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CHAPTER 4 BASIC CHALLENGES OF ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

1. To explain how differentiation occurs and why it is a design challenge. (4.1)
2. To review the five functions that accomplish organizational goals: support, production, maintenance, adaptive, and managerial. (4.1)
3. To examine interlocking roles that are differentiated vertically based on a hierarchy, and horizontally based on functional groups and divisions. (4.1)
4. To discuss the balance between differentiation and integration and examine the seven integrating mechanisms. (4.2)
5. To explain the differences between liaison and integrating roles and between task forces and teams. (4.3)
6. To illustrate the design challenge of balancing centralization and decentralization. (4.3)
7. To illustrate the design challenge of balancing standardization and mutual adjustment. (4.4)
8. To show that standardization or mutual adjustment results from organizational goals. (4.4)
9. To show the importance of the informal organization. (4.4)
10. To outline the difference between a mechanistic and organic structure. (4.5)
11. To show how the contingency approach tailors organizational structure to environmental uncertainties. (4.5)

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter addresses four challenges of organizational design:

1. Determining the level of differentiation
2. Deciding how to coordinate activities
3. Determining who will make decisions
4. Deciding how tightly the organization will control employee activities

Differentiation is the process of dividing labor. The first design challenge is to determine the level of vertical and horizontal differentiation. In an organization individuals are assigned specific responsibilities; those with similar skills are grouped into functions, with two or more functions grouped into a division. As organizations grow, they differentiate into five functional roles: support, production, maintenance, adaptive, and managerial. Each role has a horizontal and a vertical dimension. Horizontal differentiation groups people into subunits. Vertical differentiation designs a hierarchy of authority and establishes reporting relationships to connect subunits.

The second design challenge is balancing differentiation and integration. As an organization becomes differentiated, more complex integrating mechanisms coordinate activities. The following seven integrating mechanisms, listed from simplest to most complex, are reviewed:

1. Hierarchy of authority
2. Direct contact
3. Liaison role
4. Task force
5. Team
6. Integrating role
7. Integrating department

The integrating mechanism must facilitate communication and coordination for effectiveness, but unnecessary mechanisms are costly.

PHAM HOANG HIEN



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The system applies all the learning methods in such a way that both well-performing students and students who struggle perform much better. All of a sudden, everything went better. Real World Focus: In-chapter tools help students make the connection between concepts and the real-world implications of organizational design and change. My average score is now an A and those are results I would have never had in the past. Zeger Commerce and science With my old method, I passed only 3 out of 8 courses. My grades were fine. Regan 24 – Student Law Being able to create my materials online made the process of studying so much smoother and quicker. Thanks, Chris! Kurt 22 – Student Industrial Eng I immediately started to enjoy learning again, and my grades soared. Last year I scored C on a course, and this year I got an A+ thanks to your method! Thank you very much! Marije Parent The largest effect is that my child is more enthusiastic about school! 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