Komunikasi Organisasi

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Human Relations and Human Resources Approaches

After Reading This Chapter, You Should…

- Know about the Hawthorne Studies and how they proved to be a springboard for the human relations approach.

- Be familiar with Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Douglas McGregor's

- Theory X and Theory Y as exemplars of the human relations approach.

- Understand the ways in which the human relations approach was empirically inadequate and misused and how these problems led to the human resources approach.

- Be able to explain how the Managerial Grid and System IV management describe aspects of human resources management.

- Be able to describe typical communication patterns in classical, human relations, and human resources organizations.

- Appreciate the challenges of instituting human resources principles into today's organizations.

As you discovered in Chapter 2, management theory in the early part of the twentieth century was marked by an allegiance to a machine metaphor and a search for ways to increase efficiency and productivity through systems of structure, power, compensation, and attitude. Indeed, many principles of classical management are still widely used today. However, it should be clear from our consideration of Fayol, Weber, and Taylor that certain aspects of organizational communication are conspicuously absent from classical theories. For example, these theorists pay little attention to the individual needs of employees, to nonfinancial rewards in the workplace, or to the prevalence of social interaction in organizations. These theorists were also uninterested in how employees could contribute to meeting organizational goals through knowledge, ideas, and discussion—the only valued contribution was that of physical labor. Issues such as these drove the thinking of the theorists we will consider in this chapter— scholars and practitioners who represent the human relations and human resources approaches to organizational communication. In this chapter, we will consider these two approaches that began more than eighty years ago and still influence values and practices today.

We will first consider the human relations approach that emphasizes the importance of human needs in the workplace. We will then consider developments from this early movement—the human resources approach—that concentrate on the contributions of all employees in reaching organizational goals. In discussing each approach, we will consider the historical and scholarly context that led to the approach and representative theorists within the approach. We will then consider ways in which the human relations and human resources approaches influence communication in organizations and the ways in which these approaches are exemplified in today's organizations.

Human Resources Approach

The approach to organizational communication we will look at in this section builds on the contributions of classical and human relationships theorists and adds an important twist. The human resources approach acknowledges contributions of classical and, especially, human relations approaches to organizing. Human resources theorists recognize that individuals in organizations have feelings that must be considered and also recognize that individual labor is an important ingredient for meeting organizational goals. What human resources theorists add to the mix is an emphasis on the cognitive contributions employees make with their thoughts and ideas. In this section, we first consider a few of the factors that led organizational theorists and practitioners from classical and human relations principles to the ideas at the center of the human resources approach to management and organizations. We then discuss two theories that provide early statements of some fundamental aspects of the human resources approach to organizing: Robert Blake and Jane Mouton's Managerial Grid and Rensis Likert's System IV.

Impetus for the Human Resources Approach

The Hawthorne studies served as a springboard that moved thinking about organizations from the classical school to the human relations school. Was there a similar watershed event that provoked disillusionment with the human relations school and led to the human resources approach? Not really. No single study or incident induced

dissatisfaction with the ideas of human relations theorists—indeed, these views are still widely held today. However, in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, there was a growing feeling that models of employee needs were insufficient for describing, explaining, and managing the complexities of organizational life. In particular, there was concern about whether human relations principles really worked and whether they could be misused by organizational practitioners.

Do Human Relations Principles Work?

The principles of human relations theories are certainly intuitively appealing. We would like to believe that by assuming good things about employees, by treating them well with enriched and challenging jobs, and by fulfilling their needs for esteem and self-actualization, we could generate a climate in which worker satisfaction and productivity will flourish. However appealing, though, there is evidence that many of the ideas of human relations theorists simply do not hold up when put to the empirical test. This is true at the level of the individual study and theory, as there is limited support for the conclusions of the Hawthorne studies or for the specific theoretical propositions of scholars like Maslow and McGregor. In addition, this lack of support can also be seen when we consider the general principles on which the human relations movement rests. At its most basic level, the human relations approach posits that higher-order needs can be satisfied through job design, management style, and other organizational factors. When these higher-order needs are satisfied, employees should be happier. When employees are happier, they should be more productive. This general pattern is depicted in figure below.

Flowchart of Human Relations Principles

Work Factors	→	Satisfaction of Higher-Order Needs	→	Job Satisfaction	→	Productivity

Source: Miller (2012: 46)

Let us now consider the various links in this human relations model. The first link is between aspects of the work environment and the satisfaction of higher order needs. Evidence has shown that various job characteristics can serve as motivational factors,

although aspects of the job that motivate may vary considerably by person and situation. Thus, this link of the human relations model seems to hold up.

Evidence has also shown that job satisfaction will be the next step in the progression (e.g., Muchinsky, 1977). It is the third link in the model connecting job satisfaction and performance that is sometimes seen as problematic. It seems "obvious" that employees who are more satisfied will also be more productive. However, years of research stemming from the human relations movement have failed to provide robust support for this connection (see, e.g., Brief, 1998; Cote, 1999). Why aren't satisfied employees also more productive employees? Perhaps other motivations for hard work, such as financial reward or threat of punishment, take precedence over satisfaction. Furthermore, recent research has suggested that the relationship between satisfaction and performance might depend on cultural factors, such as whether a culture is a "masculine" one that values individualistic outcomes (Ng, Sorensen & Yim, 2009). Whatever the reason, it is clear that "humans are complicated, choice-making animals whose decisions about the amount of effort they should spend on any particular activity are based on a myriad of personal considerations" (Conrad, 1985: 118).

Misuse of Human Relations Principles

Another factor that steered many to the human resources approach was the extent to which tenets of the human relations movement could be used in a superficial or manipulative way in organizations. For example, a manager who holds Theory X assumptions (e.g., that employees are inherently lazy and stupid) might adopt some superficial Theory Y behaviors in an effort to gain more control over the workforce. For example, the manager might ask for employees' opinions about an issue without having any intention of taking those opinions into account during decision-making. Because this "pseudo-participation" is not based on a solid foundation of human relations principles, it is likely that it would backfire and be an ineffective organizational strategy. It is also likely that this manipulative use of human relations ideas would fail to satisfy worker needs. Miles (1965) first highlighted this problem many years ago in his article "Human Relations or Human Resources".

When Miles asked practicing managers about their behaviors, the managers reported a number of activities that would be endorsed by human relations theorists, such as participation in decision-making and supportive and open communication.

However, the beliefs of these managers did not match these behaviors. The managers did not think employees had sufficient abilities and talents to make high-quality decisions or to work independently. Miles's study—as suggested by the title of his article—highlights the difference between human relations and human resources. Both human relations and human resources managers might advocate the same kind of organizational behavior but for very different reasons.

Consider the issue of participation. A human relations manager would institute participation to satisfy employee needs for affiliation and esteem and hope that this need satisfaction would lead to higher levels of productivity. In contrast, a human resources manager would institute participation to take advantage of the innovative ideas held by subordinates. In other words, this manager sees employees as human resources that can be accessed to enhance the functioning of the organization and satisfy the needs of the individuals. It is also likely that the form of participation would distinguish a human relations manager from a human resources manager. A human relations manager might see a suggestion box or a weekly staff meeting as sufficient for meeting relevant employee needs. In contrast, a human resources manager would want to institute a form of participation that could fully tap the ideas and skills of organizational members.

Although Miles first raised this issue many years ago, organizational scholars continue to be concerned about the ways in which those in power in organizations might misuse participative programs. Wendt (1998) has eloquently pointed to this "paradox of participation" in his analysis of many contemporary organizational programs. He argues that "the team worker who constantly participates and contributes to problem solving but who, in the final analysis, has no control over the decision-making process becomes frustrated by a paradoxical dimension of empowered organizing" (p. 359) and further argues that "small tokens of recognition (the quality coffee cup) and freedom (jeans day) are strategic organizational symbols that may add somewhat to the quality of work life

but do little to foster control and autonomy" (p. 359). In short, for a human resources approach to be truly empowering, it requires more than surface changes in communication patterns.

It requires fundamental changes in assumptions about organizational functioning and fundamental changes in organizational structure and interaction. Indeed, a recent study of high involvement work practices finds evidence that involvement will not lead to changes in performance unless employees believe they can make a difference through proactive behaviors that are supported by the organizational system (Butts, Vendenberg, DeJoy, Schaffer & Wilson, 2009).

There are several theories that illustrate this fundamental change. We will consider two seminal theories that represent this shift in thinking: Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid and Likert's System IV.

Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid

Robert Blake and Jane Mouton developed their Managerial Grid (now called the Leadership Grid) as a tool for training managers in leadership styles that would enhance organizational efficiency and effectiveness and stimulate the satisfaction and creativity of individual workers (Blake & McCanse, 1991; Blake & Mouton, 1964). They began with the assumption that leaders will be most effective when they exhibit both concern for people and concern for production, thus combining the interests of classical management (concern for production) and human relations (concern for people).

Blake and Mouton formed a grid in which concern for people and concern for production were gauged from low to high (see Figure 3.2). Both of these dimensions were numbered from 1 to 9. Any manager could then be "placed" on this grid, depending on his or her levels of concern. Although a manager could be placed on any portion of this grid, Blake and Mouton distinguished five prototypical management styles.

The first prototypical management style—impoverished management—is characterized by a low concern for people and a low concern for production (1,1 on the Leadership Grid). Such a manager cares little for either the goals of the organization or the people in it and would do the minimum necessary to get by. The second prototypical

management style—country club management (1,9 on the Leadership Grid)—is characterized by high concern for people and low concern for production. This kind of manager would concentrate efforts on the establishment of a pleasant workplace with friendly and comfortable human relations. The third prototypical management style—authority-compliance (9,1 on the Leadership Grid)—is characterized by high concern for production and low concern for people. This manager—like those of scientific and classical management—would endeavor to arrange all components of the workplace, including people, in order to maximize efficiency and attain goals. There would be little concern for human needs. The fourth prototypical management style—team management (9,9 on the Leadership Grid)—is characterized by high concern for both production and people. This type of manager believes that the best way to achieve organizational goals is through the interdependent action of committed, talented, and satisfied individuals. Thus, this manager tries to maximize both productivity goals and employee needs. Finally, middle-of-the-road management (5,5 on the Leadership Grid) describes a manager who attempts to balance concern for people and production without going too far for either goal. The watchword of such a manager would probably be "compromise". Not surprisingly, Blake and Mouton believe that all managers within an organization should adopt a team management approach because such an approach would maximize concern for both production and people.

Case in Point: Slashing ER Waiting Times

Many of us have been there—sitting on hard plastic chairs in the waiting area of a hospital, hoping that you will finally "get in" to see the doctors and nurses and have your health emergency addressed. You've probably thought that there must be more efficient and effective ways to run an emergency room and provide care to people who are ill or who have experienced trauma. The employees at Parkland Hospital in Dallas, Texas, thought so, and they started working in 2007 to streamline the admissions process. Their process of working through this problem is a clear reflection of what can happen when human resources principles are put into practice (Gordon, 2007).

In April 2007, a committee was formed to improve the ER at Parkland by looking at issues such as patient transportation, bed turnaround times, discharge predictions, and the process through which medical orders are issued. Before this committee was formed, three outside consultants had failed to have an impact, but in the two months after the problems were directly addressed by employees, Parkland had saved more than 2,000 hours of patient care. How did this happen? Some of the changes have been as simple as moving x-ray services to a location closer to the emergency room. Others include more complex systemic changes. But it was critical that the people making the changes were those working in the hospital every day & who understood the challenges confronting the ER.

Three years later, Parkland Hospital was still working on the problem of ER wait time (Jacobson, 2010). The average time elapsed between arrival at the hospital and evaluation by a physician is down to less than an hour, a number that pleased hospital administrators. But there are also new challenges brought on by the lagging economy and overworked health care system, as the public hospital continues to have more ER visits than the system can handle. Indeed, although the initial wait to see a physician has been shortened, the wait for patients who eventually land in a hospital bed is almost nine hours, as the hospital works at peak capacity. Thus, even with the work of highly skilled "human resources," there are sometimes economic and organizational limits on what can be accomplished.

The Leadership Grid
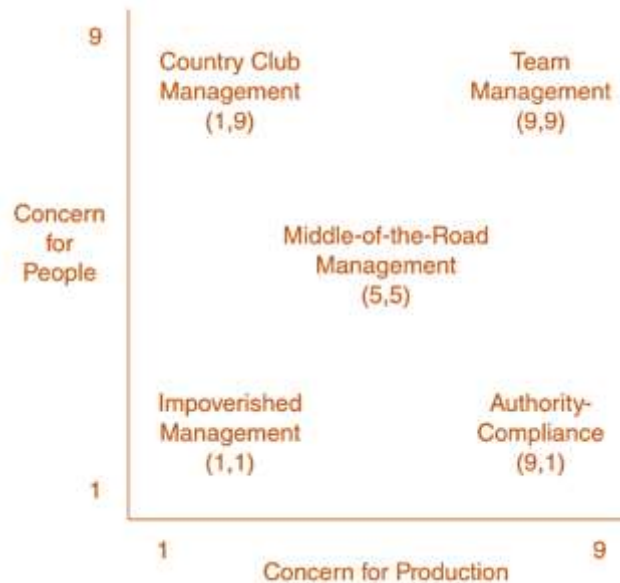
The Leadership Grid® figure from Leadership Dilemmas–Grid Solutions by
Robert R. Blake and Anne Adams McCanse
(Formerly the Managerial Grid by Robert R. Blake and Jane S. Mouton).
Houston: Gulf Publishing Company, Copyright 1991 by Grid International, Inc.

Likert's System IV

Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid concentrates on how a manager can combine the values of the human relations school and the classical school into a leadership style that will maximize the potential of human resources within the organization. The second theorist we consider here works to specify the details of the organizational form that will incorporate the ideals of the human resources movement. Rensis Likert was the founder and longtime director of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. His work has been influential in a variety of academic fields. The contributions we will now discuss stem primarily from two of his books: New Patterns of Management (1961) and The Human Organization (1967).

Likert theorizes that there are a number of forms an organization can take and that these various forms are more or less effective in satisfying organizational and individual goals. He concentrates attention on the explication of four organizational forms, labeled System I through System IV.

Likert believes that these four system types can be clearly differentiated in terms of motivational factors, communication, decision-making, goal-setting, control, influence structure, and performance:

- Likert's System I—called the exploitive authoritative organization—is characterized by motivation through threats and fear, downward and inaccurate communication, top-level decision-making, the giving of orders, and top-level control. The exploitive authoritative organization includes all the worst features of classical and scientific management.

- Likert's System II is called the benevolent authoritative organization. This organizational type is characterized by motivation through economic and ego rewards, limited communication, decision-making at the top, goal-setting through orders and comments, and top-level control. It is in many ways similar to a System I organization but does not incorporate the explicit goal of exploiting workers. However, the management style in this organization is still authoritative because the managers believe that this style is "best for the workers".

- System III—the consultative organization—differs markedly from Systems I and II. In this organizational type, decisions are still made at the top and control still rests primarily at the upper levels of the hierarchy. However, before decisions are made, employees are consulted and their views are taken into consideration. Goals are set after discussion, and there is a high level of communication moving both up and down the hierarchy.

- System IV—a participative organization—provides a sharp contrast to the other system types. In a System IV organization, decision-making is performed by every organizational member, and goals are set by complete work groups. Control is exercised at all levels of the organization, and communication is extensive, including upward, downward, and horizontal interaction. The contributions of all organizational members are strongly valued, and employees are rewarded through the satisfaction of a wide variety of needs.

These four system types, then, represent the move from the worst that scientific and classical management has to offer (System I) to an organizational type that values and

encourages the contributions of all organizational members (System IV). Likert believes that a human resources organization (System IV) is more than just managerial attitudes. Rather, he advocates structural changes and practices that enhance the participation of individuals and the performance of the organization.

These two theorists provide a good initial look at human resources principles as they were developed in the mid-twentieth century. In some ways, these principles hark back to classical approaches because organizational effectiveness and productivity are again benchmarks of success. In other ways, the human resources approach is merely an extension of the human relations framework, as higher-order human needs for challenge and self-actualization are fulfilled through organizational activities. However, the human resources approach is distinct from both of the other approaches in two ways. First, it aspires to maximize both organizational productivity and individual need satisfaction. Second, in order to optimize both goals, the human resources approach emphasizes the contributions that employee ideas can make to organizational functioning. We will now consider ways in which both the human relations and human resources approaches are reflected in organizational communication goals and practices. These issues are summarized in table below.

Communication in Classical, Human Relations, and Human Resources Organizations

	Classical Approach	Human Relations Approach	Human Resources Approach
Communication Content	Task	Task and social	Task, social, and innovation
Communication Direction	Vertical (downward)	Vertical and horizontal	All directions, team-based
Communication Channel	Usually written	Often face-to-face	All channels
Communication Style	Formal	Informal	Both but especially informal

Sumber: Miller (2012: 52)

Communication in Human Relations and Human Resources Organizations

Content of Communication

In Chapter 2, we introduced the typology of Farace, Monge, and Russell (1977) that considered various types of communication in organizations. We noted that organizations following a classical model will emphasize task communication. However, as we consider human relations and human resources approaches, we see the other two types of communication content come into play. In human relations organizations, task-related communication still exists, but it is accompanied by communication that attempted to maintain the quality of human relationships within the organization—maintenance communication. And when we consider interaction in human resources organizations, the third type of communication in the Farace, Monge, and Russell typology comes to the forefront. This is innovation communication, which is interaction about how the job can be done better, new products the organization could produce, different ways of structuring the organization, and so on. Because the human resources approach to organizing places a premium on input from employees, the innovation content of communication is critical.

Direction of Communication Flow

In classical organizations, communication flows in a predominantly downward direction, as directives flow from management to workers. A human relations approach does not eliminate this need for vertical information flow but instead adds an emphasis on horizontal communication. As discussed earlier in this chapter, human relations theorists believe that an important aspect of need satisfaction is communication among employees, so interaction that flows horizontally among employees is just as important as downward communication in the accomplishment of organizational goals. In a human resources organization, the goal is to encourage the flow of ideas from all locations throughout the organization.

Thus, in the simplest sense, communication in this organizational approach will include all directional flows—downward, upward, horizontal, and diagonal. More specifically, this multidirectional communication flow often takes place in team-based settings in human resources organizations. That is, rather than restricting communication flow to the hierarchy of organization (whatever the direction), a human resources organization will often reconfigure the organizational chart to optimize the flow of new ideas.

Channel of Communication

As you saw in Chapter 2, organizations run in a classical style are dominated by written communication because a strong value is placed on permanence. In the human relations approach, in contrast, face-to-face communication takes center stage. This channel of interaction allows for more immediate feedback and more consideration of nonverbal cues. Thus, face-to-face communication is more appropriate for addressing the human needs emphasized in the human relations approach. In a human resources organization, it is unlikely that any particular channel of communication will be favored over others. Human resources theorists desire to maximize the productivity of the organization through the intelligent use of human resources. Sometimes, these resources can be best utilized through face-to-face contact in meetings. Sometimes, the situation calls for written memos or e-mail. Thus, some scholars have suggested that effective managers will work to match the communication channel to the task at hand (Trevino, Lengel & Daft, 1987). For example, these researchers believe that tasks with a high level of uncertainty require a communication channel that is relatively "rich" (e.g., face-to-face interaction), whereas tasks with a low level of uncertainty require a communication channel that is relatively "lean" (e.g., written communication).

Style of Communication

I noted in Chapter 2 that classical organizations emphasize formal communication, as standards of professionalism and bureaucratic decorum hold sway. In contrast, a human relations organization is likely to want to break down the status differential between managers and employees as a means of satisfying social needs.

Thus, it is likely that informal communication—with less emphasis on titles, "business" dress, and bureaucratized language—will be emphasized. However, human resources organizations have the dual goals of enhancing organizational effectiveness and fulfilling human needs. On the needs side of the equation, an informal style is most likely to satisfy needs for affiliation. On the organizational effectiveness side, an informal style will also probably serve better than a formal one because employees will probably feel more comfortable contributing in a relatively informal manner. However, a human resources manager would certainly not eschew the use of a formal style if it were the most appropriate for the task at hand.

Human Relations and Human Resources in Organizations Today

Human relations theories were proposed as a reaction to classical management systems and to evidence that meeting human needs is a critical aspect of organizational performance. The basic impetus of these ideas has certainly carried over the decades to today's organizations. For example, the influence of human relations ideas can clearly be seen in the general attitude of management toward employees. It would be difficult indeed to find managers today who would characterize their subordinates as interchangeable cogs whose needs play no role in organizational decisions. For example, if a manufacturing organization needed to shut down a factory, management would be likely to consider both economic issues and human factors, such as the needs of workers and their families for severance pay and job placement or retraining programs. Furthermore, human relations principles can be seen in today's organizations in the area of job design. In many of today's organizations, an effort is made to enrich jobs by designing tasks that will satisfy some of the higher-order needs of workers through jobs that increase autonomy, variety, and task significance.

In general, though, it is the principles of human resources theorists that are most often reflected in today's organizations. Indeed, many of the ideas of early human resources theorists have been transformed in light of the contingencies facing today's

organizations. Theoretically, two of the most important developments in this area are the consideration of organizations as learning systems and the development of systems of knowledge management. Peter Senge and his colleagues (Senge, 1990; Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith & Kleiner, 1994) have made a distinction between learning organizations and those that could be seen as having "learning disabilities". Learning organizations are those that emphasize mental flexibility, team learning, a shared vision, complex thinking, and personal mastery. It is proposed that learning organizations can be promoted through participation and dialogue in the workplace. Scholars interested in knowledge management (see DeLong, 2004; Heaton & Taylor, 2002), see the organization as embodying a cycle of knowledge creation, development, and application. Both of these approaches, then, have further developed the notion that effective organizations are those that can harness the cognitive abilities of their employees, and, indeed, these ideas developed from the kernel of the human resources approach are seen by many as the ideal way to run contemporary organizations.

In the final sections of this chapter, we will look at how these abstract principles are often embodied in the practice of organizational life. We will first consider the question of what constitutes human resources management in today's organizations and then discuss how these programs can be instituted to enhance their effectiveness.

The "What" of Human Resources Programs

A number of organizational programs exemplify the use of human resources principles in today's organizations. These programs all emphasize team management and the importance of employee involvement in ensuring product or service quality and organizational productivity. Cotton (1993) defines employee involvement as "a participative process that uses the entire capacity of workers, designed to encourage employee commitment to organizational success" (p. 3). The goal is generally one of creating a "knowledge-enabled organization" (Tobin, 1998) in which the collective knowledge of workers facilitates high performance (Fisher & Duncan, 1998).

Although specific programs of team management and employee involvement vary widely in terms of the specifics of human resources management, they all share the

basic principle of trying to structure the organization in ways that maximize the contribution of employees, both individually and collectively. Pfeffer (1998) labels this important principle as "putting people first" in his book The Human Equation (see also Pfeffer & Veiga, 1999, for a summary). This book—based on both anecdotal evidence and social scientific research—highlights seven practices of successful organizations that serve as a useful summary of "what" is done in organizations today that follow human resources principles. These practices are presented in table below.

Pfeffer's Seven Practices of Successful Organizations

Practice	Description
Employment security	Job security demonstrates a commitment to employees and develops employees who understand the organization.
Selective hiring	Employees who are a good "fit" for the organization— in terms of skills, abilities, and other attributes—will stay with the organization and enhance organizational performance.
Self-managed teams and decentralization	Teams will permit employees to pool information and create better solutions as well as enhance worker control over work processes.
Comparatively high and contingent compensation	Contingent compensation connects performance outcomes with critical rewards.
Extensive training	Frontline employees need training to identify workplace problems and contribute to innovative solutions.
Reduction of status differences	By reducing both symbolic (e.g., language and labels) and substantive (e.g., pay) inequities, all employees will feel more valued.
Sharing information	Employees can only contribute if they have adequate information about their own jobs and about the performance of the organization as a whole.

Table developed from Pfeffer, J. (1998), The human equation: Building profits by putting people first.
Boston: Harvard Business School Press, and from Pfeffer, J. & Veiga, J. F. (1999), Putting people first for organizational success.
Academy of Management Executive, 13(2), 37–48.

As this table illustrates, the "what" of a successful human resources program includes many "nuts and bolts" issues regarding compensation, employment security, and organizational structure. This table also highlights the critical role of communication processes, both in terms of information sharing and teamwork and in terms of the communicative processes through which training occurs and status differentials are reduced.

The "How" of Human Resources Programs

There are clearly ways in which the principles of the human resources approach can be put into play in today's organizations. However, both our everyday experience and social

scientific research suggest that these programs often don't work. As Jassawalla and Sashittal (1999) note with regard to collaborative teams, "although they are formed with great optimism, few are managed for success". The chance of failure with human resources efforts can also be seen in specific programs. Consider total quality management (TQM), perhaps the most widely embraced program in the last thirty years. However, Choi and Behling (1997) provide extensive evidence regarding the failures of TQM, including surveys of executives who do not believe TQM has enhanced competitiveness, programs that have been discontinued because of failure to produce results, and award-winning TQM programs that have stumbled. It appears, then, that more than a belief in human resources principles is required for the success of human resources programs. The literature points to a number of ways in which the possibility for success in these programs can be enhanced. Although the following list is admittedly brief, it highlights some of the issues that should be taken into account when instituting the major change required by most human resources programs.

- Know when team-based management is appropriate: Many scholars and consultants suggest that there are times when team-based organizations will be particularly effective (Forrester & Drexler, 1999). For example, work that cuts across functional lines, a diverse and complex organizational environment, a rapidly changing workplace in which innovation is critical—all these factors suggest a need for team-based management.

- Consider the attitudes of top management: Although human resources programs involve the empowerment of workers throughout the organization, the impetus for change and the responsibility for dealing with change still often rest with top management.

- Deal with cynicism about change: Especially today, employees are often dismayed by the prospect of yet another "program of the month" at their organization. Reichers, Wanous, and Austin (1997) recommend that cynicism about organizational change can be minimized by keeping people involved in plans, by seeing change from the employees' perspective and providing opportunities to vent, by rewarding supervisors for effective communication, and by minimizing surprises. (See also the discussion of organizational change processes in Chapter 10)

- Facilitate the translation process: Every new program in an organization will require a new "language" to be learned. For example, in TQM, employees must understand terms such as "just in time," "pareto charts," and "statistical methods quality indicators". Programmatic changes in the organization can be accomplished only if members understand the terminology of the program (Fairhurst & Wendt, 1993) and if managers frame the change in a way that helps members enact their roles in the organization in viable and effective ways (Fairhurst, 1993).

Summary

In this chapter, we looked at two related approaches to the study and practice of organizational communication: the human relations approach and the human resources approach. The human relations approach was inspired, in large part, by the Hawthorne studies, which pointed scholars and practitioners toward the importance of human needs and the consideration of management practice and job design to meet those needs. The human relations approach was illustrated by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and McGregor's contrast between Theory X and Theory Y assumptions. However, there was often limited support for human relations theories, and the principles of human relations were often instituted in half-hearted and manipulative ways. The human resources movement that emerged from these frustrations emphasizes the need to maximize both organizational productivity and individual employee satisfaction through the intelligent use of human resources. Human resources ideas were illustrated through the models of Blake and Mouton (the Managerial Grid) and Rensis Likert (System IV).

We then examined the nature of communication in human relations and human resources organizations by considering factors of communication content, direction, channels, and style. Finally, we considered ways in which human relations and, especially, human resources principles are utilized in today's organizations. We discussed the "what" of human resources management by looking at both specific programs and general principles for "putting people first". We concluded with some ideas about "how" human resources programs can be instituted.

Discussion Questions

1. A great deal of research has discredited many of the findings from the Hawthorne studies. Given this research, why were the Hawthorne studies influential when they were conducted? Are they still influential today? Why or why not?

2. In jobs you have had, what aspects of the workplace did you find particularly satisfying? What role did managers have in making the organization a satisfying place? How do your experiences, then, fit in with the ideas of Abraham Maslow and Douglas McGregor?

3. In Chapter 2, we noted that the classical approach follows a "machine metaphor," and in this chapter, we associated human relations theorists with a "family metaphor". What metaphor would you use to describe the human resources approach? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the metaphor you propose?

4. Is the human resources approach more appropriate for some kinds of jobs and organizations than others? Why or why not? Can human resources principles be adapted for a variety of workplaces?

CASE STUDY

Teamwork at Marshall's Processing Plant

Marshall's is a large plant in the Midwestern United States that processes corn into the fructose syrup used in many soft drinks. Marshall's is a continuous processing plant, running 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. There are two major components of the plant. In the wet mill, where seventy-five employees work, the corn is soaked. Then, the soaked corn moves on to the refinery (employing eighty employees), where the soggy corn is processed into fructose syrup. Marshall's is a computerized state-of-the-art plant, and much of the work in the wet mill and refinery consists of monitoring, maintenance, cleanup, and troubleshooting. There are also thirty staff members who work in the office and in various other support positions. All the employees except the support staff work twelve-hour shifts.

Three years ago, Marshall's instituted a "team management" system to enhance productivity in the plant and improve worker morale. The program included two types of teams. First, work teams met on a weekly basis to consider ways of improving the work process within their own portion of the plant. In addition, the plant-wide "Marshall Team" met on a monthly basis to consider decisions about issues facing the plant as a whole, such as benefit and compensation plans, company policies, and capital equipment purchases. Each work team elected one member to serve on the Marshall Team. Management at Marshall's regarded the teams as "consultative" bodies. That is, management used team suggestions as input but retained the right to make final decisions about all plant operations. For the first three years of the team program, the same set of people participated heavily in team meetings and the same people tended to get elected to the Marshall Team. These go-getters took their roles very seriously and liked having a voice in company decisions. However, management at Marshall's was becoming concerned about the people who did not participate in the team program. After evaluating the problem for a while, management decided that it was a complicated issue and that there were three kinds of employees who were not participating in the team program.

First, one group of employees complained that the program led to too many meetings and had a lot of extra busywork. This group was epitomized by Shu-Chu Lim. Shu-Chu was a hard worker and was well-respected at the plant, but she was also a nonsense kind of person. When asked about participating in work teams and the Marshall Team, she said: "I don't have time to sit around and shoot the breeze. When I'm on the job, I want to be working, not just chitchatting and passing the time". A second set of workers resented the fact that they had to deal with so much of their own work situation. These employees believed that management was not providing enough input and was counting on the work teams to figure everything out. For example, consider Bill Berning. Bill had lived near the Marshall's plant all his life and liked working there because the pay was good. However, he saw his job simply as a way to earn money that he could spend on the great love of his life: motorcycles. When management started asking him to do more and more on the job, he just clammed up. After all, he argued, management was getting paid to make the decisions, not him. Finally, a third set of employees refused to participate because they did not think their input would be listened to. In many ways, this was the group that most disturbed higher management because many of these people had participated in team activities in the past. Harvey Nelson was a prime example. When the team management system was instituted, Harvey was very active in his area's work team and was even elected to the Marshall Team several times. However, after a couple of years, Harvey stopped participating. When asked, Harvey said: "I thought that the team idea was great at first, but then I realized that management is just going to do what it wants regardless of what we say. I can live with autocratic managers—I just don't want them to make me wake up early for a team meeting and then ignore what I have to say. If the teams are just window-dressing, it's not worth it to me". Marshall's wants to have a team management system that really works, and they know that they need to get more participation in order to have this happen. However, they've now realized that the problem is more complex than they realized at first. You have been called in as a consultant to help them fix their program. What kind of suggestions will you make?

CASE ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

1. Do the original goals of the team management system used at Marshall's comport more with the philosophy of human relations or human resources management? How would the theorists discussed in this chapter (Maslow, McGregor, Likert, and Blake and Mouton) analyze the current situation at Marshall's?

2. Employees identified three reasons for not participating in the program at Marshall's. How would you deal with each of these problems? Is it possible (or desirable) to satisfy all groups of employees and achieve full participation? Would human relations and human resources theorists have different ideas about the importance of these various reasons for not participating in the team management system?

3. What changes would you make in the team management system at Marshall's that would increase participation? What changes would you make to enhance the effective use of human resources at Marshall's? How would you institute these changes and communicate them to employees?