

## Organizations as Cultures Part 2

Organizational Form and Adoption

Wednesday February 13, 2013

### Announcements

- You have now a detailed rubric for Progress Reports.
  - If you don't, make a friend
  - If you write me with questions, I will check to see if you were in discussion before answering
- Today, I am handing out rubrics for the case study and the research paper
- If you haven't picked up your mid-term, you will need to see me in my office

## Patterns of Software Use in Organizations

Grudin argues that software used in organizations has three patterns of use.

What are they?

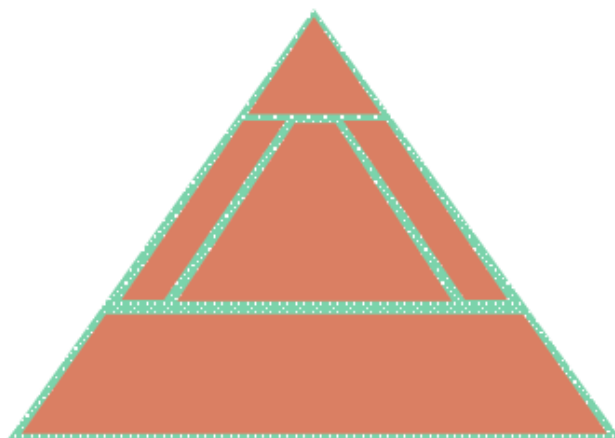
## Management and Executive Use of Computers

- In last half of last century.... Nonexistent
- Now, all the time!
- What changed?

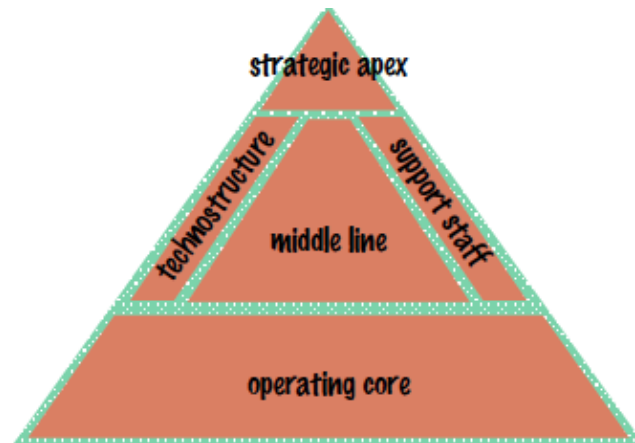
## Culture is not homogeneous

- Difference perspectives in an organization at once
- Dominant culture emerges from different elements of organizational practice

## Mintzberg's Structure



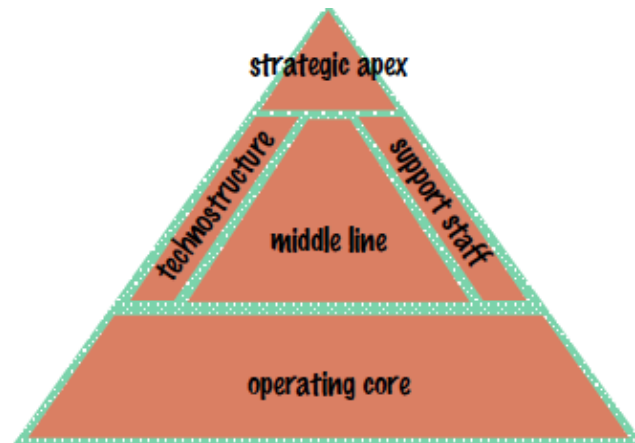
## Mintzberg's Structure



### Strategic Apex

- People with *overall* responsibility
  - Their concerns are global through the organization
- Ensures organization serves mission effectively
- Duties include:
  - Direct supervision
  - Management of boundaries
  - Development of strategy

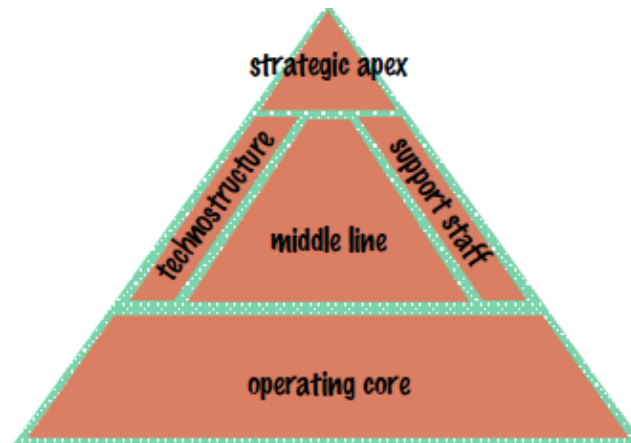
## Mintzberg's Structure



## Operating Core

- People performing the basic work
  - Generally, the production of products and services
  - Four main functions
    - Secure inputs for production
    - Transform inputs into outputs
    - Distribute the outputs
    - Provide direct support to these functions

## Mintzberg's Structure



## Middle Line

- “chain of command”
  - Why?
    - Up from core to apex
    - Down from apex to core
- Transitions through the chain
  - The mediations from strategic to operating concerns

## Technostructure

- Largely analytic
- Analysts who serve the organization by affecting the work of other analysts
- Mintzberg gives them an important role
- Technostructure analysts
- Control analysts
- General analysts

The people who put "scientific" in "scientific management!"

## Support Staff

- Organizational functions that support primary activities
  - This is *organizational units*, not individuals
  - Distinguished from technostructure by function

## How this breakdown helps

1. Illuminates other views
  - Organism view especially applies to the work at the strategic apex
  - Machine view especially applies to the work of the operating core
2. Shows organizational contexts
  - Different cultures apply in different units
  - Different cultures emerge in organizations in which different parts of the structure are dominant

## Pressures

- Each unit seeks power in its own ways
  - Strategic core seeks direct control
  - Technostructure seeks standardization
  - Operating core seeks to minimize administrative influence
  - Middle line seeks autonomy through balkanization
  - Support staff seeks influence through collaboration
- Different ways to balance these pressures



## Remember these organizational forms?

- Simple structure
- Machine bureaucracy
- Professional bureaucracy
- Divisionalized form
- Adhocracy

### simple structure



- dominant element is the **strategic apex**
  - strategic apex strives for centralization, to retain control over decision-making
  - dominant mode of coordination is through **direct supervision**
  - organizations in which this effect dominates exhibit the **simple structure**

## machine bureaucracy



- dominant element is the **technostructure**
  - technostructure favors standardization
    - maximises the leverage of scientific analysis
  - a push towards standards, esp. work processes
  - the form that results is the **machine bureaucracy**

## professional bureaucracy



- dominant element is the **operating core**
  - members of the operating core seek to minimise administrative influence
    - maximise people's control over their own work
    - achieve coordination through standardization of skills, not procedures
      - that is, through *what* we do, but with control over *how*
  - a pull for professionalism
    - that is, a reliance on externally-validated skills
  - when this dominances, the result is the **professional bureaucracy**

## divisionalized form



- dominant element is the middle line
  - must pull power down from strategic apex and up from operating core
  - concentration in each individual unit
  - creates separate fiefdoms (“balkanization”)
    - each with their own local control and decision-making
  - this is the **divisionalized form**

## adhocracy



- dominance of the **support staff**
  - not when its members are autonomous
    - that wouldn't make sense
  - rather, when their collaboration is needed
  - this is maximised when the organizational structure is highly flexible and variable
    - separate independent units interacting in fluid ways
    - requires more intricate infrastructural support
  - when this pressure dominates, the result is the **adhocracy**
    - “ad hoc” (lit. “towards this”)
      - without planning, constituted for a single purpose, improvised...

## Movie Company

- Small company
  - Simple
- M

All the same?

- L
  -
- Uns
  - M

## Information Systems Impacts

- System adoption for each group is different
- Organizational technology adoption reflects dominant concerns

## Use within groups is shaped by

- Activities
- Incentive Structures

## Example: Calendar Use

- Individual contributors
  - Meeting reminders
  - Meeting invitations
  - Printing
  - Calendar visibility
- Managers and admins
- Execs and their secretaries

## Another example: Shared Workspaces

- Orlikowski paper
- Two key elements influence the effective use of groupware:
  - Mental models
  - Structural properties of the organization

## Technological Frames

- Related to mental models
- Underlying assumptions, expectations, and knowledge that people have about technology
- People can change them based on:
  - The kind and amount of information about the product
  - The nature and forma of training received

## Structural Elements

- Reward Systems
- Policies and Procedures
- Firm Culture and Work Norms

## So what to do?

- Change the norms
  - Top-down through training, communication, leadership, and structural legitimation
  - Bottom-up through facilitating local opportunities and supportive environments for experimentation
- Provide resources
  - Occasions for experimenting → generates interest and use
  - Specific tasks that link to current work tasks

## Overall patterns to know:

1. Widely-used technologies support broad activity and incentive patterns
2. Successful use is accompanied by the emergence of norms.
3. Only influential groups tend to get attention in the design and training decisions.

## Upcoming

- No discussion Friday
- No class Monday (holiday)
- Orgs as Political Systems next Wednesday