



Communication

SPP

Revised 07.26

Tom Ross



- What is the communication process?
- How can communication be improved?
- How does perception influence communication?



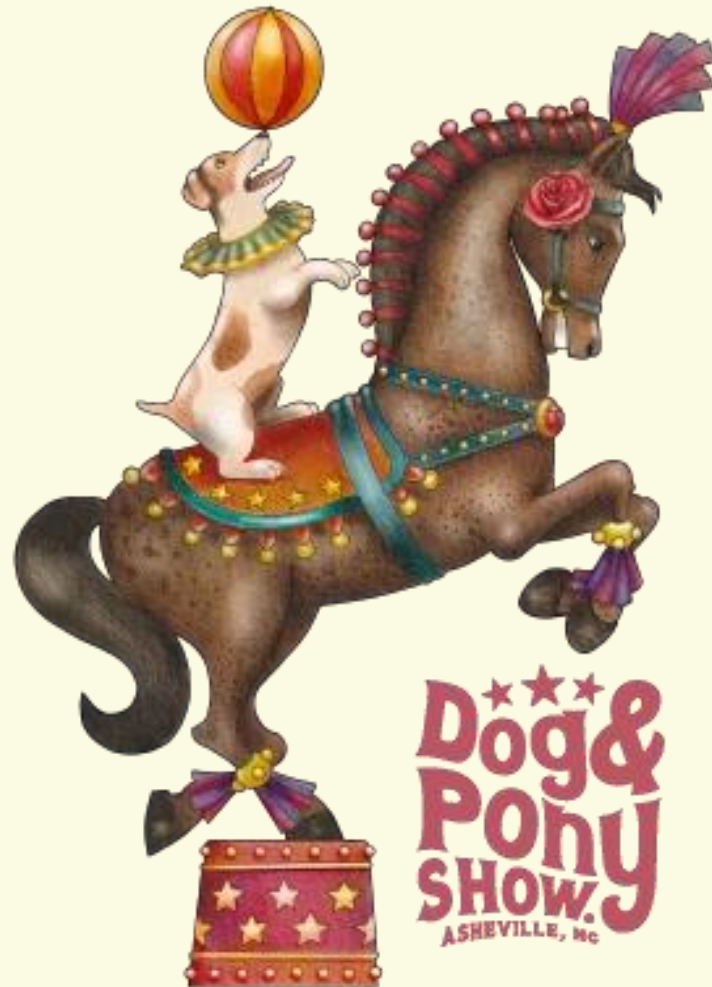
“What if, and I know this sounds kooky, we communicated with the employees.”

BASICS

Too Much?



Real Deal (Sincere/Legit) or Fake



➤ Communication.

- An interpersonal process of sending and receiving symbols with messages attached to them.
- Effective communication **means *GETTING THE MEANING ACROSS**

➤ Key elements of the communication process:

- Sender.
- Message.
- Communication channel.
- Receiver.
- Interpreted meaning.
- Feedback.

COMMUNICATION



WHAT
WE
THINK



WHAT
WE
MEAN

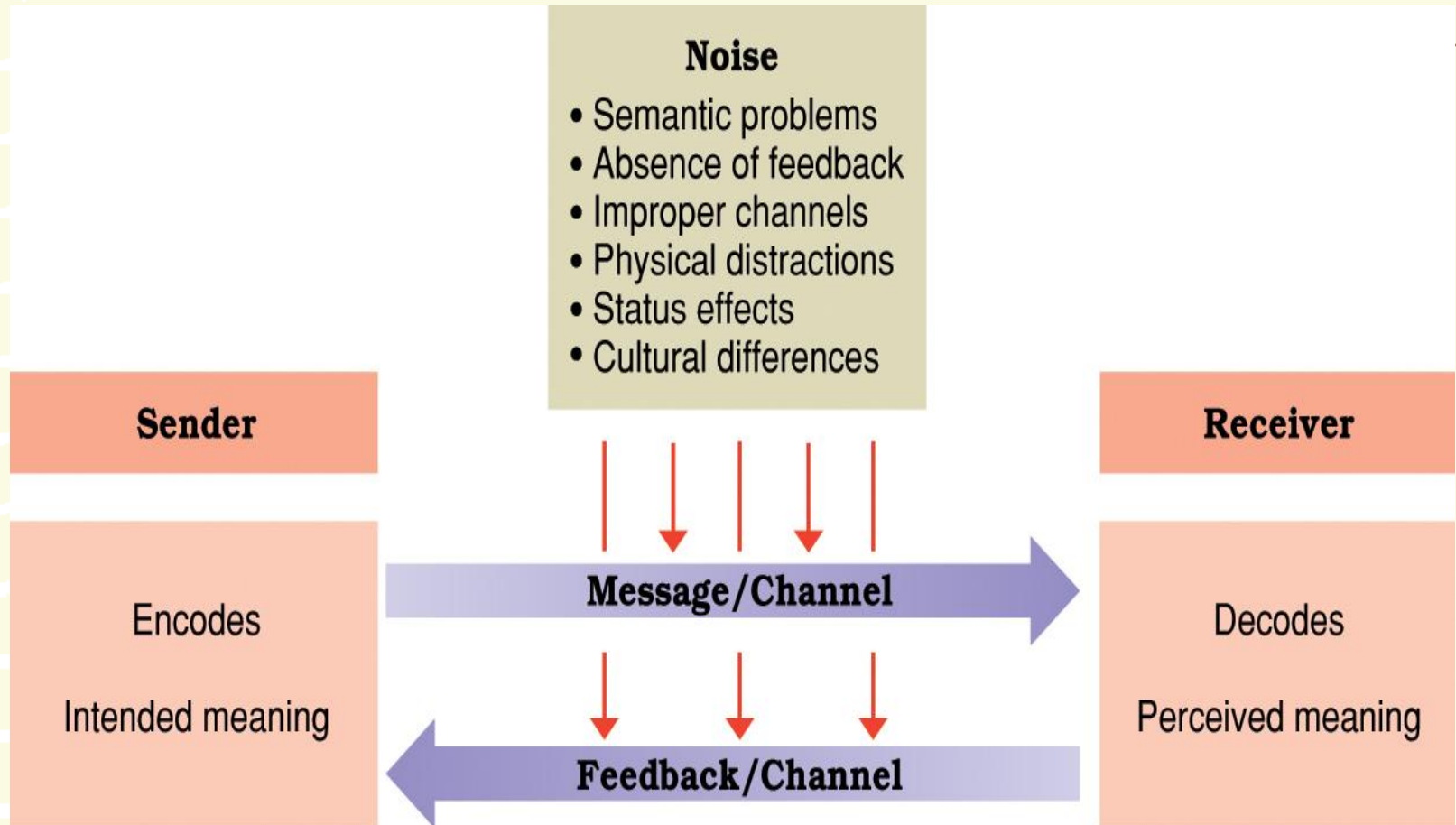


WHAT
WE SAY



WHAT
OTHERS
GET

Encode, Transmit, Decode, Feedback



Encode, Transmit, Decode, Feedback

- Encode = To PREPARE the information
- Transmit = To DELIVER CLEAR information
- Decode = To UNDERSTAND the message

FEEDBACK



➤ Feedback.

- The process of telling others how you feel about something they did or said, or about the situation in general.

➤ Constructive feedback guidelines:

- Give it directly.
- Make it specific.
- Give it when the receiver is willing/able to accept it.
- Make sure it is valid.
- Give it in small doses.

➤ Effective and Efficient communication:

- **Effective** communication

- Occurs when the intended meaning of the sender is identical to the interpreted meaning of the receiver.

- **Efficient** communication

- Occurs at a minimum resource cost.
- Quickly with a minimum of wasted time.
- Potential trade-offs between effectiveness and efficiency must be recognized.

Patterns



Bottom Up



Top Down

➤ Top – Down

- When compliance is IMPERATIVE
- Feedback is NOT wanted
- Orderliness is SIGNIFICANT
- Speed is IMPORTANT

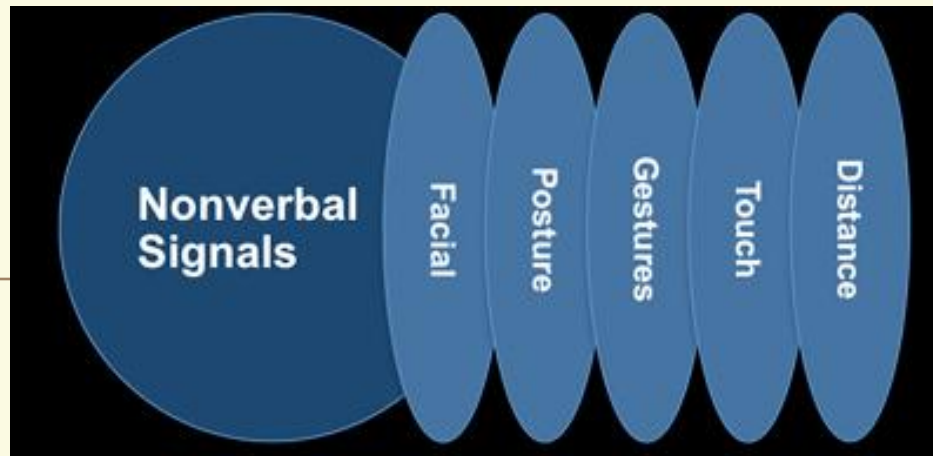
➤ Bottom – Up

➤ Horizontal Communication

Two-Way Communication is ESSENTIAL to Career Development!

➤ Which Channels?

- Choose the channel that works best.
- Written channels work for messages that:
 - Are simple and easy to convey.
 - Require extensive dissemination quickly.
 - Convey formal policy or authoritative directives.
- Spoken channels work best for messages that:
 - Are complex or difficult to convey where immediate feedback is needed.
 - Attempt to create a supportive, even inspirational, climate.



- Failure to recognize nonverbal signals.
 - **Nonverbal** communication takes place through:
Gestures, facial expressions, body posture, & eye contact
 - Use of interpersonal space
 - Para-language:
 - Tone of voice
 - Pitch, inflection, rate of speech
 - Mixed messages occur when a person's words and nonverbal signals communicate different things.

➤ **Physical distractions.**

- Include interruptions from telephone calls, drop-in visitors, a lack of privacy, etc.
- Can interfere with the effectiveness of a communication attempt.
- Can be avoided or at least minimized through proper planning.

Judge scrolled phone for hours during murder trial of child



Deference (defer to you)

Respect of rank?

➤ Status effects.

- Occur when an organization's hierarchy of authority creates a barrier to effective communication.
- Proper respect – but not ROYALTY



Status effects include:

Filtering — the intentional distortion of information to make it appear favorable to the recipient.

Subordinates acting as “yes men.”



ACTIVE LISTENING

- Active listening (GET OFF YOUR PHONE!).
 - The act of intentional listening
 - The process of taking action to help someone say exactly what he or she really means.
- Rules for active listening:
 - Listen for message content.
 - Listen for feelings.
 - Respond to feelings.
 - Note all cues, verbal and nonverbal.
 - Paraphrase and restate.

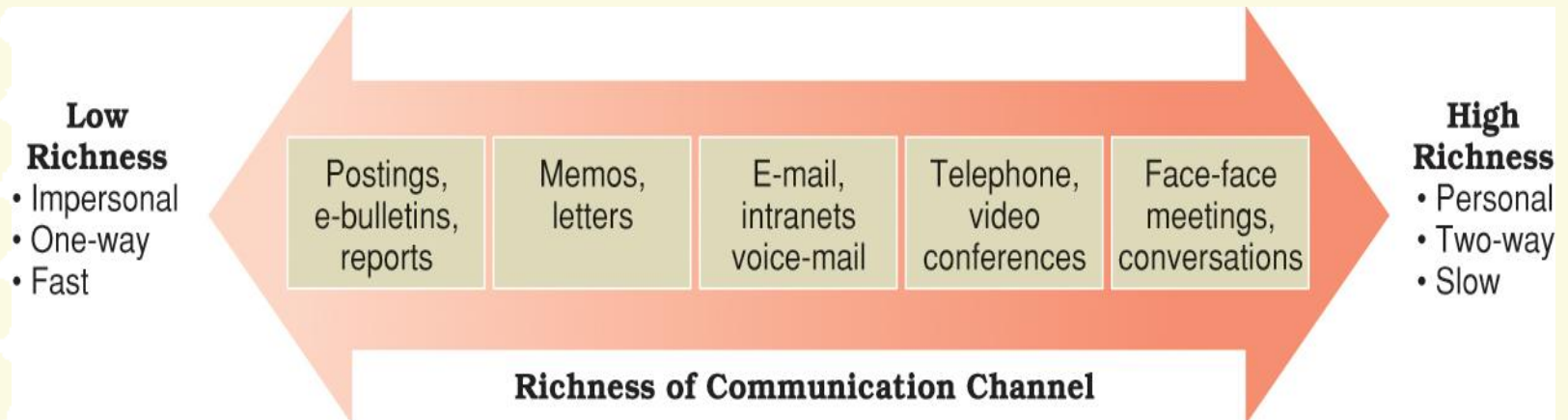
Stay off the phone!

Show that you are listening.

Use your own body language and gestures to convey your attention.

- Nod occasionally.
- Smile and use other facial expressions.
- Note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting.
- Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like, “yes, and uh huh.”

Channel richness and the use of communication media.



Use high bandwidth channels for high coordination needs

- Start new activities and projects
- Solve complex problems
- Perform creative tasks
- Manage emotional situations
- Work with new people

Use low bandwidth channels for low coordination needs

- Notify about changes
- Share updates
- Inform on progress
- Finalize deliverables
- Run recurring tasks

HIGH BANDWIDTH

Face-to-face



Video Conference



Voice Call



E-mail, Audio and video messages



Text Messaging



LOW BANDWIDTH

Grapevine Characteristics

(Informal Leaders & Informal Organizational Communications Network)

- Transmits information very rapidly in all directions
- Relatively accurate, but deletes details and exaggerates key points
- More active in homogeneous groups who easy communication access
- Most active when employees are anxious
- Usually follows a cluster chain pattern

Perception IS.....Reality

➤ Perception.

- The process through which people receive and interpret information from the environment.
- People can perceive the same things or situations differently.
- People behave on the basis of their perceptions.
- A breakdown in communication is an inevitable consequence of our inability to properly **INTERPRET** what is said.

E-MAIL

E-Mail

➤ Technology utilization.

- Information technologies facilitate communication.
- The electronic grapevine speeds messages and information from person to person.
 - Functional if information is accurate and useful.
 - Dysfunctional if information is false, distorted, or based on rumor.
- E-mail privacy.
- Agency policy on personal e-mail.
- Don't assume that e-mail privacy exists at work.
- FOIA
- IT



*"Hi. My name is Barry, and I check my E-mail
two to three hundred times a day."*

Advantages of E-mail

- Messages quickly formed, edited, sent, and stored
- Needs little coordination
- Random information access
- Fewer social status barriers

Problems with E-mail

- Information overload
- Flaming
- Interpreting emotions (Lacks empathy or support)



“Dirty Dozen” E-Mail Tips

1. If you want somebody to do something, make them the only recipient. Otherwise, you have diffusion of responsibility. Give a concrete request/task and a deadline.
2. If you really want somebody to do something, **CC someone powerful. Don't use “blind CC”**
3. Write it, draft it, but DON'T send it when mad.
4. Print them out – mark for follow up.

5. Never leave subject line blank (10 words or less please)

6. Less is more. If the email is too long, or is bad news - make a phone call instead.

7. Don't share secrets – FOIA, Discovery, can be forwarded to who knows?

8. No email should CONTAIN ALL CAPITAL LETTERS. Stop shouting! It's unprofessional and condescending.

9. Don't use emojis-----please 😊

10. Remember the "one '!' per email" rule!!!
Anything more can come across as rude!

11. Don't be cute. Written humor can go wrong on so many levels. It's best to leave it out unless you know the recipient very, very well.

12. If you want to make a demand, change it to a request. Starting an email with "Would you be willing to help me with..." is so much different than "I need you to give me..." or "I want you to stop..., " Ask gently.

Don't Be “That Guy”



Don't Be “That Guy”

- ❑ E-mail works for **ME** !
- ❑ They're lucky I check it all all
- ❑ I check my email only 2 times a day
 - At the beginning of shift
 - Right before I go home
- ❑ Sends all responses on their way out the door
- ❑ “If it's important, they will hunt me down”
- ❑ Keeps people waiting for a response

PLEASE

Use the “Out of Office” feature!

- ❑ Emails and phone calls must be returned
- ❑ Promptly!
- ❑ They are not going away
- ❑ Your boss will have to clean up your mess
- ❑ What do we do when they retire, are off on FMLA, injured? Voice mail too please.

Mind your email signature!

- "I have spoken."
- "Look out for number one, but don't step in number two!"
- "Worm regards."
- "Sent from your deceased grandmother's rotary phone."
- "Onward and Upward."
- "Have a karmic day."
- "Life is short, eat the cookie."
- "From the trenches."
- "Fare thee well."
- "Keep it groovy."
- "Live, laugh, leave me alone."
- "With all due respect and a bit of jest..."
- "Life is short. Smile while you still have teeth!"
- "Rolling away like a tumbleweed in the wind."
- "Sent from my iPhone, speeding down the street &, dodging squirrels!"
- "Till our next professional rendezvous."
- ".Later, skater."
- "Have the day you deserve."
- "Smooth Sailing!"

Real?????

Kind Regards,

Bob

Lt. Robert F. Jones III ID#57768

Watch Commander (Day Shift)

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FBI National Academy Session #232



Slack

- Text
- Group Chats
- Teams
- Zoom (recording?)



MEETINGS

Meetings & Communication

- Meetings are BIG potential time wasters.
- Meetings are a necessary evil; distractions from one's regular work.
- Try to say 'No' to a meeting where you are not absolutely required.
- The agenda should be definite. Every one should receive the agenda and relevant papers well in advance.



GROUND RULES

“Mindful Meetings”

- ✓ Start on time – End on time (60 min?)
- ✓ Agenda (24 hours in advance)
 - ✓ Not enough for an agenda? Cancel the meeting
- ✓ Pre-meetings (build support)
- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Courteous Conversation
- ✓ Encouraging full participation
- ✓ No checking email / texts
- ✓ Round the table once
- ✓ Only 1 war story per meeting

Meetings = Relationship Building

- Communication is key
- Trust
- Go to task force meetings
- Go to County/Regional Chiefs meetings
- Professional
- Business cards
- Dress the part
- Who is in your phone?

Meal Meetings

- Time constraint
 - natural ending
- Out of the office
 - Breakfast meetings
 - Lunch meetings
 - After work for 1 or 2 before going home



ORG. CHARTS

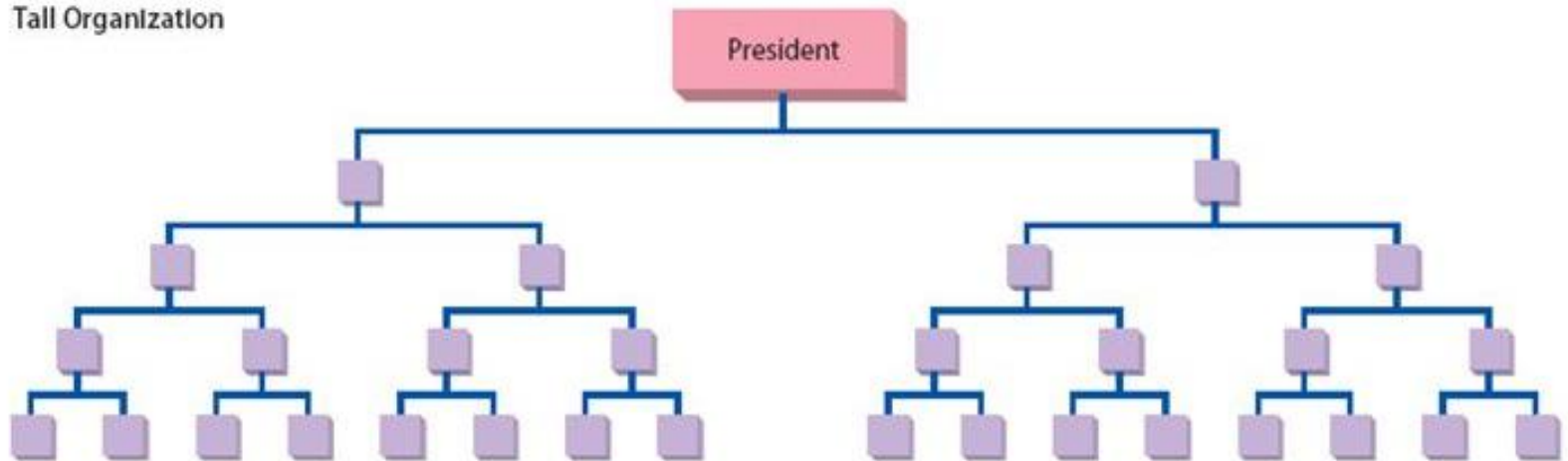
Communication Chain Of Command

□ Pyramids work

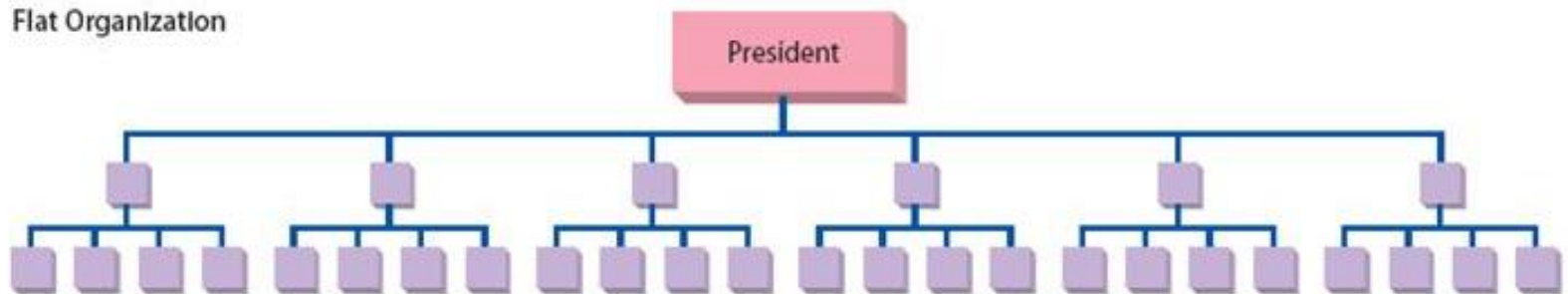


Tall or Flat? Communications?

Tall Organization



Flat Organization



The argument for FLAT

The primary advantage of flattening an organization is to improve the flow of information from those who have it to those who are in a position to act on it.

In general, reducing the number of management layers not only speeds up the flow of information from initial acquirer to ultimate user (since it has fewer stops to make along the way) but can also increase its accuracy since there are fewer opportunities for distortion (either inadvertent or deliberate).

Argument against flat – for hierarchy

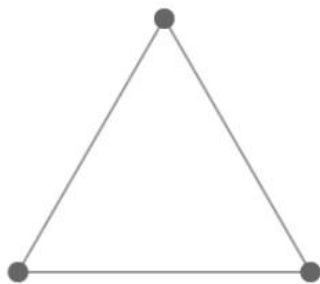
If a layer of management is removed, some way will have to be found to compensate for the lack of oversight at that level. (span of control)

Corporations can recruit outsiders to become high-level managers, whereas law enforcement must “grow” their own.

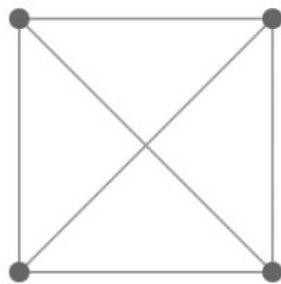
In the corporate world, lateral transfers are used to broaden an executive’s experience, and formal education (MBAs) has been used to deal with this problem

Poor Organizational Structure = Poor Communications

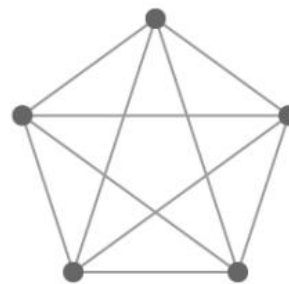
1. Unclear roles & responsibilities = things do not get done – *if everyone is responsible, then nobody is*
2. **Duplication** many people all doing the same things = wasted time
3. **Gaps** where seams should be tight = everyone thinks someone else was bringing the beer to the party



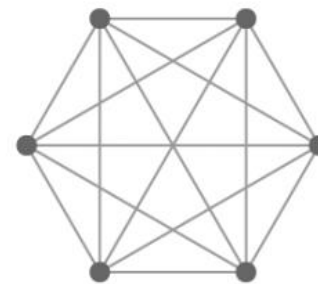
3 people, 3 lines



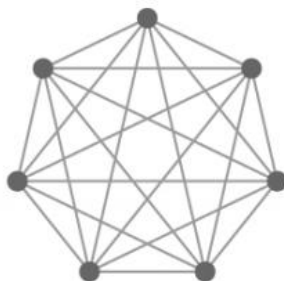
4 people, 6 lines



5 people, 10 lines



6 people, 15 lines



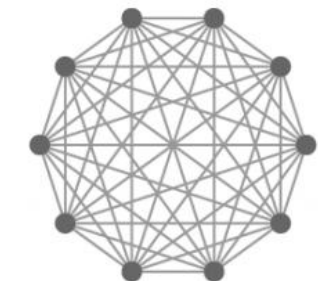
7 people, 21 lines



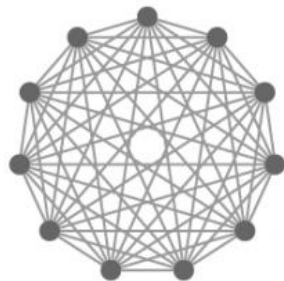
8 people, 28 lines



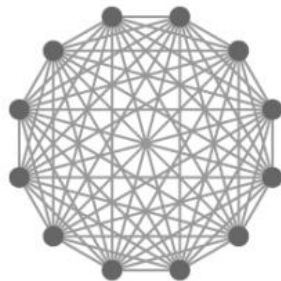
9 people, 36 lines



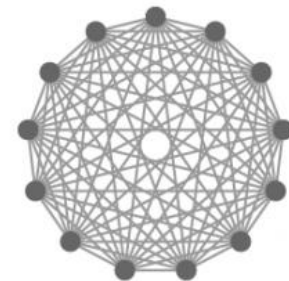
10 people, 45 lines



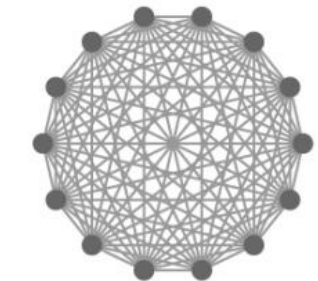
11 people, 55 lines



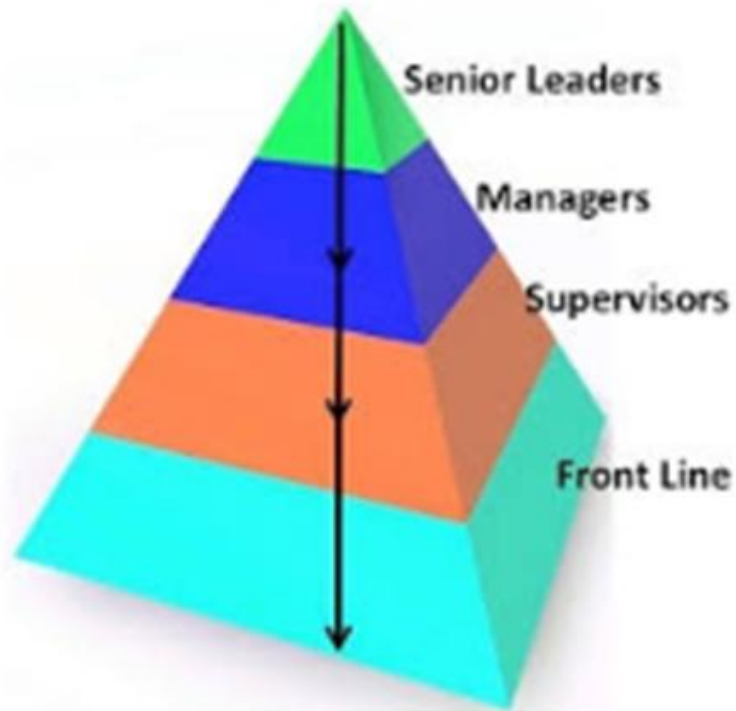
12 people, 66 lines



13 people, 78 lines



14 people, 91 lines



**The traditional structure
is often presented as a
pyramid.**

Chain of Command

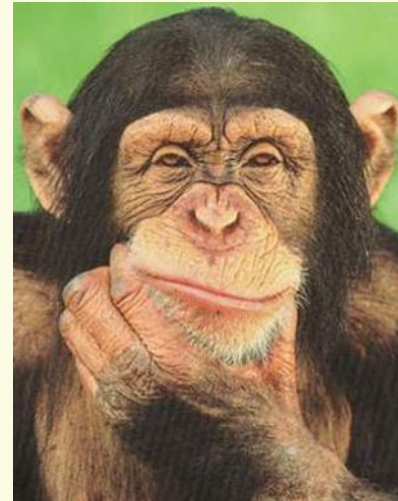
Span of Control

Unity of Command



150

- “Dunbar’s Number” (Oxford University)
 - 1993 by British anthropologist Dr. Robin Dunbar
- The number in your social network
 - Christmas card list
 - Hunter-gatherer groups
- Military “company” level
- Amish communities,
- 18th century British Villages
- Up on a chair – “We can’t hear you!”
- “Tipping Point” book, Gore-Tex, Weather-tech, lots of small buildings, 150 workers, parking , etc..



Northwestern University

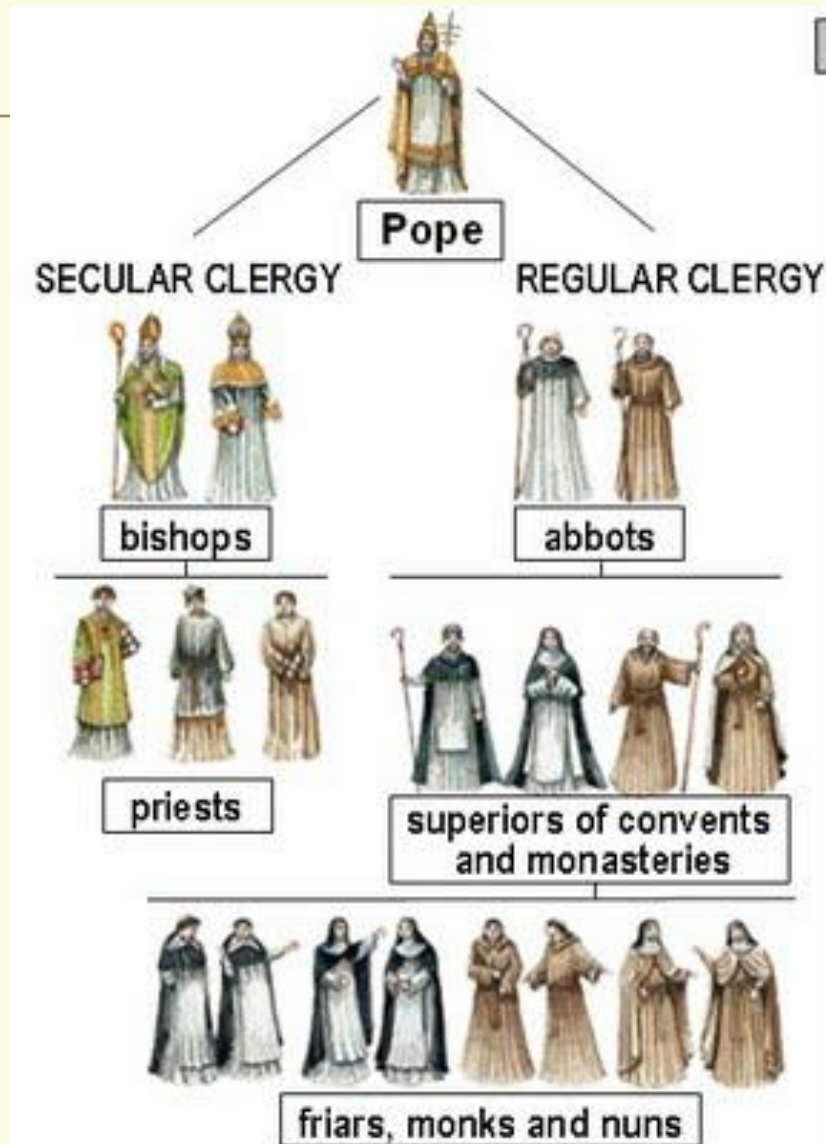
Professor of Psychological Anthropology

Dr. Helen B. Schwartzman PhD

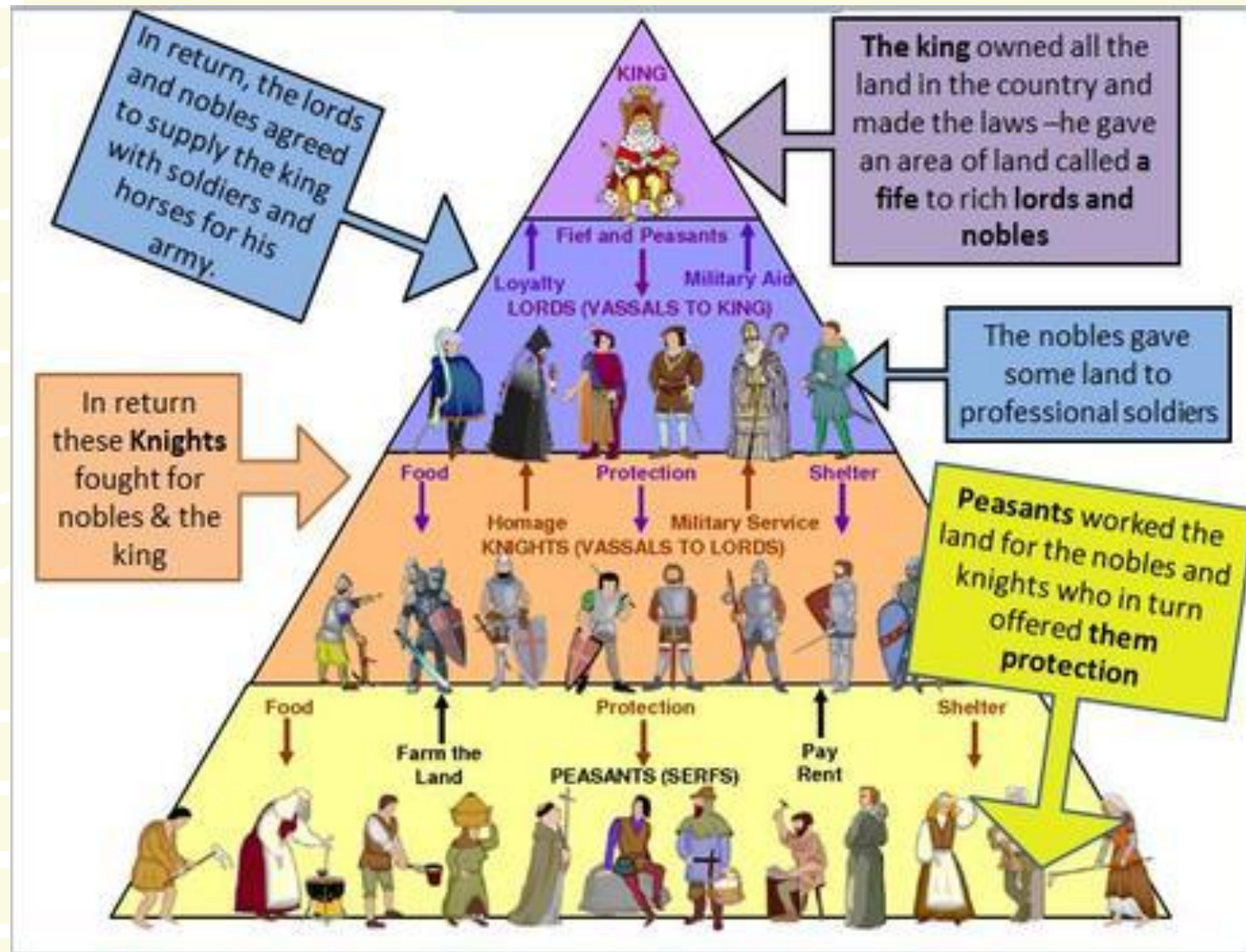
- It's simple human nature.
- Some people want to lead, and most people will voluntarily follow.
- Hierarchies in human groups are inevitable.
- Researchers have found **no** group where all members have equal status.
- When they observe people in families, meetings, clubs, or other organizations – the pecking order always emerges in work or play.



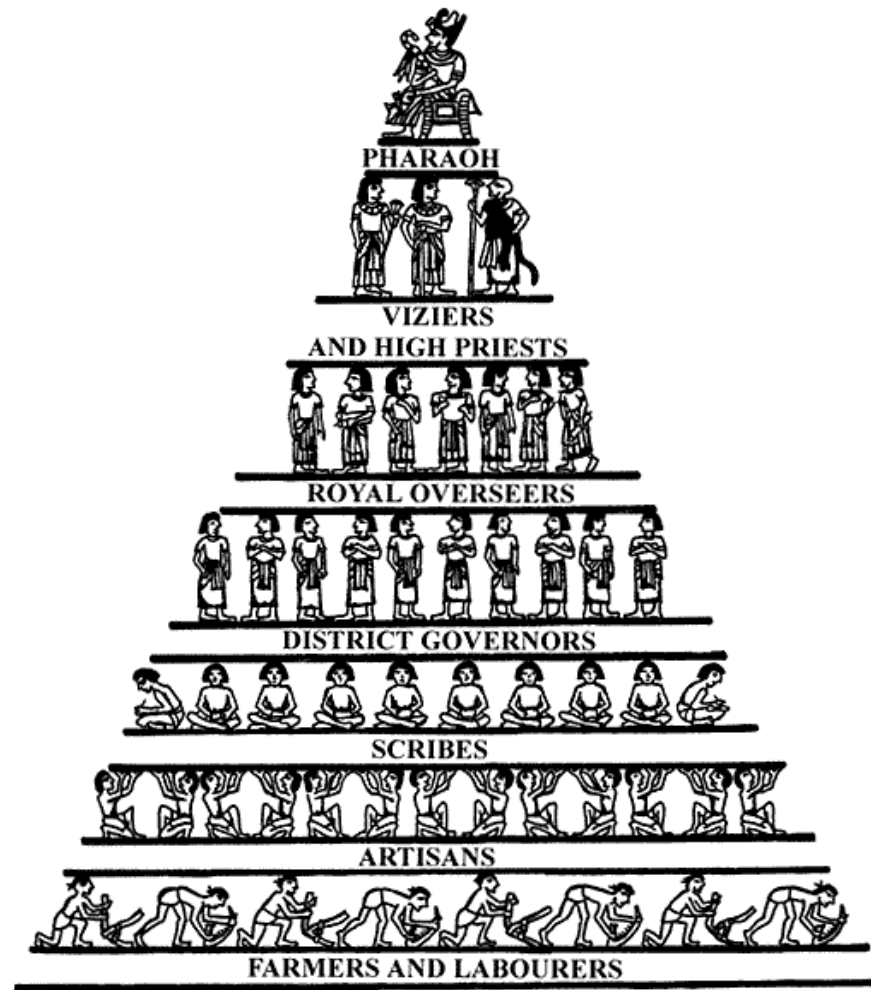
The Catholic Church



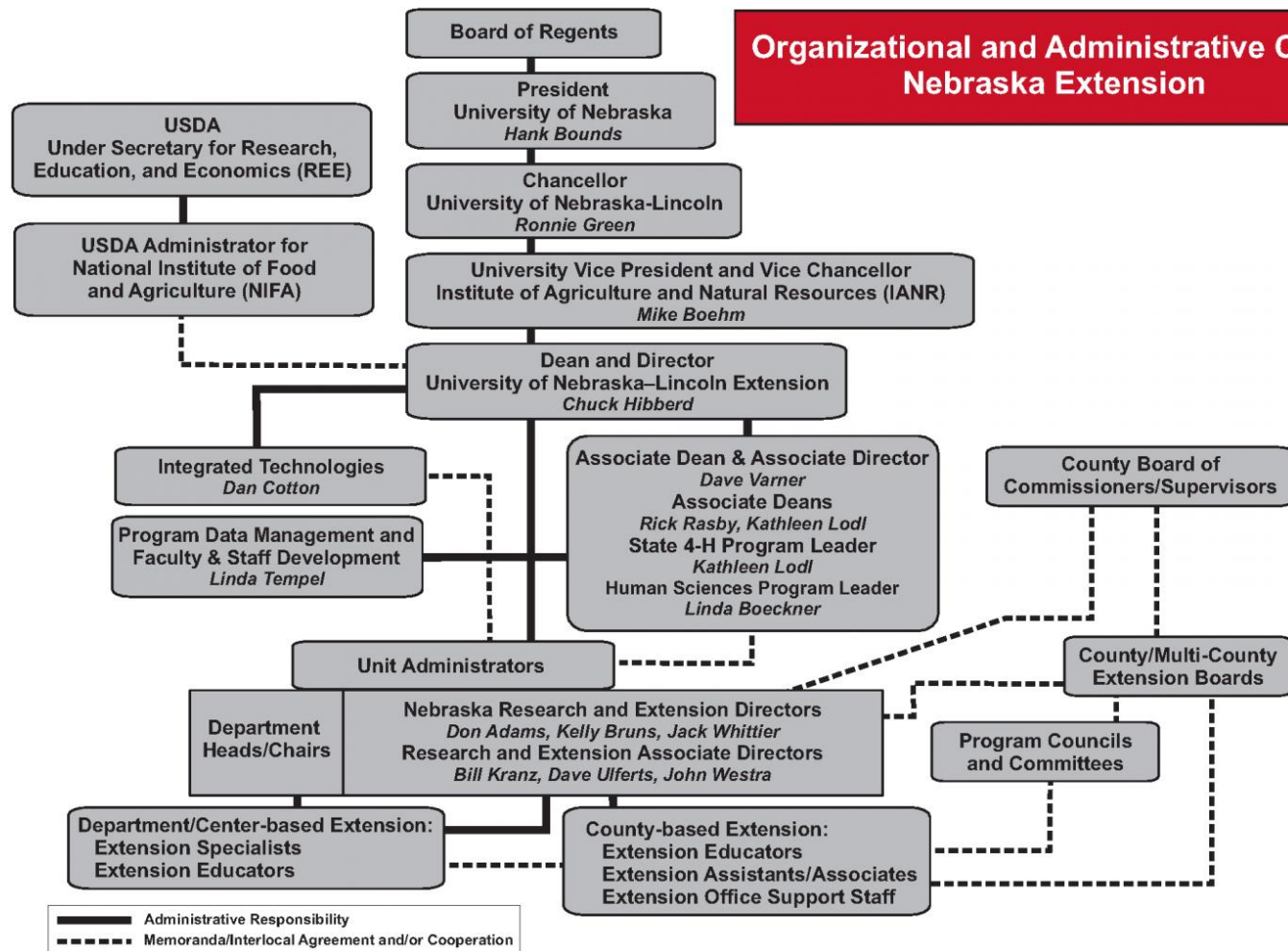
Feudal Kings



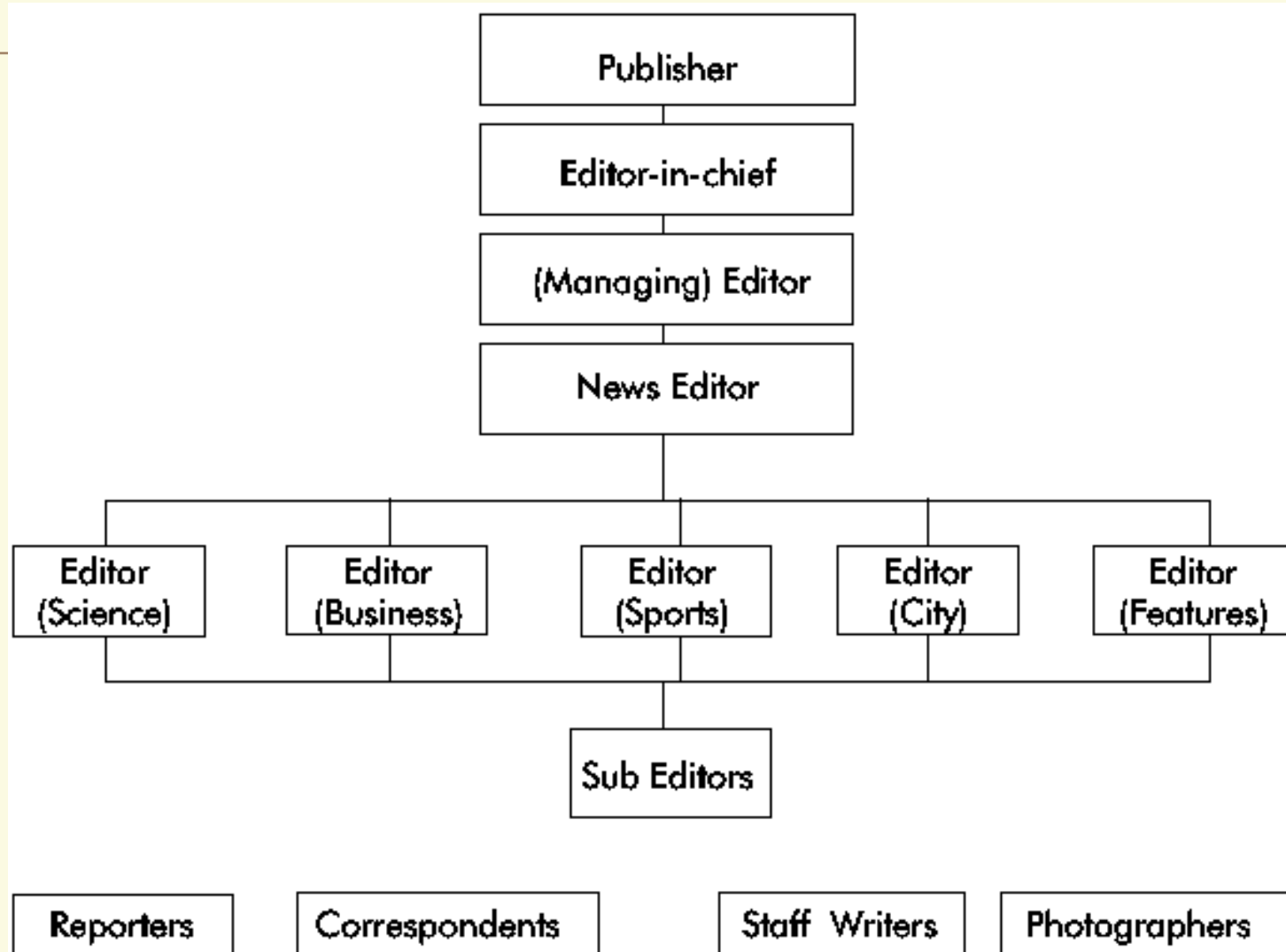
Ancient Egypt



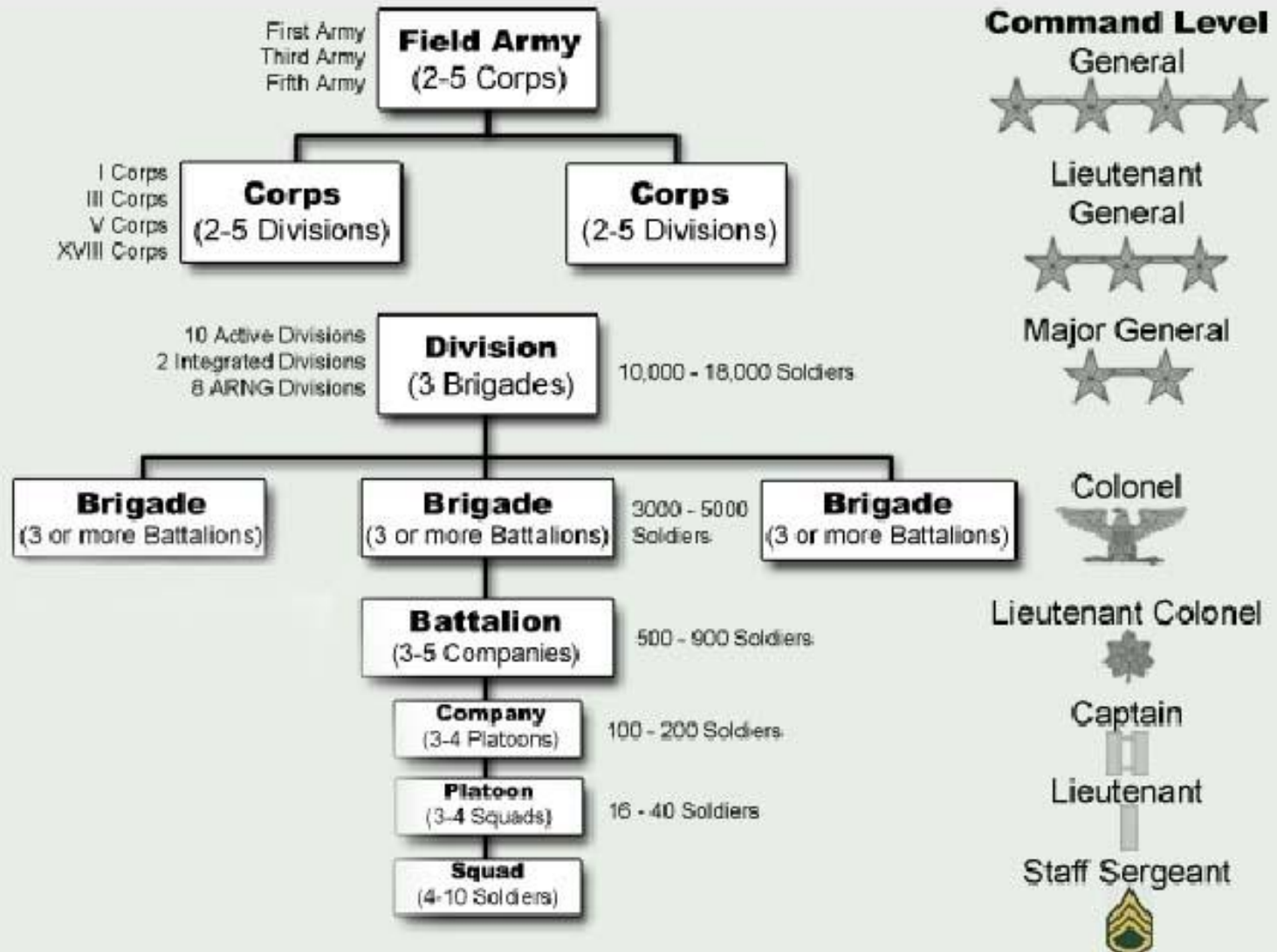
University



Newspapers

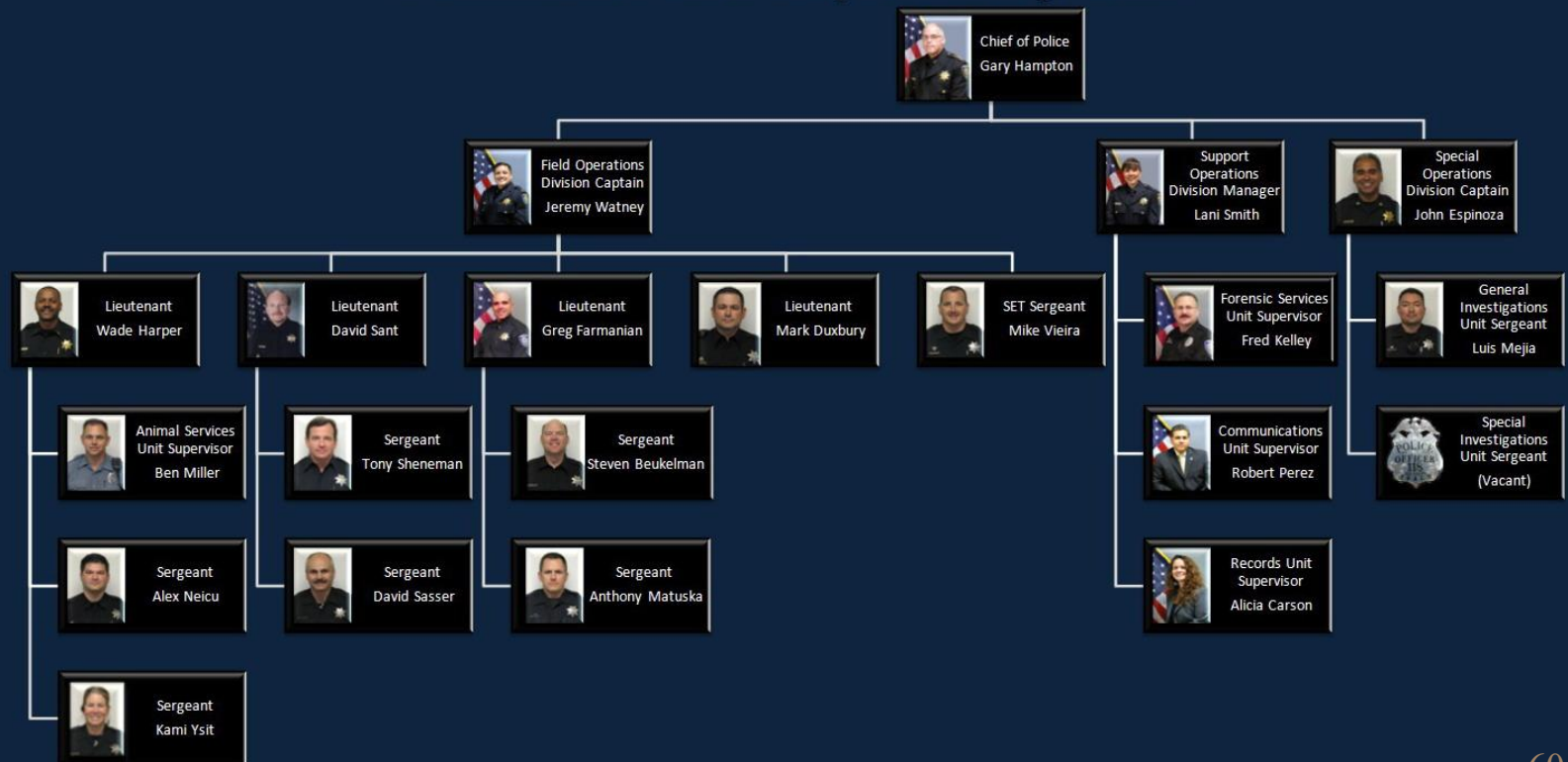


US Army



Police Department

TRACY POLICE DEPARTMENT Command and Supervisory Staff

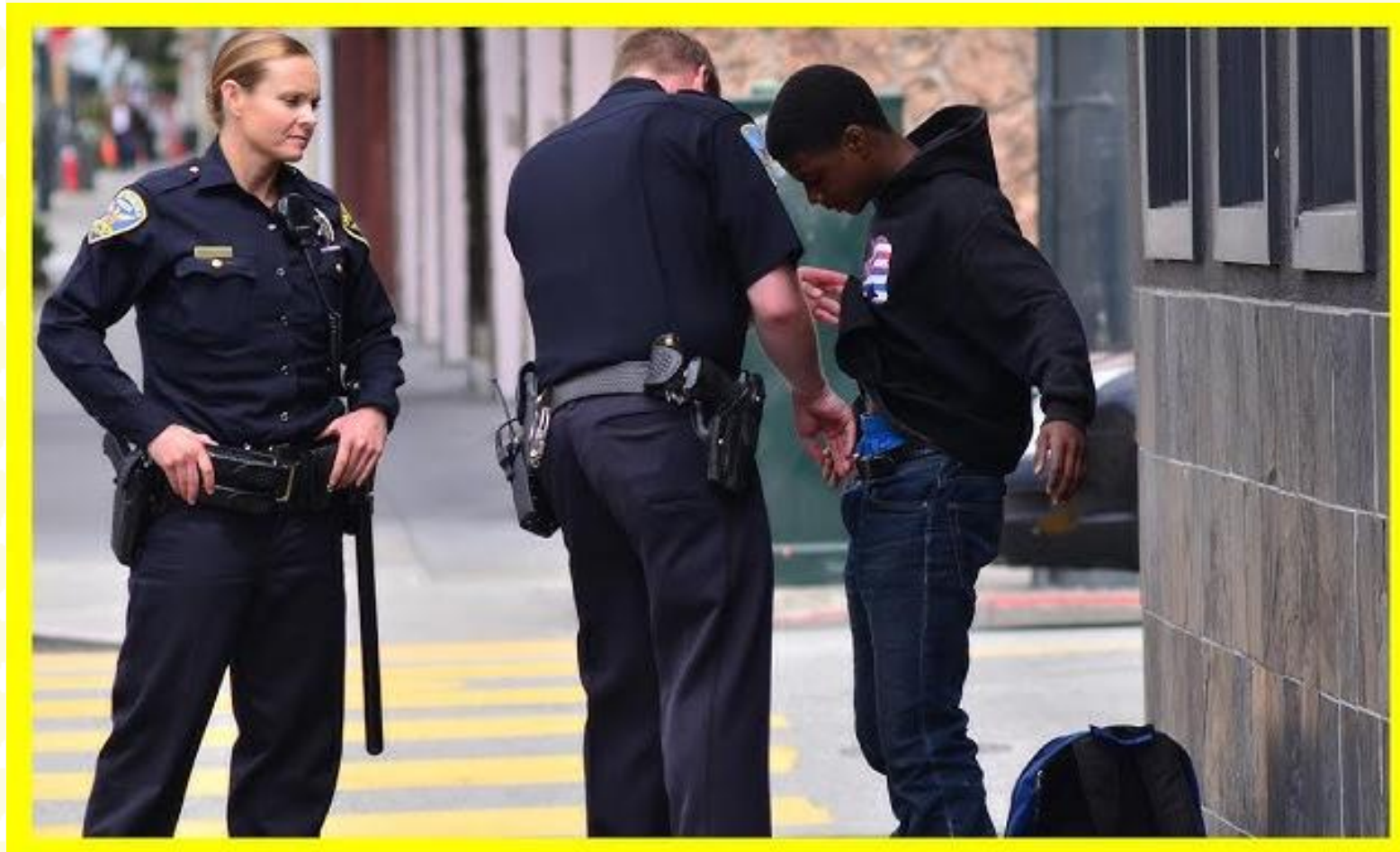


OPERATIONAL

Contact & Cover

- A police tactic where two officers work together to deal with a suspect or suspects:
 - Contact Officer - Engages with the suspect, conducts interviews and searches, and records information
 - Cover Officer - Protects the contact officer by observing the suspect and surroundings for threats
 - (BACK-UP / SECONDARY / PARTNER)

Communication is KEY



CONTACT OFFICER OVERRIDE

Assessment and appeal; Use relationship and warning language

- Listen for changes in partner's tone of voice.
- Develop key words to let partner know of a control problem.
 - "It isn't worth your job"
 - "This isn't right"
 - "Don't do this to me." (Re: partner responsibility to act)
- Offer to take over this contact.
- Call your partner over to your location.
- Have partner take a couple of deep breaths
- Attempt to reason with partner
- Provide context to situation
- Reason cost & benefits of improper action
- Threaten to call the supervisor to the scene

Act – Prevent unjustified physical conflict; save officer's career

- Call a supervisor to the scene
- Physically place yourself between your partner and the subject.
- Call for back up
- Coordinate back up to de-escalate situation
- Physically separate your partner and subject.
- Physically move subject away from your partner.
- Physically prevent your partner from striking the subject.

San Diego / LAPD Style

- The roles of each officer should be determined early in the encounter and should not be blurred. Both officers should maintain effective communication, monitor their positioning, and maintain proper distancing.
- “Fluid” – you CAN (should) switch roles if there is a language issue, personality, gender, prior history (rapport)
- STAY IN YOUR LANE!



PIO

Press Release / Statement

1. Write a good headline

Reporters get dozens of emails daily. To make your press release stand out from the crowd, you need a catchy but informative headline. Keep your headline to less than six words—you can always add a subhead—and make sure it contains the most important piece of information.

Center and bold the headline. Make it about 20 points. If adding a subhead, put it in italics (and not bold) and make it about 16 or 17 points.

2. Start off right

Begin the press release with the Date, (time), city and state. Start off with that information and then add a dash—from there you can go right into the release.

Tuesday, June 8, 2025 (8:45am) Joliet Illinois -

3. Don't "bury the lead"

Make sure the main point and all the key information are included in that first paragraph.

4. Be factual - Remember the Five Ws

Who, what, when, where, why and how.

5. Use the right style

Write a press release as a news story. Keep sentences short and simple. Don't use police jargon.

6. Include a quote

Reporters like quotes, so include one. Whether it's from the Mayor or the Chief, make sure the quote sounds real and not canned. Don't make them too long — if it has four long sentences in it, edit it down.

7. Include contact information

You need to make it easy for the reporter to contact you for more information or if he or she has additional questions. Be sure to include your contact name, email, and phone number.

8. Make sure it's timely

Old newsisn't NEWS! If you wait too long, others will fill the void.

9. Fit it all on one page.

Every press release should fit on an 8½-by-11 sheet of paper. Better yet, don't fill the sheet. This is not a place for an essay. Write short paragraphs—four lines maximum. Use lots of white space.

10. End on the right note

Press releases traditionally end with three ###s. It signifies to the reporter that the release has come to an end.

Press Conference Clips

Boulder Colorado Whole Foods

03/22/21

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgpHxtCOEwg>

49:30

Not great, afraid of the microphone

1:00:45 wrap up bad

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrX-lt_b8UM

(* Prep for first 4 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yr6owZU3ovw>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b9S_5hTztHw

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGwO-SyX56M>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9S8BA1XD5ew>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6g7d29U9hA0>

Press Conference

1. Prepare for the weather

Have a plan B if the weather doesn't look good. If you are planning to have it outdoors, rain or strong winds can cause a lot of problems, not only for your set-up and backdrop, but for your Chief's hair, and clothing.

2. Pick the right time

Thank you for being here. 5 minutes, 2 minute warning, cell phone ringers off, police radio off, ready-ready-ready – can everybody hear/see me ok?

Mic. Check 1,2,3 ok, starting in 30 seconds (for those going live)

Reporters typically get their assignments for the day at a morning production meeting and become available around 10 a.m. Typically, the ideal times for press conferences are Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

3. **Have a good backdrop**

A professional backdrop big enough so a tight shot of the speaker will show the backdrop images clearly, including a “step and repeat” pattern, which means the logo and other visual images are stacked like stairs across the banner so that no matter at what angle the photo or video is captured, multiple visuals are included in the shot.

Police cars, the crime scene, make sure you know what will be in the camera frame. Beware of background noise.



4. **Introduce and spell all titles & names**

Have a paper sheet to hand out and/or post on twitter/facebook

5. **Script the speakers and the event**

All speakers should be prepared with talking points.

Questions only AFTER everyone has spoken

6. **Take photographs**

You don't want to look back a few weeks after the event and realize you don't have any photos from the event. You will also need photos to send to local media, especially newspapers, TV and online journalists.

7. **Capture B-roll of the event** (live stream on youtube or facebook?)

While photos are great, video is even better. B-roll is often requested by TV media when they want to report on a story but need more video content so they can read their script while the video plays on the screen. 73

8. **Press kits.**

Prepare a press kit that includes fact sheets, bios and other background information to distribute to journalists. Make still photos, booking photos & video available to the press. (manilla envelope, email, up on site)

9. **The logistics.**

Before reporters arrive, set the microphone volume and height, check the PowerPoint and its remote control, new fresh batteries. Prepare any water bottles, and review any other details. Provide for gang box, microphone stand. Check 2 X

10. **Comfort**

Safe area, food (restaurants), bathrooms, and a “play pen” press area.