Work and Leadership in the Post-Modern Organization: The Futurizing of Max Weber's Classical View of Bureaucracy

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Max Weber: Bureaucracy and the Rationalization of Modern Organizations

- **Max Weber (1864-1920**)

  - Enlightenment theorist
  - Historical Context : urban industrial revolution

Question: **How do we run large/complex organizations?**

Answer: **Bureaucracy**

  - Analytical Construct   (see Lemert, *Social Theory, 2004)*

FEATURES OF A BUREAUCRACY

- **Bureaucracy: Architecture/Structure of Organizations**
    1. Division of Labor
    2. Hierarchy of Authority
    3. Written rules and regulations
    4. Impersonality
    5. Employment based on technical qualifications (Schaefer, *Sociology,* 2012)

Evaluation of Bureaucracy

- **Perennial concept**
    - 21st Century: Digital Age and Information Age
    - Norm for organizational structuring

- **Weber's Evaluation: Love/Hate Relationship**
    - paradox:
        efficiency vs iron cage of our own destruction

Problems of Bureaucracy

- Worker alienation/disenchantment
- Trained Incapacity
- Peter Principle
- Goal Displacement

Educational Bureaucracy

- Education:
- America's most embattled profession (Goldstein, *Teacher Wars, 2014)*
- Regulated profession:
   -tenure, promotion, merit pay, hiring/firing, teacher evaluations, etc.

University Administration

- Management model (John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University, 1947)*

- Bureaucratic splintering, administrators function as:

  -fund raisers, accountants, custodians-or manipulators

- "...there is a growing body of administrators who have no idea of what a university is or ought to be" (Wilshire, *The Moral Collapse of the University, 1990, p. 83)*.

TYPES OF ACTION

- **Purposively rational action (bureaucratic instrumental mindset)**
    - -efficiency in reaching a goal
    - -least cost and greatest gains
    - -little ethical considerations
    - -little regard for fundamental value of goals
- **Value rational action (substantive rationality)**
    - -goal comes first
    - -substance of goal within a deeply held value
- -   -ultimate values give life real meaning (see Hurst, *Living Theory,* 2005).

TYPES OF LEADERS

- **Transactional leaders**
    - -exchange
    - -rewards/punishments for desired behaviors and task performance
    - -analyzes and controls
    - -emphasis on compliance
    - -no enthusiasm generated for commitment and task objectives
- **Transformational leaders**
    - -focus on shared vision, shared vision, relationship building, larger meaning, and common ground
    - -inspires trust, loyalty, and admiration in followers
    - -positively impacts organizational learning (Zagorsek et. al., 2009, 147-48)

Intelligent Leadership Model

- **Based on the paradigm of the knowledge-intensive society**
- **Leading the knowledge worker**
- **Focus on intelligent leader for an intelligent organization**
- **Multidimensional, holistic, systems thinking (wholes):**
- **Comprehensive concept of the person and culture:**
    -bodily, rational (intellectual), emotional, and spiritual
    -seeing interrelationships not linear cause and effect or mechanical
    -understanding processes of change
    -born through dialogue between leaders and followers; team effort
     (Mannermas and Syndanmaanlakka, *Creating Global Strategies for
     Humanity's Future,* 2006).

Consequences of Delay

- **The Cheerful Robot**

  -loss of freedom and the will to reason (C.W. Mills, *The Sociological*

  Imagination (1959), p. 171

- **Dystopian Bureaucracy (Franz Kafka, *The Complete Stories* (1971)**

  -a maze of insanity and irrationality

  -dehumanization and anonymity

- **Betrayal and Foolishness**

- *"To treat students as merely customers is to betray both them and ourselves. To give them mainly professional training but also the impression that they are being liberally educated is to fool them. To assume that they already know what they want and need in order to be educated is to assume that they are already educated, and that is to make fools of everyone"* (Wilshire (1990),The Moral Collapse of the University, p. 234.

- **Challenge**

  -reorganization of the university

  -seedbed for new leadership

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