Analyzing Organizations

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Overview

• Why Analyze Organizations?
• How to Analyze Organizations
  – ACME Car Rental, Snake River Dam Examples
• Practice Makes Perfect
• Application to Mexico City
• Wrap-Up
Why Analyze Organizations, (1)

- Understanding Organizations Can Help You
  - Explain Behavior
  - Promote Change
- You Can Use Simple Heuristics to Ask Questions, Get Answers

Why Analyze Organizations, (2)?

- President Bush
  - Policy Staff (Domestic Politics)
    - Defense Department (Military Strategy)
    - State Department (Diplomacy)
    - Executive Office of the President
    - OMB (Budget)
    - OSTP (You!)
How to Analyze Organizations, (1)

• Ashford’s Triad
  – Opportunity
    • Over what does an organization have jurisdiction?
  – Capacity
    • Does it have the ability (technical, financial, regulatory tools) to do it?
  – Willingness
    • Does it have any interest in doing it?

How to Analyze Organizations, (2)

• Structure
  – Form clue to function

• People
  – Identity, interests of participants clue to function

• Procedures
  – Routines, information flows clue to function
Analyzing Structure

• Theory: Organizations are Like Organisms
  – Organization charts as skeletons
• Looking at Organization Charts First Step
  – What does the organization do?
  – How are subunits structured?
  – Who reports to whom?

Analyzing People

• Theory: Organizations Are Filled With People
  – Interests, worldviews influence function
• Once You’ve Seen the Org. Chart, Think About the Units You’re Analyzing
  – What training do the people have?
  – What kinds of issues are important to them?
  – Imagination/extrapolation if can’t ask
Analyzing Procedures

- **Theory: Organizations Require Stability**
  - What they do today strong predictor of how they will respond to future challenges

- **Questions to Ask**
  - What laws, regulations provide an organization’s mandate?
  - How does the organization carry out that mandate?
  - What information flows into it?
  - What resources does it have?
  - What do people do with their days?

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**Mapping Orgs. to Policies, (1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Option</th>
<th>Who Has Jurisdiction?</th>
<th>What Supposed to Do?</th>
<th>Capacity for Action?</th>
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Stakeholders & Political Coalitions, (1)

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<th>Policy Option</th>
<th>Supporters</th>
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Wrap-Up: Organizations and Policy Analysis

- Problem Definition
  - Is “the problem” purely technical or does it have organizational features?

- Policy Formulation
  - Who makes “the decision” using what rules?
  - Stakeholders/political coalitions

- Implementation
  - Who will implement any policy change?
  - Do they have opportunity, capacity, willingness?
  - If not, what can you recommend that’s feasible?
Wrap-Up: Organizational Change

• Given Tendency Toward Stability, How Can One Get Change?
  – Crisis breaks down inertia, but no long-term guarantee
  – Managerial transformation/innovation
  – Change external circumstances (relations with rest of government, interest groups)
    • Endangered Species Act as example

Wrap-Up: Oversimplified Mexico/US Comparison

• National-Level Factors Facilitate Change in MC
  – Fewer checks and balances
  – More organizational flux
  – More government control over business
  – Election of Vincente Fox breaks decades of PRI rule
• Local-Level Factors May Slow It
  – Government is short of cash, capacity for implementation, enforcement
  – Unions, public may not support changes that cut jobs or increase prices
Suggestions for Further Reading

• Public Organizations

• Businesses