

Management Briefs

Management and Leadership Theory Made Simple

Coleman Patterson



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Preface

This book is a collection of practical writings on management and leadership topics. These writings originally appeared in the business section of the local newspaper in Abilene, Texas, U.S.A. Using examples from movies, books, sports, and everyday experiences, they are designed to introduce readers to a variety of organizational topics in a concise, fun, and interesting manner. This volume should be useful to professional and aspiring managers as well as to students of management and business.

Some of the examples mentioned in the writings are specific to an American audience and refer to specific events or times of the year (e.g., sports championships, New Year's Resolutions, etc.), but were included because of their larger underlying lessons. The original titles and publication dates of the articles appear in the appendix at the end of the book.

1. Perspectives on Organizations

1.1 Division of Labor

In 1776, Adam Smith published his famous book, *The Wealth of Nations*. In that book, he described some key economic and business principles that still hold true today. The first chapter of his book described the concepts of division of labor. His classic example describes the work processes and production of workers in a pin-making factory.

Smith described that making pins involved drawing out, straightening, cutting, and whitening wire, grinding points, and making and attaching heads to the wire. Several distinct operations were also required to make the heads. Completed pins also had to be bundled and packaged. In total, about 18 distinct tasks were required to make pins.

As described by Smith, novice workers who created pins entirely by themselves could each perhaps “make one pin in a day, and certainly could not make twenty.” Workers probably had to put on and take off gloves, locate and handle tools, move between workstations, and learn or relearn skills that had not been recently practiced. Extending Smith’s conclusions, a group of 10 novices working by themselves could produce no more than 200 pins in a day.

Smith also described the work of pin makers employed in a factory. Rather than working independently and performing all of the tasks by themselves, these workers functioned as a team and each performed only a few of the 18 pin-making tasks—which they did everyday. Smith estimated that the total daily output for this group of workers was 48,000 pins or 4,800 pins per worker each day. Smith gave three reasons for those tremendous gains in productivity.

When physical tasks are continually repeated, the body learns to automatically perform the motions with minimal concentration or mental effort—he called this dexterity of the worker. Smith also recognized that dividing labor does away with time wasted moving between work stations, locating tools, putting on equipment, and learning/relearning tasks. Lastly, by performing the same tasks day in and day out, workers can envision and construct machines to aid them in their work and to make production more efficient.

Smith suggested that the division of labor contributes to nations becoming wealthy and prosperous. He described that by everyone in a society working in a job where they could become specialists, the benefits of the division of labor would arise and considerable excess output would be produced. When division of labor occurs in every job and industry in a society, excess production would occur throughout all areas of society. By then trading the excess output of workers throughout society in a common marketplace, all people could enjoy more goods and services at lower prices than if they had all worked independently for all they needed.

In addition to the tremendous differences in output between Smith’s workers, there is another significant difference. The factory workers were organized. Organization requires a coordinating mechanism—or manager. To reap the benefits of division of labor, groups and organizations must have workers who specialize in defining jobs, training and supplying workers, and controlling the flow of work. Part of that specialization includes understanding the principles and benefits of the division of labor.

1.2 Hawthorne Studies

Efficiency is a big topic these days. With gasoline and energy prices at all-time highs, many people are looking to get the most out of every energy dollar. Some are trading in their gas-guzzling vehicles for ones that are more fuel-efficient. They want to travel further on each gallon of fuel they purchase.

The theories used to structure organizations and jobs through the Industrial Revolution and into the early 1900s were also very focused on efficiency. Companies wanted to maximize organizational output and simultaneously minimize the inputs to produce those outputs. In manufacturing, jobs were studied and tasks reduced so that each worker performed only a few distinct operations. With every worker in a factory doing one or two things over and over, workers became very efficient in their production. Employees worked long days with few breaks and had little chance to interact with others, make decisions, or give input to the production process. Workers were viewed as interchangeable parts of an efficient manufacturing machine.

Although very efficient in their production, the factories of the Industrial Revolution were rather unpleasant places to work. Performing the same repetitive tasks everyday was boring and monotonous for the workers and because many had no input in setting the terms and conditions of work, employees also tended to feel powerless and enslaved. Not until some groundbreaking research in the 1920s and 1930s did the traditional understanding of the relationship between efficiency and worker performance change.

From a multi-year study of workers at an assembly plant, known as the *Hawthorne Studies*, organizational researchers recognized the importance of paying attention to human needs and making workers feel valued. In a series of work-performance experiments, workers were allowed to give input to management decisions and permitted to interact with their coworkers (and thereby become members of a team). The experiments manipulated the hours of work and the timing and durations of lunch and rest breaks. Performance was studied across the entire series of experiments. Researchers found that performance rose across each experimental condition—even ones giving workers longer breaks and shorter work hours. Traditional organization theorists would never have predicted this finding. It would have been like turning off an efficient machine for part of the day and getting more output from it than if it had been left on for the entire day. The findings caused managers and researchers to question their assumptions and beliefs about organizations, efficiency, performance, and the importance of people in the workplace.

What arose from those studies was recognition that organizations are made up of people and not machine parts, and that by attending to basic human needs (e.g., to be recognized, to feel valued, to have input, to be part of a team, and to meaningfully interact with others) organizations can back off of efficiency and still become MORE effective and productive. Efficiency is still important to organizations, but sometimes being less efficient can be even more effective for organizations.

1.3 Emphasis on People

It has been just a little more than a century since Henry Ford and his engineers created and perfected the moving assembly line. With the development of the moving assembly line, all types of products could be manufactured in quantities and at prices never before seen in the history of mankind. Assembly line manufacturing technology ushered in the heyday of industrial production in the United States and around the world.

The metaphor that dominated management thought during the industrial revolution was a machine metaphor. Organizations were viewed as elaborate machines that existed to transform raw materials into completed products. Workers were viewed as parts of the production machine and as such, were replaceable and interchangeable. Little attention was paid to the high-level personal needs of workers—for example, growth, trust, recognition, affiliation, responsibility, appreciation, and self worth. The focus was instead on pay, performance, efficiency, and having a job.

The consequences of ignoring high-level needs were that the workers felt alienated, powerless, unappreciated, and undervalued. Turnover and absenteeism were often very high. It was not until the Western Electric Studies of the 1920s and 1930s that researchers and organizational experts began paying serious attention to the high-level needs of workers. In those studies, researchers discovered that productivity could increase when workers were allowed to contribute input to decisions, consulted on work-related issues, and permitted to interact with co-workers and form interpersonal relationships.

Even though it has been more than 70 years since the end of the Western Electric Studies, too many organizations still cling to outdated ideas about ways to manage and control their workers. Many still view workers as expenses rather than assets. In other words, they see workers as necessary costs instead of what they are—the actual organization.

Without people, organizations are simply empty buildings and unused equipment. It is people who give them life, purpose, and meaning. Healthy and vibrant organizations are those with healthy and vibrant workers. As learned from research and experience, organizations that promote feelings of growth, trust, recognition, affiliation, responsibility, appreciation, and self worth tend to have healthy and vibrant workers.

Starbucks Coffee is one company that does an exemplary job of putting an emphasis on its workers. They have built a successful company around the idea that their people are the most important asset of the business. The culture, values, policies, and reward systems are all designed to impart and reinforce the ideas that their workers, or partners, are the reasons for their success. Employees return the trust, respect, and appreciation shown toward them back to the corporation. Starbucks' success using this business philosophy has been tremendous.

The old saying that “Those who forget history are doomed to repeat it” holds true for managers and organizational leaders. Those who hold to antiquated industrial models of control and management will see the same results as managers of a century ago. Valuing employees and creating cultures that promote respect, growth, dignity, and appreciation are ways to build and run vibrant and successful organizations.

1.4.1 Systems: Types

Organizations are social entities that are made of people who work together interdependently to accomplish a common goal or set of goals. The individuals who give organizations life perform the many different tasks and functions needed for organizations to accomplish their missions. For those who study organizations and ways to improve their functioning, the concepts of Systems Theory are particularly beneficial.

A system is composed of interdependent parts that are arranged in a particular order to accomplish a purpose. Our bodies are examples of systems. They are composed of different parts, or elements, that influence and are influenced by other parts of the system. The digestive system is sub-system of the human body, and a system unto itself. It is also a containing system, or super-system, of smaller systems. The mouth, for example, is part of the digestive system and is a system unto itself. Systems are related to complementary and dependent systems. Failure to perform in one element in a system can result in a cascading failure of the system and related systems. The failure of an organ in the digestive system can result in the failure of the entire system and then failure in all dependent systems until a person's whole body ceases to function.

In the 1950s, Kenneth Boulding developed a classification for different types of systems. He arranged these from least complex to most complex. These were:

- Framework—like picture frames, tables, or chairs.
- Clockwork—like grandfather clocks, the solar system, and simple machines.
- Control—like thermostats (they control themselves within limits).
- Cell—the most basic form of life.
- Plant—living organisms with differentiated and mutually dependent parts.
- Animal—self-awareness and abilities to learn, adapt, and change behaviors.
- Human—self-consciousness in addition to self-awareness
- Social—groups of individuals with differentiated and dependent roles.
- Transcendental—ultimate sets of knowledge and truth.

The 1950s were an era when organizational theorists began shifting from “machine-like” to “life-like” views of organizations. As seen in Boulding's typology, the change from machine systems to living systems occurs between “control” and “cell” systems. The machine-like view of organizations dominated organization theory through the industrial revolution. Control and human resource management decisions were developed from a machine perspective. As discovered by later management researchers and practitioners, organizations are much more complex than originally conceived. As identified by Boulding, organizations, or social systems, are some of the most complex types of systems that there are. Organizations require considerably more guidance and control than previously realized.

The similarities in definitions and concepts between organizations and systems provides added insight into ways to structure and guide organizations. Systems theory provides managers with a way to understand the concepts of differentiation, interdependence, structure, and complexity. Awareness and understanding of these principles will help managers work more effectively with suppliers, customers, and related departments and improve the ways they guide their people, units, and organizations.

1.4.2 Systems: Balance and Coordination

Many football fans eagerly await the results of an upcoming NFL draft. Teams will take turns selecting players from a pool of talented college athletes. Teams will also trade their draft picks with others in hopes of building high-performing offensive, defensive, and special teams units. Teams will select draftees with the hopes of strengthening the weaknesses of their teams and enhancing the strengths. Teams are built with the selection of individual players.

Football is a team sport. Players must function as a single unit in order to succeed. Weak players can create vulnerabilities that can be exploited by opposing teams. However, overly strong players can also be harmful to team performance. A running back who does not wait for his linemen to execute his blocks will be ineffective and harm the team's performance. Likewise, punters who outkick their coverage can also harm the performance of their teams. Sometimes individual players have to back off of their optimal performances to enhance the overall team performance—other times, they have to exceed their normal abilities.

In addition to blending with other players, it is critically important that all the players successfully carry out their own responsibilities. Teams are composed of players who fill different roles, or positions. The specific responsibilities of players vary on each play. A lineman who misses a block, a defensive back who misses a tackle, or a kicker who misses a field goal all harm the performance of their teams. Losing one's cool and committing a personal foul also harms the whole team. Team success requires individual players to fulfill their individual responsibilities and meld their performances with those of other players.

During the draft, some of the most talented players may be passed up for selection because their talents do not match the needs of teams. The players whose talents and skills match the specific needs of teams will be selected. Teams with outstanding offensive talent will likely pass over drafting offensive players in favor of defensive or special teams players—even when the most talented players in the draft are offensive players.

The examples just described are applications of systems theory. A system is made up of interdependent and interacting elements that function together to form a whole. Systems are purposeful and are simultaneously made up of subsystems and are parts of supersystems. All organizations are systems. Individuals must fulfill their role responsibilities with attention to the performances of others in the organization. Care must be taken to balance the performances of individuals and units with others in the organization.

Over-performing elements can be just as unbalancing to an organization as those that are under-performing. A balance between all interdependent elements must be gained and maintained—including interactions with suppliers and consumers. Managers must be able to shift attention and resources to and away from elements to bring about balance and to foster optimal organizational performance. NFL coaches and owners understand these principles, and so should managers of all other types of organizations.

2. Leadership

2.1 Why Leadership?

As a teenager during the early days of the music video revolution, I remember trying to watch music videos whenever I could get the chance. One of my favorite videos was “Road to Nowhere” by the Talking Heads. Throughout the song, the lead singer is seen steadily running in place in a small, superimposed rectangle in the lower right corner of the screen while images of all types pass by in the background. The lyrics tell about being on a road to nowhere—that line is repeated many times during the song. Watching the singer continually running during the video is mesmerizing and somewhat depressing. What a sad fate it would be to perpetually run nowhere.

Unfortunately, many organizations also seem to run on the road to nowhere. Those without a clear purpose and goals, those without a vital and relevant mission, and those without people who aspire to accomplish new and interesting things are often heading nowhere. As with a ship that is pushed along aimlessly by the tide and wind, a directionless organization might find that it will eventually move away from where it started. Sometimes an aimless movement to “nowhere in particular” can result in good things for the organization. However, when the tide and wind are used in conjunction with a desired destination, navigation, course corrections, and an able crew, ships can be quickly and safely maneuvered to their destinations. Effective captains guide effective ships—they prepare their ships for the journey, they constantly monitor environmental conditions, they plan and follow navigable routes, and they assemble and work with able crews.

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Effective organizations need effective leadership to guide them “somewhere.” Leadership is about vision, direction, and movement. Effective leaders provide followers with destinations to which they aspire and they work with their followers to reach them. When the journey to the destination seems perilous, leaders provide their followers with confidence and assurance. Effective leaders prepare their organizations for the journey and they constantly scan the environment for threats that might slow down or impede their journey and for opportunities that could move them along faster. They chart courses of movement appropriate for the abilities and limits of their organizations and they make periodic adjustments to their planned routes. Effective leaders also build effective work teams. They inspire team members to work toward desirable destinations and they work with followers to reach their goals.

If your organization is one that aspires to “maintaining the status quo” or simply “going with the flow,” your organization may be on the road to nowhere—and that is not typically a place that organizations seek to go. To go “somewhere” in a purposeful and coordinated manner, organizations need leaders and leadership throughout their ranks—from executive-level positions all the way down to first-level positions. When destinations are reached, leaders guide their organizations to new and better destinations. Vision, goals, direction, teamwork, and continuous change are the ingredients of leadership and the keys to keeping organizations off of the road to nowhere.

2.2.1 Defining Leadership: Leadership and Management

Royal blue and navy blue...can you see them in your mind? When only one of these colors is present by itself, one might refer to the color simply as “blue.” However, when the two shades are presented together, a different language is needed to capture the differences between the two. They are both blue, yet they are different shades of blue. If we use only the word “blue” to describe both shades, we lose out on the ability to describe the concepts most fully and accurately.

Likewise, the terms manager and leader have similar, yet different meanings. As an example, think about a “manager” of a city league softball team. The manager is one who recruits players, attends manager meetings, submits rosters, calls and organizes practices, develops and completes team line-ups before each game, assigns players to positions and batting order, meets with the umpires, and provides required equipment and paperwork for play. Managers are planners and organizers, they foresee difficulties and exceptions that might hinder the group from accomplishing its goals and develop contingency plans to head off potential problems, and they keep the team on track

The team leader does different things from the team manager. The team leader may not be the same person as the team manager. The team leader is one who provides a personal example of excellence and teamwork to teammates. Team leaders provide vision and inspiration to the team, they hustle hard and they encourage and motivate teammates to perform to the best of their abilities and to work for the good of the team. They are confident in their vision for the team and they exude this confidence into their teammates. Leaders communicate well with their colleagues, they lift up and support teammates, they are humble, and they inspire others to reach for something bigger and better.

In today's culture, we many times use the terms manager and leader synonymously. However, as with color, true analysis of the concepts can only happen when we have words to describe the different shades. In formal organizations, managers typically have formal authority—powers that reside in the position that they occupy within an organization. Leadership does not come from a position in an organization; rather, it is earned and given to someone by other organizational members. It is possible to be a good manager and not a good leader, a poor manager and a good leader, or both (or neither). Effective organizations require effective management and leadership.

In many cases, the individuals who advance through organizations do so because they are good managers and leaders. They have the abilities to plan and organize and the abilities to work with others, to inspire, motivate, encourage, and communicate. The challenge for us all is to identify and develop our strengths and weaknesses as managers AND leaders. For organizations, the challenge is to identify and train current and future organizational members with the skills and abilities required of effective management and leadership.

2.2.2 Defining Leadership: Formal and Informal Leaders

In American culture, the word “leader” is used to mean many things. Many people equate holding a position of authority with leadership. A promotion into a management position, for example, is viewed by many as moving into a leadership position. If “leader” is meant to mean power, influence, and control, then an appointment to a management position is a leadership position. However, when the concepts of authority, power, leadership, and management are broken down and analyzed, differences between the concepts can be identified. Being a team leader, for example, is not the same as being a team manager. A more thorough investigation of these topics is needed to better understand their differences and similarities.

Leadership is a particular type of authority relationship. Authority comes from the power that one holds over followers or subordinates. In some cases, authority comes from the position that one holds in an organization, as described in the constitution or by-laws of the organization, and other times it is willingly given to the power holder by the followers. The power gained from others arises from being viewed as special in some way. Admiration, respect, charisma, expertise, and other personal characteristics can all add to perceptions of personal power and authority. Power and authority gained from the position that one holds is termed “position power” and that which is earned and gained in the minds of people is called “personal power.”

Amitai Etzioni, in his classic works on authority, compliance, and organizations, made distinctions between what he called officials, informal leaders, and formal leaders. He said that those who gain their authority over others solely from the positions that they occupy are called officials. Athletes comply with the rulings of referees and umpires in athletic events because of the authority vested in those positions—athletes and coaches do not comply because of personal characteristics of the officials.

On most sports teams, there are frequently players who arise as team leaders. They become team leaders not because of positions that they occupy, but because they are viewed as special. Team leaders are the ones who inspire, motivate, and guide their teams with their effort, hustle, and performance. Etzioni called those who influence others solely through the use of personal power “informal leaders.”

Formal leaders, as described by Etzioni, are those who possess both personal and position power. A well-respected and inspirational head coach would be a formal leader. Such a coach possesses position power and personal power. Etzioni uses the term “leader” to refer to those who possess personal power—as with an informal team leader or a formal inspirational coach.

Promotion into a management position is often accompanied by an increase in position power. However, true leadership is not dependent upon position—it is related to personal power. A promotion into a new management position can have the effect of turning an informal leader into a formal leader or adding more position power to someone who was already a formal leader. It can also create officials.

2.2.3 Defining Leadership: Authority and Leadership

When many people hear the word “leader,” a variety of titles and positions come to mind. President, chief executive officer, manager, principal, pastor, coach, and general are some titles that are associated with leaders and leadership. In many cases, the individuals who rise to such positions do so because they possess leadership abilities and qualities. Owning such titles, however, does not guarantee that the person filling that organizational role is actually a leader. Titles in organizations convey authority. Authority is power that is vested in a certain position and is formally defined in an organization’s personnel manual and bylaws or constitutions. Leadership is different.

A simple, but powerful example to get people to think about leadership versus other forms of power and influence involves placing a string on a table and asking a volunteer to “lead” the string across the table with one finger. Invariably, volunteers will place a finger on one end of the string and draw it easily across the table with the string “following” the finger.


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In a second demonstration, the string is “pushed” from behind by a single finger. This method requires the influencer to adjust to the resistance, bending, and compression of the string in front of the finger and readjust his or her pushing to the parts that are falling behind. After this demonstration, similarities and differences between the two methods are noted. In both cases, a single finger was used to move the string across the table, but conceptually, the two methods are quite different.

The first method, pulling the string behind the finger, is what we commonly think of as leadership—the “influencer” is out in front and the group follows. In organizations, this type of influence arises when followers perceive an individual to be worth following and they readily fall into line behind the individual. Perceptions of worthiness arise when the influencer is respected by the followers—for his or her energy, commitment, charisma, and concern for the followers and the goals of the organization. Leaders, or pullers, inspire followers to join them in the pursuit of organizational goals. Followers willingly respond to the influence of leaders because of who they are, what they represent, and the rewards that come from accomplishing goals.

The second method, pushing from behind, demonstrates another form of power and influence. “Pushers” in organizations often rely on threats, coercion, and intimidation to get their people to perform. Instead of leading their followers in the charge toward a goal, pushers prefer lagging behind their workers and commanding them to perform. Pushers derive their power from the authority vested in their organizational positions. They do not inspire extraordinary amounts of commitment or dedication from their people.

Holding a position of authority in an organization does not make one a leader. Leadership has to be earned in the eyes, minds, and hearts of the followers. True organizational leaders are those who inspire commitment, loyalty, and dedication to themselves, their organizations, and their goals from their followers.

2.3.1 Leadership Theory: Situational Leadership Theory

Leadership has been around as long as people have lived and worked in groups. The Old Testament and other ancient texts are full of examples of the accounts and accomplishments of leaders. The ancient Egyptians even had hieroglyphic symbols for leadership, leader, and follower 5,000 years ago.

The formal study of leadership, using the procedures and principles of the scientific method, is relatively new—within the past 100 years. Beginning first with an analysis of traits and characteristics of leaders, the field then moved into an analysis of leader behaviors. Researchers concluded that there are two types of behaviors that leaders exhibit—task-oriented and people-oriented. Leadership researchers from Ohio State University labeled the two types of behaviors “Initiating Structure” and “Consideration.” Initiating structure refers to direction, goal facilitation, task-related feedback, well-defined patterns of organization, and procedure. Consideration, on the other hand, refers to behaviors stressing friendship, mutual trust, respect, interpersonal warmth, concern for the feelings of followers, and participative communication. Some researchers of this era concluded that leaders who exhibited high-task and high-people behaviors were most effective in the workplace. Those beliefs led to the idea of “Universal Leadership”—where the “universally” best style of leadership was the combination of high-task and high-people behaviors.

The proposition that there was a “best” style of leadership caused some researchers to reexamine and refine their models and thinking. With that reexamination, the contingency era of leadership thought was born. It was realized that characteristics of the situation help determine the most appropriate and effective combination of task and people behaviors. Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard hypothesized that “follower maturity” (or follower readiness) was the situational characteristic that determined the optimal combination of task and people behaviors. Hersey and Blanchard describe follower maturity as a combination of willingness and ability of followers to perform a task. As followers increase in willingness and ability, their maturity levels increase and the combinations of task and people behaviors required to most effectively guide them change. As follower maturity increases, the required levels of task behaviors decrease. People behaviors increase through the middle levels of maturity before dropping at higher levels of maturity.

According to Hersey and Blanchard’s Situational Leadership Theory, followers who are unwilling and unable to perform a task are of lowest follower maturity and require a “telling” (high task, low people) style of leadership. As followers increase in maturity, leaders should advance to “selling” (high task, high people), “participating” (low task, high people), and “delegating” (low task, low people) styles of leadership—each one appropriate for a progressively higher level of follower maturity.

Hersey and Blanchard’s model makes it clear that leaders need to adjust their behaviors and styles of leadership toward followers in relation to their degrees of task-related maturity. Effective leaders can identify the appropriate degrees of task and people behaviors required in all types of work situations. Effective leaders recognize that people, tasks, and situations change and that leadership styles must also change to bring about optimal compliance and performance from their people.

2.3.2 Leadership Theory: Idiosyncrasy Credits

Go open a checking account at a local bank or credit union and you will be required to make an opening deposit before you can begin to use the account. Over time, money can be deposited into the account and money withdrawn for a variety of purposes. As the amount of money in the account increases, the account owner can make larger withdrawals. Large withdrawals require correspondingly large deposits to replenish and maintain a healthy account balance. The trick to maintaining a healthy balance is to deposit more than you withdraw and to have enough reserve money in the account to cover unforeseen expenses. When an account balance drops too far below the required minimum balance, the account might be closed and the relationship between the customer and bank terminated.

Organizational researcher Edwin Hollander identified leadership concepts that are analogous to the principles of banking and account management. Hollander described that individuals bank “influence” credits in the minds of their followers and workers. The more of these “Idiosyncrasy Credits” that leaders have in their accounts, the more influence they have over followers. When account balances drop too low, leaders lose their abilities to influence and to bring about change in their followers.

Idiosyncrasy credits are earned through demonstrated competence and shared values. Because leadership is an attribution process, whereby individuals are deemed to be leaders in the minds of their followers, the amounts of idiosyncrasy credits available to leaders might differ across individual followers. Successful and positive experiences between followers and leaders result in “deposits” to the leader’s power and influence account. When leaders become associated with organizational failures and mishaps or when they act too far outside the bounds of acceptable group behavior, their power and influence balances are reduced.

New organizational leaders typically bring with them an “opening balance” of idiosyncrasy credits from previous experiences or through their formal organizational titles. Over time, through their interactions with followers, leaders can gain or lose credits. Leaders of all types, but especially new leaders, should carefully build idiosyncrasy credits with their followers by demonstrating appropriate group behaviors and proving competence to their followers through gradual change and success. It is important that leaders carefully choose the issues they are willing to challenge so that they build a record of success—and thereby continually add to their account balances.

Charismatic leaders and agents of radical organizational change are the high rollers of power and influence. Leaders who present visions that differ substantially from the status quo or demand radical changes in organizations risk losing all of their idiosyncrasy credits if they are rejected or fail. When those leaders succeed, however, they are bestowed with tremendous amounts of power and influence from followers and organizational members—which allow them to suggest and bring about more change. Cult leaders and charismatic leaders exert considerable influence over their followers because they are perceived as owning extraordinary amounts of power and influence. When those leaders fail, however, their power balances quickly diminish and they may eventually be asked to leave the organization.

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2.3.3 Leadership Theory: Bases of Social Power

A quick word association game on the word “power” often brings forth such concepts as: manipulation, control, dominance, or subordination—words that have negative connotations in our society. While power, in many cases, tends to be viewed negatively it is in reality neutral; it is neither good nor bad. It is the way that power is used that determines whether it is viewed in a negative or positive light.

Electricity is similarly neither good nor bad. Electricity can be used beneficially to power houses, offices, machinery, and tools that make people’s lives better. However, electricity can also be used for harmful and destructive purposes. Whether we view electricity as good or bad often comes from an evaluation of its use.

From an organizational perspective, power is the ability to influence. Influence refers to change—if something has been influenced, it has been changed. Power is needed by organizational leaders to make things happen. It is important that organizational leaders understand various types of power and when the different types of power are most appropriate to use.

One of the most well known conceptualizations of social power was developed in the middle of the 20th century by researchers John French and Bertram Raven. They identified five bases, or sources, of power. Expert power comes from perceptions of expertise or knowledge, referent power arises when one is admired and respected by followers, legitimate power emanates from the formal authority vested in one’s position within an organization, reward power comes from the ability to give rewards, and coercive power resides in the ability to administer threats and punishment.

Further evaluation of French and Raven’s taxonomy reveals two actual sources of leader power—those vested in the person and those in the position. Expert and referent powers are personal powers that are attributed to particular leaders by followers. Legitimate, reward, and coercive powers come with the organizational positions that individuals occupy. Organizational leaders should try to develop as much power as possible—both personal and positional. While it may never have to be drawn on, it is good to have excess power in reserve should it ever be needed.

Effective organizational leaders understand when to draw upon and use the various types of power that they possess. When mere compliance and obedience are required, coercive powers might be sufficient. Administering rewards for compliance might bring about a greater sense of follower willingness and commitment than coercive power when the rewards are viewed as desirable. The best follower outcomes tend to arise with the use of the personal powers—expert and referent. In such cases, compliance typically results as well as feelings of commitment, satisfaction, and internal reward. However, trying to influence uninterested, unwilling, and unmotivated followers with personal powers will not yield optimal organizational and follower outcomes. Using coercive power to bring about compliance from highly committed, willing, and involved followers will likewise result in suboptimal follower outcomes—maybe even including feelings of manipulation, control, dominance, and subordination.

2.3.4 Leadership Theory: Machiavellianism

For those who have seen *Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement*, you might remember the scene where Viscount Mabrey teaches his nephew, Nicholas Devereaux, how to always hit a bull's-eye in darts. The method, which Mabrey shows to Nicholas, is one that he learned from his friend “Niccolo Machiavelli.” The secret method of hitting a bull's-eye was to walk to the target with the dart in hand and stick it in the bull's-eye. When young Nicholas suggested that such a method was cheating, his uncle wholeheartedly agreed.

For most people, that scene would pass by with little notice or understanding. However, serious students of organization and management recognize and appreciate the reference. “Machiavellianism” is a well-studied concept in management research and a seemingly well-practiced (unfortunately) concept in the work place.

Niccolo Machiavelli was born on May 3, 1469, in Florence, Italy. He wrote a pamphlet (or book) for the ruling Medici family in Florence that outlined ways to gain and hold political power. In his writing, he expressed views suggesting, “The ends justify the means.” While it is better to be forthright, honest, and noble, sometimes situations require that power-holders be devious, ruthless, and dishonest to make desirable outcomes arise. And when rulers must be devious and manipulative, Machiavelli suggested, it is important that their people perceive them as forthright, honest, and noble.

Machiavelli's ideas gained him notoriety. Suggesting that rulers (i.e., political, organizational, and other) cheat, manipulate, and act in devious ways for personal gain is appalling to us today and it was also appalling to Machiavelli's contemporaries (at least they gave the public impression that the ideas were appalling).

Contemporary researchers Richard Christie and Florence Geis developed a test for measuring a person's level of Machiavellianism. The test asks respondents a series of questions and categorizes people by their scores into two groups: low Machs and high Machs. Low Machs believe that leading clean, moral lives are the proper ways live, interact with others, and get ahead in the world. High Machs believe that looking out for one's self-interest and well being is the best strategy to getting ahead—and if that requires deception, promises, and/or punishments to get what they want, they will do it.

Machiavellianism is alive and well in our society. The recent series of well-publicized corporate scandals from the past half-decade attest to that fact. Machiavellianism also happens in less obvious ways in organizations, such as: only revealing information to others when it is personally beneficial, using rewards to bring about one's desired actions, using flattery to shape attitudes, and making insincere promises to others to foster commitment and loyalty. Researchers have also examined Machiavellianism and its role in marketing and impression management.

Organizational leaders need to be aware of Machiavellianism and how it exists within their workplaces. Creating moral and ethical organizational cultures, transmitting clear ethical guidelines and expectations to employees, and leading by example are ways to combat the harmful effects of Machiavellianism.

2.3.5 Leadership Theory: Response to Authority

“Just say no!” was a popular campaign theme for the anti-drug movement. At times, it is also necessary to say no to superiors and those in authority. Not doing so can be costly and harmful.

A recent series of television news shows demonstrated the natural willingness of people to comply with orders and requests from others who are perceived to be in positions of authority. In one such story, an individual posing as a police officer made phone calls to fast-food restaurants across the country asking store managers to detain and strip search employees as part of an alleged investigation. Several managers complied. One female employee was actually made to perform jumping jacks in the nude in compliance with the orders of the store manager as instructed by the voice on the phone. The events of the story were all caught on the restaurant’s security camera.

To explain why such disturbing and ridiculous-seeming things occur, ABC News drew on the work of Stanley Milgram and his team of researchers at Yale University in the early 1960s. Milgram was interested in the relationship between authority and compliance. His interest in this topic came from the atrocities performed by the Nazis during World War II. He sought to understand why and how people could perform unspeakable and horrific acts on others.

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Milgram's classic and controversial studies involved a series of experiments that set subjects up as teachers. The subjects in the experiments were instructed to administer electric shocks to learners (who were actually involved in the experiments) when they answered questions incorrectly. At predetermined times in the experiments, learners expressed pain and discomfort from the shocks, voiced their objections to continuing the experiment, demanded to be released from their connection to the shock machine, and fell silent after acting that they experienced a heart attack.

Over the objections of the learners, a large percentage of subjects administered and continued to administer progressively higher shocks simply because they were told to do so by an authority figure—a man in a lab coat who was perceived to be in charge of the situation. When subjects expressed their desire to cease the experiments and shocks, the authority figure told them to continue and assumed responsibility for the outcomes.

Milgram's studies demonstrated the tendency for individuals to comply with the orders of people who are perceived to be in positions of power and authority, even when the orders and actions might be immoral, unethical, or illegal. Perceptions of status, power, and authority can sometimes lead lower-level participants to override their own senses of morality and basic judgment. An environment and culture that encourages its people to “just follow orders” is one that is destined to fall victim to the abuse of power by corrupt people and policies.

Bad things can happen when authority is followed blindly and without question. Many of the ethics scandals that have plagued our society over the past years could have easily been averted by one or more bold people. It is required of educated and moral people to sometimes say no, and disobey.

2.3.6 Leadership Theory: Citizen Leadership

Braveheart, Mel Gibson's 1995 movie about the Scottish freedom fighter William Wallace, is a great case study in leadership. Through inspirational acts and appeals, persuasive communication, vision setting, personal example, risk taking and self-sacrifice, Wallace rallies his countrymen to fight and defeat the English in battle. The contrasts of Wallace's character to those of King Edward I (Longshanks), the noblemen, and Robert the Bruce and his father provide additional insight into the dynamics of true leadership.

Whereas Longshanks ordered his troops into battle and oversaw the fighting from the safety of a distant hilltop, Wallace personally led the charge into battle and fought alongside the men who believed in and followed him. Whereas Robert the Bruce and his noblemen were tempted by Longshanks' offers of land and titles, Wallace wanted nothing but freedom for his people. And whereas self-interest, power, and political maneuvering drove the actions of the noblemen, Wallace's motives were portrayed as pure and selfless—for the benefits of his people and future generations of Scotsmen.

Toward the end of movie, Robert the Bruce finally grasped the true meaning of leadership. In anguish, he told his father, “Men fight for me because if they do not, I throw them off my land and I starve their wives and children. Those men who bled the ground red at Falkirk fought for William Wallace.” The film ends with Robert the Bruce taking up the cause of William Wallace and leading his men into battle against the English.

Leadership is a common word that is used in all types of organizations. Although it is commonly used, it is less commonly practiced. How many people can say that they have worked with people who could be called visionary, inspirational, and self-sacrificing? How many “leaders” have you worked with that possesses pure and unalterable motives and really look out for the needs and interests of others? In what circumstances have you encountered such leaders?

Richard Couto, in his writings on Citizen Leadership, argued that our society is filled with leaders of extraordinary quality who work out of the public spotlight in the service of societal needs and ills. Citizen leaders, as Couto called them, rally and mobilize others to remedy needs in their communities without receiving the usual types of honor and reward that are desired by those in paid positions in for-profit organizations. Citizen leaders put their causes ahead of themselves and work relentlessly to enlist others to join the cause and then mobilize their efforts and public sentiment toward remedying the problem—sometimes at great personal cost.

The core ideas of leadership that are evident in Citizen Leadership are equally important in for-profit organizations. Today’s business world is in desperate need of leaders—the popular and professional management literature says so. Like Robert the Bruce, managers and executives must realize that people rally around leaders and the visions and causes that they espouse and if they only rely upon position and authority to get workers to perform, they will not be viewed as leaders.

2.3.7 Leadership Theory: Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is a popular term in management and organizational circles these days. Churches, schools, volunteer organizations, and businesses of all types have jumped on the servant leadership bandwagon, but how many actually understand the concept and appreciate how drastically different it is from traditional models of management?

Robert Greenleaf coined the term “Servant Leader” to describe a leadership style characterized by serving and meeting the needs of people. He argued that the conscious desire to serve others eventually creates a desire to lead. Individuals who seek to be servants first and then rise to positions of leadership in organizations tend to interact with others and guide organizations differently than people who aspire to be leaders first. Servants as leaders seek to meet the highest priority needs and interests of their people. Servant leaders desire for their people to grow and to “...become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants.”


Traditional management thinking suggested that workers follow the commands and dictates of their superiors. Superiors made decisions and retained control over all the dimensions of the work and organization. Workers acted as the hands and feet of management, carrying out the will of the decision-making brain. In traditional management, organizations were viewed as machines and workers were viewed as machine parts. When workers broke down or gave up, management would replace them with other workers who would comply with orders and efficiently perform their work. Power and control resided with management; workers merely did what they were told to do.

Rather than tell, servant leaders ask. Servant leaders ask people about their needs and desires and ask for worker input on decisions affecting the organization. Servant leaders treat their followers as self-active, responsible, and intelligent people rather than mindless machine parts. By attending to worker needs, servant leaders free their followers from obstacles and barriers to performance and allow them to figure out and suggest ways to improve their work. They allow workers to take ownership in the workplace and the decisions affecting the organization. In the process, workers develop feelings that they are appreciated, respected, and trusted. By empowering workers and giving away authority, servant leaders actually gain more power from their followers.

Being a servant leader does not mean being a doormat to workers. Effective parents serve their children while guiding them in positive directions and steering them away from harmful or unhealthy decisions. Effective parents allow children to grow and explore new things, but are also willing and able to give corrective feedback when necessary. The goal of any parent-child relationship is for the child to meet or exceed the abilities and accomplishments of the parent. A servant leader’s relationship with followers is no different.

The ideas that managers should serve and develop workers into employees who self-actively manage and make decisions for an organization and that superiors are servants of the followers is backwards from traditional management thinking. The success of servant leaders comes from serving the needs of others.

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2.3.8 Leadership Theory: Leader-Member Exchange

Many of the theories that management researchers, consultants, and practitioners study are done so with the hopes of applying them in the workplace. Theories are explanations for how things work. They are developed and refined through research and the scientific method.

When absenteeism increases or employee performance drops, it is important that managers know how to make corrective actions. The interrelationship among the variables in a theory permits inferences about ways to bring about desired outcomes. Because they are often developed and used to solve actual problems, many organizational theories are “prescriptive” in nature.

Other types of theories are “descriptive.” Descriptive theories describe the phenomenon of interest. Understanding the ways that things work can help decision makers forecast and predict events in the future. One popular descriptive organizational and management theory is Vertical Dyad Linkage Theory (VDL) or Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX) by George Graen and his associates.

This theory was developed while studying worker ratings of superiors. The traditional method of evaluating supervisors had been to have workers rate them individually and take the average rating as the assessment for the superior. Graen’s team found a flaw with that traditional system. A supervisor who receives mediocre ratings from all of his or her workers will appear equal to a superior who receives outstanding ratings from half of his or her workers and horrible ratings from the other half. Clearly, however, those two situations are very different.

Out of the study of disparate supervisor ratings from different groups of workers was born VDL—which later became LMX. This theory states that leaders in organizations tend to form special relationships with some followers and non-special or ordinary relationships with others. These relationships form quickly, perhaps over no more than several months, and are relatively stable. “In-group” members are those who receive special attention. They are typically given more responsibilities, placed into situations where they can prove themselves and make important connections, and are first to be offered special opportunities or resources.

Workers who are not in the in-group are known as out-group members—or “hired hands.” They exist within the organization to do their jobs and are given relatively low levels of choice or influence. Their supervisors do not necessarily dislike out-groupers, they simply do not have the special relationships with superiors that in-groupers do. When special opportunities become available, out-groupers tend to be overlooked.

LMX concepts become most interesting in the midst of organizational change. When executives retire or are terminated, when companies merge or have layers of management eliminated, or when internal versus external candidates are promoted and hired for management jobs, the resulting LMX concepts can change the cultures and tones of organizations. LMX concepts are also very relevant to the area of career development. Being an in-grouper to in-groupers all the way to the top of the organization puts one in an advantageous position within an organization. In an opposite manner, being an out-grouper in a line of out-groupers does not bode well for long-term career advancement.

Further research on LMX and leadership style has noted that effective leaders are those who make all workers feel like in-groupers...but that is another story.

2.4 Managerial Roles

Because all organizations are dependent on effective management and organization to survive and prosper, great care should be taken choosing and training people for management jobs. In many cases, long-time and responsible employees, and those who are experts in their jobs get promoted into management positions. While loyalty, length of service, and job-specific expertise are admirable qualities for organizational leaders, they are not enough.

Higher-level managers, employees, co-workers, owners and shareholders, customers, competitors, suppliers, governments, and interest groups all place different demands on organizational managers. This wide variety of stakeholders and constituencies who have influences on organizations requires those filling management positions to be versatile and able to diplomatically appease the demands of the various groups. To successfully meet such a diverse set of professional demands, managers must be able to switch between different role responsibilities.

The skills and competencies needed to successfully coordinate and direct the work of others are diverse and multi-faceted. A proper balance of analytical and intuitive decision-making styles and task and people behaviors is necessary to solve organizational problems and to get the best out of the workers. Goal setting and strategy formulation and execution are just as important as attending to the personal and professional needs of the workers.

The manager's job is much more complex and detailed than it first seems. In fact, Henry Mintzberg identified a set of 10 managerial roles that managers and organizational leaders must regularly perform and assume to function effectively in their positions. He described those roles as:

1. Figurehead—the manager serves as the symbolic head of the organization and performs obligatory social or legal duties.
2. Leader—the manager provides vision, direction, and motivation for workers to achieve organizational goals.
3. Liaison—the manager serves as a bridge between outside supporters and the organization.
4. Monitor—the manager seeks and receives internal and external information of importance to the organization.
5. Disseminator—the manager transmits received information to members of the organization.
6. Spokesperson—the manager transmits information about the organization to parties outside the organization.
7. Entrepreneur—the manager seeks out productive opportunities and initiates efforts to bring about changes.
8. Disturbance handler—the manager is responsible for corrective actions to remedy disturbances and crises.

9. Resource allocator—the manager is responsible for the allocation of all kinds of organizational resources.
10. Negotiator—the manager bargains with other groups to gain advantages for his or her own group or organization.

To effectively perform role responsibilities, managers should be proficient to some degree in all ten of Mintzberg’s roles—although research findings show that the emphasis given to the various roles changes with organizational level. Different combinations of these interpersonal, informational, and decisional roles are required across all levels of management. Individuals should be chosen for management positions based on their abilities to learn and perform the complex and varied requirements of the job.

2.5 Importance of Leadership

Regardless of your particular loyalties or leanings in college football, you have to congratulate and respect the University of Florida’s football team for their victory in the 2006 BCS Championship Game. The Gators, who some deemed unworthy of playing for the national championship and who few analysts gave a chance of winning the game, thoroughly dominated the Buckeyes both offensively and defensively. It was a complete team victory.

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Teams are composed of members who work together interdependently to accomplish goals. It is the combined contributions of all team members that make up the team's performance. In the BCS game, it was the players on the field who made the plays that led to victory. However, it was also apparent that the Florida players were well coached and prepared for the game. In the weeks leading up to the game, Gator coaches conceived a game plan for victory against the Buckeyes—which they shared with their players and prepared them to enact in the game. As the actual game evolved, coaches and players made adjustments and corrections to the plans to defeat Ohio State.

Early research into the importance of managers and leaders on group performance analyzed group performance before and after replacing a manager. The results were inconclusive. In some cases, replacing a manager with another resulted in improved group performance and in other situations it harmed performance. Many empirical investigations on management influence from a "succession" perspective used professional sports teams and managers as their samples. Sports teams provide researchers with organizations that are similar in size, goals, tasks, and roles. Additionally, sports teams compete against each other and performance is easy to measure and compare across teams and seasons.

There are two extreme views on the importance of managers and leaders on organization performance. The symbolic view suggests that group and situational factors have the greatest influence on organization performance and that managers have minimal influence. The omnipotent view suggests that managers have complete control and influence on organizational performance.

As concluded by later succession researchers, the true influence of managers and leaders is often somewhere between the symbolic and omnipotent views. Characteristics of the tasks and the nature of the work, the degrees of cooperation and teamwork needed to perform the work, and the personalities and backgrounds of the individuals that make up the team all contribute to the required levels of group and manager influences needed for successful performance.

To correctly assess performance issues within organizations, the influences of groups and managers need to be evaluated. Firing a manager with little control over a situation is as incorrect as heaping praise upon a manager who did little more than wear a title and watch the group perform. Management, group, and situational factors must be assessed to determine actual contributions to organizational performance.

The Gators' victory arose from a total team effort. The players enacted the plans and game strategy that the coaching staff developed. Players and coaches both deserve credit for the victory. Go Gators!

2.6.1 Leadership Development: Ancient Thoughts

Explore the books in the business section of any popular bookstore and you will find a seemingly endless array of books devoted to leadership and management development. Some of those are self-help books, others try to sell a particular course or method of leadership development, and others are more theoretical in nature.

In addition, there are a variety of leadership development courses offered through colleges and universities, community education programs, and business development and consulting firms. The reason that there is so much attention paid to leadership development is that effective leadership is critical to all types of organizations and because it is so complicated. From an academic perspective, leadership development requires training in psychology, sociology, management, economics, political science, history, critical thinking, communication, ethics, and other fields that provide insight into the understanding of human behavior in individual and group work environments. The study of leadership from the perspectives of those disciplines takes considerable time and effort.

As beings living in the times of the most remarkable discoveries and inventions that mankind has ever known, we like to think of ourselves as “cutting edge” in all realms of science and discovery—this includes leadership studies and development. However, the idea that people need to study philosophy, history, and human nature before assuming positions of responsibility in society is nothing new.

Plato (428-347 B.C.) wrote in *The Republic* that the solution required to break the reciprocal nature of tyranny and democracy in an ideal society is leadership education and development. “...Until philosophers are kings, or the kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, and those commoner natures who pursue either to the exclusion of the other are compelled to stand aside, cities will never have rest from their evils.” Plato continued that line of reasoning by stating, “...There will be discovered to be some natures who ought to study philosophy and to be leaders in the State; and others who are not born to be philosophers, and are meant to be followers rather than leaders.” He goes on to explain that the philosophers of which he spoke are those who love knowledge, are averse to corruption and ambition, and seek truth, justice, courage, and temperance. Only after years of training and education are Plato’s philosophers prepared to govern the State.

Regardless of whether people intend to lead organizations or local, state, and national governments, they should seek training and education to accelerate their leadership abilities. Rather than learning simply through personal experience and trial and error, would-be leaders can learn leadership philosophies and skills more rapidly and efficiently through education and training. Training programs should expose participants to the rules, principles, and philosophies of leadership, teamwork, and organization as well as provide opportunities for skill development in communication, critical thinking, problem solving, conflict resolution, creativity, and persuasion and influence. Leadership development is just as important today as it was 2,400 years ago in the time of Plato.

2.6.2 Leadership Development: Education and Training

Racquetball. Remember that wonderful sport that so many people played back in the 1980s? Well, it is still around and it is still great for exercise, recreation, and relaxation. Racquetball also provides an outlet for those who thrive on competition. To master the sport, certain physical skills have to be learned and an understanding of the rules and philosophy of the game have to be developed.

One can learn to play racquetball, or any other sport, through personal experimentation, trial-and-error, and independent study. To dramatically improve performance, players must constantly seek out and compete with better players. By progressively finding and learning to beat better competitors, an individual can become an accomplished player. This “school of hard knocks” method of learning can take considerable time to yield exceptional results. It also requires that players have access to good players who actually have something beneficial to demonstrate and emulate. If the best player to learn from is only an average player, then learning to beat that player only requires someone to be slightly better than average.

Another way to learn a sport is to take lessons from experts. By finding and learning from people who have studied, developed, and mastered the skills and competencies of the game, players can more efficiently learn the game than only through personal trial and error. Philosophies and tricks of the game that took someone years of experience to figure out independently might be quickly passed on to others through a series of short lessons, stories, or examples. In the hands of an expert teacher and player, students of the game can learn to become proficient players more quickly than they can solely through personal experience.

Learning to become an effective manager or leader is similar in many ways to learning to become a proficient athlete. Both require the mastery of specific skills and competencies and the development of a successful understanding and philosophy of the “game.” It is possible to become an effective manager or leader solely through personal experience—as long as one has an intuitive feel for the game, is put in situations with people who are worthy examples, has a tremendous drive to improve and learn, and is given plenty of opportunity to practice “playing” the game.

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A more efficient way to develop leadership and management abilities is to combine individual experiences with useful lessons and instruction from others. Studying the philosophies and experiences of successful leaders and managers, attending professional development meetings and workshops, forming mentor relationships, taking management and leadership courses, and participating in internships and supervised on-the-job training opportunities can all accelerate skill and competency development—when combined with a desire to improve, practice, and conscious reflection and learning.

All organizations require effective leadership and management—which require skills and competencies that take considerable time and practice to develop. Proper attention should be paid to ensuring that individuals put into positions of responsibility have the proper skills and abilities to succeed and win.

2.6.3 Leadership Development: Organizational Systems

Organizations of all types are in constant and desperate need of leaders. Leaders are ones who can identify problems and issues, marshal the resources needed to solve the problems, and energize and mobilize others to address and solve the problems. Too often, organizations breed and train people to simply follow orders and to not question the ways things are done. In so doing, organizations condition their people to become dependent followers rather than independent leaders. Unfortunately, when individuals from such systems do promote into authority roles, the only role models they have to emulate are those whom they have seen and worked under—those who handed out orders to follow. To fill their leadership needs, organizations must train people to become active leaders and not simply givers and takers of commands.

Our country's military academies require their graduates to be leaders. The academies have developed systems where senior students take command and assume responsibility for groups of junior students. By assuming command, senior students begin making the types of decisions and carrying the responsibilities of those in the positions they are being trained to assume. The role of the senior students is to train and develop the junior students into leaders as well. To fully do this, senior students must model appropriate and required behaviors to their juniors—which they learned from their seniors when they were junior students. Upon graduation, students have practiced and are prepared to assume the positions for which they have been trained. The military's system is a complete system of leadership development.

To create a system that allows senior students to assume command and make decisions requires great amounts of trust. Trainees should be given the freedom to experiment and learn, but under the watchful and encouraging guidance of a mentor. Learning about leadership, like learning about anything else, comes about from practice, reflection, correction, and more practice.

Knowing that one serves as a role model to followers and serving as a guide and teacher forces aspiring leaders to work harder in their roles and spend more time “figuring out” how to make things work better. The trust awarded to junior leadership from senior leadership is often returned to the seniors through such a system.

The leadership development model employed by the military academies can be used in all types of organizations—from schools, to businesses, to sports teams, to churches and non-profit organizations, and others. Unfortunately, too many organizations are controlled by people who cling to the outdated command and control management models that guided organizations through the industrial revolution. In today's fast-paced and rapidly changing business environment, organizations cannot afford to have people who can only follow orders. Organizations need people who can foresee issues and problems, feel comfortable and secure in reporting their ideas to others, and possess the abilities to work effectively through and with other people. These characteristics arise when organizations create cultures that value trust and that support true leadership development.

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3. Individuals

3.1 Self Monitoring

Find a typical definition of an organization and it might read something like “two or more individuals who work together interdependently to accomplish a goal or set of goals.” In order to understand organizations, we must understand individuals. A considerable body of knowledge that focuses on the influences of personality and individual differences in organizations has been developed over the past century.

The possession of a certain personal trait is rarely described as good or bad—it simply helps define who a person is. For example, it is neither good nor bad to be tall or short. However, in some instances it might be advantageous to be tall and in other instances, short. It would be an advantage to be tall if you wanted to become a professional basketball player.

Organizations might seek out members who possess certain personal characteristics to fill certain roles because possessing certain characteristics could predispose individuals to success in a given position. It should also be noted, however, that success is not guaranteed for those who possess the characteristic and failure is not assured for those who do not. There are plenty of unusually tall people in the world who will never be professional basketball players and also many normal-sized people who are.

In addition to physical traits, organizations might also look for people with certain personality traits. Personality refers to a relatively stable set of psychological traits that influence how a person behaves in and across situations. Researchers have studied a variety of personality traits and tried to identify where and when certain traits would be advantageous for organizations. One of these traits is known as self-monitoring.

A person who is a high self-monitor is much like a chameleon. A chameleon has the ability to assess its environment and quickly change its coloring to blend into the background. This ability allows a chameleon to go unnoticed by others. It becomes an unobserved and natural looking part of its environment. By adapting to its environment, it helps assure itself of survival.

People who are high self-monitors have natural abilities to read and gauge social and environmental cues and to then quickly adapt their behaviors to fit unnoticed into new situations. They observe and quickly adapt to their behaviors to prevailing social norms, customs, rituals, dress, language, and patterns of interaction. In a relatively short amount of time, high self-monitors can seamlessly blend into new social contexts and become almost unrecognized as outsiders.

Being a high self-monitor could be an advantage for people working in boundary spanning positions and those on the periphery of organizations—those that interact with customers, partners, suppliers, and clients. When it is important for organizational members to appear similar to those they interact with, high self-monitors have an advantage over low self-monitors, who tend to act in a consistent manner across all situations. Just as it is important for basketball coaches to place players into positions where individual strengths can benefit the team, so it is with organizational leaders and workers.

3.2 Locus of Control

It has been a week since you took the final exam in your college class and you have been waiting anxiously for the grade to arrive in today's mail. Your friends know that you have been worried about your grade in the course and have gathered around the mailbox with you in anticipation of discovering the grade. When the mail arrives, you find the envelope containing your grade and quickly tear it open. With curious anticipation, your friends ask you about your grade. You give them one of two answers—"I made an A" or "The professor gave me an F."

The tendency to accept credit and responsibility for success and give away blame for failure to others and external forces is known as a fundamental attribution error and more specifically as self-serving bias. The root cause for this tendency is that people like to feel good about and have positive self-images of themselves—and they do this when they succeed in the things that they take on. Success breeds self-confidence and self-esteem. When things go poorly, however, there is a tendency to give the blame for failure to external forces. By attributing blame for failure to someone or something else, we protect our self-image and self esteem.

The errors in such processes affect our abilities to learn and grow. People learn from failures and mishaps, but only when they accept responsibility for the outcomes, critically evaluate the causes for failure, and determine the corrective actions needed to succeed in the task in the future. Through growth and success, self-image and self-esteem are enhanced—even when growth occurs as the result of initial failure.

Locus of Control is a personality dimension that relates to where individuals place responsibility for the causes of success and failure in their lives. People with an "internal" locus of control believe that the successes and failures they experience in their lives are directly related to the energy and effort that they invest in the activities. Oppositely, people with an "external" locus of control attribute the causes of success and failure in the tasks they undertake to forces outside of their control—they attribute outcomes to being in the right place at the right time or the wrong place at the wrong time.

Research shows that successful organizational leaders are those who accept responsibility for the successes and failures in their lives and learn and grow from their failures and successes. They avoid giving away blame for mishaps because they know that growth and learning can occur when they discover and fix their mistakes. Their perceptions of self-image and self-esteem are enhanced through the victories that come from successfully accomplishing things at which they may have previously failed. When asked about failing grades, they accept responsibility for the outcomes and humbly proclaim that they "earned their Fs" and then correct their actions and succeed in their tasks the next time around.

3.3.1 Attitudes: Influences on Behavior

When people hear someone described as having an "attitude" they might think of that person as being standoffish, snobby, or uncaring. Having an attitude is not usually a compliment. In reality, everyone has attitudes about all types of things and they influence peoples' thoughts, feelings, and actions.

An attitude is an evaluative feeling or belief about something in particular. People have attitudes about their jobs, food, animals, furniture, music, politicians, television shows, automobiles, and countless other things that they encounter in their lives. Attitudes can be positive, negative, or neutral and they have three components—cognitive, affective, and behavioral.

The cognitive component involves knowledge and understanding. To have an attitude about something, a person must have some type of experience or knowledge of the thing. When forming an evaluation of something in particular, people reach into their memories to retrieve knowledge and information about the subject or topic. The knowledge stored away in a person's mind comes from direct personal experiences and from experiences passed along from other people (e.g., from personal stories, news reports, writings, etc.) and other things that they have learned and filed away in their minds about the subject or topic.

The affective component is the emotional and feelings dimension of the attitude. Attitudes about family members, favorite foods, cherished items, and former schools and organizations carry with them emotional aspects that extend beyond basic knowledge and information. Negative emotions can similarly arise when negative attitudes are evoked.

When peoples' thoughts and emotions are stimulated, they combine to influence behaviors. The sight of a charging pit bull might cause one to jump into a tree or bend down to welcome the dog depending on the cognitive and emotional responses to the event. Likewise, a person's thoughts and feelings about work might result in excessive absenteeism and sloppy work or extra effort and involvement depending on his or her attitude.

It is important to understand the role that attitudes play in the workplace. Thoughts and feelings about a wide variety of things and subjects combine to influence peoples' behaviors. A supervisor who is perceived as unapproachable and overbearing can bring about feelings of fear and apprehension in workers and discourage proper and necessary interaction between workers and the supervisor. Perceptions of low pay can bring about feelings of resentment or being unappreciated and undervalued and result in undesirable work behaviors. Coworkers who are perceived as lazy or looking out for themselves can promote feelings of distrust or hostility and encourage unproductive worker behaviors.

Managers and organizational leaders who seek to change employee behaviors must recognize that behaviors arise from a complex interaction with thoughts and feelings about particular things, subjects, and concepts. Trying to change worker behaviors without also addressing their thoughts and feelings could prove to be a futile effort. Feelings of trust and support and a knowledge and understanding of the subject of change are required for true and lasting behavioral changes to occur.

3.3.2 Attitudes: Theories X and Y

The 1995 movie "Babe" introduced the world to Farmer Hoggett's talking sheep and barnyard animals. Babe the pig was the star of the movie along with his co-star Fly the border collie, who became Babe's adoptive mother. Fly comforted Babe and counseled him on how to fit in on the farm. She even tried to teach Babe how to herd sheep.

In one scene, Farmer Hoggett sends Babe into a corral with instructions to round up some sheep and lead them out. Being Babe's first time to undertake such a task, he is uncertain how to get the job done. He first tries running into the sheep pen making dog noises, but the sheep ignore him. Babe and Fly then have the following conversation:

Babe: This is ridiculous, Mom!

Fly: Nonsense, it's only your first try. But you're treating them like equals. They're sheep, they're inferior.

Babe: Oh, no they're not.

Fly: Of course they are. We are their masters, Babe. Let them doubt it for a second and they'll walk all over you.

Babe: They'll laugh at me.

Fly: Then bite them! Be ruthless, whatever it takes. Bend them to your will!

After biting one of the sheep on the leg, Babe is reprimanded by the sheep and begins to cry. The sheep tell him that he does not need to be mean and bossing, rather, he should just ask them kindly. Babe did, and the sheep willingly complied. After completing the task, Fly asked Babe:

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Fly: All right, how did you do it?

Babe: I asked them and they did it. I just asked them nicely.

Fly: We don't ask sheep, dear; we tell them what to do.

Babe: But I did, Mom. They were really friendly.

Babe's experiences with the sheep demonstrate Douglas McGregor's concepts of Theory X and Theory Y management. McGregor's theories describe two different attitudes that managers have about workers. A Theory X attitude is one that workers inherently dislike work and will try to avoid it if they can. Theory X managers view workers as lazy, irresponsible, untrustworthy, and in need of firm and constant supervision.

A Theory Y attitude is that workers desire to excel and are inherently good and eager to work. Theory Y managers try to create positive work environments for their workers and provide them with growth and development opportunities. Theory Y managers respect, trust, and look out for the best interests of the workers—which is typically returned by the workers. Babe's Theory Y attitude toward the sheep led to the film's memorable ending.

The attitudes that managers have about their workers come out in the ways they work and interact with them. Theory X managers tend to rely on coercion and intimidation to get workers to perform. Theory Y managers use persuasion, inspirational appeals, and personal power. Optimal work outcomes tend to arise under conditions of mutual trust, respect, and cooperation—a consequence of Theory Y attitudes. Maybe we can all learn something from a talking pig.

3.4.1 Self Efficacy: Learning

One of the most important aspects of a manager's job is to ensure that workers learn and confidently perform their jobs. Whether the workers learn through direct on-the-job experience or learn from sources outside of their organizations, learning job specific skills and competencies is critical for organizational effectiveness.

Learning refers to a relatively permanent change in understanding about certain things, concepts, and relationships. Learning occurs as a result of experience and influences the ways that individuals think, feel, and behave. The expression "learning curve" refers to the time and effort required to master a newly learned skill or concept. At first, new methods, skills, and previously unfronted challenges require additional concentration, time to figure out new methods and procedures, and, when performing physical tasks, time to develop "muscle memory"—where the body performs the task almost automatically, with little mental thought or concentration.

Knowledge is related to learning—it is the stuff that you know. You only know things about which you have been exposed, paid attention, processed in your mind, and stored away in your brain for future retrieval. People only know what they have been exposed to and filed away in a relatively permanent manner for future use—that is, learned.

Learning can occur as a result of direct experience or vicariously through the experiences of others. When a parent cautions a child about the dangers of undertaking a potentially harmful action, the parent is trying to teach the child about actions and consequences without the child having to experience the consequence first hand. From an organizational perspective, vicarious learning can occur by observing others perform or by reading accounts of others' performances. By observing and analyzing someone "model" appropriate and inappropriate actions and behaviors, workers can develop new skills and competencies. Watching others perform before actually performing oneself, allows new learners to develop confidence in themselves to perform the task, before ever having to perform the task directly by themselves.

Self-Efficacy refers to the confidence that a person has in his or her ability to perform a task. High self-efficacy refers to high confidence and low self-efficacy refers to low confidence. Self-efficacy comes from direct past experiences performing the task and vicariously by watching others perform the task. Self-efficacy about a new task can be strengthened when one learns that the new task is similar to another task in which he or she is already confident. A seasoned tennis player, for example, would feel fairly confident beginning the game of racquetball. Both games require similar skills and abilities and they share many of the same principles and strategies for success. However, the similar natures of the two games might cause those with poor experiences playing tennis in the past to feel less confident about their chances of success playing racquetball.

To bring out the best from workers, managers should make sure that followers understand and have opportunities to successfully develop new skills and competencies. The concepts of learning, vicarious learning, and self-efficacy help give insight on ways that people learn and succeed in new jobs and tasks.

3.4.2 Self Efficacy: Confidence

"I don't need the map, I know exactly where I am going." Those were the words that rang through my head as I left my house on the way to a conference in Dallas. I had been to the conference location four times before and was certain of my route. It was not until I actually saw the huge pile of dirt in the middle of the road about a mile from my destination that I realized my planned route to the conference had hit a dead end. After getting back on I-20, taking another exit from the highway, and driving around in rush-hour traffic for more than an hour, I finally arrived at the conference—only ten minutes late.

My adventures in driving without direction in Dallas reminded me of my summer travel adventures in Europe. I spent 17 days traveling with my family this past summer driving through Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Italy, and Slovenia. On that trip, we took wrong roads, turned around, drove on pedestrian pathways, missed exits, drove through ice and snow, read signs incorrectly (in German, Italian, and Slovenian), and encountered many one-way streets that we had expected to be two-way. Throughout our travels, however, we eventually reached every location to which we were heading. Sometimes the trips were simple and sometimes they were quite complicated. Toward the end of our European driving adventure, we were quite confident that we could overcome almost any obstacle thrown in our way.

As I drove around Dallas looking for familiar-sounding roads and scanning my memory for images of the correct layout of roads and geography, I found myself unusually calm and confident. It occurred to me that if I could survive and succeed in my European driving mishaps, I could certainly reach my destination in Dallas.

The psychological processes at play in my mind were what researcher Albert Bandura described as self-efficacy. The confidence gained by succeeding in a task helps a person gain confidence when faced with similar tasks. Success driving in Europe helped me feel more confident when driving without direction in Dallas.

Many leadership development programs are built upon the ideas of creating self-efficacy in program participants. The confidence gained from succeeding in leadership and teamwork exercises can help build confidence in participants that will benefit them in real life situations later. While it is quite unlikely that leaders and managers will have to lead workers through high-ropes elements, creative problem-solving exercises and team-building tasks, or camp-type team competitions, they will have to lead others through tasks and situations that require problem solving, effective communication, conflict management, creativity, and teamwork. Effective leadership development programs provide participants with opportunities to study and practice leadership and teamwork in controlled environments that can generalize to other situations. The skills and competencies developed must mirror those of the workplace in order to build confidence and self-efficacy in program participants. That confidence can help leaders from feeling lost when they confront new and unknown situations.

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4. Groups

4.1 Interdependence

Playing intramural sports during my undergraduate years in college provided some of my most enjoyable experiences as a student. As a member of a small student group that participated in my university's intramural program, it was not uncommon during some times of the semester to run between games of multiple sports in a single evening. As the coordinator of intramurals for the group, it was my responsibility to ensure that we had enough players at each event and to coordinate and sometimes “coach” our teams during practices.

The skills and coaching requirements needed to build an effective tennis team are quite different from those required in volleyball or flag football. Softball, team bowling, basketball, team racquetball, team golf, and team track and field also required different coaching skills to bring about the types of teamwork needed for success in the various sports.

Team golf and bowling require working with team members on their individual games—the team score is the sum of the individual scores and there is little interaction or dependence among team members. In team racquetball and tennis, players compete in singles and in doubles matches. Singles players compete much like the bowlers, as individuals, while doubles players have to learn to work with a partner. Softball requires individual performance when batting and catching balls, but requires teamwork when relaying the ball around the field to other players. Runners must also be aware of the actions of defensive players and those of other runners. Relay racers in the track and field competitions practice handing off the baton to teammates as well as develop their own racing skills. Basketball, football, and volleyball require players to perform individually and as part of a team. Those sports require considerable teamwork and mutual adjustment.

Organizations are defined as “social entities made up of two or more people who work together interdependently to accomplish common goals.” Organizational scientist James Thompson identified three forms of interdependence—pooled, sequential, and reciprocal. Pooled interdependence is characteristic of golf and bowling teams. Group performance is the “pooled” performances of the individuals on the team. Relay teams in track and field events are examples of sequential interdependence. Here, performance of one team member does not begin until the performance of another team member ends. Under sequential interdependence, time must be spent practicing the transfer of responsibility from one member to another. Reciprocal interdependence describes the basketball team. In basketball, players continually act and react to the actions of teammates and competitors. Play is constant and dynamic and requires individual players to work as a team in order to succeed. Baseball, football, volleyball, and other sports are hybrid-combinations of Thompson's three pure forms.

Sports teams provide organizational scientists and educators with great examples for studying and analyzing teams, goals, performance, and interdependence. The ways that organizations are structured affects coordination, communication, control, and teamwork processes. Thompson's forms of interdependence exist within all types of organizations. Managers must identify the forms at play within their organizations and formulate proper strategies to maximize team and individual performance.

4.2 Group Size

If you are a fan of Bugs Bunny, you might remember the “Baseball Bugs” cartoon where Bugs Bunny heckled the Gashouse Gorillas from his rabbit hole in the outfield of a baseball stadium. After bragging that he could beat the Gorillas all by himself, he was yanked from his hole and made to live up to his words. Bugs played every position—he pitched, caught, and fielded balls by himself. He eventually beat the team of behemoths on a glove-tossing catch from the flagpole of the Empire State Building.

The notion of the episode was absurd (and not because it involved a rabbit playing baseball) because it would be impossible for an individual to defeat a team in a team sport. A team with fewer than nine players is disadvantaged because positions are left vacant—and that weakness can be exploited. Would a team with nine players be at a disadvantage to a team with more than nine players? Probably so.

Ten, eleven, or twelve players would probably provide considerable extra field coverage for a team. However, fielding 100, 500, or 1,000 defensive players would probably complicate things so much that the extra costs required to recruit, train, compensate, and manage the players would not be worth the benefits that they would add to the team.

It is natural to imagine that a bigger group of people can accomplish more than a smaller group. If you have ever moved a piano, you probably appreciated having others aid in the effort. The more people who add their strength to such a task decreases the average load that each individual has to carry. However, after a certain point, adding more people to the task actually becomes a hindrance to the performance of the group. People begin to get in the way of each other and to make the collective work of the group more difficult to coordinate.

Each additional person added to a task will reduce the burden of the workers in the group, but the benefit gained from each new worker will be less than from the previous worker. For example, a third piano lifter will reduce the burden of each lifter from 50% to 33% of the weight of the piano (a 17% reduction). Adding a fourth lifter will reduce the burden from 33% down to 25% (a 8% reduction). Economists refer to this concept as “diminishing marginal productivity.”

After a certain point, the added benefit of another person will not be worth the cost of adding another person. Nine eager piano lifters may choose to go on and move the piano themselves rather than wasting time waiting on a tenth, extremely late helper. The point to stop bringing on new workers is when the cost of a new worker exceeds the added benefit of the worker.

Just as with baseball and piano moving, some work in organizations requires collective action. It is important for managers to identify the optimal sizes of their work groups. Too big, and the organization will waste human and organizational resources, too small, and the organization will lose out on performance—unless they have a secret rabbit they can call in from the outfield.

4.3 Stages of Group Development

When many couples learn that they are expecting a baby, they purchase books on pre-birth human development. The books describe the milestones and stages of growth in the unborn baby throughout the pregnancy. Once the baby is born, many couples also buy books that describe newborn and infant development through the first year of life or even up through kindergarten. These types of books are helpful because the stages of human development are very regular and predictable.

Researchers Bruce W. Tuckman and Mary Ann Jensen identified that groups also follow regular and predictable stages of development. A group is typically defined as two or more people who work together interdependently to accomplish a common goal or set of goals. Groups can come into being through formal decree (as defined in an organization’s bylaws) or informally around friendships or common interests.

When a group of individuals realize that they are dependent upon coworkers to accomplish the objective that they have in common, they enter the first stage of group development—the *forming* stage. In the forming stage, individuals get to know each other, define their purpose, and begin working together.

The next stage, *storming*, is characterized by interpersonal conflict, uncertainty, questioning, and posturing among group members. It is in this stage that the group defines and learns the roles and responsibilities of the members. Once roles are defined, the group then establishes work processes and defines how it will work together. This stage of development is known as the *norming* stage—it is in this stage that group identity develops.

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Once a group has defined its work and how the work will be accomplished, it then moves into the fourth stage of development—the *performing* stage. In this stage, the group works to accomplish its goals. Performance continues until the group reaches its goals or decides to disband. At times, groups may have to “reinvent” themselves by taking on new goals, formulating new strategies, or including new members. Changes like these could cause groups to “redevelop” themselves.

Tuckman later added another stage to describe a possible final group development stage. Just as people eventually die, so too might groups. Although groups do not have to die (i.e., they can remain vital and relevant long after the people who give them life disappear), many do. The final stage is called *adjourning*.

It is important for people to understand the development processes of groups. We are all members of many groups—in work, church, social, and community organizations. Understanding how individuals and groups work together and how they develop gives members and organizational leaders insight into ways to foster and encourage teamwork and performance. The expectations and ways that managers work with and guide young groups should be different than when they work with older and seasoned groups. Part of the manager’s job is to help grow new groups into healthy and properly-functioning, mature groups—just like parents help grow babies into mature and responsible adults.

4.4 Social Facilitation

It is not uncommon to see individual athletes perform in extraordinary ways when team, media, and fan attention shines on them. Neither is it rare to see athletes crumble and melt under pressure when competition begins. When the lights come on and the crowds begin to cheer, some athletes seem to rise to the occasion and perform beyond their limits while others seem to lose confidence, concentration, and the ability to perform. Why and how do those differences occur?

Psychologists and organizational researchers refer to this phenomenon as social facilitation. It posits that individuals perform differently in the presence of others than they do when they are alone. Knowing that others are observing them brings about a state of physiological arousal that causes people to act differently than when they are unobserved. That “charged” physiological state tends to energize people when performing physical tasks. Whether an individual uses that energy to enhance or harm performance is influenced by the nature of the task and whether the person is comfortable and confident performing the task.

When people perform physical tasks with which they are very comfortable and confident, the energized state tends to enhance performance. In other words, when tasks are perceived as easy, the presence of others positively affects performance. Highly trained athletes probably set more performance records during important competitions than in the presence of only their coaches during practice. In an opposite manner, difficult tasks, new tasks, and tasks that people are uncomfortable and unconfident with, tend to negatively affect performance when conducted in the presence of others.

Social facilitation also has a mental component. Performing in front of others brings with it an expectation that others will evaluate the observed performance. Questions such as: “What will others think about my abilities?” and “Will others view me as an asset or liability?” run through the minds of individuals when performing in the presence of others. Perceived positive evaluations enhance performance. Perceived negative evaluations will unnerve and distract the performer and subsequently harm performance.

The same processes at play on athletes in competition occur in people in everyday organizations. To make people feel good about themselves and to perform their best, they should be put into situations where they can perform tasks, at which they are skilled and regard as easy, in the presence of others. To avoid the negative consequences of social facilitation, managers should make sure that workers have chances to learn and become comfortable with new and difficult tasks by themselves before working in front of others.

Groups can outperform individuals on physical tasks because of the greater effort that can be generated by more people. Through the processes of social facilitation, groups can also enhance the performance of individual members and synergistically produce an output greater than the sum of performances of individual members in isolation. Managers and organizational leaders should use these concepts to maximize individual, group, and organizational performance.

4.5 Conformity

Jerry B. Harvey in his book, [The Abilene Paradox and other Meditations on Management](#), tells a story of a family from Coleman, Texas who, when prompted by a family member to drive to Abilene for dinner, pack themselves into an unairconditioned 1958 Buick and travel to Abilene. Four hours later, after a hot and dusty, 106-mile round trip excursion to Abilene for a less-than-satisfying meal, the family returned to their home in Coleman. Later discussion revealed that no one in the family actually wanted to go to Abilene, but they all went because they thought that everyone else wanted to go. To avoid possible disagreement and turmoil, they all willingly did what they thought the group wanted to do, when in reality, no one in the group actually wanted to do it.

The concepts at play among the family members in the Abilene Paradox demonstrate the powers of social conformity. Organizational researchers use the term “groupthink” to describe such processes. Groupthink refers to the tendency for individual group members to suppress and not give voice to their individual thoughts and ideas in the presence of an idea that seems popular with the group. It arises when group members conform to the will of the group to avoid disagreeing with the group and creating conflict and appearing as bad team players. But as the paradox shows, sometimes the will of the group is not the will of any individual member.

Devil’s advocates resist the tendencies of groupthink and social conformity. A devil’s advocate is a group member who rationally questions solutions and recommendations—often forcing group members to analyze, explain, and defend their recommendations. Through that evaluation process, modifications to proposed courses of action might be developed or selected solutions confirmed. Research findings show that groups with devil’s advocates tend to outperform groups that do not have such members. Ironically, the same research also shows that group members, when given the opportunity to evict someone from the group, consistently choose to kick out the devil’s advocate—the one who leads them to better performance. People prefer conformity, ease, and conflict avoidance to questioning, disagreement, and better-reasoned solutions.

Managers and organizational leaders must understand and recognize the tendencies of individuals to conform to group pressures. In some cases, social conformity is desired and can be used to wrangle in wayward individuals, create a sense of belonging, and build group identity. In other situations, however, the processes of social conformity and groupthink can lead groups to derive less-than-optimal solutions to organizational problems. Work cultures must be created that value teamwork AND individual input and the questioning of solutions, procedures, and methods of operation. By doing so, organizations can reap the benefits of groups and maximize the power of their individuals.

4.6 Culture

Cultures are defined by what people have in common. Common languages, customs, histories, heroes, traditions, religions, stories, beliefs, and values help define national cultures. The things that are shared by a group of people give it an identity. People from outside a particular culture can readily identify when they have stepped into a new culture—the “ways of doing things” can be completely different from what they are familiar with “back home.”

Countries can have national cultures and subcultures that exert powerful influences on the beliefs and behaviors of its people. In fact, the influences can be so powerful that they sometimes incite groups of people to make war against others to protect and defend their cultures.

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Organizations also have cultures and subcultures. The shared experiences, patterns of interaction, sense of identity, lingo and jargon, stories, customs, values, and histories common to organizational members all contribute to its culture. To ensure that a culture continues within an organization, it has to be taught to new members.

Cultures can have either strong or weak influences on the behaviors of organizational members. Strong cultures are widely recognized and supported by organizational members and can be part of the glue that holds organizations together. They help give a sense of identity to organizational members and help keep them tied to the group. Weak cultures are less widely shared and have less influence over the behaviors of members.

Organizational cultures can have positive or negative influences on members and their organizations. Positive influences occur when the culture supports the values and ideals of the organization and when it promotes the desired performance of the organization. Negative influences result when the culture encourages and values ideas and behaviors that are counter to those of the organization.

Managers and organizational leaders should be aware of culture and its influence on the behavior of organizational members. Strong and positive cultures should be fostered and maintained. In fact, strong and positive cultures make it easier for a leader to guide, direct, and encourage appropriate work behaviors and attitudes—cultures serve as a substitute for and complement to the influences of the leader. A strong organizational culture with negative influences on behavior can be destructive for organizations. They encourage behaviors and attitudes that are in opposition to the goals and values of the organization and can counteract leaders' attempts to move members toward organizational goals. Ineffective and weak cultures should be changed or eliminated.

Because leadership involves working with people, the concepts of organizational culture are tremendously important to organizational leaders. Creating and maintaining strong, positive, and effective cultures and eliminating ineffective and negative cultures should be a primary goal and responsibility of organizational leaders. Through their use of language, symbols, goals, vision, rewards, shared victories and experiences, stories, heroes, and values, leaders should shape strong cultures that support the ideals and mission of their organizations. Leadership is about getting work done with and through other people, and one of the ways that is accomplished is through the development and maintenance of organizational culture.

4.7.1 Training and Development: Types of Followers

Have you ever taken a good hard look at the people you work with? Are some of them able to identify problems and take the necessary steps to solve those problems with little help or direction? Are some of them eager to help and do whatever they are told to do, but cannot seem to think for themselves? Do some of them seem to know and have solutions to all of the problems within the organization, but do nothing to help solve them? Are there others who seem incapable of independent thought and action and need prodding and guidance for everything they do? And are there others who seem to do and speak up just enough to stay out of the spotlights of attention and responsibility?

Robert Kelley, in his scheme of follower behaviors, identified two independent dimensions on which followers differ. One dimension has to do with follower activity and behavior and the other deals with thought and problem identification. Kelley's behavior dimension ranges from active to passive. The thought dimension ranges from independent and critical to dependent and uncritical. Kelley combined those two dimensions to identify five types of followers.

Followers who are passive in their actions and uncritical in their thinking are called "Sheep." Sheep lack the abilities to independently identify problems or the courses of action needed to solve those problems, and they need prodding and pushing to get them to perform. "Yes People" are dependent in their thinking, but are active and willing to do whatever they are asked to do. People who see all of the problems within an organization and have solutions for them, but are unwilling to act until prodded are known as "Alienated Followers." Alienated Followers are the ones who would rather sit around and complain about the ways things work than actually doing anything about the problems themselves. "Survivors" are those who exist where the two dimensions intersect; they are active and independent enough in their thinking to stay out of trouble, but also just passive and dependent enough to not be noticed or given extra responsibilities. Kelley labeled people who are active and independent in their thinking as "Effective Followers." Effective Followers are those who can see and figure out solutions to problems and have the energy and activity to solve them. They are self-active and independent and work for the common good and purpose of their organizations.

Healthy organizations are made up of active and independent-thinking followers. Training and development techniques and a sincere effort on the part of management to elicit employee involvement might be used to turn Yes People into Effective Followers. Strong leadership can also create cultures of openness, shared decision-making, and employee involvement to transform Alienated Followers into Effective Followers. Under effective leadership, Survivors might also be encouraged to step up and take ownership of problems and become more active. Organizational policies, reward schemes, and high-involvement cultures must be created to promote active behavior and independent and critical thinking in organizational members.

4.7.2 Training and Development: Lost on the Moon

An effective and interactive way to demonstrate the ability of groups to outperform individuals on mental tasks is the "Lost on the Moon" exercise. In the activity, participants are given a list of items that are available to them while they await rescue on the dark side of the moon. Variations of this exercise also exist—like being trapped in the desert or wilderness.

The first step in the exercise is to have participants complete the assessment completely by themselves. Participants must rank the importance of 18 different items for survival on the moon—which include things like tanks of oxygen, a compass, matches, milk concentrate, flares, a solar-powered radio transmitter, and a tarp. During this phase, participants are not allowed to ask questions, talk with others, or look up answers in any way. They should rely only upon the knowledge that they possess in their heads at the time of the activity.

After everyone has completed his or her individual rankings, participants are then divided into groups of four to six people each and complete the exercise again as teams. It is important that everyone in the group participates and gives input into the group ranking. A group of five with only two contributing members is really only a group of two with three bystanders. All members must participate in the group output.

When the groups complete their rankings, group and individual answers are scored by comparing them against “expert” rankings for the items. The closer the participant answers match the expert rankings, the better the score on the exercise. A member of each group should calculate the group score as well as the individual scores. The facilitator of the activity will ask each group to provide its group score on the exercise as well as the average of the scores of the individual members. The group and average individual scores should be written somewhere so that all participants can see them.

When the directions are followed and participants take the exercise seriously, the group score will almost always be better than the average individual score. It shows that individuals, when solving mental tasks, have only their own experiences and knowledge to draw upon to solve problems. When individuals work together as teams, their abilities to solve problems are enhanced. This synergistic effect is a result of the combination of the knowledge and past experiences of the group members. The past experiences of four to six people will always be greater than the knowledge and past experiences of any single member.

As a group development tool, exercises like these help show the importance of groups and teamwork to organizational performance. Managers can use these exercises to show organizational members the importance of individual differences and experiences to a team and to demonstrate the importance of all members working together to solve problems. The investment of a little time to conduct a “Lost on the Moon” exercise with groups of workers could return big benefits for organizations.

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4.7.3 Training and Development: Ropes Courses

Effective and productive teams work together well. Effective teams are composed of members who trust each other and who collectively work together overcoming problems and difficulties in pursuit of their goals. Important skills like communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, influence, teamwork, and leadership are needed for groups to perform at their maximum.

Groups and teams are made up of individuals. Confidence and a desire to excel in individual members typically results in groups that are confident and willing to achieve high levels of performance. Through the success that they gain accomplishing individual challenges, members support, encourage, and prompt their teammates on to higher levels of performance and confidence.

It should be the goal of every manager and organizational leader to have teams that perform well and that are made up of members who trust and support each other. Such teams can be developed within organizations through on-the-job experiences and/or in-house training programs. Training can also occur in a variety of off-the-job arenas. One popular and successful program for developing critical teamwork, leadership, and organization skills is through outdoor ropes challenge courses.

Typically, ropes challenge courses have two sets of activities—low elements and high elements. Low elements challenges include activities that require individuals to work together to solve and complete assigned tasks. Helping team members across a self-constructed bridge, arranging members by birthday while standing on a log, and guiding teammates on blindfolded trust walks are some of the activities that help promote trust, cooperation, and teamwork. For groups that are more adventurous, ropes challenge course facilitators can guide teams through trust falls (where members fall backwards off of a small tower into the arms of their teammates) or activities that involve getting teammates up and over a wall. Low elements activities foster and promote teamwork, trust, communication, problem solving, and other important group and leadership skills.

High ropes challenge course elements involve leaving the comfort of the ground to individually climb up and traverse telephone-like poles and cables 30-40 feet up in the air or climbing a tower and rappelling back down—while securely harnessed to safety lines. The challenge for individuals on high ropes elements is to mentally overcome the anxiety that comes from being off the ground. The rewards that individuals receive from completing high elements challenges include a sense of accomplishment from succeeding at something that seemed difficult, overcoming fears, and stretching personal limits and expectations.

5. Motivation

5.1 Content and Process Theories

Motivation is “that which arouses, directs, and sustains behavior.” Understanding motivation is critical to managers and those responsible for bringing about performance from others. Performance arises when people “want to” perform a task and when people are “able to” perform the task. In other words, performance is a function of motivation and ability—if either is missing, performance will not occur.

Theories are explanations for how things work and are derived using the principles of the scientific method. Theories of motivation give explanation to why people “want to” do things and come in two types—content theories and process theories.

Content theories focus on the things that energize and direct behavior that are internal to individuals. They focus on needs and how needs drive behavior. Maslow’s Need Hierarchy, Alderfer’s ERG Theory, Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory, and McClelland’s Learned Needs Theory describe that human behavior is driven by the desire to satisfy personal needs—such as survival, safety, social, esteem, growth, achievement, and power needs. Organizational designers and policy makers can use content theories to create motivating work places through job design, pay and compensation schemes, social structure policies, and through opportunities for employee growth and development. Knowledge of the content theories gives decision makers the power to establish long-run motivating environments by fulfilling worker needs.

Process theories give explanation to short-run and individual performance. These theories focus more on cognitive processes and conscious choices of workers. Goal setting theory, reinforcement theory, equity theory, and expectancy theory are some of the more popular process theories. In these theories, individuals consciously choose to act and purposely pursue courses of action because the decisions make sense to them. Rewards that come from performance, avoidance of unpleasant consequences that come with non-performance, actions to maintain or restore equity with referent others, and confidence that performance can be attained and that performance will be rewarded, form the foundations of these models. Process theories can be used to bring about individual performance in the here and now. Getting employees to speed up their productivity could be induced with rewards for success or reprimands for non-compliance. Boosting a worker’s belief that he or she can do the task at hand and that desirable rewards will be returned for successful completion are other ways of applying process theories in organizations.

Organizations are made up of people—it is people who give them life and people who perform their work. Successfully guiding and directing workers to the attainment of individual and group goals is a big part of a manager’s job. To most effectively do that, managers should be aware of why people do the things that they do. Managers should invest time learning and implementing the concepts of both content theories, with their attention on the satisfaction of human needs, and cognitive-focused process theories. Additional information about these concepts is readily available on the web or it can be found in common management, leadership, and organizational behavior textbooks—or you can give me a call.

5.2.1 Operant Conditioning: Effective Reward Systems

Webster’s dictionary defines “folly” as: “lack of good sense or normal prudence and foresight; a foolish act or idea; and an excessively costly or unprofitable undertaking.” It was with that term in mind that Steven Kerr titled his 1975 management writing, “On the folly of rewarding A, while hoping for B.” Kerr’s article has become a classic in the academic and applied management literature because it clearly describes common mistakes that all types of organizations make when trying to promote and reward desired employee behaviors.

In his article, Kerr explained why politicians desire vagueness, why soldiers fought differently in WWII and Vietnam, why doctors prescribe medicines when they might not be needed, why research universities have professors less interested in teaching than research, why consultants rarely get poor evaluations, why true team players are so rare to find in high-level team sports, and why businesses encounter a variety of performance and expectations problems.

Kerr describes common mistakes that managers make using the principles of operant conditioning, which involves shaping behaviors through the use of rewards and punishments. Operant conditioning is how animals learn to perform tricks and how people learn many of the things they do every day. Behaviors that are followed with positive or desirable outcomes tend to happen again. Negative outcomes diminish the likelihood of their preceding behaviors occurring again. Operant conditioning posits that behaviors occur or do not occur as the result of the rewards associated with the behaviors.


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The “folly” of which many organizations are guilty involves expecting one behavior to occur, while actually rewarding another. This is analogous to expecting a trained dog to sit up and beg when it has learned through experience that rolling over and barking are the behaviors that actually earn the treats. As long as the dog’s desired rewards come only from rolling over and barking, it would be folly to expect another trick. Likewise, organizations that hope for certain behaviors from workers but actually reward others are engaging in folly.

It is also folly to hope for behaviors to occur when the rewards are not desired. Pets are trained to behave in desirable ways by giving them rewards that they crave. Dog treats, table scraps, praise, attention, and affection can be used to get dogs to learn tricks; gold watches, corner offices, pay bonuses, and new job titles have little motivating power for dogs. Also, when past experiences show that the promised rewards are seldom actually given, the rewards can lose their motivating power.

Managers and organizational leaders should examine the missions, goals, and reward systems of their organizations to ensure that the desired employee behaviors are the rewarded behaviors. If cooperation, exceptional performance, customer relations, loyalty, open communication, ownership, creativity, employee input, and innovation are desired, they must be rewarded—and the rewards must be things that workers want and that they know they will receive by performing. The behavior that is rewarded is the behavior that occurs. It is folly to think, and reward, otherwise.

5.2.2 Operant Conditioning: Salient Rewards

Have you ever heard someone say “he doesn’t need a raise, let’s give him a fancy title?” You may have even encountered a situation like this yourself. The belief behind such a statement is that titles provide *motivation* for a worker to remain with and to perform well for the organization. Is this an accurate belief?

To answer such a question, one must first define motivation and describe how it works. In the field of organizational behavior, a common way to define motivation is “something that arouses, directs, and sustains behavior toward the accomplishment of some goal or set of goals.” The “something” that activates and gives sustained direction to behavior can be a wide variety of things. Just as people are unique, so are their wants, needs, and desires.

Some people are driven to achieve internal, or intrinsic, rewards. Recognition from others for a job well done, feelings of accomplishment, or satisfaction that comes from serving others might be the “things” for which people work and aspire. Other times people work to receive rewards given from others. Pay and pay raises, promotions, bonuses, vacation time, and a variety of other externally awarded incentives can be used to direct people’s behavior.

What is valuable and motivating to one person might be of no value to someone else. An employee covered on a spouse’s insurance plan might have no need or interest in your company’s insurance offerings. Likewise, employee benefits for family members or dependents have little or no motivating effects for those without family or dependents.

The type of reward strived for also varies among people and even within people at different points in their lives. Just as hunger pangs drive a person to seek out food and then later subside after food consumption, so might the desire for specific rewards differ at different times in their lives and careers. Status, promotions, and big offices have more motivational effect for junior employees than for senior employees who have already acquired and attained those things.

So is a job title as motivating as a pay raise? It depends on the particular needs of the employee and what he or she finds rewarding. In some cases, a new and improved title could provide enhanced feelings of achievement, recognition, and responsibility—it could enhance motivation and performance. However, for the employee who is motivated by pay and the things that it symbolizes or can do or the one who struggles to pay bills and support a family, a title will have little or no value. For people who desire and require pay and raises to keep them directed and performing at work, pay and raises should be given.

Organizations must understand the needs and desired rewards of their workers to bring out the best from their people and to keep them properly motivated.

5.2.3 Operant Conditioning: Punishment and Reward

Every once in a while, educators discover an exceptional technique for teaching students new concepts or ideas. Once the technique has been proven consistent and effective, it is usually filed away for future use with new groups of students. One of the most effective and exceptional techniques to arise in management education in the past two decades has recently fallen out of favor with management educators—it was too effective.

The exercise would begin with the selection of two volunteers from a classroom. The volunteers were asked to leave the room while directions were given to the remaining students. The students were told that the volunteers were going to come into the class one at a time and perform a designated task in the room. Typically, the task chosen for the volunteers was to erase something from the chalkboard, turn off the lights, or throw away some paper. The students in the classroom were to help the volunteers figure out their tasks by giving them performance feedback.

When the first volunteer entered the classroom, he or she was told that there was a predefined task to be performed in the classroom and that the classmates would help the volunteer figure out what it is. As the first volunteer moved toward the task, classmates would clap, cheer, and rally-on their worker. When the volunteer moved away from the task or stood still, the students in the class would go stone-faced and cease providing encouragement. About 90% of the time, the first volunteer would figure out his or her task and complete it successfully.

When the second volunteer entered the classroom, the same instructions were given. In this second condition, however, the volunteer was only recognized with booing, hissing, and reprimands when he or she moved away from the task. If the volunteer moved toward the task or stood still, the classmates would go stone-faced and not provide any feedback. Sometimes the volunteers unknowingly completed the task amidst a random series of guesses and actions. About 90% of the time, the second volunteer would give up in disgust and discouragement—it was always a painful and awkward experience to watch (which is why the exercise has fallen out of favor with educators).

This teaching technique shows the effects of reward and punishment feedback for people working on a task. When positive and rewarding feedback is provided to workers, it helps guide and direct their actions toward accomplishment of the right things. Once the first volunteer realized that the class was providing encouragement and reward for certain behaviors and actions, performance quickly followed. However, when the only recognition given to the worker was an acknowledgement that he or she was doing something wrong, feelings of confusion, discouragement, and helplessness arose. By only recognizing deficiencies and incorrect actions, the classmates were unable to get the second volunteer to perform—and in the process, harmed the volunteer’s motivation, commitment, and self-esteem.

Organizational leaders need to learn from outcomes of this teaching technique and try to use more reward and less punishment feedback to bring about optimal performance from their people.

5.3 Goal Setting

At the beginning of each year, it is common to hear people talk about setting New Year’s resolutions. Becoming healthier by eating better, increasing activity and fitness levels, and losing weight are popular resolutions. As common as it is to set New Year’s resolutions, it seems almost as common to hear about people breaking their resolutions. Somehow, the good intentions behind many people’s resolutions fail to ever materialize into sustained change.

Goal-Setting Theory, a popular motivation model, helps give explanation to why people hold to or fail to meet their resolutions. Research on goal setting and performance has identified that goals, to be motivating, should be specific, challenging, accepted, and provide feedback.

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“I want to lose 10 pounds by Valentines Day” is a much more specific goal than, “Over the next year, I want to get rid of the spare tire around my middle.” Goal specificity gives people exact targets and timelines against which to measure their performance. Accomplishing a series of small, incremental, and short-term goals gives the goal setter the ability to see movement toward the overall goal.

Goals that are challenging are more motivating than goals that are too hard or too easy. Setting a fitness goal of being able to run a mile in four minutes might be unrealistically difficult for many resolution makers and eventually cause them to give up prematurely in frustration. Setting a fitness goal of being able to run a mile in 20 minutes is probably too easy for many people and would not drive people to focus, train, and significantly alter their behaviors to attain that goal.

People do things that they believe in and find important to do. When goals are not accepted by the people who are responsible for meeting them, performance is less likely to occur than when people endorse and accept the responsibility for making them happen. If people do not accept ownership and responsibility for meeting their goals, they will be more likely to give up on them when distractions and difficulties arise.

When people know how their current actions and levels of performance stack up against expected performance, they can sustain acceptable performance or make corrective actions to bring unacceptable performance back into line with expectations. Someone who has lost only two pounds at the end of January while striving toward a “Lose 10 pounds by Valentines Day” resolution should realize that corrective actions are needed. Waiting until Valentines Day to first step on a scale does not permit the goal setter to make corrective actions or maintain successful strategies during the performance period.

For resolutions to become realities, they should be specific, challenging (that is, neither too easy nor too hard), accepted, and have ways of measuring attained performance against predefined standards. The things that lead to successfully attaining New Year’s resolutions are the same things that contribute to goal attainment in organizations by individuals and groups. If one of your New Year’s resolutions is to accomplish greater things at work, try implementing the principles of Goal-Setting Theory.

5.4 Equity Theory

As a kid, I was taught that there were certain questions that you did not ask adults—doing so was considered inappropriate and rude. These included questions about age, weight, and income.

In many organizations, questions and talk of pay and compensation among coworkers is also taboo. Workers intentionally avoid discussing the subject with coworkers and managers often try to keep the pay and compensation of organizational members known only by those involved in payroll-related functions. The reasons for keeping pay and compensation a secret is probably less about being inappropriate and rude and more about keeping workers motivated, productive, and feeling that they are being treated fairly and equitably.

Stacey Adams, in his Equity Theory research from the early 1960s, gave explanation to how and why knowledge of the outcomes that others receive from their work influences the performance and motivation of workers. In his classic study, he designed an experiment where the quality and rates of work on a task were recorded for subjects in his study. After a baseline performance was determined for each subject, the researchers planted a coworker, who was part of the study, into the experiment. The planted coworker worked along side the subject doing an identical task. After a certain amount of time, the planted coworker told the subject how much he was being compensated for the task and revealed his supposed background and qualifications for the job.

Once subjects learned what the coworkers were being paid and their backgrounds and qualifications, the researchers studied the effects of that knowledge on subsequent performance of the subjects—on their quality and rates of production. In the experiments, the researchers manipulated the information they revealed to the subjects. In some cases, the planted coworkers reported that they were paid more than the subjects and in other conditions that they were paid less. Adams also changed the supposed qualification levels of the planted workers—sometimes subjects were more qualified than the planted workers and sometimes they were less qualified.

Adams concluded that workers perceive themselves as being over-rewarded, under-rewarded, or equitably-rewarded in relation to the outputs and inputs of their coworkers. When subjects felt that they were being compensated fairly with respect to the rewards and qualifications of the coworkers, they did not alter their performance after knowledge of their coworker's compensation was revealed. In cases where subjects felt over- or under-rewarded in relation to their coworkers, their performance changed after they learned what the coworkers were being paid. Subjects changed their rates and quality of work to restore perceptions of equity with their coworkers—sometimes the changes would be beneficial to an organization and sometimes not.

Equity Theory has many implications for managers and organizational policy makers. As a motivation model, it has direct bearing on policies such as wage and salary structures, compensation and benefits, training and development, and employee attitudes and morale. Managers should fully investigate the concepts of Equity Theory—asking questions about these concepts is expected and required.

5.5 Two-Factor Theory

The opposite of up is down and the opposite of on is off. The opposite of big is small and the opposite of left is right. Many things have opposites, but some do not. For example, do you know the opposite of a fish? Or a pickle? Or a book? There are also some things that we like to think of as being opposites, but in fact, they are not—such as a cat being the opposite of a dog.

Frederick Herzberg wrestled with the ideas of opposites in his work on motivation and worker satisfaction. Until Herzberg's research, many people believed that satisfaction and dissatisfaction with work were opposite ends of a single continuum. As a person became more satisfied with a job, he or she moved away from being dissatisfied. Under this view, managers and organizational leaders needed to tend to characteristics of the job that moved employees toward satisfaction and away from dissatisfaction.

Herzberg’s research revealed that there are certain job characteristics that lead to satisfaction and other characteristics that create dissatisfaction. Instead of a single continuum ranging from satisfaction to dissatisfaction, Herzberg concluded that there are actually two dimensions of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. One dimension ranges from dissatisfaction to neutral and the other ranges from neutral to satisfaction. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction with work arise from the presence or absence of different job characteristics.

Hygiene factors, as Herzberg labeled them, are those characteristics of the job that if present, lead to a neutral feeling about the job. Company policies, relationships with coworkers, working conditions, quality of supervision, pay, and relationships with superiors are hygiene factors. If these factors are unacceptable to a worker, they will lead to dissatisfaction with the job. If they are sufficiently present in a workplace, they will simply cause the worker to feel okay or neutral about the job.

The characteristics of a job that make it satisfying to workers are known as “Motivators,” according to Herzberg’s model. These are things that if present, lead workers away from feeling okay or neutral with a job to feeling satisfied. Achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement opportunities, growth, and the work itself are those things that create feelings of satisfaction and motivation in workers.

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As with personal hygiene, if you have it, the people with whom you come into contact will not be offended by your presence. If your personal hygiene is poor, the people with whom you closely interact will be dissatisfied with being near you. Proper hygiene does not create feelings of satisfaction among those you encounter; it only keeps them from being dissatisfied. Satisfaction with being near others arises when you have things in common, enjoy your times together, and respect and appreciate each other. Personality, mutual respect, shared values and feelings, and appreciation of others are what lead to satisfaction with being close to others.

Managers who want to enhance motivation and satisfaction in their workers must guarantee that hygiene AND motivator factors are positive and present in their workplaces.

5.6.1 Need Theories: Learned Needs

If you were given the task of getting a tennis ball into a box, how would you do it? Would you stand next to the box and then extend your arm and drop the ball directly into the box? Or might you position yourself a distance away from the box and toss the ball into it? Assuming that you succeeded in your first attempt, how would you position yourself for a second attempt? Would you do it the exact same way or would you make it more challenging for yourself and move further away from the box?

David McClelland and his well-known research on learned needs gives explanation for the distances that people choose when attempting such a task. People with a high need for achievement position themselves at distances that are challenging, yet also have a fairly high probability of success. People with a high need for achievement are driven to accomplish exceptional and unusual things. Simply dropping the ball into the box would not provide them with a sense of accomplishment or achievement. Standing too far away brings in elements of luck rather than skill.

McClelland's research also identified two other learned needs: the need for power and the need for affiliation. People with a strong need for power have a built-in need to be in control of others and situations. McClelland described power needs as being personalized or socialized. A personalized power need is characterized by wanting power and control for personal reasons—for the gratification that comes from having others do what you want them to do. A socialized power need is characterized by wanting power to use for the good of others. A person with a high need for affiliation is someone who actively seeks out the company of others. Such a person has a strong desire to include others in events and to be included by others.

Learned needs, as described McClelland, come from experiences in early life. The stories that children hear and learn, the lessons that they gain from parents and influential others, and the messages that they receive from their environments all help shape and determine what is regarded as important and worthwhile. Eventually, those lessons influence how people approach life, interpret events, and behave. People who value achievement as an important quality will eventually come to view opportunities in life as ways to accomplish unusual and exceptional things. Likewise, those with strong needs for power and affiliation will see and interpret life events as opportunities to meet those needs. The learned needs that people develop in life serve as lenses by which they see and approach the world.

Organizations are social entities that exist to accomplish goals and objectives. Power and influence are necessary to bring about compliance and performance from others. A combination of people who are high in needs for achievement, power (preferably socialized power), and affiliation is needed for well-coordinated, functional, and vibrant organizations. Organizations of all types need people who achieve, influence, and work well with others.

5.6.2 Need Theories: Achievement Orientation

“I think I can. I think I can!” Those were the words of the undersized train engine as it pulled the train of dolls and toys up the hill in the popular children’s book, *The Little Engine That Could*, by Watty Piper. Piper’s book is an updated version of a story that originated in the early twentieth century. It teaches children about optimism and the power of positive thinking and the sense of accomplishment that comes from taking on and succeeding at big goals.

Teaching people at early ages that success comes from hard work, persistence, and personal sacrifice can have important influences on society in years to come. According to Professor Harold Jones, the author of *Personal Character and National Destiny*, stories like *The Little Engine That Could* help develop personal values that affect how people work and their goals and aspirations. Children who learn that hard work and accomplishment are important and desirable personal characteristics begin to see events in life as opportunities to accomplish exceptional things themselves.

Jones argued that the stories we teach to our children help set the course of the nation in years to come. Children who value exceptional achievement turn into adults who value exceptional achievement. When high-achievement people control the organizations and institutions of society, they influence how a society functions and the things that it values and aspires to accomplish. A nation full of high-achievers functions differently than one without people “programmed” for exceptional performance. Jones suggested that the stories, lessons, and cultural examples that we hold up to our children early in their lives helps instill in them a sense of achievement, success, and work ethic.

Jones based much of his work on concepts of “Learned Needs Theory” by David McClelland. Needs explain why people want to do the things they do and have been used to describe human motivation—Maslow’s hierarchy is probably the most well known of these theories. Learned needs are acquired early in life through family experiences. Once acquired, they serve to guide the behaviors of individuals throughout their lives. The three learned needs identified by McClelland are achievement, power, and affiliation. A person with a high need for achievement will view and seek out events in life as opportunities to accomplish unusual and exceptional things. A person with a high need for power will search for opportunities to be in control and one with a high need for affiliation will look for ways to include and be included by others in events.

Today’s workplace is made up of people who grew up at different times and were exposed to different “stories” as they were raised. For some, hard work and achievement are programmed into them. For others, strong needs for power or affiliation drive their behavior. Others grew up with negative and painful stories. Managers should understand the needs and motivations of their workers and seek ways to develop cultures of exceptional performance with people of different backgrounds and types of personal motivation.

5.6.3 Need Theories: High-level Needs

If you are looking for a clean, fun, mindless, and uplifting experience, watch *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure* on video. It is the story of two high school friends who travel through time collecting “personages of historical significance” for use in a high school history presentation. In one scene, Bill and Ted find themselves in the future and in the presence of an assembly of people who admire *them* as historically significant people. Before leaving the future, they are prompted to say something to the group. The words of wisdom that they utter are: “Be excellent to each other” and “Party on, dudes!” Later in the movie, Abraham Lincoln used those same words to conclude Bill and Ted’s presentation to the high school student body during the history presentation.

The concepts described in the words of Bill and Ted have become quite popular in the management and organization fields in recent years. The management philosophy at the Pike Place Fish Market in Seattle, Washington is one such example. Their philosophy is that work should be fun and they realize that work and organizations are about people—the people who work in them and give them life and the people with whom they serve and work. Visitors to the fish market witness workers being playful while working hard and giving extreme personal attention and service to each customer. Workers learn to see customers as fellow human beings with individual needs and wants. Respect, concern, and compassion for others make up the core of the “fish philosophy.”

Without profitable exchanges with others outside of the organization, businesses will eventually go out of business. Work has to be done. The fish market chooses to conduct work in a fun and friendly environment. It should not surprise anyone that places that are perceived as fun and enjoyable are preferred over those places that are not. When people are free to enjoy each other, their work, and their organizations, they tend to be more satisfied with work, life, and themselves.

From a motivational perspective, these philosophies operate on peoples’ higher-level needs. When people focus on themselves and what *they* are personally getting or not getting from work and when they view work as simply a means to a paycheck rather than a way of helping and serving others, they can become overly absorbed with bettering themselves and can sometimes neglect bettering their customers and organizations. Working in a culture that encourages members to focus on others and serve their needs, can help individuals grow and satisfy higher-level personal needs, such as esteem and self-actualization needs.

When all organizational members, from first-level workers to top management, value and respect each other and their customers, suppliers, and other external constituents, good things happen. When work is fun, meaningful, and enjoyable, workers tend to commit themselves more fully to their jobs and organizations. This philosophy is not new. Bill and Ted said it wonderfully, “Be excellent to each other...and party on, dudes!”

6. Appendix

6.1 Original Titles and Dates of Publication in Abilene Reporter-News Newspaper


1. Perspectives on Organizations

- 1.1 Divide labor--increase production, July 14, 2006, 7D.
- 1.2 How being less efficient can mean more productivity, June 2, 2006, 2D.
- 1.3 Emphasis on value of workers vital for companies, March 9, 2007, 2D.
- 1.4.1 A systematic approach to systems theory, April 13, 2007, 2D.
- 1.4.2 Parts of the system must remain in balance, April 20, 2007, 7C.

2. Leadership

- 2.1 Looks like we're on a road to nowhere, April 6, 2008, 2D.
- 2.2.1 Leaders, managers and shades of blue, February 24, 2006, 2D.
- 2.2.2 Leadership not limited to positions of power, November 4, 2007, 2D
- 2.2.3 Authority, leadership different animals, October 27, 2006, 2D.
- 2.3.1 Formal study of leadership relatively new 'science.' October 28, 2007, 2D.
- 2.3.2 'Idiosyncrasy credits' valuable teaching tool on leadership, November 3, 2006, 9C.

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- 2.3.3 Identifying five sources of power, June 23, 2006, 2D.
- 2.3.4 'Machiavellianism' well practiced at office, September 1, 2006, 2D.
- 2.3.5 Saying 'no' to managers sometimes essential, January 19, 2007, 2D.
- 2.3.6 True leaders are visionary, sacrificial, December 30, 2007, 2D.
- 2.3.7 Servant leaders differ in approach, March 16, 2008, 2D.
- 2.3.8 Being 'in' with boss pays off with recognition, responsibilities, May 27, 2007, 2D.
- 2.4 10 roles key to managerial effectiveness, March 11, 2006, 2D.
- 2.5 Managers, like coaches, affect group success, January 12, 2007, 7C.
- 2.6.1 Leadership remains a key skill to develop, October 14, 2007, 2D.
- 2.6.2 Mastering the game of management, April 28, 2006, 7C.
- 2.6.3 Military academies can teach lesson on leadership, December 15, 2006, 2D.

3. Individuals

- 3.1 There are advantages to hiring self-monitors, May 19, 2006, 4D.
- 3.2 Accept responsibility for failures as well as successes, December 1, 2006, 11C.
- 3.3.1 Understand the role of attitudes in the workplace, December 8, 2006, 2E.
- 3.3.2 From the mouth of a pig, good management advice, May 13, 2007, 2D.
- 3.4.1 Continuing to learn key to job performance, June 9, 2006, 7D.
- 3.4.2 Have confidence in confidence, February 17, 2008, 2D.

4. Groups

- 4.1 Sports teach valuable lessons, October 20, 2006, 9C.
- 4.2 A lesson in diminishing marginal productivity, February 3, 2006, 2D.
- 4.3 Group development important, August 4, 2006, 2D.
- 4.4 Social facilitation: Handling pressure during performance, March 31, 2006, 7D.
- 4.5 Why social conformity can be bad in the workplace, April 14, 2006, 2D.
- 4.6 Organizational culture should be developed, maintained, November 17, 2006, 2D.
- 4.7.1 Are you a follower? March 30, 2008, 2D.
- 4.7.2 Groups outperform individuals on mental tasks, December 2, 2007, 2D.
- 4.7.3 Team-building tools effective, November 10, 2006, 2D.

5. Motivation

- 5.1 Motivation is the key, December 23, 2007, 2D.
- 5.2.1 Reward the behavior you want to see, January, 5, 2007, 7C.
- 5.2.2 Employee motivation is crucial to any company, February 10, 2006, 2D.
- 5.2.3 Recognizing only mistakes doesn't improve work, July 21, 2006, 7D.
- 5.3 Resolve to be specific with your goals, January 6, 2008, 2D.
- 5.4 Understanding equity theory and keeping employees motivated, January 20, 2008, 2D.
- 5.5 Real measure of worker satisfaction, March 30, 2007, 2D.
- 5.6.1 Learned needs determine our course in life, March 9, 2008, 3D.
- 5.6.2 Taking a cue from the little engine that could is crucial in child development, April 27, 2008, 2D.
- 5.6.3 Making workplaces fun is productive, January 26, 2007, 7D.