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CHAPTER 1

The Great Jackass Fallacy

The top management of a large company discovered that some of its line employees had embezzled a five-figure sum while their supervisors had stood by unperturbed. The executives were astonished. They had thought that their supervisors were loyal and that they themselves were thoughtful and kindly. They didn't understand how such thievery could take place in their company.

An airline purchased a fleet of hydraulic lift trucks to put food aboard aircraft. Although they cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, the trucks sat unused on the airport apron. Maintenance employees occasionally glanced at them contemptuously as they went about their work in sullen anger. The company was dismayed that the maintenance men seemed unresponsive to the airline's cost reduction efforts.

Large companies, seeking new products, frequently have bought smaller companies. Almost invariably the successful management of the acquired firm soon departs, and no new products are forthcoming. The larger organization has only increased its size and its managerial burdens. The hoped-for advantages from the merger have evaporated. No one quite knows why this happens repeatedly or why managements don't learn from failures.

When looked at psychologically, the reasons for such occurrences are self-evident. In the first case, every two years the company renegotiated its labor contract. Obviously, the appropriate person to handle the negotiations was the vice president in

charge of labor relations. However, the people who actually carried out the contract were first-level supervisors. And they were never asked about what they felt ought to be in the contract or what problems they had in implementing it. By its actions, management effectively communicated to them that they didn't matter much. Furthermore, every two years when the contract came up for renewal, the union let grievances pile up, knowing full well that management would settle them all in the union's favor to get a contract. But the grievances arose when supervisors carried out the terms of the contract. When management gave in, the supervisors felt that they had been undercut. In effect, these people were being told that they were stupid, that they had nothing useful to contribute to policy making, that their job was to do as they were told and that they were expendable when necessary.

In the airline instance, the issue was much the same. A purchasing officer had bought the hydraulic lift trucks, complete with sophisticated electronic controls. What was more natural than for a purchasing officer to do the buying and get the best? But he failed to confer with the mechanics and technicians who would have to keep the trucks operating. After all, what did they know about buying and who asked technicians anyway? Had he asked them, he would have learned that the sophisticated electronic controls were fine for Los Angeles and Phoenix, where the weather was dry and mild, but that they failed repeatedly in New York where the trucks were always exposed to variable, sometimes harsh weather. No matter how hard they worked, the technicians could not keep the trucks functioning. As the supervisors in the previous example, they felt they were being treated contemptuously and were being exploited. Ultimately they gave up trying to keep the trucks going. Seeing how much money the company had wasted on the trucks, they had little incentive to economize in their own small ways.

There are many reasons for merger failures. However, what happens most frequently is that the parent (note the use of that word) company promises its newly acquired company that there will be no sweeping changes. Immediately there are, and the first of these is likely to be in accounting control systems. The flexibility that characterized the smaller, more innovative company is then lost to the control system. Obviously controls are necessary, and just as obviously

many small companies do not have *sophisticated* controls. But small companies are frequently flexibly innovative for just that reason. When controls become the central thrust of management, creative people who need flexibility leave, and the parent company is left with a corporate shell. The message received by the acquired company is that the parent company considers it stupid and unsophisticated and therefore the parent must control it more rigidly.

The three situations I have been discussing would be dismissed in most organizations as simply "failures in communications." Many psychologists would advocate dealing with such problems by participative management. However, beneath that glib "explanation," and unresponsive to that ready "remedy," lies a fundamental unconscious attitude that is responsible for most of the contemporary management-labor difficulty and what today is being called a *crisis in motivation*.

CRISIS IN MOTIVATION

The crisis takes many forms: The chief executive of a major company complains about increasing absenteeism, greater inefficiency, and lower productivity. He pointedly reminds his company's employees that their product can be manufactured in Germany and Japan. A news magazine devotes a major story to the inefficiency of American industry, once considered to be the world's most efficient production system. There are mounting vigorous complaints and lawsuits from a whole new movement of now organized and vocal consumers about shoddy products, inadequate services, and marketing deceptions. Companies are repeatedly reorganized on the advice of management consultants to little avail in the long run. New managerial devices, such as the four-day week and putting hourly people on salary, are loudly touted for their effect on employee motivation and morale, but the old problems soon reappear. Efforts to enrich jobs by giving employees more responsibility show encouraging results until employees begin to want to have some voice in company policy and are turned down by management. Students in business schools express a decided preference for smaller businesses. Business and nonprofit organizations alike are burdened by job encumbrances, the product of union-management compromises. Increasing numbers

of middle management and professionals, such as engineers, teachers, and hospital personnel, turn toward unionization. Many in the managerial ranks seek new careers, even at lower incomes, that offer the promise of greater individual freedom and initiative.

Most executives with whom I come in contact cannot understand why people don't respond to their executives' efforts to sustain effective organizations, why people seemingly don't want to work, and why people want to leave apparently good organizations. Faced with these problems, often the executives are confused, angry, and hostile to their own people. The terms of chief executives, particularly those in educational and governmental administration, become shorter as the managerial frustrations increase. For example, a recent study by Frederick Harmon of 400 top executives in Europe indicates that they feel menaced.¹ Most see themselves as driving forward toward efficiency but find themselves unsettled by transitions in management styles. They report that they can no longer use the authority of position against subordinates, that they must gain their position by competition with their subordinates and defend that position each step of the way. Sixty-one percent of those interviewed spontaneously mentioned that their main problem was personnel management. Almost all had leadership problems.

The crisis in motivation has long been evident to students of organization who have offered a wide range of theories to cope with it. These are discussed in Chapter 2. Suffice it to say here that by this time, thousands of executives are familiar with these theories. Many have taken part in managerial grids, group dynamics laboratories, seminars on the psychology of management, and a wide range of other forms of training. Some have run the gamut of all training experiences; others have taken up a wide range of less well accepted efforts such as various forms of encounter groups. And some have been enamored of a variety of panaceas offered by quacks.

FAILURE OF RESPONSES

The results of executives' efforts to cope with the crisis in motivation so far have not been impressive. Some companies have tried to

¹ Frederick Harmon, "European Top Managers Struggle for Survival," *European Business* (Winter 1971), pp. 14-19.

put the theories into practice with varying success. Some have given up their efforts as too simple for the complexity of the organizational phenomena. Many who have tried to apply the concepts have failed in their efforts or have found no significant differences in their organizational and operational activities. Some have complained that participation in decision making is no remedy, and none of the practices based on these theories offers a cure.

The new theories have confronted executives with the need to distribute power more widely in their organizations, which in turn raises questions about management's right to manage, its responsibility, and its authority. Despite the proliferation of courses and training, as the Harmon study shows, executives now flounder more than ever with respect to the motivational aspects of management. Meanwhile, their power becomes eroded as older methods of control and motivation become less effective.

Why are there such significant gaps between the problems on the one hand and the applications of the theory on the other? The answer to that question is critical for a society comprised of organizations and for a society that depends for its survival on the effective functioning of those organizations. There are, of course, many reasons. First, executives often feel inadequate to apply the concepts. And in that feeling they are frequently right. Managers who have had little or no previous exposure to the behavioral sciences, let alone formal training, can get only the barest introductory knowledge in any brief training program. No one would expect a person to be able to design a complex building after a week-long training program in architecture, nor would he expect it of himself. However, often both the executive and the people who train him expect him to be a different person after he undertakes a week-long sensitivity training laboratory.

Furthermore, it is one thing to learn to become more aware of one's feelings; it is another to do something different about managing them, let alone managing those forces that affect the feelings of other people. If everyone who had experienced psychotherapy were by that fact an expert therapist, there would be no shortage of such healers. Experience is not enough; education in a conceptual framework and supervised skill practice is also required. Many who have expected more of themselves and of brief training experiences are

therefore disillusioned, despite the benefits that have often resulted from them.

Would longer training help? Not much, as it is currently conducted, because only a few behavioral scientists are skilled at changing organizations and, therefore, few are in a position to teach executives how to change them. While many behavioral scientists know about the theories, and some practice what is called organizational development, they do not themselves change organizations. Rather, they more often help others think through alternative action possibilities. Many bring groups of employees and executives together and help them overcome the communications barriers toward working out their own solutions. However, unlike marketing experts (who develop and execute marketing programs), and control experts (who install financial control systems), behavioral science experts (with the exception of certain kinds of psychotherapists) are not themselves expert in *doing*. So, more prolonged training is questionable if it does not help executives to develop modes of action.

The second reason for the gap between the problems and the application of solutions is that executives have had insufficient experience in a wide variety of situations to know how to apply conceptions in different ways to different groups and situations. To illustrate, the physician sees the same kinds of illnesses in a variety of patients. He may treat the same illness differently in different patients, depending on their age, physical condition, severity of symptoms, and so on. While executives may work in different organizations, even in different countries, they have insufficient training in the behavioral sciences to attempt to apply more than one or two techniques in all situations. No matter how good those techniques may be, they cannot fit all situations equally well. Furthermore, the behavioral sciences have not yet developed differentiated treatments of choice for changing organizations in the same way physicians have treatments of choice for different illnesses and for the same illness in different patients.

A third problem is that many executives are fearful of losing their control over their organizations. Even though executives encourage their employees to participate in making organizational decisions and in solving organizational problems, and invite people to express themselves more freely, they often feel threatened of their position.

Particularly vulnerable are those executives whose whole life thrust has been to obtain positions of power and control.

Coupled with the fear of losing control is the fact that a disproportionate number of executives are characteristically insensitive to feelings. Many executives have engineering, scientific, legal, and financial or accounting backgrounds. Each of these fields places a heavy emphasis on cognitive rationality and measurable or verifiable facts. People who enter them are usually trained from childhood to suppress their feelings and to maintain a competitive, aggressive, non-emotional front. They are taught to be highly logical, and they seek to impose that kind of rationality on the organizations they encounter. As a result, they simply do not understand the power of human feelings, and all too often such executives are incapable of sensing their own and others' feelings in everyday practice. They are like tone-deaf people who, attending an opera, can understand the lyrics but can't hear the music. Such executives are typified by a company president who was a participant in a seminar on psychological aspects of management. Halfway through the first lecture he broke in to say, "You have already told me more about this subject than I want to know." He was right. Though he stayed to the end of the program, he simply could not grasp what was being taught.

Furthermore, many people pursue executive careers to obtain power over others as a way of compensating for real or fancied personal inadequacies or as a reaction to an unconscious sense of helplessness. Being neurotically driven, their single-minded, perpetual pursuit of control blinds them to their own subtle feelings and to those of others.

Still another reason for the gap between the problems and their resolution lies in union attitudes. Union leaders, too, are afraid of any practice that might undermine their power. Most have long since given up any ideology that emphasizes values other than wages, hours, and working conditions. Even when unions are not opposed to innovative means of coping with motivational issues, managers fear that they are and back away.

All of these reasons, coupled with the inadequacies of contemporary theory, explain much of the disparity between theory and practice. In time, with new knowledge and better training experiences, most of these weaknesses will be overcome. But the fact remains that

much more effort could be applied now than is being applied even with present knowledge. Obviously there is another, more subtle barrier, one that will inhibit the application of whatever further knowledge is developed. This barrier is an unconscious assumption about motivation, held particularly by executives in all types of organizations and reinforced by organizational theories and structures. I call it the great jackass fallacy.

THE GREAT JACKASS FANTASY

Frequently, when conducting executive seminars, I ask the participants what the dominant philosophy of motivation in American management is. Almost invariably, they quickly agree that it is the carrot-and-stick philosophy: reward and punishment. Then I ask them to close their eyes for a moment and to form a picture in their mind's eye with a carrot at one end and a stick at the other. When they have done so I ask them to describe the central image in that picture. Most frequently they respond that the central figure is a jackass.

When the first image that comes to mind when one thinks "carrot-and-stick" is a jackass, obviously the unconscious assumption behind the reward-punishment model is that one is dealing with jackasses, that people are jackasses to be manipulated and controlled. Thus, unconsciously, the boss is the manipulator and controller, and the subordinate is the jackass.

The characteristics of a jackass are stubbornness, stupidity, willfulness, and unwillingness to go where someone is driving him. These, by interesting coincidence, are also the characteristics of the unmotivated employee. Thus it becomes vividly clear that the underlying assumption management unconsciously makes about motivation leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy. People will inevitably respond to the carrot-and-stick by trying to get more of the carrot and by protecting themselves against the stick. This predictable phenomenon led to the formation of unions and to the frequent sabotage of management's incentive efforts as well as to the characteristic employees' suspicion of management's motivational (manipulative) techniques. Employees obviously sense the carrot-and-stick conception behind management's attitudes and just as obviously respond to the communications built around those attitudes with appropriate self-defending measures.

There is much talk about the need to improve communications in all organizations. However, the problem all too often is not that communication is inadequate but, rather, that it is too explicit. When people sense themselves to be viewed as jackasses, they will automatically resist hearing management's messages, no matter how clear the type or how pretty the pictures. Most managerial communications to employees, therefore, are a waste of time and money.

Since the turn of the century, half a dozen different philosophies of management have appeared, each emphasizing a different dimension of the management task, and each advocating a new set of techniques. Though they differ from each other in many respects, all are based on reward-punishment psychology. Almost all of the contemporary psychological conceptions of motivation (discussed in Chapter 2) take a reward-punishment psychology for granted, and they fail to see the contradiction between advocating trust and openness among employees and managers on the one hand and, on the other, accepting the thesis that the more powerful people have a natural right to manipulate the less powerful.

But as long as anyone in a leadership role operates with reward-punishment assumptions about motivation, he is implicitly assuming that he has (or should have) control over others and that they are in a jackass position with respect to him. Such a relationship is inevitably one of condescending contempt whose most blatant mask is paternalism. The result of that psychological position is a continuing battle between those who seek to wield power and those who are subject to it, as reflected in the Harmon study referred to earlier, and in the history of labor-management relations. The consequences are increased inefficiency, lowered productivity, heightened absenteeism, and other modes of withdrawal from engagement in that kind of relationship, or covert engagement in a combative struggle.

BUREAUCRATIC COMPLICATIONS

The problems resulting from the underlying jackass fallacy are compounded further by bureaucratic organizational structure. A bureaucratic structure is based on a military model that assumes control of the organization from the bottom up by whoever is at the top. In pure form it is a rigid hierarchy, complete with detailed job descriptions and fixed measurable objectives. Such a structure requires ev-

everyone at every level to be dependent on those at higher levels. Hiring, firing, promotion, demotion, reassignment, and similar actions are the prerogatives of superiors who can make such decisions unilaterally. In short, a subordinate's fate is decided by a distant "they" whom he frequently does not know (individuals who are beyond his influence, let alone his control). Such circumstances make for increasing defensiveness on the part of the subordinate, for he must protect himself against being manipulated and against the feeling of helplessness that inevitably accompanies dependency. Rank and file employees have long since counteracted this defenselessness by unionizing. Managerial and professional employees are beginning to follow suit, and that trend will continue to grow.

While the bureaucratic structure with its heavy emphasis on internal competition for power and position is often touted as a device for achievement, it is actually a system built for defeat. Fewer people move up the pyramidal hierarchy at each step. That leaves a residual of failures, often euphemistically called "career people," who thereafter are passed over because they have not succeeded in the competition for managerial positions. Most such people feel resentful and defeated. Often they have been manipulated or judged arbitrarily. They constitute a heavy burden in most organizations for they are no longer motivated by competitive spirit: the carrots-and-sticks mean less. There is little need in their eyes to learn more; they simply do as they are told. They usually stay until retirement and are frequently described as the "deadwood" that needs to be cleaned out when a new management takes over.

Executives new to a company or to higher level jobs like to think of themselves as being effective in cleaning out the deadwood or trimming the excess managerial fat. Some take to that task with great vigor. Unfortunately the consequences are more negative than enthusiastic executives like to recognize. In one large company where just that task was undertaken with the hope that the 40-year-olds would respond with unbridled enthusiasm when the 50-year-olds were cleaned out, the younger men failed to respond. They saw in what was happening to the older men their likely fate in ten years. Bureaucratic structure, with its implicit power struggle orientation, increases infighting, empire building, rivalry, and the sense of

futility. It tends to magnify latent feelings that the organization is a hostile environment that people can do little to change. Little wonder that many young people do not want to get caught up in such struggles. Since 90 percent of workers work in organizations, most young people, too, must do so. But they would rather be in organizations that provide them with an opportunity to demonstrate their competence and proficiency than in those that test their ability to run a managerial maze successfully.

These two factors—the great jackass fallacy and the bureaucratic organization structure—are formidable obstacles to organizational survival. They are essentially self-defeating, if what an executive wants from his followers in an organization is spontaneity, investment, dedication, commitment, affiliation, and adaptive innovation. As already indicated, many executives try to cope with the pathology of the system by introducing new techniques, such as group dynamics or job enrichment. These are simply palliatives in an organization that has few effective ways of integrating them; when people are asked to express their feelings more freely and to take on greater responsibility, they soon come into conflict with power centers and power figures in a system geared to the acquisition of power. The latter soon cry, "Business is not a democracy." Such efforts then are quickly shed and disillusionment sets in once again, both on the part of the management that tried the new techniques and the subordinates who were involved in them.

Unless the fundamental assumptions of management (and behavioral scientists) about motivation are changed and unless the organizational structure is changed to match the changing assumptions about motivation, then the underlying jackass assumptions will remain visible to those who are subjected to them no matter what practices the organization undertakes. People will avoid, evade, escape, deny, and reject both the jackass assumption and the military style hierarchy; for few people can tolerate being a jackass in a psychological prison without doing something about it.

This issue is critically important for society as a whole because society is increasingly made up of organizations. The less effectively organizations carry out the work of society, the greater the cost in

money and in social paralysis. This paralysis leads to the kind of demoralization already evident in problems of transportation, health care, education and welfare, and motivation.

BEGINNING ALTERNATIVE STEPS

If the executive leader grasps the import of what I am saying, shudders appropriately, and wants to do something else, what are his alternatives? Is he forever doomed to play with psychological gimmicks? Is he himself so much a victim of his assumptions that he cannot change them? I don't think this is necessarily so for the majority of executives. I think there are viable alternatives. I would offer the following suggestions as points of departure:

- (1) Anyone who supervises anyone else should look carefully at the assumptions he is making about motivation. He must assess for himself how strongly carrot-and-stick assumptions are implicit in his own attitudes. One may argue that if he tries to be nice to people the stick is softened. No matter. He is still operating with carrot-and-stick. Paternalistic kindness is only a disguised form of carrot-and-stick which seeks to increase loyalty by creating guilt in those who are the recipients of managerial largesse.
- (2) Having honestly and frankly faced up to one's own assumption about what makes people tick, the next step is to look at one's organizational structure. Most organizations are constructed to fit a hierarchical model. People assume that the hierarchical organizational structure is to organizations as the spine is to human beings, that it is both necessary and given. As a matter of fact, it is not always necessary nor is it a given. This is not to argue that there shouldn't be distribution of power and control, but, rather, that it need not take this particular form. Every executive should ask himself, "Is my organization organized for hierarchical structure or is my structure organized to accomplish the task the organization must do?" If it is organized more to fit the hierarchical model than for the task, it is time to consider what other organization model might be better able to accomplish the desired tasks?
- (3) Implicit in whatever organizational structure one evolves is an assumption about what makes people tick. Therefore it is important to look very carefully at what are the most powerful motivations. In

¹ Paul R. Lawrence and Jay W. Lorsch, *Organization and Environment* (Boston: Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration, Division of Research, 1967).

Chapter 2, I shall trace the development of theoretical conceptions about motivation as they relate to management and delineate my own position in contrast to the currently accepted psychological conventions. In Chapter 3, I shall make a simple extrapolation of these conceptions to illuminate and illustrate the ways in which the work environment becomes emotionally toxic to people and what managers and companies might do about minimizing that toxicity. In Chapters 4 and 5 I shall apply the same model to the normal crises of normal individuals—the fact of middle age and the daily losses of support, affection, and self-esteem that we all experience. Then in Chapters 6, 7, and 8 I shall turn to three topics that have appeared with increasing frequency during my Harvard years: the problems of objectives, merger, and family businesses. While these certainly do not cover the range of organizational problems nor are they meant to be a systematic treatment of all organizational problems, nevertheless, by reviewing these three very common issues that are among the most complex and difficult which managers have to face, the fundamental elements of my theory and its possible helpfulness in dealing with these issues can then be seen more clearly against the context of operational reality. Organizational change is a perennial and pressing issue. In Chapter 9, I shall use one case and one method to illustrate the applicability and usefulness of the theory and other facets of its conception in dealing with the most difficult kind of organizational change.

Having illustrated the theoretical conceptions and their application in these various modes, I shall, in Chapter 10, issue some cautions and raise some questions about the glib application of organizational change efforts. In Chapter 11, I shall apply the conceptions in the form of a reflection about business school students.

While the chapters, having originally been discrete papers, jump from topic to topic, they nevertheless serve to illuminate the range of my frame of reference, hopefully to demonstrate both its consistency and its validity while simultaneously offering constructive and creative modes for dealing with some of the more severe contemporary problems of management.

CONCLUSION

In sum, I contend that the increasing momentum toward demotivation in contemporary American culture is a product of the carrot-and-stick philosophy and the hierarchical organization structure,

both of which imprison people psychologically and assume that they are jackasses to be manipulated. This self-fulfilling prophecy has destructive effects on the competitive enterprise system in a free society because the alienation it produces from common purposes and common goals is at the core of our social and organizational rot. I contend that effective management must get rid of this invalid motivational assumption and revise the anachronistic organizational structure in order to recapture the momentum toward unlimited possibilities and stimulate the inherent potential of people and their willingness to solve problems, to achieve goals, and to reach for the stars. This I see as the fundamental challenge of the leadership of all types of institutions and organizations.

CHAPTER 2

Various Approaches to Understanding Man at Work

THE MANAGERIAL WOODS ARE FULL of theories and fads. A psychologist, whose basic training is in the understanding of the individual and in methods to help him restore his adaptive equilibrium, necessarily comes to the study of organizations and the motivation of people in organizations with that same frame of reference. That is, he will look upon theories and fads for the degree to which they reflect an understanding of the psychology of the individual and the equilibrium maintaining efforts of both individuals and organizations. Individuals do not lose their individuality because they are in groups or organizations, and the latter are necessarily made up of individuals. Just as one cannot deny physicochemical processes because he is studying biology, so one cannot deny individual psychological processes because he is studying motivation in and related to management.

The task of adapting myself to a new field, namely the psychology of management, has required that I take a critical, analytic look at theories and fads, to understand how they came about and with what assumptions they operated, so that I could then formulate and state for myself my own position. And it was that effort that led to the formulation expressed in this chapter, culminating in the conception of *psychological man*, on which I elaborate after reviewing historic and contemporary trends and concepts. This conception of psychological man—whose crucial sources of motivation are imbedded in his

both of which imprison people psychologically and assume that they are jackasses to be manipulated. This self-fulfilling prophecy has destructive effects on the competitive enterprise system in a free society because the alienation it produces from common purposes and common goals is at the core of our social and organizational rot. I contend that effective management must get rid of this invalid motivational assumption and revise the anachronistic organizational structure in order to recapture the momentum toward unlimited possibilities and stimulate the inherent potential of people and their willingness to solve problems, to achieve goals, and to reach for the stars. This I see as the fundamental challenge of the leadership of all types of institutions and organizations.



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efforts to adapt to his world—is fundamental for me and sets the frame of reference for all of the subsequent chapters. Since all executives struggle with motivational issues and may have also struggled with the same problem of conflicting theories and fads, perhaps they will find this discussion stimulating for their own thinking, whether or not they agree with mine.

Any effort to understand man at work and obtain a perspective on contemporary theory and practice related to work motivation must begin with the roots of both subjects. All discussions of the meaning of work and the motivation to work are the product of four interacting forces: (1) a theory of psychological motivation; (2) the major social role encompassed in the concept of work at any given time; (3) a conception of the modal organization structure within which people work; and (4) a view of the broader ethos within which work organization functions.

Contemporary theory and practice may then be viewed as an outcome of these four forces. With such a perspective, the shortcomings of theory and practice may be clarified. These shortcomings may then be appreciated as the inevitable concomitant of evolutionary steps that are perpetually entangled in outmoded notions and struggling to accommodate to new ones.

THEORIES OF MOTIVATION

Two major conceptions of man dominated psychological thinking in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. One conception, with a tradition stemming from Locke through Watson to Skinner, is an *outside*, or environmental, theory of motivation. It views man's motivation and behavior as shaped primarily by forces outside himself. It is largely an empirical theory that leads to research focused on forces and factors external to the person, and is correspondingly less concerned with such internal factors as thinking, feelings, and subjective experiences.

The second conception is a nativistic, or *inside*, theory of motivation. In its more modern form it stems from Kant, and its two most widely known contemporary names are Freud and Piaget. Nativistic conceptions see man as unfolding and developing physiologically and psychologically from biologically based givens. They focus on the development and refinement of internal capacities, primarily emotional

and cognitive, which give rise to certain feelings, wishes, fantasies, perceptions, attitudes, and thoughts.

Research and practice based on environmental theories tend to be concerned with the *control* of behavior, implicitly assuming someone is controlled and someone else is controlling. Referring to work motivation, the question usually is asked, "How can the employee be motivated?" Often the implication is that by doing something to the person or his environment, he can be made to do, by someone else, what is either desired or expected of him.

Research and practice based on nativistic theories tend to be concerned with *understanding* behavior and often with *freeing* a person to behave more nearly in keeping with his wishes or with opening a wider range of choices from which he presumably may choose alternative courses. Managerial practice based on nativistic theory related to work motivation seeks to understand the person's own motivations and to create conditions under which these can flower in the work situation to meet the needs of both the person and the organization.

MAJOR WORK ROLE

Until the industrial revolution, the major work role was that of laborer or artisan. To work was largely to do something with one's hands with varying degrees of skill. Comparatively few did commercial, intellectual, professional, political, or military work. Even the prophets of the Old Testament were artisans. The laborer-artisan usually worked alone or in a small group.

The industrial revolution made a machine-tender of the worker. Often the machine had greater skill and competence than the man. Large numbers of men had to be brought together to operate numbers of machines in plants. The paradigmatic working man was a factory employee who became heavily dependent upon the employing organization, often for a working lifetime. The growth of a factory culture led to the expansion of cities and the proliferation of material goods. The development of cities destroyed the supportive resources of the extended family and small town, requiring development of service roles to replace those losses.

Ultimately the plethora of material goods from the factory culture lessened pressure for continuous work, providing higher incomes and greater leisure, which called for more service functions as standards

of living and expectations of service were raised. In the West we are presently midway between a factory and a service culture; many predict that soon men will not have to tend machines. Service will become the modal work role. Services may be offered by individuals or organizations but, because of their complexity, will tend largely to be rendered by organizations. Medical service is an example.

Beyond service as the modal work role lies involvement. Involvement as a modal work role means that people are engaged together in joint problem-solving for their mutual benefit and for the good of society. Involvement requires a multiplicity of specialized skills which can be brought together but need not be held together once the problems for which they were assembled are solved. We are just at the beginning of the involvement stage. For all practical purposes, involvement will have to take place within social institutions, for contemporary social problem solving is done by institutions and organizations rather than by individuals. Today's problems are outcomes of system functioning and must be solved by working with such systems. For example, today conservation means one must cope with pollution, housing, transportation, and many other factors.

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

The earliest organizational structures within which work was accomplished were families, extended kinship systems, tribes, or villages. Work in such structures was inseparable from other aspects of living, for living was largely a process of sustaining an all-too-short life. Early elements of bureaucratic structure were found in the Western world in the only nonfamily work, the church and the military.

The industrial revolution, with its more finely differentiated work roles and responsibilities and work areas located away from the home, gave rise to formal bureaucratic structures in which tasks were defined, responsibilities assigned, and authority delegated. The underlying assumption of a bureaucratic structure is that the head of the organization has control and the followers respond to the command and direction of the leader or his delegates.

Bureaucratic structures lend themselves well to factory culture and the derivatives of feudal conceptions of authority, obligation, and loyalty, which define the complementary relationships of the

more and less powerful. However, bureaucratic structures are essentially static. They work well to the extent that people can be contained and controlled within them and work can be routinized. The less people can be contained within a physical place, the less control can be exerted over them; the less routine the work, the less well bureaucratic structures function.

When service is the modal form of work, requiring as it does varied but complementary skills, supervision and control by authority are less possible because a greater complexity of function means authority figures can no longer possess all skills or exercise all competencies. Those in authority must depend on the skilled individuals doing the work to exercise the necessary competence as responsible individual partners. This is the point Galbraith makes in discussing the infrastructures of organizations which, for all practical purposes, make organizational decisions.¹ Furthermore, the more flexible an organization must be to adapt to its environment, the more freedom people must have to make decisions at the point of action, which, in large measure, mitigates the central control possibilities of bureaucratic structures. In addition, bureaucratic structures operate on a unit-efficiency basis. They compute their efficiency by counting units produced during a given period of time. This measure is less useful when the assembly line is not the prototype of work, when the work to be done is of a project nature and is a task to be accomplished rather than a number of pieces to be made.

Organizations that are structured to render service or solve problems require more coordination and mutual interaction. Those people who actually render the service wield great power at the point of service. They are not as interchangeable as machine tenders. Standards of performance are as much those of the profession or discipline as of the organizations through which the services are rendered. Loyalty tends to be divided between the professional reference group and the organization, as in medicine, nursing, and engineering. The standard of performance is the excellence of task accomplishment. Service and problem-solving organizations tend more to be made up

¹John Kenneth Galbraith, *The New Industrial State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967).

of units that can be readily organized, disorganized, and reorganized in keeping with tasks to be done. Project organizations or matrix organizations (in which there are overlapping functions) are more common modes of rendering services and solving problems. Since these cannot be held together by bureaucratic controls, they must depend for cohesiveness on common purpose and on the identification of the employees with the organizational goals. The less the bureaucratic control, the more the organization must depend on voluntary commitment for accomplishing organizational tasks. Thus, control is inevitably much more self-control, control by peers and the requirements of the task. When bureaucratic controls are lessened, authority figures are more influenced by and responsive to others in the structure.

Organization structures may take a variety of forms. Ultimately we will see many different organizational structures in the same company as structure more closely follows function.

ETHOS

The combination of assumptions about motivation, about the modal social role of work, and about the structure of organizations, with the dominant economic theories of an era, comprise the ethos within which managerial theory and practice evolve. Beginning with the industrial revolution, overlapping phases may be distinguished, each characterized by a dominant ethos.

Economic Man

The first major phase was that of economic man. The underlying assumption about motivation was environmental, specifically that man was rational and economic in his outlook and that he would be motivated by money. Man, like the machines he operated or the tasks he did in a bureaucratic structure, was viewed as an interchangeable part. Further, he existed to serve the organization. His feelings, if considered at all, were viewed as annoyances in an otherwise rational, organized, controlled system. The dominant mode of motivation was by appeal to presumably obvious reason, backed up by the carrot-and-stick. The greater wisdom of superiors in the hierarchy

was taken for granted, and a worker's economic fate was dependent on their greater knowledge and power.

Most contemporary managements still operate primarily in the economic man ethos. While organizations may be more or less paternalistic in an effort to obtain loyalty and commitment, most seek greater efficiency by breaking jobs down into the smallest possible work units and expect to motivate employees by financial reward. Most industrial sociology and organizational theory are concerned with describing bureaucratic structure, assuming it as a given and also assuming a reward-punishment model of individual motivation. Most industrial psychology, with its emphasis on testing, selection, placement, reward, supervision, morale and motivation, is heavily environmental in its underlying motivational assumptions.

Social Man

The second major phase was that of social man. It arose largely from the work of Elton Mayo and his colleagues.² Mayo called attention to the importance of social relationships in organizations, giving rise to considerable work on informal social organization and group norms and calling into question the economic man model. While Mayo focused on man's need for affiliation with his fellows, and thus began to take a nativistic direction, he did not question seriously the bureaucratic model or look closely at other aspects of internal motivation. Mayo saw interpersonal relationships as primary and work as secondary. His work stimulated attention to supervisor-supervisee relationships and work group interactions and gave impetus to the human relations movement in industry. It led also to criticism of the ennui of factory work and to efforts at job enlargement to make the work place more congenial and, sometimes, to paternalism.

Mayo's conception flatly contradicted the economic man model. Those who followed him did not contradict him. Their thinking may be seen as elaborations of the social man conception.

² Elton Mayo, *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (New York: Macmillan, 1933); F. J. Roethlisberger and W. J. Dickson, *Management and the Worker* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1939); W. J. Dickson and F. J. Roethlisberger, *Counseling in an Organization* (Boston: Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration, Division of Research, 1966).

Self-Actualizing Man

The third major phase, building on Mayo, but more a product of the followers of Kurt Lewin,³ is that of self-actualizing man. With philosophical roots in Rousseau and Ruskin, the proponents of self-actualizing man saw him as spontaneous, creative, and seeking self-expression. They sought to free the working man from the constraints of bureaucracy and unilateral power. They continued to view work as a necessity but contended that it need not be psychologically destructive to the worker. Furthermore, they pointed out that what seemed efficient in the bureaucratic model of economic man was really less efficient, because control by hierarchical relationships and industrial engineering not only dehumanized man but required him to defend himself against such controls by passive resistance and reluctance to be involved in the system. In fact, between the lines of conceptions of self-actualizing man is the notion that organizations exist to serve man rather than vice versa. There followed the converse emphasis on actualization of potential and reduction of power differentials in bureaucratic structures.

For example, the late Douglas McGregor⁴ suggested that managements operated by what he called Theory X: the assumption that (1) the average human being has an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it if he can; (2) therefore most people must be coerced, controlled, directed, and threatened to put forth adequate effort; (3) the average human being prefers to be directed, wishes to avoid responsibility, has relatively little ambition, wants security above all.

Opposed to these assumptions he offered what he called Theory Y: (1) the expenditure of physical and mental effort in work is as natural as play or rest; (2) man will exercise self-direction and self-control in the service of objectives to which he is committed; (3) commitment to objectives is a function of the rewards associated with their achievement, the most significant rewards being the satisfaction of self-actualizing needs; (4) the average human being learns, under proper conditions, not only to accept but to seek responsibility; (5)

³ Kurt Lewin, *Field Theory in Social Science* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951).

⁴ Douglas McGregor, *The Human Side of Enterprise* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960).

the capacity to exercise a relatively high degree of imagination, ingenuity, and creativity in the solution of organizational problems is widely distributed in the population; (6) under conditions of modern industrial life, the intellectual potentialities of the average human being are only partially utilized.

McGregor's position is largely nativistic, holding that man's needs are primarily social and egoistic. He holds work to be a natural expenditure of energy and commitment originating from esteem and self-actualization. Commitment frees people to be imaginative, self-disciplined, responsible, and cooperative. McGregor envisions the possibility of integrating individual and organizational goals and emphasizes interpersonal relationships and flexibility of organizational structure.

Chris Argyris, too, seeks to integrate individual and organizational needs.⁵ He sees bureaucratic structure as inhibiting the fulfillment of individual needs, particularly those for a sense of personal value, self-esteem, and independence. Like McGregor, he views individuals as self-motivated rather than motivated by forces outside themselves. Both McGregor and Argyris advocate sensitivity training as a medium for obtaining openness, cooperation, and commitment.

Renis Likert conceives of an organization as comprised of interacting small groups that ideally have great autonomy and are linked together by "linking pins" (that is, key management personnel who are members of two groups), into an integrated whole.⁶ He gives heavy emphasis to small group interaction and to that between superiors and subordinates. He advocates group accountability, consensus decision, and group goal setting. His major theme is that the principle of supportive relationships is basic to a sense of personal worth and importance.

Blake and Mouton, too, see no necessary conflict between individual and organizational objectives.⁷ They emphasize managerial style as the major device for counteracting bureaucracy. They have popularized what they call the "managerial grid," a two-dimensional tem-

⁵ Chris Argyris, *Integrating the Individual and the Organization* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1964).

⁶ Renis Likert, *New Patterns in Management* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961).

⁷ Robert R. Blake and Jane S. Mouton, *The Managerial Grid* (Houston: Gulf Publishing Co., 1964).

plate on which executives can scale themselves according to their degree of concern for people and for production. This presumably provides managers with insight into their own behavior, and with a heavy emphasis on interpersonal relationships. Blake and Mouton have supplemented their scale with self-administered exercises and teaching devices, derived from sensitivity training, which illuminate intraorganizational conflicts.

The work of Frederick Herzberg on motivation through work itself, though he is not strictly a Lewinian, emphasizes job enrichment.⁸ Herzberg conceives of "satisfiers" and "dissatisfiers." Satisfiers are achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth. Dissatisfiers include company policy and administration, supervision, working conditions, interpersonal relationships (with superiors, subordinates, and peers), salary, status, job security, and personal life. Satisfiers are motivating; dissatisfiers cannot motivate people to work but can counteract motivation. In Herzberg's conception they are hygienic factors that can contaminate the psychological environment. Herzberg, like Argyris, urges management to increase the challenging aspects of the job to make it more self-fulfilling, achievement-motivated, and self-actualizing. Although Herzberg does not follow the model of economic man, he assumes that *higher management* should enrich the jobs of lower level people. He raises few questions about organizational structure, controls, or power relationships, and he minimizes interpersonal relationships as motivating forces. Work must be given meaning largely by expanding responsibility and extending recognition as well as from the intrinsic satisfaction the person derives from it.

All of the theories discussed lean heavily on the concept of a hierarchy of needs put forth by the late Abraham Maslow.⁹ Maslow contended that human needs could be classified on five levels, each succeeding need becoming more pressing as more primitive ones were satisfied. In ascending order these are physiological needs, safety needs, needs for belonging and love, need for esteem, and need for self-actualization.

⁸ Frederick Herzberg, *Work and the Nature of Man* (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1968).

⁹ Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954).

The emphasis of this body of theory gave rise to such conceptions as participation in decision making, more adequate support from higher level management, and responsible involvement in the work itself and in decisions about how it was to be done. Questions began to be raised about organizational structure. The group dynamics movement brought into vogue emphasis on open communication, partnership with respect to task accomplishment, and the reduction of psychological barriers to cooperation. The fundamental thrust of this phase complemented the increasing trend toward service work and involvement.

However, most of these efforts are still based on a reward-punishment psychology, where a person's needs are seen normatively as broad categories of generalized need, such as achievement and self-actualization, with little differentiation among different people and different circumstances. While these theorists gave more attention to nativistic man, they were largely without a systematic theory of personality on which to base conceptions of need. Often they implicitly saw man as having limited motivational dimensions and frequently tried to force nativistic conceptions into organizations that were based fundamentally on environmental assumptions. However, as a result of their influence, many companies are now trying to assimilate and act on the model of self-actualizing man.

Psychological Man

The fourth major phase, now in its elementary beginnings, is that of psychological man. This concept is based on a comprehensive theory of personality. Stemming largely from psychoanalytic conceptions, it views man as a complex, unfolding, maturing organism who passes through physiological and psychological stages of development, as an open system interacting with his environment. Man evolves an ego ideal toward which he strives and a complex set of mechanisms and defenses for coping with the basic drives of sexuality and aggression, with the superego or conscience, and with the environment. Work serves different purposes for different people, but for all it is a major device to maintain psychological equilibrium. This view holds that the major spontaneous human effort is that of adaptation, which means aggressive attack on the environment to master it for survival. These notions about personality functioning are far more

complex than the general rubric of self-actualization. For example, in this concept of psychological man, self-esteem is related to ego ideal and to the whole of personality theory. The relationship of a man to the organization in which he works becomes of critical psychological importance. The organization psychologically recapitulates the family structure of the culture in which it is found, and employees evolve both conscious and unconscious psychological contracts with organizations as devices to maintain their psychological equilibria. While these considerations militate against the rigidity of historic bureaucracy, they recognize the importance of leadership and power relationships and see danger in vitiating power positions or undermining the leadership role. Although some people still see work as onerous or even as a form of slavery and look forward to the age of leisure, this kind of comprehensive psychological conception sees work as a mode of mastery of self and environment. In this view, though man may be freed from compulsion and physical labor, he will never be free of work.

In contrast to the humanistic, self-actualizing theories of motivation which are derived largely from academic conceptions of personality, the considerably more complex psychological theories of motivation are derived from insights originally based on clinical work with individuals, largely by clinical psychologists and psychiatrists. These theories are heavily nativistic in that they place strong emphasis on the conception that man is continuously balancing his sexual and aggressive drives, the pressures and demands of his superego or conscience, and the realities of his world in his effort to master himself and it. This view is also environmentalistic because the focus is not with man alone or with organization alone but significantly with the man-organization relationship. The major theorists of this point of view are Elliott Jaques, Abraham Zaleznik, and I.

Jaques is concerned with two areas: superior-subordinate relationships, modes through which employees can express their power constructively with respect to policies; and practices of salary administration, which enable employees to compare their level of pay with that of other groups whom they judge to be carrying equivalent levels of responsibility.¹⁰ Jaques seeks to cope with the employee's sense

¹⁰ Elliott Jaques, *Work, Creativity and Social Justice* (New York: International Universities Press, 1970).

of insecurity and the stirring of his unconscious anxieties when contemporary threats and problems reawaken repressed childhood conflicts that then lead to irrational behavior.

Zaleznik directs most of his attention to the special psychological problems facing people who become organizational leaders and to the psychological forces that compel people to invent systems of organizing work that then influence society and thereby affect other people.¹¹ He and his students have investigated the ways in which the unconscious motives of individuals affect decision making. In addition, he has emphasized the capacity of the individual to mold his own life, both at work and at home. That emphasis on what the individual can do to act responsibly to control his own destiny contrasts with the humanists' appeal to enlightened management.

My own conception is built around an ego psychology model. I have defined the three broad classes of needs to be met as (1) maintenance needs—for care and support from others—(2) maturation needs—for growth and development—and (3) mastery needs—for control of one's fate—allowing considerable variation in the definition of such needs for different individuals and groups of people.¹²

My fundamental thesis is that the most powerful motivating force for any human being is his wish to attain his ego ideal. In the course of growing up, out of our identifications with our parents, out of our wish to emulate them, out of the encouragement and affection of our teachers and other people who are important to us, out of the refinements of our skills and competencies, we evolve a picture for ourselves of how we should be at our ideal best. When we work toward our ideal best we like ourselves; when we come close we are elated. When we do not, we become extremely angry with ourselves.

One has only to think of how he criticizes himself for the simple accident of spilling a drink at the table to see how harsh we are to ourselves for trivial mistakes—errors that keep us from being as perfect in our own eyes as we would like to be. Adults in North American society (and probably most others) like to see themselves as com-

¹¹ Abraham Zaleznik, *The Human Dilemmas of Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).

¹² Harry Levinson, *The Exceptional Executive* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968).

petent and effective in doing well what they do. They are unhappy with themselves when they do poorly or inadequately. The reasons are very simple. One's self-esteem is a product of the gap between his ego ideal and his self-image. The greater the gap, the more he dislikes himself and the angrier and the more self-critical he becomes with himself. Indeed we are then ridden with extremely uncomfortable feelings of inadequacy and guilt.

Why then do people do sloppy work? Why are they absent? Why are they unmotivated? Largely out of anger and out of need to protect themselves. Many such people have low self-images and, therefore, low self-esteem because they are caught up in the carrot-and-stick motivational conception and the military general-staff hierarchical model. To raise their self-esteem, they must fight back and they do so, even at the risk of hurting themselves, by producing shoddy goods, leaving jobs and, in effect, telling the organization to go to hell.

Thus the individual is most highly motivated to meet the demands of his own ego ideal, his wish to attain that perfection that represents himself at his ideal future best. To meet this internal demand, he must manage the twin drives of sex and aggression and the four major feelings or wishes derived from them: feelings of love and of hate and dependency wishes on the one hand, and the wish to master the environment on the other.

Therefore I view a man's relationship to his work and to his work organization as part of his generalized effort to meet the demands of his ego ideal and, as a result, to be significantly related both to his emotional health and his motivation at work. The kind of work he does and the nature of his relationship to the organization either supports his personality structure and enables him to use himself psychologically as he would like to do, thereby enhancing both his motivation and his health, or it impairs both.

Thus I do not see bureaucracy as either good or bad by definition, for some tasks require bureaucratic structure and some people need more structured organizational support than others to satisfy their dependency needs. I take seriously the psychological interaction of the person and his organization and the psychological usefulness of organizational structure.

I am therefore much interested in organizational design, particu-

larly the work of Lawrence and Lorsch,¹³ which promises a method for evolving a sophisticated understanding of organizational functioning, comparable in depth to and compatible with psychoanalytical theory. Lawrence and Lorsch point out that it is necessary to differentiate different parts of an organization in terms of their formal characteristics and their climate characteristics. Different kinds of work require different patterns of formal relationships and duties, different patterns of formal rules and procedures and control and measurement systems, and have different time dimensions and different goals. A sales department would differ in these respects from a research department. Such differences could be delineated in terms of the kinds of work styles, values, and skills, and the types of personalities required to carry on such activities successfully. By differentiating the work environments more clearly in behavioral and emotional terms, a better fit can then be made between the individual and the work organization to enable him to achieve a greater sense of mastery and to better meet the demands of his ego ideal.

I am particularly interested in the leadership role, which I consider to be more complex and active than do most of the other theorists. If all organizations in any society are essentially recapitulations of the family structure in that society, then the leader is psychologically in a father figure role (that is, he encounters unconscious expectations that he behave in the modal way a father behaves in his culture) that he must understand and act upon to ensure the perpetuation of the organization.

Conceptions of psychological man, in the sense used here, have yet to be implemented in any significant way. They call for viewing the organization as an adaptive organism directed to its own perpetuation.¹⁴ Thus conceived, an organization is a problem-solving mechanism. It is an educational institution that, for its own survival, must increase the psychological and economic competence of those who work in it. This conception calls for a different role for the leader, that of a teacher of problem solving and a facilitator of human development.

This more complex conception requires deeper, more comprehen-

¹³ Paul R. Lawrence and Jay W. Lorsch, *Organization and Environment* (Boston: Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration, Division of Research, 1967).

¹⁴ Levinson, *The Exceptional Executive*.

TABLE 2-1
SCHEMATIC RECAPITULATION OF APPROACHES
TO UNDERSTANDING MAN AT WORK

<i>Theory of Motivation</i>	<i>Major Work Role</i>	<i>Organization Structure</i>	<i>Ethos</i>	<i>Advocates</i>
Outside	Laborer, artisan	Families, kinship systems	Economic man	Managers, economists, industrial engineers
	Machine tender	Bureaucratic	Social man	Mayo, human relations school
Inside	Service	Project, matrix	Self-Actualizing man	Neo-Lewinians, humanistic psychologists, organizational sociologists
Inside-Outside	Involvement	Multiform	Psychological man	Psychoanalytically trained psychologists and psychiatrists

sive understanding of motivation as a complex derived from drives, wishes, fantasies, and the ego ideal. That requires a more sophisticated understanding of organizations, one only now slowly evolving.¹⁵ Ultimately it will be possible to fit men to organizations and vice versa by differentiating the psychological components of work performance and organizational structure and matching these with personality configurations.

All of the theories under the rubric of psychological man presume a modal work role of involvement.

CONCLUSION

Managerial theory and practice related to work motivation are necessarily based on assumptions about motivation in general. They presuppose a theory of personality, a modal view of the work role and the work organization, and the ethos of work (see Table 2-1). In my judgment, most contemporary theory and practice fall short of their possibilities because they are not adequately based on a comprehensive theory of personality, and they fail to take into account the need for differentiating organizational structure to meet the needs defined by such a comprehensive theory of personality.

¹⁵ Harry Levinson, *Organizational Diagnosis* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972).

Levinson, The Great Jackass Fallacy, Ch3, 1973, Harvard Univ. Press, Boston, MA

CHAPTER 3

Emotional Toxicity of the Work Environment

A SIMPLE WAY TO EXAMINE one's theoretical position and its usefulness in a management context is to observe the manner in which managerial processes affect people. If we view man as an unfolding, maturing organism who, ideally, is actively interacting with his environment toward achieving his ego ideal while at the same time successfully managing his aggressive and sexual drives, his conscience or superego, and maintaining an effective relationship with his organization and his task, then we can readily observe those aspects of the work environment which inhibit his adaptation process. We can observe the ways in which care and support are or are not provided by the organization, the presence or absence of institutional encouragement to growth, and the degree to which the organization allows a person to have an effect on his own fate. Such issues are more easily seen in the negative—that is, when they are absent or when adaptation is not successful—because, when these processes are working well, the smooth functioning of the organization makes it difficult for them to stand out in relief. Just as the physician learns more about the normal processes in the body from malfunction and illness, so any observer of the management scene will see a process magnified when he sees "pain" or dysfunction.

Seeing pain may throw a process into relief, but it may also contribute to a feeling of helplessness. It is of little help to me to hear a knock in the motor of my automobile if I cannot do something about

it. Therefore, in addition to looking at psychological issues, in this chapter I would like to suggest various simple ways by which an executive or manager can cope with some of these issues. If the reader can see the nature of the problems with which he has to deal, and if he has some techniques he can apply that are in keeping with his managerial role and through which he can demonstrate to himself the validity of the frame of reference I am elaborating, he will be in a better position both to do his job more effectively and to give more careful consideration to other issues and problems as they are viewed from that same frame of reference.

To turn from the theory to implementation as a way of testing the theory, in this chapter I will address myself to the question of what the executive can do about recognizing and ameliorating some of the more obvious problems the organization creates for those who report to him.¹

Imagine yourself two generations ago, when public health practitioners were urging people not to drink from the common drinking cup because it contained germs that carried disease. Imagine how difficult it must have been for people who had no concept of germs to understand that organisms existed that were invisible to the naked eye, let alone that could transmit disease. However, we have learned to accept the fact that there are microscopic agents that affect us, and we now give careful attention not only to bacteria, microbes, and viruses, but also to toxic agents such as gases. We can now make many infectious agents visible under the microscope. We now odorize or color gases. We no longer speak of magic or demons but point to real, concrete objects.

Despite what is known about the power of that which is not readily visible, management as a profession has not caught up altogether with other powerful nonvisible toxic agents, namely, feelings. It seems extremely difficult to grasp the idea that feelings are the primary precipitants of behavior and a major influence in health and sickness. Even today, in the face of a recent history of massive riots, social apathy, militant rebellion, and similar evidences of social disor-

¹ Two of my books spell out in greater detail many modes of executive action to deal with psychological issues: *Emotional Health: In the World of Work* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964); *Executive Stress* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970).

organization, we still tend to think in terms of outside provocation rather than to ask: What do people feel? Why do they feel that way? How can something more positive be done about and with those feelings? The same is true when it comes to many physical illnesses that have important psychophysiological components. There is growing evidence to indicate that there are significant psychological components in coronary disease and even in cancer. By and large, however, management tends to avoid recognition of these powerful psychological forces.

He who would be concerned about how his organization affects people cannot avoid the impact of feelings on motivation and health. He must create for himself a psychological stethoscope to sense the feelings of his subordinates and must evolve means of keeping various feelings from inducing symptoms in individuals in the organization.

UNDERSTANDING THE FOUR FEELINGS

As I noted in the discussion on psychological man in Chapter 2, there are four major feelings with which every human being must deal: love, hate, feelings about dependency, and feelings about one's self-image.² Here I propose to elaborate them and suggest some ways in which the executive can sense them and do something about them.

Love

Every person needs to be able to give and to receive affection. Those who have difficulty loving other human beings invest themselves proportionately more in pets, causes, or hobbies. Some revel in the love of their spouses or their children, others in the affection of their dogs, and still others in the adulation of their followers. Whatever the case, it is necessary to give and to receive affection to survive, as studies of concentration camp survivors and the aged have confirmed.³ The first question about any person whom an executive

² Levinson, *Emotional Health: In the World of Work*.

³ Elmer Luehnerhand, "Prisoner Behavior and Social System in the Nazi Concentration Camps," *The International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, XIII:4 (Autumn 1967), pp. 245-264; Marjorie F. Lowenthal and Clayton Haven, "Interaction and Adaptation: Intimacy as a Critical Variable," *American Sociological Review*, 33:1 (February 1968), pp. 20-30.

supervises, then, should be: "In what ways does he handle his need to give and to receive love and with what success?"

For example, some people need to be constantly applauded and encouraged. Others need to have the approval of their superiors but do not want to pay any attention to their subordinates. Still others keep their superiors at arm's length and seek the adulation of those who report to them. Some need the gratification which comes from pleasing customers. Others are involved with their work and could not care less about the people involved. Still others may deny in their behavior that they need anybody else's approval.

Hate

Konrad Lorenz demonstrated that aggression is an inborn animal instinct necessary for the survival of the species.⁴ Freud theorized that this instinct to aggression becomes a psychological drive and is an important component of being able to act upon or master one's world. However, such a powerful drive that literally can result in someone else's death, a power necessary for self-defense and survival, can easily get out of hand. Hate, derived from aggression, is the most difficult of all feelings with which to deal. As Lorenz pointed out, and as cultural anthropologists have demonstrated in other ways, we set up elaborate mechanisms to transform aggression into constructive acts. We become guilty when we act in ways that seem to us destructively aggressive, even when those acts are merely symbolic, like telling somebody to go to hell. We are terribly frightened of being overwhelmed by our own aggressive impulses. Indeed, some people, such as catatonic schizophrenics, withdraw from the outside world for fear that they will destroy others. As every psychotherapist knows, the fear of one's own hostility leads to elaborate defensive mechanisms that cripple people psychologically. Often in desperation people turn their hostility on themselves, which can lead to suicide, accidents, self-inflicted injury, as well as self-defeat.⁵

The executive, therefore, should ask himself as he works with another person: How does this man handle his aggression? Is he able to

⁴ Konrad Lorenz, *On Aggression* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1966).

⁵ K. A. Menninger, *Man Against Himself* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1939).

channel it constructively and master it in constructive tasks? Does he displace it on other people? Does he contain it within himself so that various kinds of psychophysiological symptoms result? The key problem with aggression is the necessity for constructive channels for its discharge. Does he have them? Is more aggression being provoked than he can tolerate and is something being done about it? How can I, as an executive, decompress these feelings of hostility? Talking about it with him, suggesting outlets, and encouraging the man to confront the sources of his anger are some helpful ways. Discovering the ways he is frustrating others and providing him with more adequate modes of solving frustrating problems are even better ways.

For example, a man who is dealing with his anger by complaining to his subordinates or his peers might be encouraged to bring his angry feelings into discussion with his boss rather than to continue to handle them destructively through gossip. Some people manage their aggression by becoming ever more preoccupied with detail when under stress. The boss might well point out that there are more constructive ways than becoming immersed in detail: he might examine the intensity of the pressure he, the boss, is exerting, which may lead to that preoccupation. Some, in their angry frustration, pick on their subordinates. The boss can point out that destructive behavior and help the man learn to lead his subordinates to more effective problem solving. The boss might also ask whether his subordinate is merely imitating his own behavior. Some are unrealistic in their expectations of themselves and in their assumptions about how much responsibility they have. The boss can define what the responsibilities of the task are and are not.

Dependency

No human being can survive without being dependent on somebody else. For many people, however, to be a little dependent is the same as being totally dependent. This unconscious equation and the resultant negative feelings about dependency stem from the helplessness of infancy. The child strives to overcome his helplessness, to stand by himself, walk by himself, and be master of his own body and his own fate. None of us likes returning to a state of helplessness, and we fight vigorously against it. But all of us must come to terms with our dependency needs and evolve those situations for ourselves in re-

relationships with companies, schools, hospitals, churches, and families which provide the most congenial mode of gratifying our dependency needs. Some people assert complete independence; others lean on the rest of the world all of the time.

The questions the executive should ask are: How does the man I am working with handle his dependency needs? How much dependency can he accept and how much must he reject? What supports for his dependency needs does he maintain and with what success? How much can he lean on his wife, his company, his children, his lodge? What role do I (the executive) play in this picture? How much can he count on his relationship with me? How do people in this organization expect it to support their dependency needs? Does it do so?

Dependency needs vary, depending on the problems people have to deal with. In crisis, people need much more support from their superiors. In a new situation, they need more frequent contact with superiors to help them get their bearings and establish momentum in the new job. In times of rapid change, they need much more information and guidance and greater strength of direction than in more stable periods. The more ambiguous a situation, the less it is structured, usually, the greater the need for discussion, mutual planning, and the spreading of risk about decision making.

Self-Esteem

Studies of the incidence and prevalence of mental and physical illness in industry indicate that the lower the person is in the organizational hierarchy, the more frequently and seriously he becomes ill. Analysis of the studies of mental health in industry indicates that these employees all touch on self-esteem as the central variable. As I have already noted, self-esteem is the distance between how one perceives himself to be—his self-image—and how he feels he ideally ought to be—his ego ideal. Failure to meet the demands of the ego ideal is one of the major sources of feelings of inadequacy. The lower the self-esteem, the greater the incidence of illness. The questions the executive should ask about his employees, then, are: What are their ego ideals? How do they ideally think they ought to be? How far do they feel from that? How worthless do they feel they are?

These questions are not easy to answer for one's self, let alone for others. There are a number of ways of getting partial answers. One

way is to look at the choice points over a person's lifetime. When he had a choice between courses in school, what direction did he take? When he had career choices, what direction did he take? When he had task or job choices, what direction did he take? Although these may seem somewhat random, if one delineates the choice points and traces them out, he will observe a certain consistency to the choices that give thrust and direction to a person's life. Another way of ascertaining dimensions of the ego ideal is to ask who a person's heroes and models are or were. Still a third is to ask what were the peak experiences the person has had. Each of us in his lifetime has had one or two experiences during which he felt highly elated with himself. When one recalls those experiences and looks at his own behavior at those times, he may see in relief that state toward which he is striving. A critically important aspect of the ego ideal derives from the values of the parents. If a person can recall not so much what his parents did but how in behavior they emphasized certain values, he will probably then be able to discern more clearly (in his own ego) ideal elements of those values. Taken together, all of these modes of achieving the ego ideal will contribute to evolving a clearer definition. Certainly they provide a basis for thinking and discussion.

People often speak about the ego ideal when they talk about their expectations about promotion, about the quality of the work they like to do, and when they criticize themselves about how well they have done a given task. They reflect their negative feelings about themselves and their organization when they talk about how difficult it is to solve problems in the organization and how small the prospects seem for becoming effective in their problem-solving effort. Few people will say they feel worthless in a managerial situation, but they may express those feelings indirectly in the degree of pessimism or optimism with which they go about their efforts. Many organizations try to deal with such feelings by inspirational methods. But these rarely work for long because they provide no effective ways for a person to achieve gratification by successful problem solving to counter the underlying feelings of inadequacy.

RECOGNIZING THE SYMPTOMS

To turn to the work situation, whenever any of the four feelings are exacerbated by the organization, a person becomes ill. The symp-

toms may be physical, psychological, or both. There is no escape from the fact, however, that equilibrium will be altered.

Love

Whenever a person is deprived of his sources of affection in the work situation or of his opportunity to give his affection, the symptom, however subtle, will appear. Such losses occur if a person is removed from a congenial work group, if there is a change in the work process with which he is identified, if he is physically transferred to another community or moved to another section, if he is fired, or even if he is promoted; and there will be changes in his ability to attach himself to other people and to familiar and preferred objects. I shall discuss these issues in greater detail in Chapter 5. Suffice it to say here that in myriad ways we give and receive affection although often we do not regard our bantering with friends, our pride in task accomplishment, the ready availability of help from supervisors, peers, subordinates, and even organizational support from institutions, such as a medical department or a personnel department, as sources of affection.

Hate

Whenever anger is unnecessarily increased by unfair criticism, exploitation, poor planning, attack, or simply when a person is made to feel like an ass, the result will be some kind of symptom where people act against their own interests or those of the organization or both. Many managements have not learned that the unnecessary provocation of anger is destructive to them and to their people. Some still believe that, "You have to heat it out of them or you won't get production."

Dependency

Whenever people are made more dependent than they can allow themselves to be, when their natural human supports are undermined, when they cannot gratify their dependency needs, or when they are made to feel more helpless, then these frustrations will increase their anger. Some organizations undertake mistaken forms of paternalism in vain efforts to make their employees like them. Paternalism only increases the sense of dependency for the very word im-

plies that the employer is a father and the employees are children. Such a relationship makes it impossible for people to see themselves as adults in their own eyes. In community rehabilitation efforts, for example, people insist on doing things themselves, because only if they solve their own problems and stand on their own feet can they be adults in their own eyes.

Self-Esteem

Whenever self-esteem is lowered by contempt or by arbitrary changes in a person's work patterns, work relationships, or his ability to be in charge of what's happening to him without having to consult with superiors, he inevitably feels he is being treated as a jackass. Lowered self-esteem stirs up anger within an individual and between himself and others. If he is conscientious and cannot sabotage the product or the organization, he will sabotage himself, which results in the increasing incidence of symptoms and illness. Sickness, absenteeism, and accidents must be viewed as withdrawal phenomena requiring investigation.

DEALING WITH THE PROBLEMS

The concerned executive will want to ask his people how their work is going for them and take the time to listen to what they say. He should ask himself what is happening to the four feelings for each person.

Love

What is happening to the ability to give and receive affection? If a man has lost his sources of affection, how can they be restored? The executive should encourage him to do something about it by, for example, making new friends, undertaking new activities, repairing old friendships, or even transferring to another group, if that is at all possible.

For example, a 42-year-old corporate vice president, newly promoted and transferred from a small midwestern town to New York City, complained of a range of vague, diffuse physical symptoms. Medical examination findings were essentially negative. A few minutes of conversation about how he was adjusting and how he liked what he was doing disclosed a lonely, unhappy man. He missed the

camaraderie and affection of the small town. He did not see familiar faces on the street. His suburban community was as strange to him as a hotel room. He was a man who all his life had had close give-and-take relations with others. Now there were few with whom he could have that relationship. The opportunity to talk with the boss was his first chance to examine aloud the relationship between his psychological loss and the onset of his symptoms. At that point he could choose his own course of healing.

Hate

With respect to aggression, the executive should permit the person to ventilate his hostility and to get his anger out in the open. Once he has done so, he is in a better position to think about how he can cope with the provocations of the hostility he experiences. He can then examine his alternatives and find more constructive ways of handling his anger.

To illustrate, a 38-year-old vice president was specially selected for his post by the company president as his likely successor. However, the president played his own role close to his vest and used his chosen heir more as an office boy than as an officer. The younger man became increasingly angry. He tried to talk with his boss gently but could get nowhere. Thinking that perhaps he was not performing adequately, he asked for constructive criticism, but got none. He chafed and fumed, reluctant to leave and give up the opportunity to become head man in this company. He looked forward to a change of heart on the part of the president, eagerly sought ways to break through the latter's armor and to prove himself. Terribly frustrated as each effort failed, he finally took the opportunity to talk over his situation with someone outside the company. After he blew off steam, he came to recognize that the president had never been able to delegate authority, could not tolerate rivals, would not open up to him no matter what he did, and that he was, therefore, beating his head against a psychological wall. Now, he saw he could either wait for his turn patiently in the wings or go somewhere else.

Dependency

It is important for the executive to help a person understand that it is all right to be dependent on other people in varying degrees. We

he is up against nor any way of mastering it, then he gives up. The task of the executive is to sustain hope and preserve vitality. To do that, he must be the agent of reality for his people and help them to see their own psychological microbes and the forces that cause them.

CHAPTER 4

On Being a Middle-Aged Manager

THE THESIS OF THIS BOOK is the conception of psychological man. Since psychological man is a heavily nativistic conception, one implication is that there are discernible stages in the process of growth and development. Not only must one understand these stages if he is to have a comprehensive grasp of motivation, but he must also understand the specific problems of managing internal and external factors that are unique to given stages, if he is to act reasonably and rationally with respect to motivation.

The concept of psychological man—a whole adaptive person maintaining an internal and external equilibrium—comes most vividly into view in relation to the issues of middle age. The crises of middle age have become increasingly the crises of executives. Crises of executives in turn become crises in organizations for they affect decision making, job performance, morale, and motivation. These crises relate, on the one hand, specifically to changes in the ego ideal with time and, on the other hand, to the nature of work and progress in organizations. These crises mobilize many feelings, including the crucial ones I have previously discussed. Negative exacerbation of these feelings is the core of executive stress. Executives must cope with them on behalf of themselves and the organizations for which they have responsibility.

For most men, attainment of executive rank coincides with the onset of middle age, that vast gulf that begins about the age of 35 and endures until a man has come to terms with himself and his human fate (for no man matures until he has done so). This period ex-

all are. We need to find ways of being independent from some, interdependent with others, and more heavily dependent on still others. Some people will need permission to be dependent, and so the executive, in effect, will have to give them that permission. Some people who demand very much of themselves cannot accept help from anybody without feeling an obligation. An understanding senior person can help such people find ways of helping somebody else, to repay the obligation they feel for being treated kindly or helpfully by others. Each person needs to know somebody needs him, each person needs to find somebody who does indeed need him. A colleague, friend, or boss can help him understand that and find ways of coping with his dependency needs more successfully.

A division manager for a public utility company was one of several such managers who were close to the vice president to whom they reported. The elder man was like a father to them and fostered each of his subordinate's careers. When the older man died, each felt the loss of his support. But this division manager resorted to alcohol. Only when he was required by his new boss to go to a physician could he begin to spill out his grief and loss. He, more than the others, needed a kindly father to lean on. The death of the older man made that apparent, but he dared not look for a substitute for that would be weakness. The physician talked with him several times, serving meanwhile as a temporary substitute, and helped him to see that each person has his own pattern of meeting his dependency needs, and that he need not be ashamed or embarrassed at recognizing that he was a good No. 2 man. The manager's boss, recognizing his need for greater support, saw him more frequently in supervision.

Self-Esteem

A physician is often in the position of having to reassure his patients that their bodies are all right, even that they are attractive bodies. An executive must often do the same with respect to the self-image of his employees. Sometimes the executive can point out to people that their ideals are impossible ones and their aspirations are but fantasies that no human being could achieve. He can sometimes also point out to people that their demands on themselves are too high, that they judge themselves too harshly and too unfairly, that they deprecate their achievements, and that they depreciate their as-

sets. The executive may also have to reassure them that they are indeed doing well. This, in turn, will give them some relief from their self-demands and provide added strength to work more actively toward mastering their problems.

A hard-driving engineer described himself as so busy he had to take his lunch at his desk regularly. He talked about his long hours, late nights, and heavy responsibilities. When his boss asked him if he had to work that way and whether the company compelled or demanded it, he responded negatively. He felt he had to cover all bets, to be on top of every detail. He asked the boss how he compared with other young executives in the company. The boss reviewed his record of achievement with him and in effect made him demonstrate out loud to himself his competence and success. When he talked about his minor mistakes, the boss said, "Welcome to the human race." With some further efforts toward objectivity, the executive was able to help the young man relax somewhat and to see himself in a more accurate perspective.

CONCLUSION

My thesis is that there are four major feelings with which each one of us has to deal. These feelings can be exacerbated by what goes on in a work situation. The executive can help counteract the impact of these precipitants of negative stress by working with his juniors to help them understand that feelings are as powerful as germs, if not more so, and that feelings induce symptoms and illness that are just as severe as those produced by microbes or viruses. The executive who is unable to act in his organization to prevent illness can, nevertheless, understand the feelings his subordinates struggle with and how they approach them. He can then serve as a triangulating point, a point in reality against which the subordinate can mirror his feelings, look at them sometimes for the first time, understand that they are just as natural as other forms of infection and that he can combat them by undertaking counteracting activities. In such a case, the executive makes it possible for the person to really know those realities that are often most difficult to recognize, namely, feelings. Hope for a man is the fundamental ingredient of health. A man has emotional health when he knows what he is up against and has some effective ways of working at mastering the difficulty. If he neither knows what