In the next four chapters, I describe four fictitious institutions to illustrate different models of college and university governance, organization, and leadership. In each case, the model and the institutional type have been matched because, *on average*, the concepts often fit that type in the real world. For example, People's Community College is the setting for analyzing bureaucratic organizational models because public two-year institutions are generally considered more hierarchically structured and their management more rationally focused than other institutional types, such as liberal arts colleges (Bensimon, 1984; Richardson and Rhodes, 1983). However, it is important to avoid the error of totally equating models with particular types of institutions; one message this book carries is that no model illuminates all aspects of any institution all of the time, and every model illuminates some aspects of every institution some of the time. Just as a person who is familiar with only one institution does not understand any institution, so a person familiar with only one model does not really understand any model.

Each model represents an idealized version of an institution as seen through the lens of a specific cognitive frame. Anyone experienced in higher education will immediately note that while each model is familiar, none of the descriptions fully captures the richness of a real institution. This purposeful simplification serves two purposes: it allows the salient aspects of that frame to be placed in uncluttered and bold relief, and it also shows the essential limitation faced by any administrator or researcher who takes a single frame approach to understanding higher education. Because each frame emphasizes some parts of reality while ignoring others, no frame by itself provides a truly complete sense of how any campus really works.

After briefly presenting the fictitious institution, each chapter begins with a discussion of the characteristics of the model it represents. It then examines the patterns of interaction that reflect its properties as a system. Each chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of the model for effective leadership.

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Chapter 4

The Collegial Institution: Sharing Power and Values in a Community of Equals

The 150-year-old campus of Heritage College sits on a wooded hilltop several miles outside a large town. Older buildings are interspersed with a new science building and a new gymnasium, both donated by grateful alumni. Several new residence halls were built a decade ago, when, after years of discussion, the college decided to expand to its current enrollment of 1,150 students. Heritage offers a wide range of baccalaureate programs in the arts and sciences, all built on a general education core curriculum. The Heritage catalogue, its graduation speakers, and its funding appeals all emphasize a liberating education in the Judeo-Christian tradition as preparation for a life of individual meaning and social purpose.

The students, most from the top quarter of their high school classes, attend full time, and few fall outside the traditional eighteen- to twenty-one-year-old age group. Students are required to live in residence halls unless they are "townies." In many students' families, an older relative has had a previous association with the college; some families can trace students back over three generations.

All but a few of the seventy-four faculty have doctorates. Faculty are expected to be scholars and to keep current in their disciplines, but there is no pressure for research or publication. Classroom teaching and student advisement are emphasized, and faculty prestige and promotions are largely based on demonstrated expertise and commitment to these activities. There is an active college senate, run as a town meeting with the president presiding.

President Harold Henderson had been a popular faculty member at Heritage who left to accept the deanship of a similar institution and was asked to "come home" to Heritage as president several years later by a unanimous search committee. His inauguration was as much a community celebration as an academic ceremony.

The campus serves as the center of an active if somewhat subdued social life. The many clubs and activities include a number concerned with political and social causes, but even a casual campus visitor can sense that academic pursuits are the primary concern of students and faculty alike. Most faculty live close to campus, and many commute by bicycle in good weather. They often attend campus functions, and some regularly invite their students to their homes for dinner.

Current issues on campus include the pending report of a joint campus committee studying divestiture in companies doing business in South Africa, continuing discussions in the senate about modifications to the core curriculum, a student government investigation of the food service, and initiation of a new capital campaign among alumni.

Heritage College as a Collegial System

It is useful to study the organization and management of Heritage as a collegial system. An emphasis on consensus, shared power, common commitments and aspirations, and leadership that emphasizes consultation and collective responsibilities are clearly important factors at Heritage. It is a community in which status differences are deemphasized and people interact as equals, making it possible to consider the college as a community of colleagues—in other words, as a collegium. Hierarchical bureaucracies are so ubiquitous in our society that we often overlook the many examples of egalitarian collegial bodies, such as corporate boards of directors, the United States Senate, town meetings, the College of Cardinals, and some institutions of higher education.

The terms *collegium* and *collegiality* are often used in higher education. A recent study of college and university faculty (Bowen and Schuster, 1986) suggested that collegiality has three major components: the right to participate in institutional affairs, membership in "a congenial and sympathetic company of scholars in which friendships, good conversation, and mutual aid can flourish," and the equal worth of knowledge in various fields that precludes preferential treatment of faculty in different disciplines (p. 55). Sanders (1973), in like vein, identified collegiality as "marked by a sense of mutual respect for the opinions of others, by agreement about the canons of good scholarship, and by a willingness to be judged by one's peers" (p. 65).

Since conceptions of collegiality sometimes vary (see, for example, Baldridge, Curtis, Ecker, and Riley, 1978; Zimmerman, 1969), it will be useful to develop a more expanded understanding of the term as we shall use it in this book. We shall do so by examining the ways in which the faculty and administration of Heritage College work together to form what has been called a community of scholars (Millett, 1962).

Characteristics of Collegial Systems

The organization of Heritage College reflects certain characteristics that collegial groups of all kinds share to some degree (Anderson, 1963). For example, just as members of collegial groups usually have undergone some specialized training or have other identifying qualifications that set them apart from nonmembers, almost all faculty and administrators at Heritage have advanced academic or professional degrees.

Heritage is not an institution in which hierarchy is considered to be very important, and much of the interaction among

members of the collegium is informal in nature. The college is egalitarian and democratic, and members of the administration and faculty consider each other as equals, all of whom have the right and opportunity for discussion and influence as issues come up. Like some other collegial bodies, the faculty and administration of Heritage are concerned about the views of nonmembers such as staff and students, but the right of these others to participation is severely circumscribed and often only token in nature.

The hierarchical structure and rational administrative procedures seen at many institutions, which emphasize precision and efficiency in decision making, are absent at Heritage. Instead, because all members have equal standing, there is an emphasis on thoroughness and deliberation. It often takes a long time to reach major decisions, such as whether the college should divest the stock it holds in businesses operating in South Africa. Decisions are ultimately to be made by consensus, and not by fiat, so everyone must have an opportunity to speak and to consider carefully the views of colleagues. Certainly, some members are more influential and persuasive than others, but these differences arise from the norms of Heritage itself and from the personal characteristics of members, rather than from their official or legal status. For example, it is generally believed that the views of senior faculty are more influential than those of their juniors and that positions advanced by faculty who are regarded as among the best teachers are given special weight. These characteristics are quite conspicuous at Heritage, but they are not completely unique to this kind of institution. Clark Kerr (1982), for example, has noted in the faculties of research universities "the tendency to rely on consensus and on the opinions of the older members of any academic group in making decisions" (p. 27).

Consensus does not require unanimity. In fact, at some other institutions under some circumstances (for example, when the cabinet of an authoritarian president "votes" on a proposal on which the president has clearly already reached a decision), one can find unanimity even when consensus is absent. Real consensus, by contrast, arises when open discussion is possible and

expected, when participants feel that they have had a fair chance to state their position and to influence the outcome, and when people are comfortable about supporting the chosen alternative even if it was not their first view (Schein, 1969). When the faculty at Heritage attempt to reach consensus, they allow sufficient time in their deliberations to make it possible for participants to state their reservations or opposition and to feel that they have been heard and understood. If they do not have this opportunity, frustrated critics may later withdraw their support at crucial times or engage in other disruptive activities.

Heritage, as does any collegial group, has an administration to provide support services and to represent the college's interests to its various publics, but the administration is understood to be subordinate to the collegium and carries out the collegium's will. Administrators are often members of the faculty who agree to serve for a limited time and then return to their classroom responsibilities. Administrators therefore tend to be "amateurs," rather than professionals.

Since members of a collegial body are presumed to be equals, their leader is not appointed. The faculty tend to think of President Henderson as having been elected, since he was recommended to the Heritage trustees by a unanimous faculty search committee. Although his faculty colleagues expect that the president will make decisions about ordinary problems as they come along, they see him as their agent rather than as an independent actor. They concede that he has some extraordinary powers not available to other members (and in fact they understand that it is important to them that these differences exist), but he is seen by them not as a "boss" but rather as serving as *primus inter pares*, or "first among equals." In that capacity, he is thought of as the group's servant as well as its master. At larger and more highly structured institutions, the faculty may refer to the president, vice-presidents, and deans as "them" or as "central administration." Heritage faculty refer to the president by his preferred nickname, "Bud," when they meet with him alone or with other faculty members. When outsiders are present, however, they speak of him as "Mr. President" to enhance his standing with external audiences.

In many ways, Henderson at Heritage reflects the romance of the collegial tradition and its implications for the relationship of faculty and administration, as articulated by Veblen ([1918] 1957, p. 182) in discussing the proper role of the president as:

> the senior member of the faculty, its confidential spokesman in official and corporate concerns, and the moderator of its town meeting-like deliberative assemblies. As chairman of its meetings he is, by tradition, presumed to exercise no particular control, beyond such guidance as the superior experience of the senior member may be presumed to afford his colleagues. As a spokesman for the faculty he is, by tradition, presumed to be a scholar of such erudition, breadth, and maturity as may fairly command something of filial respect and affection from his associates in the corporation of learning; and it is by virtue of these qualities of scholarly wisdom, which give him his place as senior member of a corporation of scholars, that he is, by tradition, competent to serve as their spokesman and to occupy the chair in their deliberative assembly.

Sustaining a sense of community that permits collegial organization requires shared sentiments and values on such matters as the general purposes of the organization, loyalty to the collectivity, and agreement about institutional character as reflected in the shared understanding of members, rather than necessarily by a written document, and this is evident at Heritage. Problems related to dualism of control or differences in values between trustees, faculty, and administrators that cause conflict on many other campuses are generally absent here. Board members tend to be alumni, administrators tend to be faculty, and there is general agreement on the expected and accepted relationships among and between the groups. Faculty are predominantly locals who are loyal to the institution; they derive their greatest satisfactions and rewards from their activities within the college, rather than from groups outside it.

An important condition for the maintenance of a true collegial form is that it be comparatively small. Although some believe that the tradition of an academic community could be maintained only in institutions with no more than ten teachers and 150 students (Goodman, 1962), these are probably unduly restrictive limits. Heritage, with fewer than eighty faculty and a handful of administrators, has little difficulty in supporting a collegial culture. Even though the faculty as a whole meets only once a month, they interact with each other constantly, at lunch in the faculty dining room, in meetings of the many committees that oversee important aspects of college life, and in their neighborhoods near the campus. There is little doubt, however, that if the college were to grow much larger, maintaining collegiality would be increasingly difficult.

Common backgrounds, continuing interaction, and a long tradition have made it possible for Heritage to develop a strong and coherent culture with distinctive symbols, rites, and myths. Consider, for example, The Teas, one of the first programs renewed by President Henderson when he took over the underfinanced and somewhat dispirited campus eleven years ago. Now a tradition, The Teas are open houses for students held every evening of final examination week featuring home-baked cookies and pastries (but never tea) served by faculty members and their spouses. More than just an opportunity for calming frayed nerves, The Teas have over the years become a ritual and a metaphor, symbolizing the campus ideal of teaching as service, the nurturing and supportive role of the faculty, and the importance attached to achievement in examinations, as well as reinforcing the sense of Heritage as a total community. When Heritage faculty end the last class of the semester with "See you at The Teas," its meaning is understood to be "good luck," rather than a statement of their intention to attend (although most do).

The usefulness of The Teas sometimes transcends the mere opportunity for meaningful interaction, as important as that is. For example, when The Teas were held even during a campuswide student demonstration on endowment policy, much of the tension between faculty, administrators, and students dissipated. The story is still told that President Henderson

and his wife brought and served cupcakes to students who were conducting a nonnegotiable sit-in in his office. Henderson refused to cancel final exams but said that if students wanted to go home and study, they could return unimpeded and continue their sit-in when exams were over. At nearby Darwin College, in contrast, exams were cancelled, and six demonstrators were suspended.

The Teas are a symbol of enduring values and relationships that helps to stabilize the campus when transient issues are occasionally the subject of contention. Those who are not effectively socialized into the Heritage culture may misinterpret the importance of The Teas, believing them to be merely social gatherings. The recent dean, for example, who was the first ever appointed from outside the faculty, spent end-of-semester evenings catching up on critical administrative office work. He did not understand that his absence from The Teas was perceived as reflecting an antipathy to college values and a lack of sensitivity to the unique programs and stellar achievements of the college. The dean's replacement, to no one's surprise, was a senior Heritage faculty member.

The collegial model does not completely describe Heritage College. The model ignores the fact that there are differences in legal authority between various participants that are spelled out in the college's charter and in civil law; it overlooks the importance of some standard procedures that have been codified and no longer appear under the control of any individual or group; and it assumes general agreement on values when in fact many matters are the subject of great contention.

Still, much (but not all) of what happens at Heritage on a daily basis can be understood by thinking of it as a self-governing collegial body. The civil discourse with which faculty on opposite sides of an issue refute the arguments of "my learned colleague," the formation of elected faculty search committees that usually select deans from the faculty itself, the traditional refusal of deans to serve more than two five-year terms in order that they may return to the classroom or laboratory, the rotation of department chairs, and references to shared authority are all familiar examples of the processes that characterize much of Heritage College most of the time.

Of course, not all small liberal arts colleges can be reasonably characterized as collegiums. Many cannot be. On the other hand, some colleges and universities of other types might occasionally be appropriately described as collegiums, and collegial structures and processes can almost certainly be seen at least some of the time in at least some of the parts of most institutions.

Collegiality, seen as a community of individuals with shared interests, can probably be maintained only where regular face-to-face contact provides the necessary coordinating mechanisms and where programs and traditions are integrated enough to permit the development of a coherent culture. Size is probably thus a necessary but not sufficient condition of a collegium, and this limits the possibility of the development of collegiality on an institutional level to relatively small campuses.

As organizations grew, there would eventually come a point at which the probabilities of interaction between any two randomly selected members would be comparatively low. Increased size and numbers would lead toward specialization, which would tend to decrease communications and interaction. However, the traditional concept of community would still be viable in *subgroups* within institutions (such as departments). On some campuses, collections of these subgroups may share common interests and institutional commitments that, at least on some major issues, would override parochial concerns. These colleges might be thought of as "loosely coupled communities." But at other institutions, still greater size, complexity, and cosmopolitanism might create departments with tighter coupling to external groups (such as disciplinary associations) than to campus colleagues. Such situations present the ultimate irony—that under certain conditions, strong subunit collegiality inhibits or prevents the development of collegial governance in the institution as a whole.

This discussion of collegiums is based on analyses of small groups—that is, groups of people who communicate with each other frequently on a face-to-face basis over a period of time. The social forces that develop common attitudes, activities, and norms are not available to a large institution in the same way as they are to a small one. But even if many colleges and universi-

ties are not truly communities governed through collegial structures, the concept of the collegial model as an ideal type may have significant consequences for the ways in which these institutions are controlled.

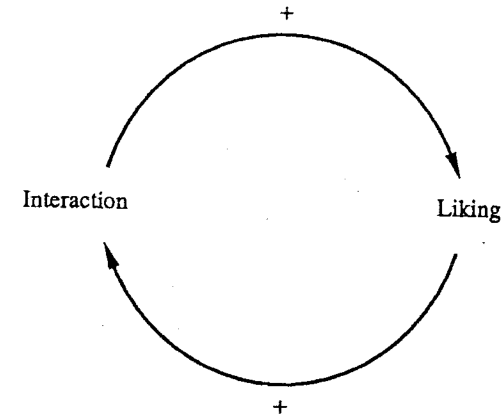
As is true of other organizational forms, there is nothing innately effective or ineffective in the collegium. Cohesiveness and the development of powerful norms may reduce effectiveness if the norms emphasize the maintenance of interpersonal rewards. However, if norms emphasize commitment to task performance, then cohesiveness can be used to improve organizational performance.

Loops of Interaction in Collegial Systems

Collegium members interact and influence each other through a network of continuous personal exchanges based on social attraction, value consensus, and reciprocity. Through these processes, the subsystems of Heritage have been integrated into an enduring institution whose ideals and beliefs transcend individual faculty members and are transmitted from generation to generation (Blau, 1964). Communities or collegiums such as Heritage College are sustained and reinforced by nonlinear loops that control the behavior of their members. These loops permit the faculty and administration of Heritage College to form a coherent and effective working group, even in the absence of an obvious hierarchical control system.

People who interact with each other in groups tend to like each other (Homans, 1950, 1961). As interaction increases, so does liking. The relationship between these factors is illustrated by the loop shown in Figure 10. It is a nonlinear interaction whose relationships are reciprocal (liking leads to interaction, and interaction leads to liking) and reversible (decreased interaction leads to decreased liking). The relationship does not hold under certain conditions; when the interaction is involuntary, when there is an authority relationship between the persons involved, when one of the persons engages in irritating behavior, or when the organization itself is not successful, increased interaction may not lead to increased liking. For example, if

Figure 10. The Relationship Between Interaction and Liking.



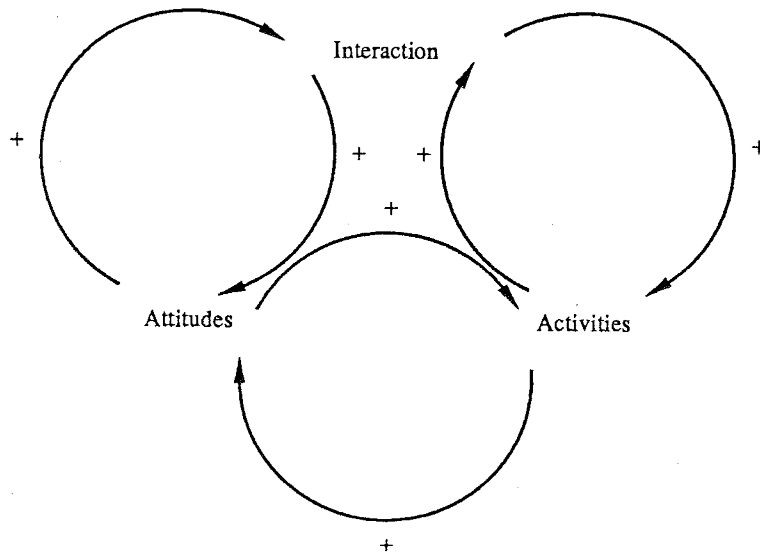
there were large status differences between them, a dean and a department chair might not come to like each other even as they spent more time together. Much of their contact would not be voluntary, and the relationship would consist in large measure of one person giving orders to, monitoring activities of, and controlling the behavior of the other. Interaction of this kind is more likely to produce alienation than liking.

But at Heritage, little attention is given to orders, monitoring, or controlling, and interaction sustains the liking that people have for each other. Because people like and are friendly to each other, they interact with each other frequently, as might be expected in a group whose members have similar backgrounds and interests. The relatively small differences in status between members mean that the chances of interaction are increased, because people are more likely to interact when they are of equal status and less likely to interact as status differences between them increase. And the increased interaction in turn reduces status differences still further.

As people at Heritage like each other more, they tend to spend more time together in both work and nonwork situations. This means that their activities increasingly become more alike, which further increases their interactions and thus their mutual liking. Interaction also increases the sharing of sentiments or

attitudes. The causal loops relating interaction, activities, and attitudes are shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11. Relationships Between Interaction, Attitudes, and Activities.



Obviously, spending more time with people who share the same values reinforces those values. When Heritage recruits new personnel, it gives a great deal of attention to appointing people whose values appear to be compatible with those of people already on campus. Applicants, in turn, usually base their continued interest in an appointment on whether they are intrigued or turned off by the Heritage environment. Because of the attention given to making good "matches" between people and the organization, Heritage appointments usually work out well, and new people tend to become closely integrated into the community. But if the values or behavior of the newcomer deviate from those of the group, certain things are likely to happen.

Members of the community will respond in a manner that indicates their disapproval—sometimes by overt attempts to correct the behavior ("We missed you at The Teas last night, John")

and sometimes by decreasing interaction (and thus withholding the reward of friendship). If the newcomer changes behavior to conform to Heritage's culture, interaction with colleagues will increase. If not, interactions between colleagues and the newcomer are likely to continue to diminish. They will not seek each other out as frequently on campus or socialize as much afterward. The recruit eventually will feel like an outsider and leave after a year or so. The mutual effects of liking, interaction, values, and activities are therefore strengthened both by the self-selection of candidates to the collegium and by the strong pressures for conformity found in a cohesive community. Members of such groups find the positive feelings of other group members to be particularly rewarding and do not wish to risk their diminution or loss.

As people in a group interact, share activities, and develop common values, the group develops norms—expectations about what people are supposed to do in given situations. Examples of norms at Heritage College are that it is wrong to criticize a colleague in public, that faculty members should not wear jeans to class, that administrators and faculty should address each other by first name, and that courses in the general education core should emphasize original sources. Informal norms control behavior even more powerfully than do written rules and regulations. Such shared understandings arise gradually and covertly through the interaction of group members, and for the most part are not even consciously considered by the group. Since norms often indicate a range of acceptable behavior, deviations from them can often bring group disapproval (Hackman, 1976). For example, faculty meetings are of the "town hall" variety at Heritage, and members are expected to participate at an appropriate level. A member who speaks too much is as likely to experience expressions of disapproval from colleagues as one who speaks too little.

The strength and clarity of norms are directly related to the frequency with which group members interact and the extent to which they participate in common activities. Since interaction and common activities decrease as group size increases (March and Simon, 1958), it would be expected that norms

would be a more powerful influence on behavior at small Heritage College than at a larger institution.

Tight and Loose Coupling in Collegial Systems

Heritage College, while not a wealthy institution, is fiscally stable. The existence of an established clientele enables it to perceive a reasonably placid, clustered, and munificent environment. Heritage's applicant pool is stable, comes from a small number of identifiable sources, and is large enough to permit the college to be moderately selective. Through continuing interaction with the alumni association and with counselors in certain "feeder" high schools, the administration is tightly coupled to the interests of this core clientele, and student support programs and administrative processes are likely to respond quickly as student interests change. But for the most part, the institution is only loosely coupled with other environmental elements. It pays little attention to national reports criticizing higher education, to federal policy on research and development, or to the politics of the local community. Changes considered important by some other institutions, such as the increase in secondary school enrollments of minority students or the provision of educational services to business corporations, have had no effect on Heritage.

The faculty are locals and loosely coupled to the academic guilds, so that the curriculum changes only slowly and subtly. Heritage students are generally not exposed to "cutting edge" material and esoteric specializations created by the latest research findings. However, there is tight coupling within the faculty itself. Changes in the content of the core curriculum are likely to lead to changes in other courses as well.

Values that guide the administrative and instructional subsystems at Heritage are tightly coupled and therefore consistent because of the significant overlap in their personnel. But these same values, such as autonomy and academic freedom, lead to loose coupling within the administrative systems, because giving directives challenges the assumption of equality. The dean is more likely to give the registrar a suggestion than an

order; therefore some record-keeping changes that the dean would like to see never happen. Similarly, procedures to follow up and assess the consequences of decisions are often lacking, so that once decisions have been reached, they may not be implemented, or, if implemented, they may not be evaluated. As a consequence, many agreements reached on campus are never reduced to writing; if they are, they get buried in files. The degree to which the campus relies on an oral tradition increases the potential for inaccuracy and misinterpretation. Some administrative operations at Heritage have not changed for many years even though the situations for which they were created have long since passed. There is little accountability in the system, because decisions are made by consensus, and no specific person is responsible. Moreover, even if responsibility for improper behavior could be fixed, campus norms resist the imposition of official sanctions, and informal sanctions (such as withdrawal of interaction) can have only a cumulative effect over an extended period of time.

Loose coupling at Heritage often makes the college look very inefficient, but there are benefits as well. The collegium's emphasis on thoroughness and deliberation makes it likely that a greater number of approaches to a problem will be explored, and in greater depth, than would be true if greater attention were paid to efficiency and precision. The willingness of members to themselves be influenced in exchange for the opportunity to influence others leads to the development of compromises that most people on campus can support. Through this process of extended discussion, campus members can ensure the eventual adoption of workable solutions rather than engaging only in idealistic and unachievable rhetoric. Full participation also means that members will be likely to understand the implications of their deliberations and to be committed to them. As understanding increases, the need for interpretative rules and regulations decreases, and as commitment rises, the need for systems of monitoring and control that inevitably lead to alienation diminishes. While attention to maintaining and strengthening the social ties that bind the collegium together has many advantages as a means of coordination, it may also lead to over-

looking deficiencies in performance. The term "community of scholars" may itself be self-contradictory. Good scholarship requires the critical assessment of colleagues' work, so that strengthening scholarship may weaken the sense of community (Weick, 1983a).

Effective Leadership in Collegial Systems

President Henderson and the other members of the collegial body are constantly engaged in processes of social exchange (Blau, 1964). For Henderson, serving in the presidential role provides rewards of status, of service, and of support; for the other members, having a competent, sensible, and supportive person such as Henderson as president is seen as providing benefits to the group. Because of the expectation that Henderson will have more influence over individual members than they will have over him, the existence of a president somewhat diminishes the individual autonomy of every other member. But the president's activities also provide the group with increased prestige and resources. The satisfactory exchange of these benefits over time leads to mutual feelings of obligation, gratitude, and trust.

Henderson is more influential than the other group members and is accorded higher status. He is a leader partly because he is seen as having expertise in activities the group considers to be important and partly because he is seen as conforming to the group's norms. He relies on expert and referent power to exert his influence. Reward power and coercive power have no place at the college, and even legitimate power is suspect. Both the president and the faculty realize that reliance on legal authority is an admission of weakness. Henderson knows that while he could probably win any campus battle because of his superior status, the long-term consequences of doing so would be to lose, rather than gain, power.

But, in fact, there are few situations in which the president's interests are different from those of the faculty. At Heritage, as in other groups, the higher the rank of a person in a group, the more nearly that person's activities will conform to the expectations of the group. The group creates its own leaders, who are typically drawn from the group itself and who remain members of it in spirit. President Henderson was selected by his colleagues because they believed him to exemplify the norms of Heritage College—they saw him as "the most of us and the best of us." His perceived effectiveness at Heritage is likely to depend on his fulfilling the presidential role—that is, behaving as the collegium's members believe he ought to. Among other things, this means making decisions that are "right"—that is, decisions that prove to be acceptable to the group.

President Henderson is believed by his colleagues to make major contributions to the welfare of the collegium, and they receive his suggestions with considerable respect. However, if he were to make demands on the group that they considered unfair, their respect and liking for him (and their willingness to accede to his suggestions) would decrease. His leadership therefore is based on mutual influence, and Henderson's ability to influence other people depends on his willingness in turn to be influenced by them (Homans, 1961). While Henderson must follow the college's norms, because of his high status he can exercise disproportionate influence over the development of those norms. Indeed, because he has demonstrated his adherence to college values in the past, he has also earned the privilege of engaging in a limited amount of deviant behavior (Hackman, 1976; Hollander, 1985). It is in this sense that Henderson is "part creature and part creator of the organization in which he works" (Demerath, Stephens, and Taylor, 1967, p. 41).

President Henderson's attitudes and activities, and the norms in which he believes, are influenced whenever he interacts with others. But because he enjoys higher rank, his influence on them is likely to be even more important. If Heritage were to grow much larger, Henderson would be able to spend less time on average with individuals and therefore would be less influential. With the decline in interaction would also come a parallel decline in common attitudes and activities and the clarity of norms at Heritage. Social control would be reduced. Henderson might feel the need to introduce rules and regulations in an effort to regain influence and in doing so would still further reduce interaction and increase status differences. This is

one way in which collegial structures may become transformed into bureaucratic ones.

Persons in leadership positions in collegial systems are expected to influence without coercion, to direct without sanctions, and to control without inducing alienation. They must provide benefits that other participants see as a fair exchange for yielding some degree of their autonomy. Their selection as leaders provides them significant leverage to influence their communities, their new status has been legitimated by the participation of their constituencies, and these constituents have certified, at least initially, both their competence and their commitment to group values. Leaders in collegial settings should follow certain rules if they wish to retain their effectiveness.

Live Up to the Norms of the Group. Leaders exemplify the values of the group to an exceptional degree. They are able to exert disproportionate influence because they serve as role models, and their perceived conformity even allows them some freedom to engage in occasional deviant behavior. Conforming to group norms engenders trust, and this trust (and the leverage it confers) can be lost if a leader is seen as persistently acting in a manner at odds with the values of the group.

Conform to Group Expectations of Leadership. Conforming to group norms need not require collegial leaders to be passive; indeed, groups expect their leaders to be aggressive and to initiate action in some circumstances. If a group expects a leader to make certain decisions, they must be made or the leader will lose status. This is particularly true in an emergency, when "any failure on his part to initiate interaction, to take the initiative . . . will make him that much less the leader" (Homans, 1950, p. 428). The student takeover of the president's office during the divestiture demonstrations at Heritage was just such a crisis. As it was unprecedented, there was no consensus on the "right thing to do." Henderson's actions were immediate and decisive, but because they were clearly consistent with Heritage norms and traditions, faculty were not at all upset that they had not been consulted. To the contrary, his actions reconfirmed their judgments about his expertise.

Use Established Channels of Communication. Since a collegial group has established understandings of what is appropriate, members come to expect that both formal and informal communications will follow certain customs. Deviating from these customs is apt to create confusion. Leaders may also create confusion when they praise or blame members in front of others. Doing so raises or lowers their social rank and thus may change group interaction in unpredictable ways.

Do Not Give an Order That Will Not Be Obeyed. Collegial leaders can give orders, as long as those receiving the orders see them as fair and appropriate. To give an order that will be obeyed is to confirm the tacit understanding of an exchange; to give an order that is questioned is to question the relationship and the position of the leader.

Listen. The essence of leadership in a collegial group is displaying marked conformity to group expectations. The leader can best do this when there is a clear understanding of group norms and values. The leader is at the center of a communications web. The leader may initiate the interaction but then must listen and overcome the tendency of leaders to talk. The leader should acknowledge the importance and relevance of the group values that are expressed and accept them without taking a moral or judgmental stand. Influence requires interaction; to influence, one must allow oneself to be influenced. In permitting others to talk or argue, the leader is not abrogating responsibility, because in any social exchange the leader's values will ultimately carry more weight than those of others.

Reduce Status Differences. Open communication is critical to the maintenance of a collegial body whose members are viewed as equals. Since status differentials inhibit communication, people who wish to be influential in a collegium should attempt to reduce such differences where they exist. That is why President Henderson encourages all faculty to call him Bud, why in public pronouncements he always identifies himself as a spokesperson and agent for the faculty and emphasizes their good works, and why he is often self-deprecating about

his own abilities (Blau, 1964) and apologetic about conspicuous status symbols (such as his large office and chauffeur-driven college car, which "are just to impress the donors so we can get more from them"). The president often visits faculty in their offices rather than his, and makes frequent opportunities to socialize with them.

Encourage Self-Control. The leader in a collegium has the ultimate responsibility for controlling behavior but little authority to do so. Moreover, uses of traditional organizational sanctions are likely to be considered illegitimate by the group; recourse to them will be taken as a sign of weakness and will increase alienation, thereby reducing still further the leader's effectiveness. Good leaders create the conditions in which the group will discipline itself (Homans, 1950) by appealing to relevant group norms and values and by making deviations more publicly visible to activate controls exercised by other group members. Leaders remove the onus of others' admissions of error (thereby making the detection and correction of errors easier) by treating errors as useful learning experiences that contribute to personal and institutional growth.

Chapter 5

The Bureaucratic Institution: Rationalizing Structure and Decision Making

People's Community College is a two-year public institution in a middle- and working-class suburb of a large metropolitan area. The college opened in an urban storefront in 1962, and in 1975 it finally moved into a large, attractive megastructure on a permanent twenty-five-acre site. The contemporary concrete-and-glass facade gives the appearance of a successful corporation's headquarters. People's offers transfer programs that parallel the first two years of a baccalaureate program, as well as a wide range of career programs in technical, business, and health science areas. Its mission statement emphasizes access, low cost, career preparation, and meeting community needs.

There are 5,700 degree students, many of them studying part time in the evening. Many students are working, married, or both. Their average age is twenty-eight, and most graduated near the middle of their high school class. Additional students are enrolled in nondegree certificate programs and adult education courses. All students reside in the city and commute. Minority enrollment peaked at 21 percent in 1982 and is declining.

All the faculty in the transfer programs have master's degrees, usually from a nearby university. Half have a year of addi-

tional graduate work, and 10 percent have doctorates. Most of the faculty in the career programs have baccalaureate degrees, and half have master's degrees. The faculty is represented by a local chapter of a national union. There is a faculty senate, but its membership overlaps the union leadership, and the senate's role is unclear. People's was originally part of the municipal school system, and many faculty and administrators have had some secondary school teaching experience.

President Peter Potter came to People's from the administrative vice-presidency of a similar institution. As the third president of People's, he followed the extended term of a benign but paternalistic founding president and the tumultuous and disastrous three-year tenure of his successor, which included a bitter two-week faculty strike. Potter's expertise is in management and community relations.

Students view their educational experience primarily in practical terms, and most have clear vocational objectives. Few students participate in campus organizations, and many maintain closer ties with high school friends than with fellow students. Faculty are dispersed throughout the metropolitan area and spend little nonteaching time on campus.

Current issues on campus include state pressure for student assessment examinations, the intrusiveness of some local trustees who think the college should be run "more like a business," transfer articulation disagreements with local four-year colleges, implementation by the new academic vice-president of a management-by-objectives program, and negotiations with local firms over the expansion of contract training activities.

People's Community College as a Bureaucratic System

We have seen how activities at Heritage College are coordinated by internally generated norms that are continually reinforced by face-to-face interactions of participants. In general, the larger the organization, the greater the number of positions between the top leader and the ordinary member (Homans, 1950). As organizations grow, the number of subunits (such as departments) increases, these subunits become increasingly specialized, and administrative structures become more complex

(Blau, 1973). Interaction decreases, and norms become confused and no longer serve to control behavior. More structured means of interaction are required, and the institution becomes bureaucratized. The same processes that create bureaucracies in other settings do so in colleges and universities as well (Stroup, 1966).

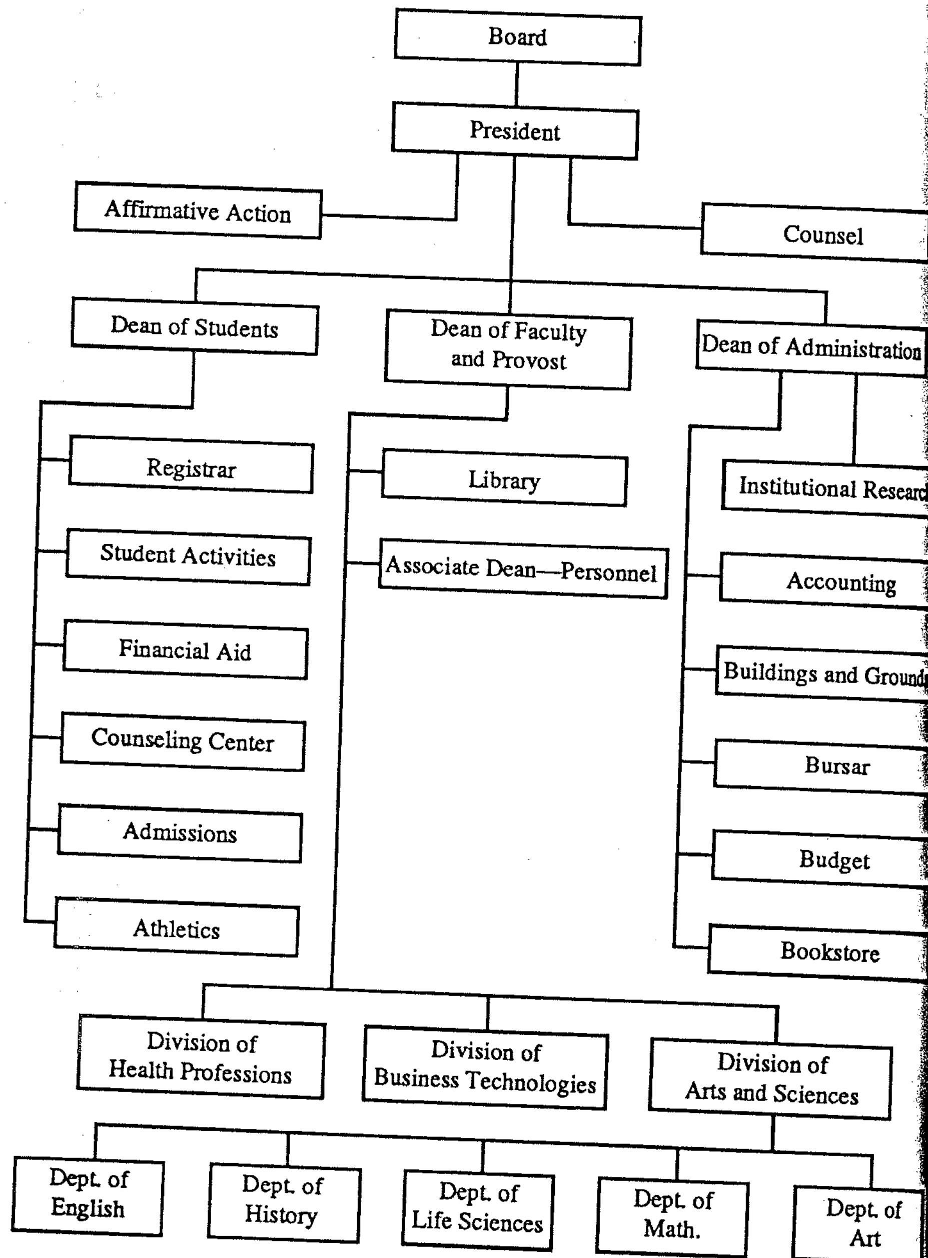
Collegial interaction may still exist, but it becomes a characteristic of subgroups rather than the total group. To a great degree, campus constituencies find themselves isolated from each other, with neither a consistent culture of belief nor face-to-face communication through which to coordinate activity. Rules and regulations become the important mediators of interaction, and administrators become specialists in distinctive areas. Administrators spend little time with faculty and talk instead to other administrators and to external nonfaculty audiences in state legislatures, professional associations, and boardrooms.

The word *bureaucracy* is so burdened by connotations of rigidity, waste, and lack of human concern that merely mentioning it in the context of college life almost always provokes responses ranging from helpless shrugs to cries of outrage. A useful discussion of the college as a bureaucracy must therefore begin by using the word in a descriptive and analytical rather than a pejorative sense. In this chapter, we will consider *bureaucracy* to refer to "the type of organization designed to accomplish large-scale administrative tasks by systematically coordinating the work of many individuals" (Blau, 1956). Bureaucratic structures are established to efficiently relate organizational programs to the achievement of specified goals. When behavior is standardized, the activities and processes of organizations are made more predictable, so that the organization can become more efficient and effective.

Characteristics of Bureaucratic Systems

People's Community College can be most clearly described within the context of that icon of all bureaucracies, the organizational chart. The chart of People's shown in Figure 12 has been greatly simplified; there are many more people employed

Figure 12. Organization Chart of People's Community College.



at People's than indicated here, and a complete chart would list every existing office.

The vertical lines connecting the offices are referred to as "lines of authority" or "lines of communication." They represent the way work is supposed to flow through the college; information and reports are presumed to flow up the chart to President Potter and through him to the board, and their directives are to flow downward. Organizational structures make a difference, and the organization chart of People's Community College contains important information that might be overlooked by the casual observer. For example, the number of levels between the highest and the lowest offices on the chart can be counted. Organizations with relatively few levels are considered to be "flat," and those with more levels are considered to be "tall." Fewer levels lead to less distortion in communications as information flows through the system. At the same time, it means that more people report to each supervisor, and therefore they cannot be as closely monitored. Higher education organizations are typically much flatter than business organizations of comparable size. At People's, there are only two levels between the highest supervisory office (President Potter) and the lowest (department chairs). A business firm of comparable size might have many more levels between them.

The existence (or nonexistence) of an office on the chart and its location in the hierarchy are a signal both inside and outside the campus of the importance of the substantive area. Location on the chart has a practical effect as well. People located near each other on the chart are more likely to interact with—and therefore to mutually influence—each other than people who are distant on the chart. People's is large, and the attention of senior administrators is limited. Those who report directly to senior people are more likely to be able to bring things to their attention—for example, requests for resources—than those who do not. At People's, it is not likely that President Potter believes intercollegiate athletics (which reports to the dean of students) to be as important as does the president of nearby Darwin College, to whom the athletic director reports directly. And since the values of senior officers are likely to differ because of their

roles, the fortunes of programs will often depend on the office to which they report. It is likely, for example, that more attention is paid to the fiscal aspects and less to the academic aspects of the bookstore at People's, which reports to the dean of administration, than would be the case if the bookstore reported to the dean of faculty. The structure of the college thus affects how offices will interact and influence each other. Structure has a major effect on the patterns of loose and tight coupling between offices.

Organizational structure also affects who will be responsible for gathering certain kinds of information, an important issue because whoever collects information also determines how it is to be communicated and evaluated (Cyert and March, 1963). Since data are often equivocal, and since many data potentially available are filtered out by the expectations and experiences of the person encountering them, the assignment of responsibility for data gathering is really an assignment to define the environment for the organization. It makes a difference whether the collection, analysis, and dissemination of student outcomes data, for example, are a responsibility of the dean of students, the director of institutional research, or the director of admissions.

People's as an organization has been consciously structured to facilitate certain organizational processes. But since it is not possible to optimize all values, structures that increase communication between two specific units are likely to decrease communication with other units. Putting the budget office and the bookstore at the same organizational level under the dean of administration makes it more likely that their work will be closely coordinated and that the financial viability of auxiliary enterprises will be protected. At the same time, it makes coordination between the bookstore and the library more difficult because they are supervised by different administrators. Every structure not only provides certain benefits to the organization but at the same time makes other benefits more difficult to achieve. There is no perfect structure, and the creation of structure is therefore a matter of trade-offs.

In addition to the organization chart, there are a number of other specific attributes of People's that would be expected

in a bureaucracy (Anderson, 1963; Weber, 1969). For example, the functions of each office are codified in rules and regulations, and officers are expected to respond to each other in terms of their roles, not their personalities. A new directive on financial aid policy issued by President Potter should elicit the same response even if someone else had been president. In the same way, the new rule would be expected to be administered at People's in the same way by each of the financial aid officers, and all students to whom the rule applied to be treated identically.

The emphasis on written job descriptions and on rules and regulations that guide behavior increases organizational certainty and efficiency at People's. Deans, registrars, and financial aid officers fill specific roles, but the role and the person are not identical. People filling roles can be replaced by others (as long as they are technically competent) without having a noticeable impact on the functioning of the college. Rules and regulations have been created at People's to deal with situations that occur on a regular basis. Rules are one way in which People's coordinates its activities and ensures an acceptable level of predictability in the actions of various offices. Rules also serve as a means by which the college transmits to present personnel what has been learned about appropriate solutions to problems in the past. This means that each problem does not have to be considered as unique, and each new employee does not confront the problem with a blank slate (Cyert and March, 1963). Although college administrators and faculty often become frustrated with rules, rules serve many functions, and by themselves they are neither good nor bad. As Perrow (1979) comments, "they protect as well as restrict; coordinate as well as block; channel effort as well as limit it; permit universalism as well as provide sanctuary for the inept; maintain stability as well as retard change; permit diversity as well as restrict it. They constitute the organizational memory and the means for change" (p. 30).

People's has developed a systematic division of labor, rights, and responsibilities and enforces it through a hierarchical control system. Individuals know what their jobs are, and they understand the limits of their own responsibilities and those of

others. This formal division of labor serves many functions. It prevents duplicating activities, it minimizes the possibility of things "falling between the cracks," and it makes it possible for people to specialize and to develop high levels of expertise in specific areas. In the financial aid office, for example, one professional specializes in federal and state grants and entitlements, while another focuses on bank loans and work-study packages. Together they know more and are more efficient in dealing with issues within their specific spheres of interest than would be two people who shared the same general knowledge about both areas.

Effective and efficient operation of the college depends on compliance with rules and regulations, and compliance at People's is not left to chance or to goodwill. Instead, the organization is organized as a hierarchy. The activities of every lower office are supervised by the next higher office on the organization chart. Administrative rules, actions, and decisions at the college are formulated in writing. The issues with which People's must deal are complex, and the incumbents filling various roles change over time. If rules are to be applied uniformly, there has to be a written record of their interpretation that can serve as precedent for implementation in the future. At People's, written records are kept of trustee resolutions, faculty senate actions, presidential decisions, registrar interpretations, union contracts, and every other facet of institutional functioning. Not everything known by anyone in the college can be codified, and no one in the college can know everything there is to be known. Therefore, rules must also be developed for determining what information is to be available in different offices, and for identifying the channels through which such information will move. These have been codified at People's through procedures such as the use of preprinted "buck slips" by which a single check mark sends copies of a document through any one of six different distribution systems. The information that People's collects and retains, the forms on which it is stored, and the conventions by which they analyze their data affect the college's perception of its environment (Pfeffer, 1981b) and suggest what alternative actions the college may consider (Cyert and March, 1963).

Administrative promotions at People's are based on merit. In some social systems, promotion in rank is based on birth; in others, it depends on personality or other attributes. But in bureaucracies, technical competence and performance are what count. The higher one is on the organizational chart, the greater competence and expertise one is assumed to have. This is why bureaucrats are appointed by their presumably more expert superiors, and not elected. This relationship between organizational status and merit is important, since it reinforces the willingness of subordinates to accept the directives of superiors by associating rank with expertise.

Bureaucracies such as People's are rational organizations. This does not necessarily mean that People's always makes good decisions, or even necessarily efficient ones. Rather, it implies that at People's there is some conscious attempt to link means to ends, resources to objectives, and intentions to activities. "Rationality refers to consistent, value-maximizing choice within specified constraints" (Allison, 1971, p. 30). The hierarchical nature of People's presumes that much of this process of determining goals and deciding on how to achieve them will occur in the senior levels of administration and in particular gives a preeminent role to President Potter.

Rationality requires as a first step the articulation of objectives. The more precise and measurable these objectives can be made, the more accurate will be the calculations of costs and benefits of alternative courses of action. People's emphasizes long-range planning and develops definable subgoals and schedules for their completion. The new vice-president for academic affairs was selected in good part because of having had experience in this type of activity. Administrators give attention to the collection and analysis of data that permits the selection of alternatives that maximize the achievement of stated organizational goals. The development of specific offices (such as institutional research) and procedures (such as management information systems) for this purpose is an important organizational priority.

Faculty and administrators at People's often grumble about bureaucratic procedures and red tape, and it is easy for them to overlook some of the advantages of their system. For

example, existence of written rules and regulations that seem to pose barriers to faculty or student interests in fact also have the complementary function of limiting administrative discretion. Administrators and faculty who function within their roles must apply the same criteria to everyone, ensuring fairness and equity rather than personal favoritism, and subordinates are less subject to administrative caprice. The emphasis on rationality, performance, and expertise also limits the extent to which incompetent people can move into higher positions and reduces reliance on extraneous factors such as social status, sex, or religion in personnel decisions. But perhaps the greatest benefits of bureaucratic systems are those explained by Max Weber: "Experience tends universally to show that the purely bureaucratic type of administrative organization . . . is . . . the most rational known means of carrying out imperative control over human beings. It is superior to any other form in precision, in stability, in the stringency of its discipline, and in its reliability. . . . However much people may complain about the 'evils' of bureaucracy, it would be sheer illusion to think for a moment that continuous administrative work can be carried out in any field except by means of officials working in offices. . . . The choice is only between bureaucracy and dilettantism in the field of administration" (Weber, 1952, p. 24).

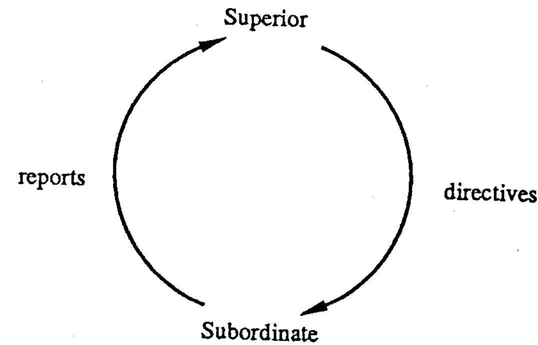
The legitimacy of colleges and universities and their support by society depend at least as much on the appearance of regularity and stability as on the quality of their technical performance. As long as this continues to be true, bureaucratic structures and patterns may be expected to be an essential component of institutional life at People's Community College.

Loops of Interaction in Bureaucratic Systems

People's, like any organization, is constructed of interacting subsystems. The characteristic that identifies People's as a bureaucracy, however, is the expectation that these interactions will be influenced primarily by legitimated hierarchical relationships. People's can be considered as composed of hierarchically arranged relationships between superiors and subordinates. In

such relationships, as depicted in Figure 13, a superior gives directions to a subordinate, who complies and submits a report to the superior. On the basis of the report, the superior then prepares new directives. Each event as it takes place provides feedback that affects its successor as the superior discovers the consequences of the directive and the subordinate is informed of the extent to which performance was acceptable. The interaction not only gets work done but also reinforces the control structure of the organization itself. A decisive statement by President Potter, once accepted and acted on by the dean of faculty, increases the president's tendency to make decisive statements and in turn the dean's willingness to accept them.

Figure 13. Relationship of Superior and Subordinate at People's Community College.

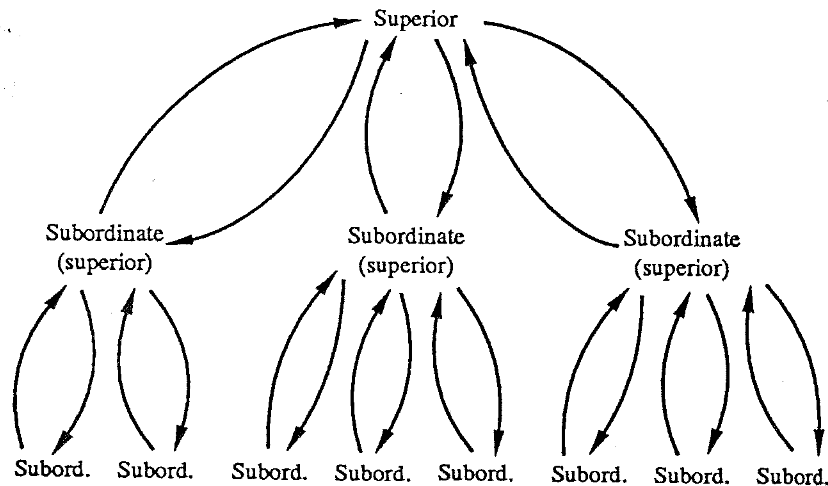


The horizontal relationships between equals that control behavior at Heritage are much less effective at People's. When personal interaction occurs outside the superior-subordinate relationship, it often conflicts with, rather than reinforces, the processes desired by institutional management. President Potter, for example, likes to communicate certain information to staff members through the weekly *People's News and Views* newsletter. But most people find out about really interesting happenings (many of which never make *News and Views*) through the informal grapevine.

Because of the hierarchical nature of People's, superiors

at one organizational level are subordinates at the next lower level, and so the organization can be depicted as a continuous linkage of levels, as shown in Figure 14. Superiors give directives to subordinates as problems are encountered for the first time, but some problems are encountered so frequently that they become part of standard operating procedures (SOPs). SOPs are the systematic processes guided by rules and regulations through which reports are prepared, forms are processed, budgets are developed, and the other work of People's gets done. For example, the processing of class selections by students, the preparation of class rosters, and the determination of student academic eligibility are all incorporated into separate SOPs at People's that permit each process to run smoothly and allow other parts of the college to predict those processes.

Figure 14. Linking Vertical Loops at People's Community College.



SOPs are in turn grouped into sets, or programs (Allison, 1971) that permit coordinated action in specific situations. The SOPs previously mentioned, for example, are part of a program at People's that might be thought of as "class enrollment." Among other programs at People's are those that direct the activities of "annual budgeting," "degree approval," and "faculty

appointment." Clusters of programs initiated under certain conditions can be considered in the aggregate as organizational repertoires. People's, for example, has a "fall registration" repertoire that includes not only the class enrollment program mentioned earlier but also other, related programs, such as those for fee payments and academic advisement. It also has budget and personnel repertoires that are regularly implemented.

SOPs, programs, and repertoires make certain interactions more likely than others, and these eventually come to be considered as a "given" by the organization. They all help to establish a consistency of organizational perception and functioning through the creation of precedents that then direct future behavior. Once budgets are determined, decisions are reached, or responsibilities allocated at People's, they tend not to change (Cyert and March, 1963; Perrow, 1979).

Vertical bureaucratic loops can make some aspects of institutional functioning more effective. But they can cause ineffectiveness as well. For example, they can lead to "vicious circles" (Masuch, 1985) similar to those created at People's when the academic dean announced new work-load rules to increase faculty office hours. The resulting alienation of faculty actually reduced rather than increased the time faculty spent in their offices, leading to the creation of additional rules and further alienation. In the same way, vicious circles can create self-reinforcing ideas that take on a life of their own. Processes initially set up to support goals may become goals in themselves; perpetuating the means may become the ends. At People's, for example, the development of management information systems created large quantities of data that then required further interpretation and explanation. This led to a need for more data and the hiring of people who believed in the importance of collecting and analyzing information (Feldman and March, 1981). As a result, People's allocates significant resources to its management information system, although the system itself is now so complex that managers find it virtually useless for their daily needs. The importance of such information is one of the rational myths of the college. The availability of computerized data is considered by internal administrative groups and by external

political groups to be a sign of managerial effectiveness and efficiency, even though there is little evidence these data have much impact on what actually happens at People's.

The very programs created by People's to enable it to repeat its successes ironically may inhibit its perception of new problems (Starbuck, 1976), and the assurances of reliability that are made possible by SOPs, programs, and repertoires may prove to be the greatest barriers to organizational effectiveness, particularly during times of rapid environmental change. Systems of accountability may lead to "red tape" so that perfectly reasonable actions and rules generated in one part of the organization are thwarted by perfectly reasonable actions and rules created in another. Situations encountered for the first time may create confusion and "buck passing" to higher levels. Heads of organizations of all kinds, from presidents of the United States to academic department chairs at People's, have bemoaned their inability to overcome the inertia of the bureaucratic system. Ongoing processes are difficult to stop and new ones often impossible to start. As a consequence, the ability of leaders to engage in strategic decision making is severely circumscribed, and bureaucracies often go on doing what they have always done and paying relatively little attention to what their participants (sometimes even their most powerful participants) want them to do.

Bureaucratic elements are present to some extent in all parts of all institutions (even the philosophy faculty at Heritage College are on personnel "lines," teach courses at times listed in the class schedule, and keep records of student achievement). Some offices at People's are more bureaucratic than others (compare, for example, the registrar's office, whose activities occur in regular cycles and are guided by extensive procedure and policy documents, with the public relations office, which seems to function in a state of constant disorder as it responds daily to unanticipated events). Some types of institutions appear in general to be more bureaucratic than others (People's has more departments, more regulations, more planning systems, more formal evaluation, and less subunit autonomy, and is therefore more bureaucratic than Heritage). In general, public institu-

tions are likely to be more bureaucratic than independent institutions, because they are often embedded in bureaucratic systems of local and state government. This may often require that certain aspects of personnel processes and administrative procedures in higher education institutions be consistent with those of other public agencies.

Are bureaucratic systems effective at People's? The board of trustees (composed mainly of local businesspeople) and the administration believe that they permit them to be efficient and responsive to emerging needs. Many of the faculty had previously taught in public school systems. They accept administrative dominance as long as it is not oppressive. The environment provides clusters of acceptable if not overabundant resources. The technology of People's, restricted to introductory liberal arts courses and semiprofessional training, is relatively clear. Students differ in level of preparation, but the college has developed batteries of placement examinations so that faculty face few unprecedented problems.

The essence of contingency theory is that different forms of organization and administration prove to be the most effective under different conditions. People's has responded to its particular environmental and technical problems by creating a relatively mechanistic organization that appears to work and that in general is accepted by the participants. The problem of dualism of controls exists at People's, as it does at Heritage, but in both institutions, conflict between them is muted because one control system so clearly dominates the other. At People's, administrative authority is supreme. It is reflected not only in the way decisions are made but also in the culture of the institution. Adherence to rules has created a coherent but in many ways superficial culture that engages the activities but not the full devotion of many participants. People work hard, and many are committed to educating less advantaged youth. But most have a calculative involvement with the college, arriving and leaving at times dictated by the union contract and cautiously assessing changes that might lead to personal disadvantage or inconvenience.

Other institutions, facing more turbulent environments or

complex technologies, would not find the system at People's acceptable, although they would almost certainly adopt bureaucratic structures and processes in some subunits of the organization. We would expect, therefore, that while bureaucratic systems may not be effective in some parts of some institutions all the time, they would reflect a significant aspect of reality at almost all institutions at some times. While bureaucracies have many significant weaknesses, bureaucratic structure and processes are ubiquitous in colleges and universities. Much of what happens in most institutions is influenced by the SOPs, programs, and scenarios created by the legitimacy of hierarchy and reinforced by structures and rules. This is what allows colleges and universities to continue to perform their functions even as goals are disputed, crises occur, and the external environment becomes more turbulent.

Nonroutine tasks are difficult to bureaucratize. But in general, "when the tasks people perform are well understood, predictable, routine, and repetitive, a bureaucratic structure is the most efficient" (Perrow, 1979, p. 162). It may also be that under these same conditions of relative certainty, bureaucratic structures and processes also lead to greater satisfaction of participants (Morse, 1970). When structure and technology "fit," an organization may be more productive and its members may have a greater feeling of competence and accomplishment.

Tight and Loose Coupling in Bureaucratic Systems

Relating the idea of a bureaucracy to the concept of loose coupling may initially appear contradictory. After all, bureaucratic structure emphasizes precisely the directive and control functions that appear to most tightly couple administrative and instructional subsystems. Tight linkages are certainly not unusual in nonacademic institutions: in many, "managers decide, performers implement; managers command, performers obey; managers coordinate, performers carry out special tasks" (Scott, 1981, p. 254). The administrative and instructional subsystems of People's are by no means as tightly coupled internally as they are in many business organizations, but they are much more tightly coupled than at Heritage.

Tight coupling in one part of an organization leads to loose coupling in another. The various SOPs that make up a program, for example, are more tightly coupled than those in unrelated programs. The close alignment between management structure and institutional production at People's is possible because of loose coupling between the technical subsystem and the environment. As work and management become more tightly coupled, work and environment become more loosely coupled and the institution becomes more of a closed system. Most of the environmental input into People's comes through President Potter, and the curriculum of People's is much more administratively controlled than that at Heritage. Although departmental faculty design courses, new programs are more likely to emerge as a result of the interaction of the president, academic vice-president, deans, and department chairs than as a consequence of faculty debate. This is not necessarily dysfunctional, since President Potter is more tightly coupled to community needs than the faculty. Faculty are locals, rather than cosmopolitans, and the president and senior members of his academic administrative staff are more "professional" than the faculty (they on average have higher credentials). In addition, the purpose of major parts of the educational program is primarily administrative and technical (to articulate most efficiently with programs of four-year institutions) rather than educational (reaching consensus on the knowledge of greatest worth). The degree of professional autonomy involved is relatively small.

To a limited extent, People's can affect the degree to which organizational elements will be tightly or loosely coupled by the way it designs its own structure. There is a tendency to see both problems and solutions in structural terms. When the system does not appear to be functioning effectively, or the quality of performance is declining, President Potter's typical response is to reorganize. Sometimes the change is primarily a symbolic act that indicates that "something is being done," even though it has no instrumental consequences. But at other times, reorganizing severs existing connections between units, thereby loosening the coupling between them, and creates new connections that tighten coupling.

Even though coupling between administration and in-

struction is tighter at People's than in many other institutions, achievements based on plans are still elusive for many reasons. For example, the status differences created by the hierarchy at People's inhibit the full transmission of information between levels. Subordinates, aware of the consequences to them of passing negative information upward, tend to withhold data that might reflect poorly on their own performance or that might anger their superior. The very information for which Potter has the greatest need, because it indicates organizational problems, is precisely the information that is most likely to be either distorted or withheld. In addition, while Potter may tell subordinates what they need to know to do their jobs, he often does not provide them with operating discretion or enough background information to place a directive in organizational context. When subordinates encounter equivocal situations, they must therefore respond according to the directives, even when carrying out the directive in that specific situation might be adverse to larger organizational interests. The distortion or blocking of communications means that it is difficult for subordinates to clarify confusing or ambiguous directives. In response, subordinates may minimally comply by observing only the letter of the law (Katz and Kahn, 1978, p. 444).

Effective Leadership in Bureaucratic Systems

The work of individuals can be coordinated and controlled by having them follow the directives of a superior. The most effective organizations are those in which the processes through which coordination is attempted are accepted as legitimate. Attempts to exercise control by a person not seen as having the right to do so can lead to alienation and refusal to comply.

There are several different ways in which legitimation can be achieved. One way is through tradition, whereby activities may be coordinated by accepting orders from someone because "it's always been done that way." Work can also be coordinated when people follow the directives of a charismatic leader whose personal authority they accept. Traditional or charismatic legitimation can coordinate work, but there are costs to organizational functioning and stability that become particularly apparent when changes in leadership take place. The boss's daughter or the chief's son may initially be accepted because of tradition, but they may not be as effective as their fathers. The charismatic leader's lieutenant may take over but may lack that magical ability to keep the organization together. An alternative to control by tradition or charisma is to create a system in which people accept directives from others as legitimate because they are consistent with rules or norms that all accept. Bureaucratic authority at People's rests on a common agreement about rules, including an understanding of what the legitimate range of activities and behaviors of a president is and of the appropriate responses of faculty, students, and other administrators.

This acceptance has profound effects, not only on how people make sense of the college but also on how people behave. For example, before President Potter took office, he was somewhat unsure about his judgments and decisions and often hesitant in his statements. When he became president, people seemed more willing to accept his decisions. He consequently became more confident in his judgment and more able to make authoritative statements, which in turn led people to have increased confidence in him. The acceptance of decisions by subordinates changed Potter's behavior, which made subordinate acceptance of decisions (as well as further changes in Potter's behavior) even more likely in the future. In the absence of the legitimate authority to make decisions conferred by his role, the opposite reaction might have occurred and Potter could have become more hesitant to make judgments as his previous decisions were ignored or rejected.

On the organizational chart, President Potter can be seen as at the apex of a pyramid—the ultimate recipient of all information that flows from the bottom of the organization to the top, and the ultimate decision maker and initiator of all directives that flow down from the top through channels of communication and authority. Deans and other senior executives have similar status in their own organizational subunits. The bureaucratic ethos of competence-based mobility suggests that since those who are more rational get promoted, deans are more ra-

tional than department chairs, vice-presidents more rational than deans, and the person who becomes president the most rational of all. Potter's main source of power is the legitimation conferred by the legal and organizational system, but this can be reinforced by the expertise he demonstrates through the performance of his role. Potter believes in utilizing the resources of his office to motivate others, and he often influences their performance through his power to reward and much less frequently through his power to punish. As a consequence, he has little referent power at People's; he is respected, but few things at the college happen because others identify with him and eagerly embrace his latest projects.

The core of bureaucratic management is seen to be decision making, and Potter is expected to be a rational analyst who can not only calculate the most efficient means by which goals can be achieved but also design the systems of control and coordination that direct the activities of others. He is also cast as a heroic leader, able to articulate noble values and goals, to solve the most complex problems, to energize and motivate people, and to direct an efficient and effective organization. "Much of the organization's power is held by the hero, and great expectations are raised because people trust him to solve problems and fend off threats from the environment" (Baldridge, Curtis, Ecker, and Riley, 1978, p. 44). Bureaucratic structures rationalize the hero role. By legitimating leaders, they give them some of the aura of heroes, so that merely by the nature of their office they have more influence. As heroic leader, President Potter can justifiably accept credit for significant institutional advances whether or not he caused them, but at the same time he risks being blamed for failures that cannot be otherwise explained. The image of the heroic leader can be seen in many higher education processes and arenas. Examples include:

- the advertisement prepared by the trustee committee for the search that ended with Potter's appointment, which listed almost superhuman qualities and competencies expected of candidates
- reports of national task forces and commissions that call for "stronger presidential leadership," either to arrest significant decline or to forge brave new worlds
- touting of successive management systems (program planning and budgeting system, zero-based budgeting, management by objectives, strategic planning) that will increase rationality and finally permit presidents to "take charge" of their institutions
- calling for presidents not only to clarify institutional goals and objectives as the first step toward increasing effectiveness but to create better goals and objectives

Almost any book on management will contain lengthy lists prescribing presumably effective leader behaviors. Bureaucrats are concerned with planning, directing, organizing, staffing, controlling, and evaluating. They "control activity by making decisions, resolving conflicts, solving problems, evaluating performances and output, and distributing rewards and penalties" (Bolman and Deal, 1984, p. 39). Good bureaucrats collect and analyze the right data in the right amount, follow organizational processes and systems, and follow the orders of their superiors. Better bureaucrats even anticipate these orders, thus making giving directives less necessary.

The distinctive value of a bureaucracy is that Potter and other administrators need not do all the work of the institution themselves. They may empower others to do it through the concept of delegation of authority. In the academic bureaucracy, the right to make authoritative decisions stems initially from a charter or legislation approved by civil government. In the case of People's, the charter gives the board of trustees "the powers, rights, and privileges that are incident to the proper government, conduct, and management of the college, and they may make and ordain, as occasion may require, reasonable rules, orders, and by-laws not repugnant to the Constitution and Laws of the State." The legal authority given to the trustees then serves as the basis for the delegation of specific authority by them to President Potter. If President Potter could do everything himself, then good trusteeship would require only one rule—"Hire the right president"—and good administration only

one corollary—"Do the right thing." But Potter has neither the time nor the expertise to do everything, and the bureaucratic structure is designed specifically to enable him to expand the influence of his leadership by delegating some of his authority to subordinates.

Potter's predecessor talked constantly about delegation but in fact never practiced it. Instead, he exercised close supervision over his subordinates and reviewed their decisions before giving final approval. To delegate in the full sense, responsibilities have to be assigned, the right to make decisions or expend funds has to be granted, and the person to whom authority has been delegated must be held accountable by the authorizing agent. President Potter's effectiveness as a leader depends on his ability to delegate. His delegations usually follow the "lines of authority" on the organizational chart, which flow in an unbroken chain from the civil government granting the charter to the person exercising authority in a specific instance.

As long as the person receiving an order from a superior believes in the legitimacy of the rule of law that provided for the delegation, that person is likely to expect to receive such orders and to be predisposed to accept them. But we know through our experiences that not all orders are obeyed. To understand why, it is necessary to examine the idea of authority from an organizational, rather than a legal, perspective: "a subordinate is said to accept authority whenever he permits his behavior to be guided by the decision of a superior, without independently examining the merits of that decision. When exercising authority, the superior does not seek to convince the subordinate, but only to obtain his acquiescence" (Simon, 1961, p. 11).

This remarkable definition may superficially sound similar to the legal concept of authority, but in fact it is quite different. Authority is no longer defined by the power of the person giving an order but instead by the willingness of the person receiving it to accept it. It is the subordinate at People's, not the superior, who establishes an authority relationship. In essence, the subordinate defines the area in which orders will be accepted without concern for what those orders are, and the authority

relationship exists only within that area and not outside it. This area in which the subordinate will accept orders has been called the "zone of indifference" (that is, the subordinate is indifferent as to whether the superior orders *A* or *B*). At People's, for example, faculty accept the right of administrators to call meetings, and they are usually indifferent to when they are scheduled. But a dean who called weekly meetings on Friday afternoons would quickly discover that few would attend. It is the faculty, not the dean, who would decide which directives would be obeyed.

This understanding of the nature of authority has significant implications for the application of the bureaucratic model to colleges and universities, since professionals have relatively narrow zones of acceptance (Simon, 1961). This means that the greater the professional level of institutional staff members, the less effective bureaucratic controls will be in coordinating their behavior. It suggests why bureaucratic controls are usually less influential in dealing with faculty than in dealing with administrators. It also suggests why bureaucratic controls may be more effective at People's than they would be at Heritage. Fewer faculty at People's have the doctorate, and they are therefore less professional. They are also more likely to have had experience in secondary school systems and therefore to have been socialized to expect less involvement in decision making. As long as Potter is seen as equitably administering institutional processes, as consulting with faculty even though reserving to himself the right to make final decisions, as maintaining or expanding institutional resources, and as providing for the faculty's own economic interests through fair dealings with their union representatives, his leadership at People's is likely to be accepted.