New public management vs traditional public management

Business, Management

New public management (NPM) changes the focus of public servants from administration to management. Traditional Public Administration (TPA) takes the view that managers have a more policy-making focus. This management style is as much, if not more concerned, with how goals are accomplished then the goal itself. Thus management is concerned with making sure that policies are in place to ensure that processes are in compliance with government regulations, are fair and equitable, have the public interest at heart, and are transparent to the public. Success is measured on how well the policies accomplish this. New public management wants government to adopt a more private sector model of management which places an emphasis on satisfying the client/customer and thus lends itself to a management style that requires that managers have a more entrepreneurial attitude towards achieving their goals and managers are given the flexibility to be more creative in the solutions that they come up with. Managers are rewarded for their risk taking if successful, and are held accountable for shortfalls, as they would be in the private sector. " Public servants shall endeavour to ensure the proper, effective and efficient use of public money" TPA's focus on form over function (policy more than results) often results in bureaucratic log jams where money is wasted on projects that are never completed due to an excess of procedural rules. NPM's focus is to ensure client satisfaction and thus gives managers the flexibility and tools to make decisions that will allow a more efficient and effective use of public funds. "" In public Service, how ends are achieved should be as important as the achievements themselves" NPM's private sector approach to customer satisfaction (results based as apposed to process based), can make it less

transparent as to how results are achieved. NPM's focus on empowerment of management, privatization and down sizing of government conflicts with the above value as there is a loss of transparency regarding due process. TPA through its emphasis on policy making ensures that processes are in place that promote democracy, social equity and due process. Looking at the above two values, it seems that the second value can be easily achieved with the use of TPA but at the expense of the first value. NPM on the other hand appears to more successfully achieve the first value but at the expense of the 2nd.