

# Other dimensions of organization aspects that cause organization in effectiveness

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## Abstract

In daily interaction with team members, the Manager sets out the performance parameters. The Manager being the leader of the team advises on the best ways of attaining the desired objectives. He suggests and manages the ways of business for best implementation of business objectives by management practices that yield effective results. Sometimes, the manager being the member of implementation team fails to analyze the unexpected malfunctioning of the organizational work system and ineffective performances and results accruing from organization practices since he or she is part of the system. Since the things seem right in management theory the malfunction or ineffectiveness gets concealed under the acceptable surface of management theory. This article reviews some facts about acceptable aspects in organizations, such as Shamrock Organization, Glass Ceiling, Devil's Advocacy and Management by Consensus, which are some of the plausible reasons of organizations effectiveness or ineffectiveness.

**Keywords:** Organization Ineffectiveness, Shamrock Organization, Glass Ceiling, Devil's Advocacy, Management by Consensus



## Introduction

We realize the importance of organizational performance and organizations effectiveness in the overall development of the organizations as a collective group, team activity.

We know organizations effectiveness is achieved when work procedures, systems and behavior conform to established standards and practices which ultimately help in accomplishment of organizational goals.

The most significant work-related concerns, team members face involves, ignorance of subject, inaccurate performance by some team member, excessive reliance on each other's for attaining the objective and ignorance of the ultimate result of their labor.

Work systems are sometimes poorly conceived and goals sometimes turn out to be unachievable, because there are some aspects in work procedures and systems that are wrong and ill-conceived on false understanding of past events and results.

This article would present other dimension of organization aspects or phenomena that cause organization ineffectiveness.

## Shamrock Organization

A form of organization composed of three interlocking leaves in the sense of three distinct groups of workers who are treated differently and have different expectations. Shamrock is the plant, its leaves formed a triad. (Hannagan, Tim, 2009 , refer to Handy, Charles, 1987. The Making of Managers, London: Manpower Services Commission, National Economic Development Council, British Institute of Management.)

Hannagan suggests that a small group of specialists "core" workers form the first leaf. They are the nerve center of the

organization in the sense that they are essential to its work and success. They are both specialists and generalists who run the organization and control the technology which has replaced, to a large extent, much of the labor force.

The second leaf, the contractual fringe, may or may not work exclusively for the company. Its constituents carry out certain tasks for which they are paid a fee based on results, rather than based on the time taken.

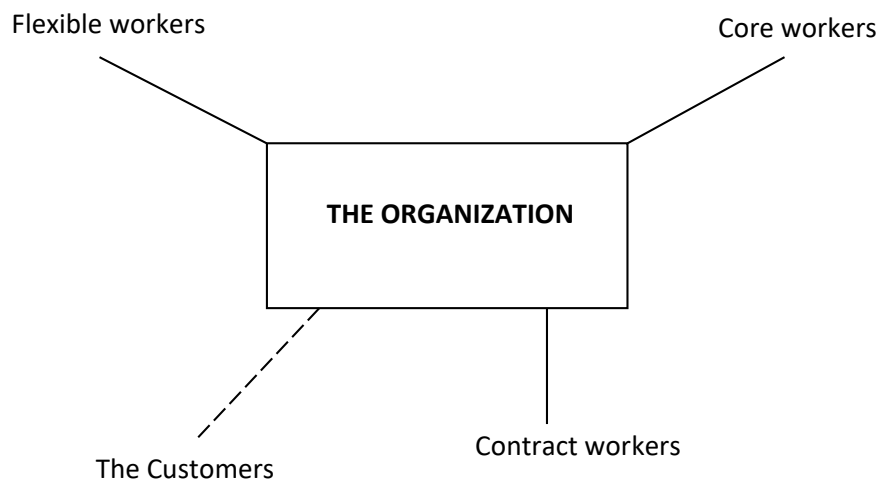
The third leaf of the shamrock organization, the flexible labor force, comprises a pool of part time workers who are available for use by the organization

There are a number of organizations that have three interlocking leaves. It is admitted that this structure is reasonable. This is about division of labor, specialization and chain of command. It is obvious that the first leaf employee, specialist employee or professional employee receives special rights or better property rights than other leaf employees. As a specialist or professional, the organization provides variety of facilities from office cabin, desk top, flexible working hours to golden parachutes, stock options, large salaries, control over organizational resources and over all decision making. Whereas the second leaf employee have a different limited salary ceiling, narrow scope of property rights, fixed working hours, and insignificant participation in decision making. Not to mention about the third leaf employee, they cannot access the company rights even cannot participate in company celebrations or parties.

The organizational focus being on the First and Second leaf employees, the third leaf employees obviously are treated differently. They have different unrecognized status in the organizations and their opportunity for negotiation with

management are limited. On the other hand, the Second leaf employee has favorable negotiation opportunity with the management. They find different valuable tradeoffs or need less persuasion to persuade the management to agree. But this tradeoff with Second leaf employee is

vulnerable. Some of them are more likely to claim their higher status and flexible benefits, but in reality, their demands are unreasonable and unachievable. But managements ignore these realities at the peril of achieving results at all cost.



**Figure 1** The Shamrock Organization

Source: Hannagan, Tim (2009), *Management: Concepts & Practices*, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed. United Kingdom, Pearson Education Limited.

We realize the Shamrock organization is a common practice but it seems difficult to build rapport among employees. Viewing this situation, Shamrock organization value employees differently. It is difficult to narrow the gap between the different leaf employees.

Not surprisingly, the Second leaf employee often select to leave the organization to other organizations that they expect to get better status, career path and less difference among different levels of employees.

Shamrock organization leads to insufficient motivation and drive of a particular group of employees. Their co-operative moves

are likely to be decreased. Also, the employees face Job stress and burnout problem and adopt negative and untrusting attitude. Not only the conflict spreads among employees, the conflict also spreads between employees and executives. If organizations are not aware of this, the situation will become more difficult to overcome.

Undoubtedly this organizational structure has the problem of building a healthy conducive relationship among employees, and fails to build co-operation among employees and cannot encourage trust among the employees which finally effects the organization effectiveness.



## Glass Ceiling

Glass Ceiling is the invisible barrier that prevents women and minorities from advancing to the top jobs in organizations. (Williams Chuck, Management, 2012). We find this incidence not only in Asia but also in organizations across the Western hemisphere.

This effects the morale, incentive, ambition and drive of female & minority employees. It is true that many companies formulate policies that encourage and foster diversity. Yet we have to admit that many organizations have glass ceiling. Female employees are not able to advance beyond certain position at high level. Focusing on minorities in workplace, there could be some employees with different race, religion, nationality, ethnicity even different educational background or other classification. As implied, some people are more visibly different than others because of physical features or disabilities.

The fact that minorities could be with exceptional expertise, rare knowledge or some excellent skill sets is often unexpected. This could be implied to the politics of workplace as the employees are one among many political groupings in the company. It is found that minorities in different political groups are passed over for promotion in favor of other candidates despite equal qualifications.

Glass ceiling against any of minorities group whether based on any classification, decreases minorities' opportunity to step to the higher level executive positions, even being treated differently from other employees. Glass ceiling can greatly harm employee's self-esteem, individual motive, work contribution, dedication, and sense of safety. It can cause incredible damage to the organization as the organization misses the opportunity to have an

excellent talented employee to conduct the specialized tasks.

Possibly women or these minorities could have outperformed those who always had the chance.

## Devil's Advocacy

A decision-making method in which an individual or a sub group is assigned the role of a Critic. According to Cambridge Dictionary, the person who act as 'Devil's Advocate' is someone who pretends, in an argument or discussion, to be against an idea or plan that a lot of people support, in order to make people discuss and consider it in more detail.

Having a Devil's Advocate in a team who is responsible for raising tough questions in a constructive way is critical to the success of the team. Every company attempting to innovate needs some version of a Devil's Advocate—both to head off problems and to bring out the best efforts of the organization. (Mui, Chunka, 2014)

Devil's Advocacy creates conflict by assigning an individual or a subgroup the role of critic. (Williams Chuck, Management, 2012). In work when you were debating an issue or in a group decision making process, you might ask someone or another party to be the Devil's advocate. It would mean to argue against the topic. It seems like persuade someone to conduct dialectical inquiry. This person or this party act as being argumentative. They have to analyse the situation from other angles so that a solution can be reached. The person or party who plays the Devil's Advocate, takes the contrarian view, will always ask undesirable, unpleasant, difficult questions, typically with good intention, so that the problem can be analysed holistically taking all



angles into account for reaching a good, correct solution.

Fundamentally, Devil's Advocacy is the system where flaws in the system are uncovered by technique of "Honest Inquiry". The use of Devil's Advocacy is the attempt to counteract GroupThink. The Devil's Advocacy should develop a re-analysis of the problem and alternative recommendations.

On the other hand, Devil's Advocacy could affect negative outcomes. Schwenk, Charles R. indicated that one major caution regarding the use of Devil's Advocates has to do with the attitudes of those in the decision-making group. Devils Advocates should only be used if decision-makers can honestly question their basic assumptions and have a sincere commitment to the Devil's Advocate process. Without such commitment, the use of Devil's Advocate may not be useful may prove to do more harm than good.

The problem here is the person who acts as Devil's Advocate could present strong negative criticism which could intimidate, discourage and demoralize other team members. This causes tension, frustration and sense of conflict in the group. Also in some cases where the person who acts as a Devil's Advocate has a bias against some team member, he could intentionally attribute malevolent motives and create humiliation and resentment to that person. Thus, team work could take a hit due to lack of cohesiveness in the team, lesser participation and coordination in decision making activities, more anxiety among team members toward one another and greater opportunity for unproductive conflict. This situation does not allow organisations to achieve superior efficiency.

## Management by Consensus

Minnesota Department of Health indicated that Consensus management means that when a decision is reached by the group, there is total commitment to it by all members. It does not necessarily mean the decision was reached easily or that there were not widely differing views shared and debated during the group's discussion. But once consensus is formally achieved, division of opinion, so far as that decision is concerned, should cease.

Consensus decision making is a creative and dynamic way of reaching agreement between all members of a group. Instead of simply voting for an item and having the majority of the group getting their way, a group using consensus is committed to finding solutions that everyone actively supports, or at least can live with. This ensures that all opinions, ideas and concerns are taken into account. Through listening closely to each other, the group aims to come up with proposals that work for everyone. Consensus is neither compromise nor unanimity - it aims to go further by weaving together everyone's best ideas and key concerns - a process that often results in surprising and creative solutions, inspiring both the individual and the group as whole. (<https://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/consensus>)

When the group can reach consensus, group obtains agreeable solution. Consensus decision making builds on team spirit, bond of friendship, trust, honest intention, respect, cooperation and capability to tuning attitude among team members.

Hannagan Tim indicated that we often hear leaders of groups or activities say that they want to manage by consensus. However, in many cases, they do not know



or understand the meaning of consensus and the benefits and detriments of its use in group politics and overall decision making. While the intent is to bring the participants to common ground, the results can unfortunately also be divisive and counter-productive if misapplied.

When done right, management by consensus is an effective method of decision making. According to 'Seeds for Change'

([www.seedsforchange.org.uk](http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk)), management by consensus involves common goal sharing, that require shared vision among team members, commitment and patience, trust and openness, sufficient time, clearly understanding the process, active participation, good facilitation, active listening, a succinct and accurate summarizing.

It also requires other team members communication skills such as conflict resolution, creative thinking and open-mindedness.

Something can be happening to minimize the advantage of management by consensus and finally decrease organization effectiveness.

It is considered that consensus could be effected by **Groupthink**.

Groupthink, a term coined by social psychologist Irving Janis (1972), occurs when a group makes faulty decisions because group pressures lead to a deterioration of "mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment" (p. 9). Groups affected by groupthink ignore alternatives and tend to take irrational actions that dehumanize other groups. A group is especially vulnerable to groupthink when its members are similar in background, when the group is insulated from outside opinions, and when there are no clear rules for decision making. ([http://www.psycsr.org/about/pubs\\_resources/groupthink.htm](http://www.psycsr.org/about/pubs_resources/groupthink.htm))

Groupthink is a psychological phenomenon that occurs within a group of people in which the desire for harmony or conformity in the group results in an irrational or dysfunctional decision-making outcome. Group members try to minimize conflict and reach a consensus decision without critical evaluation of alternative viewpoints by actively suppressing dissenting viewpoints, and by isolating themselves from outside influences, (Wikipedia)

Groupthink occurs when people choose not to disagree or raise objections because they don't want to break up a positive team spirit. Some groups want to think as one, tolerate no dissension and strive to remain cordial (Bateman and Snell).

There is a reasonable chance that Groupthink will occur, when people have been working together as a team work for some continuous period of time, they would facilitate close cooperation. They chose to provide meaningful consensus agreement. Smooth interaction is achieved when they use consensus in decision making. Maintaining group harmony is more important than reaching good solutions. Besides, support, trust and harmony is the basic requirements for successful team work.

Typically, group members have some time to consider the problem or decision and present their ideas and alternative for entire discussion. Sometimes, deadlines and time pressures coerce that the views be made immediately that are accepted quickly. Accordingly, groupthink occurs and consensus comes.

Sometimes Groupthink and consensus happens when team member are so much concerned and considerate of other members. The team should include members with a mix of experience and capabilities with various ideas, viewpoints and perspectives. When this whole comes



with a consensus idea, it effects the outcome is terms of a less creative idea, less innovation, and less effectiveness of the organization.

## Conclusion

Well managed Organizations emphasize on well organized structure with challenging systems and process, inspiring shared vision, encouraging the team with participative strategic thinking leaders with global minded leadership.

Managers must also strive for effectiveness, which is accomplishing tasks that help fulfill organizational objectives.

Sometimes managers have trouble figuring out an ideal work system or a process that helps organization achieve its objectives.

Managers as human beings, have a vivid understanding about things that can go right or wrong. There are some things which they know theoretically, from past experiences and from their exceptional talents and instinct. Yet there are some things which are practically out of the managers' sight in the day to day mundane life in the workplace.

Consequently, managers have to keep updating their professional skill sets theoretically and practically to stay relevant in this fast-paced action-oriented internal and external environments facing today's organization.

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