



PROJECT MANAGEMENT
CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE
A.J. CLARK SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
Civil & Environmental Engineering Department



MANAGING FOR MEANINGFUL OUTCOMES

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2019 Project Management Symposium



Traditional management: The UN's Water Decade

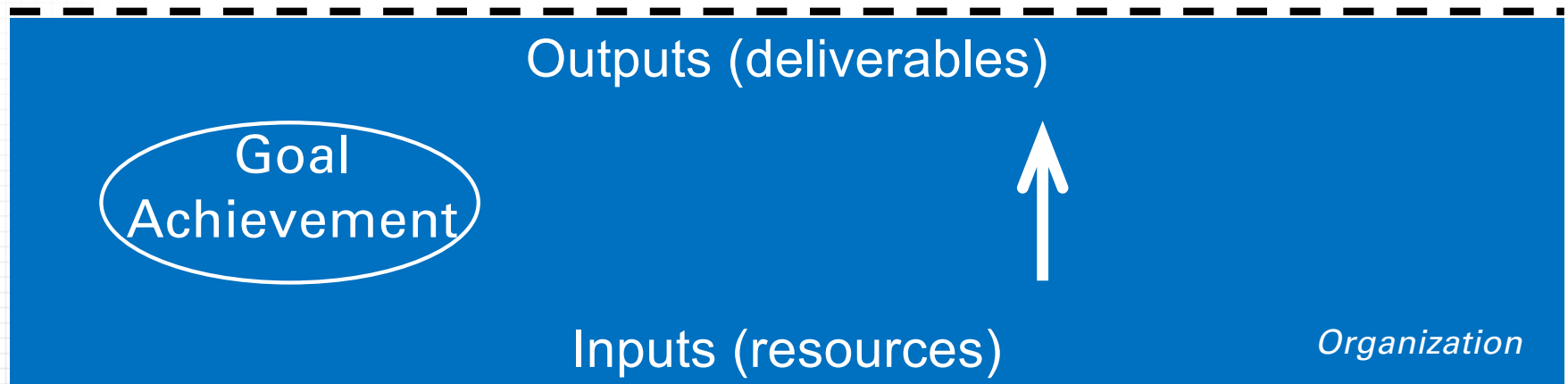
UN Water Decade
Goal: Expand
'coverage' of safe
water supply and
adequate
sanitation in
participating
countries
[meaningless
output]





Traditional management uses an input-output model

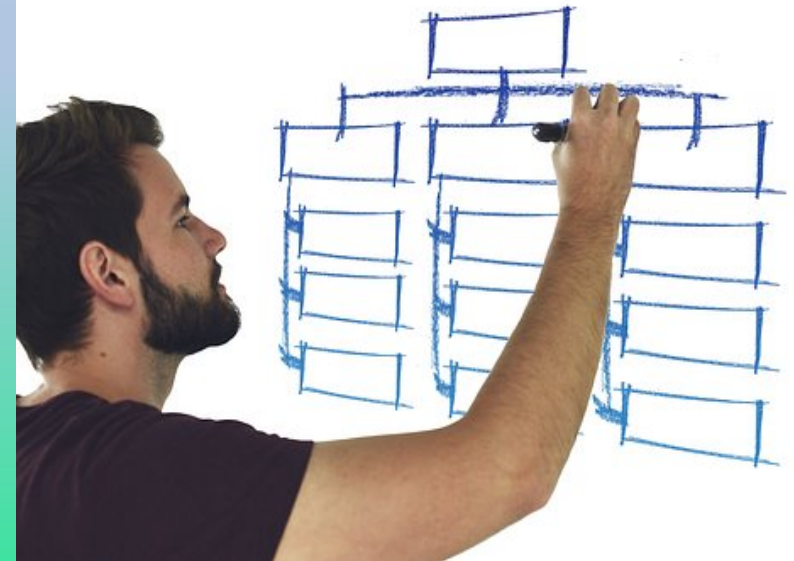
Environment





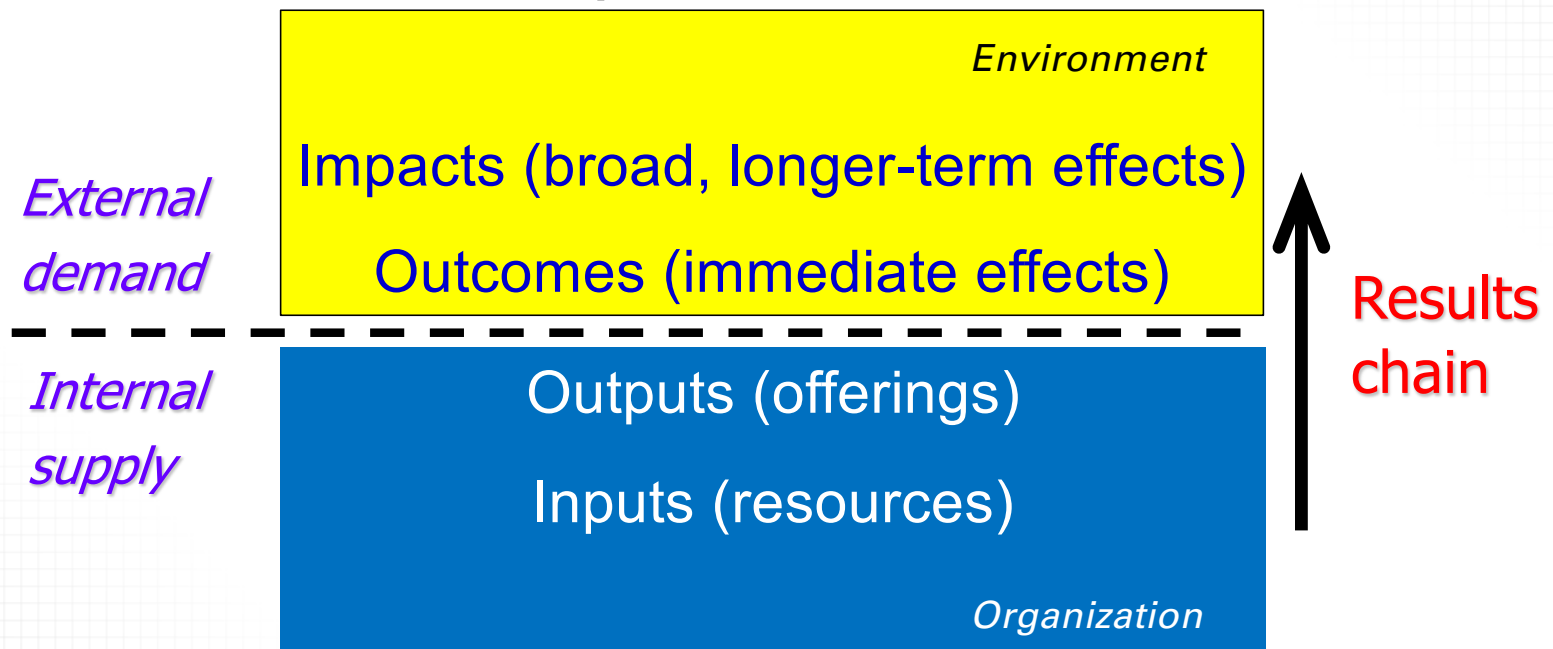
Traditional Management Efficiency is the highest good

- Top down, command & control [originally designed for repetitive manual work]
- Goals & objectives cascade down from the top of the hierarchy, focused on production
- Largely authoritarian & bureaucratic
- Driven by intentionality from the top
- Positive values are optional
- Input – output model (organization centric)
- Only requires 'clear' objectives
- Wastes are returned to the environment





Managing for Meaningful Outcomes uses a more comprehensive model



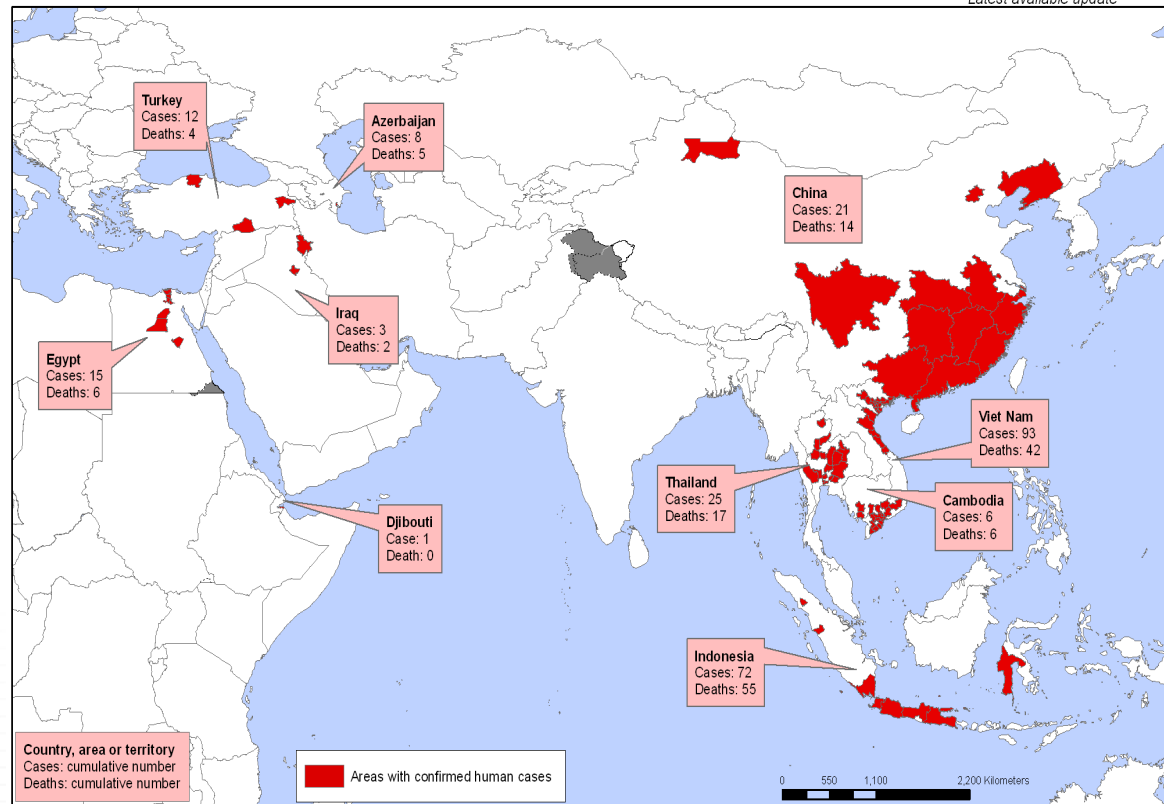


Meaningful outcomes: Bird Flu in Asia

Program goal: To achieve physical separation between domestic and wild flocks to interrupt virus transmission
[outcome-level goal]

Affected areas with confirmed human cases of H5N1 avian influenza since 2003

Status as of 16 October 2006
Latest available update



World Health Organization

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

Data Source: WHO / Map Production: Public Health Mapping and GIS
Communicable Diseases (CDS) World Health Organization
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Dead chickens, infected from migrating birds



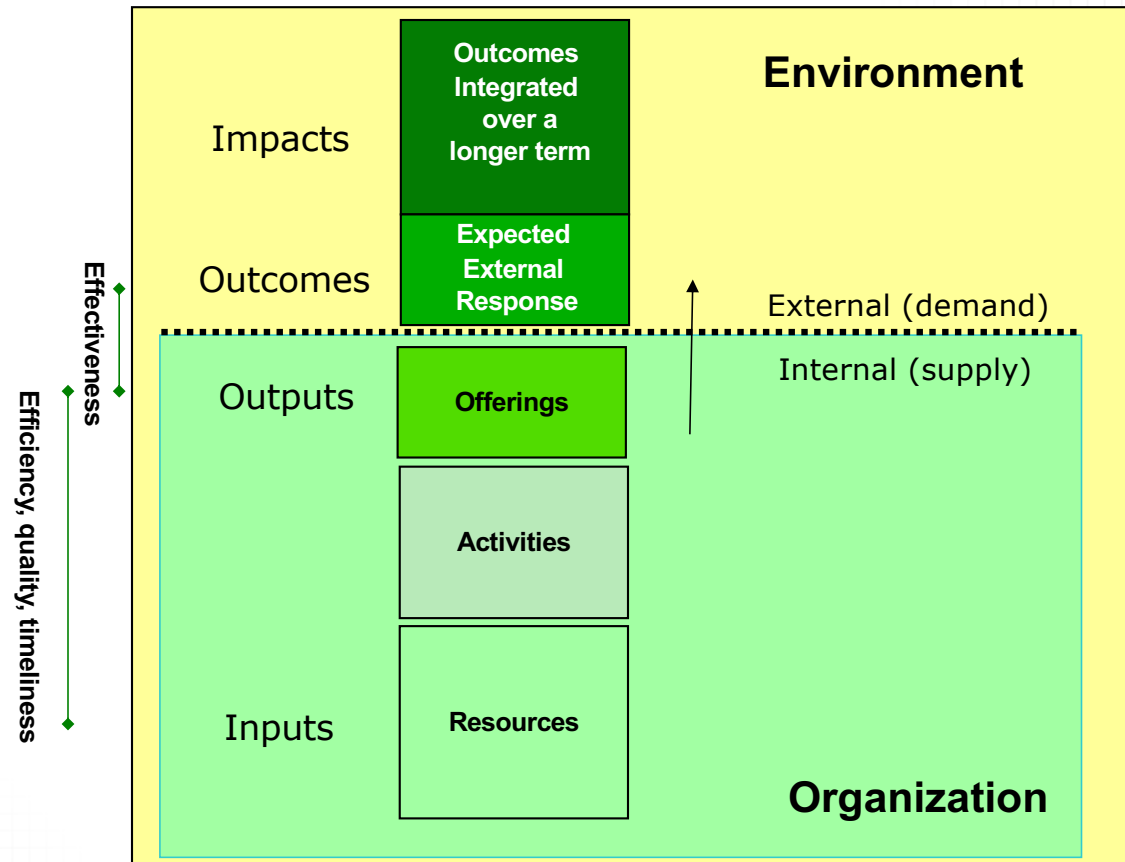


Chickens isolated from migrating foul



Organizational effectiveness: reliable stimulation of meaningful outcomes

The successful organization has a clear understanding of the chain that reliably links its activities and their outputs to the external responses that are expected





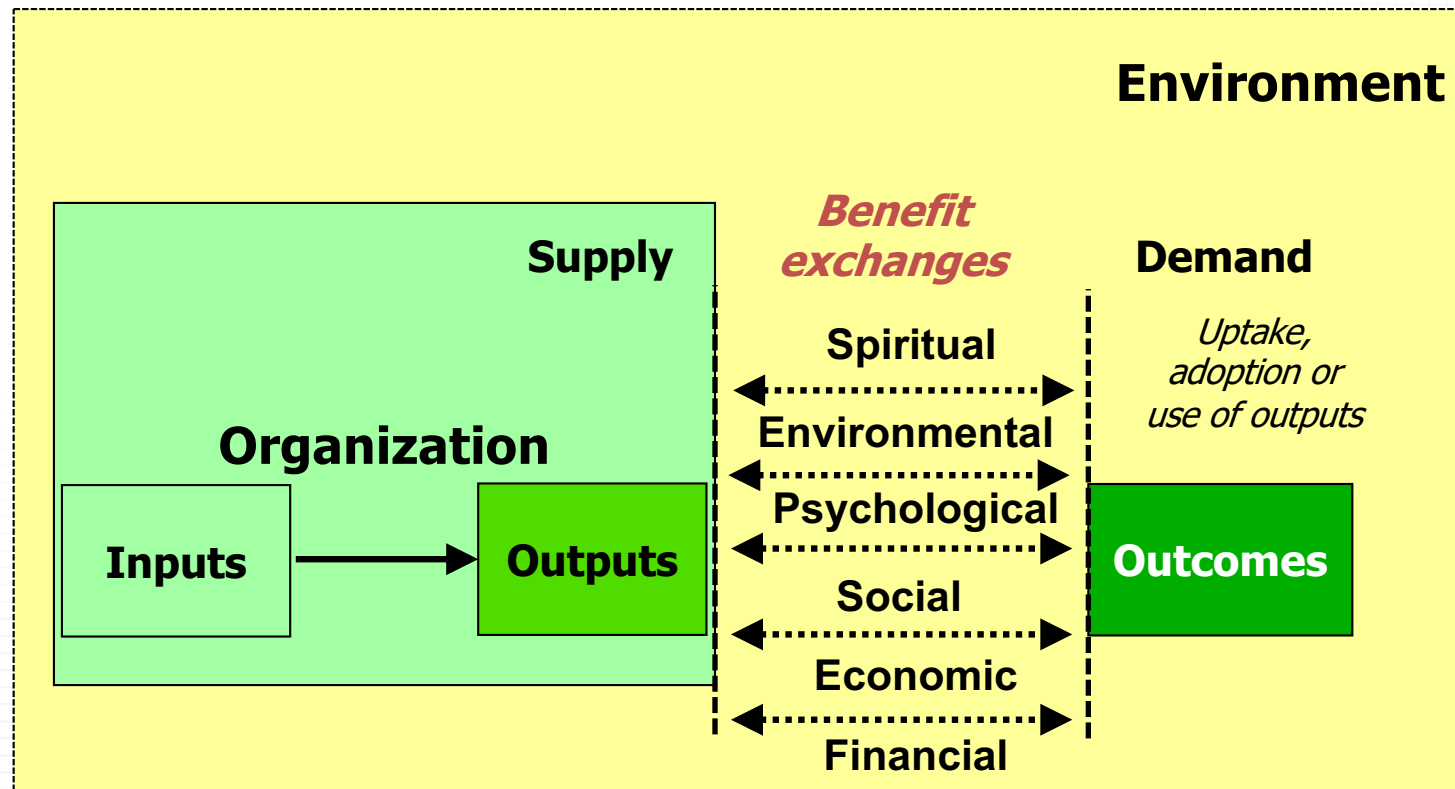
Managing for meaningful outcomes

Effectiveness is the highest good

- Meaningful outcomes are achieved and confirmed in the environment (input – outcome model)
- Responsive to environmental context and environmental response (open system)
- The environment is assumed to be complex at the start (results chains involve conjecture)
- Involves self-regulation of processes to uphold positive values and reduce or eliminate negative side-effects
- Positive effectiveness is the highest good



What does it take to motivate an exchange of benefits?





Purchase of durable goods



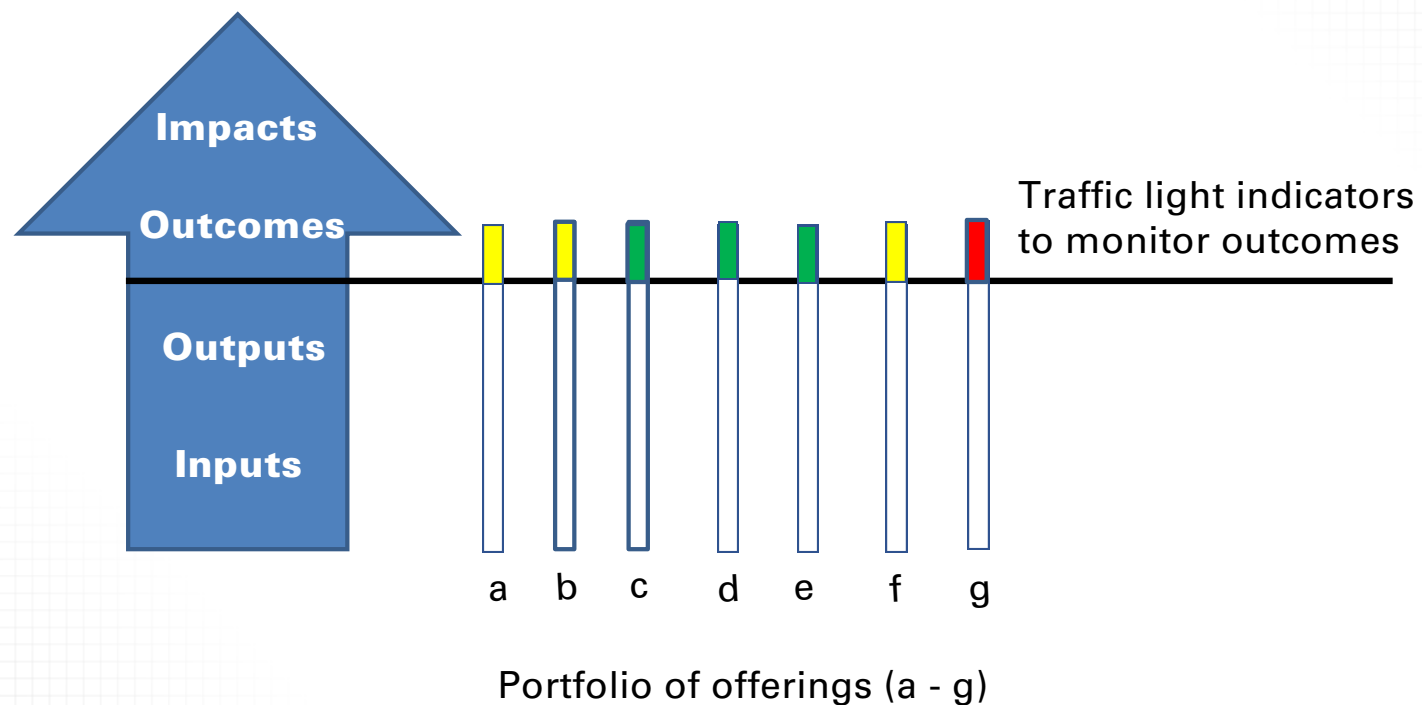


When effectiveness becomes the meta-goal, risks to the organization are reduced

- A new executive team with a new set of goals can be risky and destabilizing for the organization
- Under the new approach the meta-goal of every organization is to be effective within its environment (provides boundary conditions)
- Each offering is focused on meaningful outcomes
- Teams organized around individual offerings are encouraged to innovate and find better ways to serve the external environment

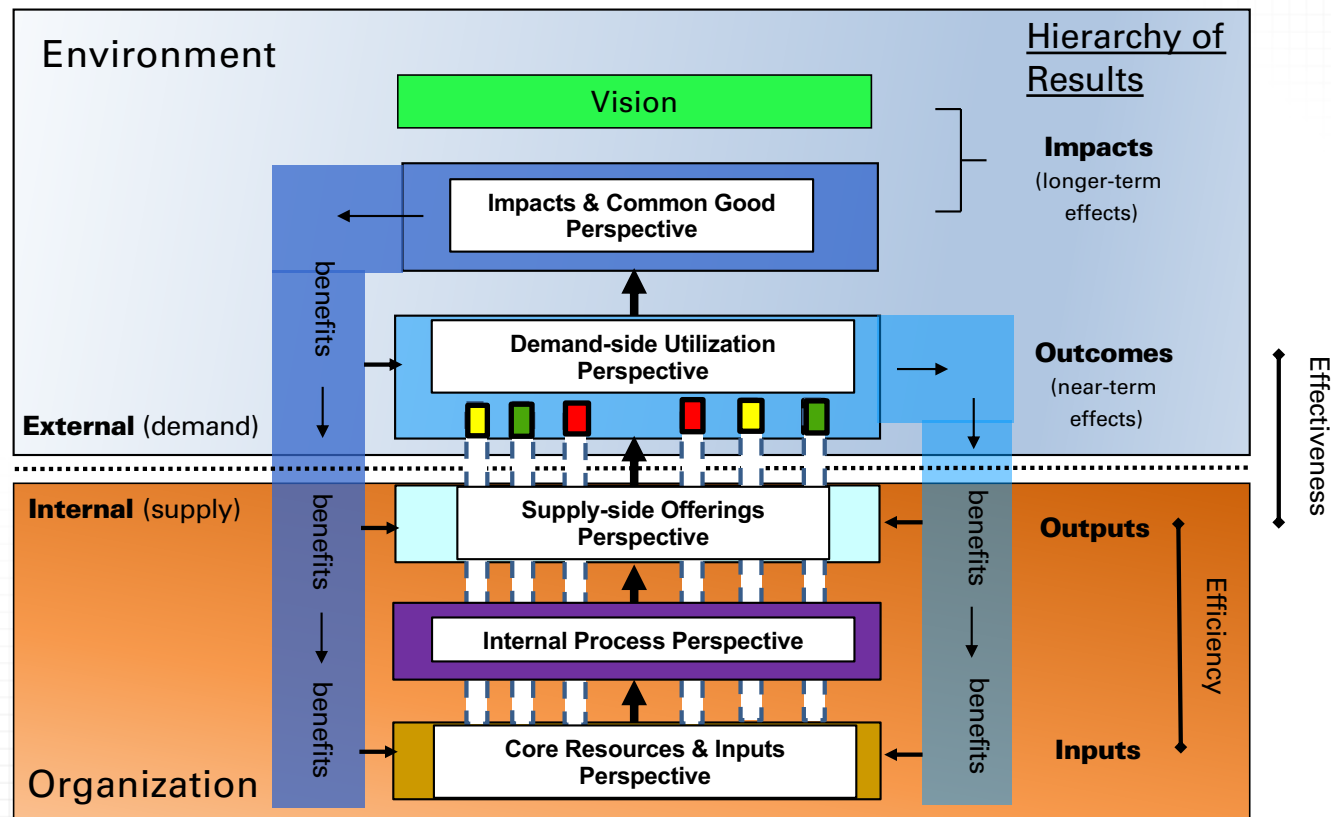


Meaningful outcomes from a portfolio of offerings





Organizational Effectiveness Scorecard





Why manage for meaningful outcomes?

- A more relevant, fine-grained approach, supported by theory & practice
- Equivalent to managing for organizational effectiveness (the highest level of performance)
- Since effectiveness can be verified in the field, it becomes the meta-goal (highest good and capstone to theory)
- Immediate feedback becomes available for decision support for a portfolio of offerings
- Gives increased agency to internal actors & attempts to reduce or eliminate negative effects on the environment



How to manage for meaningful outcomes?

1. Start with... the meta-goal of every organization is to be effective within its environment (while improving the whole)
2. Develop a portfolio of offerings designed to serve the environment (one at a time)
3. Determine the effectiveness of each offering by observing its demand-side response
4. Effectiveness benefits are additive across the portfolio (whereas efficiency benefits are not)



Intentionality may be linear
...but causality in a complex environment
is nonlinear, and intertwined

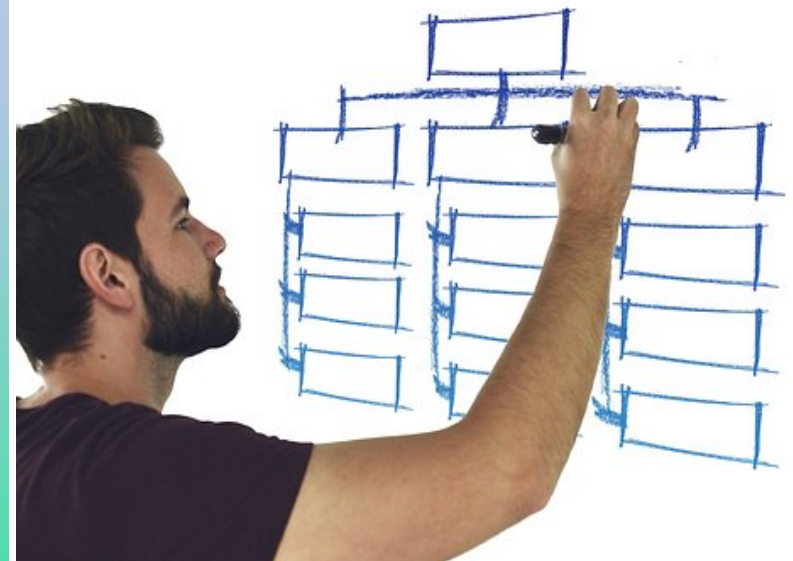




Session Takeaways

Managing for Meaningful Outcomes

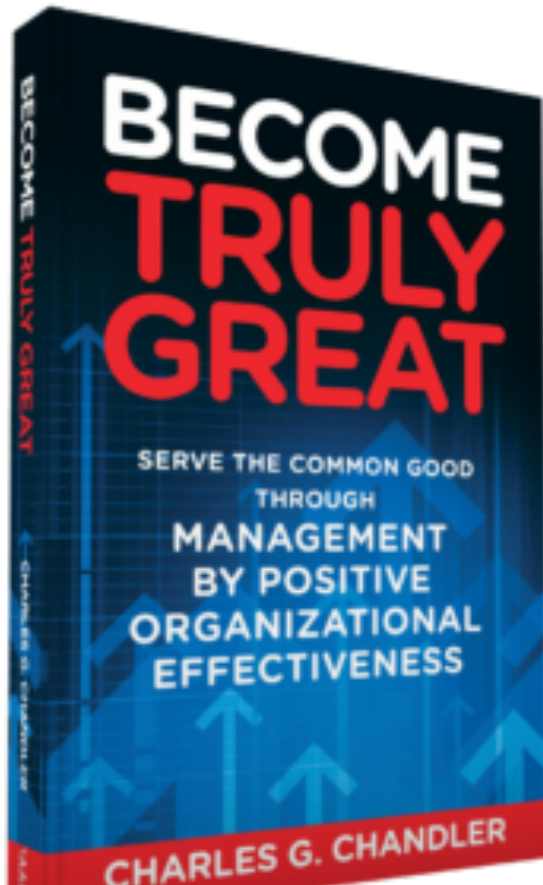
- Meaningful decision support is provided by a 4-level, fine-grained model that enables the verification of effectiveness across a portfolio of offerings
- Effectiveness (equated with meaningful outcomes) is additive across the portfolio due to cumulative benefit exchanges
- The new approach provides a more reliable technology for collective human accomplishment
- Organizations that adopt positive organizational effectiveness as their meta-goal are helping to manage capitalism for the common good





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THE END

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