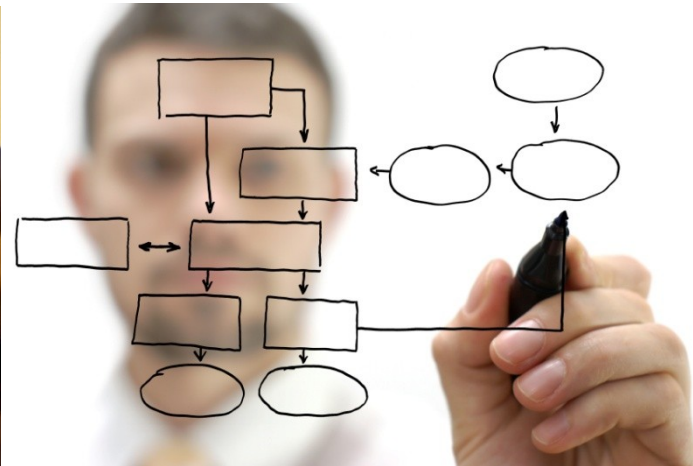
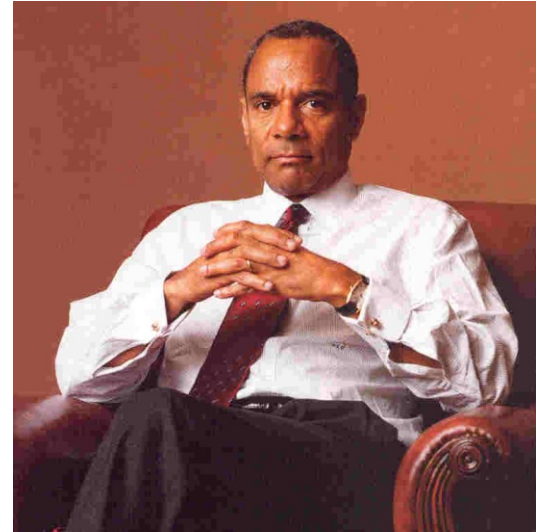


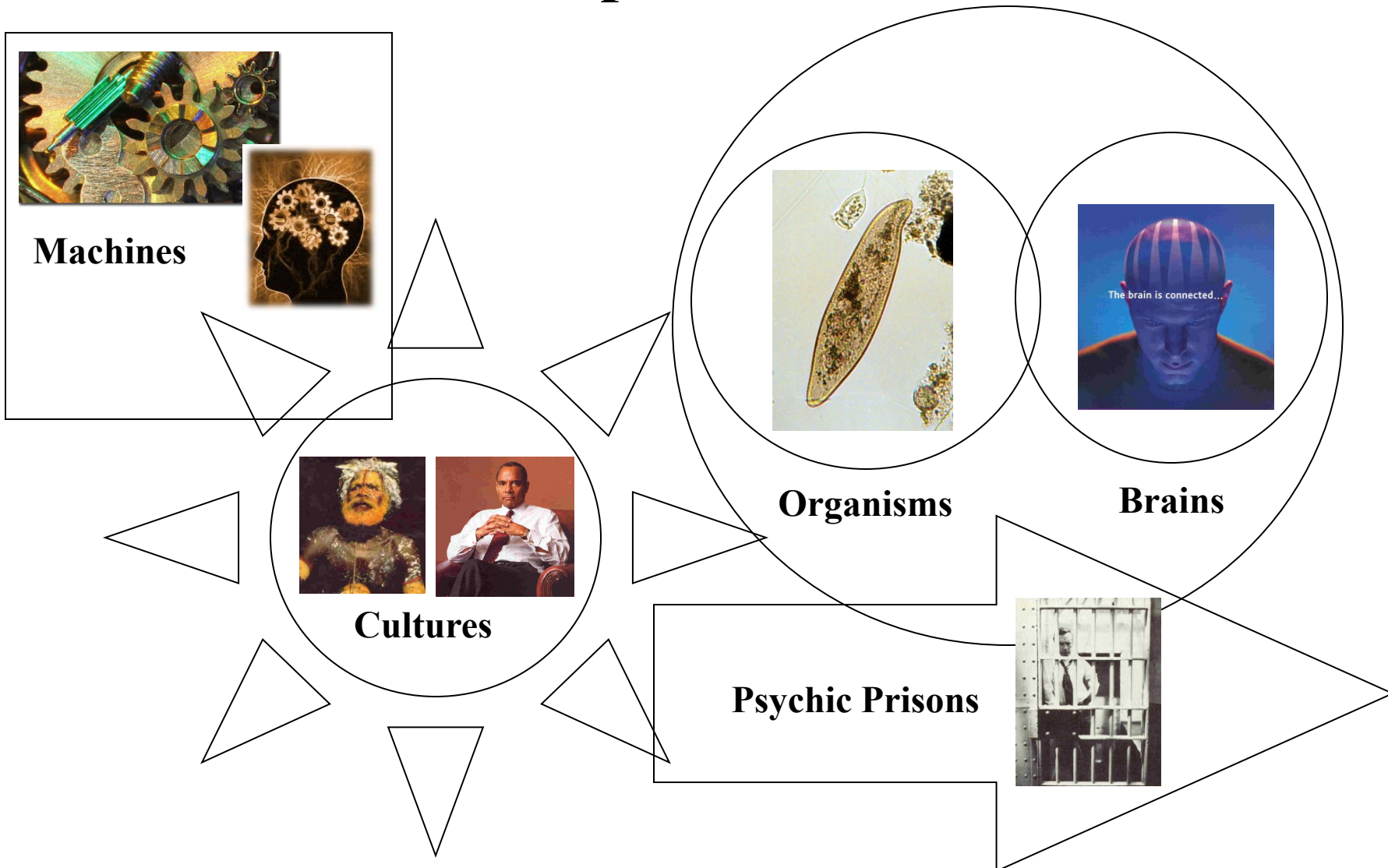
Management, McDonald's and the Machine Metaphor



What is Management?



How Can Managers Make Sense of a Complex World?



Mechanistic Thinking: An Example from Southwest Airlines



**“It’s got to operate like
a smooth machine...”**

Mechanistic Thinking: An Example from EDS



“I’m an engineer person by background. I like to know how things are going to fit together... and what the results are going to be.”

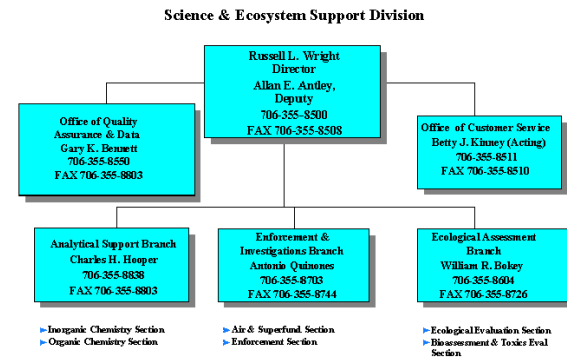
The Machine Metaphor



Managers adopting a machine metaphor believe in detailed planning around predetermined goals and objectives ...



... and organizational charts as the fundamental blueprint of the organization.



The Machine Metaphor



Managers holding a “mechanical” view of the world value:

- Control
- Precision
- Routine
- Predictability
- Reliability
- Consistency
- Efficiency



The Machine Metaphor



Mechanistic organizations adopt organizational structures characterized by:

- **Centralized/Top-down control**
- **Division of labor into specialized jobs**
- **Clear lines of authority**
- **Unity of command**
- **Detailed rules and regulations**

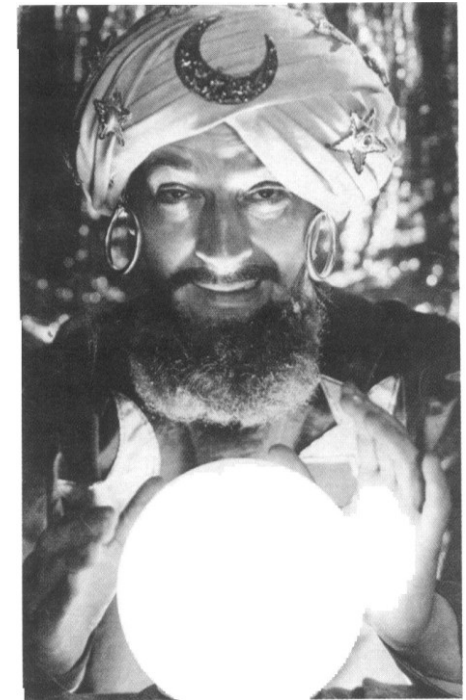


The Machine Metaphor



Mechanistic organizations work well in simple, stable environments ...

... environments that are, by definition, predictable.



Limitations of the Machine Metaphor



However, in more complex and dynamic environments, mechanistic organizations don't work that well.

This form of organization creates rigidities that suppress originality, innovation, and adaptation to change – things necessary for organizations to be effective in more unpredictable environments.

Limitations of the Machine Metaphor



“My single biggest problem is to prevent the corporation from becoming a great bureaucracy, which only moves a little cog out at the end of the chain as the big cog moves at headquarters, and has everything geared together to move at the same pace with no originality and no imagination.

We’re not that, but that’s what big companies sometimes become.”



A Visit to McDonald's

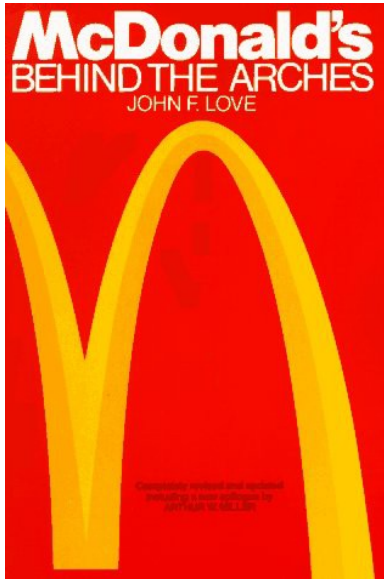


Using the machine metaphor to guide your thinking, spend 35-45 minutes observing at a local McDonald's restaurant.

The exercise begins upon arrival. Start observing as you wait in line. For example, how are the menu options presented? How is your order taken? Is it taken like the person ahead of you? What's going on behind the counter? Continue observing as you sit and eat, and as you walk around the restaurant.

Record your observations on the sheet provided. If you provide written observations in *at least* six categories, your observation sheet will be entered into a raffle, and you'll have a chance to win one of three prizes.

McDonald's as a Machine: A Look Back in Time



Assembly-line efficiency



Consistency



Minimal variety



Detailed operating manuals/Iron-clad rules



No tolerance for variation



Precision



Control



Can't trust the individual

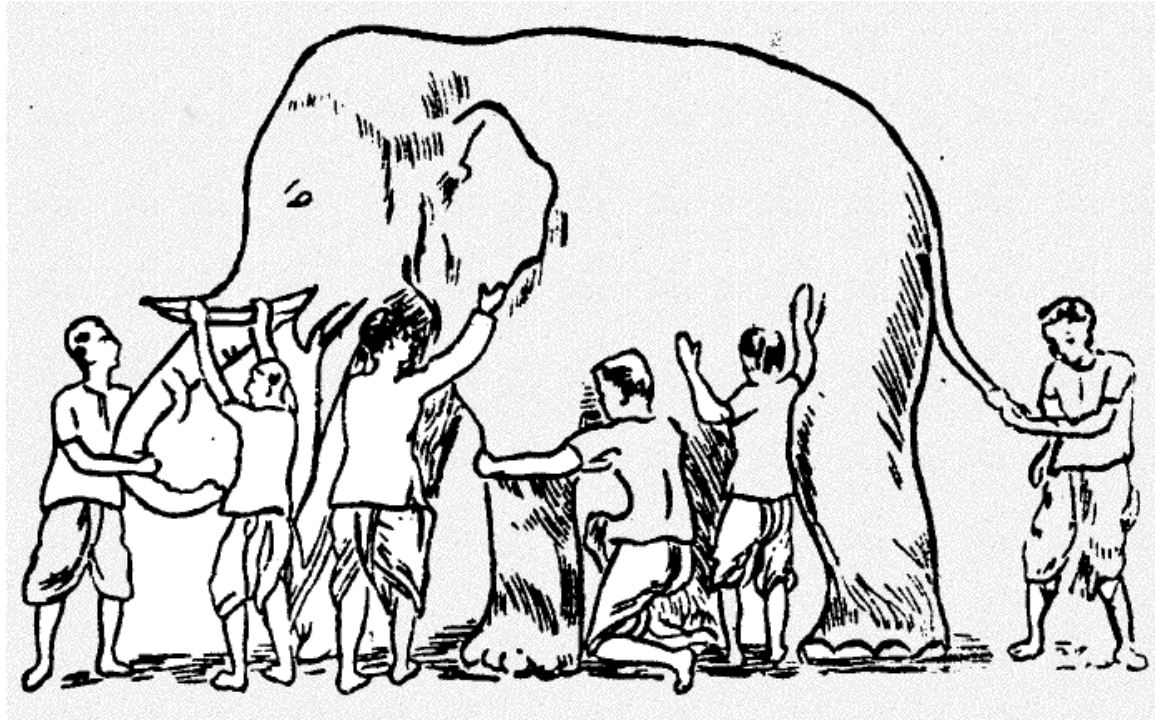


Follow the formula/Not a place for innovation



Deskilled jobs

The Blind Men and The Elephant



**We are the blind people, and the organization is our elephant.
Only by using multiple interpretive lenses (metaphors) can
we begin to *see* organizations in their full complexity.**