

Organizational Analysis

SW 843

Introduction

Although some organizations may have very similar goals and objectives, the organizational setting and climate, management practices, and diversity of the organizations are very different. It is useful for the employees or potential employees to analyze an agency, not only look at the mission of an organization and the services provided, but at the structure and operations of the organization and, in the long term, if the organization is a compatible fit for them. Furthermore, the analysis is important for employees to observe if it is a place they want to be employed at or to continue employment there. [Excellent intro.](#)

Organizational Setting

The Clay County Juvenile Court provides care, treatment, and protection of children who come within the jurisdiction of the court due to delinquency, status offenses, child abuse, and neglect. The Family Court consists of different areas including (1) Juvenile Administration, which includes delinquency/probation unit, child abuse/neglect unit, Dispute Resolution Services, adoption specialist, educational evaluator, support staff, court psychologist/group home coordinator, and CASA services, (2) Detention, and (3) Group Homes; however, the discussion through this paper will only include the Juvenile Administration, which is the area that I am employed. Employees demographics consist of 34 employed, all but 3 are female; however, the Juvenile Officer (the top authority in the agency) is male. One employee is African American and the rest are Caucasian. Ages of employees range from 27 to 59 years old; and most employees started at the agency in their early twenties, including myself. The organization does not reflect the population we serve (well, we can't really have juveniles on our staff), but regarding sex and race, the demographics of the employees are not reflective of the population.

[Good observation.](#)

The clients coming to this agency do not necessarily come because they want to get help. They are there because they are alleged to have broken the law or caused harm to their children. Although helping clients is one aspect of this agency, it does not exist solely for the clients. Victim justice and community safety are also aspects of the agency and the services must balance all three aspects. Therefore, victim/offender mediation is a largely utilized program within the delinquency/probation unit. Most other services are contracted out to other organizations including substance abuse treatment and counseling services. [Good description of the organization.](#)

Management Practices

My agency follows a bureaucratic management style, as it is a government agency [and must adhere to state statutes and guidelines.](#) As described by [Weinbach \(2003\)](#) a bureaucracy includes a vertical organizational hierarchy, defined guidelines that limit functions, rewards based on demonstrated competence, formal communication channels, job security for full-time employees, division of labor, and emphasis on written documentation. In my agency, there is a vertical hierarchy with a Juvenile Officer at the top, then Supervisors of the different areas right under him, and the front-line employees under the supervisors; each level of the hierarchy has defined practices to their job and there is very little overlap between the levels (division of labor) and all communication by front-line workers goes to their supervisor, and the supervisor communicates with the Juvenile Officer (rigid communication channels). [Good.](#) There is a definite separation of the different areas, all with their own guidelines for practices, specifically between the delinquency/probation unit and abuse/neglect unit, and there is very little overlap between the two units regarding cases. The agency operates on “paperwork” with every communication, every services, every report, everything documented in the case file. The phrase

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“CYA” (Cover Your A--) is spoken frequently around the office as reminder to complete paperwork. Furthermore, it is a well-known fact around the agency that no matter how much employees screw up, their jobs are protected unless there are criminal charges against them (unfortunately, this has happened and is still happening to one particular employee who never seems to get reprimanded). All of the supervisors were promoted from within the agency, showing that there are rewards and promotions for hard work. [Good.](#)

By utilizing a bureaucratic management style, it is easier to ensure that that statutes and guidelines are followed to maintain control. If statutes and guidelines are not followed, then the agency can be completely shut down or left open to lawsuits by the public. As long as the rules are followed, the agency will be left alone. The existence of the agency is crucial to the juvenile justice system not only for the care, treatment, and protection of children, but also for the parents and victims of crimes by juveniles. Bureaucracies are almost certain to exist, to the certainty of clients and the public, providing for their needs as needed. [Good.](#)

The challenges of working in and the limitations of bureaucracies can deter people from seeking employment in an agency. While the consistency of bureaucracies can be beneficial in that they will always exist, the internal consistency of bureaucracies is not always beneficial to the clients. Bureaucracies handle cases more or less the same, and not one is treated differently. However, every case and every situation is different, and may sometimes need to be handled differently, or certain clients need to be handled differently; sometimes the guidelines get in the way of treatment. Furthermore, the incompetence of employees is not a reason for termination, which is very, very frustrating for the rest of the employees who excel at their jobs. Also, there are written guidelines and protocol for everything, to align with the CYA attitude, and any

changes to guidelines and protocol are a long, slow process, mostly due to the fear of getting sued. [Good.](#)

Although bureaucracies are not, in my opinion, employee friendly, for the type of agency that it is, bureaucracies are vital to court systems because they do have to adhere to state statutes, or face harsh consequences. [Good.](#) It works well with government organizations that are guided by statutes and regulations. It's not a system that I enjoy working in at this point, mostly due to my interests in expanding programs, and that process takes too much time in bureaucracies.

[Good.](#)

Organizational Climate

Organizational climate of my agency is often guided by the bureaucratic nature of the agency. [Good.](#) It seems to me, again, that the guiding philosophy within the agency is CYA and doing things to not get sued. While working with clients, it is not uncommon to perpetually look at different statutes and how they affect the practices of the employees. It is an assumption that employees will be in different positions for a long time due to the lack of open positions due to job security. However, the management is often not sticklers to the policies of the agency when it comes to employees. Often times, nothing is said if employees take longer than one hour on their lunch break or go run a quick errand during work hours. Also, if employees have a family emergency (sick child or others) the other employees are there to help pick up their workload as needed. The managers also are lax about goofing off by employees as long as their work is done on time. [Good.](#)

According to Taylor and Giannantonio's information on organizational types, (1993), I would classify my organization as a club system for many reasons. Positions in the Clay County Juvenile Court are hard to come by as many of the employees stay until retirement; this is also

consistent with bureaucracies in that there is job security. This not only provides reliability and consistency in the organization, but when working with clients, it provides credibility. Furthermore, the organization is divided into units (delinquency unit and abuse/neglect unit) and positive acknowledgement of hard work is given to the units rather than the individual employees. [Good.](#)

The employees handle decisions on individual cases, but if they feel that they need direction, they discuss the case with their supervisor and come up with a decision together. The Juvenile Officer makes policy decisions with the approval from the Judge of the Juvenile Court.

Relationships are formed based on personalities and work functions commonalities, in that the employees of the delinquency/probation unit form closer relationships with those in their unit than any others, and the same for the rest of the areas. Furthermore, those with more history together, i.e. have worked together longer, have a closer relationship than those who have not been working there as long. Adaptation usually happens quickly as new employees are often “thrown into the fire” and need to adapt quickly. In my five years of employment at this agency, I have seen only retirements and no terminations due to incompetence or pursuit of other interests. [Good.](#)

Diversity Orientation

Diversity orientation is not something that it just added on to an organization to show the world “Hey, look, we’re diverse!” It is a complete systematic process that is embedded in the organization to encourage a variety of people with all kinds of traits to come and stay at their organization. It is in hiring practices. It is in the benefit packages. It is in the everyday work practices. It is in the promotions. It is *everywhere* in the organization, and not just training once a year. [Good.](#) There is never any emphasis on diversity regarding any observable attributes,

except for wanting an increase in male employees, but the recruitment process does not encourage males to apply any more than females. Regarding underlying attributes, during the interview process, there are observations by the management to hire an employee that has common personality traits as existing employees. [Good.](#)

In my organization, there is not much diversity. The organization doesn't reflect the population we serve. However, our employees' educational backgrounds are fairly eclectic in the social science area, but most of the employees have similar personality traits. Diversity is something that is not addressed by my organization, nor is it something that is an integral part of everyday practices. Even in recruitment of employees, the most the organization does to encourage diversity is "EOE." It's really pathetic. I have not observed any attempts to integrate a more diverse setting; however, it is rumored throughout the office that when a new position does open up, it is likely to be filled with a male. [Interesting. Yet the staff do not reflect the clients you serve. Any thoughts on how the organization can become more diverse without hiring staff?](#)

Conclusion

I am often complaining about my job and the agency as most people do. Now, as I go through graduate school and have the opportunity to look at my agency through a different lens, it really makes me see some ways where things could be different and I have come to the realization that I do not want to be a part of this organization for the rest of my career. [Interesting.](#) I have learned that agencies should not just be content in their policies and practices, and that there are always ways for agencies to strive to be more diverse, to manage in a way that is most conducive for the employees and clients, and that the organizational climate is vital. This is all new material for me and by reading the course materials, and gaining new knowledge, makes me feel that I can be a good leader someday. [Good.](#)

References

Taylor, M. S., & Giannantonio, C. M. (1993). Forming, adapting, and terminating the employment relationship: A review of the literature from individual, organizational, and interactionist perspectives. *Journal of Management*, 19(2), p. 461 (443).

Weinbach, R.W. (2003). Chapter 3: Historical Origins of Current Management Theories in *The Social Worker as Manager: A Practical Guide to Success (4th ed.)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. pp. 47-70.

You did a great job with this assignment. You covered all of the required components in a concise yet thought provoking manner. I especially appreciated your insight of the organization, summarized in your conclusion. Do you think you, as one person, can make a difference in a bureaucratic club that is not diverse? What would you have to do to make the workplace more interesting for you and a place you would stay? Just some thoughts to ponder. Good work! Grade = 100