# Chapter 8

Communicating with Employees

"**Word is not crystal, transparent and unchanged; it is the skin of a living thought and may vary greatly in color and content according to the circumstances and the time in which it is used.**"
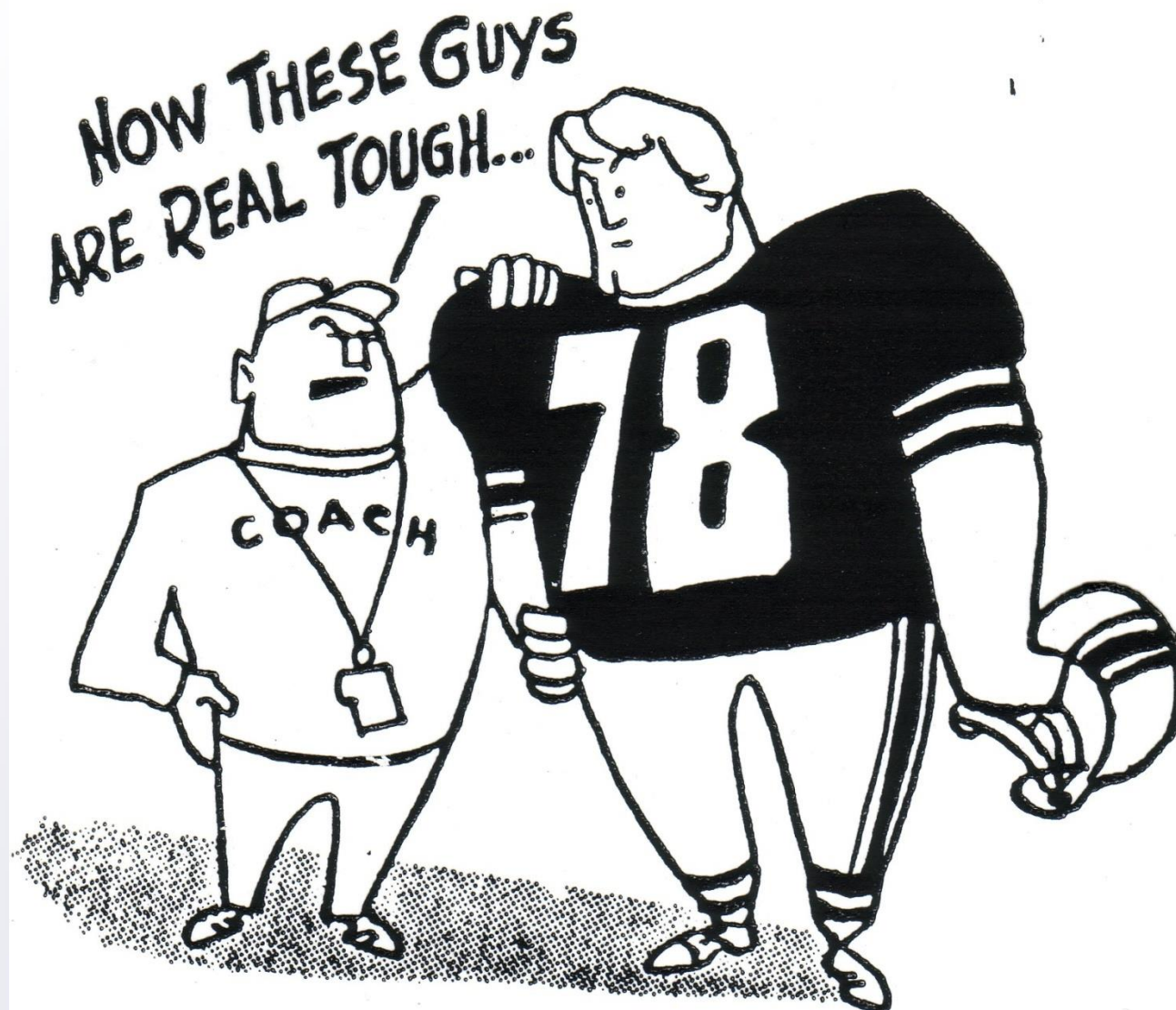
Oliver Wendell Holmes

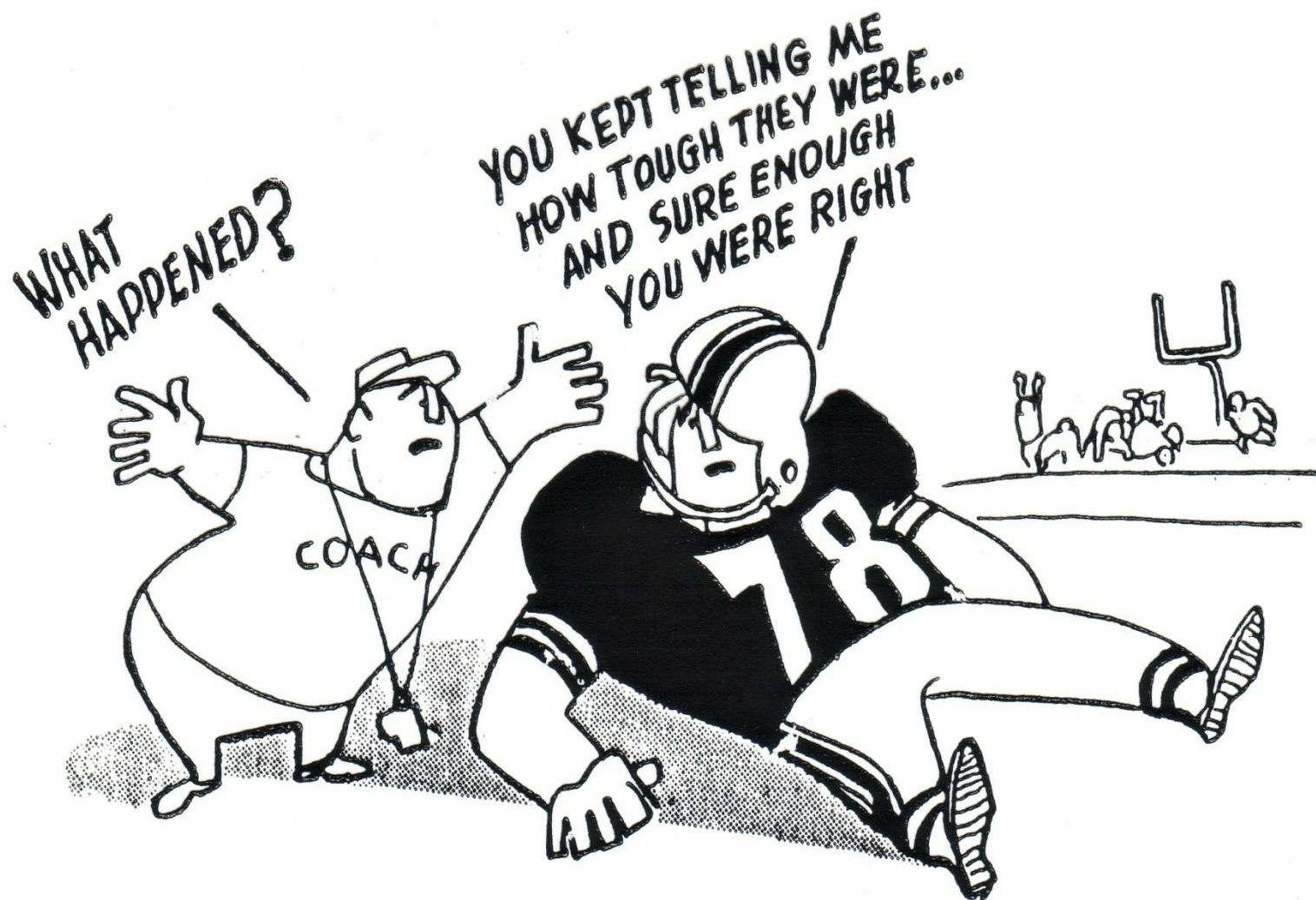*I know you believe you understand what you think I said.*

But I'm not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant.
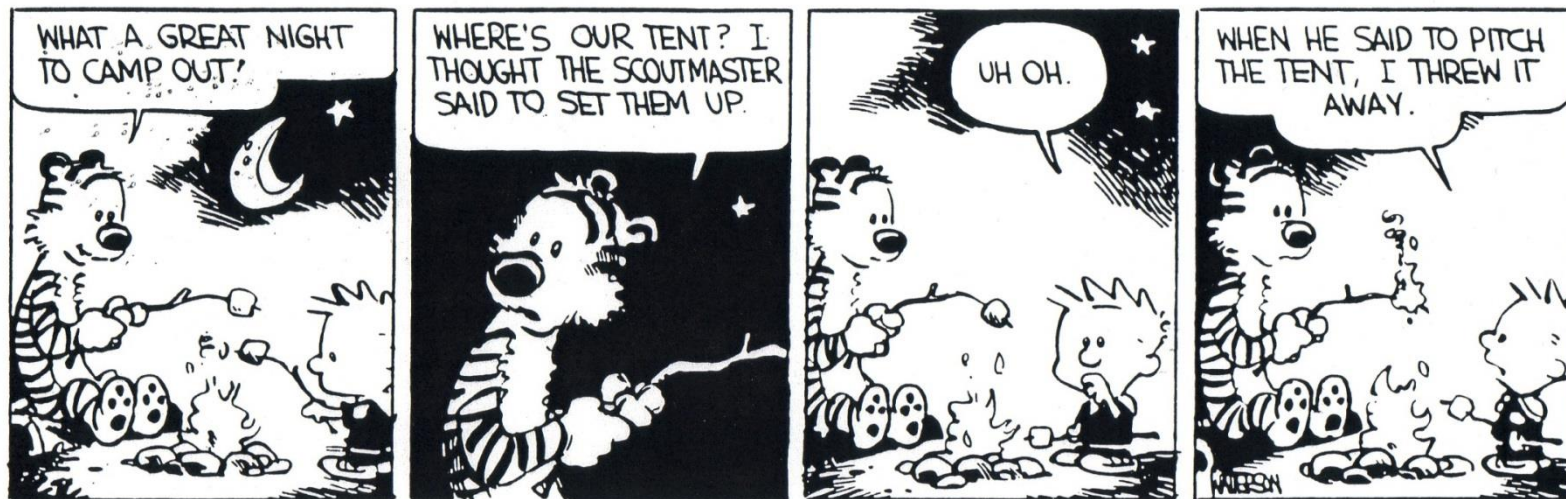
"When I said we needed a second grader, I meant for the highway department."

Effective Supervisory Skill Building, @ICMA 2005

The 🍁 leaves are on you. The 🚚 trucks are on us. We'll go halves on the 🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑 🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑 🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑 🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑🗑 bags.

This time of year leaves are stacking up, clogging storm drains, and generally making a mess. Fortunately, city crews are standing by to haul them away. All you have to do is bag them. And we'll even provide the bags — 50 for $3.75 at any Greenville fire station (about half of what you'd pay elsewhere). For more information about leaf pick-up or recycling, call the City of Greenville Solid Waste Division at 467-4345.

Effective Supervisory Skill Building, @ICMA 2005

Social Media

Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin, Snapchat, Tumblr

- **Update**
- **Current**
- **Relevant**

The average supervisor spends 80% of the day in verbal communication

- **Face-to-face with an individual**

- **Face-to-face with a group**

- **Over the telephone**

- **In written memos or letters**

- **Through e-mail**

Communication is "the exchange of information, facts, ideas, and meanings."

The Meaning of your communication is the response you get.

If you aren't getting the response you want, change what you are doing.

Components of communication

- **Sender**

- **Message**

- **Medium**

- **Receiver**

- **Feedback**

- **Noise**

Effective Communication
Verbal? Vocal? Visual?

Verbal _____%

Vocal _____%

Visual _____%

Total   **100%**

The Meaning of Communication

Words 7%

Voice Characterists 38%

Non Verbal 55%

- ☐ Words
- ☐ Non Verbal
- ☐ Voice Characterists
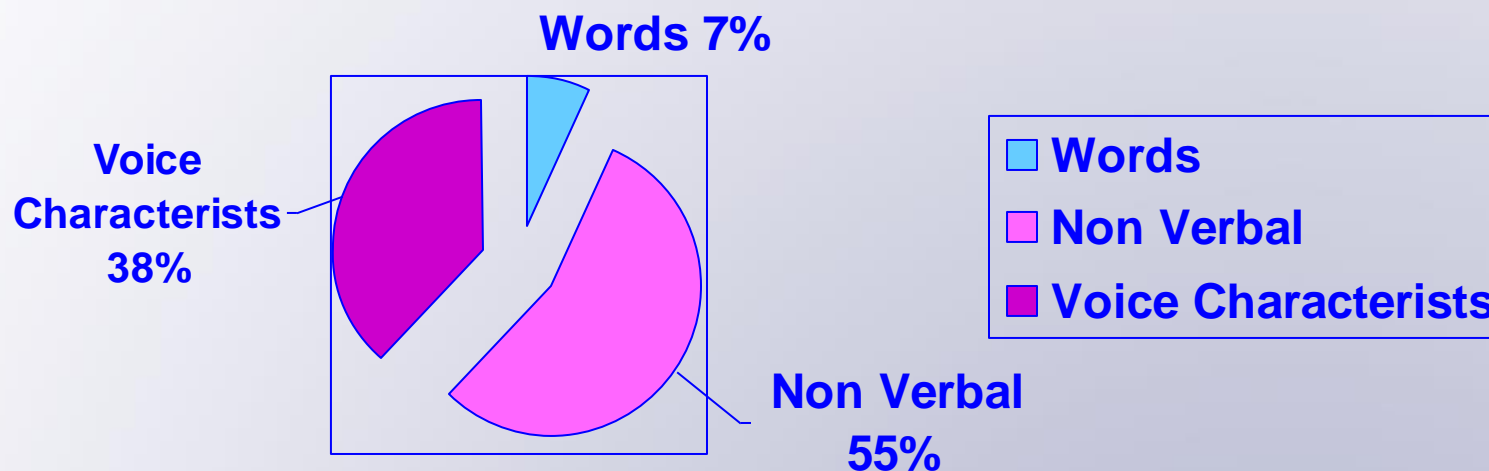
Nonverbal communication

- **Paralanguage**
  - **Tone of voice**
  - **Pitch**
  - **Emphasis**
  - **Speed**
  - **Loudness**
  - **Pauses**

(continued)

Nonverbal communication *(continued)*

- **Body language**
  - **Posture**
  - **Hand gestures**
  - **Facial expressions**
  - **Eye contact**

(continued)

Nonverbal communication *(continued)*

- **Personal space: Proximity to comfort zone**

- **Personal style**

    — **Clothes**

    — **Way you carry yourself**

    — **Volume you use when speaking**

Supervisory and leadership skills are highly dependent on communication skills.

You cannot supervise or lead well if you do not communicate well.

ICMA.org

Barriers to effective communication

On the part of the *sender*

- **Lack of clarity about goal of message**

- **Failure to adapt message to receiver**

- **Failure to ask for feedback**

- **Misinterpretation of feedback**

- **Failure to clarify the message on the basis of feedback**
- **Attitude towards Sender**

(continued)

Barriers to effective communication *(continued)*

On the part of the *receiver*

- **Failure to hear entire message**

- **Misinterpretation of message**

- **Inattention, distraction, or emotion**

- **Rejection because message contradicts beliefs or assumptions**

- **Failure to ask for clarification**

Additional Barriers

- **Attitude about subject matter**
- **Lack of Knowledge/Information**
- **Wrong setting (time or place)**
- **Words themselves**

Steps for improving communication

- **Think about who the receiver is and his or her emotional state.**

- **Clarify your objective in sending message.**

- **Make physical surroundings comfortable and free of distractions.**

- **Review message in your head; consider meaning and clarity.**

- **Use language and nonverbal cues that receiver will easily understand.**

- **Ask for feedback.**

- **Avoid defensiveness.**

Tips for giving feedback

- **Examine your motives.**

- **Consider receiver's readiness to hear feedback.**

- **Remove external distractions.**

- **Give feedback promptly.**

- **Be descriptive rather than evaluative.**

- **Describe concrete events; be specific.**

(continued)

Tips for giving feedback *(continued)*

- ***Offer* feedback, do not *impose* it.**

- **Avoid overload; focus on what is most important.**

- **Avoid emotional words and phrases.**

- **Don't avoid giving feedback; this may give a negative message.**

- **Ask employees for feedback on your performance.**

Tips for receiving feedback

- **Make sure you are ready to hear things that may make you uncomfortable.**

- **Monitor your reactions carefully.**

- **Ask for clarification if needed.**

- **Do not debate validity of the other person's opinions.**

- **Express your appreciation for feedback.**

Active listening

- **Face speaker and look at him or her attentively.**

- **Use appropriate facial expressions; nod or say, "I see"**

- **Wait patiently for speaker to gather his or her thoughts.**

- **Avoid interrupting.**

(continued)

Active listening *(continued)*

- **Listen for and acknowledge feelings; note both verbal and nonverbal messages.**

- **Do not make judgments.**

- **Give feedback on or paraphrase what was said.**

- **Ask open-ended questions.**

Matching Predicates

Statement	Visual	Auditory	Kinesthetic
I understand you	I see what your are saying	I hear you clearly	What you are saying feels right to me
I know	I see what you mean That's clear to me	That clicks I'm in tune with that It ring a bell	I can grasp what you are saying That fits in I catch the idea

Matching Predicates (cont)

Statement	Visual	Auditory	Kinesthetic
I don't understand	It's obscure dim cloudy dark unclear hazy clear as mud	It sounds distorted It doesn't click for me It's a lot of gibberish It's all Greek to me	It doesn't fit I feel confused It's slipped away I'm groping for ideas

With e-mail, a supervisor can

- **Communicate the same message to many employees at once**

- **Reiterate a message delivered verbally**

- **Keep a record of communication**

- **Stay in touch with employees in the field or in other locations.**

Disadvantages of e-mail

- **E-mail can be alienating.**

- **E-mail cannot communicate tone.**

- **Message or tone can be easily misinterpreted.**

- **E-mail is one-way communication; unless the receiver responds, sender may not know message was misinterpreted.**

Sensitive messages are better delivered in person.

Tips for using e-mail

- Reread each message before hitting "send."

- Ask for feedback; encourage employees to see you in person to discuss a message.

- Be selective so that your messages are not perceived of as "junk mail."

- Do not use e-mail for sensitive information.

- Never pass along "joke" e-mails.

- Use "reply all" sparingly.

If you don't want to see it in print, don't write it.

Chapter 12

Motivating Employees

"A leader's role is to raise people's aspirations for what they can become and to release their energies so they will try to get there."

David Gergen

HOW TO MOTIVATE EMPLOYEES
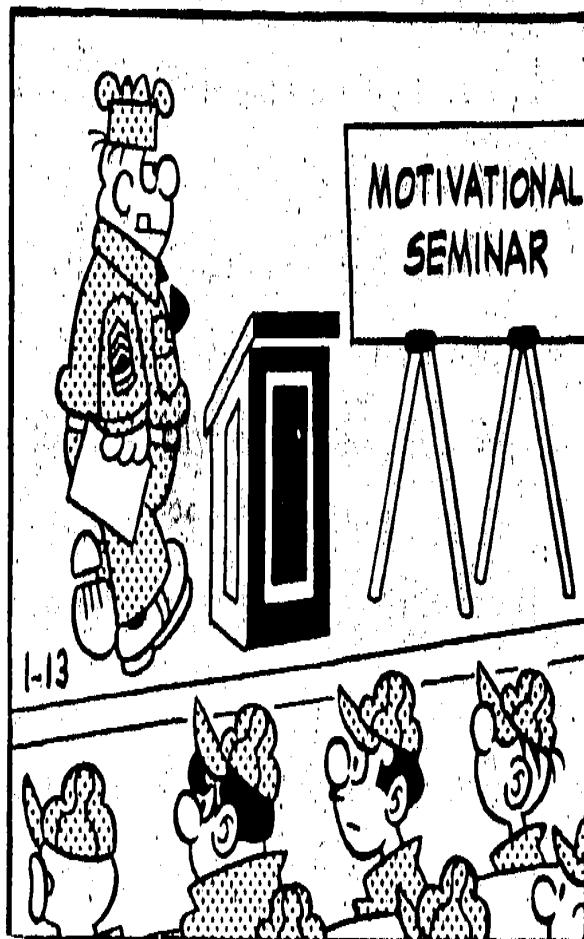
Effective Supervisory Skill Building, @ICMA 2005
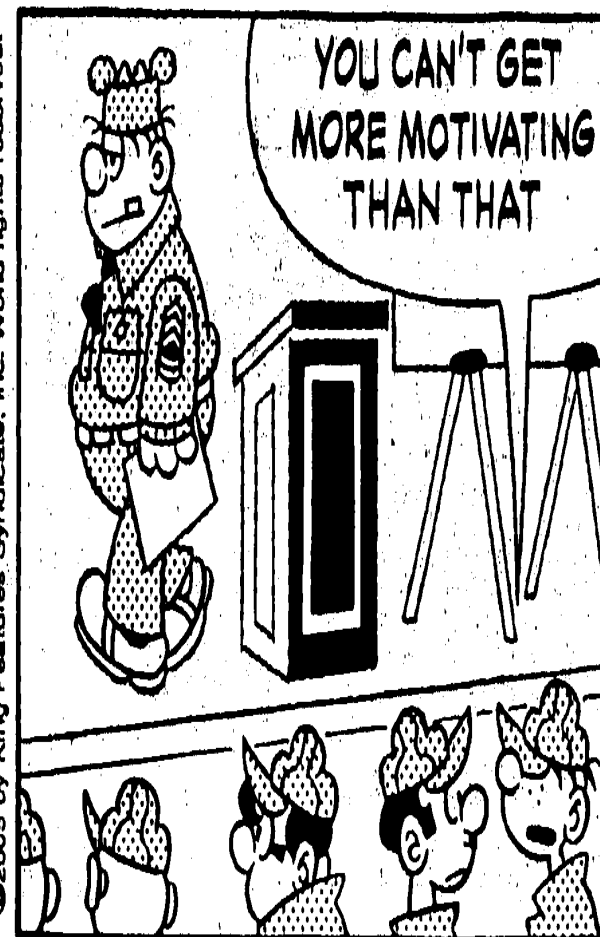
Beetle Bailey

Research findings on motivation

- Whatever people do, they do to satisfy a need.

- Raises, bonuses, and fringe benefits may not be the best way to encourage productivity.

- Employees' attitudes toward their jobs are largely the result of past experiences.

- Every employee is different; what motivates one member of a work group may not motivate another.

Douglas McGregor: Theory X

Theory X supervisors believe that

- People dislike work and will avoid it if possible.

- People are unwilling to take responsibility and must be controlled.

- People are productive only if they are coerced, intimidated, and perhaps rewarded.

- Managers and supervisors know more about a job than their subordinates do.

- Most subordinates conform to rules, are unoriginal, and need direction.

Douglas McGregor: Theory Y

Theory Y supervisors believe that

- **Work is a natural activity and an opportunity for people to learn and develop.**

- **People are motivated by challenging work.**

- **Self-discipline is necessary.**

- **People are motivated by their need for acceptance, recognition, and a sense of achievement.**

- **People will accept and seek responsibility.**

- **People have the ability to solve organizational problems creatively.**

Edgar Schein:
"Complex person" theory (Theory Z)

- People are complex, and their needs vary from day to day.

- Workers may be motivated simultaneously by short-term and long-term rewards.

- People bring their personal motives with them to work.

- Motivation is not the only factor that determines how much work is done and how well.

- No one supervisory strategy will work for all people at all times.

Abraham Maslow: Hierarchy of needs

1. **Physiological: food, shelter, clothing, etc.**

2. **Security: physical safety, an orderly environment**

3. **Social: acceptance, a sense of belonging**

4. **Esteem: self-respect, the respect of others**

5. **Self-actualization: full development of one's abilities, a satisfying personal life**

Frederick Herzberg

Hygiene factors

- **Decent salary**

- **Good working conditions**

- **Fair supervision**

- **Good interpersonal relations**

Motivators

- **Interesting work**

- **Responsibility**

- **Recognition**

- **Advancement**

Adapters versus innovators

Adapters

- **Thrive in a stable environment with established rules and expectations**

- **Motivated by desire to be precise, efficient, and consistent**

- **Relate best to Theory X supervisors**

Innovators

- **Thrive in a fluid environment that encourages problem solving**

- **Concerned with originality, finding new approaches to old problems**

- **Relate best to Theory Y supervisors**

Basic Human Needs and Motivation

MASLOW

HERZBERG

MOTIVATORS
Recognition
Work Itself
Increased Responsibility
Promotion
Growth

Self actualization

Esteem Needs

MAINTAINERS
Peers

Good Working Relationships

Time Off for Family

Social Needs

Supervisor Interaction

Good Working Conditions

Security Needs

Retirement Plan

Wages

Benefits

Physiological Needs (Survival)
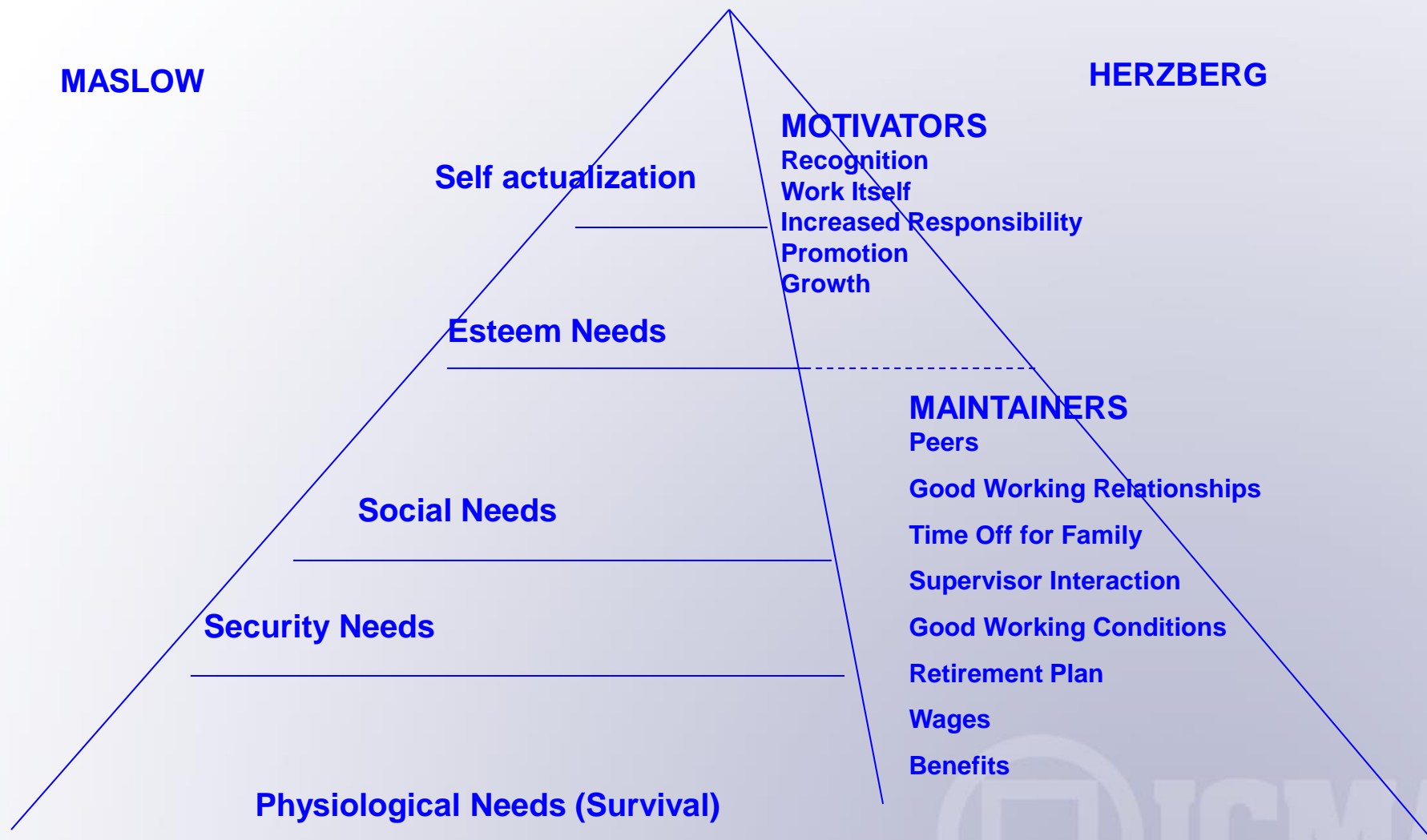
Four "types" motivated by public service

1. **Samaritans motivated to help**

2. **Communitarians serve the public good and to be involved in the larger community**

3. **Patriots sense of duty and commitment to public good**

4. **Humanitarians sense of social justice and a desire to make a difference in society**

Job Related Factors	Supervisors	Workers	George Mason University	American Productivity & Quality Center
Good working conditions	4	9		
Feeling in on things	10	2	3	2
Tactful disciplining of others	7	10		
Full appreciation for work done	8	1	2	3
Management loyalty to workers	6	8		
Good wages	1	5	5	4
Promotion and growth in the organization	3	7		
Understanding of personal problems	9	3		
Job security	2	4	4	
Interesting work	5	6	1	1

To release higher levels of motivation in employees, supervisors need to

- **Provide fair and accurate performance appraisal**

- **Demonstrate concern for employees' job satisfaction**

- **Recognize and acknowledge good work**

- **Involve employees in decision making and goal setting**

- **Create conditions that will help get the work done more efficiently and effectively**

- **Regularly talk with and listen to employees.**

Bell Shape Curve of Performance

The Mass in the Middle

Laggers

Winners

Strategies for identifying employee motivations

- **Informal dialogue or survey**

- **Focus groups**

- **Self-assessment exercises**

- **360-degree assessments**

Strategies for increasing job satisfaction and motivation

Job redesign

- **Assigning additional responsibility for planning work**
- **Allowing employees to set their own work pace**
- **Changing the types of tasks undertaken regularly**

Job rotation

- **Having employees take on different jobs for a specific period (cross-training)**
- **Providing something new for employees to learn**

Approaches for developing positive behavior among employees

- **Reward desired behavior promptly**

- **Fit the person to the task**

- **Use positive reinforcement**

- **Be a teacher, mentor, and guide**

- **Celebrate success**

Chapter 5

Organizing Your Work and Time

"It has been demonstrated throughout human history that most individuals can achieve more of their goals or achieve them faster, easier, more completely, or more efficiently through organizations."

Herbert G. Hicks

An organizational chart shows

- **Who is responsible for what**

- **Who reports to whom**

- **How each person is expected to relate to everyone else**

- **How one unit is supposed to work with all the other units**

- **The *formal* organization of the government.**

The *informal* organization is shaped by employees'

- **Interests**

- **Backgrounds**

- **Preferences**

- **Affiliations.**

Types of formal organization

- **Line organization**

- **Line-and-staff organization**

- **Functional organization**

- **Program or project organization**

- **Quality improvement organization**

Attributes of a line organization

- **Person at the top has complete authority.**

- **Orders come from above and move through a chain of command.**

- **Everyone's authority and responsibility are spelled out clearly.**

- **Everyone at the same level of authority does the same kind of work with the same amount of responsibility.**

- **Lines of responsibility are clear-cut.**

Attributes of a line-and-staff organization

- **As in the line organization, person at the top has authority and orders move through a chain of command.**

- **Unlike in the line organization, staff experts advise the person at the top.**

Attributes of a functional organization

- **All departments are specialized, and each is headed by a specialist.**

- **Unlike in the line-and-staff organization, specialists are not merely advisers but also are in the chain of command and deal directly with problems.**

Attributes of a program or project organization

- **Employees are assigned to a project on the basis of their particular skills.**

- **While they are working on a particular project, employees report to the project director instead of to their department heads.**

- **Once a project is completed, a new project director may be chosen and an entirely different set of people may be assigned to work on the next project.**

Quality improvement organization

- **The emphasis is on the constant improvement of work processes and services.**

- **The structure is flatter, with fewer "levels" and more direct interaction between people throughout the organization.**

- **The underlying rationale is that employees know the work best.**

Building blocks of quality improvement organizations

1. **Work process improvement**

2. **Continuous improvement**

3. **Customer focus**

4. **Teamwork**

5. **Leadership**

6. **Strategic planning**