DIGITAL B

Understanding the Changing Organization as a Primary Context for Volunteering

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Most work by volunteers is accomplished through organizations—existing organizations into which a volunteer is integrated, or newer organizations that develop and grow as a result of the volunteer's contributions. Many, if not most, volunteers are products of organizations, of organizational expectations, and of organizational lives. They approach their work as volunteers in a context learned from their past organizational experience. For individual volunteers and for leaders and managers of a volunteer workforce, an understanding of organization theory is helpful. Further, understanding the era of change that the world of organizations is transitioning through is helpful for anyone who seeks to produce more effective results with and through people who are willing to give their time and energy to the work of public-serving nonprofit and government organizations.

A Time of Organizational Change

The essence of today's organizational context may be summed up in the words of Peter Drucker, one of the greatest minds contributing to the discipline of organizational management: "We are in one of those great historical periods that occur every 200 to 300 years when people don't understand the world anymore, and the past is not sufficient to explain the future" (cited in Childress & Senn, 1998, p. 10). Over a mere 25 years, the organizational landscape has transformed radically. On the subject of organizational change, Warren Bennis (1999) declared, "Change is the 'godhead' term for our age," (p. 119) and the phrase "The only constant is change" has become no more than a tired cliché. According to Jerald Hage and Charles Powers (1992) in a comprehensive look at the societal shift that has taken place, both

organizational workers and leaders are confronted with a new postindustrial organizational era, truly a "wholesale transformation" of industrial life as we have known it. It is a world in which technology and knowledge have become the dominant forces that are shaping society.

The implications of the tumultuous change in the organizational landscape are many, varied, and complicated. According to Lewin and Johnston (2000), "The pace of organizational change has accelerated, competitive pressures have intensified, and most organizations are now forced to operate within much more complex environments than was the case a relatively few years ago" (p. 45). One of the key realizations of these turbulent and chaotic times is that the high rate of change that organizations and people are experiencing is not going to disappear. "There are no 'kinder and gentler times' just over the horizon or around the corner. We are going to have to live with change, in our organizations and in ourselves" (Childress & Senn, 1998, p. 10). The essence of the 21st-century workplace is change—massive and relentless.

Modern management theory, according to Lewin and Regine (2000), is obsessed with change, "how to generate it, how to respond to it, how to avoid being overcome by it" (p. 15). The reason, they argued, is not hard to find. Chaos seems to reign supreme. Echoing Drucker's assessment, Lewin and Regine claimed that science, as well as management of organizations, "is in the midst of an important intellectual shift, a true Kuhnian paradigm shift that parallels what is happening in business, or, more accurately, is the vanguard of that change" (p. 17). No longer is the world viewed as linear and mechanistic with simple cause-and-effect solutions; rather, according to Lewin and Regine, for both scientist and manager, it is nonlinear and organic, and filled with complexity and uncertainty.

Most work accomplished by volunteers takes place in the context of the organization, and most organizational volunteers are employed within the context of other organizations. Managers of volunteer resource programs and leaders of the volunteer workforce can find it helpful to have an understanding of organizations and how the concept of the organization has evolved over the past several hundred years and how it continues to evolve as the world is transitioning—or, some would say, has transitioned—from one major era to another. The industrial era, with its essential principles of organization, has all but given way to the entirely new historical context, one that is alternately called the postindustrial era, the information age, the postmodern era, the age of technology, or any number of other descriptors.

However this era may be identified, it is a time of fundamental, monumental, and accelerating change: The world of organizations is changing; the work of organizations is changing; the role of the worker is changing; and the worker is changing. And these workers provide much of the volunteer workforce that is available to nonprofit and public-serving organizations. Nonprofit organizations and other public-serving organizations are not only themselves experiencing the larger transitional shift from one era to another, they are also experiencing the shift through their volunteer workers—the volunteers' needs as well as the skills and abilities those volunteers have to contribute. The role of both the volunteer and the volunteer resource manager in this postindustrial era is undergoing an elemental and enormous change. Understanding the organizational context of this change can help managers to reframe their thinking as they optimize the value that volunteers can bring to their organizations.

Understanding the Industrial Era Organization

Organizations are social units that have specific purposes. They have existed since before recorded time, and people likely have made attempts to understand or predict their success and behavior to some degree since prerecorded history. According to Jay Shafritz and J. Steven Ott in their comprehensive anthology, *Classics of Organization Theory* (2001), serious study of organizations "lay largely dormant over the centuries until society found a practical use for it," (p. 1) and that use was to help in the management of the growing industrial organizations and institutions that originated in the factory system of 18th-century Great Britain and came to dominate the 20th-century landscape. A closer look at various classic schools of industrial era organization theory, particularly their diverse underlying assumptions, major tenets, and organizational structures is helpful to highlight the similarities and differences among them relative to human nature and human beings, sources of authority and power, communication, the roles of managers and leaders, organizational boundaries, structural characteristics, and organizational success.

Classical School

Classical organization theory represents the traditional school of thought and, according to Shafritz and Ott (2001), serves as a basis on which all other schools of organization theory have been and continue to be built. It was the dominant theory in the 1930s, and it remained very influential late into the 20th century. Shafritz and Ott noted these fundamental tenets and assumptions of the classical school:

- Organizations exist to achieve economic goals through their production-related activities.
- There is a "best way" to structure an organization for production purposes, and this way can be detected through systematic, scientific inquiry.
- Production is maximized when specialization and division of labor methods are utilized.
- People and organizations act according to rational economic principles.

The works of Adam Smith (1776), Henry Towne (1886), Henri Fayol (1916), Frederick Taylor (1916), Max Weber (1922), and Luther Gulick (1937) are the most influential and representative of classical theory, and ideas from each contributed significantly to this school of thought.

Typically, in classical theory, "workers were viewed not as individuals but as interchangeable parts in an industrial machine in which parts were made of flesh only when it was impractical to make them of steel" (Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 29), this dehumanizing metaphor does not seem to be Fayol's (1949) intent when he argued the necessity of the strength garnered in developing esprit de corps among workers. On the contrary, according to Fayol: "Real talent is needed to coordinate effort, encourage keenness, use each man's abilities, and reward each one's merit" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 59). Fayol encouraged verbal communications for speed, clarity, and harmony, although Weber's bureaucracy—the crowning achievement of classical organization theory—came to be based on written and standardized rules

and regulations. Taylor's scientific management principles sought to capture "the initiative of the workmen, their hard work, their goodwill, their best endeavors . . . with absolute regularity" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 65). The task of leaders employing scientific management was to "set out deliberately to train the workmen in their employ to be able to do a better and still better class of work than ever before, and to then pay them higher wages than ever before" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 66).

Weber's (1922) "traditional bureaucracy," according to Perrow (1986), became a *rational-legal bureaucracy*, the tenets of which include:

- Equal treatment of all employees
- Reliance on expertise and experience relevant to the position
- Precluding the use of position for personal gain
- Specific standards for work and output
- Extensive record keeping
- Establishment and enforcement of regulations to serve the interests of the organization
- The recognition that these rules apply to both managers and employees

Further, according to Perrow, almost all large and complex organizations may best be categorized as bureaucracies, although the degree and forms of bureaucratization may vary.

Robert Merton, writing in 1940, suggested that the primary advantage of bureaucracy was "its technical efficiency, with a premium placed on precision, speed, expert control, continuity, discretion, and optimal returns on input. The structure is one which approaches the complete elimination of personalized relationships and nonrational considerations (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 104). Organizational boundaries are clearly delineated within and apart from the environment, as displayed in classical organizational charts, and the structure is machinelike in its parts-and-whole configuration. Organizational success is measurable in output, but it is the owners or the stakeholders who must decide on the definition of *output*.

Neoclassical School

The neoclassical school, according to Shafritz and Ott (2001), built on the classical school by attacking the classicalists; the time frame for much of their activity was during the years following World War II through the 1950s. Because the classical school was based largely on theory alone with little or no empirically derived assumptions, it was an easy target, and the result of the neoclassicists' attacks was largely an extending and refining of the classical model. The neoclassical school did not have a bona fide theory to call its own, as Shafritz and Ott point out. Rather, they described it as an *anti-school*. Nevertheless, the contributions of this school to the industrial era, represented primarily in the works of Chester Barnard (1938), Robert Merton (1940), Herbert Simon (1946), and Philip Selznick (1948), began the theoretical movement that departed from the overly simplified mechanistic perspectives of the classical school and challenged its tenets in a time when classical theory was the *only* theory. The issues raised by the neoclassicists served as the underpinnings for most of the schools that followed.

Many of the challenges to the classical school were levied on behalf of the worker, upon whom the organization ultimately depends to accomplish the work. Barnard, in his 1938 work on incentives, boldly stated, "Men will not work at all, and will rarely work well, under other incentives if the social situation *from their point of view* is unsatisfactory" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 97). He argued that it was the responsibility of leadership to develop and maintain a sense of purpose and a *moral code* in the organization, along with communication systems, both formal and informal, as well as to ensure the willingness of the workers to cooperate. Selznick added that "individuals have a propensity to resist depersonalization, to spill over the boundaries of their segmentary roles, to participate as *wholes*" (cited Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 126). He further suggested that informal relations or ties of both sentiment and self-interest help to cement relationships that uphold formal authority in daily operations and help to encourage effective communication. The emphasis, as commented on later by William Scott (1961), was on various forms of communication—both formal and informal, vertical and horizontal, and by and between line and staff.

Selznick further suggested that the organization does not operate in a vacuum. The boundaries between the organization and its environment may be of considerably greater consequence than the classicists realized, and "continuous attention to the possibilities of encroachment and to the forestalling of threatened aggressions or deleterious (though perhaps unintended) consequences from the actions of others" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 128) must be maintained. In considering power and authority as well as leadership, Selznick presented the concept of co-optation, or "the process of absorbing new elements into the leadership or policy-determining structure of an organization as a means of averting threats to its stability or existence." He recognized the existence of and the conditions that breed co-optation, as well as how it can be used as a tool for the sharing of the "*responsibility* for power rather than power itself. . . . Co-optation reflects a state of tension between formal authority and social power," and as a consequence of co-optation, "the outside elements may be brought into the leadership or policy-determining structure, may be given a place as a recognition of and concession to the resources they can independently command" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 132).

Human Resource School

The human resource school of thought, according to Shafritz and Ott (2001), assumes "that organizational creativity, flexibility, and prosperity flow naturally from employee growth and development." (p. 145). The focus, according to Chris Argyris, is "on people, groups, and the relationships among them and the organizational environment. . . . [There is a] very high value on humans as individuals, things typically are done very openly and honestly, providing employees with maximum amounts of accurate information so they can make informed decisions with free will about their future" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 145). The foundational assumptions of human resource theory, according to Bolman and Deal (1997, pp. 102–103) and cited in Shafritz and Ott (2001, p. 146), are:

- Organizations serve human needs rather than the opposite.
- Organizations need people and people need organizations.

- A suitable fit between the individual and the organization must exist, or exploitation of either or both will occur.
- A good fit will provide benefit to both the organization and the individual.

Although most of its work has occurred since about 1957, the human resource school of thought was conceived much earlier through the unanticipated consequences of the Hawthorne experiments accomplished by the Elton Mayo team during the late 1920s and early 1930s, as documented by F. J. Roethlisberger in the 1939 and 1941. Another very early contribution was Mary Parker Follett's landmark treatise from 1926 on the giving of orders (Shafritz & Ott, 2001). Additionally, Abraham Maslow outlined his hierarchy of human needs in 1943. While it has been attacked for its simplicity by critics, it remains the germinal work on human motivation—suggesting that all humans are motivated by needs and that these needs fall into a specific hierarchy. Once lower-level needs are satisfied, they no longer serve to motivate behavior; rather, a higher-level need will take over as the motivating force (Shafritz & Ott, 2001).

Douglas McGregor (1957) is credited with ushering in the explosion of work in the human resource school with his Theory X and Theory Y assumptions, which concern the premise that managerial assumptions cause employee behavior. Theory X argued that people "dislike work and will avoid it if possible . . . [They] must be coerced, controlled, directed, or threatened with punishment to get them to work. . . . [People] prefer to be directed and to avoid responsibility, and will seek security above all else" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 148). McGregor's Theory Y, however, argued that people like work, that work provides a sense of satisfaction, that people will demonstrate self-direction and self-control if they are committed to the organization's objectives, that they will seek and accept responsibility, and that their potential is usually quite underutilized in the workplace (cited in Shafritz & Ott). According to McGregor, "the essential task of management is to arrange organizational conditions and methods of operation so that people can achieve their own goals *best* by directing *their own* efforts toward organizational objectives" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, p. 183).

The dangers of *groupthink*, particularly as it relates to the responsibility of leaders, are offered by Irving Janis (1971), along with the steps to prevent or remedy its taking over in an organization, most notably during a time of crisis. Communication serves as a major key in combating groupthink; however, the individual must overcome the pressure of the group and prevent self-censorship regarding misgivings on an issue. According to Janis, the "reliance on consensual validation within the group tends to replace individual critical thinking and reality testing, unless there are clear-cut disagreements among the members" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 189).

The human resource school is the most optimistic of the various theories regarding the value of people in the workplace. As early as 1926, Mary Parker Follett was arguing for participatory leadership. According to Shafritz and Ott, the "beliefs, values, and tenets of organizational behavior [in human resource theory] are noble, uplifting, and exciting . . . [and] the perspective developed into a virtual movement" (2001, p. 150), or cause. Times, however, are changing. Bart Victor and Carroll Stephens (1994) argued that all was not well regarding the human side of the organization in "the brave new world of the 21st century organization, networked,

information rich, delayered, lean, hypercompetitive and boundaryless" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 193). The organizational commitment to the worker, they suggested, is being "thoroughly violated, [yet] the employee is expected to exhibit feverishly enhanced commitment to the organization" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 195). They sounded a warning that the human side of organization must be addressed or there will be grave consequences.

"Modern" Structural School

The "modern" structural theorists, according to Shafritz and Ott (2001), concern themselves with many of the same issues as those of classicists Fayol, Taylor, Gulick, and Weber, and their foundational thinking is much the same. They are, however, "modern," and as such have built on the concepts of organizational efficiency, rationality, and the production of wealth using the newer tenets added to organization theory by the neoclassicist, human resource, and systems schools of thought. The basic assumptions were described by Lee Bolman and Terrance Deal (1997) and include these:

- Organizations are rational and their purpose is to accomplish specific objectives through systems of defined rules and formal authority with controls and coordination being key for maintaining their rationality.
- There is either a "best" or a most appropriate structure for any organization, depending on its objectives and its environment and its technology for production.
- Specialization and the division of labor increase quality and quantity of production, especially in operations that call for highly skilled workers.
- Most of an organization's difficulties are caused by structural flaws and can be solved through structural change. (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, pp. 197–198)

Tom Burns and G. M. Stalker (1961) addressed the key issue of structure, suggesting that mechanistic systems are appropriate to stable conditions and organic systems are appropriate to changing conditions and that "the beginning of administrative wisdom is the awareness that there is no one optimum type of management system" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 204). In a similar vein, Arthur Walker and Jay Lorsch (1968) wrestled with the issue of organizing around product or function, concluding that the solution must lie in analyzing "the multiple tasks that must be performed, the differences between specialists, the integration that must be achieved, and the mechanisms and behavior required to resolve conflict and arrive at these states of differentiation and integration" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 221).

The influence of Chester Barnard's humanistic tenets are injected in the modern structural school through the work of Peter Blau and Richard Scott (1962), who described the formal and informal organization and noted that the nature of social relations involves various patterns of social interaction and people's feelings about each other and that the status of each group member depends on his or her relations with others. "As a result, integrated members become differentiated from isolates, those who are widely respected from those who are not highly regarded, and leaders from followers" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 207). Henry Mintzberg (1979) argued the need for an elaborated administrative hierarchy of authority that he suggested must

develop middle-level managers as the organization becomes more and more complex. In addition to these *managers of managers*, Mintzberg argued that there is a need to separate the *technostructure* and the support staff from the middle-line managers. Mintzberg's concept of the middle-line manager is that he or she "performs all the managerial roles of the chief executive, but in the context of managing his own unit . . . the job becomes more detailed and elaborated, less abstract and aggregated, more focused on the work flow itself" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 229). Mintzberg described the responsibility of the chief executive, or "the strategic apex," as ensuring that the mission is accomplished effectively and that those to whom he or she is accountable are satisfied. The chief executive had, according to Mintzberg, three sets of duties: (a) direct supervision, including roles as resource allocator, disturbance handler, monitor, disseminator, and leader; (b) organizational boundary conditions management—the organization's relationships with its environment; and (c) development of the organization's strategy (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 227).

Elliott Jaques (1990) cited similar critical features for which managers must be held accountable: for (a) subordinates' work as well as their own added value; (b) sustaining a team that is able to do the job; (c) "setting direction and getting subordinates to follow willingly, indeed enthusiastically. In brief, every manager is accountable for work and leadership" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 237). Little is mentioned regarding communications in the "modern" structural school of organization. Most comments are incidental regarding "feedback" or juxtaposing informal-formal communications at various strata of organizations. From the lack of prominence of communications in the literature of this school, it would appear that the fairly intricate structural designs assume the act of communication.

Systems School

The systems school, according to Shafritz and Ott, began to dominate organization theory when Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn articulated the concept of organizations as open systems in 1966, followed shortly by James Thompson's 1967 discussion of the contingency perspective and rational systems. Information systems, computers, the use of statistics and a variety of measurement tools may have served as contributing factors to what became the conventional thought in organization theory for the next several decades. The underlying assumptions of systems theory include the applicability of general systems theory to organizations and the use of tools and techniques to quantify and explain the "complex relationships among organizational and environmental variables and thereby to optimize decisions." Systems theory "views an organization as a complex set of dynamically intertwined and interconnected elements, including its inputs, processes, outputs, and feedback loops, and the environment in which it operates and with which it continuously interacts" (Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 242). It further suggests that organizational cause-and-effect relationships are complex and multidimensional and that those various relationships are dynamic and constantly adapting to their environment if they are to survive. Likewise those relationships have a reciprocal effect, in that their actions and decisions modify the environment in which they function.

Systems theory relies heavily on quantitative analysis to identify optimal solutions through the use of a variety of tools, methods, and models, including statistical

probability models for use in decision making and other organizational processes. Because of the reliance of systems theory on technology, serious philosophical differences emerged between its theorists and those of the human resource school, according to Shafritz and Ott (2001), but by viewing most organizations as "open systems," Katz and Kahn (1966), as well as Thompson (1967), were able essentially to mediate and merge the various perspectives of the classicists, the neoclassicists, the human resourcists, and the "modern" structuralists.

Power and Politics School

The power and politics theory of organization, according to Shafritz and Ott, rejects as "naive and unrealistic, and therefore of minimal practical value" (2001, p. 298), the assumptions of rationality held by both the "modern" and systems schools. In particular, according to Jeffrey Pfeffer (1981), one can distinguish the power model if there is "no overarching organizational goal . . . or even if such a goal does exist, decisions are made which are inconsistent with maximizing the attainment of the goal" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 314). In power theory, organizations are "viewed as complex systems of individuals and coalitions, each having its own interests, beliefs, values, preferences, perspectives, and perceptions" (Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 298) constantly competing for scarce resources and thereby experiencing frequent conflict. Influence is the critical tool or "primary 'weapon' for use in competition and conflicts."

Shafritz and Ott (2001) suggested that in the power and politics school of thought, goals are the end result of individuals' maneuvering and bargaining; they are not established by formal authority. Loyalties shift easily and cross both horizontal and vertical boundaries as activities are pursued in ad hoc coalitions. Legitimate authority is viewed as "only one of the many available sources of organizational power, and power is aimed in all directions" (Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 299). Henry Mintzberg (1983) suggested that there are five general bases of power, including control of (a) a resource, (b) a technical skill, or (c) a body of knowledge; (d) legal prerogatives, or exclusive rights or privileges to impose choices; and (e) access to those who can rely on the other four (cited in Shafritz and Ott, 2001, p. 354).

John French and Bertram Raven (1959) also identified sources of social power and suggested that the more useful focus to explain power attraction and resistance is in the reaction of the recipient agent rather than the agent possessing the power. French and Raven's five power bases include (a) reward power; (b) coercive power, or its perception; (c) legitimate power, or organizational authority; (d) referent power, or association with others who hold the power; and (e) expert power, earned through knowledge or ability. They concluded that the use or perception of power from each the different bases has different consequences relative to attraction and resistance (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 300).

Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1979) argued that power is "the ability to mobilize resources (human and material) to get things done" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 343) and that leaders can accomplish more when they marshal power appropriately. They may also suffer from powerlessness if they lack supplies, information, and support; and powerlessness, or perceived powerlessness, can be a more substantive problem than the abuse of power. Kanter further developed the concept of

empowerment, of growing one's "productive power" by sharing it, and she argued that "sharing power is different from giving or throwing it away. Delegation does not mean abdication" (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 351).

Organizational Culture School

Another organization theory "counterculture," the organizational culture school, also rejects the assumptions made by both the "modern" structural school and the systems school, according to Shafritz and Ott (2001). Organizational culture theory assumes that behaviors and decisions are "predetermined by the patterns of basic assumptions that are held by members of the organizations." These assumptions form the unquestioned basis for organizational behavior and "may continue to influence organizational decisions and behaviors even when the organization's environment changes. . . . They are so basic, so pervasive, and so completely accepted as 'the truth' that no one thinks about or remembers them." Rather than being controlled by rules and regulations, people are "controlled by cultural norms, values, beliefs, and assumptions" (Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 362).

The organizational culture school suggests that "knowledge of an organization's structure, information systems, strategic planning processes, markets, technology, goals, and so forth can provide clues about an organization's culture, but not accurately or reliably" (Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 362). This school rejects the quantitative methods of the "modern" structural and systems schools "for studying organizations, mainly because these methods have produced very little useful knowledge about organizations over the last thirty or forty years . . . [favoring rather] qualitative research methods such as ethnography and participant observation" (Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 362).

Organizational symbolism, an integral part of the organizational culture school, has three foundational tenets, according to Bolman and Deal (1997):

1. The meaning or the interpretation of what is happening in organizations is more important than what actually is happening.
2. Ambiguity and uncertainty, which are prevalent in most organizations, preclude rational problem-solving and decision-making processes.
3. People use symbols to reduce ambiguity and to gain a sense of direction when they are faced with uncertainty (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 364).

With the publication of a variety of writings in the 1980s, organizational culture theory reached a turning point almost overnight, according to Shafritz and Ott (2001). Among other works, Tom Peters and Robert Waterman's *In Search of Excellence* in 1982 and Gareth Morgan's *Images of Organization* in 1998 helped to demonstrate the importance of this school of thought. W. Edwards Deming's successful work with the Japanese finally was "discovered" in the 1980s by American business, and the total quality management philosophy and its various iterations significantly furthered the cultural school's movement. Harrison Trice and Janice Beyer's (1993) considerations for changing organizational cultures summarized much of what this school of thought rests on: "capitalize on propitious moments; combine caution with optimism; understand resistance to culture change; change many elements, but

maintain some continuity; recognize the importance of implementation; select, modify, and create appropriate cultural forms; modify socialization tactics; and find and cultivate innovative leadership'' (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 366).

Understanding the need for an altered organizational culture is the first step in ''reshaping organizations to be more flexible, responsive, and customer driven'' (Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 366), and it is not one which is easily accomplished. According to Trice and Beyer: ''Cultural innovation involves the duality of creation and destruction. . . . Cultural change involves a noticeable break with the past; it also inevitably involves changes in both ideologies and cultural forms.'' Trice and Beyer identified three types of cultural change: ''(1) relatively fast, revolutionary, comprehensive change; (2) subunit or subcultural change; and (3) a more gradual cumulative but comprehensive reshaping of a culture'' (cited in Shafritz & Ott, 2001, p. 422).

Industrial Era Organization Summary

Each of these seven schools of industrial era organization thought built on the schools it succeeded, perhaps even while purporting to reject the prevailing or preceding theory. Even the two ''counterculture'' theories, the power school and the culture school, serve to further explain the nature and behavior within the mechanistic organizations described by the earlier theories. Most of these schools, in one way or another, could be classified as ''mechanistic'' in approach. According to Morgan (1998), these ''mechanistic approaches to organization work well under conditions when machines work well'' (p. 31): when the task is straightforward; when the environment is predictable and stable; when the product to be produced is essentially unchanging; and when people must comply and behave as they are expected to behave. The limitations that Morgan delineated are that mechanistic approaches have difficulty with change and that they can result in the creation of mindless bureaucracies.

Each school of thought contributes to an overall understanding of organization theory—theory that was relevant, helpful, and dynamic during the industrial era. It certainly can be agreed that there were and are many different types of organizations; they exist in a variety of environments; and they are staffed by people whose values, skills, and knowledge differ widely. The most effective organizational form, if there is such a thing, is determined on a case-by-case basis. There is no one-size-fits-all template to overlay on organizations. While all organizations seek to produce value, to do so as effectively and efficiently as practicable, and to provide meaningful work for their employees to the degree possible, they cannot all attain these goals under the same conditions. Organizations, even small and relatively simple ones, are complex in nature. Human behavior and group dynamics combined with the efficient production of goods and/or services yield issues that those who study organizations will continue to grapple with as the environment continues to change, as the type of work that is done continues to change, and as the profile of the worker changes. The challenge at this point in history, as we transition out of the industrial era, is to evolve to yet another, more comprehensive, organization school of thought that accommodates all these varying conditions and all these changes—if that is indeed possible.

Moving to the Postindustrial Era Organization

The world of organizations is spinning through a monumentally transitional time, crossing from one era to another. The industrial era, with its fixation on scientific principles, efficiency, and command and control bureaucracy was a time of black and white with little room for gray. While some voices did sound different calls, mainstream industrial era organization theory seems to have existed in a world that was, more or less, understood by its inhabitants. As society transitions into what has been alternately call the information age, the postindustrial era, or the postmodern era, the world is confronted by change in every aspect of organizational life. There is no standard, expected, and easily recognized pattern of the single best way of organizing to accomplish work. This new era that the world is careening into could also be called the age of uncertainty. The challenge is to determine how organizations can best function in an environment where the work is different, the tools are different, the workers are different, and the world itself is different.

Tomorrow's Organizations

In Hesselbein, Goldsmith, and Beckhard's (1997) compendium of authors contributing thoughts on tomorrow's organizations, Peter Drucker (1997) provided a number of insights that united these writers. According to Drucker, increasingly in the organization of the future, people will no longer be working as employees of an organization; rather, they will be temporary or specialist workers, suggesting that society is moving to a network structure from the traditional employment structure. Ownership, as well as command and control, will be further "replaced by or intermixed with all kinds of relationships: alliances, joint ventures, minority participations, partnerships, know-how, and marketing agreements—all relationships in which no one controls and no one commands" (cited in Hesselbein et al., 1997, p. 2). Drucker, however, countered theorists who suggested that the end of the organization is near. Precisely because there will continue to be a great deal of ambiguity, flexibility, and variation in the new organization, he argued that much more clarity would be needed regarding mission, values, strategy, goals, and results as well as decision-making authority and command during times of crisis. While new organizational thinking is needed, Drucker asserted that the organization as a unit of society that gets work accomplished is needed more than ever. Above all else, organizations are social; they are comprised of people; therefore, the purpose of the organization must be more than economic; rather, its purpose must be "to make the strengths of people effective and their weaknesses irrelevant" (Hesselbein et al., 1997, p. 5).

In his contribution to Hesselbein et al.'s peek into the future, James Champy (1997) suggested that if the pace of change was leaving one breathless, then one needed to learn to breathe differently. He declared that form no longer need follow function; that organizations must reinvent their entire business, rather than merely a few of their processes; communication throughout the organization must be thought of in terms of conversation; boundaries must be more porous; and the company must be agile and able to sustain change. In the same futuristic context, Michael Hammer (1997) suggested that security, stability, and continuity are out; freedom and personal growth are in. Further, according to Hammer, obedience and diligence

are no longer relevant. Working hard, he suggested, no longer matters; rather, results matter, and instead of protection, an organization owes its employees opportunity and growth. In the same volume, Ric Duques and Paul Gaske (1992) stressed the importance of acting small, particularly ensuring that arrogance, which frequently comes with size, has no place in the organization of tomorrow. Client loyalty and retention translates to "managing the business with zero defections" (Hesselbein et al., 1997, p. 36); and agility, flexibility, and responsiveness are necessary to sustain that loyalty and encourage organizational growth. Jeffrey Pfeffer (1997), another contributing author to this visionary work, predicted that retaining and building capacity would require keeping employees who possess the organization's tacit knowledge, plus the experience and commitment necessary to make the organization successful. He added that those organizations must possess the courage to be different because "following the crowd will probably not permit an organization to outperform the crowd" (Hesselbein et al., 1997, p. 50). Ian Sommerville and John Edwin Mroz (1997) summarized seven areas of competence for the new organization:

1. Committing to a higher purpose
2. Instilling responsible leadership
3. Encouraging multidisciplinary teaming
4. Forging organic partnerships
5. Promoting knowledge networking
6. Fostering a global search for the best ways of doing business
7. Embracing change

The common theme, predicted and proven: Change is everywhere, and it is here to stay.

Uncertain Times

Charles Handy—part poet, part philosopher, part deep-thinking futurist, and part organizational theorist—put forth his theories of future organizations in 1996. One of his predictions was his 1/2-by-2-by-3 rule of organizational fitness: "half as many people on the payroll, paid twice as well, producing three times as much" (p. 25). Handy suggested that as the workplace trims its employee rolls, many will become independent members of the organization's contractual support network: consultants, temps, and pieceworkers who are hired back for fees paid for work accomplished, not wages or salaries for time spent. He further discussed the "portfolio" worker, one whose assets can be illustrated in a personal portfolio that will demonstrate the value that he or she can bring to an organization. He modified the "Third Age of Living" stage of one's life to include work of one's choice that allows one to feel useful and valued, and suggested that now is the time to develop one's "portfolio" skills that will enable one to do just that. In describing the workforce of the future, Handy suggested that workers "prefer small, autonomous work groups based on reciprocal trust between leader and led, groups responsible, as far as possible, for their own destiny" (1996, p. 40).

Another primary theory that Handy put forth described federalism in terms of the workplace. He suggested that federalism deals effectively with several paradoxes of

power and control: "the need to make things big by keeping them small; to encourage autonomy but within bounds; to combine variety and shared purpose, individuality and partnership, local and global" (1996, pp. 33–34). This, according to Handy, includes a center that exists to coordinate but not in terms of control. Relationships are unique and built on mutual respect and shared interests instead of on stringent controls and legal pronouncements. Federations are held together by trust and commitment to common goals. The most important of federalism's principles is *subsidiarity*, meaning that power and authority belong at the lowest point in the organization. Subsidiarity requires that leaders and managers train, advise, and support their subordinates in appropriate decision making. The reverse of empowerment, or the giving away or delegating of power, subsidiarity is the assumption—the expectation—that power must rest at the lowest point in the organization.

Evolving Postmodern Perspective

The whole of organization theory was summed up by Mary Jo Hatch (1997) through her divisions of the theory into four perspectives: the classical, the modern, the symbolic-interpretive, and the postmodern. While her focus was on the current and emerging postindustrial organizations, she presented theories from the classical period that reigned supreme during the industrial age and came to serve as the foundation for all organization theory. Hatch matched each of the four perspectives with a specific root metaphor, and it is helpful to take a look at the metaphors that explore the early perspectives to better understand the current ones.

The classical period perspective is represented by the machine metaphor, reflecting the image of the organization as a machine that has been designed and constructed by management, as engineer, to achieve specific, predefined goals. This metaphor deals primarily with structure and efficiency as well as predictability and reliability. Boundaries are clearly delineated, tasks and processes are defined, and people are slotted where they can most efficiently be "used" until they wear out or break. Clear sources of power and authority are spelled out, usually in hierarchical bureaucracies large and small, and management's job is to produce the most that the organization is capable of producing. Success is measured in things quantified through observation and historical analysis. Hatch refers to Martin Kilduff in identifying the now-popular computer metaphor as merely an updated machine metaphor. While times are changing, the machine metaphor representing the classical perspective is still alive—but not necessarily well—in today's postindustrial world.

The modern perspective is represented by the organism metaphor, reflecting the image of the organization as a living system that performs and produces and adapts for the purpose of survival in a hostile world. Management is viewed as an interdependent part of this system, but it is the part that provides authority and control, whether seen through the cybernetic model of standard setting and monitoring of activities and outcomes or through agency theory, wherein management serves its own interests. The modern perspective accepts contingency theory that there is no one best way to organize; no one-size-fits-all that will work for organizations. The organization is viewed through objective measures and is dependent on the environment for those resources that it needs to survive. Processes transform input to output, and changes in the internal or external environment affect the entire system.

Emphasis is placed on the organization's dependence on the external environment, on technology for transforming it, and on structural adaptation.

Hatch's (1997) symbolic-interpretive perspective uses the culture metaphor to create an image of the organization as "a pattern of meanings created and maintained by human associations through shared values, traditions, and customs . . . [with management as] an artifact who would like to be a symbol of the organization" (p. 52). The organization is viewed through subjective perceptions and observation of participants.

The metaphor that Hatch (1997) selected to describe the postmodern perspective is the art form of collage. This metaphor suggests that an organization theory may be comprised of bits and pieces of knowledge and understanding that are pasted together from many theoretical sources as well as one's own knowledge and experience; taken together, the resultant whole forms a new perspective, one that has reference to the past. The manager is viewed as a theorist who is at the same time an artist. According to Hatch (1997), a collage may "stimulate surprise by juxtaposing incongruous images that unleash powerful ideas and feelings capable of providing the viewer to change his or her accustomed ways of seeing and experiencing the world" (p. 54).

In addition to describing these perspectives, Hatch (1997) delineated six core areas for comparison: (a) the environment, (b) technology, (c) social structure, (d) culture, (e) physical structure, and (f) the nature of work. Environmental concepts that apply to the postindustrial era include: global competition; fragmented markets and decentralized production; consumer choice and the demand for customization; social movements and the service class; and pluralism and diversity. Technological concepts include automation and the flexibility of manufacturing, the use of computers for many organizational functions, just-in-time systems, and a focus on speed and innovation. Social structures come in new forms, such as networks, alliances, virtual organizations; they are flatter and communicate across boundaries; functions are outsourced; participation, culture, and communications provide informal means for influencing; and boundaries between internal and external units and organizations are being loosened or eliminated. The postindustrial organizational culture celebrates uncertainty and paradox, and organizational values embrace quality, customer service, innovation, and diversity. The organization's physical structure has a lower level of concentration of people and a reduction in time links between places, which encourages a global orientation. A shortening of product life cycles leads to a compression of time dimensions. The nature of the work has become complex and even frenetic; skills are knowledge based; teamwork is performed cross-functionally; there is a greater value placed on learning; and there is more outsourcing of work, subcontracting, telecommuting, and self-employment (Hatch, 1997, pp. 25–26). The world has changed from the routine, the stable, and the standardized. Bureaucratic hierarchies focused on command and control represent yesterday's model. While all four perspectives that Hatch describes exist in today's world, it becomes increasingly apparent that the postmodern perspective, the building of a model to custom-fit an organization, will likely evolve into the dominant, most viable theory. "Postmodern perspectives challenge existing orders and inspire thoughts about alternative realities while raising ethical questions and heightening consciousness through self-reflexivity. This perspective does not theorize change, it attempts to provoke it" (Hatch, 1997, p. 376).

New Meaning Through Metaphor

Metaphor is a useful tool to explore organization theories, and Gareth Morgan (1998) has done so with eight detailed organizational metaphors. By using one element of experience to understand another, "metaphor gives us the opportunity to stretch our thinking and deepen our understanding, thereby allowing us to see things in new ways and to act in new ways." However, Morgan also warned that one must be cognizant of the limits of metaphor, in that it produces one-sided insights, it creates distortions, and "while capable of creating valuable insights, [it] is also incomplete, biased, and potentially misleading" (p. 5). In addition, Morgan suggested metaphor is paradoxical by nature in that the way of seeing something becomes a way of not seeing. However, these limitations aside, the creative use of metaphor to explore concepts through a different lens can expand understanding of organizations.

Like Hatch (1997), Morgan (1998) explored organizational images as machine, as organism, and as cultures. He further identified and elaborated on five other organizational metaphors including the organization as (a) information processing brains, (b) political systems, (c) psychic prisons, (d) flux and transformation, and (e) domination. While each of these explorations holds points of interest, perhaps the most relevant to postindustrial organization theory are those regarding organizations as information-processing and holographic brains and organizations as flux and transformation. Certainly in this postindustrial age with its massive information technology structure and its resultant crushing level of available data, sorting and processing information and converting it into knowledge is a survival skill for any organization. The holographic imagery speaks to the need for knowledge within an organization to be highly specialized while still self-organizing and regenerative because its knowledge is contained in each piece of the whole. Because of the organization's flattened, decentralized, and flexible structure, there is a need for knowledge to be distributed throughout it. In the event of the loss of a knowledge worker, others must take his or her place. Morgan identified five paradoxes that derive from this metaphor, suggesting that the theorist must reconcile them: (a) logical reduction and creative expansiveness; (b) specialization and distributed function; (c) randomness that produces a coherent pattern; (d) enormous redundancy as the basis for efficiency; and (e) a highly coordinated and intelligent system that has no predetermined or explicit design. Morgan (1998) argued, "Organizations are information systems. They are communication systems. And they are decision-making systems" (p. 74).

Viewing organizations as flux and transformation, Morgan (1998) explored four "logics of change": (a) the theory of autopoiesis, (b) chaos and complexity theory, (c) circular cybernetic ideas, and (d) dialectical tensions. Autopoiesis suggests that "all living systems are organizationally closed, autonomous systems of interaction that make reference only to themselves" (p. 215) rather than being open and responsive and dependent on their environments—certainly a great departure from both modern and symbolic theory. Viewing organizations through a chaos and complexity lens allows one to consider the organization and the environment as interconnected patterns that will always produce coherent order from randomness, unpredictability, and surface chaos. Autopoiesis, chaos, and complexity theories lead to thinking about change in circular patterns "in terms of loops rather than lines and to replace the idea of mechanical causality . . . with the idea of mutual causality"

(p. 234). This allows for organizational thinking in terms of exponential change or of small changes producing very consequential results. Finally, the logic of dialectical change presses theorists to view organizations in terms of opposites and paradox. Morgan argued, "Any organization wishing to sustain a competitive advantage must recognize how its successes are going to become weaknesses" (p. 252). This way of thinking allows for new understandings of the nature, source, and consequences of organizational change.

Postindustrial Era Organization Summary

The key points of these works revolve around change, contradiction, ambiguity, and paradox and how managers can skillfully and creatively address the changes and challenges that they face. The new organization, the organization of the future—and the future is best defined as *now*, and if not *now* then *very soon*—has to deal with the postmodern world, a world that is messy and complex. There is no formula, no single organizational archetype, no template that can be superimposed as the one great way, no final solution to the organizational "problem." For too long, organization theory was considered a science, the implication being that a "best way" could be determined and studied. There can be no final science, only the acceptance of the addition of what science has considered a weak sister—art. Managers must loose themselves from the lofty notion that they are practicing a science; management is both science and art, and practitioners must take on the virtues of the artist as well as the scientist. In addition to adding the artist's eye, the scientist's eye needs to be grounded in the paradigms and metaphors of the new sciences, as described by Margaret Wheatley (1999), and be ready for the mind-boggling "messiness" of those new sciences: quantum physics, complexity theory, and chaos theory.

Efficiency and effectiveness in the new organization are drawn from its fluid, flexible, and flat nature and structure. People, specifically knowledge workers, represent the most valuable resource an organization can acquire. The workforce is a microcosm of the society—all voices are represented, and all voices are heard. Authority accompanies responsibility and accountability and is located at the lowest organizational level—if indeed there are levels. Self-determining and self-monitoring teams accomplish much of the work. Decision making is a shared responsibility.

The work of the new organization is performed in a structure—or antistructure—that may resemble a series of concentric circles, intersecting circles, circles within circles, matrices, webs, networks, or federations of units. It embraces the paradox of being both simple and complex, small while perhaps large, and able to rapidly adapt to changing conditions as necessary to embrace new projects, processes, or structures. The new organization measures its success through factors beyond market share and profitability. People work in these organizations because they choose to do so, and this choice is based on factors beyond the profit-loss bottom line. The workplace is meaningful, not rendered meaningless. There is a need for a larger purpose, social responsibility, and a contribution to the larger community. Leadership is found and encouraged at all levels of the organization. Integrity is the core value sought from all levels of leadership. Boundaries, both internal and external, are fluid and permeable; communication is free flowing. The new workplace, while it is lean, cannot be "mean," or its most valuable resource will give notice and go elsewhere.

Not all organizations can or will embrace the theories and practices that are part of the postmodern, postindustrialist era. Some do not have the resources, the technology, the time, the talent, or the heart. Some use the excuse that they are too big, too busy, too bureaucratic, too controlled by external authority, too controlled by markets, too controlled by relationships. These are the organizations that ultimately will not survive. The work is changing, the worker is changing, and the world is changing. The workplace must also change. There are plenty of options in the new era. Leaders and managers should be aware of the possible perspectives and potentialities in their organizations, and they must be willing to do the new work—the hard work—that is required in and of the postmodern, postindustrialist organization.

Implications for Volunteer Resource Managers

There is wisdom to be gained from each of the industrial era theories, and arguments can be made for bureaucracy as the crowning achievement of the industrial era. However, the industrial era, with its essential principles of organization, has all but given way to the entirely new historical context, and it is time to embrace new theories or create newer ones. New thinking must accompany the shift from the modern era to the postmodern era, the transition from the industrial age to the postindustrial age.

While this may sound groundbreaking, monumental, and dramatic—and it is—if we scan the bigger picture, the modern era has occupied a period of only about 200 to 300 years. It is time for a change, and this generation is privileged to be offered the challenge of grappling with the reality of the "brave new world" that has been ushered in during our lifetime. We are immersed in information, information technology, and information networks, but the postmodern world is not only about information and technology. Organizations are about people, and the human element is more and more critical in our organizations than ever before. Organization theory must find ways to serve the human element in the wake of the accelerating information that the initial stage of the postmodern era is driving.

The world of organizations is changing; the work of organizations is changing; the role of the worker is changing; the worker is changing; and these workers provide much of the volunteer workforce that is available to nonprofit and public-serving organizations. Nonprofit organizations and other public-serving organizations are not only themselves experiencing the transitional shift from one era to another, they are also experiencing the shift through their volunteer workers—through the needs of their volunteers as well as through the skill sets and abilities these new volunteers have to contribute. The role of both the volunteer and the volunteer resource manager in this postindustrial, postmodern era is undergoing an elemental and enormous change. Understanding the organizational context of this change can help managers to reframe their thinking as they optimize the value that volunteers can bring to their organization.

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