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Modern businesses are becoming more complex and diverse. In this article, a well-known theorist organization describes the new principles of design organization being used and their application to modern businesses and institutions. He believed that the new principles should not only enable organizations to function and fulfil their functions, but should also serve the highest purposes of human endeavour. The structures of the organization are becoming more short-lived and unstable. The classical structures of the organization of the 1920s and 1930s, which still serve as textbook examples, stood for decades without needing more than a random touch. American Telephone and Telegraph, General Motors, DuPont, Unilever and Sears, Roebuck have maintained their organizational concepts, structures and core components through several generations of management and major changes in the size and scale of the business. Today, however, the company has not had time to finish a great job of reorganizing itself than it starts all over again. General Electric, for example, completed a huge overhaul of the organization around 1960, after nearly a decade of hard work; it has since updated both its structure and overall strategies at least twice. Similarly, Imperial Chemicals in the UK is revamping the design of an organisation that is barely 10 years old. The same anxiety and instability are affected by the organization's structures and concepts in large U.S. commercial banks, IBM, and U.S. government agencies. For example, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare is undergoing a final reorganization almost every year of its 20-year history. To some extent, this instability is the result of gross over-organization. Companies resort to reorganization as a kind of miracle drug instead of diagnosing their ailments. Every business observer can see dozens of cases where a substantial, even massive surgery organization is being misunderstood to take care of fairly minor procedural problems, or - even more often to avoid facing staffing decisions. Equally common is the abuse of reorganization as a substitute for rigid thinking about goals, strategies and priorities. Few managers seem to recognize that the right structure of the organization is not about performance itself, but rather as a prerequisite for execution. The wrong structure is indeed a guarantee of an unsatisfactory view; it causes friction and frustration, puts the wrong questions in the spotlight, and makes mountains of little things. But the ideal organization is similar to perfect health: the test - it's troubles that he does not have and therefore do not need to be treated. Even if unnecessary organizational surgery had not been so rampant in our as unnecessary appendectomies, hysterectomies and tonsillectomies are said to be in our hospitals, would still be a crisis organization. Twenty Twenty back many managers have not yet learned that the organization of design and organization structures deserve attention, thinking and hard work. Almost everyone accepts it today; indeed, organic research has been one of the true growth industries of the past twenty years. But if a few years ago the theory of the organization had answers, today all this confusion. The crisis is at the same time a crisis in the theory of organization and practice of the organization. Ironically, what's happening is not at all what theorists of the organization like Chris Argyris, Warren Bennis, Douglas McGregor (and myself) have been predicting for at least 10 years: the pressure on a more free-form and humanistic organization that provides more room for personal performance to play with almost no involvement in the organization's current crisis. Instead, the main causes of instability are changes in the objective task, in which business and institution should be organized. This is rooted in a crisis of practice organization. The organization's traditional response to the organization's crisis of organization - more development of the organization - has much to do with this new problem. Sometimes they seem to be pushing old remedies to treat a disease that no one has heard of before, and that inhabits a completely unfamiliar body type. The business and institution that will be organized today are very different from those that were 20 years ago. These changes in the target have created new design principles that do not conform to the organization's traditional concepts. And that's the crisis of theory. On the other hand, the past 20 years have also seen new agreements emerge about what needs the organization to focus on and how to work on the organization's needs and structure design. Only when we have an idea of what a new body looks like can we start to relate to its mice. In the next, I compare old models with new realities and describe new design principles. These principles can be a conscience with the tasks of modern governance, as well as with the formal needs of all organizations, regardless of their purpose. By studying these relationships, we can discern a way to avoid the crisis of an organization that affects so many businesses and institutions. Early models twice in the short management history we had the final answer to the problems of the organization. The first time was around 1910, when Henri Fayol, a French industrialist, thought through what was universally valid for him as a production company. (I use the word function in a general, managerial sense, not in the way Fayol used it to describe administrative problems.) Of course, at that time the manufacturing business represented one really important organization of the problem. Then, in the early 1920s Sloan Jr., in General Motors, took the next step. He found the answer to the organization of a large, multi-industry production company. Sloan's approach has built individual divisions into the functional structure that Fayol has identified for the manufacturing business, i.e. in engineering, manufacturing, sales, and so on; but it organized the business itself on the concept of federal decentralization, that is, on the basis of decentralized power and centralized control. By the mid-1940s, GM had become a model for large organizations around the world. Where they conform to the realities that face the organization of designers and performers today, Fayol and Sloan models are still unsurpassed. Fayol functional organization is still the best way to structure small businesses, especially small manufacturing businesses. Sloan's federal decentralization is still the best structure for such a large, one and one market company as GM. But more and more of the institutional reality that needs to be structured and organized is not appropriate. Indeed, the very assumptions that underpin Sloan's work and Fayol's work do not apply to the organization's current problems. GM Model vs. Current Realities There are at least six ways in which the GM structure no longer serves as a model for the organization's current needs. 1. General Motors is a manufacturing business. Today we face the task of organizing a large unprepared institution. There are not only large financial businesses and large retailers, but also, equally, there are worldwide transportation, communications and customer service companies. The latter, although they can produce a product, have the greatest emphasis on external services (like most computer enterprises). Then, of course, there are all non-business service institutions, such as hospitals, universities, government agencies. These unprepared institutions are increasingly the true centre of gravity of any developed economy. They employ the most people and they contribute the most to the gross national product and take on it. They represent the main problems of the organization today. 2. General Motors is essentially one product, one technology, one business market. Even taking into account the income of large financial and insurance subsidiaries, four-fifths of the total revenue is still produced by the car. Although Frigidaire and Electromotive are large, important enterprises and leaders in the home appliances and locomotive market, respectively, they are only small parts of GM. Indeed, GM is unique among large companies in being much less diversified today than it was 30 or 40 years ago. Then, in the late 1930s and early 1940s, General Motors had a major investment in chemical (Ethyl), in the aviation industry (North American (North American and in earth-earth equipment (Euclid). All three have now left and have not been replaced by new diversification activities outside the automotive field. The cars that General Motors manufactures differ in detail, such as size, horsepower, and price, but they are essentially the same product. The man who came up to the line in, say, the Pontiac Division, is unlikely to find the Chevrolet completely alien, and even Opel in Germany will not hold very many surprises for him. In contrast, typical enterprises today are multi-products, multi-technology and multimarket. They may not be conglomerates, but they are diversified. And their main problem is the problem General Motors has not had: the organization of complexity and diversity. In addition, there is an even more complex situation in which the GM model cannot be applied: a large single-second, one-tech business, which, unlike GM, cannot be divided into separate and at the same time comparable parts. Typical are the materials of enterprises such as steel and aluminum companies. Here belong, also, larger transportation businesses, such as railways, airlines, and large commercial banks. These businesses are too large for a functional structure; it ceases to be a skeleton and becomes a straitjacket. Nor are they able to be truly decentralized; No part is a genuine business. However, as we move from mechanical to process technologies, from manufacturing goods to knowledge and services, these large, complex but integrated enterprises are becoming more important than the multi-division business of the 1920s and 1930s. General Motors continues to view its international activities as both organizationally separate and external. For 50 years it has been producing and selling abroad, and something like one-quarter of its sales is now outside of North America. But in its structure of the organization, in its reporting relationships, and above all in its career ladder, GM is an American company with foreign subsidiaries. Instead of leaning towards an international, not to mention multinational, GM's top management primarily deals with the U.S. market, the U.S. economy, the U.S. labor movement, the U.S. government, and so on. This traditional structure and viewpoint of GM's senior management can, to a large extent, explain GM's significant inability to take advantage of the rapid expansion and growth of such large non-U.S. companies. Automotive markets like Europe, where GM's share is actually declining, or Brazil, where GM has failed to anticipate a fast-paced automotive market.1 In contrast, over the past 20 years many other companies have become multinational. There are a lot of cultures, countries, markets and are equally, or at least important. 4. Because GM is one product, one country company, a company is not a serious organization problem and therefore is not a serious problem. At GM, everyone speaks the same language, whether it's the language of the automotive industry or American English. Everyone understands what another does or should do, if only because, in all likelihood, he has done a similar job himself. GM, therefore, can be organized in accordance with the logic of the market, and the logic of power and decision. In her organization, it should not deal with logic and the flow of information for many times. In contrast, multi-products, multi-technology and multinational companies need to develop their organization structure to handle a large flow of information. At the very least, they need to make sure that their organization structure does not violate the logic of the information. And for this task, GM is not offering any indications- GM should not address the problem. 5. Four out of every five GM employees are either manual workers or clerks in routine tasks. In other words, GM is using yesterday's workforce, not today's workforce. But the main problem of the organization today concerns the work of knowledge and knowledge of employees. They are the fastest growing element in every business; in service facilities, they are the main employees. 6. Finally, General Motors is a management business, not an entrepreneurial business. The strength of Sloan's approach lies in his ability to manage, and manage superbly, that was already there and known. The modern organizer is challenged by the growing demand for entrepreneurship and innovation. But the General Motors model gives no indication for this beginning. New Design Principles We don't know how to deal with these new organizational realities or how to meet their structural requirements. However, the organizing task did not wait. To address the new realities, we have in the last 20 years improvised special design solutions in addition to the models Fayol and Sloan. As a result, the organization's architect now has five so-called design principles, five different organization structures. Two traditional ones mentioned have been known as design organization principles for many years: Henri Fayol's functional structure. Sloan. Three of them are new; in fact they are so new that they are usually not known, let alone recognized, as principles of design: imitation of decentralization. In a team organization, the team, usually quite small, is set up for a specific task, rather than for a specific skill or stage in the process. Over the past 20 years, we have learned that while group design has traditionally been considered applicable only to short-lived, transient, exclusive target group assignments, it is equally applicable to some needs, especially for senior management and innovation innovation in an organization that is too large to remain functionally organized and too integrated to be truly decentralized, simulated decentralization is often the organization's answer. It sets one function, one stage in the process or one segment, as if it were a separate business with genuine responsibility for profits and losses; it treats accounting fiction, transfer prices and overheads as if they were market realities. For all its difficulties and frictions, simulated decentralization is probably the fastest growing design of the organization today. It is the only one that fits, albeit badly, materials, computer, chemical and pharmaceutical companies, as well as large banks; it is also the only design principle suitable for a large university, hospital or government institution. Finally, the structure of the systems combines group organization and simulated decentralization. A prototype of this design principle was NASA's space program, in which a large number of autonomous units - large government agencies, individual research scientists, profit-seeking enterprises, and large universities - worked together, organized and informed the needs of the situation, rather than logic, and held together a common goal and joint top management. A large transnational company, which is a mixture of many cultures, governments, enterprises and markets, is the true embodiment of an organization based on the concept of systems. None of the new design principles is easy or unum carefree. Compared to traditional patterns of functionalism and federal decentralization, they are indeed so complex, complex and vulnerable that many of theoreticians of the organization claim that they are not principles at all, but an abomination.2 And there is no doubt that wherever traditional principles are used, they should be; they are infinitely lighter. However, traditional principles are much more limited in scope than new ones, and if used incorrectly, they can cause even greater problems. Design Logic Each of the five design principles expresses or embodies the logic that makes this principle appropriate for application when one or another management task requires a structure. In this discussion, we can identify three, maybe four, of the logic on which the five principles are based. For example, while they do this in different ways, functional and team design principles embody work and task and thus are appropriate projects to consider when faced with work-oriented management or task-oriented management problems. Historically, these two design principles have been seen as antithetical, but in fact they complement each other. In a functionally organized structure, work skills - manufacturing, accounting and so on - are designed to be static; work goes from one stage to another. In the team structure, the work is conceived as static, with in accordance with the requirements of the task. Because of their complementary nature, these two design principles are the only possible choice to address, say, the structure of knowledge. For if you need a specific task performed and team effort will do it best, then you need static functions as a basis from which people, and their experience, can be moved to form a team. You can also identify two other design logics that correspond to work and task logic. Sloan's simulated decentralization and federal decentralization relate to both results and efficiency. They are focused on the result of the designs. However, unlike functional and command structures, they do not complement each other; they are not even an alternative. Federal decentralization is optimal, modeled decentralization, to less evil, which should be resorted to only when the strict requirements of federal decentralization cannot be met. The last of the available design principles, system design, relationship-oriented, is another dimension of management. Since relationships are inevitably more numerous and less clearly defined than work, task or results, a relationship-oriented structure will face greater difficulties than work-oriented or result-oriented design. There are, however, problems with the organization, as in a true multinational business, in which the very complexity of relationships makes the design system the only suitable design principle. This approximate classification indicates that at least one additional design principle can still be developed. The solution is as much a management aspect as work and task, results and performance, and relationships. However, until now we are not aware of the principle of designing a decision-oriented organization structure, but if it is ever developed, it can have broad applicability.3 Ideally an organization should be multi-axis, that is structured around work and task, results and performance, relationships and decisions. It will function as if it were a biological organism, like a human body with its skeleton and muscles, a range of the nervous system, and with circulatory, digestive, immunological and respiratory systems, all autonomous but interdependent. But in social structures, we are still limited to projects that express only one basic dimension. So when designing organizations, we have to choose between different structures, each emphasizing different dimensions, and each, therefore with different costs, specific and fairly strict requirements, and real limitations. There is no risk structure And the design that is the best solution for one task can only be one of a number of equally poor alternatives to its final product. No organization is adequate for all three types of work; Each business will have to use several design principles side by side. In addition, each structure of the organization has certain formal specifications, which have nothing to do with the purpose of the structure, but are an integral part of the structure itself. Just as the human body can be described as having certain characteristics, regardless of the profession of its inhabitants, so can the organization structure. Bodies have arms and legs, arms and legs, all related to each other; similarly, organizations are structured in a way that caters to the need for: clarity, as opposed to simplicity. (The Gothic cathedral is not a simple design, but your position inside is clear; you know where to stand and where to go. Saving efforts to maintain control and minimize friction. Directing vision to the product, not to the process, the result, not the effort. Understanding each person's task as well as the organization as a whole. Decision-making, case-oriented, action-oriented and at the lowest possible level of governance. Stability, as opposed to stiffness, is to survive shocks, and adaptability to learn from it. The perpetuation and self-mutilation that requires the organization to produce tomorrow's leaders from within, helping each individual to constantly evolve; the structure should also be open to new ideas. Although every institution, and especially every business, is structured in some way around all aspects of management, no design principle is adequate to all their requirements and needs. None of the five design principles available meets all formal specifications. The functional principle, for example, has greater clarity and high savings, and it makes it easy to understand your own task. But even in small business, it seeks to steer vision away from results and to efforts to hide the goals of the organization, and to suboptimize solutions. It has high stability, but little adaptability. It perpetuates and develops technical and functional skills, i.e. middle managers, but opposes new ideas and inhibits development and vision Guide. And one of the four other principles is also a good fit against some formal organization specifications and non-profit relative to others. One of the conclusions of this discussion is that the structures of an organization can be clean or effective, but they are unlikely to be both. Indeed, even the purest structure we know of, Grandmaster Alfred Sloan, was actually mixed. It consists not only of decentralized units, with functional organization within the divisions. It also contained some significant simulated decentralization from the outset. For example, Fisher Body is responsible for all body work, but not for any final product. And top management was clearly structured as a team, or rather, as a number of interconnected teams. This does not mean that the structure of an organization should be a cumbersome or confusing mixture if necessary. The huge viability of some older structures - Sears, Roebuck and GM, for example - shows that dynamic balance can be achieved. One consequence is clear, however, and it is that the clean structure is likely to end up badly failing. (This trend may explain the difficulties faced by both GE and Imperial Chemicals, each of which is trying to decentralize clean.) First of all, our observations lead us to conclude that arranging a design series is a risky decision, rather than finding one the best way. And by and large, theorists of the organization and practitioners have not yet learned this. Building a new structure there are a number of important lessons that can be learned from the previous discussion and from the experience of the last 20 years. Some of them relate to new ideas or conclusions that we have not recognized before, while others relate to rethinking old concepts and relationships that we thought were settled many years ago. The first thing we can conclude is that Fayol and Sloan were right: the good structures of the organization will not simply develop. The only things that develop on their own in an organization are clutter, friction, and unsatisfactory. Not the correct structure - or even livable one-intuitive, no more than Greek temples or Gothic cathedrals were. Tradition can indicate where problems and malfunctions are, but they do little to help in finding solutions. The design and structure of an organization requires thinking, analysis and systematic approach. Secondly, we learned that designing the structure of an organization is not the first step, but the last step. The first step is to identify and organize the building blocks of the organization, that is, the key tasks that need to be covered in the final structure, which in turn carry the structural load of the final building. This is, of course, what Fayol did with his production functions when he designed them according to the work to be done. Now we know that the building blocks are determined by the contribution they make And we know that the traditional classification of contributions, such as the staff concept and the traditional theory of the U.S. organization, is more an obstacle to understanding than a help. Designing building blocks or tasks, so to speak, is the engineering phase of the organization's design. It provides basic materials. And, like all materials, these building blocks have their own specific characteristics. They belong in different places and approach each other in different ways. We also learned that the structure follows the strategy. The organization is not mechanical. This is not done by the assembly, and cannot be prefabricated. The organization is organic and unique to each individual business or institution. We now understand that structure is a means of achieving the goals and objectives of an institution. And if we want the structure to be effective and sound, we need to start with goals and strategies.4 This is perhaps the most fruitful new understanding we have gained in the field of organization. This may seem obvious, and it is. But some of the worst mistakes in building organization were made by imposing a live business mechanistic model of ideal organization. Strategy is the answer to the question: What is our business? What's this supposed to be? What will it be? - defines the purpose of the structure. In this way, it identifies key tasks or actions in a given business or service organization. An effective structure is the design that makes these key activities function and produce results. In turn, the key activities are the supporting elements of a functioning structure. The design of the organization is primarily related to or should relate to key activities; other goals are secondary. Some of the new ideas in design organization require us to unlearn old ideas. Some of the most complex and time-consuming battles in organization theory and practice are pure deception. They represent either/or dichotomies when the correct answer is both in different proportions. The first of these bogus battles that are best forgotten, between task focus and man-focus in the work of design and organization structure. The structure and design of the work should be task-oriented. But the tasks must correspond to both the person and the needs of the situation. There is no point in confusing them, as the old and tedious discussion of non-problems insists on it. Work is always objective and impersonal; the work itself is always done by man. Somewhat related to this old controversy is the discussion of hierarchical versus free form organization. Traditional organization theory knows only one type of structure that applies to both building blocks and entire buildings. This is the so-called large-scale organization, that is, a hierarchical pyramid of superiors and subordinates. Today it becomes fashionable another, in equal doctrine, the theory of the organization. He supports the support Shapes and structures are what we want them to be-they are, or should be, free-form. All - form, size and, apparently, tasks - stem from interpersonal relationships. Indeed, it is argued that the purpose of the structure is to enable each individual to do his or her own work. However, it is simply not true that one of these forms is a total regimental and the other is total freedom. The amount of discipline required in both is the same; they only spread it in different ways. Hierarchy, critics argue, does not make the man at the top of the pyramid more powerful. On the contrary, the first effect of a hierarchical organization is to protect the subordinate from arbitrariness from above. A large or hierarchical organization does this by defining the sphere in which the subordinate has power, an area in which the boss cannot interfere. He defends his subordinate by forcing him to say: This is my assigned job. The protection of a subordinate also underlies the insistent insistence of scalar principle that a person has only one boss. Otherwise, the subordinate is likely to be between conflicting demands, teams, interests and loyalty. There is much truth in the old adage: Better one bad master than two good ones. At the same time, the hierarchical organization gives the most individual freedom. As long as the incumbent does all the responsibilities assigned to him, he does his job. He is not responsible for this. We hear a lot of talk these days about the human right to do their thing. But the only structure of an organization in which this is remotely possible is hierarchical. It pre-edges the individual to submit to the goals of the organization or to conscience his activities for the needs and demands of others. Teams, on the other hand, require, first of all, a very large self-discipline from each participant. Everyone has to do the team thing. Everyone should take responsibility for the work of the whole team and for its work. One thing you can't do as a team is your own thing. The builders of organizations (and even theorists of the organization) will have to learn that the sound structure of the organization needs both (a) in the hierarchical structure of power, and (b) in the ability to organize task forces, groups and individuals to work both on a permanent and temporary basis. The theory and practice of organizing a myth-making organization in one direction still assumes that there is one definitive answer, at least for a particular business or institution. In itself, this belief is a significant part of today's crisis of the organization. This leads to doctrinaire structures that impose one template on each and every one, such as operational and innovative components. Manufacturing and service units one product and a multimarket And if any person or process, no matter how insignificant it may be, seems inappropriate, to accommodate it it is necessary to work out a complete reorganization of roots and branches. Maybe there's one correct answer, but if so, we don't have it yet. Indeed, for some businesses and institutions, such as major airlines or government agencies, we don't even have one bad answer - all we have is a lot of equally unsatisfactory approaches. But, as mentioned earlier, the task of the organization will not wait; it will, as necessary, continue to be the central concern of leaders. Therefore, they better learn to understand the principles of design that we already have. They should also examine the formal specifications of the organization and the relationship between business objectives and the structures available to it. The true lesson of the organization's crisis, however, is quite different. The fact is that the traditional search for one correct answer - the search, which is entirely haunted by the new heretics of the organization of free form, as well as the most Orthodox classics - pursues the wrong quarry. It misinterprets an organization as something in itself, not a means to its cause. But now we see that the liberation and mobilization of human energies, rather than symmetry, harmony or consistency, are the goal of the organization. Human productivity is both his goal and a test. 1. To discuss these events, see the epilogue for the new edition of My Concept Corporation (New York, John Day, 1972). 2. This is, for example, the verdict of the organization theorist Harold Kuzin in his widely publicized article Juggle Theory of Management, journal of the Academy of Management, December 1965; see also his Creation of the Meaning of Management Theory, HBR July-August 1962, page 24. 3. Herbert A. Simon and his school tried to develop one-at least this, as I read the administrative behavior of H.A. Simon (New York, McMillan, 1957) and I.G. Marsha and H.A. Simon organizations (New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1958). 4. Fundamental work on this topic, an in-depth study of the design of a modern organization in innovative American companies such as DuPont, General Motors, and Sears, was done by Alfred D. Chandler in his book Strategy and Structure (Cambridge, M.I.T. Press, 1962). A version of this article appeared in the January 1974 issue of Harvard Business Review. 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