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DIGITAL GOVERNMENT II
WEEK 3: IT AND
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE (1)

Mar 10, 2009

tonight's plan and announcements



- **Admin stuff:**
 - IPOL event: Secrecy (Tues, March 17th, 7:30 pm)
- **My lecture** (bureaucracy, then and now; some history on IT in government; post-Weberian bureaucracies)
- **Class and small-group discussions**
- **Small-group assignment**

Max Weber (on bureaucracy)

- Jurisdictions
- Hierarchy (power and accountability)
- Specialized training / division of labor
- Professional neutrality
- Structured in rules; “rationalized”
- **Files / records**

Cross-cutting issues: *coordination* (mutual adjustment, supervision, standardization), *function* (*div of labor*), and *flows* (lateral & vertical)

Some wider points: the world this replaced (patronage, clientelism, urban machines); theory of modern organization *in general*; Weber’s “iron cage” of modernity...)

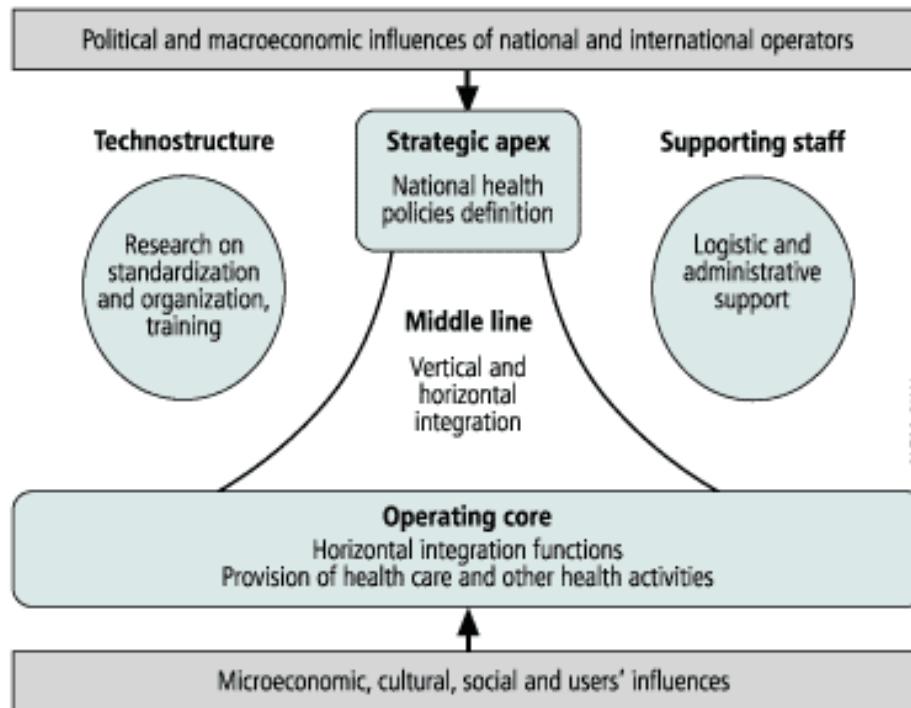
Frederick Taylor (Principles of Scientific Management)

- Replace craft / rule-of-thumb work practices with methods derived from scientific study of work process (time and motion studies; deskilling)
- Scientific selection and training of workers
- Enforced application of new methods
- Sharp separation between workers and the “management function”; “the brain and the hand”

“machine bureaucracies” (Mintzberg, as cited in

Dunleavy et. al.)

Fig. 1. Schematic representation of the functions of the five components of a national health service organization



Source: Undetermined

Trends in public administration: practice and theory



- From patronage to professional civil service (early 20th century)
- Massive federal expansion (1930s to post-war; New Deal and the Great Society) in size and responsibility
- Public administrative science (rise of MBAs and MPAs, later schools of public policy (e.g. Harvard Kennedy School, Ford School) (mid-20th century)

IT in government (Dunleavy et. al., Dawes)

- Early and ongoing leadership in specialized agencies (defense, energy, etc.) (1940s-)
- Office automation, database development, and in-house IT expertise (1960s-70s)
- Outsourcing and (relative) decline (1970s-80s)
- Dunleavy et. al.'s explanation:
 - fragmentation / marginalization of IT staff within dominant 'machine' and 'professional' bureaucracies;
 - weak paths to bureaucratic leadership;
 - slow development of IT professionalism

(the) “New Public Management”

Later 1980s through 1990s. Distinctive features:

- TQM and business process reengineering;
- Fiscal pressures, downsizing;
- Pressures for accountability, transparency, etc.
- Emphasis on efficiency, standardization, quantifiable performance, etc.

1993 National Performance Review: *“a loose collection of policy and management initiatives designed to increase efficiency, accountability, and performance in bureaucratic states largely through greater use of markets and market-based management systems” (Fountain 19).*

Worked through “grassroots activists” within agencies to suggest new initiatives for streamlining and efficiency, organized in “reinvention teams” coordinated by the Office of the Vice-President. September 1993 “Gore Report on Reinventing Government,” leading to Government Performance and Results Act.

Strong emphasis on IT as enabler / multiplier of structural change and efficiency gains in government (e.g. 1993 report, “Reengineering Through Information Technology.”)

Life After Weber? Life after NPM?



The (changing?) institutional shape of government:
from *government* to *governance*: “interorganizational networks,” “policy networks,” “virtual agencies,” and “post-bureaucratic organizations.”

(cf. Jane Fountain, “Comparison of Weberian and Virtual Bureaucracies”)

Dawes’ E-governance action and research agenda:

Progress toward (coordinated) policy framework

Progress on enhanced public services (web 1.0, 2.0, etc.)

Progress on improved management and operations

Progress toward citizen engagement

Progress toward administrative / institutional reform.

Group discussion:



- What are Fountain's concepts of embeddedness and 'technology enactment'? Do you agree with her 7 propositions? Does Fountain's theory provide an adequate framework for thinking about the process(es) of IT and government reform, or are there dimensions to this problem that she misses or understates?

SI 533: Small Group Assignment 1

- Read the assigned case, “Defragmenting e-Government in New Zealand,” and answer *each* of the following questions:
- What are the relative merits of centralized vs. decentralized approaches to the development of e-government initiatives at the national level?
- What barriers might the legacy of decentralized ICT development and NPM approaches pose to the newly integrative e-government strategy articulated in the case?
- Given these historical, institutional, and political circumstances, what options / strategies might Laurence Millar and others tasked with developing and implementing the new strategy deploy?