

The Effective Public Manager

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Summary

The book focuses on the current challenges of public managers in the twenty first century and the new tools available to meet those challenges. The book provides a core set of concepts that can guide the management of public organizations and offer some suggestions. This includes a need to adopt new type of effective public managers that will be creative and innovative. To seek managers that will shape events rather than being shaped by them. The managers that will manage their organizations efficiently and simultaneously remained accountable to the public.

Chapter One:

The Perpetual Crisis in Public Management

The discussion centred on the general perception of government incompetence and how such has fed into the perpetual crisis in public management. The chapter discussed:

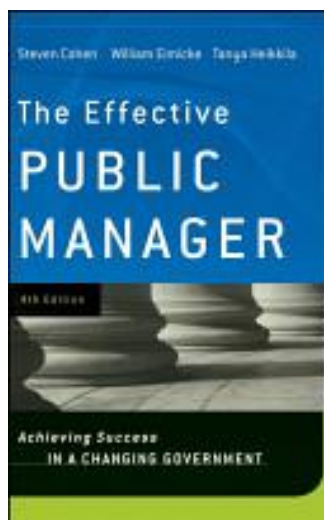
- 1) The characteristics of public managers which underlie the image of incompetence and how that image can be countered.
- 2) Provides an analysis of the crisis of confidence in contemporary public management that started during Vietnam War

The Current Crisis

Defined: The genesis of

the crises, how it was tackled and necessary actions to address such was discussed.

- The Department of Parks & Recreation's management practices was cited as an example of a government agency that was in perpetual crisis and heavily critics by people.
- This was mainly on



the movement that started in the 1990s to reinvent and reinvigorate government agencies across all levels on how they do business.

- This was done by adopting strategies like “performance measurement, performance-based budgeting, and management for result which still require the public managers to remain accountable and to serve ethically and responsibly.

The difference between standing in a long line at a local motor vehicle bureau, post office or IRS office was compared with the success stories of the

private sector such as Federal Express with its almost flawless computer-assisted delivery service, iPods that include every song we could ever think of or Amazon.com and its

ever-expanding selection of everything. It was recommended that public management must deal with a profound crisis of confidence, a perception

that government can't get the job done.

Chapter Two

Defining Effective Public Management

provides an operational definition of effective public management looking at the opportunities for managers to respond to the challenges discussed in the first chapter. It defined what effective public manager isn't and reminded readers why the negative image of the public manager persists today. The chapter outlines a recipe for failure in the public sector and introduces a strategy for success. The five ingredients for public sector failure are:

- Accepting the negative image of public management
- Using the constraints of the public sector as an excuse for none performance.
- Allowing caution to become inertia, hiding behind ambiguity
- Forgetting that people matter.

Most of these ingredients are what was considered correctable management failures.

Despite the overarching structural conditions that can undermine a public manager's image, most public managers are adequate

performance and many are excellent. But still all managers are subject to the same public image. Although there are many inadequate public managers, still there are public managers who can match, if not exceed, the performance of any private managers.

Public Managers often have no easy response to attacks regarding levels of government productivity, all too often; they accept the negative image that is presented to them. Such acceptance is the first ingredient of the recipe for failure.

The Innovative, Effective Public

Manager: The key to effective management is an active, aggressive and innovative effort to overcome constraints and obstacles. The best managers are those who understand their organization's environment. They are able to project the effect that their actions will have on that environment.

Flexibility, resilience, and persistence are key attributes of the effective public manager. When obstacles cannot be overcome, new paths are pursued.

Innovation is the key to learning to succeed, and it is possible to study the process of innovation. Innovation and entrepreneurship are not only possible, they are necessary for effective public management.

Chapter Three

How to find and keep good people is

one of the most important issues faced by public manager.

It explains why hiring and firing are so difficult in the public sector and underlines a number of strategies for obtaining and retaining excellent staff members.

Finding employees, nurturing them, and motivating them form the essence of all effective management strategies.

Public sector managers often find it difficult to attract top-notch people for the job, at the same time, it can be challenging to fire people who aren't performing well.

The chapter addresses the challenges of finding and hiring good people. The civil service rules usually make hiring a long and tiresome process. In order to find good people, you must know what kind of people you need. This can be done by:

- Assess current staff members skills, strength and weaknesses
- Develop a recruitment Network
- Get the word out- a two way communication process through



which you attempt to find personnel who fit your needs.

- Encourage good people to apply
- Judging applicants through intelligence, experience, training and expertise, attitude and communicating skills.

How to hire good people you have found:

- Use temporary appointments and contractors, which permits greater flexibility and allow manager to exploit opportunities as they occur.
- Selling organization and its mission

How to reward and keep the good people in your organization:

- Using incentives: These are food that keeps the organizational organism alive.
- Encouraging Entrepreneurial behaviour: good people are entrepreneurial innovators.

Keeping a good person from leaving:

- Maintain constant communication
- Understand their needs

- Be aware of their level of job satisfaction.

How to get rid of inadequate staff members:

- Identifying poor performance
- Encouraging Improve Performance
- Knowing when to give up staff member

Dealing with Inadequate staff members

- A performance evaluation system that clearly identifies the failure to meet even the minimum level of performance will facilitate such as transfers.

Each technique has certain costs and benefits and each must be individually tailored to a given management environment.

Chapter Four

Developing effective working relationships focuses on how to deal with and interact with colleagues at work. It provides advice on how to perform the mundane but essential task of keeping your boss and staff happy. It outline the communication and listening skills that are essential to effective management and provides some practical tips on how to keep organization functioning. How to satisfy the demands of superiors, peers, and subordinates:

- Good working relationships can be damaged by inadequate communication
- Choosing which demand to satisfy
- Learning to listen to your coworkers
- Knowing why information and interpersonal relations are critical
- Ascertaining your boss's management style

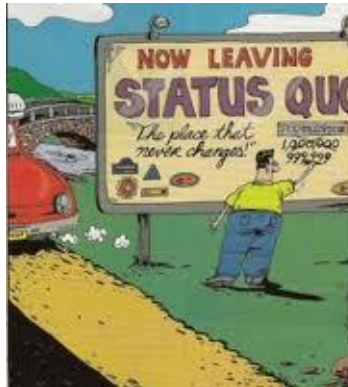


- P
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- Communicating with your boss
- Working out disagreement with your boss
- Learning what motivate your staff
- Communicating with your staff
- Understanding the role of unions in your organization

Chapter Five

Structuring Systems, Tasks and Responsibilities, examines how to rearrange organizational structure, task assignments, and standard operating procedures to increase an organization's effectiveness. The chapter focuses on how the organization's structure can help managers manage. The structure of the organization can be used to influence the behaviour of the organization's members by moving staffers into newly configured organizational units. Structure is important because most tasks in the modern world are complex and performed by groups and performance will suffer if an organization's work and structure are not in sync.



Chapter Six

Understanding and Applying Innovation Strategies in the Public Sector, takes the discussion of organizational effectiveness one step further by presenting our hands-on, real-world, tested approach to management innovation and the bringing of fundamental change to organizations. This approach is based on more than a decade of consulting work in government and non-profit sector, and it reflects the hard lessons learned in while trying to help organization improve

their performance. The chapter identifies strategies for bringing innovation into public sector organization. The techniques include strategic planning, reengineering, quality management, benchmarking, team management and leveraging private sector action. It was at the same time acknowledged that implementation of innovation in public sector organization is not an easy task because; the leaders need to in still a clear vision and action plan for implementing the innovation..

Chapter Seven

The Art and Craft of Contracting, focuses on an underdeveloped management skill of most public managers-contracting management. To improve the

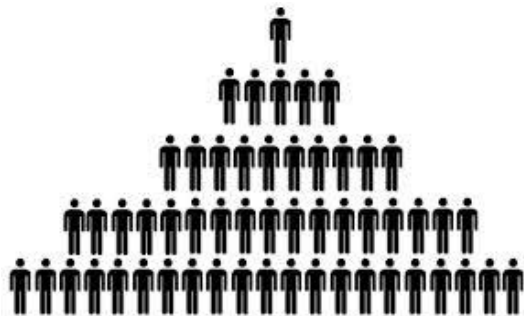
management of a government programs, public managers use team management, privatization, and reengineering, benchmarking and quality management. Of these

innovation techniques, the one used mostly is contracting out to private for profit and non-profit organizations to help deliver public goods and services. The use of

contracts, though not new, is becoming a central task of public management. Its effective practice is an art and craft that builds on lessons taught in all of the management fields.

Chapter Eight

Gathering, Organizing, and using information, outlines the problems public managers usually face when trying to improve the quality of information they received. This include how to avoid having too much of wrong information and not enough of the right information. The chapter also provides a simple approach to managing an organization's information flow, which is by organizing and analysing the information obtained and use it as a management tool.



Chapter Ten

Shaping organizational goals and strategies, is devoted to the issue of formulating and implementing an organizational strategy. Every organization is expected to perform certain functions. In the public sector, political factors replace market forces, intensely complicating an

Chapter Nine

Mastering the Budgetary Process, poses the new question: How can I use the budget to control my organization? Financial management is the most important and most overrated tool available to public managers. Certainly no activity can occurred except it is paid for. But paying for something is not a guarantee of receiving the item or service. The chapter explains the uses and limitations of the budget as a means of influencing organizational behaviour. The budget is a necessary but not a sufficient tool for influencing organizational behaviour. An effective public manager must understand budget formulation and financial management. Effective financial management can increase the probability of successful public management but cannot guarantee success.

organization's strategy decision. In the private sector, an organization must decide if anyone will buy the proposed product and if the organization has the capability to produce, market and distribute the product.

In the public sector, an organization must receive permission and gain resources from elected official before a product or service can be marketed. The chapter offers advice for public manager on how to interpret order from above, read signals sent by outside groups and formulate a realistic operational strategy for the organization. But suggests that strategies do not simply emerge on their own, there is need to utilize leadership skills to formulate and implement organizational strategies.

Chapter Eleven

Communicating with the Public, the Media, and stakeholder, summarizes the form and function of this often-tortured scrutiny and gives helpful hints for dealing with the outside world.

The chapter provides guidance on the communication strategies that are needed to be employed to communicate and work with the public, legislature, overhead agencies, interest groups and the media.

Also, the relationship of a public manager with the stakeholders will play an important role in determining success.

The best way to stay out of trouble with the public is to pay attention to their needs

because the public has the right to know what any government agency is doing.

It is easy to generate political opposition if members of the public feel that a manager is ignoring them.

It concludes with an assessment of the costs and benefits of public sector careers and with plea for more aggressive, risk-taking public management.

It was asserts that public organizations can and must be made to perform more effectively.

Chapter Twelve

Surviving and Thriving in Public Service. The authors started with questions: Why should anyone want to become an effective public manager? Why should anyone bother to stick his or her neck out? The simple answer is that no one can succeed at public management without taking risks.

This is because as society faces ever more complex problems- from the global economy to global terrorism-the need for highly educated, flexible, and imaginative managers continues to grow.

The society relies on government for protection within, maintenance of the economy and defence from

enemies abroad. Yet, it is a common knowledge that government does not always perform its tasks efficiently or effectively.

Although the private sector has certainly provided the principal vehicle for developing the vast materials wealth that the United States enjoys, it has been left to the public sector to deal with the problems that cannot be handled by the free market.

For example, it is government that provides insurance for the unemployed, the aged, the sick and food stamps for the hungry. This is why there is there is need for entrepreneur public manager. For most of this century, students of public administration have sought to make government work better.

Some have attempted to come up with magic answers.

Some analysts were concern with the stability of government and hope that better constitutions would make for a better government.

Others felt that changes in organizational structure would help and therefore created “superagencies” such as the extinct U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare and New York City’s Human Resources Administration.

Evaluation:

The book is a good tool for public managers. It provides advice to the public managers on how to build and maintain a professional reputation and how to advance in the bureaucratic hierarchy. It is an interesting book to read. It provides a core set of concepts that can guide the management of public organizations. Although some of the points raised in the book may seem obvious or simple, but as simple as they may be, most managers are unable to follow these lessons. So, the advice in the book should not be taken for granted especially for the managers in the public sector. Managers need better training and opportunities to exchange and share ideas about how to develop and deploy

management innovation strategies. The book could serve as one of many path to improvement for professionalization of public service.