

bureaucratic management essay sample

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Bureaucratic management, one of the schools of classical management, emphasizes the need for organizations to function on a rational basis. Weber (1864 – 1920), a contemporary of Fayol, was one of the major contributors to this school of thought. He observed that nepotism (hiring of relatives regardless of their competence) was prevalent in most organizations. Weber felt that nepotism was grossly unjust and hindered the progress of individuals. He therefore identified the characteristics of an ideal bureaucracy to show how large organizations should be run. The term bureaucracy (derived from the German buro, meaning office) referred to organizations that operated on a rational basis. According to Weber, a bureaucracy is a highly structured, formalized, and impersonal organization. In other words, it is a formal organization structure with a set of rules and regulations. The characteristics of Weber's ideal bureaucratic structure are outlined. These characteristics would exist to a greater degree in ideal organizations and to a lesser degree in other, less perfect organizations.

Major Characteristics of Weber's Ideal Bureaucracy

Characteristic	Description
Work specialization and division of labor	The duties and responsibilities of all the employees are clearly defined. Jobs are divided into tasks and subtasks. Each employee is given a particular task to perform repeatedly so that he acquires expertise in that task.
Abstract rules and regulations	The rules and regulations that are to be followed by employees are well defined to instill discipline in them and to ensure that they work in a co-coordinated manner to achieve the goals of the organization.
Impersonality of managers	Managers make rational decisions and judgments based purely on facts. They try to be immune to feelings like affection, enthusiasm, hatred and

passion so as to remain unattached and unbiased towards their subordinates. Hierarchy of organization structure The activities of employees at each level are monitored by employees at higher levels. Subordinates do not take any decision on their own and always look up to their superiors for approval of their ideas and opinions.

Behavioral Approach The behavioral school of management emphasized what the classical theorists ignored the human element. While classical theorists viewed the organization from a production point of view, the behavioral theorists viewed it from the individual's point of view. The behavioral approach to management emphasized individual attitudes and behaviors and group processes, and recognized the significance of behavioral processes in the workplace. It gives an overview of the key contributions to management theory by the behavioral management school of thought. **Elton Mayo: Focusing on Human Relations** Elton Mayo (1880 – 1949), the Father of the Human Relations Approach, led the team which conducted a study at Western Electric's Hawthorne Plant between 1927 and 1933 to evaluate the attitudes and psychological reactions of workers in on-the-job situations. The researchers and scholars associated with the Hawthorne experiments were Elton Mayo, Fritz Roethlisberger, T N Whitehead and William Dickson.

The National Research Council sponsored this research in cooperation with the Western Electric Company. The study was started in 1924 by Western Electric's industrial engineers to examine the impact of illumination levels on worker productivity. Eventually the study was extended through the early

1930S. Limitations of Human Relations Approach Human relations theory recognizes the significance of human resources. This theory believes that each individual is unique and the attitude and behavior of an employee determines the way he or she works. This theory is against the view that people respond automatically to monetary stimulus. Human relations theory was one of the greatest advances in management, yet, it did not succeed in establishing new concepts. Human Relations theory has made noteworthy contributions to the field of management. It provides valuable guidance in understanding the employees and managing them. This theory also states the importance of attitudes and behaviors in managing the workforce effectively.

Human Relations is one of the foundations on which the building of management is to be built. Although this theory has given great insights, it has its limitations also. This theory focuses more on the informal group and is very vague about the positive motivation aspects. The limitations of the Human Relations theory are: The Human Relations theorists are of the opinion that by removing fear, people would perform effectively. This view attacked the assumption that workers can be motivated to work only through fear. The Human Relations approach made a significant contribution at a time when it was generally being assumed that workers have to be coerced to work. Yet, this approach has very little to say about positive motivation. The positive motivation aspect has been generalized by the Human Relations theorists. Human Relations theory does not provide enough focus on work. It emphasizes more on interpersonal relations and on the informal group. Consequently, this approach assumes that a worker's

attitudes, behavior and effectiveness is predominantly determined by his relation with his fellow-workers and not by the kind of work he does.

Human Relations does not understand the economic implications of organizational problems. Therefore, most of the principles advocated cannot be applied in the organizational context. Human Relations theory also tends to be very vague. It stresses on giving the workers a sense of responsibility but hardly tells what their responsibilities are: Comparison of Mayo and Hawthorne Studies Comparison of Elton Mayo and the Hawthorne Studies Pre-judgments Findings Job performance depends on the individual worker. The group is the key factor in job performance. Fatigue is the main factor affecting output. Perceived meaning and importance of the work determine output. Management sets production standards. Workplace culture sets its own production standards. Abraham Maslow: Focusing on Human Needs In 1943, Abraham H. Maslow (1908 – 1970), a Brandeis University psychologist, theorized that people were motivated by a hierarchy of needs. His theory rested on three assumptions.

First, all of us have needs which are never completely fulfilled. Second, through our actions we try to fulfill our unsatisfied needs. Third, human needs occur in the following hierarchical manner: physiological needs safety or security needs belongingness or social needs esteem or status needs self-actualization, or self-fulfillment needs. According to Maslow, once needs at a specific level have been satisfied, they no longer act as motivators of behavior. Then the individual strives to fulfill needs at the next level.

Managers who accepted Maslow's hierarchy of needs attempted to change

their management practices so that employees' needs could be satisfied.

Douglas McGregor: Challenging Traditional Assumptions about Employees

Douglas McGregor (1906 – 1964) developed two assumptions about human behavior, which he labeled Theory X and Theory Y. According to McGregor, these two theories reflect the two extreme sets of belief that different managers have about their workers.

Theory X presents an essentially negative view of people. Theory X managers assume that workers are lazy, have little ambition, dislike work, want to avoid responsibility and need to be closely directed to make them work effectively. Theory Y is more positive and presumes that workers can be creative and innovative, are willing to take responsibility, can exercise self-control and can enjoy their work. They generally have higher-level needs which have not been satisfied by the job. Like Maslow's theory, McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y influenced many practicing managers. These theories helped managers develop new ways of managing the workers.

Read more at: <http://www.examrace.com/UGC/UGC-Study-Material/Management/Management-Basic-Concepts/Management-Bureaucratic-Management.html>

Copyright © www.examrace.com