

Puzzle Activity

Setup

Setup

1. Organic

6 to 9 Members

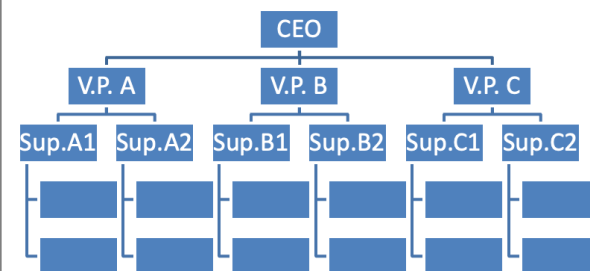
Focal Point appointed by
the Professor

2. Mechanistic

CEO appointed by the
Professor

VP's appointed by the
CEO

Supervisors appointed
by the VP's



Rules – Organic

- **Chain of command:** There is a Focal Point who provides strategic guidance if needed but does not enforce strict authority. The team operates autonomously, with shared decision-making. Team members collaborate directly, and shift roles based on expertise and project needs. The focal point should act as a facilitator, ensuring communication flows openly across all team members._
- **Departmentalization:** There is none in this exercise!
- **Range of command:** High (from 1 to 4 to 1 to 8 – depending on the size of the group).
- **Job Specialization:** Potentially low: Everyone can work directly on the puzzle and do any task.
- **Centralization:** Typically decentralized organization, but without questioning the authority of the leader.
- **Formalization:** Low.
- **Communication:** Everyone can talk to everyone.

Rules – Mechanistic 1/2

- **Chain of command:** There is a CEO who has direct authority over three VPs, who have direct authority over two supervisors each. Supervisors have direct authority over at least two workers. All managers and employees have the responsibility to obey their superiors, under penalty of being excluded from the game.
- **Range of command:** Diminutive (expected: 1 to 3)
- **Departmentalization:** Defined by the CEO together with the VPs.
- **Specialization of work:** Only workers can work directly on the puzzle. CEO, VPs and supervisors are only responsible for managing subordinates and their work.
- **Centralization:** Centralized organization, all decisions regarding the organization of work have to be made by the CEO. If there is any idea of change on the part of an employee, it has to be communicated to the CEO, via the chain of command.

Rules – Mechanistic 2/2

- **Formalization:** Typically high in a mechanistic organization, but in this case it is medium (cf. The management and execution functions are different, but the work of the workers has some freedom).
- **Communication:** A hierarchical level can only speak directly to someone about whom they have a line of authority and to their immediate boss:
 - The CEO can only speak directly to the VPs.
 - VPs can only speak directly to the CEO and the CEO they manage directly.
 - Supervisors can only talk to their (intermediate) manager (VP) and the workers they manage.
 - Employees can only talk between themselves and to their supervisor.

Puzzle Activity

Pedagogical objectives and some
conclusions



Pedagogical Objectives

- **Chapter 11**
- **(Designing Organizational Structure)**
- Experience the benefits and constraints/drawbacks of two types of organization:
 - **Mechanistic** (Rigid and centralized);
 - **Organic** (Highly adaptable and flexible);
- Reflect on contextual factors that may benefit the choice of one type of organization over the other.

Conclusions

- If we wanted to choose the most **efficient** organization, what would it be? And which one gives more guarantees of **effectiveness** if the goal is to have the puzzle done in 1h00 or less?
- Difficulty in keeping everyone at a **constant level** of work throughout the process!
- **Mechanistic groups tend to behave organically** when allowed!
- The division of the mechanistic group ends up forcing a **specialization** of work that, initially, causes some difficulty, but in a short time (about 10/20m) begins to produce **positive effects on productivity!**
- A puzzle usually does not have watertight sections and has many areas in which the pieces can be part of one section or another. In other words, departmentalization turns out to be an artificial way of dividing something that is not clearly differentiable and divisible!

Conclusions

- The number of departments should be **adjusted to needs of the organization!**
- The fact that the organic group all works in the same place **makes it look like** it's closer to getting the job done!
- In the organic group it is very **difficult to understand who the boss is** and easily someone, with a more assertive personality, ends up passing by and performing the functions of group leader!
- The CEOs and middle managers of the mechanistic groups - because they could not (it was a rule) do micro management - tended to go and **analyze the competition**. The CEO of the organic group, no!
- Apparently, the 200-piece puzzle did not allow students to take such a big benefit from the specialization of the work, since the part of the activity in which it is possible/preferable to work in a departmentalized way, was clearly smaller!