

## **How Course Changed, Improved, and Informed My Understanding**

Jerome Z. Cunningham

School of Public Affairs and Administration, Rutgers University – Newark

20:834:522:01: Managing Public Organization

Stephanie Newbold, Ph.D.

December 20, 2021

Understanding the methodologies of public administration was hard for me to learn in this classroom setting since I work for a corporation in the public sector. I had to constantly be aware and separate the class learning from on-the-job training. I thought I knew how management already operated in the public sector until I started learning the theories discussed in class. I started identifying the proper names of what my colleagues and I were doing daily. I realized that the daily workload was one of the theories studied and that they intertwined with one another. We took several approaches over the next twelve weeks of reading and digesting the theories.

The theories that stood out most to me were classical, management, human, social, and contingent. Classical theory is more about producing numbers than caring about how the job affects the human factor. The classical theory is for those with direct authority in one area: the manager. The authoritarian makes sure the actors are a means of production. In classical theory, some individuals operate better under a structural or technological process. Understanding the information in the theory mentioned had me reevaluating my management skills. I wanted to make sure that I operated each day at work, knowing that I cared about the people who worked in the corporation. Something worked right when you knew the employees reciprocated gratitude because you ensured the employees were also cared for.

The course changed my perception of what type of management skills I possessed. The course motivated me to dig deeper into the thought process of writing journals, expressing what I have learned from the books, and applying it more to the job processes. The organization I worked for seemed to have fallen under a couple of theories we learned: the open system and administrative theory. I asked the executives what I was learning in the classroom, and they said that the curriculum was spot on. The theories evolved as time went on and changed the concepts

of how organizations are managed. I also learned how complex it was regarding public laws being implemented in the public sector. This can be a factor when the persons creating the policies have entrusted interest and disproportionately influence the regulations.

Evidence-based information is sometimes lacking in the policy's writing, especially if it has not been reviewed since corporations evolved. It is also interesting how much influence the outside government has when implementing changes within a public organization. Your local government and board members also influence how policies are written because they may have a different stake in the corporation. Depending on how regulations are implemented can be the difference in how the corporation is funded in the public sector. Public entities are supported on many levels. You get funded through federal government programs, and through local government programs, you can get financed through anonymous donations. Corporations can even be funded through private organizations when you have some affiliation agreement with them.

So many factors come into play when outside influences contribute to decision-making within a corporation. Election cycles can influence policy change within a public organization. When election cycles come around, this could change who oversees facilities and who the directives can come from. In public facilities, Presidents of the corporation are usually sought out and appointed to the position. New elective officials can influence changes within the organization's hierarchy structure. I learned that interdisciplinary teamwork is the best route to implement changes within an organization because you have other members from different areas who can give their professional and first-hand knowledge on how processes work within the corporation. Administration contributes a lot to making things happen when creating a change

for the greater good within an organization. The policy process is daunting; however, it can be accomplished with the right individuals fighting for proper support.

We touched base on how important communication was in an organization when it came to working with your colleagues and even more critical when managing a group of individuals. It is essential to make the employees feel like work is their second home (Job) feels that way. Employees typically operate and produce when they know they are not counted as just another number to produce goods and then forgotten about. You don't get as many incentives in the public sector to do a job. For instance, you might not get bonuses at the end of the year to motivate you to perform. You might not get an excellent performance evaluation from a manager, which will change your attitude toward work. Managers must devise ways to motivate their workers, so they provide overtime or compensation time.

I learned that small changes in a corporate structure might change an employee's perception and make them want to perform better at their job. Leadership has a significant influence on employees when they show they are willing to change the social environment in which they work. When you try to improve work conditions and show you care, employees show their leaders that they care in exchange. Psychologically, the mind gravitates to feeling better, and all you may have done is give employees a suite of new chairs. Incentives are very different in the private sector than in the public sector.

A thriving private corporation makes it easier to maneuver around for growth within the organization from experience. I realize working in the public sector and job growth sometimes does not come as fast as you would like because employees do not leave these jobs that often to move on. Employees in the public sector usually keep their jobs until it is time to retire, especially if they are not top executives. I find that executives can move around more within the

corporations when producing results within the facility where they work. We learned that everything is not written in a black-and-white format. Corporations are constantly coming up with contingency plans because they are faced with situations they did not see coming. It started several years ago when we were confronted with one of the most tremendous storms in the tri-state area.

Superstorm Sandy came through, and everyone thought it would be just a significant thunderstorm with a lot of rain. However, the storm came through and created massive flooding throughout New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. The aftermath of the storm caught everyone by surprise. Corporations knew they could withstand the storm, especially health care facilities. We learned quickly at the hospital that we had to devise a contingency plan to make sure all the patients we had in the facility were safe. One day before the storm wiped out the Lower East Side, which was affected by all the flooding, the hospital had to evacuate over six hundred patients with various conditions. At that moment, executive leadership had to devise contingency plans for where we would offload the patients and how they would be taken care of.

There was around-the-clock coverage on logistics, transportation, and deployment of employees to our sister facilities. I realized that things could change quickly, and you had to adapt to new processes that may have taken you out of your comfort zone. This created another managing structure with which I was familiar. Learning about morale within an organization in a classroom setting made me go back and evaluate how I interacted with my colleagues to make sure I made those around me feel valued.

You have managers within the corporation who only look out for themselves and do not care how individuals feel. The new corporation president came in and brought his values of the family dynamics. Valuing others represented programs he implemented to make others feel

respected and that their opinions and suggestions mattered—another way of having employees wanting to reach the common goal of a company's mission. The bottom line is that the company continues to thrive and operate at its total capacity.

Understanding that everyone cannot be a top executive in the corporation does not mean you do not have any power within your job position. This resonated with me during the course because you want to move your career to the next level, but you say you do not wish to power. Deep down inside, I knew that power was what I wanted after internally searching my thoughts and understanding my feelings on hierarchy within an organization. I learned it was okay to like this if it is used for the good and not to misuse it.

Having power could make or break a person in an organization. Sometimes, power can go to a person's head and force them to think they are better than someone else. Others would gain power and work on making successful changes that contribute to the corporation. Working hard to climb the corporate ladder, you realize power is something you deserve without feeling guilty about achieving it. Recognizing that power comes with specialties because the CEO is the highest position in a corporation you can hold. However, he does not have a degree in IT, so if the CEO needs someone to fix their computer, the power lies with the computer expert to diagnose and fix the problem. Holding a top position does not mean you know everything; others have just as much power without the title.

Toward the end of the semester, I learned that the workforce still has a long way to go regarding LGBT groups. Corporations have made strides in making sure they have a clear path to inclusiveness when it comes to Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender employees. It has taken years of research and lawsuits to assist with changes in the workplace culture. Several years ago, they implemented a policy that every floor in the workplace must accommodate

restrooms that are not gender-specific. This begins the transformation of acceptance in the workforce for the LGBT community. Corporations must continue providing compassion training amongst staff so they will not use any language that is offensive to another group of people. The course has broadened my knowledge of connecting the proper content with what happens daily in the workplace.

The course has opened my eyes to continue to be an active leader within the corporation. I believe it is okay for me to obtain a position with more responsibility, which in turn means more power. The course has taught me that reforming a system within the public sector is sometimes a precarious mission—the journey to take the theory from thought to a form of practice.

When ironing out processes and regulations, the correlation between purpose and conclusion can be blurred. The theories created through research done a million times over the years seem to overlap somehow. You can take information from each of them and still apply portions of the research to expected changes in the workplace today. Concepts for public corporations are formed from a democratic standpoint, where everyone has a voice and inclusion is critical in decision-making. Employees on all levels of the corporation should continue to be educated to make specific organizational changes.

[Full article: Complexity theory and public management: a 'becoming' field \(tandfonline.com\)](#)

[How has this course changed, improved, and informed your theoretical and practical understanding for the study of complex organizations in public administration? - Google Search](#)

[Understanding Evidence-Based Public Health Policy \(nih.gov\)](#)

[\(PDF\) Conclusions: Looking Beyond the New Public Management \(researchgate.net\)](#)

[FULLTEXT01.pdf&gt \(diva-portal.org\)](#)