hospital located in the Midwestern United States, surveys designed by research teams at Cornell University and Georgetown University are administered to two groups of employees simultaneously: a control group and a test group. Both groups completed an initial survey to set a baseline for certain measures of mindset such as attitudes regarding employee empowerment, management support, and collaboration. Control and test groups are carefully selected at each stage of the rollout to be as close in size, patient population and clinical acuity, and other measurable baseline metrics as possible.

After participating in Arbinger's two-day foundational workshop, the test group then completed an immediate post-workshop survey. About six to eight weeks after the DIOM workshop, both the control and test groups completed another survey—this one almost identical to the first (baseline) survey—to measure whether and to what extent the test group had changed mindsets and behavior as a result of the workshop.

Finally, approximately four months after the DIOM workshop, each participant's supervisor completed a survey about the participant's performance and effectiveness compared to four months prior (i.e., compared to before the workshop). These surveys were conducted in five iterations over the course of one year, with approximately 100-150 employees in each iteration.

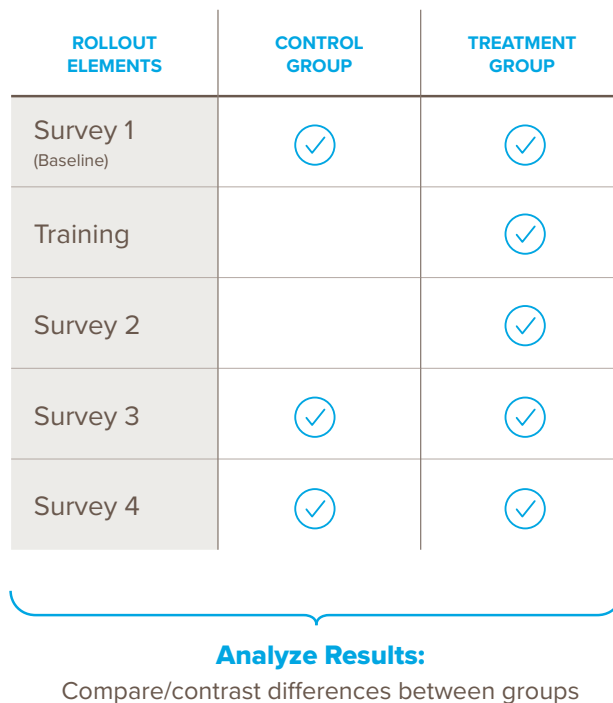


FIGURE 2: Design of long term hospital study including training and survey elements delivered to test and control groups.

Thus far, the study clearly demonstrates that:

1. Arbinger's training increases employee cooperation and collaboration by 12%.

Comparing month-to-month performance as rated by their supervisors, test group employees scored 12.14% higher than control group employees in terms of improvements in cooperation and collaboration.

2. Arbinger's training increases an employee's personal investment in their work by 11%.

Test group employees were rated 10.98% higher by their supervisors in terms of improvements in their personal investment in their work. These findings are particularly meaningful because they are not self-scored results collected shortly after an Arbinger training, but a supervisor's assessment of behavior and performance four months after training. The length of time and outside perspective indicate these changes are concrete and at least somewhat sustained.

This study has also revealed an "Arbinger contagion effect." As indicated above, when leaders take Arbinger's training, they themselves improve (as measured by their supervisors) in terms of performance, attitude, and engagement. Remarkably, their subordinates—who did not take the training—also show significant improvements in attitude, commitment, awareness, and empowerment.

These improvements were measured several months after the employees' leaders had received the training and showed that:

- Untrained employees feel more psychologically safe
- Untrained employees have a greater commitment to the organization
- Untrained employees feel more empowered
- Untrained employees feel increased support and advocacy from their leaders
- Untrained employees are more focused on how they impact others
- Untrained employees have greater perceptions of the utility of working collaboratively



To learn more about Arbinger's intellectual foundations and to access additional whitepapers, visit [arbinger.com](https://www.arbinger.com)