



# Client Centered Management

- ✦ Also referred to as “Social Administration”
- ✦ Framework rests on the assumption that the principal justification for a human service agency is to improve the lives of the clients it serves.

# Management As Performance

- ✦ It is almost impossible to separate a manager's performance from the performance of the organizational unit.
- ✦ It is rare to see a "superior" manager in charge of a poorly performing program, or a superior team being run by an "inferior" manager.
- ✦ This perception is common in the business sector, but rare in the human/social services sector.



# Areas of Human Service Performance

- ☀ Client Outcomes
- ☀ Productivity
- ☀ Resource Acquisition
- ☀ Efficiency
- ☀ Staff Morale

# Client Outcomes

- ☀ Affective Changes
- ☀ Learning
- ☀ Behavior Changes
- ☀ Status Maintenance or Change
- ☀ Environmental Modifications

# Productivity

- ☀ Amount of service provided
  - ✿ **Client Count:** number who receive services
  - ✿ **Service Episode:** complete period of service provision from intake to termination
  - ✿ **Service Event:** tally of specific actions by worker, client or both
  - ✿ **Elapsed Time:** amount of time devoted to service

# Resource Acquisition

- ✦ Obtaining what you need to do the job
  - ✦ Money
  - ✦ People
  - ✦ Time
  - ✦ Physical Plant
  - ✦ Community Support
  - ✦ Equipment

# Efficiency

- ✦ Ratio between resources acquired and outcomes
- ✦ “bang for your buck”
- ✦ Cost per hour, service, etc.
- ✦ Percentage of the population served

# Staff Morale

- ✱ Job satisfaction of employees
- ✱ Social Service organizations should contribute to the well-being and satisfaction of employees, too.
- ✱ Job satisfaction can be linked to productivity (not always)

# Separation of Management and Clients

- ✦ Current management practice strongly separates the human services manager from the real life of the agency's clients
- ✦ Can drastically alter the effectiveness of the organization
- ✦ Manager is “blind” to the realities clients face

# Signs of Separation

## ☀ Goals

- ✱ Means-oriented, not goals oriented
  - “We will teach...” as opposed to “they will learn....”.
- ✱ Abstract language
  - “improved quality of life”

# Signs of Separation

## ☀ Daily Agency Practices

- ☀ Staff meetings
- ☀ Data kept
- ☀ Employee performance appraisals
  - Process, not results oriented

# Consequences

## ★ Goal Displacement

- ★ What are we really trying to do?
- ★ Means become the ends – process orientation

## ★ Reactive Management Practice

- ★ Technique of the day

## ★ Client Displacement

- ★ End up feeling even more displaced

# Principles of Client-Centered Management

- ✦ Principle #1: Venerating the People Called Clients
- ✦ Principle #2: Creating and Maintaining the Focus
- ✦ Principle #3: Healthy Disrespect for the Impossible
- ✦ Principle #4: Learning for a Living



# Principle #1: Venerate the Clients

- ✦ Create an environment in which consumers are seen and treated humanely – more like people and less like patients, or clients, or “welfare moms,” etc.
- ✦ Managers play the key role in communicating the values of the program to those who use it and work in it, and to the community in which it operates

# How do we do this?

- ☀ Know the people who use the program
  - ☀ Stories, history, families. First name basis. Common courtesy. Managers model this behavior and demand it of their staff
- ☀ Promote the idea that clients are heroes.
  - ☀ Overcoming problems. Achievements. Resiliency

# How do we do this?

- ☀ Employees manifest a client-advocacy perspective toward their own jobs.
  - ✿ Clients' perspectives become the focal point everything else is organized around
  - ✿ Managers in particular have the formal authority, control over resources, and control over information necessary to make this happen.

## Principle #2: Focus

- ✦ Organizations that perform are the ones that have clearly defined their mission purpose and performance, and commit all knowledge, resources and talents to getting it done.
- ✦ For client-centered performance managers, that focus is defined in terms of clients and client outcomes.

# So what does that mean?

## ★ Rules:

- ★ Selecting and establishing organization focus is manager's job
- ★ Focus should be defined in terms of client outcomes
- ★ Defining focus requires elimination of other potentially worthwhile goals and activities (can't do it all)
- ★ Defining a focus requires a **COMMITMENT** to achieving that focus

# Principle #3: Never say “Impossible”

- ★ Chronic lack of funds, staff, community interest and public support coupled with incessant demands.
- ★ Do you give up and just try for status quo, or look for creative solutions?
- ★ *Both groups work equally hard, but the creative ones get more done!*

# The “Make It Happen” Attitude

- ✦ Perceive self as powerful and responsible (self-efficacy)
- ✦ Flexibility and invention based on clear focus on people’s needs
- ✦ Problem-solving skills
- ✦ Blending disparate agendas
- ✦ Persistence (don’t take “no” for an answer)



# Principle #4: Learning for a Living

- ✦ Continuing to learn is more effective than just putting in one's time.
- ✦ As opposed to “working for a living.”
- ✦ Open to experimentation, trying new things.