

Key Concepts in Bureaucratic/Structural Models

- central question: how best to organize for efficiency and effectiveness to meet organizational goals
- dominant focus on organizational goals, and the deployment of expertise in pursuit of those goals
- organizational goals are assumed clearly and precisely stated, shared, and stable
- overall organizational goals drive the entire organization's structures, processes, choices
- emphasis on rationality as envisioned by the Enlightenment thinkers (e.g., Adam Smith) and as reflected in the scientific revolution:
 - identify a problem
 - seek relevant information
 - determine potential alternative solutions
 - analyze for the optimal alternative
 - implement the chosen solution
 - follow-up to ensure continuing optimality of the solution
- roots in the industrial revolution in the 19th century, with both organizational theorists (e.g., Max Weber) and management theorists (e.g., Frederick Taylor, via his "scientific management" ideas) conceptualizing this perspective as an emerging advance over earlier organizational for
- core explanatory ideas in structural-bureaucratic thinking:
 - expertise as the source of legitimate authority, and as the main basis for structure, processes, and choices
 - metaphorically, the organization as smoothly functioning machine
 - hierarchy, with greatest expertise at the top
 - division of labor and specialization by function
 - impersonalism: separation of work and home lives
 - universalism: orgs should be "above" politics, and should evaluate based solely on expertise and performance, not on socioeconomic, gender, religious, genealogical, or racial/ethnic factors
 - the importance of formalization: rules, regulations, legal framework
 - leadership based in expertise
 - careers can be pursued, rewarding performance over time (potentially to be formalized as tenure)
 - positive and negative sanctions for individuals based on performance quality
 - assumption that material rewards and stature drive individual behavior