

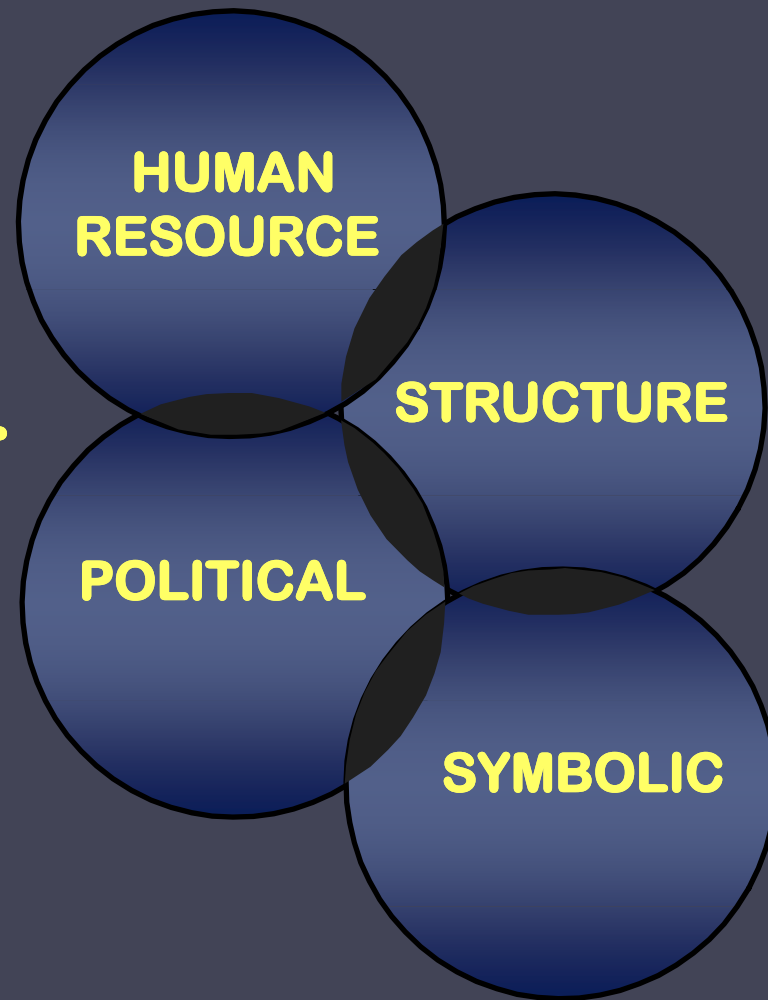
# Organizational Dynamics

A Multi-Frame Approach by  
Leo Bolman; Terry Deal

# OBJECTIVES

- Another way to look at your agency.
- How do the four perceptual frames play out in your agency.
- Understand how leaders frame their workplace.

# FOUR PERCEPTUAL FRAMES



# Structural Frame

**Focus:** Precision, Command and Control  
How we work!

- Division of labor
- Roles, rules,  
and regulations
- Policies and procedures
- Organization charts
- Chain of command

# Assumptions Underlying the Structural Frame

- Organizations exist primarily to accomplish established goals.
- For any organization, there is a structure appropriate to the goals, the environment, the technology, and the people.

# Assumptions Underlying the Structural Frame

- Organizations work best when environmental turbulence and personal preferences are constrained by norms of rationality.
- Coordination and control are accomplished best through the exercise of authority and impersonal rules.
- Organizational problems can be resolved through redesign and reorganization of structures.

# Use of the Structural Frame

- Effective Use
  - Efficient management
  - Lean and effective
  - Lean bureaucracy
- Ineffective Use
  - Rules more important than outcomes
  - Policies and rules remain unchanged
  - Leader is petty tyrant
  - Management by fiat and detail





# Human Resource Frame

**Focus:** What People need, their Goals

- Systems create harmony
- Interpersonal communication
- Groups
- Interdependence
- Collaboration
- Job Enrichment
- Training and Development

# Assumptions Underlying the Human Resources Frame

- Organizations exist to serve human needs; humans do not exist to serve organizational needs.
- Organizations and people need each other. Organizations need the ideas, energy, and talent from people; people need careers and salaries from organizations.

# Assumptions Underlying the Human Resources Frame

- When the fit between individual and organization is poor, either the individual or the organization will be exploited.
- When the fit is good, people do meaningful and satisfying work and the organization accomplishes its mission.

# Use of the Human Resources Frame

- Effective Use
  - Extensive personnel training
  - Appropriate benefits package
  - Rewards for development, accomplishments
  - Leader is supportive and empowering
- Ineffective Use
  - Codependent organization
  - Employees' happiness more important than achieving outcomes
  - Leader is a weakling, a push-over; abdicates responsibility



# Political Frame

**Focus:** competition, power

- Organization as a jungle
- Allocation of scarce resources
- Conflict
- Power: Who has it?
- Bargaining and negotiating
- Building coalitions
- Advocacy

# Assumptions Underlying the Political Frame

- Most of the important decisions in organizations involve the allocation of scarce resources.
- Organizations are coalitions composed of a number of individuals and interest groups — hierarchies, departments, professional groups, and ethnic groups.

# Assumptions Underlying the Political Frame

- Individuals and interest groups differ in their values, preferences, beliefs, information, and perceptions. Such differences are enduring and change slowly if at all.
- Organizational goals and decisions emerge from bargaining, negotiation, and jockeying for position.



# Use of the Political Frame

- Effective Use
  - Negotiates settlements with disparate groups
  - Produces “buy-in” and “win-win” solutions
  - Promotes shared power and influence
  - Advocates for organization
- Ineffective Use
  - Manipulates special interest groups
  - Doesn't honor promises
  - Uses power to exclude, trivialize
  - Leader can be a con artist, hustler



# Symbolic Frame

**Focus:** Meaning and Significance of Events

- Values and beliefs
- Ceremonies and rituals
- Myths, stories, fairy tales
- Heroes and heroines
- Symbols

# Assumptions Underlying the Symbolic Frame

- What is most important about any event is not what happened – but the meaning of what happened.
- Meaning is determined by how people interpret what happened.
- Ambiguity and uncertainty undermine rational approaches to analysis, problem solving, and decision making.
- When faced with uncertainty, people create symbols to resolve fear and confusion and increase predictability.

# Assumptions Underlying the Symbolic Frame

Events themselves may remain illogical, random, and meaningless, but people's symbolism will make them seem otherwise.

# Use of the Symbolic Frame

- Effective Use
  - Inspires others with commitment to “higher purpose”
  - Uses symbols to give rich meaning to everyday events
  - Leader acts as prophet and poet for the organization
- Ineffective Use
  - Promotes fanaticism among followers
  - Trivializes sacred symbols
  - Leader uses “smoke and mirrors”







# Leader Tasks

## *Structural Frame*

- Organizational charts, hierarchies
- Allocation of resources and responsibilities
- Management policies, continuous improvement

## *Human Resources Frame*

- Builds community
- Attends to needs and feelings of staff
- Tailors organization structures to people
- Helps people feel good about what they are doing

# Leader Tasks

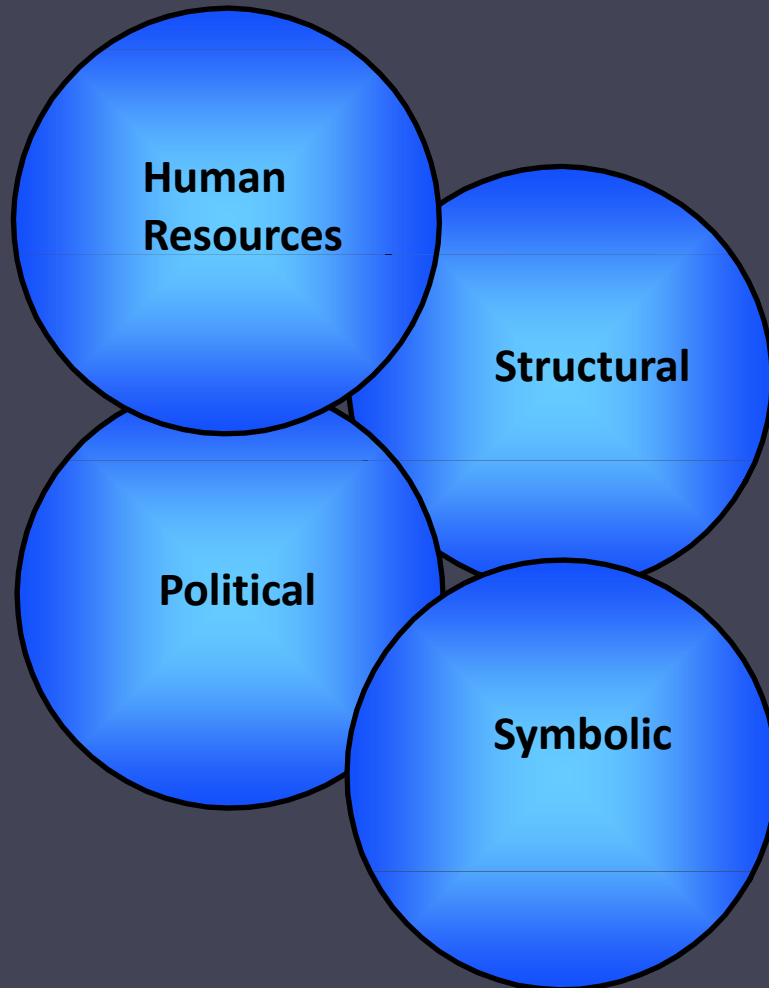
## *Political Frame*

- Engages in bargaining and negotiating
- Forms coalitions around specific interests
- Monitors and adjusts power allocations

## *Symbolic Frame*

- Consciously constructs organization's culture
- Orchestrates ceremonies and rituals
- Creates heroes, stories, and myths

# Successful Leaders Make Effective Use of All Four Frames



- Demonstrate “frame flexibility”
- Expand perceptual set by thinking outside their box

# Reframing Leadership

*Frame*

*Effective Leadership*

*Ineffective Leadership*

	<i>Leader Is:</i>	<i>Leadership Process</i>	<i>Leader Is:</i>	<i>Leadership Process</i>
<i>Structural</i>	Social architect	Analysis, design	Petty tyrant	Management by detail and fiat
<i>Human Resource</i>	Catalyst, servant	Support, empowerment	Weakling, pushover	Abdication
<i>Political</i>	Advocate	Advocacy, coalition-building	Con artist, hustler	Manipulation, fraud
<i>Symbolic</i>	Prophet, Poet	Inspiration, framing experience	Fanatic, Fool	Mirage, smoke and mirrors



“By deliberately changing their  
internal image of reality,  
people can change their world.”

Willis Harmon

# Reframing Leadership

*Frame*

*Effective Leadership*

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