CHAPTER 9

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS IN PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

All the ideas and approaches we have examined are helpful in understanding what is going on in public and nonprofit management. But putting those ideas into practice requires the ability to lead and work effectively with other people. Ideas about what leadership is, who can be a leader, and the roles that leaders serve have changed over time. While early perspectives on leadership focused on those holding top-level positions, more modern views recognize that leadership can and should be exercised at all levels of organizations. By carefully considering and constantly practicing good leadership, you can become more effective in whatever position you occupy in an organization.

Effective leadership and management involve decision making, communication, self-awareness, and the ability to motivate others and manage group dynamics. It should be recognized, however, that leadership and management in practice are often complex and fluid, demanding both a strong skill set and enormous flexibility. For instance, you may be called upon to clear up a situation and take appropriate action, often within a matter of seconds. As a leader, you will necessarily and appropriately analyze and understand the situation in terms of your own approach or theory. But you will also have to act and engage with others in decision making. In doing so, you need to have the ability to influence others and to exercise power constructively and responsibly.

Putting ideas into action requires that you have the ability not only to make decisions and delegate tasks but also to do so in a manner that energizes and engages others. Such decision making requires both confidence and self-awareness. Employees look to leaders not only for direction, but also for cues about how to feel about their work and their part in achieving organizational goals. Interestingly, however, successfully exercising these leadership skills depends on several essential "personal" skills that are part of one's social and psychological makeup. Some of these personal skills reflect your approach to the world, others have to do with your capacity for creativity or effective decision making, and still others have to do with how you deal with ambiguity or lack of clarity. For example, the manager suddenly promoted to the directorship of a mental health department will certainly have important (and immediate) decisions to make, perhaps involving creative solutions to organizational problems left by the departing director. The new manager will also have to operate, perhaps for months, in a highly ambiguous situation.

Leadership and Power

Many commentators have argued that improved leadership is essential for us to successfully meet the challenges of the coming century. Public opinion data reveal widespread loss of faith in the leadership of business, government, labor, and other private and public institutions. But many argue that the problem relates not merely to formal positions of power but also to a pervasive failure of leadership throughout society. Because effective leadership sometimes involves the use of power, the capacity to understand power, especially the capacity to recognize and use the resources one has available to influence others, is essential in modern organizations of all types. But *power* is a far narrower term than *leadership*. We will consider power as one aspect of the larger question of how one might develop greater skills in public leadership.

Early leadership studies attempted to identify and understand the attributes of "great men." Such approaches focused on the personal characteristics of existing or historical leaders, assuming that leaders were "born, not made." These so-called "trait studies" were reviewed in the 1940s by Ralph Stogdill (1948), who found that although leaders do appear to possess traits that make them different from other people, there was a lack of agreement about exactly what those traits were. For example, some of the studies that Stogdill reviewed found that leaders were more intelligent and active, while others found that leaders were taller and more dependable. Overall, Stogdill (1974) concluded that leaders encouraged cooperative behavior, were sensitive to others, exercised initiative, and had self-confidence. But having those traits did not necessarily mean that you would be an effective leader.

Although the trait approach to leadership offered some insights, it became evident over time that it left a number of important questions unanswered. For example, beyond personal characteristics, what did leaders actually do? Why was it that the same leaders might be effective in one situation but not another? These questions led researchers to focus on the behavior of leaders and the exercise of leadership in particular contexts. One of the more important studies of leadership behavior was initiated at Ohio State University in the 1940s. Leadership was conceptualized as based on two types of behaviors. The first type was called "consideration," which was behavior focused on relationships and concern for others. The second type was called "initiation of structure," which was behavior aimed at task definition and completion (Bass, 1990). A similar study at the University of Michigan referred to these same sets of behaviors as "employee orientation" and "job or production orientation." Based on these dimensions, Blake and Mouton (1964) came up with a Managerial Grid that plotted behaviors associated with production and people on a scale of 1 to 9. The ideal in their model was to be a "9.9" manager—that is, a manager with a high concern for both people and production.

Other researchers began to focus on the context of leadership, trying to match different types of organizational situations with the appropriate mix of leadership behaviors. One such "situational" leadership model was developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1988). In this model, the key to assessing a situation was the readiness and ability of the follower to accomplish a particular task. For example, a person lacking in ability needs the leader to use high-task behavior to provide instruction and guidance. Then, once that person begins

to show a willingness to try, the leader should be encouraging, using high-relationship behavior. On the other hand, a person who is ready and willing to accomplish a task needs neither high-task or high-relationship behavior—in this case, the leader should just get out of the way!

Networking

For different perspectives on leadership, visit the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership at http://www.academyofleadership.org/, the Research Center for Leadership in Action at http://wagner.nyu.edu/leadership/, the Center for Integrative Leadership at http://www.leadership.umn.edu/, or the Centre for Advanced Studies in Leadership at www.casl.se.

More contemporary perspectives on leadership embrace the idea that leadership is not just the responsibility of those in the executive suite, but can and should be exercised throughout an organization. John Gardner, the former cabinet secretary and founder of Common Cause, stated, "In this country leadership is dispersed among all the segments of society and down through all levels, and the system simply won't work as it should unless large numbers of people throughout society are prepared to take leaderlike action to make things work at their level" (Gardner, 1987, p. ix). In this view, leadership is a pervasive phenomenon occurring in families, work groups, and businesses and at all levels of government, society, and culture. Leadership, then, should be seen not merely as a position someone holds, but rather as something that happens in a group or organization, something that comes and goes, something that ebbs and flows as the group or organization does its work.

As we have seen, modern society can be described as (1) highly turbulent, subject to sudden and dramatic shifts; (2) highly interdependent, requiring cooperation across many sectors; and (3) greatly in need of creative and integrative solutions to problems. Under such circumstances, ambiguity is increasingly a hallmark of decision making, and the involvement (rather than the control) of many individuals in group decisions will be necessary. "Leadership...will become an increasingly intricate process of multilateral brokerage, including constituencies both within and without the organization. More and more decisions will be public decisions; that is, the people they affect will insist on being heard" (Bennis, 1983, p. 16). Leadership for the future cannot be equated merely with the exercise of control by those in formal positions of power.

So what do we know about leadership, especially shared or public leadership? What do we know about leadership in the increasingly common situations where no one is really "in charge"—student organizations, churches, political groups, and so on? Often, much of their work is done through committees or other even less formal groups. And those committees seem to waste a lot of time and energy, partly because of lack of leadership. Even though one person may be designated the "leader," rarely does he or she exercise much control. Usually, things drift for a while—maybe a long while—until someone finally puts forth a suggestion that people pick up on and get excited about. At that point, we can say that someone has exercised leadership.

Somewhat more formally, then, we can define leadership as "the character of the relationship between the individual and a group or organization that stimulates or releases some latent energy within the group so that those involved more clearly understand their own needs, desires, interests, and potentialities and begin to work toward their fulfillment" (Denhardt & Prelgovisk, 1992, pp. 33–44). Where leadership is present, something occurs in the dynamics of the group or organization that leads to change. What is central to leadership is the capacity of the leader—whether or not he or she is called a leader—to "energize" the group.

What Would You Do?

The state government division that you head is going through several significant changes in a very short period of time. You are moving to a new location and at the same time embarking on some major new programs. All of this is occurring in a year in which your staff has been substantially reduced by retirements and transfers and you are in the midst of hiring replacement personnel. It promises to be a really difficult year, filled with change and uncertainty. You want to make things go as smoothly as possible for your staff. What would you do?

The leader merely taps and reshapes the "consciousness" of the group. Acts of leadership express a new direction, but one that is determined by the emerging interests of all members of a group. We can say that someone exercises public leadership when he or she (1) helps the group or organization understand its needs and potential; (2) integrates and articulates the group's vision; and (3) acts as a trigger or stimulus for group action. The essence of leadership, therefore, is its energizing effect. But often the people we formally refer to as leaders don't really lead; at best, they manage things successfully by keeping the group running more or less smoothly.

To energize the group, for example, the leader must know how to sense its underlying desires, sometimes even before those desires are clear to the group members themselves. The leader must also be able to act in ambiguous situations and to take risks; leadership involves change, and change is often difficult for both group and leader. Developing the personal strength to face change is important. Leadership has often been viewed in terms of the exercise of power by one person or group over another— getting people to do what one wants them to do by manipulating power and influence. Leadership in the future will be more and more independent of power, and the most critical leadership skills will be the personal (rather than interpersonal) skills associated with correctly empathizing with and "reading" a group, acting with a sense of direction in the presence of ambiguity, and having the courage to take risks when change is warranted.

Sally Helgesen (1996) calls this new approach "grassroots leadership." She argues that today's organizations differ dramatically from those created in past generations. Power becomes shared throughout the group and, in turn, leaders "are to be found not only among those at the top, the 'lead horses,' but also among those who constitute what in the industrial era we called the rank and file" (p. 21). Accordingly, each individual plays a key role in shaping the organization; each helps the group deal with issues of organizational change.

In fact, although power may be an important resource to the leader, one need not exercise traditional power to bring about change (see the box "Exploring Concepts: Bases of Social Power"). Efforts to control a group are often ultimately destructive of leadership. On the other hand, when the direction of the group or organization is selected through a developmental process that gives priority to group members' needs and desires, leadership is much more likely to be enduring. Leadership, in this context, relates more to sharing power among the group rather than using power for the purpose of control. So for the new knowledge-based organizations of today to be successful, greater autonomy and decision-making capacity should be distributed to the front line, with those closest to the situation serving as the leaders of change.

Exploring Concepts

BASES OF SOCIAL POWER

Power is really much more complex than we often think. For example, the power we exercise is based on a number of different factors that operate in social situations. A classic research article describes the following "bases of social power":

1. *Reward power.* The ability to meet the needs of another or control the other by rewarding the desired behavior. Pay, promotions, or bonuses may be ways that organizations exert reward power over employees.
2. *Punishment power.* Coercive power, or the ability to deliver a painful or punishing outcome to others, and hence control them by their desire to escape the punishment. Firing, ridiculing, or disciplining an individual are common techniques of punishment.
3. *Expert power.* Power based on the ability to understand, use, and deliver information that others need. Engineers or scientists may exert great influence in an organization based on their knowledge of scientific techniques for manufacturing a product, and so forth.
4. *Legitimate power.* Control or influence exerted by virtue of one's holding a particular position in the organizational structure. The "power" is vested in the rights and responsibilities of the position, not the person. Thus, a company president or chairman of the board has power by virtue of the rights and responsibility given to whoever holds the office. Compliance with legitimate power occurs because other individuals in the organization respect the organizational structure and the rights and responsibilities that accompany particular positions.
5. *Referent power.* Charisma, or the ability to motivate others to comply with one's wishes because of one's personal attractiveness. Control based on referent power depends on the power-holder's ability to have others like and be attracted to him or her and to follow his or her leadership because of this attraction.

SOURCE: Adapted from John R. P. French, Jr., and Bertram Raven, "The Bases of Social Power," in Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin F. Zander, eds., *Group Dynamics*, 2nd ed., New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1962. © 1962 by Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin F. Zander. Reprinted by permission.

Perhaps most importantly, leadership is not just about doing things right, but also about doing the right things (Bennis & Nanus, 1985). Particularly in the public sector, the goals sought by leaders inevitably involve important public values. Public leaders, at all levels, must play a "transformational" role in helping people to articulate and act on shared ideals and values within the context of democratic governance. Transformational leaders understand and support the needs of followers, work with them to define and seek higher-level needs, and engage followers as whole people. "The result of transformational leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents" (Burns, 1978, p. 4). In fact, leadership in the public sector involves attention not only to the needs and values of those within the organization, but also to the values and preferences of citizens.

In *The Leadership Challenge*, James Kouzes and Barry Posner (2007) assert that *credibility* is the foundation of leadership. Constituents must trust that their leader "will do as they say they will do." They expect their leader to be honest, forward-looking, competent, and inspiring. The five practices of credible leaders are to (1) model the way, (2) inspire a shared vision, (3) challenge the process, (4) enable others to act, and (5) encourage the heart.

First, leaders "model the way" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, chs. 3–4). Successful leaders understand and are able to articulate their personal values and find their unique voice; identify the shared values among their constituents; reinforce shared values through meaningful verbal and nonverbal communication, such as artifacts, symbols, metaphors, and storytelling; and act consistently with those personal and shared values. Values serve as the anchor, motivation, and compass by which individuals authentically lead their own life and guide others.

From this source of authenticity, leaders "inspire a shared vision" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, chs. 5–6). A successful leader imagines the possibilities, rather than the probabilities, of "*an ideal and unique image of the future for the common good*" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 105). This vision is value-oriented and introduces meaning and purpose into our lives. Leaders articulate their initial vision; educate their constituents to their vision through meaningful verbal and nonverbal communication; and engage the constituents in continuous dialogue to collectively discover, clarify, and commit to the common goals of the vision.

Inspiring a vision naturally requires that leaders "challenge the process," that is, request that constituents change from the status quo (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, chs. 7–8). In *Leadership on the Line*, Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky (2002) argue that leadership is fundamentally concerned with adaptive challenges. As opposed to *technical challenges*, which require a change in the knowledge, skill, procedure, or structure of a given situation, *adaptive challenges* exist when social conflict or crisis demands that the current beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of people must change in order to realize a more just and equitable collective future.

Beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors inform the identity and competence of a person. When leaders move beyond their position of authority and request that people risk their identity to adaptively work toward an uncertain future, they will naturally face resistance from those people who feel discomforted by and resistant to change. Leaders and their vision constantly face the danger of being marginalized, diverted, attacked, or seduced by people

who resist change. Thus, the challenge of leadership is to orchestrate conflict in a way that ennobles people and engages them in adaptive work at a rate that they can handle (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Helgesen, 2005). Leaders learn to build momentum on small wins.

According to Heifetz and Linsky (2002), in order to manage conflict and change, leaders must continuously maintain a holistic and realistic understanding of the context of change. To appropriately evaluate and successfully orchestrate the situation, the leader must iteratively alternate between the objective vantage point of standing on "the balcony" and the subjective vantage point of acting on the stage. The balcony allows the leader to view and assess the entire stage in order to (a) distinguish the adaptive from the technical challenges; (b) attentively listen to and interpret the underpinnings of the words and behaviors of various actors to gain an understanding and appreciation of their perceived risks, fears, and conflicts; and (c) assess the reaction of the authority figure(s), such as the director, for clues that indicate the cast's level of tolerance for change (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002, ch. 3).

With a holistic and realistic understanding of the situation, a leader returns to the stage to partake in the production and to "enable others to act" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, chs. 9–10). That is, a leader must empower constituents to mobilize and engage in adaptive work. Empowerment acknowledges that power is expandable and reinforcing and that it originates from sources such as talents, knowledge, experience, ideas, personal relationships, and personal authority (Helgesen, 2005; Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Leaders empower their constituents when they provide them with the competence and confidence to assume the control and responsibility needed to collaboratively work toward a shared vision. Leaders "become more powerful when [they] give [their] own power away" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 251).

Finally, according to Kouzes and Posner, leaders "encourage the heart"—that is, they appeal to the passions of their followers and their emotional commitments so that there are not only rational reasons for following, but followers have a deeper although more abstract commitment to the leader's path. Leaders persuade others not only by appeals to the "head," but also by appeals to the "heart."

A new approach to understanding leadership is to consider leadership as an art. This view opens the possibility that both music and leadership shape and are shaped by similar patterns of human experience and human energy, that the best leaders display a certain "musicality" that distinguishes them from others, and that actual artistic expressions, skillfully facilitated, can be employed to tap and evoke significant aspects of the leadership experience and help to unveil its mysteries.

What do transformational leaders do that causes others to follow? Denhardt and Denhardt (2006) argue that the best leaders *connect with us emotionally in a way that energizes us and moves us to act*. Transformational leadership engages others in a very special way, touching elements of desire, commitment, and possibility that are deeply seated in the inner lives of potential followers. Leaders facilitate a reshaping of human energy, restructuring the narratives of human experience and bringing alive a new progression of possibilities, even in spite of ambiguity, complexity, and uncertainty.

Interestingly, this is similar to the role of music in our lives. Music connects with us emotionally, communicating a certain energy that resonates with one or another emotional state.

CourseReader Assignment

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Read "Can Bureaucracy Be Beautiful?" by H. George Frederickson. While public organizations, like other large and complex organizations, are often viewed from a rational standpoint, there is an aspect of creating and operating large organizations that is artistic in nature. It involves creativity, ingenuity, and artistic skill. The successful administrator or the successful leader must touch the heart as well as the head.

A recent IBM study found that the most important attribute of leadership is creativity. Why would you say that this is the case or not the case? Do you think of leadership as a science or an art? If leadership is a creative art, does it make sense to you to think of managing in terms of beautiful processes and beautiful outcomes?

It touches us physically, emotionally, even spiritually and primes us for what might be called a *feeling-based exploration* of our personal condition. In this way, music relaxes us, assures us, consoles us, inspires us, excites us, or calms us as its rhythms and harmonies interact with our own. In a very real way, we are *moved* from wherever we might have been to a new condition, noticeably more in tune with something we value, and definitely a couple of notches removed from any of our default states. The music's progressions and transitions—its changes in harmony, melody, and rhythm—become progressions and transitions in our own feeling states, and, indeed, over time we are primed for analogous progressions in other aspects of our lives, more or less at ease with complexity, dissonance, ambiguity, dramatic emotion, and more.

It's easy to think of music as a metaphor for leadership. For example, many have illustrated leadership by referring to the role of an orchestra conductor or the leader of a jazz ensemble. On this point, Denhardt (1993) argues that leaders are rarely able to write and conduct a "symphony" that others play. More often they are called on to be fully integrated into the performance themselves, to play along with others, like the leader of a jazz ensemble improvising a tune. "By establishing the theme, the leader of the ensemble…can chart the basic pattern and direction in which the performance will move. By setting the tone and the tempo, the leader gives focus to the spirit and energy of the group. By modeling effective and responsible performance in their own solos, leaders can energize and articulate the performance of others. But it is the performance of others that is critical" (pp. 180–181).

More importantly, leaders confront many of the same issues faced by musicians and do so in ways that go beyond metaphorical parallels. For example, leaders, like musicians, are concerned with rhythm and timing, and leaders can learn a great deal about rhythm and timing from musicians. We understand that groups and organizations have rhythmic patterns that organize the experiences of those in the group. We understand the different cycles of group life and the varying pace at which different groups work. Many have experienced what happens when a group accustomed to a particular rhythm in its work gets a new "boss," someone with a completely different rhythm, typically resulting in chaos and frustration. And there is the matter of improvisation: leaders, like musicians, often improvise (though they rarely think of their work in this way), and they can certainly learn the basics of improvisation from musicians (see Denhardt & Denhardt, 2006). In all these ways leadership might be considered an art rather than a science (Cimino & Denhardt, forthcoming).

Communication

All the good ideas in the world are worth very little if they cannot be shared with others. Communication is the basis for setting goals, engaging others, and ensuring cooperation. Hales (1986) found that between two-thirds and four-fifths of a manager's day is spent giving or receiving information, and that most of this giving and receiving takes place in face-to-face interactions. In fact, the ability to communicate well is necessary for any adult to function successfully in virtually any role in American society. Early research showed that, on the average, adult Americans spent 70 percent of the waking day in some form of communication activity (Rankin, 1929): 9 percent of the time was spent writing, 16 percent reading, 30 percent speaking, and 45 percent listening. In the following sections we will discuss the communication modes of listening, speaking, and writing. (We will not address reading, except to note that the special skill known as "speed reading" is probably one a manager might find useful.)

Listening

We spend more time in listening than in any other form of communication. Recent research focusing exclusively on managers reveals that managers spend a greater-than-average portion of their time listening—about 63 percent of a typical day. But doing a lot of listening does not mean that managers listen well. Listening is not the same as hearing, and although hearing cannot be altered without medical or technical intervention, one can substantially improve the quality of one's listening with proper motivation and training. Let us first review some basics of effective listening (see the box "Take Action: Principles of Effective Listening").

Take Action PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE LISTENING

1. Have a reason or purpose.
2. Suspend judgment initially.
3. Resist distractions.
4. Wait before responding.
5. Rephrase what you listen to in your own words.
6. Seek the important themes.
7. Use the thinking-speaking differential to reflect and find meaning.

Have a Reason or Purpose This is the most important principle of those we will discuss. Having a purpose or a reason to listen provides the motivation to listen, and, generally speaking, you will do things you are motivated to do better than if you are not motivated. Listening is no exception. One must be motivated to listen well; it does not just happen. Without motivation, you will not use the other six principles, or you will not use them as well as you could.

But, you ask, what if I don't have a reason to listen? In such cases, it is a good idea to actively search for a reason to listen to what is being said. Ask yourself, "How can this information help me do my job better?" or "How can I use this information in some way, on the job or elsewhere?" Finding a reason to listen will provide the motivation to use all the other principles and techniques.

Suspend Judgment Initially The key word in this phrase is "initially." You will obviously need to evaluate the material you listen to, but you should wait until you hear the entire message before you begin the evaluation. This can be difficult. In an election year, for example, if we know a particular candidate's party, we are likely to evaluate what the candidate is going to say before he or she even begins speaking. It is not coincidental that television and radio advertising for many candidates does not prominently identify the candidate's party. The advertisers want to increase the chances of having the message heard rather than losing half the audience immediately by identifying the speaker as a Democrat or a Republican. To make a judgment before listening carefully to what someone is saying is the opposite of the "suspension" principle.

Resist Distractions Many things can distract us when we are trying to listen. The "distraction" principle tells us to fight back, to actively resist whatever may be distracting us. Among the many things that distract us, various sounds are usually the most powerful. The sound may be a nonverbal noise, such as the siren from a passing fire engine or ambulance; the voices of several people speaking at once; or something about the way the speaker talks. Regardless of what type of sound is creating the distraction, the remedy is to resist, to try harder. In this case, "trying harder" means that you should increase your concentration. If you are in a face-to-face situation with a speaker, make sure you maintain constant eye contact. You can also lean a little bit in the direction of the speaker. By increasing your level of concentration, you can resist distractions you would have thought impossible to overcome. And that is the problem with distractions—they become an excuse for not even trying to listen because "it's impossible to hear what she's saying."

A common classroom demonstration in listening skills illustrates the "distraction" principle (as well as others). Two volunteers are positioned in front of the class, about fifteen feet away from each other. Each reads aloud a brief paragraph (that only takes thirty to forty seconds to read). Each student in the class is assigned to listen to one or the other of the volunteers, but not to both. The students are instructed not to take notes while the paragraphs are being read, but at the end of the reading they are to write down something about each of the major points in the paragraph they listened to. The trick is that the volunteers not only read different paragraphs, but they read them simultaneously! After the first round of the exercise usually only a small number, and sometimes none, of the students in the class are able to write down something about every major point their speaker read.

The instructor then reviews the eye contact and leaning points, picks two new volunteers, gives them two new paragraphs, and repeats the exercise. The second time around it is not unusual to find that 20 percent to 25 percent of the class has written down something about each major point. This exercise demonstrates that there is variability in the quality of listening, both between and within individuals. It also shows that it is possible to resist even a major distraction, that our ability to resist distractions is much higher than we realize, and that we can overcome a great deal to improve the quality of our listening.

Some distractions are less obvious and are perceived only semiconsciously. One such distraction for many Americans is listening to English spoken with a foreign accent or with a different regional accent. In a personal conversation, Professor Allen Bluedorn told of learning this in a listening course that he took while he was in the U.S. Army. Bluedorn wondered if he had been using people's accents as an excuse not to listen to them. (He was stationed at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas, and frequently heard English spoken with a Spanish accent.) He tested his theory by concentrating harder the next time he conversed with someone with a Spanish accent. To his surprise, he found that he clearly understood everything the person said. He concluded that he had indeed been succumbing to the distraction of the accent, and it had become an excuse not to listen well. This lesson is important in today's increasingly multicultural organizations, where English is often spoken with a wide variety of accents. But the larger and more important lesson is that even substantial distractions can be overcome.

Wait before Responding The "response" principle suggests that one relax and wait for natural opportunities to speak instead of jumping into the conversation immediately. When we are burning to contribute to a discussion, we may get so excited about what we want to say (as soon as we get the chance) that we don't listen to the person who is speaking. Instead, we can wait for a natural opportunity to contribute and try to flow with the conversation as an event rather than interrupting.

Rephrase What You Listen To in Your Own Words The "rephrasing" principle suggests an incredibly simple, yet powerful, way to check one's understanding. The idea is merely to take something you hear (an opinion, instructions, and so on) and put it into your own words. You then repeat it to the person who gave you the information and ask if that is what was meant. As easy as it seems, this is an excellent way to check understanding and avoid mistakes. When you give instructions, you can ask the person who is receiving them to do the same thing. You can say, for example, "I'm not sure I explained that very well. Please tell me what you got out of that."

Seek the Important Themes The "thematic" principle indicates that the main ideas are more important than facts—so important that they are the general keys to understanding and retaining what is said. Understanding the main ideas provides a framework for organizing the facts, which makes the facts themselves easier to remember.

The man usually credited with starting the listening movement over thirty years ago, Ralph Nichols, demonstrated this point in his research (Nichols & Stevens, 1957). He discovered that A and B students reported different listening habits than C and D students.

In surveys of hundreds of students, he discovered that the A and B students gave a much different response to the question "What do you listen for first when you attend a lecture?" than did the C and D students. The A and B students predominantly gave a response like "I listen for the main ideas first," whereas C and D students said, "I listen for the facts." (This finding probably does not entirely explain the differences in these students' GPAs, but it is undoubtedly part of it.)

Use the Thinking-Speaking Differential to Reflect and Find Meaning The "meaning" principle reflects the fact that people think faster than they speak. Although it varies by region, people in the United States speak at a rate of about 150 words per minute, but in terms of language, they think at a rate of about 500 words per minute. Thus, we normally think more than three times faster than we speak. This differential creates an opportunity to listen more effectively, but the opportunity can also be a temptation to do things that interfere with our listening. The extra time can also be used for things that distract from the listening process—concentration lapses, daydreaming, thinking about something other than what the speaker is saying, and so forth. All of these can interfere with good listening, so extra time can be a two-edged sword—both opportunity and temptation.

Listening is both the most widely used and most widely misused communication skill. It is also the skill least often taught in the American education system at all levels (Steil, Barker, & Watson, 1983).

Speaking

Most of the speaking that managers do is informal, in one-on-one or small-group communications in their offices, on the phone, and in meetings. To demonstrate how we can improve our speaking, we will focus on giving instructions, because a significant amount of manager-initiated communication consists of giving instructions to others. The managerial activity of delegation, in fact, would be virtually impossible without being able to properly give instructions. The key to doing so successfully is the ability to put yourself in the position of the person who is getting the instructions. Ideally, you want to give exactly the right amount of information—neither too much nor too little. (If one must depart from the ideal, however, it is usually better to give too much rather than too little.) The following two questions can help you put yourself in the position of the individual to whom you are giving the instructions:

1. What does the person *need* to know to carry out the instructions?
2. What does the person *want* to know to carry out the instructions?

The ability to decide what information is necessary is, incidentally, a justification for promoting from within—making managers out of those who have done the jobs they will be managing. People who have done the job should be able to determine more accurately what their subordinates need to know when they receive instructions. Unfortunately, not everyone who is promoted to the management level takes full advantage of this knowledge.

To demonstrate how difficult it is to identify what information to transmit, we'll look at another classroom exercise on how you can put yourself in the position of the person who will be receiving the instructions. Students form pairs, and one member of each pair is given a diagram. The students are seated back to back, and the one with the diagram gives the other one instructions for drawing the diagram on a piece of paper. Only the instruction giver is allowed to speak and may not look at the partner's drawing. After the drawing is completed, it is evaluated with a set of scoring rules. The partners then switch roles, a new diagram is used, and verbal instructions are again given to draw the diagram.

It has been found that the scores in the second round are usually higher than those in the first, even if the second diagram is more complex. Why? The answer seems to be that the instruction giver in the second round has been in the position of receiving instructions already and thus has a better idea of what information is really helpful. Furthermore, the instruction givers during the second round know the scoring rules and can focus on what elements of the diagrams will be scored when the copies are evaluated. Most important, however, the instruction giver who understands what information someone needs is better able to provide that information.

Writing

Writing is a less common form of managerial communication than speaking and listening, but it is important nevertheless. Most managerial writing is brief, often one or two pages. The memo is the most common type of written communication for many managers. Sussman and Deep (1984) offer six rules for effective managerial writing that they call the "Six Cs."

1. *Clarity.* To be clear, one must put oneself in the reader's position—much as the instruction giver must put himself or herself in the receiver's position. Write in the active voice (such as, Dave painted the house) rather than the passive (such as, The house was painted by Dave); avoid jargon; and try to use the simple format of introduction, body, and conclusion.
2. *Courtesy.* Courtesy involves knowing your readers, adapting to their moods, and writing at their level, providing neither too much nor too little information. Again, there are clear parallels with instruction giving.
3. *Conciseness.* This is the rule of brevity: be short and to the point. Sometimes you may want to repeat something for emphasis, but the general rule is, the shorter the better. Think of it this way: which are you more likely to read—a fifty-word memo or a ten-page report? You are likely to read the fifty-word memo on the spot; the ten-page report goes into the "when I get a chance" pile.
4. *Confidence.* Always write with confidence. Confidence is really a matter of the writer's judgment, based on one's knowledge of one's readers. Judgment is especially important in avoiding two extremes: overbearing (too confident) and wishy-washy (not confident enough).
5. *Correctness.* You must be correct in following the technical rules of writing: grammar, composition, spelling, and punctuation. Inaccurate spelling is especially conspicuous.
6. *Conversational tone.* To achieve a conversational tone, write the way you talk, and try to imagine one specific person to whom you are writing. Thinking of a specific individual rather than an abstract category makes it much easier to write. (It is much easier to write to John Jones than to "all economics professors.") Occasionally, conversational writing calls for violating some formal rules of grammar, but this breach can make things smoother, more understandable, and easier to follow.

Communication will affect nearly every aspect of your work as a public manager. Your ability to persuade others of your position, your clarity in sharing ideas, and your ability to deal effectively with difficult people will shape your image as an administrator (see the box "Take Action: Secret Weapons for Organizational Communication"). Fortunately, you can improve your ability to listen, to speak, and to write. Practicing your communication skills whenever possible will pay dividends in every career.

Take Action SECRET WEAPONS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Here are several methods for dealing with difficult situations in the work setting:

1. Remember that people do things for their own reasons, not yours. Someone's anger may mean he or she actually sees the situation from a completely different perspective, so try to understand that view.
2. When under attack, use a calm, even tone of voice and low-key body language. The content of what you say can be the same—just modify your delivery; in face-to-face communication, words carry 7 percent of your message, tone of voice 38 percent, and body language 55 percent.
3. Use conversational fantasy to anticipate a really sticky situation by saying exactly what you want to say. Then tone it down to what you know you should say.
4. Remember to rehearse so that you are prepared to cope with the situation when it arises. Practice receiving and returning "verbal hardballs."
5. If necessary, use emotional jujitsu. The principle of jujitsu is to flow with your opponent's strength, to turn his own force against him by redirecting it rather than resisting it. Rather than defending yourself, agree. Your critic will be instantly disarmed, and then you can begin to deal with the causes of the emotion rather than the emotion itself.

SOURCE: Excerpted from "Personal Productivity: Organizational Communication," *Government Productivity News* 3 (September 1989): 4.

Delegation and Motivation

Management can be defined as "the process of getting things done through others." To get things done through others, it is necessary to communicate with others and, often, to motivate them as well. Much of the time, those "others" are the people you supervise. After all, if you can do all the work yourself, you should just go ahead and do it. As a manager, however, you are not there to do the actual work but to do the managerial work.

Delegation

Delegation is the process of assigning tasks to others. Like so many other managerial tasks, it may be done poorly or it may be done well. Poor delegation can be nearly fatal.

To delegate well, you need to try to delegate an equal amount of authority and responsibility for a job. Authority is the legitimate power to do the job, and responsibility is the accountability the individual has to you for getting the job done. The idea that an individual should have equal amounts of both is the *parity principle.* Managers often complain that they will be held responsible for something but have not been given enough authority to get the job done. Less frequent, but equally troublesome, is an individual who has authority but is not held responsible for its use.

Generally speaking, you should delegate jobs with complete and clear instructions, and you should delegate tasks to the appropriate level. Holding everything else equal, the appropriate level is the lowest level in the hierarchy where the task can be accomplished competently. You should also provide support for the delegated tasks. This support can take many forms, including delegation of authority in a public statement (such as saying at a meeting, "Betty is in charge of inspections in the northern district now").

It is often helpful to involve subordinates in the process of delegation, encouraging them to make suggestions about the kind of work they can or should be doing. Delegation should be a two-way process. On the other hand, do not fall victim to the upward delegation phenomenon. Upward delegation occurs when subordinates bring problems to their managers that the subordinates should be solving themselves. This is the opposite of effective delegation, and you should refuse to take on such problems. An effective technique is to insist that any subordinate who wants advice about an issue (the way the upward delegation attempt is often presented) should first think of at least one potential solution before coming to you to discuss it. To allow for creativity and motivation in the delegation process, it is best to hold subordinates accountable for results and leave the "how" up to them. This principle assumes, of course, that the "how" will be within the constraints of legal and ethical behavior as well as the constraints of public or organizational policies. Finally, tasks should be delegated consistently when the workload is light as well as heavy and when the jobs are fun as well as unpleasant.

Besides getting things done through others, delegation helps to develop employees, thereby making them more valuable to you and to the organization. Some managers are threatened by the idea that they may be developing possible replacements (that is, competitors). But there is another way to look at this situation. Unless you are at the very top of the organization, you probably want to be promoted. But you cannot be promoted if you cannot be replaced. Developing your subordinates through delegation is a way of providing, to your advantage, your own potential replacements!

Motivation

Whether members of an organization perform well depends partly on ability and partly on motivation. A person must already possess or be able to learn the right mix of skills and abilities to do a job and must be motivated to do the job well. When you can help develop your employees' skills through instruction, training programs, and so forth, you are likely to have a significantly greater impact on their motivation.

Pay and Job Satisfaction When one thinks of motivation in a managerial context, monetary compensation is a subject that naturally comes to mind. Frederick Taylor (1923)

based the entire incentive system of his scientific management program on economic factors. Contemporary thinking about motivation is more sophisticated than Taylor's, however, as pay is seen to interact with other motivators in complex ways.

Even as early as the 1950s, Frederick Herzberg developed a model of motivation known as the *two-factor theory*. Herzberg (1959) argued that two sets of variables were relevant to the question of motivation: "hygiene factors," which impact job dissatisfaction, and "motivators," which impact job satisfaction.

Hygiene factors included variables such as pay and working conditions; motivators were factors such as chances for achievement, recognition, and advancement. Herzberg argued that improvements in hygiene factors such as pay would not increase job satisfaction; instead, any improvements would simply reduce dissatisfaction. If an individual's pay got worse or did not increase fast enough, dissatisfaction would increase. Conversely, motivators such as achievement or advancement would not affect dissatisfaction, but would increase or decrease job satisfaction. The lesson for managers was that motivating employees is a far more complex task than simply changing salary levels.

Controversy about the effect of job satisfaction goes back at least as far as the Hawthorne studies conducted during the mid-1920s and early 1930s. Recall from Chapter 8 that these studies began as a research project to investigate the effects of physical working conditions, such as lighting, on workers' productivity. Given some unexpected findings early in the studies, the investigators changed the focus of the research to investigate the impacts of social and supervisory variables on performance. Some authors interpreted the results of the later studies as indicating that higher levels of job satisfaction led to higher levels of worker performance, a conclusion that some argue was never present in the original research reports and is thus a misinterpretation (Organ, 1986). But misinterpretation or not, the Hawthorne studies are usually credited for the "discovery" that a "happy worker is a productive worker." Other studies of the job satisfaction–performance relationship produced mixed results. Some theorists argued that the job-satisfaction-leads-to-better-performance thesis was wrong in terms of the causal ordering—that it was actually the other way around, with higher levels of performance causing higher levels of job satisfaction.

Although there is still not complete agreement on this issue, support is accumulating for a third interpretation of the job satisfaction–performance relationship: that there will only be a relationship between job satisfaction and performance if the rewards one receives are based on one's performance. If rewards are based on performance, there should be a positive correlation between job satisfaction and performance (the higher the performance, the higher the job satisfaction) because higher performance will lead to higher rewards, which will produce higher job satisfaction. If this is true, one part of the manager's job will be to make sure that performance is directly linked to rewards—monetary as well as others. One method to achieve this linkage is reinforcement theory.

Reinforcement Theory Reinforcement theory and related approaches have been given various labels, including behaviorism, operant conditioning, stimulus-response psychology, and Skinnerian psychology. All of the labels refer to more or less the same thing: an approach to explaining behavior based on Thorndike's law of effect, which states,

"Of several responses made to the same situation, those which are accompanied or closely followed by satisfaction (reinforcement)...will be more likely to occur; those which are accompanied or closely followed by discomfort (punishment)...will be less likely to occur" (Daft & Steers, 1986, p. 51).

The law of effect as it relates to learning in both animals and human beings has been studied for more than a century. Results of this research have produced a number of generalizations about the specifics of reinforcement. There are four basic scenarios or results that may follow a specific behavior. If a reward follows the behavior, the individual is more likely to repeat the behavior; this is called positive reinforcement. Reinforcement will also occur when behavior is followed by the removal of something unpleasant, called negative reinforcement.

On the other hand, if an unpleasant event or punishment follows the behavior, the individual is less likely to repeat it. Note that negative reinforcement is not the same as punishment, even though the terms have become synonymous in ordinary usage. From the standpoint of the recipient, punishment would be considered a bad outcome, whereas negative reinforcement would be considered a good outcome. The final possibility is that nothing will happen following a behavior, or at least no reinforcement will occur in connection with it. When this is the case, the individual is less likely to repeat the behavior and will eventually stop doing it altogether. This cessation of behavior is called extinction.

Regardless of which of the four possibilities one is considering, a common theme, and one of the key principles of the reinforcement approach, is that whatever response is given to the behavior, the response should follow the behavior as soon as possible. If there is too long a delay following the behavior, the response (reward, removal of an unpleasant situation, and so on) may be misinterpreted and associated with other behaviors that have occurred in the interval.

Other important considerations of the reinforcement approach are the patterns, frequency, and basis for providing the response. In terms of frequency, responses can be given every time the behavior occurs (continuous reinforcement schedule) or for only a certain proportion of occurrences (partial reinforcement schedule). The basis for making the responses can be either the number of times an event occurs (ratio schedules) or the passage of time (interval schedules). The pattern of responses can be either consistent (fixed schedules) or random (variable schedules). Research indicates that while fixed schedules lead to faster learning, they also lead to quicker unlearning or forgetting when the schedule is abandoned. Conversely, variable schedules lead to slower learning, but once the behavior is learned, the unlearning or forgetting is much slower when the schedule is abandoned.

This description of reinforcement approaches probably conjures up images of laboratory animals running through a maze to earn food or to avoid electric shocks, and these are indeed how reinforcement has been studied in the laboratory. An obvious and natural parallel applying reinforcement theory in a managerial context is to link pay in some way to an individual's performance. This can be done, but pay (wages or salaries) tends to be set only once a year, and because organizational policies often dictate pay scales, many managers have only a partial impact on establishing their subordinates' salaries. This limits the extent to which the manager can use pay as a motivational tool.

An article in the *PA Times* identified several assumptions underlying pay-for-performance forms of motivation:

1. An individual's performance could be accurately or reasonably measured according to some criteria.
2. This system could affect an employee's decision to leave or remain with his or her organization and influence an employee's willingness to work harder for his or her organization than those who are not under the system.
3. An employee will place high value on monetary rewards in the workplace (Lee, 2001, p. 3).
4. Beginning with the first assumption, though, we can see the challenges faced by public and nonprofit managers in employing such a system in practice. As the author found, "It [a performance-based system] may work in private companies, since they have a clear goal (maximization of profit) that can be measured in quantitative ways. However, this doesn't seem to be working in most public agencies" (Lee, 2001, p. 3). Unclear goals, combined with the need to balance between competing interest groups, tend to make establishing such clear-cut objectives impossible in the delivery of public services.

Moreover, the author found in his study of public employees in New Jersey that people who work in public and nonprofit organizations tend to seek more than financial incentives: "If a public-sector employee is committed to his or her supervisor, he or she is more likely to remain with the agency and make an extra effort on behalf of the organization. In other words, a major motivating factor is not monetary reward, but an effective personal relationship among employees" (Lee, 2001, p. 3). Pay-for-performance may boost some forms of productivity, but it shouldn't be viewed as a building block for a truly high-impact organization.

Goal Setting Goal setting is another method of motivating that can be used by itself or in conjunction with reinforcement techniques. In fact, you can use it to motivate yourself as well as other people. A goal is a desired state of affairs one attempts to achieve, and, as research has shown, just the act of setting goals seems to increase the probability of success. But some ways of setting goals are better than others in terms of motivational impact. Research indicates there are at least twelve ways in which you can shape a goal to have maximum motivational impact:

1. Write down a goal rather than just keep it in mind. In a technical sense, one does not "do" a goal, but *achieves* a goal. Therefore, the proper way to write a goal statement is with the word *to* followed by an action verb—for example, "To finish reading this chapter by 5 o'clock." Something about writing down a goal creates greater commitment on the part of the writer. It is harder to ignore, and seeing it on your desk or in your notebook constantly makes the goal harder to forget. Writing down a goal can also facilitate planning because you are consciously identifying the actions you must take to achieve the goal.
2. Because specific goals are much better motivators than general goals, a properly stated goal should be very clear. For example, a field experiment on goal setting at the Weyerhaeuser Company in Oklahoma several years ago tested the relative impacts of general and specific goals. The objects of the experiment were truck drivers who hauled logs from one location to another. The federal government established safety standards for how much weight the truckers could carry, and this amount was taken to be the maximum capacity of the trucks, or 100 percent. The researchers and managers at Weyerhaeuser noted that the truckers normally only hauled about 62 percent of capacity. The first part of the experiment consisted of management informing the truckers that they wanted more weight to be carried on each load and that the truckers were to do their best to achieve this goal.
3. The truckers' performance was tracked for the next three months, and there was little or no improvement (1 or 2 percent at most). The truckers were then informed that a goal had been set for them: to haul 94 percent of capacity on each load—a much more specific goal than "Do your best." After three months, the truckers were averaging over 90 percent of capacity per load, very close to the 94 percent goal the managers had set for them.
4. No pay increases were given for the increase in weight hauled, although the truckers were told they would not be asked to make any more runs than they normally did as a result of hauling more weight. This remarkable change in behavior saved Weyerhaeuser over $250,000 annually, and subsequent checks on the truckers have found they have maintained this level of performance for several years. So a specific goal indeed makes a difference.
5. The means for verifying whether a goal has been achieved should be specified. In the study at Weyerhaeuser, the truckers weighed in at the delivery location for the logs, which provided a precise way to measure the amount of weight they were hauling and, in turn, how close they were to the goal. (Incidentally, the weigh-in procedure was not added by the experiment; the truckers had been following it for many years as part of their job.)
6. A date or time by which the goal is to be accomplished should be specified. The presence or absence of a deadline is a critical attribute of any goal-setting exercise. Deadlines stimulate action, and the closer the deadline, the more motivation to act. The absence of a deadline makes the urgency of the goal indefinite and hence less motivating. For example, there are a disproportionately large number of plays during the last few minutes of a football game because the team that is behind faces a deadline for scoring more points or losing the game. Similar increases in activity occur toward the end of the trading period each day on the New York Stock Exchange. Think of your own behavior when a test date is rapidly approaching, and you begin to increase your preparation activities.
7. A goal should be perceived as attainable. Impossible goals often are demotivating because there is no reason to try if they cannot, by definition, be attained. (Problems may also occur, however, if the goal is too attainable.)
8. Although a goal should be attainable, it should also be challenging. There is little or no satisfaction in achieving a goal that presents little challenge. The best goal in terms of motivation is one that is perceived as attainable yet challenging, that can be achieved, but only with significant effort.
9. Psychologist David McClelland (1985) demonstrated this phenomenon many years ago. Children were asked to throw beanbags into a box from various distances,

including a position located right next to the box. After they had thrown from various distances, they were asked from which position they preferred to throw. Very few picked the location next to the box; most picked a position farther away—a decision consistent with the properties of attainability and challenge. In effect, the children were setting their own goals, and the goals they set were challenging but attainable.

10. When setting goals for others, the goals must be understandable to the people for whom you are setting them. If they cannot understand the goals, how can you expect them to achieve them? As in so many areas, clarity is extremely important.
11. It was originally believed that if the participants were not involved in setting the goals, they would reject them. Subsequent research, such as in the Weyerhaeuser study, in which the truck drivers did not take part in establishing the goals, has shown that people are quite willing to accept goals that others set for them. This does not mean, however, that involving people in establishing goals is a waste of time. Among other things, if the people who will actually be trying to accomplish the goals take part in formulating them, there is a greater chance that they will more completely and accurately understand the goals. And although people may be willing to accept goals established by others, there may be greater motivation if they participate.
12. Managers often worry about involving subordinates in decision making, including decisions about goals and goal levels. A study comparing goals that managers set for their subordinates to goals for the same activities set by the subordinates themselves revealed that the subordinates set more difficult goals (Hitt, Middlemist, & Mathis, 1983, p. 289). Although this may not happen all the time, it is an intriguing finding that supports the notion of including subordinates in the goal-setting process.

Individual Decision Making

One could argue that decision making is the most universal managerial activity because it is involved in all the other functions of management. It is impossible to plan, control, staff, direct, organize, or perform any of the miscellaneous management functions without making decisions. All management involves either explicit or implicit decisions. We will examine decision making at the individual level and explore several models of how decisions should be made and how decisions are actually made.

A great deal of research has been conducted concerning rational processes for decision making, some of which we discussed in terms of rational policy analysis. In its purest form, the rational model of decision making suggests the following steps:

1. Find an occasion for decision making ("decide to decide") and then formulate the problem in the best way possible.
2. Develop as many alternative solutions as possible.
3. Choose the alternative that maximizes the possibility that we will attain our goals or standards.

In essence, analyze the problem, generate alternative solutions, and choose from among the solutions. For our purposes, the most important lesson of the rational decision model lies at the beginning—becoming aware that a problem exists and correctly defining the problem. If you are not aware of a problem, you will not go through the rest of the process to solve it. Your chances of solving the problem are obviously low. (The probabilities are not zero, however, because problems are sometimes solved by accident.) Even if you are aware that a problem exists, if you do not identify the problem correctly, your chances of solving it do not increase very much. How you define the situation is the result of your own perception of reality. Human beings need to make sense of things. We do not tolerate chaos well, and thus are continually defining and redefining situations in which we find ourselves. Aside from our need to make sense of things, defining the situation is important because that will be the basis for our actions and decisions. All mentally healthy individuals behave in a way consistent with their definitions of situations.

When it comes to problem solving, incorrect diagnosis of the problem (that is, an incorrect definition of the situation) can be disastrous. A good example of this can be seen in the Cold War days of the early 1960s. During this period, the United States and its allies had installed long-range radar systems to monitor the Soviet Union and to give warning of any Soviet attack by either missile or bomber. Soon after the radar systems were installed, the commander of an installation in England was made aware of a set of images on the station's screens that looked as if the Soviet Union were launching a massive missile assault against the United States. It was the commander's job to evaluate the information, report it to Washington, and include a recommendation and an evaluation of the accuracy of the information.

Obviously, since missiles travel pretty fast, the commander did not have a great deal of time to contemplate the situation. But, being a calm and collected individual, the commander thought things over for a few minutes before he made his report. He remembered that Nikita Khrushchev, then premier of the Soviet Union, was in New York City addressing the United Nations that day. He thought it would be an unlikely time for the Soviets to attack. He also took into consideration the fact that the radar system was new and that new systems sometimes have "bugs" in them. Putting all this together, he made his report, including in it his relatively low confidence in the information on his screens. He stated that he believed there was a malfunction somewhere in the system and recommended that the radar images not be interpreted as an attack on the United States. Obviously he was correct; there was no attack by the Soviet Union. But what was actually happening?

It turned out that the radars were so powerful that some of the radiation they broadcast traveled far out into space. The system operated smoothly for about a week, but then the moon orbited into position and was hit by some of the radiation, which it reflected back to the radar antennas, creating images on the screens that looked very much like a group of missiles heading toward the United States. The computers in the radar system had not been programmed to disregard radiation bouncing back from the moon.

The commander was presented with a problem: the decision of interpreting the images and making his report. He had two interpretations. One was that the Soviet Union had started World War III, and the other that he had a malfunctioning system. One definition of the situation might have actually started World War III, but the other would prevent that catastrophe. So you can see why correctly identifying the problem is critical in a problem-solving situation.

The rational decision model is often presented as the way people actually go about making decisions (or at least the way they should), and this is probably true to a

certain extent. It is also clear that, in many cases, solutions to problems are arrived at in a far different way. The basis of the rational problem-solving process is the economic assumption that people attempt to maximize their outcomes when they make choices (that is, decisions). Theoretically, people select a criterion, such as income or profit, then evaluate all decision alternatives in terms of that criterion, and finally select the alternative that will produce the best results.

As we discussed in Chapter 8, Herbert Simon, in his studies of organizational decision making, found that the rational model rarely describes human problem-solving or decision-making behavior in real life. He argued that maximizing outcomes is simply not possible in most situations and identified several reasons that it is usually impossible (Simon, 1957, p. xxvi). All the reasons Simon offers add up to constraints on human beings' abilities to acquire and process information. There are time limits for making most decisions, and there are only so many resources available to gather information. Moreover, because we care more about some problems than others, our motivation to solve problems varies. We are willing to spend more mental and physical energy on some problems than on others.

Even if we had access to unlimited information about any problem, there are cognitive limits to how much information we can process at any given time. Furthermore, particularly in managerial situations, we seldom have the luxury of being able to deal with just one problem at a time. Other problems compete for our attention, time, and energy, further taxing our cognitive limits.

Putting all these constraints together, Simon argues that human beings attempt to be rational, but they can be rational only within certain limits or bounds. What Simon calls "bounded rationality" (see Chapter 8) suggests that choices will be evaluated, but only within the bounds of these constraints. This results in a "satisficing" criterion for evaluating alternatives, rather than in a maximizing one.

A *satisficing decision* is one that is just "good enough" in terms of some criterion. Bounded rationality leads to satisficing decisions, and the process, in its pure form, operates as follows: When an individual faces a choice situation in which a decision must be made, rather than attempting to gather all possible information, generate all possible alternatives, and choose the alternative likely to produce the best results, the decision maker decides what level of outcome (in terms of some criterion) will be satisfactory or "good enough." The individual then examines choice alternatives one at a time and selects the first one that equals or exceeds the minimal ("good enough") criterion level. The process stops at this point, and the choice becomes the decision. No attempt will be made to examine other, potentially better, options.

That human beings vary in attempts to maximize suggests something of a continuum between satisficing and maximizing. But Simon's work suggests that most decisions, most of the time, fall much closer to the satisficing end of the continuum than the maximizing end, even where we are making important (and potentially costly) decisions. Marketing research shows, for example, that people tend to seek out most of the information they acquire about new cars after they purchase a new car rather than before.

Thus, the rational decision-making process can be considered a prescriptive model that tells us what we should do to make better decisions, but it does not give us an accurate picture of how human beings actually make decisions. Because we tend to satisfice

rather than maximize, a modified and more limited version of this process, the satisficing model, provides the more accurate description. Hence, we can call it a descriptive model, which attempts to describe how things actually happen without regard to how they should happen. Given the nature of managerial work, satisficing may be the only way a manager can deal with the constant stream of problems and choice situations that arise daily.

Interestingly, one alternative model of decision making in the public sector claims to be both prescriptive and descriptive. Charles Lindblom's incremental model of decision making assumes that most governmental decisions (and others) usually begin by analyzing the existing situation and then move marginally or incrementally away from that position. In making a case for new programs, for example, managers often talk about how a new idea "builds on" existing strengths. This descriptive aspect of the model has a familiar ring. But, in a curious twist, Lindblom also suggests that the incremental model may even make sense normatively: because incremental proposals focus on well-known experiences, they reduce the number of alternatives to be considered and thus reduce the complexity of the problem at hand (Lindblom, 1968, p. 27).

Group Dynamics

Individuals acting alone make a majority of organizational decisions, but sometimes two or more people combine efforts to solve a problem or make a decision. Research has shown that sometimes a group should make a decision and that certain advantages come from group decision making, but there are also disadvantages. Similarly, studies of group dynamics have established fairly predictable patterns of interactions.

Advantages of Group Decision Making

An old cliché has it that two heads are better than one—probably because two heads hold more information than one. Put any two people together, and it is very likely that each knows something the other does not. Create a group of five or six, and there is even more information available. We have already seen that generating alternatives is one of the fundamental steps in the rational decision-making process, even under satisficing conditions. Because there is more information in a group, there is greater potential for generating more alternative solutions to a problem than could be generated by a single decision maker. But these advantages will surface only if the group is managed properly.

Groups may also benefit from synergy: the notion that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Synergy can occur in a group, but it is a precious commodity that is not easy to create. Consider the following case. Three people get together to solve a problem. Bob proposes a solution, and Allen proposes a different solution. Betty has been listening to the proposals, which gives her an idea about how to solve the problem in a completely new way. The idea represents something new that was not present before in the group. If it were possible to quantify the information in the group at the beginning of the discussion, the total information would equal the sum of the information held by the individual

members. With Betty's new idea—an idea stimulated by the group discussion—the sum is now greater than the sum of the individual parts.

We want to do more than just make a good decision. The final step in the decision-making process is always implementation. If the people who make the decision are the ones who will be implementing it, commitment to the decision should help with implementation. Research also reveals that satisfaction with the group and its processes increases as the networks become more decentralized. Satisfaction is not exactly the same thing as commitment, but the two are closely related. In most cases, then, as participation in making the decision increases, so should commitment to the final decision.

What Would You Do?

You are the leader of a task force composed of a dozen members, each selected for his or her significant expertise in the field. Drawn from several different professional areas, these are "the best and the brightest" your organization has available. As your meetings progress, however, you recognize that, although these are very smart people, many of them take a rather narrow view of the world and are almost contemptuous of anyone who sees things differently. You recognize that unless something changes, the task force will fail to achieve its goal. What would you do?

An interesting property of group decision making, the *risk shift*, can be either an advantage or a disadvantage. The risk shift refers to how daring the decisions would be if made as a group compared to the average risk of the same decision if each member made it alone. It was originally thought that groups would always make riskier decisions than would individual members. As more research was conducted, however, it was discovered that sometimes the shift works in the opposite direction: that groups sometimes make decisions that are less risky than those made by members working alone.

Sometimes a daring decision produces better results, but sometimes it makes things worse. Because the same can be said about more conservative decisions, the dilemma is that it is often impossible to predict whether a more conservative or more daring decision will yield better results. The most we can say is that a group decision will normally be either more daring or more conservative than the average riskiness of a decision made by each member acting individually.

Disadvantages of Group Decision Making

Along with the advantages of group decision making, there are potential problems. One of the obvious constraints on human beings that results in our "bounded rationality" is the constraint of time. Time not only limits the efforts of individual decision makers to acquire and process information, but it also limits the possibilities for groups to make decisions. Normally, it takes a group much longer to make a decision than it takes an individual to

make a decision about the same problem. Time thus becomes an important constraint on a manager's ability to use group decision making.

Another constraint may be cost. Even if group decision making and individual decision making were equally fast, the group is still more expensive. Compare a single decision maker whose pay is $100 per hour who takes one hour to reach a decision with a committee of five managers who are paid $100 each and also reach a decision in one hour. The cost to the organization for the single decision maker is $100, whereas the cost of the committee is $500.

Another property of groups is groupthink, which is the opposite of synergy. If synergy is the concept that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, groupthink makes the whole (the group) less than the sum of the parts. Groupthink was first defined and analyzed by Irving Janis as "a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action" (Janis, 1983, pp. 8–9). Because the group is so cohesive, greater emphasis is given to conformity than to making good decisions.

Janis identified characteristics of groups victimized by groupthink and cautioned managers to interpret the presence of these characteristics in a group carefully. For example, groups experiencing groupthink have an illusion of morality, a belief that the group's position, whatever it may be, is inherently ethical and moral in comparison to positions held by other individuals and groups. Such groups also engage in negative stereotyping of other people and groups, often viewing outsiders as the "enemy" and as being too different to negotiate with. Groupthink tends to produce an illusion of invulnerability, which makes decisions seem less risky than they really are. Rationalization is commonly employed as a way to discredit information critical of the group or its decisions, and there is frequent self-censorship of dissenting views, which minimizes the amount of critical or contrary information to which the group is exposed. A strong conformity pressure permeates the group and puts further pressure on group members to agree with the dominant position. Finally, an illusion of unanimity results in the belief that everyone in the group has confidence in the group's decisions and judgment. Obviously, groups that are victimized by groupthink are limited in their constructive abilities.

Groupthink has been used to explain flawed decision-making processes in situations such as the Bay of Pigs, Watergate, and the *Challenger* space shuttle disaster. In the case of the *Challenger* disaster, a Presidential Commission investigated the accident and identified faulty decision making as a primary cause. Moorehead, Ference, and Neck (1991) analyzed the testimony of those involved and found the situation had many characteristics associated with groupthink. For example, the Commission found that those testifying displayed a strong sense of overconfidence because of the extraordinarily successful history of NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration). Even though engineers predicted during the final launch approval process that critical joints would fail, flight center officials discounted the analysis and rationalized that the conclusions were faulty or questionable. Two of the three top NASA officials stereotyped and criticized the views of others, particularly the engineers who warned them about the dangers of proceeding with the launch. Dissenters were pressured to either change their minds or remain silent. As a result of these and other problems, the launch was authorized and the shuttle exploded, killing all seven astronauts.

Interpersonal Dynamics in Groups

Interpersonal relationships affect the work of groups or teams. To illustrate the problems that can arise, imagine that two people who despise each other are assigned to the same committee. Obviously, these two individuals will not work as well together as two people who are neutral toward each other or who like and respect each other. Even if the conflict is not manifested, personal animosity may contribute to building a *hidden agenda,* where privately held goals and priorities motivate actions more directly than the overt and publicly stated reasons. Obviously, the operation of hidden agendas disrupts the group and diminishes its effectiveness.

But the interpersonal dynamics of groups in action are much more subtle and complex than these examples suggest (Gardner, 1974, pp. 8–11). For example, groups often follow a fairly predictable pattern of development. Typically, at the outset of the group's work, its members are highly dependent on the leader of the group. They ask for direction and become quite frustrated if they don't get it. If the leader allows the group to become overly dependent, however, its productivity will suffer in the long term. The leader can resist dependency by referring questions back to the group's members for input.

Often, however, a period of counterdependency will often follow, in which members may show hostility toward the leader. Although still wanting some direction, the group's members are now also experiencing a need for independence, just as an adolescent may simultaneously love and hate his or her parents. Counterdependency seems especially likely to occur in authoritarian work environments, where members' actions are too closely regulated.

On the other hand, in a group where members feel they can openly express themselves and their ideas without fear of retaliation, feelings of interdependence may develop. At this stage, group members recognize the purposes they hold in common and come to have greater trust and respect for one another. The group will probably be most effective when it reaches this stage.

As the group moves through these stages of development, certain patterns of behavior are likely to occur. Early in the group's development, some members may seek flight, actually withdrawing from the work of the group, being silent, or giving irrelevant or self-serving remarks. Most flight behavior is an implicit attempt to say that nothing significant will happen unless the leader gives in to the group's desire for explicit direction. In the counterdependent stage, members may engage in flight behavior or in pairing. Fighting the group's leader in some symbolic fashion is, of course, a fairly straightforward act of rebellion; pairing or breaking off into small groups or alliances is somewhat more subtle, but it expresses the same emotion.

Finally, as the group reaches the stage of interdependence, the actual work of the group can be accomplished in reasonable and satisfying ways. At this stage, a variety of leadership functions must occur for the group to maintain its effectiveness (see the box "Take Action: Leadership Roles in Group Dynamics"). These functions can all be performed by a single person, typically the group's formal leader, but they can also be performed by a variety of different people active at different times in the group's development. In either case, if you wish to help the group meet its objectives, you should be attentive both to the stages of group development and to the extent to which the various leadership functions are being fulfilled.

Take Action — LEADERSHIP ROLES IN GROUP DYNAMICS

1. *The coordinator role.* Communicate to all members about meetings, schedules, tasks, procedures, and similar matters; act as an information clearinghouse for all group members and as a contact person with other groups or outsiders.
2. *The facilitator role.* Set up procedures and a structure for group work; assist members in identifying problems, defining issues, summarizing progress, and working together. (This role involves minimal direct influence on the group task. It concentrates on establishing an interpersonal network that helps members work together to solve problems.)
3. *The trainer role.* Teach group members ways of approaching problems; provide the group with methods of learning from their own experiences; arrange for outside consultants to train the group.
4. *The observer role.* Be alert to how the group is functioning and particularly to which functions are not being met; describe to members what is happening in terms of the group process; show the group areas in which change might facilitate their work.
5. *The gap filler role.* Fulfill those functions that are not being handled by anyone else, particularly the functions of summarizing, clarifying, synthesizing, or facilitating compromise.
6. *The monitor role.* Once the group has determined a procedure to follow or a solution to a problem, see to it that the group is reminded of responsibilities, functions, and assignments necessary for implementation of the decision; provide copies of budgets, schedules, assignment sheets, and agendas to members so they can complete their work on schedule.

SOURCE: Excerpted from Ernest Stech and Sharon Ratliffe, *Working in Groups* (Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company, 1976), pp. 220–221. Reprinted by permission of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

Specialized Techniques for Group Decision Making

Brainstorming is a technique that was developed to enhance the alternative-generating portion of the decision-making process. The goal is to generate as many ideas about some problem as possible, although suspending judgment about each idea. The task before the group is to develop ideas about a problem, or even solutions to the problem, and the more of them generated, the better.

Once the assignment is announced, group members begin to propose ideas. The ideas are described orally, and someone records each idea on a chalkboard or flipchart for everyone to see. No evaluations of ideas are permitted during brainstorming. The session continues until everyone is out of ideas or the leader feels the session has lasted long enough. The purpose is to bring out the information held by different group members and to encourage synergy by stimulating new ideas.

Whereas brainstorming helps enrich the alternative-generating portion of the decision-making process, the nominal group technique generates both alternatives and solutions. A major purpose of the design is to avoid groupthink. A *nominal group* is a face-to-face

meeting that allows only very limited interaction among participants. A problem is presented, but unlike in brainstorming, the group is expected to make a decision about how to solve the problem. After the problem has been presented, each member, working alone, writes down as many solutions to the problem as he or she can formulate. When everyone is finished writing, the leader calls for the solutions. Each person in the room presents one solution until all the possible solutions have been heard.

The solutions are recorded publicly as they are presented, again usually on a whiteboard or a chart paper. Other members may ask questions for clarification if they do not understand a solution, but only clarifying questions are allowed. Members may not debate the merits of particular solutions. After every solution has been presented and all questions answered, the group makes a decision by means of a written poll, taken as a secret ballot. Each member rank-orders the different solutions from best to worst. The rankings are submitted to the meeting leader without any identifying material on the ballot. The leader or someone assisting the leader tabulates the ballots, and the solution that receives the highest average preference becomes the group's decision.

Quality circles are the most comprehensive specialized technique for group decision making in that they are explicitly concerned with every step in the decision-making process, from recognition that a problem exists through implementation of solutions. Quality circles also incorporate other specialized techniques such as brainstorming.

One specialized approach that is often helpful in group dynamics is the helping relationship, which has been explored in great detail by Edgar Schein in his recent book, *Helping* (2009). A helping relationship can be informal (as when we seek help from a friend, a spouse, or a coworker), semiformal (as when we go to a computer consultant), or formal (as when we hire a management consultant), but all of these involvements bear certain features in common. Most importantly, the helping relationship occurs between people, and an effective human interaction must occur for effective helping to take place.

Initially, the helping relationship must be based on conditions of mutual trust. "Trusting another person means, in this context, that no matter what we choose to reveal about our thoughts, feelings, or intentions, the other person will not belittle us, make us look bad, or take advantage of what we have said in confidence" (Schein, 2009, p. 18). Trust equates to emotional safety. Beyond that, we understand certain rules that govern our behavior and our relationships. For example, building an effective relationship requires that both parties get something out of it and it feels "fair." Over time, we learn the different roles we play and the expectations associated with those roles. But we also recognize that confusing roles can be detrimental to an effective relationship. For example, though we may be a parent, if we act in a parental way toward others at work, we may appear patronizing, and trust in the relationship will be undermined.

Conflict, Bargaining, and Negotiation

Differences and conflicts inevitably arise in public and nonprofit organizations. But as Richard Box (1998) explains, finding a way to equitably resolve differences is a key interpersonal skill, opening the door to more citizen-oriented governance. "For elected leaders and public service practitioners, this means a flexible attitude toward change, shedding of

protective feelings about personal turf, and a willingness to engage in open dialogue on issues facing the community" (p. 12).

What Would You Do?

Your division of purchasing is composed of two sections, one that acquires goods and another that acquires services. Over time, the two section heads have developed an intense rivalry that has increasingly turned ugly. The two are basically at war, with insults flying back and forth at every occasion. They are forcing you into the position of having to choose sides—which you don't want to do. What would you do?

Roger Fisher and William Ury (1991) of the Harvard Negotiation Project have suggested that negotiation is a natural process that occurs where two parties share certain interests but are opposed with respect to others. Negotiations often move quickly to positions that are held by one party or another. For example, a union representative requests a 10 percent raise, but the city negotiator takes the position that only a 2 percent raise is possible. Moving quickly to a position and allowing it to become hard and fast not only produces undesirable results but also damages the continuing relationship between the parties. Positional bargaining seems to move participants to one of two postures: a soft posture that emphasizes the ongoing relationship and seeks agreement among participants, or a hard posture that assumes an adversarial relationship and in which each party seeks victory over the other.

Fischer and Ury suggest an alternative method called "principled negotiation." Principled negotiation is based on four elements of negotiation: people, interests, options, and the criteria for solution. Four guidelines emerge from these elements (see the box "Take Action: Guidelines for Successful Negotiations").

According to Fischer and Ury, following these guidelines leads to negotiated settlements that are more equitable and more likely to lead to continued effective working

Take Action — GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS

1. Separate the people from the problem.
2. Focus on interests, not positions.
3. Generate a variety of possibilities before deciding what to do.
4. Insist that the result will be based on some objective standard.

SOURCE: From *Getting to Yes*, 2nd ed., by Roger Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton. © 1981, 1991 by Roger Fisher and William Ury. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.

relationships than are more traditional modes of bargaining. Remember that negotiations occur in all kinds of situations, from deciding which movie to see to resolving matters of war and peace. However, the same general guidelines may be employed in all negotiations to generate more effective and responsible solutions (Fischer & Ury, 1991).

More recently, managers of public and nonprofit organizations have adopted systems for alternative dispute resolution (ADR). ADR can be thought of as any conflict management strategy outside of formal adjudication. Approaches range from preventative measures, such as building consensus and setting clear parameters on interpersonal (and interorganizational) relationships, to more formal approaches, such as court-based mediation and arbitration (Constantino & Sickles-Merchant, 1996). Recall that earlier in Chapter 2 we discussed the increasing use of ADR in the federal government.

Networking

For information on conflict resolution, visit the Conflict Resolution Center at http://www.crnhq.org/, the National Association for Community Mediation at www.nafcm.org, or Illinois's Center for Conflict Resolution at http://www.ccrchicago.org/, which offers insight into specific examples of ADR at the state level.

Summary and Action Implications

Leadership involves more than power and control. To lead others, you must first know yourself. Thus, understanding yourself is an essential prerequisite to acting effectively and responsibly in public organizations. Moreover, to the extent that you are able to learn about yourself—your strengths and weaknesses, your desires and frustrations—you will be much more effective in your work with others. Whereas power may be a resource, leadership capabilities are more likely to arise from the ability to understand the emerging desires of a group, to articulate the vision or direction the group wishes to follow, and to stimulate the group to action. Leadership unquestionably requires social or interpersonal skills, but it is based in empathetic understanding, the ability to express the aspirations of the group, and the confidence to undertake the risks associated with change.

All the knowledge, values, and skills you possess are expressed in the moment of action. Whether you are a manager or a policy analyst or hold some other position in a public organization, your ability to act effectively and responsibly "in the real world" will determine your success. Your actions will usually occur in social settings and require working with others. Especially in a managerial position, you will engage in almost constant interaction with other people, so no matter how much you know or how proper your values, your effectiveness will be limited if you cannot work well with others.

Today we recognize that interpersonal skills, like other skills, can be developed and improved over time. Just as artists or athletes can improve proficiency, so can you improve

your skills in areas of communications, delegation, negotiation, and group dynamics. The key to improving your skills in public management, as in other areas, is practice and repetition, accompanied by self-reflection and self-critique.

If you want to be a better communicator, for example, you should seek opportunities to practice communicating with others. Find opportunities to make presentations; practice listening with special concentration and sensitivity; try to develop your writing skills. As you practice, be conscious of your own and others' reactions. Reflect upon your successes and failures and try to learn from both. Over time, you'll improve your skills and find that you are far more effective.

Throughout this book, we have described public management as involving cognitive, conceptual, technical, and human skills. In the moment of action, however, the areas cannot be separated. Indeed, your capacity to bring together knowledge, technique, and interactive skills at the moment of action will determine success or failure in most situations. Public management can be studied in the abstract, but it must be lived in the real world—a world of stress, complexity, and uncertainty. In few other fields do so many aspects of the human personality have to come together. But it is this very difficulty that makes public service so challenging and rewarding.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the seven basics of effective listening?
2. Why is speaking an important interpersonal skill?
3. Discuss the "Six Cs" for effective written communication.
4. Management can be defined as "the process of getting things done through others." Discuss how delegation and motivation enable the work of management to occur.
5. Explain reinforcement theory and its four basic scenarios or results.
6. Goal setting is another motivation technique. Discuss what characteristics a goal should have for maximum motivational impact.
7. What features are present in rational decision making?
8. What are the elements of "principled negotiation"?
9. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages associated with group decision making.
10. Explain the fundamentals of managing group dynamics.
11. Identify and discuss various techniques for group decision making.

CASES AND EXERCISES

1. Although power should not be equated with leadership, it can certainly be an important resource to public managers. To illustrate some types of power, think back over the past week or two as you attended class and worked in various groups and organizations, and answer the following questions:

   a. Who were the two or three people during this period who exercised the greatest power over you?

   b. Who were the people during this period over whom you exercised the most power? Now return to the box "Exploring Concepts: Bases of Social Power" on page 327. What was the basis for the power that others exercised over you? What was the basis for the power that you exercised over others? How might you most effectively build up your power base in groups and organizations to which you belong?

2. Chapter 1 discusses the management skills identified by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (see pages 11–12). Some of those skills are listed here. Go through the list and assess your level of development in each of the skills. You might want to verify your evaluations by talking with others who know you well and have seen you operate in groups and organizations. After you have a sense of your own level of skill development, try to identify the activities (classes, workshops, readings, and so on) that would help you improve your skills in areas that need some work.

The "How" of Management Effectiveness Characteristics

- *Broad perspectives:* Broad, long-term view; balancing short- and long-term considerations.
- *Strategic view:* Collecting, assessing, analyzing information; diagnosis; anticipation; judgment.
- *Environmental sensitivity:* "Tuned in to" the agency and its environment; aware of the importance of nontechnical factors.
- *Leadership:* Individual; group; willingness to lead, manage, and accept responsibility.
- *Flexibility:* Openness to new information; behavioral flexibility; tolerance for stress, ambiguity, change; innovativeness.
- *Action orientation:* Independence, proactivity; calculated risk-taking; problem solving; decisiveness.
- *Focus on results:* Concern with goal achievement; follow-through, tenacity.
- *Communication:* Speaking; writing; listening.
- *Interpersonal sensitivity:* Self-knowledge and awareness of impact on others; sensitivity to needs, strengths, and weaknesses of others; negotiation; conflict resolution; persuasion.
- *Technical competence:* Specialized expertise (such as, engineering, physical science, law, accounting, social science).

3. Divide your class into groups of three. Taking turns, have one person choose a topic from the following list and begin a conversation with the group. Follow the rules of effective communication.

   a. You are short of cash and want to take a winter vacation to an island off the coast of Mexico. You need to borrow at least $300 for the trip. You are pretty sure you can pay it back in three months.

   b. The two classmates you are talking with have been working with you on a class project. Actually, the problem is that they haven't been working! You have to do something to get them busy, or your grade will suffer. You need at least a "B" in the course to graduate.

   c. You have been working in behalf of the homeless in your community for the past two years. A march on Washington has been scheduled for next week, and a bus has been chartered to take people from your community to Washington at a cost of $83 each. The problem is that unless you can find two more people to make the trip, the bus won't go. You want to convince your two friends to go with you.

4. Imagine that you are an administrative assistant to the director of the Department of Social Services in your state government. The director is interested in starting a new strategic planning process and wants to send a letter to all the managers and employees in the department describing the new process and enlisting their support. You have been asked to draft the letter. Using the information about strategic planning in Chapter 4, draft an appropriate letter.

   After everyone in the class has drafted a letter, each draft should be shared with and analyzed by at least one other student. Your analysis should take into account the specifics of the situation (what should be said, how much should be said, how it should be said) as well as the more general Six Cs of effective communications listed in this chapter.

5. Divide the class into groups of three. Have one person in each group play the role of Chris, the supervisor, and another play the role of Brett, the employee. (Each person should read only his or her own role description and not that of the other person.) The third person in each group should observe the discussion between Chris and Brett and then comment on the motivation strategies employed. The scene begins as Brett walks into Chris's office and says, "Someone said you wanted to see me."

Chris You are twenty-eight years old and recently received your MPA from a fairly prestigious school in the East. You have worked for the federal government for four years, moving rapidly from a presidential management internship to your current position supervising a small unit that produces health and safety brochures for industry. Brett has worked with the agency for twenty-three years as a design specialist. Throughout this period, from what you understand, Brett has done an excellent job. In the few months you have been with the agency, however, you have noticed a decided drop in both the amount and quality of Brett's work. With a heavy workload anticipated over the next several months, you decide that you have to do something to improve Brett's performance. You have asked Brett to come and speak with you.

Brett You have worked for twenty-three years as a design specialist for a small federal government unit that produces health and safety brochures for industry. Throughout your career, you have taken great pride in your work and have done an excellent job. Over the last few months, however, you have been increasingly troubled by painful back spasms, the source of which you have not been able to identify. The problem with your back has triggered a lot of concerns about your health, your age, and your work. Although you haven't shared these concerns with anyone, you find that you spend long periods daydreaming about them. Even drinking a few martinis each evening hasn't calmed your fears. You still enjoy your design work, but somehow the projects you have had recently just don't seem all that exciting. What's worse, your supervisor, a kid probably half your age, has been hinting that your work may not be up to par.

6. Consider the following case. You have recently been appointed head of a new agency established to monitor pollution emissions from coal-fired power plants throughout the Midwest. The data you collect will have a direct impact on an anticipated presidential decision concerning acid rain in the Northeast and Canada. You must try to develop the most comprehensive and precise measures possible and then monitor as many plants as you reasonably can during the relatively short period prior to the presidential decision. Most of your staff have been in the pollution control field much longer than you and are highly committed to the goals of your agency. They have been arguing that a new piece of equipment, an Emission Systems Monitoring Instrument (ESMI), is the only device that is capable of taking precise measurements of the particular pollutants with which you are concerned. The problem is that the ESMI is both extremely expensive and would require nearly half the time you have available just to be delivered. You are skeptical about whether the ESMI is worth the cost, but even more concerned that its limited availability will mean that you will fail to meet your deadline. You also think, though you are not sure, that the rough estimates generated by the existing equipment are sufficient for the purposes of your report to the president. Do you go ahead with the existing equipment, or do you buy the ESMI?

7. Divide the class into task groups of five people each, with three observers assigned to each group.

   The task groups should list what they consider the five most important guidelines for effectively managing a large organization. After each task group completes its work, the observers should lead a discussion of the group dynamics they observed in the work of the task group.

   For observers only: During the discussion, you should silently watch the discussion and take notes about the operation of the group. Try to identify patterns of group development such as those presented in the chapter. Pay special attention to shifting patterns of leadership and communications. If this same group were to perform a similar task, what would you suggest to improve its effectiveness?

8. The following "classic" exercise in group problem solving will illustrate several important aspects of the decision-making process.

Your spaceship has just crash-landed on the moon. You were scheduled to rendezvous with the mother ship 200 miles away on the lighted surface of the moon, but the rough landing has ruined your ship and destroyed all the equipment on board, except for the fifteen items listed below.

You and four to seven other people should take this test individually, without knowing one another's answers, then take the test as a group. Share your individual solutions and reach a consensus—one ranking for each item that best satisfies all group members.

Your crew's survival depends on reaching the mother ship, so you must choose the most critical items available for the 200-mile trip. Your task is to rank the fifteen items in terms of their importance for survival. Place 1 by the most important item, 2 by the second most important, and so on through 15, the least important.

- box of matches
- food concentrate
- fifty feet of nylon rope
- parachute silk
- solar-powered portable heating unit
- two .45-caliber pistols
- one case of dehydrated evaporated milk
- two 100-pound tanks of oxygen
- stellar map (of the moon's constellation)
- self-inflating life raft
- magnetic compass
- five gallons of water
- signal flares
- first-aid kit containing injection needles
- solar-powered FM receiver-transmitter

SOURCE: Jay Hall, "Decisions, Decisions, Decisions," *Psychology Today* 5 (November 1971): pp. 51–88. Reprinted with permission from *Psychology Today.* © 1971, www.psychologytoday.com by Sussex Publishers, Inc.

Note: NASA experts have determined the best solution to this task. Their answers appear in the chapter appendix.

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APPENDIX

"Lost on the Moon" Exercise: Answers from NASA Experts

1. Two 100-pound tanks of oxygen: most pressing survival need
2. Five gallons of water: replacement for tremendous liquid loss on lighted side

3. Stellar map of the moon's constellation: primary means of navigation
4. Food concentrate: efficient means of supplying energy requirements
5. Solar-powered FM receiver-transmitter: for communication with mothership; but FM requires line-of-sight transmission and short ranges
6. Fifty feet of nylon rope: useful in scaling cliffs, tying injured together
7. First-aid kit containing injection needles: needles for vitamins, medicines, and so forth; will fit special aperture in NASA spacesuits
8. Parachute silk: protection from sun's rays
9. Self-inflating life raft: Carbon monoxide bottle in military raft may be used for propulsion
10. Signal flares: distress signal when mothership is sighted
11. Two .45-caliber pistols: possible means of self-propulsion
12. One case of dehydrated evaporated milk: bulkier duplication of food concentrate
13. Solar-powered portable heating unit: not needed unless on dark side
14. Magnetic compass: magnetic field on moon is not polarized; worthless for navigation
15. Box of matches: no oxygen on moon to sustain flame; virtually worthless