

ORGANISATIONAL THEORY AND LEADERSHIP STYLE

The following management structure is based upon a community located in the Eastern suburbs. It is a religious community that incorporates many different concepts relating to education, aged, youth, and community. The community has a membership in excess of 600 members who are governed by an elected Management Committee every two years. In addition, the management committee is supported by the trustees and honorary members whose roles have been diluted to that of observers and passive action roles.

Beneath the management committee there are managers whose roles are similar to senior management and/or executives of a multinational company. The leadership style is based on the pyramid model which is really a cloak to shield the management committee from any criticism and to be able to wield the "big stick" so to speak. Major decisions are made by senior management and those decisions only enforced or implemented once approval has been provided by the management committee. This in itself prohibits the senior members from making decisions that may affect the community and its long term, interests.

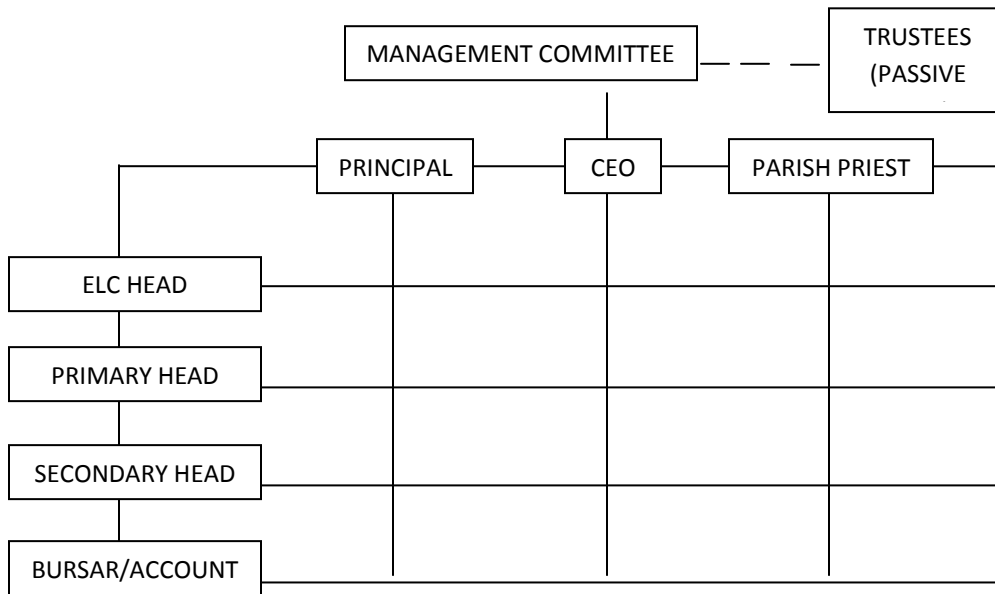
The matrix shown below has been restructured from the pyramid style of leadership and does not demonstrate the inherent weaknesses in the current style of leadership within the organisation. The matrix simply restructures the line of authority to a more interactive playing field where all stakeholders appear to have an active interest in the leadership of the company. Had this matrix been implemented at the organisation, decisions such as the implementation of a safety management system (SMS) may well have been communicated to all levels of the chain of authority.

The matrix model incorporates the Management Committee, CEO, Bursar, Parish Priest, College Principal, College Heads and Trustees (passive or inactive action role). The CEO has the responsibility to ensure that the Safety Management system is embraced by all staff throughout the community. This fact alone places enormous pressure on the CEO, knowing that he is faced with a management committee that is hostile to change and prefers traditional methods of "if it is not broken then leave it alone attitude" what it entails is that consultation with all stakeholders is important and that the SMS being demonstrated that it's in the best interest of all stakeholders with emphasis on the financial gains that may result from implementing the SMS at all levels throughout the organization.

The matrix also enables the reader to identify the different roles by the positions. For example, the Management committee has overall responsibilities on legal and moral grounds, the CEO is responsible to the management committee and plays a dual role between facilitator and that of a Director, and the Principal is responsible for all educational aspects while the Parish Priest is responsible for ecclesiastical matters as well as being a non-voting member of the board. In this case the main influencer of senior management is the Parish Priest while the Trustees play an insignificant and minor passive role that of observers.

It is of interest to note that in this particular organisation the management committee has a pathological approach to SMS and is doomed to fail despite the willingness of the workforce and influence of non-voting members.

ORGANISATIONAL MATRIX



ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

<p style="text-align: center;">MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE</p> <p>Responsible for the provision of safe environments and safe work systems by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ensuring adherence to the organisations Health and safety policies. b. Promoting and promulgating such policies and all relevant health and safety information c. Providing appropriate staff training and resources d. Reviewing data and programs 	<p style="text-align: center;">SENIOR EXECUTIVES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CEO – PRINCIPAL – PARISH PRIEST</p> <p>Responsible for the safe working environment by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Maintaining compliance within the Company's health and safety policies b. Arranging appropriate staff training supervision and maintenance records c. Ensuring the purchase and use of appropriate personal protective equipment and clothing d. Conducting regular hazard inspections, checking accident protection measures and reviewing accident prevention performance e. Providing relevant safety information to all staff.
<p style="text-align: center;">COMMUNITY HEADS</p> <p>Responsible for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The implementation and maintenance of safe work procedures b. Providing appropriate personal protective clothing and/or equipment c. Providing technical guidance and support and ensuring the elimination of hazardous conditions d. Providing measures to ensure that all accidents and injuries are reported and that these events are investigated so as to reduce or eliminate the possibility of a future occurrence 	<p style="text-align: center;">EMPLOYEES OR COMMUNITY WORKFORCE</p> <p>Responsible for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Following appropriate safe work procedures, thus providing for their own health and safety, and that of others. b. Ensuring that appropriate personal protective clothing and/or equipment is used. c. Seeking guidance for all new work practices and safe work procedures. d. Ensuring that any hazardous conditions, accidents or injuries are reported

Model taken from "National Guidelines for Integrating Occupational Health and Safety Competencies into National Industry Competency Standards [NOHSC: 7025 (1994)]

As stated above, the management committee has a pathological cultural approach towards change management and will resist at all costs any changes that may affect the balance of power. The influence of the Parish priest on the decisions of the management committee is instrumental in the implementation of any new changes being introduced. The fear of the advisory body being work safe in this case does not change their opinion of any new structures being put into place. This fear of change has been embedded over time throughout the history of the organisation and will only change if the outcome is favorable in terms of financial gains. One must keep in mind that there is no obvious link between Government grants and the work safe which would influence the management committee towards a generative culture.

Management committee. Despite the pathological approach of the management committee, the organisation meets with its obligations to the OHS Act 2004 and ensures that its records and audits reflect this in its documentation. This however provides a false sense of security to Health and Safety auditors and staff alike. In this particular organisation, management delays, does not answer, passes the buck, pays lip service to and/or refuses to follow upon complaints, incidents and will only react when its very existence is challenged or is under threat.

Senior management. Senior managers often play a pivotal role in the organisation and if they have the courage and strength of will to report matters that are detrimental to the health of the organisation may soon find themselves looking for another job. What then can senior managers do other than to report and risk their livelihood? One theory is to use the influencers to the advantage of the organisation, provide written reports, presentations, emails correspondence and slowly but surely gets their message across.

Middle management. Middle management is afraid to voice their opinion in the event that they lose their employment and the perks that go with it. They are also slow or do not follow through complaints but rather hand ball the problems up the chain of command so that they may be seen as doing their job.

Workforce/Employees. Those at the coal face are subjected to bullying, discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and have no champion amongst them to stand up for their rights. Their only course of action is the union and in this particular case the union is in bed so to speak with senior management on the educational level. Employees are reluctant to speak out and many resort to stress leave, absenteeism, long service, annual leave in advance and last of all workers compensation. They view management with suspicion and will only report accidents if it involves children. Major incidents are reported up the chain of authority and are no to senior management or to the Management committee. Only cases that involve a serious health issue and/or matters that involve major incidents that may attract negative press are reported to the management committee. The end result is that the workers/employees lose faith in the system and in most cases leave the organisation in search better pay and conditions.

Despite the impressive audits, checks and balances and compliance with the OHS Act 2004, the organization has failed to meet its duty of care to its employees and has failed in being due diligent to ensure that the workplace is a safe working environment. This conclusion has been formed as a result of speaking to employees at the "coal face", parents whose children attend the College, Aged residents living in the community homes, community parishioners that have injured them. In addition the Register of injuries, complaints, absenteeism and workers compensation applications testify to the fact that management has failed to embrace a safety management system culture. Costs have spiraled alone in absenteeism, thus increasing the costs of hiring temporary staff to fill the gaps. Salaries have increased to ensure that staff is retained despite the inappropriate conditions of bullying, provocation, intimidation, harassment and discrimination. All of these incidents are hidden and countered in consultation with the parish priest and the Principal.

To the untrained observer the organisation at first glance may well believe that given the physical state of the organisation, all is well and that the organisation appears to be compliant with the OHS Act 2004 in terms of duty of care and due diligence in the workplace. **Peter Adamis**