



# Gaining Support of Middle Managers for Change

## Building Organizational Will

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# Learning Objectives

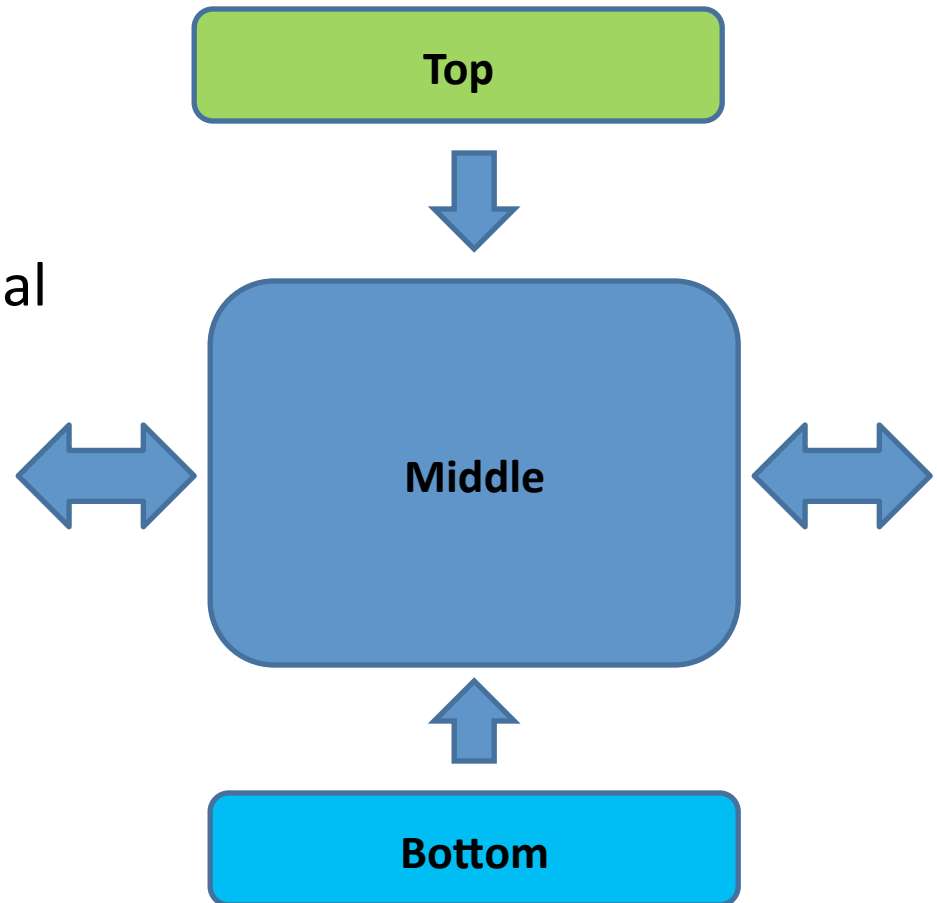
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- **Discuss the role of public-sector middle managers in reform**
- **Explain the Empowerment-Inclusion matrix and how it helps understand types of middle-manager behavior**
- **Role play ways that middle managers and senior managers can work together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

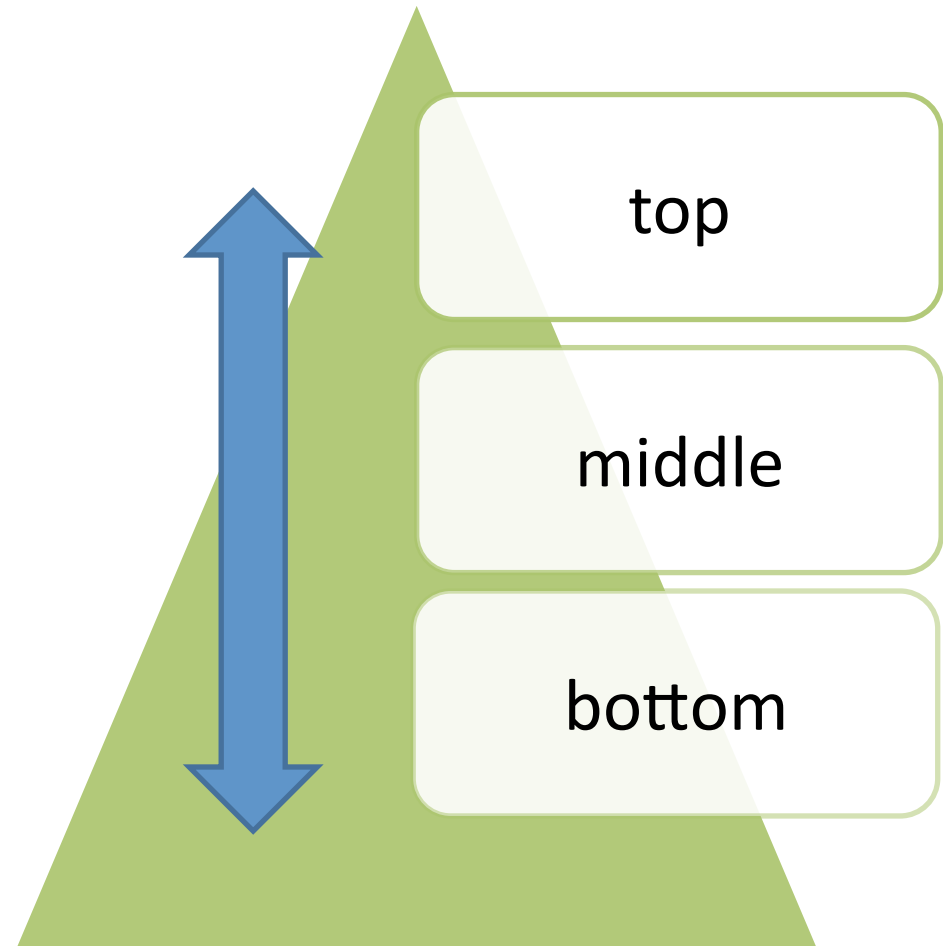
Feel burdened by unmanageable, fast-moving complexity and heavy responsibility for the system.

## **Middles (stuck)**


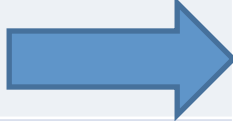
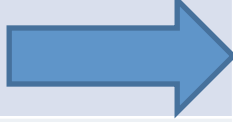
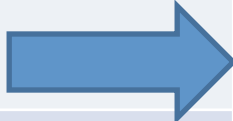

Feel torn between often conflicting needs – the priorities of those above them and those below them.

## **Bottoms (neglected)**

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



# What is the middle manager's role in the bureaucratic, top-down organization vs. the networked, agile, flexible organization?

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

# What do you think?

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- 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 is the layer of clay? What might be the reason for middle managers’ resistance to change?

# Middle Management Inclusion and Empowerment in the Reform Process

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

*Empowerment*

*Included* *Excluded*

**Inclusion in Strategy**

Adapted from F.R. Wesley (1990)

# Tapping into a Valuable Resource



What might you do to overcome resistance of middle managers?

How might you gain the support of middle managers?



# Sources of Power

Sources of Positional Power	Provided by the Organization
Formal authority	Position in hierarchy & prescribed responsibilities
Relevance	Relationship between task & organizational objective
Centrality	Position in key networks
Autonomy	Amount of discretion in a position
Visibility	Degree to which performance can be seen by others
Sources of Personal Power	Developed by the individual
Expertise	Relevant knowledge & skills
Track Record	Relevant experience
Attractiveness	Attributes that others find appealing & identify with
Effort	Expenditure of time and energy

# Influence Tactics

Rational persuasion	Using logical arguments and factual evidence
Inspirational appeals	Making a request or proposal that arouses the person's enthusiasm
Consultation	Seeking suggestions and help to support idea, build collaboration
Ingratiation	Using praise and flattery and friendly helpful behavior
Personal appeals	Appealing to friends of loyalty or friendship
Exchange	Exchanging favors, sharing benefits, establishing reciprocity
Coalition tactics	Seeking the aid and support of others to persuade
Legitimizing tactics	Claiming authority or consistency with organizational policy
Pressure	Demanding, threatening, persistence

# Rank Order of Tactics

Tactic	Downward	Lateral	Upward
Consultation	1	1	2
Rational	2	2	1
Inspirational	3	3	3
Ingratiating	4	4	5
Coalition	5	5	4
Pressure	6	7	7
Upward appeal	7	6	6
Exchange	8	8	8

## More Approaches to Consider....

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- **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)**

# Role Plays

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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 your middle managers in these scenarios:

1. Budget transparency initiative

2. Digitization initiative for census data

3. Internal HR reform—flex work schedule

# Summary

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- **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.**