

DIAGNOSTIC MODELS: AN INTRODUCTION

Julie A. C. Noolan

Traditional diagnostic models can be categorized as *descriptive* models or *normative* models.

Descriptive models

With descriptive models, the role of the OD practitioner is to illuminate “what is” for the client, and “what could be”. Within descriptive models, contingency theorists would argue that the OD practitioner facilitates change only, not focus. The client determines the direction of change and the OD practitioner helps the client get there. Most diagnostic models fit under the “descriptive” category. Examples include:

- Bolman and Deal: *Four Frames Model*
- Freedman: *Socio-technical Systems Model*
- Galbraith: *Star Model*
- Hornstein and Tichy: *Emergent Pragmatic Model*
[Sometimes used in developing consultant or company specific models]
- McKinsey: *7-S Model*
- Nadler and Tushman: *Congruence Model*

Normative Models

With normative models, the practitioner recommends specific directions for change, prior to the diagnosis – the “one best way of managing.”
Examples include:

- Blake and Mouton’s Grid [Concern for People/Concern for Productivity 9, 9].
- Likert’s Profiles

Yet **other diagnostic approaches** include Levinson’s Clinical Historical Approach, patterned on a psychoanalytic approach to the client system.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO LOOK AT IN ORGANIZATIONS

By Robert J. Marshak, Ph.D.

Organizational theorists and consultants have developed a wide variety of models identifying important organizational elements and their interrelationships. Each is predicated on a particular theory/theories or perspective(s), and each intended to highlight and bring into focus a broad range of data and experience for purposes of diagnosis and intervention.

A range of well-known models are displayed on the following pages. Please note:

- Most of the models suggest interaction or interrelationships among all the selected variables.
- Many of the same variables are contained in all the models, although not necessarily in the same way or with the same emphasis.
- The fewest number of variables depicted in a model is four (Leavitt), the greatest is twelve (Burke-Litwin), most are between five and seven.
- Each model leaves out variables that another school of thought might include or emphasize. For example, only the Hanna model mentions “hard numbers,” i.e. financial performance.

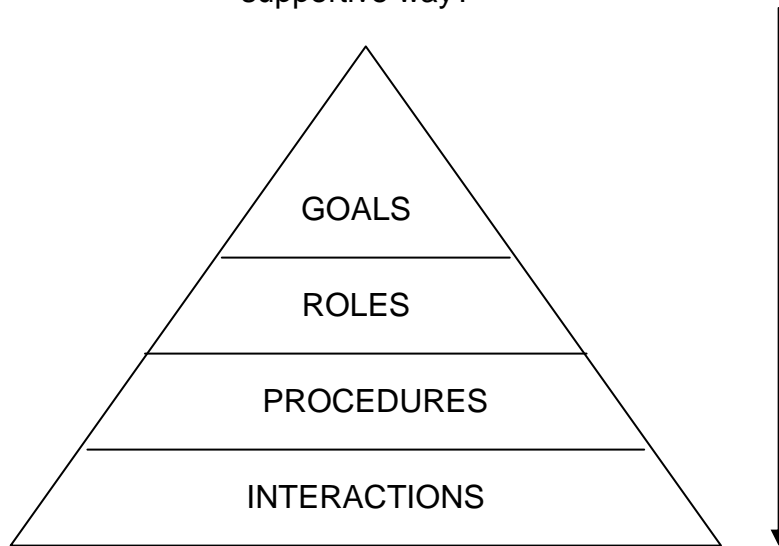
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Compiled by Robert J. Marshak, Ph.D

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GRPI MODEL
RICHARD BECKHARD

GOALS	--	Do we have clarity? Do we have agreement?
ROLES	--	What are our roles and responsibilities?
PROCEDURES	--	How we do our work? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Procedure, rules, approaches? Systems• How we work together?
INTERACTIONS	--	Interpersonal, inter-group? How do we work together in a mutually supportive way?



Source: Richard Beckhard, Optimizing Team Building Effort, Journal of Contemporary Business, Vol1 (3). 1972

BECKHARD'S G R P I MODEL

Julie A. C. Noolan, Ph.D.

Although Beckhard's model* originally addressed teambuilding, I have found it a very useful approach for dealing with a broad range of groups and companies when they are stuck. In this model you work from the top down.

As organization development consultants we are often called in when a group appears to be in conflict. And often our backgrounds tend to make us focus more on the inter-personal or inter-group dysfunctionality. But Beckhard would argue that that is the last thing we should look at when a group is having difficulties. He says that not only does it make more sense to start at the top, ensuring that a group or organization has clarity regarding its vision, mission, or purpose, but that it is also much easier and quicker to work these issues, getting agreement, than it is to deal with interactions, whether they be between individuals or parts of an organization.

I describe it sometimes using a sports analogy. It doesn't make matter how well the players on a football team like each other if they don't know that their **goal** is to get that football across the goal line or kicked between the uprights. And it doesn't matter how well they get along with each other, and pat each other on the back or elsewhere, if they don't understand what their positions or **roles** are on the field—that the quarterback throws the ball and the place kicker kicks it, and so on. And it doesn't matter that they really trust each other, if they don't understand the **procedures** or rules of the game. And it is only when there is clarity and agreement on the above three areas that the consultant should address **interactions**, either inter-personally or inter-group.

This model is one of the templates I routinely run through in my head in working with a group, even if it is not what I have initially been called upon to address. Without clarity on goals, roles, and procedures, there is little long-term benefit in working at the interaction level.

*Richard Beckhard (1972) "Optimizing Team Building Effort" *Journal of Contemporary Business*. Volume 1 (3) pp.23-32

MISSION OR PURPOSE

- Who we are
- What we do
- For whom do we do it
- Why we do it

GOALS OR OBJECTIVES

- What's the work and how is it sequenced (milestones)?
- How is success measured?
- Priorities
- Specific, time bound, with accountabilities

ROLES

- Where does leadership for this team/group reside?
- How is the work divided up?
- Individual responsibilities, accountabilities, authority
- How are roles addressed across interfaces?
- To whom am I responsible and who is responsible to me?

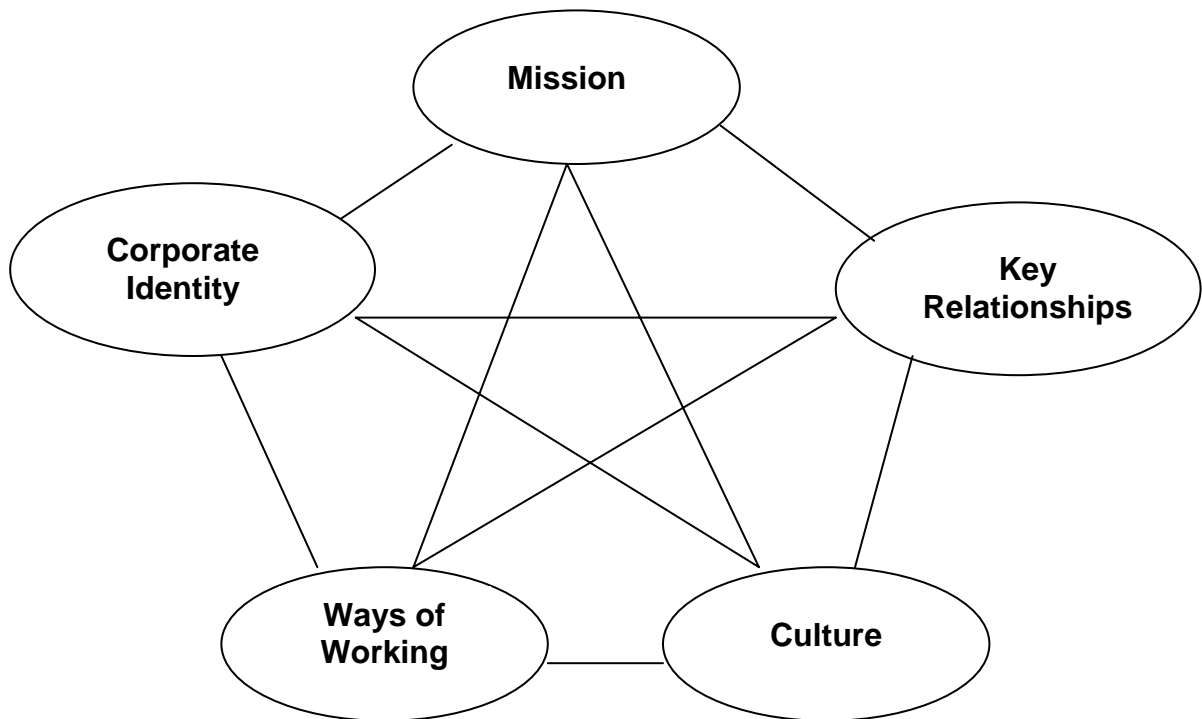
PRACTICES

- How is work organized?
- How do we "operate"what are the important "norms"
- How and when do we communicate, and to whom?
- All infrastructures: performance management, decision making, problem-solving, resolving conflict, organization structure, team/group versus individual practices, etc.

RELATIONSHIPS

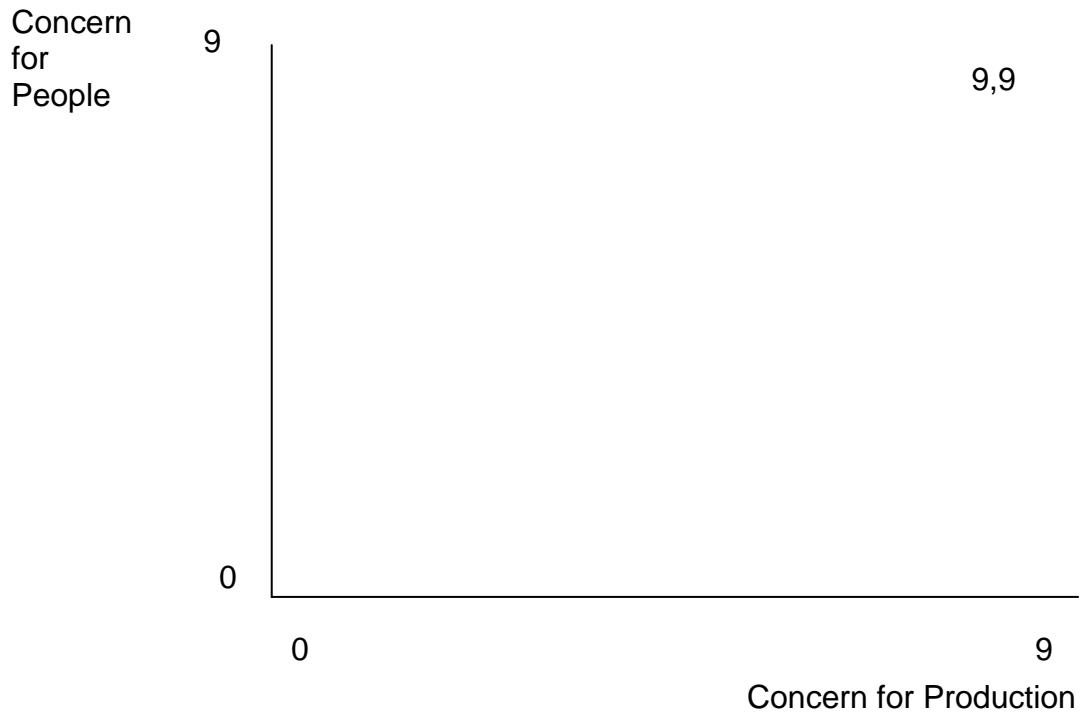
- How do we work together in a mutually supportive way?
- What do we need from one another and what do we get/not get?
- What are our expectations of one another and of the group?
- How do we give feedback to one another?
- Trust, support.....saying what we'll do and doing what we say.

BECKHARD & PRITCHARD CHANGE MODEL



Source: Richard Beckhard & Wendy Pritchard, *Changing the Essence: The Art of Creating and Leading Fundamental Change in Organizations*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1992

MANAGERIAL GRID
BLAKE and MOUTON



Source: Burke, W. Warner *Organization Development 2nd ed.* Pages 116-121.

THE FOUR FRAMES MODEL
by
BOLMAN AND DEAL

<u>Structural</u>	<u>HR</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles • Relationships • Structures • Rules & Policies <p>Goal: Coordination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailoring the organization to meet human needs <p>Goal: Individual job fulfillment</p>
<u>Political</u>	<u>Symbolic</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scarce resources which lead to: conflict, bargaining and coalitions <p>Goal: Increase political skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization's shared values and culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rituals • Myths • Ceremonies • Beliefs <p>Goal: Manage symbols, myths, and traditions</p>

The following is excerpted from Bolman and Deal: *Modern Approaches to Understanding and Managing Organizations*. Jossey-Bass, 1989.

Bolman and Deal describe their model as embracing “conceptual pluralism” – they take the various schools or organization thought and categorize the perspectives into four “frames” to characterize these different vantage points. As they say, frames are windows on the world. Frames filter out some things while allowing others to pass through easily. Frames help us to order the world and decide what actions to take. Every manager has a personal frame, or image, of organizations to gather information, make judgements, and get things done.

Understanding organizations is nearly impossible when the manager is unconsciously wed to a single, narrow perspective. Managers in all organizations can increase their effectiveness and their freedom through the use of multiple vantage points. To be locked into a single path is likely to produce error and self-imprisonment. We believe that managers who understand their own frame –and who can adeptly rely on more than one limited perspective – are better equipped to

understand and manage the complex everyday world of organizations. Sometimes they can make a significant difference in how that world responds.

There are four frames for looking at an organization in this model:

1. **Structural** – the rational, tough-minded side of organizations ... clarifying basic issues in organization design ... the relationship between goals and structure organizations.
2. **Human resource** – the human side of enterprise ... examines strengths and weaknesses of current approaches to humanizing the workplace.
3. **Political** -- the darker side of organizations – conflict, coalitions, and struggles for power and positions.
4. **Symbolic** – organizational symbols ... explains the roles played by myths, rituals, ceremonies, and plays at all levels of the organizations.

The **structural frame** emphasizes the importance of formal roles and relationships. Structures – commonly depicted in organization charts – are created to fit an organization's environment and technology. Organizations allocate responsibilities to participants ("division of labor") and create rules, policies, and management hierarchies to coordinate diverse activities. Problems arise when the structure does not fit the situation. At that point, some form of reorganization is needed to remedy the mismatch.

The **human resource frame** establishes its territory because organizations are inhabited by people. Individuals have needs, feelings, and prejudices. They have both skills and limitations. They have great capacity to learn and a sometimes greater capacity to defend old attitudes and beliefs. From a human resource perspective, the key to effectiveness is to tailor organizations to people – to find an organizational form that will enable people to get the job done while feeling good about what they are doing. Problems arise when human needs are throttled.

The **political frame** views organizations as arenas of scarce resources where power and influence are constantly affecting the expected because of differences in needs, perspectives, and life-styles among different individuals and groups. Bargaining, coercion, and compromise are all part of everyday organizational life. Coalitions form around specific interests and may change as issues come and go. Problems may arise because power is unevenly distributed or is so broadly dispersed that it is difficult to get anything done. Solutions are developed through political skill and acumen – much as Machiavelli suggested centuries ago.

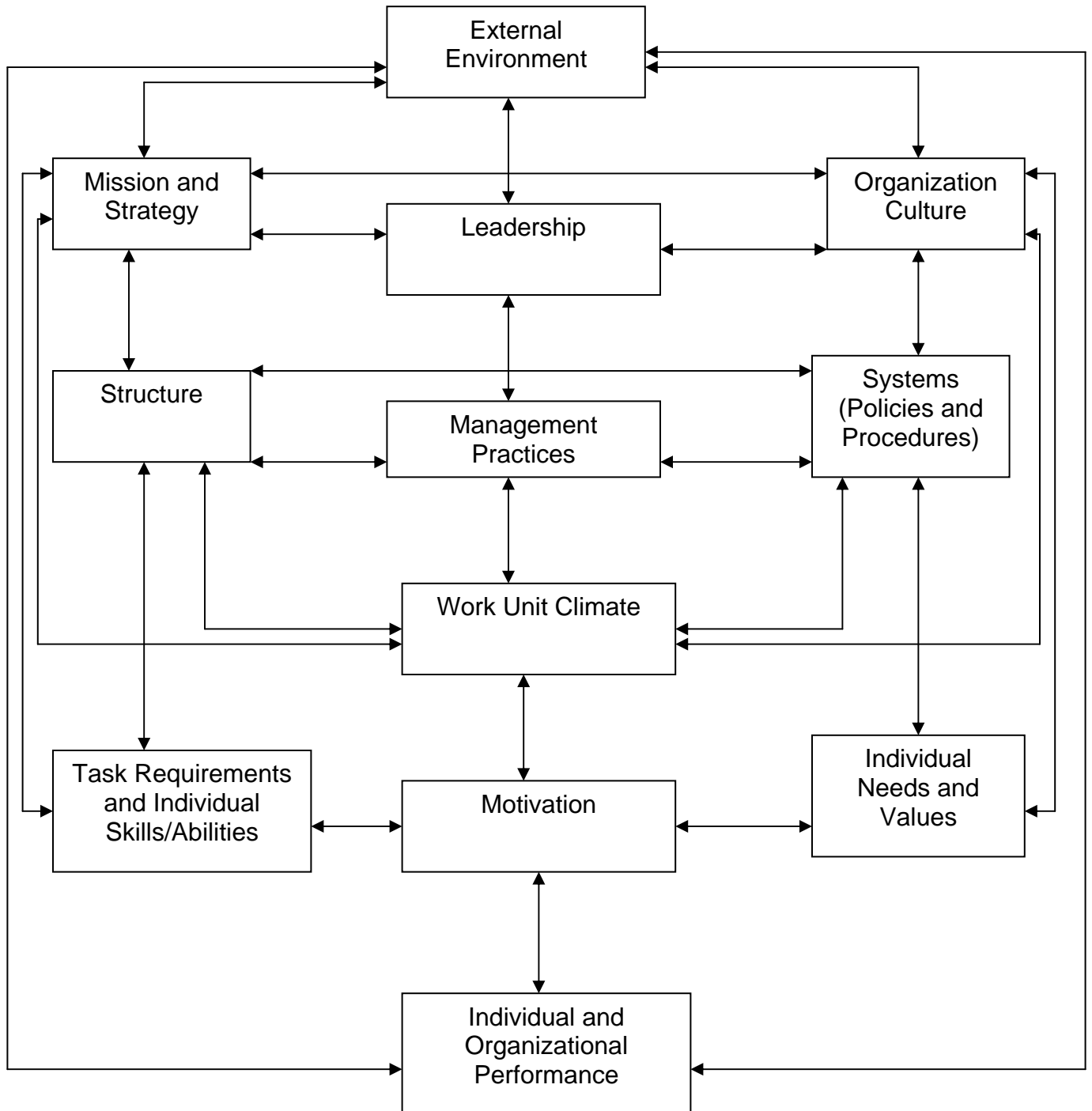
The **symbolic frame** abandons the assumptions of rationality that appear in each of the other frames and treats the organization as theater or carnival. Organizations

are viewed as held together more by shared values and culture than by goals and policies. They are propelled more by rituals, ceremonies, stories, heroes, and myths than by rules, policies, and managerial authority. Organization is drama: the drama engages actors inside, and outside audiences form impressions based on what they see occurring on-stage. Problems arise when actors play their parts badly, when symbols lose their meaning, when ceremonies and rituals lose their potency. Improvements come through symbol, myth and magic.

Each frame has its own vision of reality. Only when managers can look at organizations through all four frames are they likely to appreciate the depth and complexity of organizational life. Successful managers rely intuitively on all the different frames, blending them into a coherent, pragmatic, personal theory of organizations. We believe that an explicit introduction to, and grounding in, all four frames can enrich any manager's native intuition. Success becomes possible even for the great majority of us who were not born with the ability to understand and act effectively in such a complicated and ambiguous world.

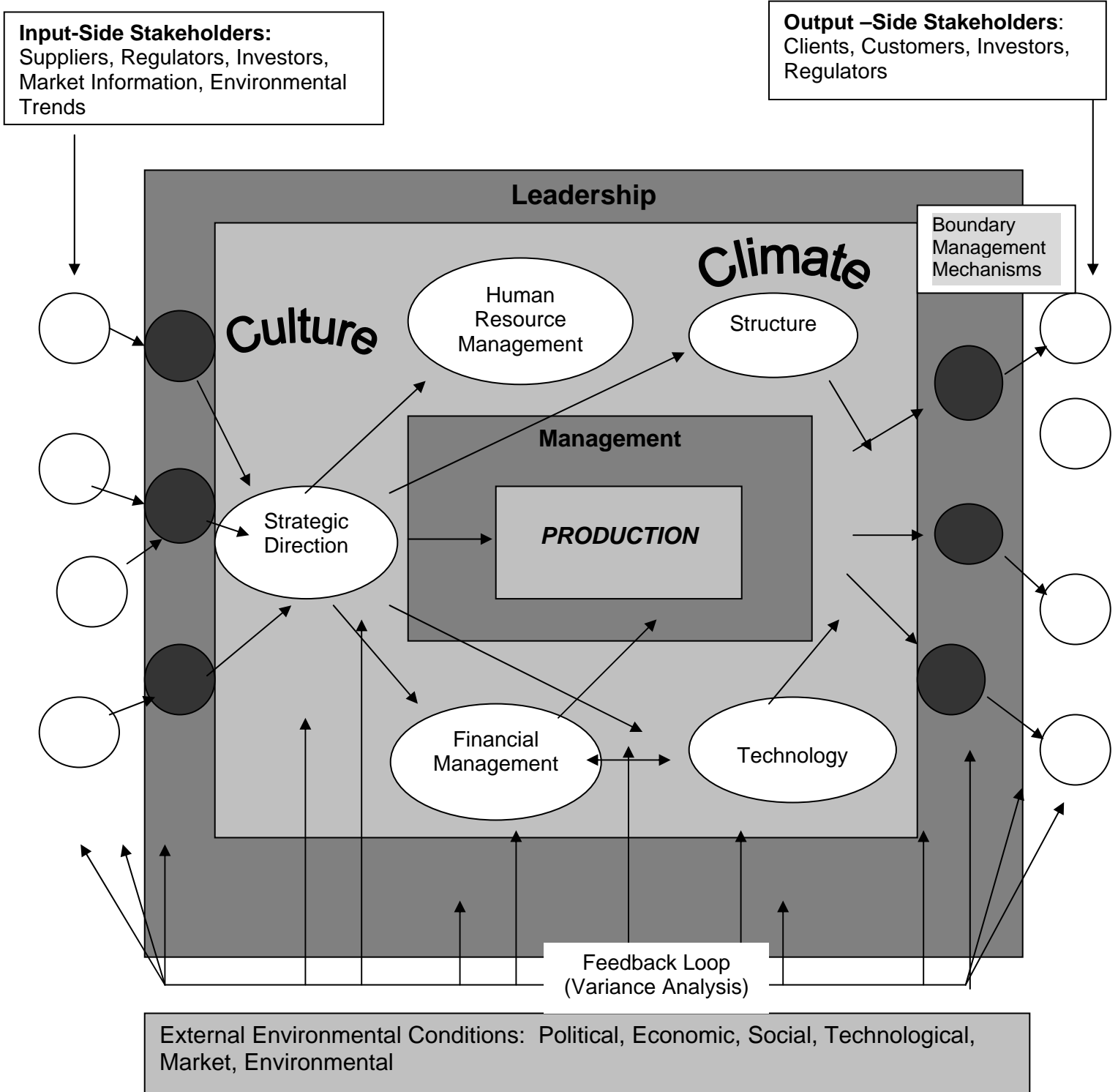
CAUSAL MODEL OF PERFORMANCE CHANGE

BURKE-LITWIN



Source: W. Warner Burke, in Ann Howard (ed.) *Diagnosis for Organizational Change*, Guilford Press, 1994

THE SWAMP MODEL OF SOCIOTECHNICAL SYSTEMS



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Elements of Socio-Technical Systems

Arthur M. Freedman, Ph.D.

1. **Vision: Goal Structure (Organizational Direction):**

- A. Alternative Future Scenarios: Best-Case, Worst-Case, and Most Likely-Case.
- B. Mission.
- C. Strategic Goals or Operational Objectives.
- D. Strategic Plans.
- E. Philosophy and Values.

2. **Production:**

- A. Nature of the core work processes:
 - 1. Project (“job shop”).
 - 2. Production (assembly line).
 - 3. Continuous process.
- B. Operational plans for:
 - 1. Human Resources:
 - a. Number and type of employees (current and future).
 - b. Deployment schedule for employees.
 - c. Inducements to be exchanged for contributions.
 - 2. Work flow (design or redesign of the organization’s value-adding business processes).
 - 3. Differentiation of responsibilities: tasks, activities and functions.
 - 4. Integrative structure for communications and decision-making.
 - 5. Assessing match between “expected” and “actual” performance and results.
 - 6. Scanning for, identifying, defining, and solving emerging operational problems or improvement opportunities.
- C. Corrective and preventive maintenance measures for human resources.
- D. Corrective and preventive maintenance for physical resources

3. **Financials:**

- A. Projected versus actual revenues (funds).
- B. Budgeted versus actual expenses (costs).
- C. Profit and loss.
- D. Financial management and auditing systems and procedures – including real-time value-adding activity-based accounting (EVA).

4. People (Human Resource Management Systems):

- A. Strategic H.R. Plans: Determining how to satisfy current and projected H.R. needs for all organizational subsystems.
- B. H.R. Utilization: Developing, enhancing, retaining competencies of current employees to satisfy current work requirements.
- C. H.R. Development: Preparing current employees to meet projected work requirements.
- D. H.R. Monitoring: Auditing systems to identify and study human performance and indications of underachievement or non-achievement.

5. Organizational Structure:

- A. Organizational charts indicating hierarchical levels, positions, and lines of authority and accountability.
- B. Responsibilities for individuals (roles) and intact work units (charters): Tasks, activities, and functions.
- C. Policies and procedures.
- D. Rules and regulations.

6. Technology:

- A. "Hard" technologies: E.g., equipment, materials, facilities.
- B. "Soft" technologies: E.g., managerial-supervisory practices; interpersonal, team and inter-group communications, problem-solving and decision-making processes.

7. Organizational Culture and Climate:

- A. Culture: The persistent manifestations and impacts of historical organizational traditions, practices, beliefs, values, precedents, myths, and legends that are the foundations of contemporary, informal (unwritten) norms and standards governing acceptable behavior by organizational members.

- B. Climate: Current levels of tension, sense of urgency, pace, and tempo of activities in response to temporary conditions (e.g., crisis, emergency, uncertainty, turbulence, calm, predictability, or consistency).

8. Organizational Leadership:

- A. Support the goal structure (direction) of the enterprise.
- B. Insure the integrity of the boundaries between the system and the external environment:
 - 1. Support (or perform) boundary management functions including the development of teamwork between organizational elements or subsystems and significant external stakeholders and constituents.
 - 2. Represent the requirements, preferences and concerns of all parts of the organization to their relevant, significant external stakeholders and constituents.
 - 3. Represent the requirements, preferences, and concerns of relevant, significant external stakeholders and constituents to the organization's major subsystems and employees.
- C. Provide "Variance Analysis"
 - 1. Scan, monitor all socio-technical system functions within the enterprise.
 - 2. Identify, define operational problems, improvement opportunities, and entrepreneurial opportunities.
 - 3. Develop and implement action plans to solve or prevent problems and to capitalize on improvement or entrepreneurial opportunities.
 - 4. Evaluate effectiveness of corrective and preventive actions taken.
- D. Ensure timely, effective corrective and preventive maintenance for human, fiscal, and physical resources.

9. Input-Output Transactions at the Interface Between the Organization and its Relevant External Stakeholders:

- A. Relevant stakeholders and constituents are identified as having a legitimate "stake" or vested interest in the enterprise and its manner of operating.
- B. Inputs imported into the organization:
 - 1. Nature of the inputs which are delivered by supply-side stakeholders:
E.g., market information, technical knowledge and skills, information on regulations and ground rules, people, materials, equipment, and/or financial resources.
 - 2. Quality of inputs: I.e., the degree to which inputs provided by suppliers satisfy the organization's specifications (standards or criteria), requirements, and preferences.

3. Reliability and/or timelines of delivery of inputs to the organization.
- C. Outputs exported from the enterprise:
1. Nature of the outputs delivered by the organization to its demand-side stakeholders (customers and users): E.g., goods, services, marketing or sales activities, dividends to shareholders, reports to governmental regulators, employees' salaries and wages, and waste materials and garbage.
 2. Quality of outputs: The degree to which the system's outputs satisfy the customers' specifications, requirements, and preferences.
 3. Reliability and/or timelines of delivery of outputs to customers and users.
- D. Organizational boundary management systems or mechanisms:
1. Identity of persons or groups responsible for negotiating and conducting input-output transactions with external demand-side or supply-side stakeholders.
 2. Standards or criteria used to determine the limits of acceptability of inputs from suppliers or outputs to customers.
 3. Methods, procedures, or processes used to determine "acceptability".
 4. Degree of decision-making authority, including the source or basis of this authority.
 5. Degree to which the boundary management system scans the external environment (proactively or reactively) for relevant activity, changes, trends, novel conditions or events, etc.
- E. Methods of managing transactions across lateral interfaces between the organization and its relevant stakeholders and constituents:
1. Effective communication: Accurate, timely, comprehensive transmission and reception of relevant, influential input and feedback.
 2. Goal clarification and negotiation for agreement.
 3. Role clarification and negotiation (and re-negotiation).
 4. Conflict management and utilization.
 5. Clarification and negotiation of mutual expectations.
 6. Negotiating decision-making procedures and strategies, including responsibilities and authority.
 7. Joint identification and solving of problems or capitalizing on improvement opportunities.
 8. Negotiating commitments and consequences.

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Assessing the Fit Between a System and Its Environment

Arthur M. Freedman, Ph.D.

Divide group into sub-groups (teams) that represent major stakeholder groups or constituent populations within the larger organization (e.g., “Managers,” “Labor Union,” “Finance,” “Maintenance,” “Marketing,” “Engineering Group,” “Human Resources”).

Each team is to describe itself in terms of its:

1. Direction being taken by the group

- What is your Vision of the world in which you must compete, operate and survive in the future?
- What is your Mission? In what business or businesses is your group involved? What is your market? How do you add value to your customers' operations? What is your competitive advantage?
- What are the Strategic Goals that you must achieve to survive and grow? What must you do to contribute to the realization of Mission of your larger organization?
- What is your Strategy to achieve these Goals?
- What are the Values or Philosophy that you use to guide your group's operation and the behavior of its members?

2. Production

- From whom does your group get its work requests? How are they originated? How do you know what to produce? Why are you able to obtain work? How do you attract work?
- What goods, products, or services does your group produce? What will your group be producing in the future?
- What standards or criteria must be satisfied for these work results to be considered acceptable? Who establishes these standards or criteria?
- How effective is your group? Are you satisfying these production standards or criteria? Are you profitable? Are your deliveries on time? Are you efficient? How do you know?

3. People

- How many of what types of people does the group currently require to operate effectively? Do you have all these people under contract now? Are your people over- or under-qualified?

- How many of your people will still be fully qualified next year? Five years from now? 10 years from now? 20 years from now? Is it possible that the future work demands that your people must satisfy will exceed their current types or levels of competence?
- How many of your fully qualified people will leave or retire next year? Five years from now? 10 years from now? 20 years from now?
- How many of what types of people will the group require next year? Five years from now? 10 years from now? 20 years from now?
- Where will your group find the people you will need? How will you recruit, screen, and select those who are fully qualified?
- What will it take to attract and contract with the fully qualified people that your group will need?

4. Structure

- Who is responsible for which tasks, activities, and functions?
- Who has what level of authority over whom?
- Who is accountable to whom?
- What guidelines, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures reinforce, limit or prescribe the behavior or activities of the members of this group?

5. Culture and climate

- What behaviors are acceptable and encouraged or rewarded in this group?
- What behaviors are unacceptable and tolerated, ignored or punished?
- What is the current emotional climate within the group?
- Is your group's culture and climate similar or different compared with the prevailing culture and climate within the larger organization? Among your stakeholder groups? Among your constituent populations?

6. Leadership

- How does your group stay in touch with internal organizational and external environmental events and conditions? How do you know if significant changes are taking place that could effect your group's business?
- How does your group ensure that its members' activities are all oriented toward the same common goals and purpose?
- How does the group identify, define and solve its problems – and exploit or capitalize on emerging opportunities to improve its effectiveness?

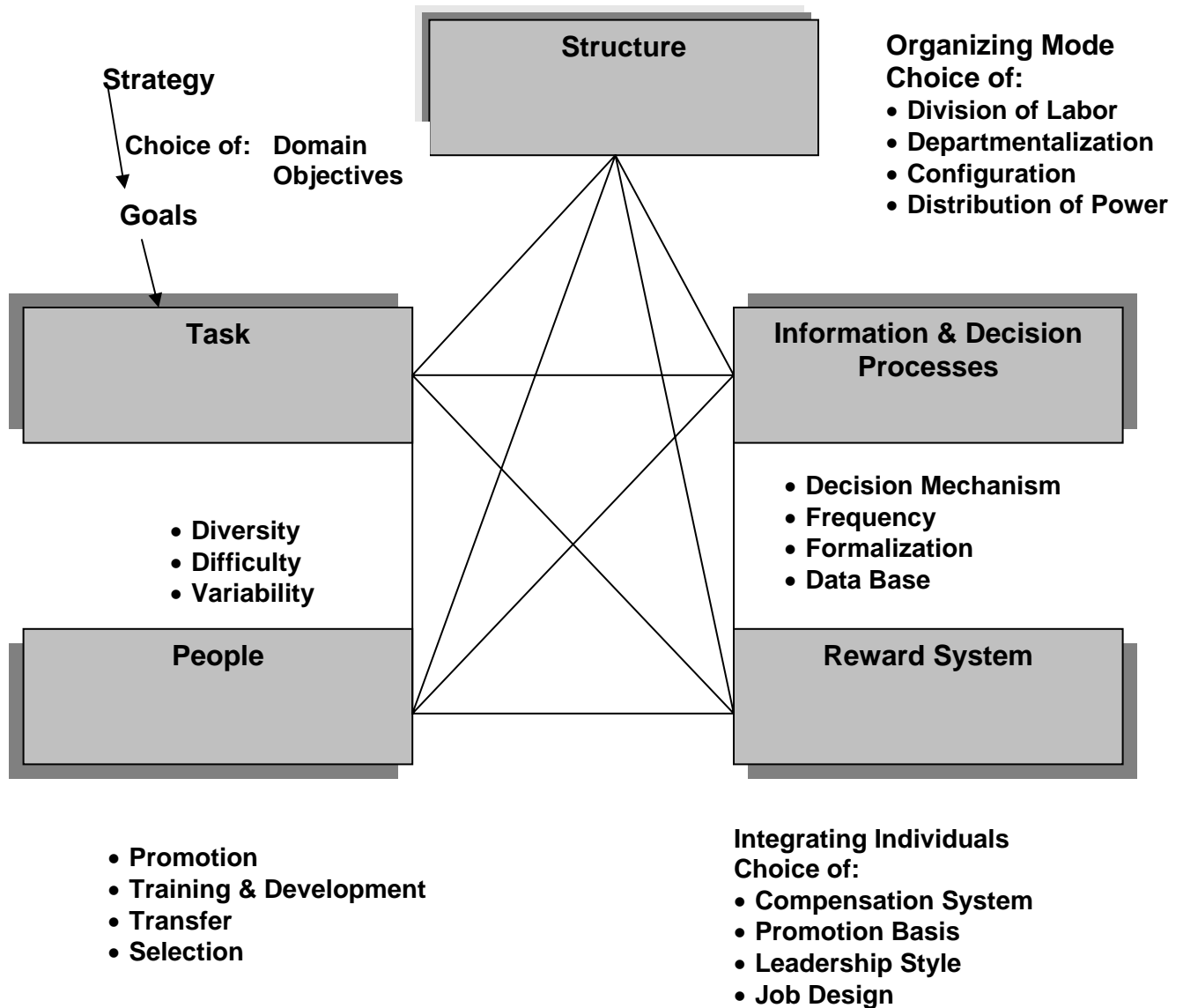
7. Transactions with stakeholder groups and constituent populations

- Which significant groups or individuals have some vested interest in this group's activities? Which of these suppliers, customers, regulators, investors, etc. are internal to the group's organization? Which are external?
- What does the group "import" from its "suppliers"?
- What does the group "export" to its "customers" or "users" or "targets"?
- By whom and how are these transactions managed?
- Through the use of which methods are these transactions managed so as to maximize mutual satisfaction and to minimize or eliminate difficulties?

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STAR MODEL

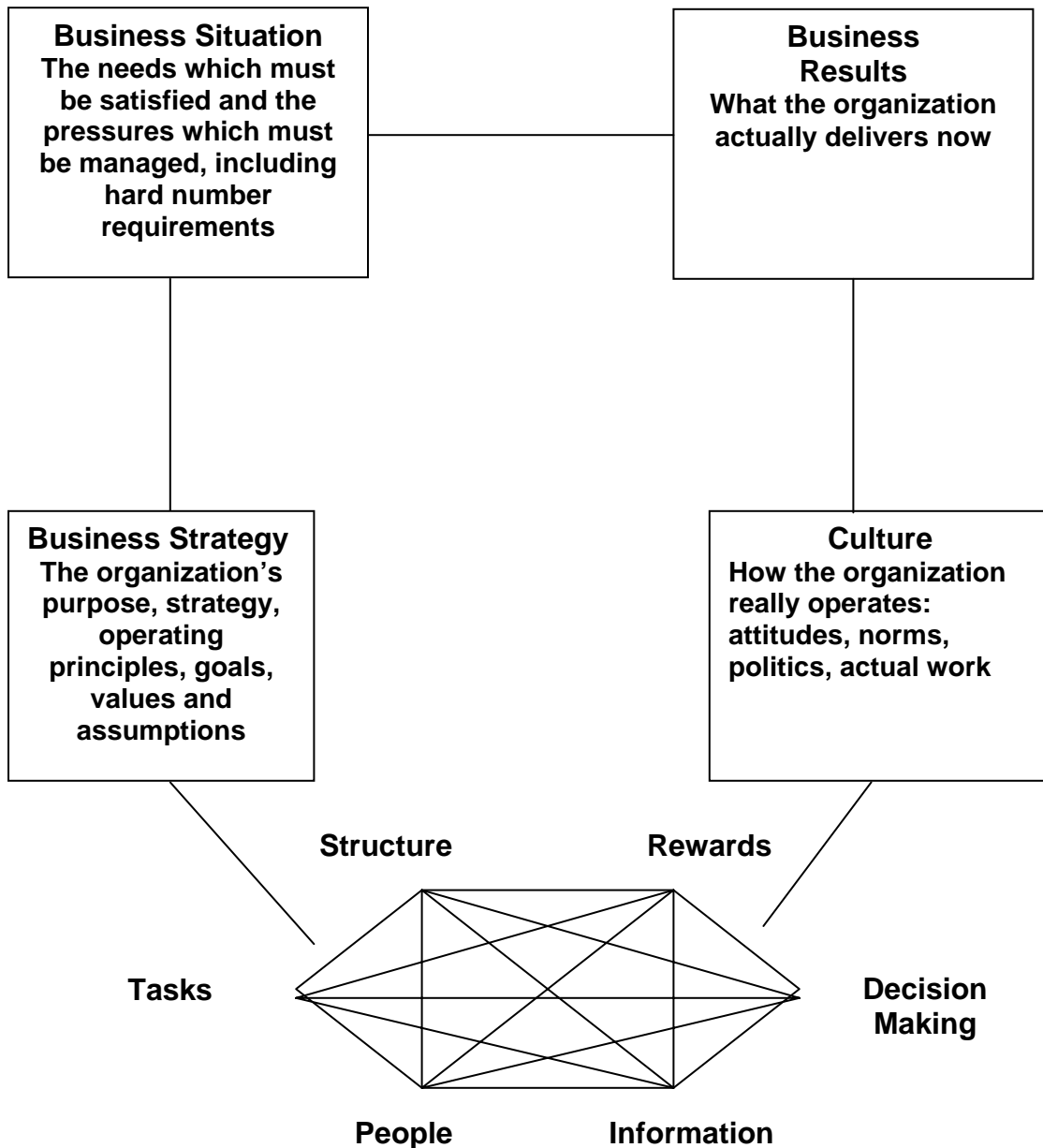
Jay R. GALBRAITH



Source: Jay R. Galbraith, *Organization Design*, Addison-Wesley, 1977

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE MODEL

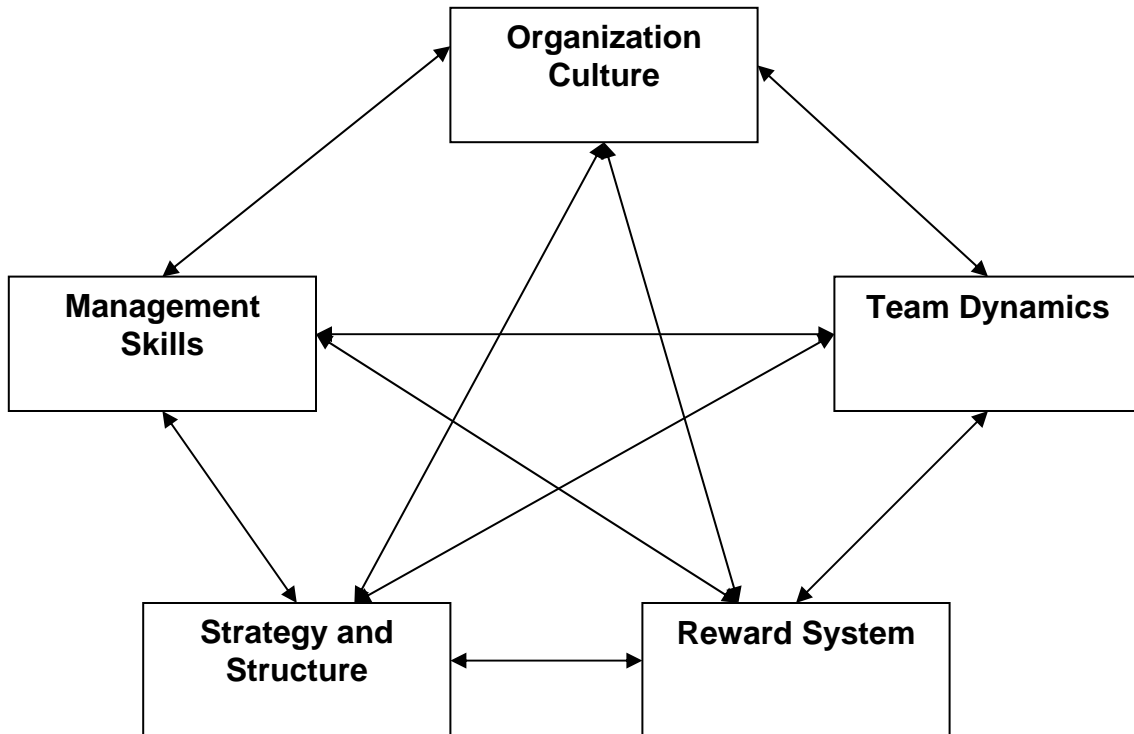
DAVID P. HANNA



Source: David P. Hanna, *Designing Organizations for High Performance*, Addison-Wesley, 1988

FIVE TRACK MODEL

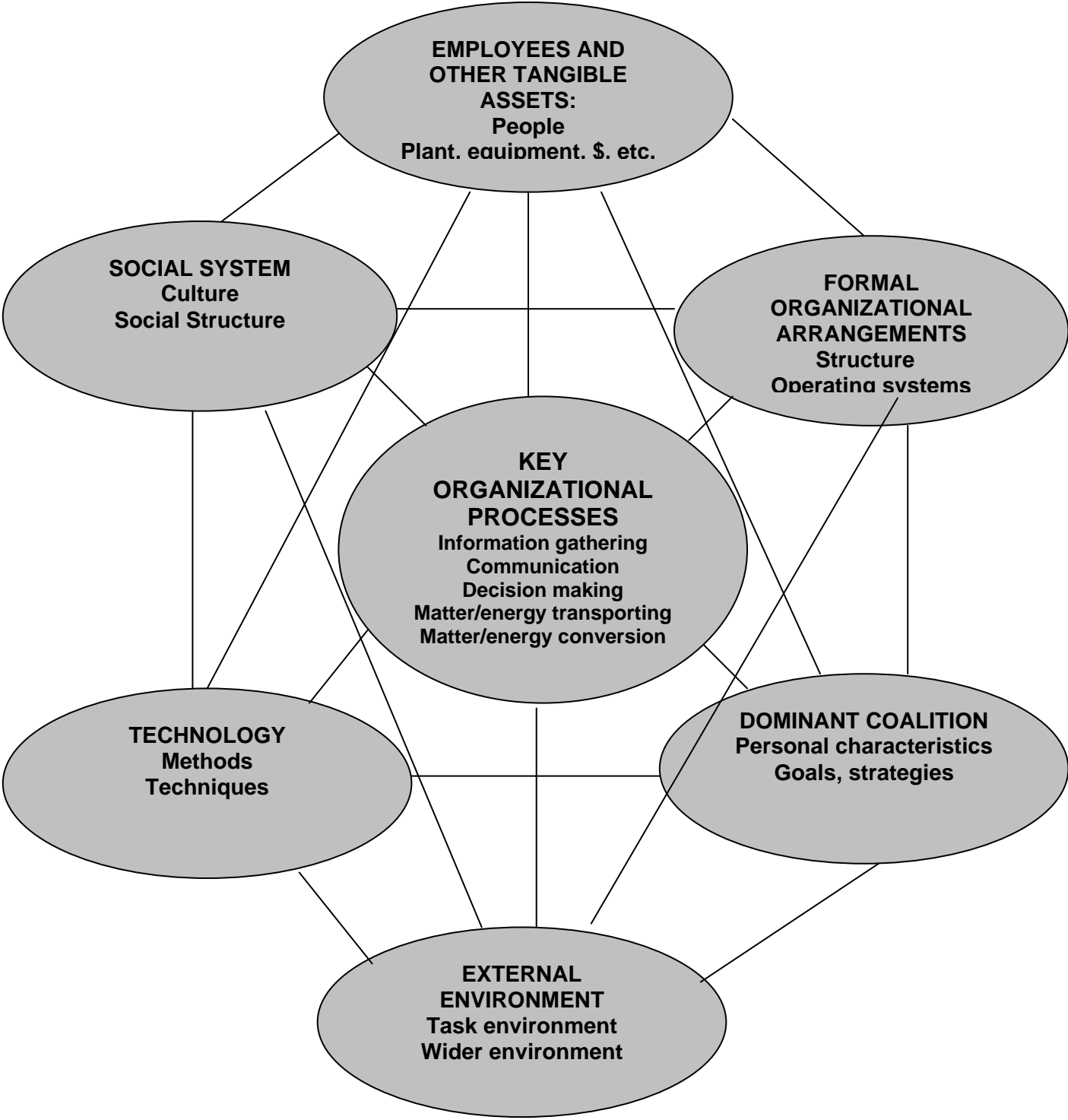
RALPH KILMANN



Source: Ralph Kilmann, *Beyond the Quick Fix*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1984

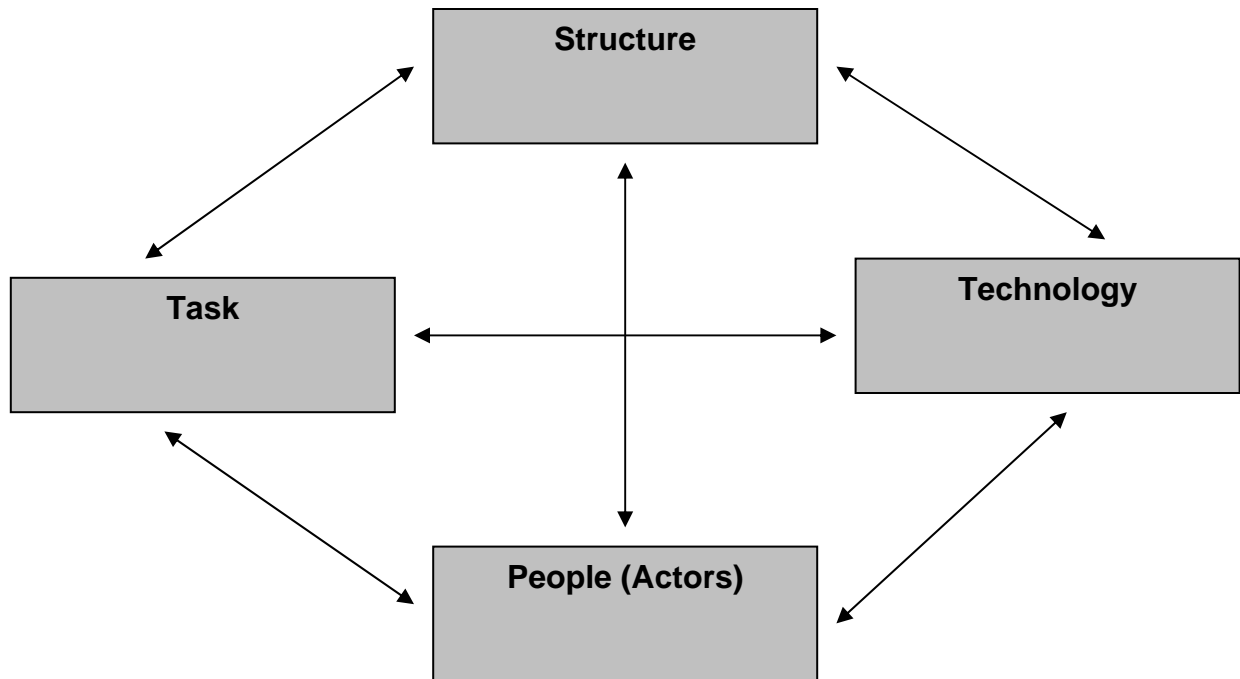
NEA/NL OD Certificate Program
Diagnosing Organizations With Impact
Kaye Craft & Arty Trost
March 29-April 1, 2004

ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS MODEL: JOHN P. KOTTER



Source: John P. Kotter, *Organizational Dynamics: Diagnosis and Intervention*, Addison-Wesley, 1978
 NEA/NTL OD Certificate Program
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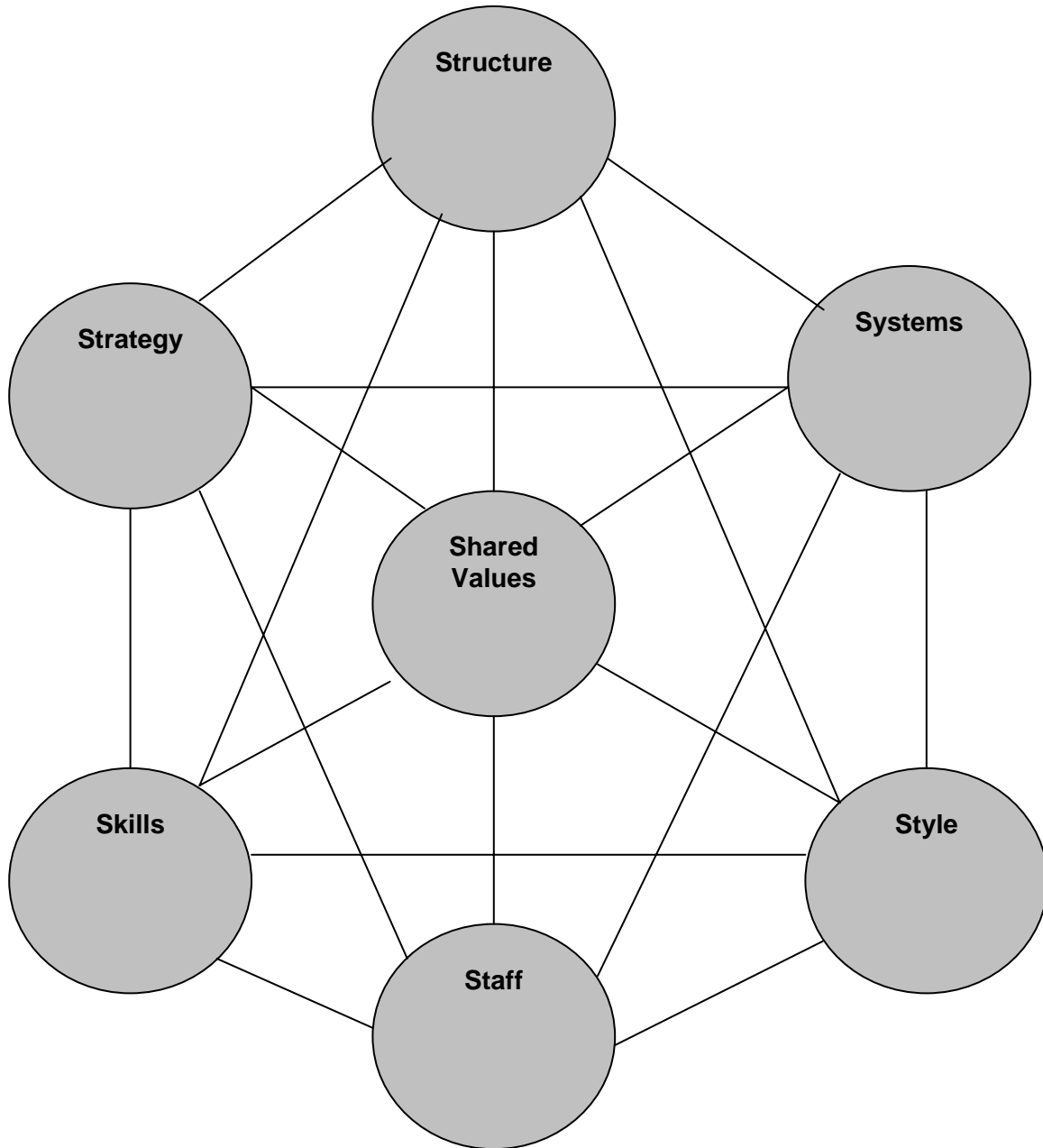
LEAVITT MODEL



Source: Harold J. Leavitt, "Applied Organizational Change in Industry: Structural, Technological and Humanistic Approaches," in James G. March (Ed.) *Handbook of Organizations*, Rand McNally and Company, 1965.

7-S MODEL

McKINSEY CONSULTING



Source: Robert H. Waterman, Jr., Thomas J. Peters & Julien R. Philips, "Structure is Not Organization," *Business Horizons*, June 1980.

NEA/NTL OD Certificate Program
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MCKINSEY'S 7 S'S MODEL

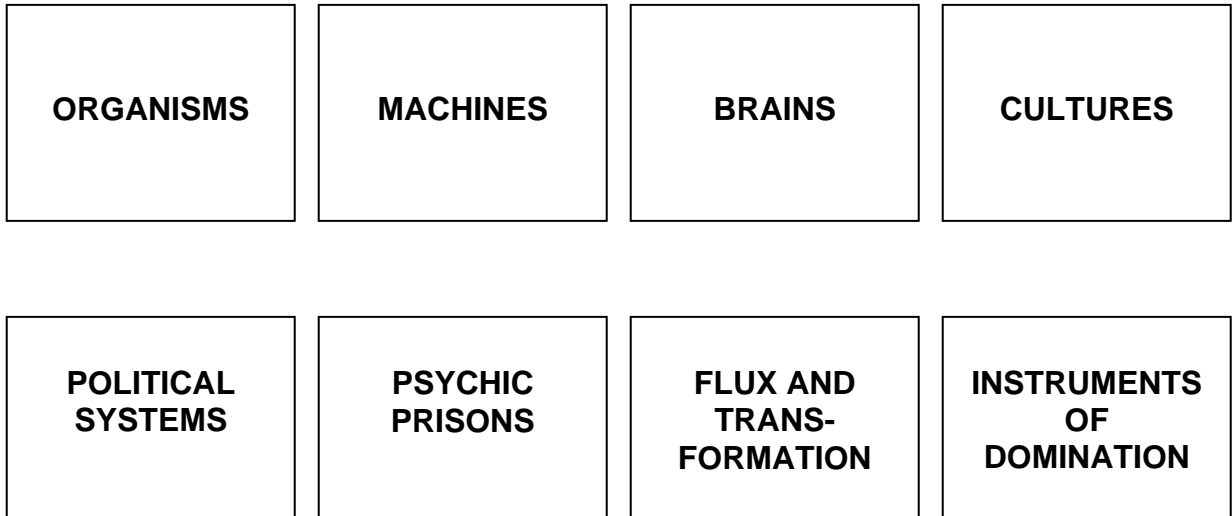
McKinsey Consulting developed a model for looking at organizations. The 7 S's Model provides an especially useful framework for reviewing the impact of change.

- **Shared Values and Beliefs:** A role of the vision statement is to impart to the organization (and externally) what the organization stands for and what it believes in.
- **Strategy:** States how an organization will attain its vision and respond to the threats and opportunities of the new mediums. Capabilities are needed in: marketing, distribution, product and service development, business requirements analysis; creation and management of alliances & partnerships.
- **Systems, including Processes:** Capabilities are required in: IT & IS, sales and service, legal, actuarial.
- **Staff:** HR management for developing the skills and aptitude for building lifetime customer relationships. Needed are policies, standards and processes re: recruitment, training & development, motivation & regards.
- **Style:** This refers to the management style best suited for the organization. The challenge for management is to use appropriate styles for the situation without confusing staff.
- **Structure:** Organizations will find that changes to processes and style inevitably require changes to their structure. (e.g. centralized, decentralized, network, matrix, process structures.)
- **Skills:** The degree to which necessary skills exist is the core of workforce planning and often a major aspect in organization diagnosis. If staff and managers are to acquire all the skills outlined above, then there needs to be an appropriate learning environment.

MORGAN METAPHORS

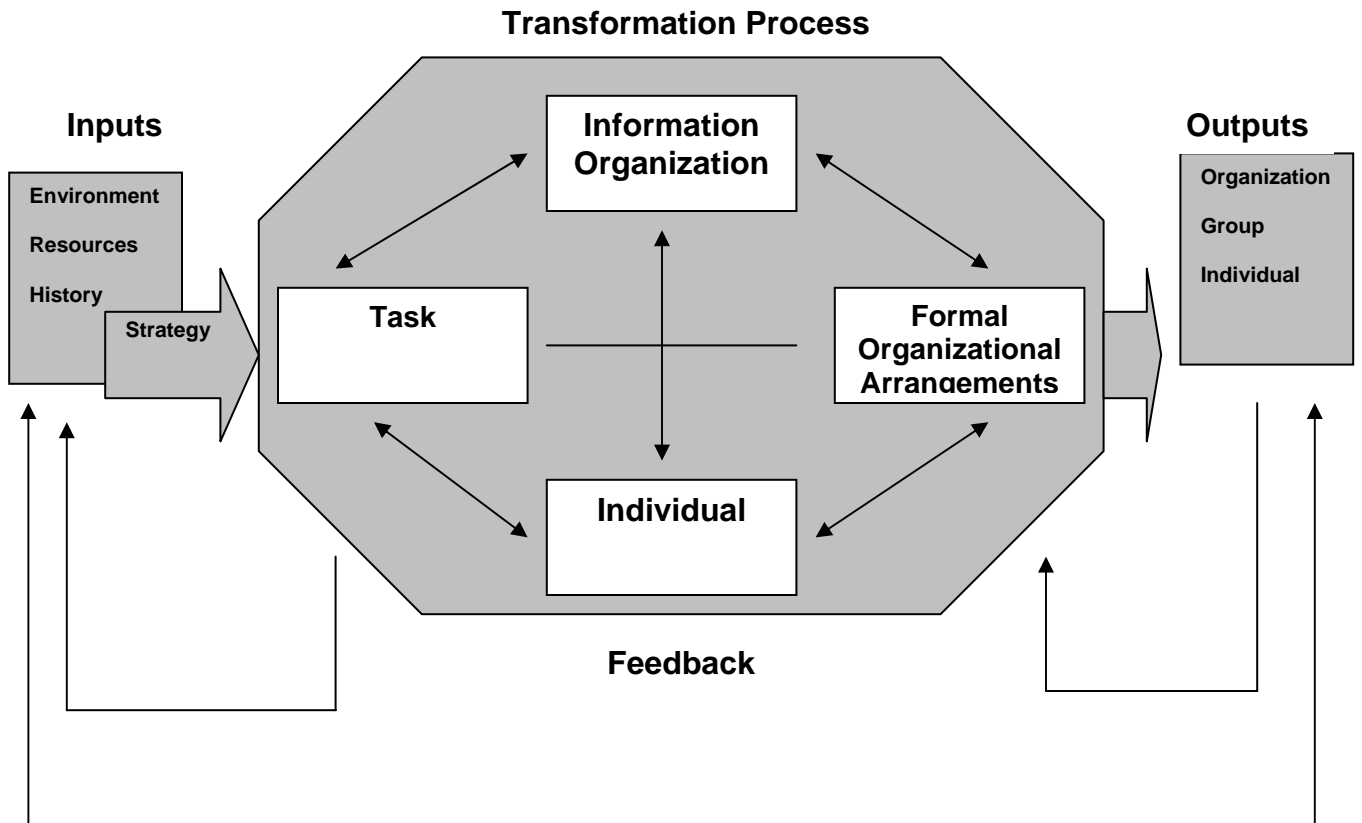
GARETH MORGAN

ORGANIZATIONS AS



Source: Gareth Morgan, *Images of Organization*, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1986 and 1997.

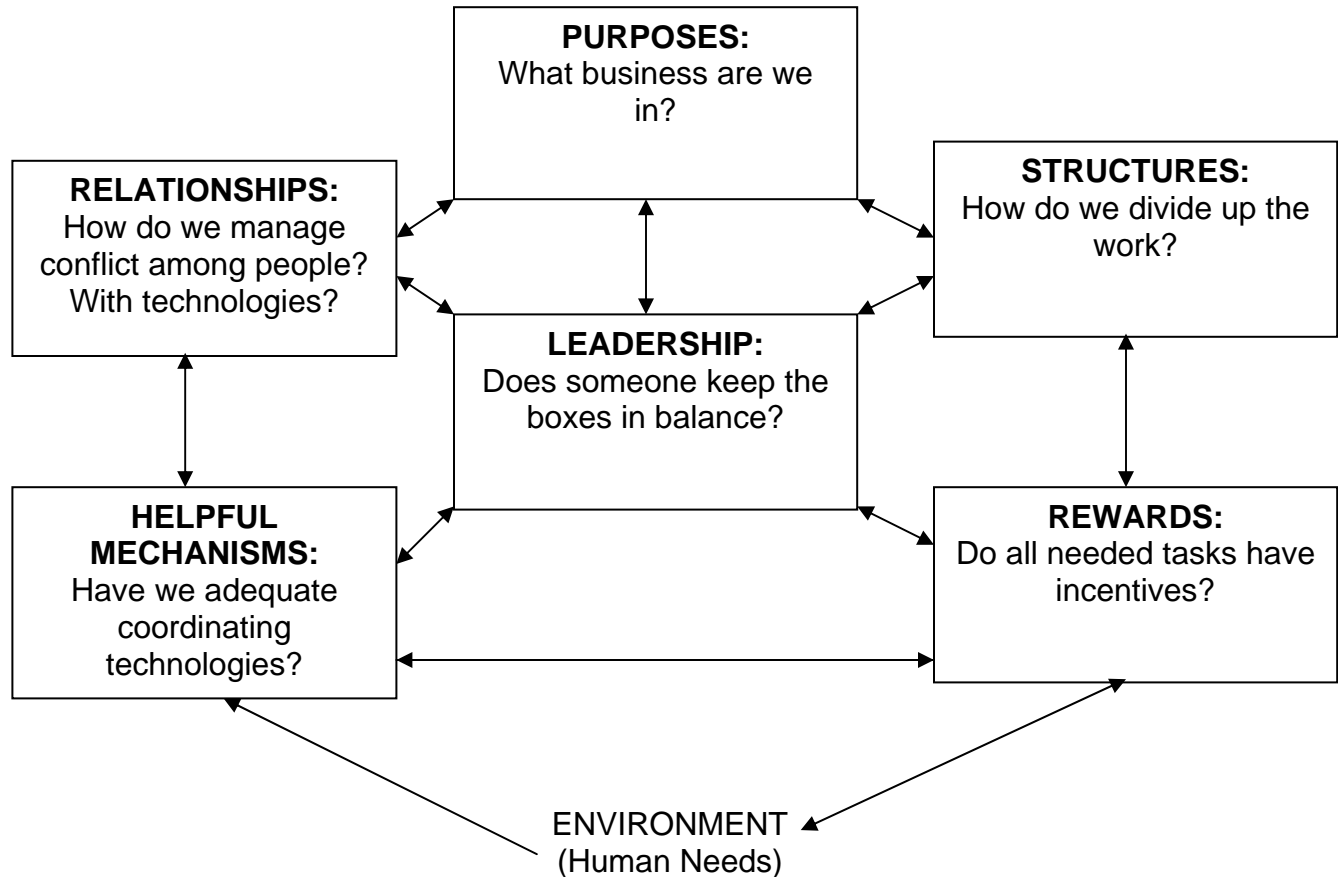
A CONGRUENCE MODEL FOR DIAGNOSING ORGANIZATION BEHAVIOR
NADLER-TUSHMAN



Source: David A. Nadler & Michael L. Tushman” A Model for Diagnosing Organization Behavior,” Organization Dynamics, Autumn, 1980

SIX-BOX DIAGNOSTIC MODEL

MARVIN R. WEISBORD



NOTE: The model can be seen as a radar screen. Organizational problems appear as “blips” of varying intensity. It is management’s unending task to scan, assure balance among the boxes, identify and close gaps between “what is” and “what ought to be,” between “what is produced,” and “what should be produced.” Leadership is responsible for providing a mechanism to maintain the scan. Moreover, closing a gap always requires the use of some helpful mechanism. Unless a mechanism exists or can be created, nothing is likely to happen.

Diagnostic tip: Identify the “missing pieces” in each box.

Organizational Diagnostic Model

1. The chart summarizes relationships among Purposes, Structure, Relationships, Rewards, Helpful Mechanisms, Leadership, Environmental Demands.
2. It assumes that Purposes will be related to Environmental demands – i.e., an organization's priorities should be based on what it must do to fulfill its mission at this time in this place.
3. Structure will be based on Purposes. In organizations, as in architecture, form follows function. For example, functional—or departmental—organization is a strong structure for developing in-depth special competence. It is much less effective in carrying out integrative projects. By contrast, a product—or program or project—organization is strong at coordinating around special purposes, and pays for this through less in-depth specialized capability, such as production or sale.

Historically, organizations have reorganized periodically in one or the other mode as environment, technologies, and strategies changed. Where both capabilities are equally important, organizations—e.g., aerospace industry, medical schools—have gone to a matrix. This requires sophisticated conflict management.

4. Relationships refers primarily to the way units are coordinated. This is another way of saying “conflict management,” for the critical problem in coordinating differentiated activities is managing inevitable conflict between them. The more complex—i.e., matrix-like—the required structure, the more conflict management becomes a critical requirement for effective organization.
5. Rewards help or inhibit the “fit” between individuals and organizational goals. Ideally, organizations should offer incentives—e.g., promotions, achievements, money—for people to do what most needs doing. In practice, reward systems sometimes work against the organization's best interest. Piecework incentive plans sometimes have this unintended consequence and, in medicine, academic promotion may hinge on research, even though a medical center is under pressure to teach and serve patients.

6. Cutting across all four issues—Purposes, Structure, Relationships, Rewards—is the notion of Helpful Mechanisms. These are procedures, policies, systems, forms, committees, agendas which contribute to appropriate Purposes, Structure, Relationships, and Rewards. An effective organization continually revises its mechanisms, eliminating some and adding others as the need arises. Whenever a “gap” between what is and what ought to be is identified, it is often discovered that no present mechanism exists to close it. Hence, the creation of new mechanisms is central to the identification and closing of gaps.
7. Only Leadership can scan the entire environment and act on behalf of the whole. This is the appropriate role for top administration—to keep the entire organization in balance, continually creating mechanisms to articulate Purposes (and change them as the environment changes), alter Structure, and provide for appropriate Relationships and Rewards.
8. The model provides a vocabulary and way of thinking about these issues.

Source: Weisbord, Marvin R., Six –Box Diagnostic Model, Consultation Skills Readings, NTL Institute, 1983