
Managing Collaboration in Public Administration: The Promise of Alliance among Governance, Citizens, and Business is a book that discusses the need for increased collaboration in public administration between governmental entities, the business community and the citizens residing in nations and states. For Gadot, collaboration will be accomplished through increased levels of participation among these three prominent actors in the policymaking arena.

Gadot begins his book by tracing the development of public administration, and the many different paradigms that have existed since Woodrow Wilson and Frank Goodnow’s contributions for establishing the “art” and “science” of public administration (p. 3). Although the paradigmatic progress of public administration is thoroughly discussed in the text, Gadot is quick to mention that his work is not an attempt to establish a new paradigm for public administration. For the author, public administration is years away from solving the paradigmatic problem, but he does tell us of the necessity of cross-disciplinary collaboration as the bedrock for paradigmatic progress. Gadot points out the deficiencies of the prevailing paradigms and criticizes each for the lack of emphasis each places on collaboration.

On page 46 of the text, Gadot outlines a strategic model for approaching collaboration. First, the “issue” must have a general consensus of importance among the stakeholders. What Gadot is essentially advocating is the notion of defining the policy “problem(s),” which then lends support to the beginning of “collaboration.” The questions of “what” and “where” collaboration should begin is the next step in the model. The stage of implementation of collaboration is assisted by correctly identifying the particular policy’s opponents and advocates. Gadot emphasizes that successful policy implementation begins with the identification of those in support of a particular issue because policy implementation will be inhibited if uncommitted public managers are the primary stakeholders in charge of the implementation process. The author then places a tremendous responsibility on public managers for policy implementation and evaluation.

For the author however, public managers are not the only stakeholders with a vested interest in fostering collaboration, the “private sector,” as well as the “community,” are also charged with this responsibility. Gadot is critical of the perpetual exploitation of the “community” by business and the many ventures they utilize to sway public managers in developing their capital ventures. For the author, this is one, if not the sole criteria that severally limit collaborative efforts among industrialized nations. Gadot postulates that business has been victorious in receiving economic incentives for capital ventures at the expense of the community. The community perceives public
managers and policymakers as cronies of big business, enhancing the impression that communal interests are of little concern in the collaboration process.

For Gadot, the first step towards communal involvement in the policymaking process is for public administrators to be more responsive to citizen demands. The essential cornerstone of Gadot’s argument rests on the concept of responsiveness because business and government have been working together for centuries, only recently have communal concerns been solicited for making government more efficient and effective. Gadot is quick to stipulate that responsiveness contradicts the values of efficiency and effectiveness in public administration. So changing the mentality of public managers, to welcome responsiveness, is an endeavor in and of itself a “steep hurdle to cross.”

One of the strengths of Gadot’s book is the empirical technique utilized to support the enhancing of collaboration in public administration. The data sample consisted of 244 managers in the public, nonprofit and private sectors (p.118). Open and closed ended questions were part of a survey mailed to managers throughout Israel. The policy arenas represented in the survey were education, healthcare, welfare, employment, environmental, and transportation services.

The respondents generally believe that governmental agencies collaborate with each other, but do agree that more collaboration is needed with non-governmental agencies. In reference to citizen involvement, both private and public sector managers agree that more should be done to boost community collaboration in decision-making. In essence, the findings of Gadot’s research suggests that all parties believe that more collaboration between private and public agencies is needed to make western style democracies work more effectively in the future.

Despite the contributions of this book to the study and profession of public administration, some limitations do exist. The strategic model advocated by Gadot, as the process necessary for enhancing collaboration in public administration, is simply another attempt at establishing a rational typology for managing in public administration. If one tends to believe that elements of rationality exist in public administration, Gadot’s collaboration model will receive praise as a worthwhile strategic plan. However, for those scholars who tend to reject the idea of rationalism, Gadot’s argument will find very little credence as a valid strategic management model.

The audience most interested in Gadot’s book will consist of scholars and practitioners concerned with increasing collaboration among public and private entities. This text’s utilization in public administration courses will probably best be served as a supplementary text in courses on human resources management and organizational theory and behavior.

Overall, the book offers empirical research in support of its general premise that more collaboration is needed in public administration. Gadot’s concise and thorough historical progression of public administration tells us where we have been, where we are at, and where we need to go in public administration. This book is a significant contribution to public management and is highly recommended for those interested in the study and practice of collaboration, as a strategic management model, necessary for increasing responsiveness in public administration.
Organizational Development In the Public Sector is a text advocating the implementation of the management philosophy of organizational development (OD) in the public sector. The purpose of this book is to define OD in a manner that promotes the utilization of this management tool in all types of public firms. The author suggests that despite the multiple definitions that exists defining OD, all these definitions contain common core elements. Premised on Action Research (AR), OD is seen as an effort to deal with or initiate change in organizational cultures of public agencies. AR is a method of collaboration between members of the organization and a “change agent (p. 23).” The change agent is that individual placed in the position to “influence others to meet organizational goals through collaboration (p. 29).” The primary objective of AR is to expedite the diagnosis of the problems found in the organization, and to encourage strategies that equip organizational members to learn how to cope with these difficulties.

Carnevale’s identification of OD is based on a lengthy discussion of the historical literature pertaining to the classical and neoclassical models of organizational theory. By dealing with such models as Weber’s Bureaucracy, Taylor’s Scientific Management, and the Hawthorne Studies, the author makes a convincing argument that OD’s roots have a historical presence in public administration. Carnevale claims that OD is an antidote to the widespread management philosophies which state that “command and control, dispersed from the upper echelon of the public organization, is the best path to organizational effectiveness.” However, OD expects change agents to understand the necessity of allowing organizational employees to attempt to achieve self-actualization, which is a concept absent from the classical models but found in the human relations school of organizational thought and behavior. The combining of organizational structures, with an emphasis on the human side of enterprise, is the essence of OD in its efforts to achieve effectiveness in the public organization. OD is built on evidence that the task and relationships of organizational employees are the crucial pieces of the puzzle necessary for creating high performing work organizations. It dictates that individuals and their organizations are inherently related, and both are contingent on each other for organizational survival.

By adopting Barnard’s view that public firms are complex social systems that reflect the culture of the people, OD is structured to incorporate the components to answer the previously stated question: “Can the organization promote conditions of work that are developmental and beneficial for both individuals and the organization (p. 116)?” Carnevale suggests that OD answers this question in the following manner.

The political culture in which public organizations operate, create formal policies establishing a public firm with specific powers entrusted to them to meet the polity’s demands. These demands are formalized into policies that are implemented by the public firm to alleviate injustices hindering the self-actualization of the citizens found in the political culture making the demands. The structure of the firm is necessary for the efficient implementation of the demand, and the employees of the firm oversee and evaluate of the demand to ensure effectiveness. In turn, the polity making the demand rewards the organizational employee(s) with salaries and benefits to ensure that the
service is continued. The organizational employee is satisfied to some extent with the rewards given to them by the polity and chooses to remain at the public firm.

Another distinctive characteristic of OD, separating it from other management philosophies, is the methods used to deal with real life problems. Within holistic political cultures are divergent sub-cultures that generate competing demands on public organizations. The emphasis on solving the demand problems for public organizations is based on political compromise. Although compromise may result in policies and programs that are not the best possible solutions for a problem, the competing sub-cultures may view them as “good enough.” Therefore, OD suggests that the change agent should be aware of the necessity of knowing and understanding the demands of the sub-culture(s) surrounding the firm because all organizational actions have the potential to involve one or more of these competing sub-cultures.

OD also understands that the public organization is in a state of constant change. Change within a public organization is usually met with resistance and distrust. Accompanying change, in many cases, is conflict. The successful change agent, according to Carnevale, knows when “incremental” change is best and only resorts to “revolutionary” change as a last resort. For Carnevale, confronting change usually entails dealing with some elements of “conflict” because people simply do not like change.

Carnevale postulates that the democratic ideals resulting in the creation of public organizations is premised on conflict. The author states that if conflict is inherent in the political structure of a society, it should be expected in those agencies given the necessary power to meet the demands of the polity. The change agent will be successful at finding consensus among divergent interests when conflict erupts in the public firm. Furthermore, the change agent must accept conflict as a constructive part of organizational effectiveness, not the traditional view that it is always deconstructive.

Organizational Development In the Public Sector is a theoretical discourse tracing the roots of OD in the historical literature pertaining to public management in public administration. With its emphasis on practical real life problem solving, Carnevale addresses one of the fundamental questions of public management in public administration: how to bridge the gap between theory and practice. The author displays a great deal of knowledge about the topic of OD and the book is well written.

Due to a lack of emphasis on OD in many of the leading organization theory and behavior text books, Carnevale’s work serves well as a secondary text for those interested in bringing OD to the classroom. For the practitioner, Carnevale’s book offers real life problem solving techniques that can be implemented in the decision-making process from day-to-day in the public organization.


The early chapters of this publication describes the basic decision model and defines the terms of the model using three separate theoretical viewpoints: prescriptive, behavioral and naturalistic. In explanation:

- Prescriptive theory generally focuses on choices among options and rarely focuses on either diagnosis or implementation. The author’s interest is in the interplay of group institutional dynamics and their effects on decisions made within and on behalf of organizations.
Behavioral theory research usually involves subjects making choices between two offered bets. Naturalistic theory studies how decisions are made instead of how they “should” be made. Also looks at implementation.

The author explains that decision making in organizations is strongly influenced by the structure and norms of the organization and that decision-makers do not entertain the full array of options that an outsider might consider available. Herbert Simon’s terms of “bounded rationality” and “satisficing” are discussed.

This reporter enjoyed the author’s discussion of the sequence of paradigms, which are philosophical frameworks, leading to theories, which are more specific, leading to models, becoming even more specific. Models come and go, theories go when evidence is against them and paradigms stay until a radically better idea comes along.

Beach defines framing as involving embedding observed events in a context that gives them meaning. People tend to avoid taking risks when outcomes are framed as gains; and they tend to take risks when outcomes are framed as losses. After framing, there are three methods to make decisions:

1. Recognition – situation is similar to one encountered before so similar behavior can be used again.
2. Inference – situation is similar to one encountered before so an educated guess can be used.
3. Choice – situation is not similar so options must be explored

The author examines lens theory and multiple regression analysis in his discussion of decision making. He also explores probability theory as an abstract mathematical system of rules for assigning numbers to sets of hypothetical elements and utility theory which is used to represent preferences to outcomes. There were several chapters devoted to both group and individual decision making. One method of decision making discussed was game theory. In game theory actors are thoroughly rational, strictly self-interested beings whose behavior is determined solely by the payoffs, tempered by judgments about what the other actors may do.

Group decisions include the concepts of:

- Fairness
- Cooperation
- Negotiation
- Strategies

Group decisions may utilize a number of models for decision making. The author provided a brief explanation of the following models:

- Participation model
- Garbage can model
- Rational model
- Brainstorming model (for options)

The concepts of consensus and confidence were discussed with explanations of risky shift. This term describes the process of individuals moving to groups for decision making, as groups tend to be more extreme in their willingness or unwillingness to
endorse risky decisions. Groupthink was examined and criticized but not beyond what has already been discussed in the previous book reports.

Beach examines image theory that assumes that decision-makers come to the decision with knowledge that can be divided into three categories:

1. Knowledge about what really matters (beliefs and values)
2. What constitutes a desirable future (goals)
3. How to go about securing that goal (plan).

Lastly, decisions need to be assessed as to their compatibility and altered if off course.

The book is well written and deals with an extremely important topic in public administration. This book is highly recommended for use in public administration classes. Classes in organizational theory and behavior particularly would be served quite well by adding this book to the students reading list.