




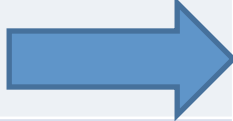
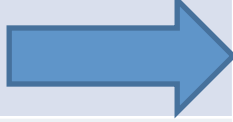
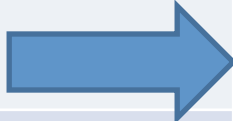

Gaining Support of Middle Managers for Change

Building Organizational Will

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Middle Managers Play an Important Role in Reform Efforts

Moving from public organizations that are:		To ones that are more:
Oriented to the hierarchy		Attentive to public sentiment
Input focused		Results driven
Bureaucratic		Client-focused; agile, flexible
Fragmented		Interdependent
Expert-driven and individualistic decision making		Collaborative, team-based and partnership-oriented

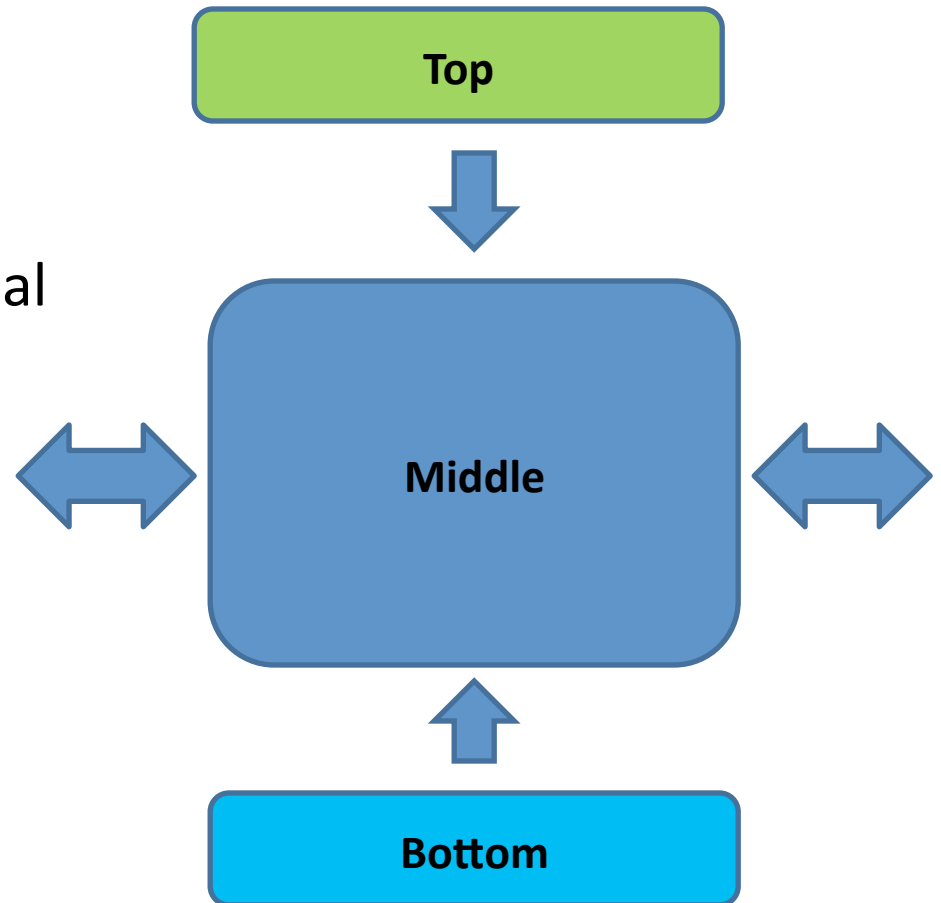
Learning Objectives

- **Discuss the role of public-sector middle managers in reform**
- **Explain the Empowerment-Inclusion matrix and how it helps understand types of middle-manager behavior**
- **Role play ways that middle managers and senior managers can work together for positive reform change**

Who are Middle Managers?

Research literature suggests that middle managers are:

- The center of the organization with pressures from the top and bottom.
- Rich repositories of organizational memory and expertise, the ins and outs of formal and informal organizational rules
- The grease in the wheels of an organization
- Gatekeepers or 'boundary spanners' between the internal and external organizational environments.



Tops, Middles, Bottom Model*

Tops (Shapers)

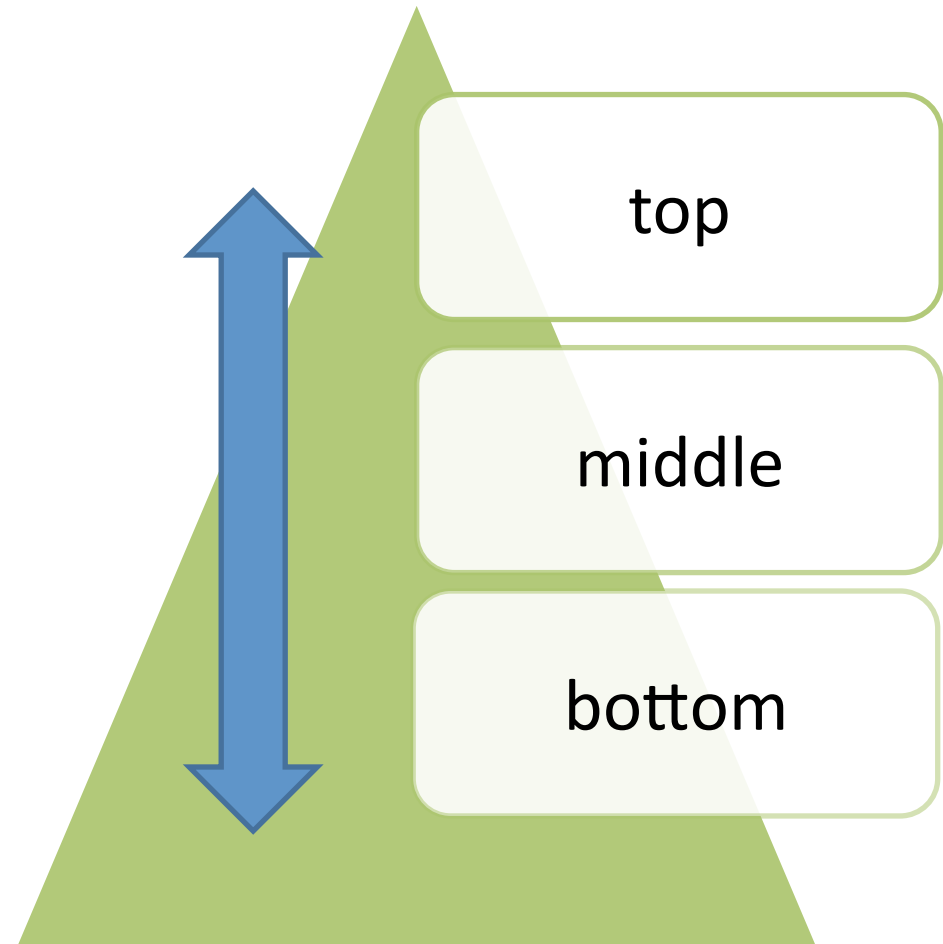
Feel burdened by unmanageable, fast-moving complexity and heavy responsibility for the system.

Middles (stuck)





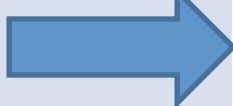
Feel torn between often conflicting needs – the priorities of those above them and those below them.

Bottoms (neglected)

Feel isolated, uninformed, unseen, uncared for by insensitive higher-ups.



What is the middle managers role in the bureaucratic, top-down organization vs. the networked, agile, flexible organization?

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What do you think?

- Based on your experience, what has been the role of middle managers in the reform process?
- Middle managers are sometimes the strongest internal opponents to change and sometimes referred to as a “LAYER OF CLAY” in the organization. What are the most common reasons for their resistance to change?

Middle Management Inclusion and Empowerment in the Reform Process

Empowerment	<i>Active</i>	I. Empowered & Committed, Part of Coalition	II. Resistant & Bureaucratic
	<i>Passive</i>	III. Compliant, No initiative	IV. Apathetic
		<i>Included</i>	<i>Excluded</i>

Inclusion in Strategy

Adapted from F.R. Wesley (1990)

Tapping into a Valuable Resource



What can be done to overcome resistance from middle managers?

How does one gain the support of middle managers?

The Role of Communication

- **Information sharing**
- **Participation**
- **Vision and motivation**
- **Social support**
- **Evaluation and feedback**

Lewis , L.K. and Seibold, D.R. (1998)

Role Plays

You are a senior leader and one of the few leaders who are championing a reform. You are attempting to improve organization will and win over middle managers to support the reform. Show us how you might convince these types of middle managers:

Budget transparency initiative	Senior Leader	Resistant Middle Manager
Digitization initiative for census data	Senior Leader	Apathetic Middle Manager
Internal HR reform - flex work schedule	Senior Leader	Compliant Middle Manager with No Initiative

More Approaches to Consider....

- **Use Appreciative Inquiry (Barge)**
- **Engage in vision and strategic intent, and foster a sense of inclusion (Westley)**
- **Empower by providing support (Malinga)**
- **Change mindset through learning and joint inquiry (Forester)**
- **Employ dialogue and collaboration (Deetz)**
- **Build internal coalition through negotiation (Forester)**

Summary

- **Securing organizational will requires gaining the support of middle managers.**
- **Middle managers drive the reform process both internally and externally.**
- **Communication techniques are available to build the trust and support of middle managers in a change environment.**