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Principles, Values, and Assumptions Underlying “Good Public Management”

by

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Presidential Management Capacity to Respond to 21st Century Challenges

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Management

This is one of a series of issue papers prepared under the auspices of The National Academy of Public Administration’s Standing Panel on Executive Organization and Management. They are intended to inform Presidential candidates and Congress about the management capacity of the Executive Office of the President and the challenges facing it.

A list of the papers that have been completed as of this date can be found after this title page. The papers represent the views of the author(s), not necessarily those of the Academy or any of its panels.

List of Issue Papers on Presidential Management Capacity to Respond to 21st Century Challenges

The Standing Panel on Executive Organization and Management undertook an effort in 2006 to examine the institutional management capacity of the Executive Office of the President. Following is a list of issue papers issued as of August 2008:

Broad Governance Issues

- “Principles, Values, and Assumptions Underlying ‘Good Public Management’” *by John Kamensky*
- “Governing with Foresight: Institutional Changes to Enhance Fact-Based Decision-Making in the Executive Office of the President,” *by John Kamensky*

Institutional Management Capacity of the Executive Office of the President

- “A Modernized Office of Executive Management: An Option for Making the M in OMB a Reality,” *by Dwight Ink*
- “The President Must Develop a Strong Capacity to Meet Executive Organization Requirements,” *by Dwight Ink and Herbert Jasper*

Management Tools Used by the Executive Office of the President

- “Strengthening the Government’s Budgeting and Fiscal Management Capacity,” *by F. Stevens Redburn and Philip G. Joyce*
- “Crisis Management” *by Dwight Ink*
- “The President’s Intergovernmental Management Agenda,” *by Bruce McDowell*
- “Government By Contract: The White House Needs Capacity to Review and Revise the Legacy of 20th Century Reform,” *by Dan Guttman*
- “Improving Collaboration by Federal Agencies: An Essential Priority for the Next Administration,” *by Thomas Stanton*
- “The Legislative Clearance Process,” *by Bernard Martin*

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Executive Summary

The definition of “good public management” is premised on a set of underlying principles, values and assumptions. There is no consensus on what these might be. Past government management reform efforts were rooted in different principles, values and assumptions that reflected the president’s perceptions of how the world works and how other people behave, the trends of the day in the private sector, or the political environment.

This issue paper offers a framework for understanding the various perspectives and competing advice a president may receive in regard to developing his management improvement agenda.

At least four different perspectives “good public management” have served as the unstated underpinnings of reform efforts undertaken over the past 50 years:

- The “state,” or traditional hierarchical, perspective sees public administration from the standpoint of centralized, integrated control by the president.
- The market-based perspective sees public administration relying on commercial management approaches such as competition, choice, customers, incentives, and contracts.
- The civil society perspective sees society as being comprised of voluntary civic and social organizations that act collectively on behalf of the larger community.
- The collaborative perspective has adapted approaches from the previous three perspectives. It is based on the development of common goals and extended, or peer-to-peer, relationships across hierarchical boundaries.

Each of these perspectives reflects different management approaches and potential new initiatives. For example, advocates of the traditional hierarchical perspective would advocate stronger central controls as an approach to increasing accountability while the collaborative perspective would advocate stronger transparency as a preferred approach for achieving increased accountability.

The author recommends that the next President define and articulate a set of management operating principles early in his Administration and communicate them clearly to his political appointees as a framework for action. These principles should then be used to guide the supporting institutional framework in the Executive Office of the President.

Principles, Values, and Assumptions Underlying “Good Public Management”

Introduction

A President will receive conflicting advice on how to improve the management of the federal government. Some advisor will advocate an emphasis on reducing waste, fraud, and abuse. Others will encourage an emphasis on empowering employees to better serve customers. Some will advocate imposing more rules to ensure fewer mistakes. Others will encourage streamlining rules to speed service delivery. Some will advocate strong Presidential involvement. Others will say the President should distance him- or herself and delegate as much as possible to the bureaucracy to handle. And so on.

Most management advice and associated initiatives tend to not be linked to political agendas. For example, initiatives begun under one President are oftentimes implemented by another, even one from a different political party (albeit the initiatives will be re-named!). That was the case for a range of initiatives begun under President Clinton that were continued under President Bush. In addition, every President inherits a plethora of conflicting laws and ingrained institutional cultures.

Nevertheless, every President wants to leave the government better than when he or she took office. But what does that mean? What constitutes “good public management?”

What is the President’s role – and the role of the institutional presidency – in making “good public management” happen? There were 13 government-wide management reform efforts in the 20th century, each of which set out to improve the management of the federal government.¹ Each of these efforts was premised on some underlying principles, values, and assumptions as to what the proponents perceived as being “good public management.” And these perceptions varied among the different reform efforts. Some advocated specialization and hierarchy, others focused on efficiency, and others focused on devolution and employee empowerment. The variations reflected the values of the proponents and the needs of the times.

Will the next President take a comprehensive look at how government is managed? Former Comptroller General David Walker had called for a “fundamental review, reprioritization, and reengineering of the base of government” because he has concluded that current federal policies, functions, and activities are based on historical conditions and are “not well-aligned with 21st century realities.”² His emphasis was on an examination of “what” government should do -- but he also recommended a look at “how” government should do what it ultimately chooses to do.

If the next President and Congress choose to undertake such a review, what would be the values, principles, and assumptions about good public management that would underlie their decisions in choosing among alternatives? And once decided, what premises would be used

to implement the selected approaches? For example, the Clinton Administration recommended reducing the size of the workforce, but by targeting “overhead” positions in headquarters, not the traditional across-the-board approach, under the premise that centralized over-control was preventing front-line workers from serving citizens effectively. The George W. Bush Administration advocated competing commercial work being done by civil servants with the private sector under the premise that competition would drive efficiencies in service delivery.

This issue paper offers a framework for understanding the various perspectives that practitioners and academics may bring to an understanding and assessment of what is “good public management.” It also recommends that a President needs to explicitly set the tone and expectations regarding his management approach for appointees directing the development of policy and execution of programs – precisely because there is no single “correct” perspective. Academics John Dixon and Rhys Dogan summarized this succinctly:

“All approaches to public management have their origins in conflicting and competing values, beliefs, and attitudes on what constitutes good public management, which are, in turn, a product of perceptions about how the world works and how other people behave.”³

Why Should the Next President Articulate a Clear Approach?

Since the end of World War II, Congress has enacted scores of laws that affect the administration and management of the federal government – either government-wide or for specific agencies. In a 1997 assessment of these laws enacted over the prior 50 years, academic Paul Light observed that these laws were not based on a consistent set of premises.⁴ For example, some laws, such as the Inspectors General Act, were premised on the need to reduce waste, fraud, and abuse as a way to improve government effectiveness. Other laws, such as the Freedom of Information Act, were premised on the importance of fairness and openness in government operations as a way to achieve government effectiveness.

When the body of laws is taken together – as agencies and the President must – it sometimes leads to divergent expectations and inconsistent direction. For example, does an agency collect customer satisfaction information to meet requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act, or does it not collect such information, in order to minimize citizen burden under the Paperwork Reduction Act?

While the President is obligated to “take care that the Laws be faithfully executed,” he or she sometimes has substantial discretion in how to interpret and apply the specifics of these laws. Further, when developing new laws, the President and Congress can more explicitly emphasize one set of premises that constitute “good public management” over another.

There are many competing “lenses” through which a President can view what constitutes good public management. However, precisely because there are different perspectives, an effective leader will find it important to make explicit which set of premises matter most to

him or her. Obviously, that set of premises will be tempered by the times, the political environment, and of course the Constitution and existing public laws (even if they are internally inconsistent with each other). Nevertheless, by understanding the broader context, and being respectful of different perspectives of good public management, a President, his or her Administration, and Congress can set a tone, a direction, and pursue good public management more effectively. Doing this can increase the chances of successful implementation of the President's policy priorities, but equally important, it can help avoid negative consequences such as increased micro-management by Congress or poorly coordinated (and potentially conflicting) agency-specific initiatives.

Perspectives of Good Public Management

Much as there is no consensus as to a common perspective on what constitutes good public management, there is also no generally agreed-upon single framework for describing the array of perspectives. Perspectives vary by professional discipline, by political philosophy, and by management tools and approaches that may be in favor at various points in time.

Three different perspectives “have received wide acceptance” in the field of public administration, according to public administration scholar Dr. Charles Goodsell:⁵ the State perspective, the Market-Based perspective, and the Civil Society perspective. He summarized a recent analysis of governance by Dr. Jan Kooiman:

“The state sees public administration from the standpoint of centralized, integrated control by the chief executive. The market sees it in terms of private sector values and the culture of business. Civil society’s viewpoint is that the field’s democratic potential is realized through direct influence over administration by those affected by it.”

While this trio of perspectives does not represent a consensus among public administration scholars, it is used here as a point of reference. Other frameworks developed by other academics are summarized in Appendix B.

In addition, a fourth perspective seems to be evolving. The Collaborative perspective is becoming a new way of viewing how organizations are working across boundaries in the context of broader societal challenges such as healthcare, environment, and education. This perspective, which is being adapted from the business world, is exploring ways of achieving social goals outside the bounds of traditional bureaucratic hierarchies (Heckscher).

Interestingly, within each of the three more widely accepted perspectives there is a continuum that oftentimes crosses political spectrums. For example, the Civil Society perspective embraces common values held by both Libertarians and Communitarians. Following is a summary of each perspective, along with what kinds of recommendations adherents to that particular perspective might advocate to a new President.

The “State” Perspective

A State perspective adherent would see good public management as using a strong hierarchical approach to ensure accountability, a rule-based set of procedures to ensure consistency and uniformity, and clear distinctions between the public and private sectors.

Among observers of the State perspective, there is a continuum. At one end of the continuum are some academics that call themselves “Constitutionalists” and share strict interpretations of what they see as good public management. At the other end of the continuum are the pragmatic traditional public administration practitioners. They tend to promote the administrative principles framed by the Brownlow Committee and Hoover Commissions. They see the importance of a strong executive branch and hierarchy, but remain flexible regarding implementation.

The Constitutionalists Perspective

According to Constitutionalists, such as Dr. Ronald Moe, “the United States is the only nation in the world established according to a comprehensive political theory.” They say that the federal “government was established by the Constitution of 1789 and, although initially small in size, it was complete and the rules of governance established at the time continue to provide the basis for the organization and management of the executive branch.”⁶

According to Moe, the Constitution reflects the clear intent of the Framers to organize a government based on three premier principles with respect to the organization and management of the federal government being:

1. *The institutions of government shall be divided among three co-equal branches, the legislative, executive, and judicial, and these branches shall be at once institutionally separate and interdependent.*
2. *All administrative functions are to be located within the executive branch and responsible to the president and through the latter accountable to Congress.*
3. *There shall be a governmental sector (agents of the sovereign) and a private sector, and they shall be separate and function under distinctive theories of jurisprudence).⁷*

Moe extends the interpretation of these principles as follows:

Congress is Co-Manager of the Executive Branch. “The powers of Congress are defined and enumerated in Article I of the Constitution, a location selected intentionally.” Congress “establishes departments and agencies and, to whatever degree it chooses, the internal organization of agencies, personnel systems, confirmation of executive officials, funding systems, and ultimately determines whether the agency shall continue to exist. It is Congress that establishes all programs and determines whether or not they are being implemented properly.”⁸

The President as Chief Executive. “The President has executive powers, several of which are stated in the Constitution. Implementation of laws, for example, is principally the responsibility of the President.”⁹

The Executive Branch should be treated as a unified system. According to Moe, “The Constitution and the intent of the Framers was to have a unified executive branch accountable to the President through necessarily hierarchical delegations of authority.”¹⁰ In support of this theory, a series of “general management laws” have been enacted that assume the entire executive branch is a single, unitary organization. The term “general management law” refers to those cross-cutting laws that apply generally to all agencies of the federal government, such as the Civil Service, Administrative Procedure, Budget and Accounting, Ethics in Government, and Freedom of Information Acts.

Functions should not be commingled between the public and private sectors. Constitutionalists are clear that there are two distinctive jurisprudential systems in the United States; public law and private law. According to Moe: “In the governmental sector, the constitutional presumption is that the actions of an agency or officer must have their basis in public law. Silence in law is prohibition [to act].” In contrast, in the private sector, “the reverse presumption holds sway. That is, private persons may act as they please unless there is a law prohibiting their actions.”¹¹

The Perspective of Traditional Practitioners of Public Administration

The traditional practitioners of public administration stress the importance of hierarchy, clear organization, and process. They reflect the tradition of Luther Gulick and Louis Brownlow, who wrote the classic texts on public administration in the late 1930s.¹² For example, Gulick defined and popularized “the work of the chief executive” as “POSDCORB” – Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting, and Budgeting. These functions became the framework for what traditionalists see as the core capabilities the institutional Presidency must develop and sustain. The reform recommendations of the 1937 Brownlow Committee to President Franklin Roosevelt are premised on these principles and resulted in the transfer of the Bureau of the Budget to the newly-created Executive Office of the President; that agency has evolved to the present Office of Management and Budget.

The traditionalists also believe in pragmatic solutions to real-world problems. They will apply general management approaches, such as those summarized by POSDCORB, but where needed they remain flexible and responsive in the implementation of the President’s policies and priorities.

Options the Next President Might Consider for Achieving “Good Public Management” from a State Perspective

A president who subscribes to the State perspective might consider initiatives such as:

- A stronger institutional management capacity in the Executive Office of the President by either expanding the role of the Office of Management and Budget or by creating a separate Office of Federal Management reporting directly to the President.
- The creation of Sunset commissions to review individual agencies or rationalize programs to reduce redundancies and overlap, or to reorganize agencies to be more efficient.
- The use of scorecards and assessments of agency management capacity and program functions.
- The appointment of Chief Management Officers in departments and major agencies to integrate accountability and priority-setting among various management functions.
- The review of all the existing general management laws to ensure consistency and reduce superfluous requirements.
- An assessment of contractor-government employee functions and tasks to ensure “inherently governmental functions” are only performed by federal employees and that the delineation of accountability and responsibility is clear.
- An emphasis on procedural accountability, ensuring compliance with rules, and strengthening the role of inspectors general.

The “Market-Based” Perspective

A Market-Based perspective adherent would see good public management as best done via a series of approaches that rely on competition, choice, incentives, and contracts, with an emphasis on performance measurement as an accountability tool. Adherents value an emphasis on achieving program outcomes over compliance with standardized administrative procedures.

Academic observers say this perspective assumes that individuals are largely motivated by maximizing individual or organizational preferences, not necessarily serving the public good.¹³ Proponents also believe that the Executive Branch is, for practical purposes, not a unified system but more of a confederation of agencies, responsible jointly to both the President and the Congress. Governing a confederation, they believe, is best done through market-based approaches. Market-based adherents also believe that the act of governance is no longer solely the purview of government, that our world’s challenges have become so

complex that they regularly reach across societal boundaries to other sectors for collaborative solutions.

Much like the State perspective, the Market-based perspective embraces a continuum that spans the ideological spectrum. At one end, “privatization” market-based proponents support more external, private sector involvement with contracting out, competitive sourcing, and more top-down control over employee performance. At the other end, the “reinvention” proponents support the use of internal markets inside government, such as franchise funds, encourage employee empowerment to better serve customers, and support bottom-up entrepreneurial behaviors by employees to increase innovation.

The Privatization Perspective. In recent years, the privatization advocates in the U.S. have seen their end of the spectrum in the headlines. Proponents of the Privatization perspective operate under the premise that government should not be the provider of services that could be delivered commercially.

“Privatization” for some is not defined as solely private sector ownership of a particular function, but also private sector provision of services. So this would include “outsourcing” of work to the private sector that could be, or has been, conducted by government workers. In this case, the decision to perform the work in the private sector has already been made and the only decision is which firm in the private sector can deliver the best services at the best price.

Privatization, for some, would also include the use of “competitive sourcing,” where functions that are commercial in nature that are currently being performed by civil servants would be competed between the public and private sectors. The work would then be awarded to whoever can perform the function at the least cost and best service.

The Reinvention Perspective. Advocates of the Reinvention perspective advocate adapting business practices to the public sector. In doing so, they make the following assumptions:

- Government works better if it is organized around baskets of “services and results” not the hierarchies of “agencies and programs.”
- Government services should be organized and sensitive to their customers.
- A results-orientation results in better management than the stewardship orientation reflected in traditional public administration.
- Accountability is largely driven via transparency and choice instead of hierarchy and inspection
- It attempts to break down operational stove-pipes in order to better focus on outcomes.

Likewise, the principal characteristics of a Reinvention-oriented approach to good public management are:

- Set clear, central goals, policies, and oversight -- then decentralize implementation.
- Pursue a customize response vs. one-size-fits-all; to do this requires pushing as much authority as practicable to the front line delivery agent, or reducing the distance between the “center” and the “edge” as much as possible.

- Use incentives in place of disincentives where possible (“trust but verify”)
- Place a greater reliance on risk management than on risk avoidance.
- Emphasize being performance-based rather than process-compliance focused in accountability and oversight.
- Separate policy and regulatory development from program implementation functions in order to increase the programmatic executive-level emphasis on implementation.

The tools or approaches used to manage in this perspective include:

- The use of principal-agent approaches, such as contracts between providers and service recipients, or between departments and agencies, or departmental secretaries and agency heads.
- The use of performance-based pay for employees, performance-based contracting for contractors, and performance-based budgets for resource allocation.
- The use of competition and choice in the delivery of services, especially services which can be delivered by more than one agency or by the private or non-profit sectors.
- The use of transparency as a way of encouraging the use of fact-based decisions and creating bottom-up rather than top-down accountability for performance. This would include the use of activity-based costing, performance budgeting, and performance reporting.

In the popular vernacular, these characteristics and tools have been referred to as “Reinventing Government.” In the more academic literature, they have been described as “New Public Management” or “Managing for Results.” These approaches combine a mix of: disaggregating large bureaucracies into smaller, operational components; the use of competition – both inside government and between public and private sectors – to define efficiency; and the use of incentives to leverage action. For example, performance-based pay, performance-based contracting, and performance budgeting all attempt to leverage results-oriented actions through incentives, not compliance-based rules.

When applied within the government for its internal management, this set of approaches would be reflected in initiatives similar to those prevalent in the Clinton Administration’s reinventing government initiative such as an emphasis on customer service, reducing bureaucratic layers and processes, the creation of franchise funds, and empowering employees to focus on performance and results. In the George W. Bush administration, included initiatives such as the expanded use of shared administrative services and performance-based pay for the Senior Executive Service.

Options the Next President Might Consider for Achieving “Good Public Management” from a Market-Based Perspective

A president who subscribes to a Market perspective might apply the following kinds of approaches to improve his or her institutional management capacity:

- Continue efforts to move toward a performance-based pay system for the civil service, based on lessons learned from recent pilots and the implementation of a similar system among Senior Executives.
- Expand efforts to move toward a performance-based contracting environment.
- Increase the use of performance-based budgeting, linking more tightly decisions on program funding to how well the programs perform, especially in relation to other programs providing similar services. This might include the increased use of the OMB Program Assessment Rating Tool when making budgeting decisions.
- Resurrect the use of Performance-Based Organizations as a way of focusing improved performance in specific governmental functions that are customer-service based and are not highly interdependent across other agencies for success.¹⁴
- Institute governmentwide business case assessments of all key functions, along the lines of the British government’s “value for money” initiative in order to determine which functions provide value to their customers.¹⁵
- Continue competitive sourcing efforts, or adapt the British government’s “competitive tendering” initiative.

The “Civil Society” Perspective

“Civil society” adherents see society as being largely comprised of voluntary civic and social organizations and institutions that act collectively or individually on behalf of their larger community. From this perspective, good public management implies that the development and delivery of government services should be highly distributed, and that government decisions should be made as close to the point of delivery as possible.

According to the London School of Economics Centre for Civil Society:

“In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often populated by organisations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organisations, community groups, women’s organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups.”¹⁶

Like the previous two perspectives, the Civil Society perspective has a continuum. One end is based on the importance of individuals. Radical individualists tend toward libertarian philosophies. The other end is based on the importance of community. Radical communitarians favor a civil society that emphasizes communities and societies over individuals. They also tend to be liberal on economic issues (e.g., environmental protection, public education) and conservative on social issues (e.g., character education, faith-based

programs). This second strand is also related to populism, which proposes reining in the power of both government and business.

The institutional presidency has traditionally not emphasized a Civil Society perspective as much as the political presidency has. However, the institutional presidency has on occasion applied a Civil Society perspective. For example, White House conferences have been a medium a President uses to get insight from, and act upon, dialogue with citizens on specific topics. Past presidents have used Conferences on Aging, Small Business, etc. to engage citizens. In fact, this “engagement with civic authority” was seen as the genesis of Medicare in the mid-1960s.

There are other examples of executives engaging the public, but these are predominantly at the state level. For example, Washington State governor Christine Gregoire conducts town halls and talks in-person around state-wide priorities. In the past, governors from Oregon and other states have used heavy citizen-dialogue efforts to gain legitimacy around state-wide goals. With the advent of the Internet, wide-spread engagement has shown more of a potential for the institution of the presidency. Future presidents may choose to use this approach more than their predecessors. Technology is allowing the evolution of social networks that could be leveraged around selected issues. European Union countries have been making strides in recent years in efforts to better engage citizens in governance issues.

From a Civil Society adherent’s perspective, “good public management” would be characterized by a greater emphasis on activities such as philanthropy, voluntarism and service, and character building.

The tools of Civil Society adherents might include:

- The use of term limits for elected political office holders, and maybe even for senior civil servants, as a way to ensure a constant flow of citizen perspectives into the top levels of government.
- The use of recall and referenda provisions, which allows direct democracy, possibly over the Internet
- Allowing direct citizen debate over legislation, again, possibly over the Internet.
- Anti-corruption campaigns to reduce the influence of corporate and special interests on policy making and contracting
- Moving administrative decisions and action closer to the people affected
- Revenue sharing between levels of government as a way of ensuring a common base of purchasing power among different communities.
- Encouraging greater citizen-government co-production of public services, where citizens bear a greater responsibility for services they receive or services that are provided in their communities.

Options the Next President Might Consider for Achieving “Good Public Management” from a Civil Society Perspective

A president who advocates a Civil Society perspective might support initiatives such as:

- Create an active White House role in defining national outcomes via the use of citizen-based dialogs. This might be inspired by similar efforts in Oregon, Florida, or Washington State, or the Washington, DC, city government’s Citizen Summits held in recent years.
- Include customer feedback as part of the regular reporting of agency-level metrics in service delivery functions.
- Encourage greater transparency in legislative and regulatory processes, such as allowing a public review period of all legislation before it is sent to the President for signature, and posting readable regulatory information on the Internet for public scrutiny in advance of actions taken.
- Continue or expand White House efforts on voluntarism, faith-based initiatives, and community service-oriented campaigns, which involve co-production of services
- Revise the federal rule-making process to invite more citizen-engagement, possibly through the Internet. This may require revisions to the Administrative Procedure Act of 1949.
- Encourage on-line dialogs coupled with on-line voting (probably non-binding) on key topics of national interest.

The “Collaborative” Perspective

A fourth perspective, which is growing in practice and is increasingly reported in the academic literature, is a new way of thinking about how large enterprises, or institutions, work. For an adherent to the Collaborative perspective, good public management would mean developing a clear set of common purposes and developing the institutional mechanisms to engage organizations and individuals in “peer-to-peer”-types of arrangements. It does not fit neatly in any of the three models described earlier.

As described by Professor Charles Heckscher, a “collaborative enterprise” is comprised of both a formal hierarchical network and a relatively formalized peer network. It operates both within a market and within a network of alliance relationships that are much like those that can evolve in the Civil Society perspective – extended relationships that cross hierarchical boundaries. In the public sector, this perspective has been developed in Canada as part of its “horizontal government” initiative and in the United Kingdom under its

“joined up government” initiative. In the U.S., agencies like the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control are pioneering the Collaborative approach.

Part of the reason for the slow adoption rate of the Collaborative perspective in the U.S. has been the need to be responsive to diverse accountability and funding agents (e.g., the Environmental Protection Agency is accountable to more than 70 congressional committees and subcommittees). Also, the career track of those who engage in collaborative efforts is still vague in comparison to the career track of employees who engage in traditional bureaucracies.

Collaborative organizations are centered on the knowledge and skills needed to address flexible tasks that are hard to define in advance. In contrast, the traditional hierarchical organization is product-oriented and addresses standardized and routine tasks that are predictable in nature.

The principal characteristics of a collaborative approach include:

- People who are interdependent with other and are intolerant of those who do not pull their own weight.
- People who see “performance” as the most important attribute of contribution where the important question is not position or status but “what can you contribute to the mission?”.
- Trust being based on the belief that everyone is working toward a collective goal.
- The central organizing principle is seen as the mission or collective purpose, not the agency or hierarchy.
- Flexible boundaries between levels of government, as well as between government private, and non-profit organizations, are good

Central values in a collaborative approach to governance include:

- A focus on the capability for contribution, not an individual’s formal position in an organization.
- Dialogue and openness.
- Helpfulness towards others, often demonstrated by the transparent, or free, sharing of information
- Openness to the outside
- Embracing diversity of capabilities

There are three sets of practices that help create a collaborative social infrastructure:

- Creating shared purpose, building and maintaining a unifying sense of purpose by fostering one-way and two-way dialogue – similar to the Civil Society perspective – and creating shared vision and value statements.
- Organizing and formalizing peer or associated relationships by creating linking roles between organizations; providing information transparency; using explicit, not implicit, processes and common platforms; developing negotiation skills and systems within

agencies; and replacing informal personal relationships with systematic process management skills focused on performance and capability.

- Connecting these systems to the outside world by increasing planning and sensing efforts, developing planning and priority-setting approaches, and combining sensing and planning efforts.

Heckscher says that the collaborative approach challenges the values of both the hierarchical and market-based approaches:

“ . . . those who hold the value of democracy as primary will be dissatisfied with the collaborative model: it does not imply equal rights to power or processes of majority rule. . . .it does involve a radical challenge to hierarchy.” The use of power must be justified on the basis of common purpose, not position. The collaborative model is also not the same as meritocracy, because that implies that those with the most merit rise to power. Collaboration minimizes the concept of “position” and doesn’t have much use for the concept of general merit – it focuses instead on contribution. (Heckscher: 259)

Options the Next President Might Consider for Achieving “Good Public Management” From a Collaborative Perspective

A president who subscribes to a Collaborative perspective might support initiatives such as:

- Continuing the development of the Lines of Business, shared services, and enterprise architecture initiatives to ensure a common administrative and technical backbone to support cross-organizational collaboration.
- Using the Key National Indicators Initiative as an impetus for identifying, creating consensus around, and organizing Administration priorities around outcomes.¹⁷
- Extending the use of Presidential National Strategies as a way to articulate a government-wide focus on key priorities. National strategies are currently being used by the current Administration as a tool for pursuing outcomes that reach across federal agencies, as well as states, localities, and non-governmental organizations.¹⁸ A president in a future Administration would use them as the organizing building blocks for acting collaboratively on these strategies. For example, he or she might create a new White House Council – such as a National Performance Council – to guide nationwide outcome achievements in key national areas such as housing, healthcare, or environment. Its operations might be based on an adaptation of Baltimore’s Citi-stat or the Washington State “Government Management Accountability and Performance” system.¹⁹

- Encouraging the use of Web 2.0 tools as a way of creating communities of practice and grass-roots action networks inside government, across agency boundaries, much like the Intelligence Community is doing today.

Conclusion

The next President will be faced with articulating his or her management principles, either explicitly or implicitly. While there are practitioners and academics who would advocate a “pure” version of one or another of the perspectives described above, pragmatic politicians will most likely select a blend that reflects their personal values, their goals, and the operating environment they find themselves in. Recent international research suggests that a blend of governance approaches seems to be appropriate (Svensson).

The challenge is to be pragmatic while at the same time being clear about a predominant theme that can be used to effectively communicate direction to thousands of political appointees, senior executives, and front line employees in a clear and compelling way.

Recommendation

The next President should define and articulate a set of management operating principles early in his Administration and communicate them clearly to his political appointees as a framework for action. If done at the outset of an Administration, this will help frame the orientation of incoming political appointees. Having a set of operating principles in place early will help new appointees better define managerial choices they will face when implementing the president’s policy initiatives. Similarly, such principles will help guide initiatives for developing the supporting institutional framework in the Executive Office of the President.

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Appendix A

Presidential Management Reform Efforts in the 20th Century

1905	Keep Commission
1910	Taft Commission
1920	Joint Committee on Reorganization
1936 - 1937	Brownlow Committee
1947 – 1949	First Hoover Commission
1953	Rockefeller Panel
1953 – 1955	Second Hoover Commission
1964	Price Task Force
1967	Heineman Commission
1969 – 1971	Ash Council
1977 – 1979	Carter Reorganization Effort
1982 – 1984	Grace Panel
1993 - 2001	National Performance Review/National Partnership for Reinventing Government

Sources: Peri Arnold, "Making the Managerial Presidency: Comprehensive Reorganization Planning, 1905 – 1996". (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998) Second Edition.

Harold Relyea, Congressional Research Service, personal conversation, August 22, 2007.

Appendix B

Alternative Frameworks for Assessing Public Sector Management

Paul Light, “Tides of Reform” 1997

Paul Light’s “Tides of Reform” examines 50 years of 141 pieces of legislation focused on improving government management, Light identifies four separate tides, or philosophies, of reform. These are not variations of a single reform philosophy, but rather each has a different goal:

- **Scientific Management** focuses on tight hierarchy, specialization, and clear chains of command. Its goal is efficiency and accountability, and it is based on a commitment to a set of management principles that can guide reform, such as those promoted by Luther Gulick and Lyndall Urwick. Legislative examples include the 1939 Reorganization Act and the 1990 Chief Financial Officers Act.
- **War on Waste** emphasizes inspectors, auditors, cross-checkers and reviewers. Its goal is economy in government, and is guided by audit standards, such as the “Yellow Book.” Legislative examples include the 1978 Inspectors General Act and the 1986 Computer Fraud and Abuse Act.
- **Watchful Eye** embraces sunshine and openness. Its goal is fairness and due process, with court enforcement. Legislative examples include the 1946 Administrative Procedures Act, the 1966 Freedom of Information Act, and the 1989 Whistleblower Protection Act.
- **Liberation Management** advocates “letting managers manage” under the influence of market pressure. Its goal is improved performance, with an emphasis on measuring performance and the use of performance accountability over rule-based compliance accountability. Legislative examples include the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 and the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994.

The Scientific Management and Liberation Management tides assume a basic trust in government and its employees. The War on Waste and Watchful Eye tides assume just the opposite.

Light pointed out that over the years Congress has passed various laws from these different perspectives. Over time this has led to laws that either directly or indirectly conflict with one another. He observed that: “Because Congress and the presidency simply do not know what does and what does not actually make government work, and because they have no overarching theory of when government and its employees can or cannot be trusted to perform well, they will move back and forth between the four reform philosophies almost at random.”

John Dixon and Rhys Dogan, “Contending Perspectives on Public Management” 2005

John Dixon, and Rhys Dogan’s framework of management characteristic describes “good agency management” from four perspectives:

- **Managing for Process** (Naturalist Structuralism). Agencies are bureaucratic organizations. Their primary concern is management of inputs and getting processes right. They are characterized by a high degree of formality and centralization, with unity of direction and control. They apply the principles of hierarchy, process control, and command and control.
- **Managing for Results** (Naturalist Agency). Agencies are entrepreneurial. They focus on outputs and outcomes. They are characterized by low complexity, low formalization, and low centralization. Where appropriate, they decentralize decision-making where possible to the point closest to the action. They focus on performance.
- **Managing for Inclusion** (Hermeneutic Structuralism). Agencies are mission-focused. Like the “managing for results” agencies, they are characterized by low complexity, low formalization, and low centralization. However, they manage for inclusion of different stakeholders who are committed to shared common values and a common vision.
- **Managing for Survival** (Hermeneutic Agency). Agencies are comprised of staff who are fatalistic, marginalized, and feel alienated. They are characterized by high formality and centralization. They never resolve conflicts, the scope and role of decision makers is fluid. When made, decisions are autocratic. Validity, truth, and efficiency are irrelevant. Compliance occurs only because of a fear of punishment.

Elaine Kamarck, “The End of Government as We Know It: Making Public Policy Work,” 2007

Dr. Kamarck summarizes the tools of future government action in three categories: reinvented government, government by network, and government by market. She does not reflect the existing, traditional approach.

- **Reinvented Government.** In a reinvented government, public-sector organizations operate without the trappings of traditional bureaucracy. In fact, “reinvented government is government that is run as much like a private-sector business as is possible.” Performance measures serve as market proxies, allowing agencies to compete against measures set for itself and others. Administrative flexibilities are valued more than central-control mechanisms such as budget, personnel, and procurement rules. Customer service is used to model organizational behavior.
- **Government by Network.** In a government by network, bureaucracy is replaced by a wide variety of other kinds of institutions. Government serves as a funder, but not a direct service provider. Networks can be comprised of other government agencies, non-profits, educational institutions, etc. “The defining characteristic is that they are all contracted by a state entity using state money for something the private market would not produce, to the extent required, on its own.”
- **Government by Market.** In government by market, the government uses its regulatory or tax powers to create a market that fulfills a public purpose. This work involved few, if any, public servants and little or no public money. (Kamarck, 16-18).

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End Notes

¹ See Appendix A for list.

² U.S. Government Accountability Office, “Suggested Areas for Oversight for the 110th Congress,” GAO-07-235R (November 2006), p. 2.” In addition to Controller General David Walker’s traditional reports and testimony, he has joined a coalition of bipartisan organizations in “Fiscal Wakeup” visits to states holding early primaries to encourage voters to ask important questions about the fiscal future of the country of the candidates.

³ John Dixon, and Rhys Dogan (2005). “The Contending Perspectives on Public Management: A Philosophical Investigation,” *International Public Management Journal*, 8(1), p. 1.

⁴ Paul Light, (1997). *The Tides of Reform: Making Government Work, 1945-1995*. Vail-Ballou Press (Binghamton: NY).

⁵ Goodsell, Charles T. (2006). “A New Vision for Public Administration,” *Public Administration Review*. July/August 2006. p. 624.

⁶ Ronald C. Moe, National Academy of Public Administration, “Minutes of October 20, 2006,” Standing Panel on Executive Organization and Management, unpublished, pp. 3-6 (hereinafter cited as: “EOM Minutes”). See also: Moe, Ronald (2004).

⁷ Ronald C. Moe, Chapter 2, “Governance Principles: The Neglected Basis of Federal Management,” in *Making Government Manageable: Executive Organization and Management in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Thomas Stanton and Benjamin Ginsberg, The Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 22-23.

⁸ Ronald C. Moe, EOM Minutes, p. 4

⁹ Ibid, EOM Minutes, p. 4.

¹⁰ Ibid., EOM Minutes, p. 5.

¹¹ EOM Minutes, p. 6.

¹² Luther Gulick, “Notes on the Theory of Organization,” and Louis Brownlow, Charles E. Merriam, and Luther Gulick, “Report of the President’s Committee on Administrative Management,” as excerpted in “Classics of Public Administration,” edited by Jay M. Shafritz and Albert C. Hyde 2nd Edition (Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.: Pacific Grove, CA) 1987, pp. 79-95.

¹³ Those who advocate public administration as a profession dislike the assumption that motivation of individuals are self-centered and not necessarily based on public good, because it downplays the centrality of professional norms as a determinant of “right” behavior. However, adherents of the Market perspective believe it tends to reflect reality and point to Madison’s *Federalist Paper, Number 51*, as a source of inspiration. There, Madison describes the rationale behind the various checks-and-balances built into the Constitution. These checks and balances were developed under the assumption that individuals operate based on self-interest, not necessarily the common good.

¹⁴ National Partnership for Reinventing Government, “Performance-Based Organizations: A Conversion Guide,” Draft, November 1997. <http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/npr/library/pbo/guide1.html>, Retrieved on August 16, 2007.

¹⁵ U.K. National Audit Office, “Value for Money Report: Executive Summary,” http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/05-06/0506802es.htm, Retrieved on August 21, 2007.

¹⁶ London School of Economics, Centre for Civil Society (2004). “What is civil society?” http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what_is_civil_society.htm . Retrieved on April 17, 2007.

¹⁷ See for more details: U.S. Government Accountability Office, “Informing Our Nation: Improving How to Understand and Assess the USA’s Position and Progress,” at: <http://www.gao.gov/npi/>. Retrieved on August 16, 2007.

¹⁸ John Kamensky, “Making Big Plans: Bush Expands Use of ‘National Strategies,’” *PATimes*, November 2006

¹⁹ Esty, Daniel C. and Reese Rushing, “Governing by the Numbers: The Promise of Data-Driven Policymaking in the Information Age,” Center for American Progress, April 2007. http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/04/data_driven_policy.html, Retrieved August 16, 2007.