



Strategic
Human Resource
Management

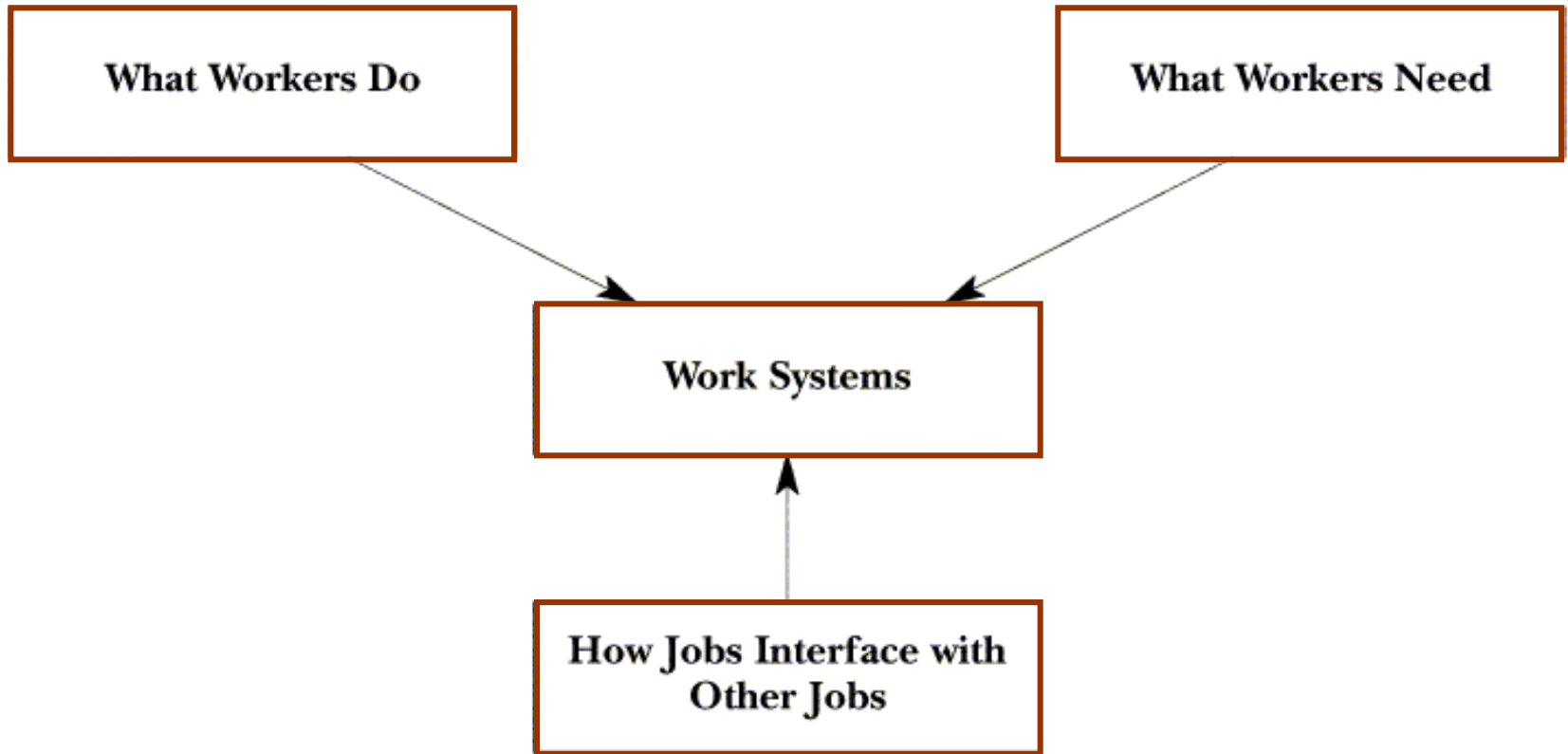
JEFFREY A. MELLO

CHAPTER 6

DESIGN AND REDESIGN OF WORK SYSTEMS

Design of Work Systems

EXHIBIT 6-1: A MODEL FOR THE DESIGN OF WORK SYSTEMS



Design of Work Systems

- Job Specialization
 - Creates jobs with very narrow task (activity) assignments.
 - Resulted in high efficiency, quickly achieved job competency, low training costs, but also created monotonous jobs.
- Job Enlargement
 - An increase in task variety in an attempt to relieve boredom.
- Job Rotation
 - Employees are moved across different specialized positions.

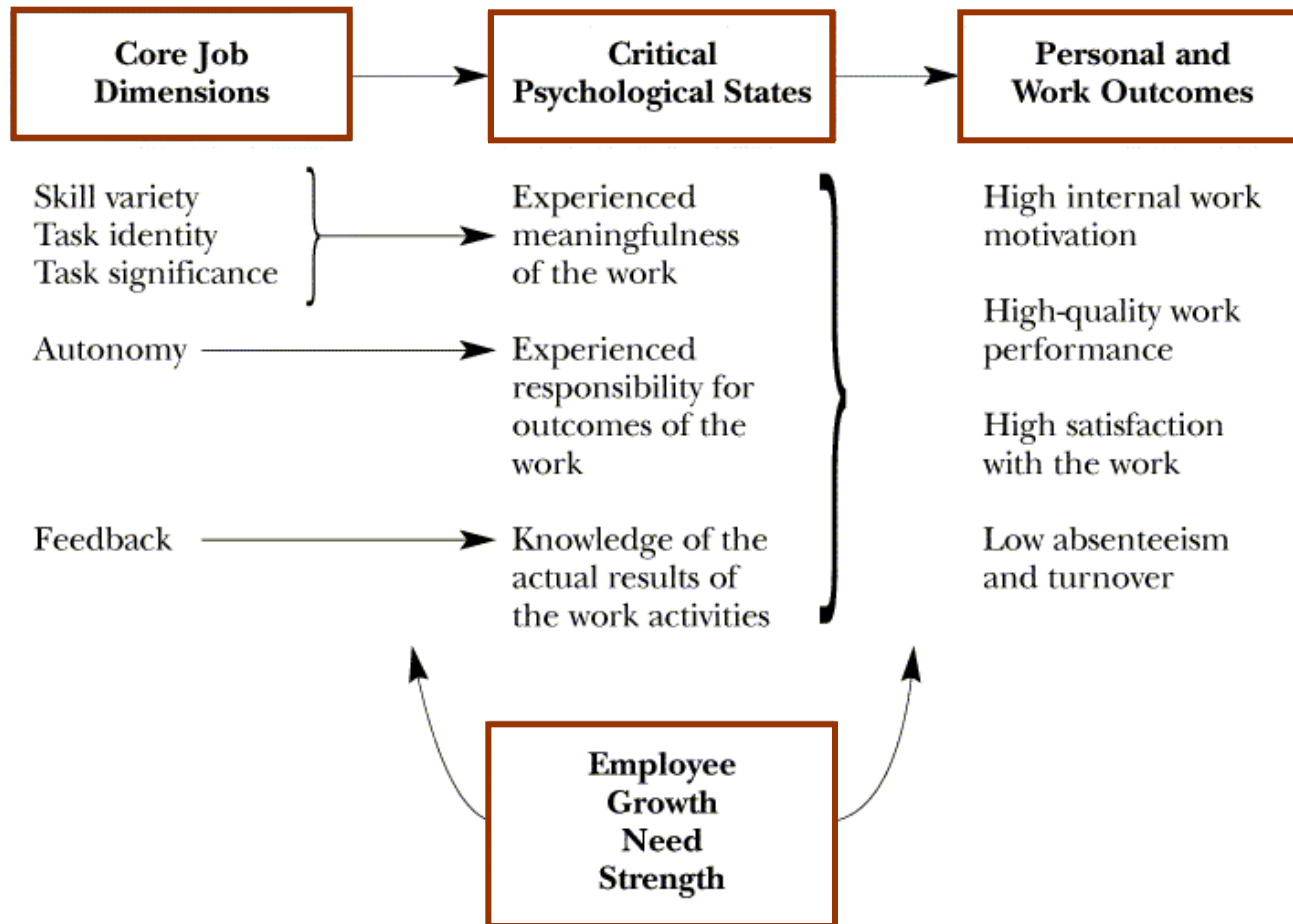
Design of Work Systems (cont'd)

- Job Enrichment
 - Increasing the amount of responsibility for quality and productivity that employees have for their own work.
- Vertical Loading
 - Is the reassignment of job responsibility formerly delegated to the supervisor to the employee.

Five Core Job Characteristics

- Skill variety
 - The extent to which the work allows an employee to use a variety of acquired skills.
- Task identity
 - The extent to which work allows an employee to complete a whole or identifiable piece of work.
- Task significance
 - The extent to which the employee perceives that his/her work is important and meaningful to those in the organization or to those outside the organization.
- Autonomy
 - The extent to which the employee is able to work and determine work procedure at her/his own discretion.
- Feedback
 - The extent to which the work allows the employee to gain a sense of how well job responsibilities are being met.

EXHIBIT 6-2: THE JOB CHARACTERISTICS MODEL



Source: J. R. Hackman and G. R. Oldham, "The Relationship Among Core Job Dimensions, the Critical Psychological States, and On-the-Job Outcomes," *The Job Diagnostic Survey: An Instrument for the Diagnosis of Jobs and the Evaluation of Job Redesign Projects*, 1974.

What Workers Need

- Changing demographics and life styles
 - Worker needs vary by age, gender, race, religion, physical abilities, sexual orientation, and marital and family status.
- Employee needs for work/life balance
 - Workers are less committed to organizations today but also suffer from burnout and lower performance.
- Employee needs representation (“voice”)
 - Workers want to be involved in work-related issues and expect the organization to listen to their concerns.
- Employee concerns about safety in the workplace
 - Workers want a safe, hazard-free working environment.

How Jobs Interface with Other Jobs

- Types of Task Interdependence
 - Pooled Interdependence
 - Individual employees work independently of each other in performing tasks but utilize coordination of their activities.
 - Sequential Interdependence
 - The work in process flows from one individual to another, where one individual depends on the timely completion of quality work for another coworker.
 - Reciprocal Interdependence
 - Workflow is not linear as in sequential interdependence but random. Work flow responds to immediate situation and employees have joint and shared responsibilities for the work.

Redesign of Work Systems

- Current and future work systems are more broadly defined and more closely related to strategic choices made by management.
- Workers are becoming more involved in the design and reengineering of their jobs.
- Cross-function teams are strategically beneficial, but also create challenges in effectively managing their activities.

Understanding Change

- The pressure to change is constant.
- Barriers to change:
 - Change involves disrupting the status quo and may be met with resistance by both employees and managers.
 - Change comes with costs and the reallocation of resources.
 - Employees will resist change if they do not perceive a need to change work systems or see no benefits from change.
 - There is risk and uncertainty and no guarantee of increased results (performance, efficiency, or morale) in change
 - Poor coordination and communication can undermine change initiatives.

Managing Change

- How to overcome resistance to change:
 - Promote and implement change so that it provides benefits to those impacted by the change.
 - Involve employees in the change process so that their commitment to the change process facilitates implementation of the change process.
 - Change is facilitated by open, two-way communication. Begin early before change decisions have yet been made. Reduce apprehension, dispel rumors, increase trust and acceptance of change by keeping employees informed and asking for their input.

Reading 6.1: Restructuring Teams for Re-engineered Organizations

- **Reasons for using teams in organizations:**
 - The complexity of many decisions in organizations that needs to be made make it unlikely that one individual will have all of the knowledge and information needed to make a good decision.
 - Teams can provide more “buy-in” (commitment) to decisions.
 - Managers believe that teams enhance motivation and productivity.
 - Teams facilitate the acquisition and sharing of information that is vital to organizational growth and flexibility.
 - Team can facilitate a variety of internal quality control initiatives.

Reading 6.1: Restructuring Teams for Re-engineered Organizations

- Problems with the use of teams:
 - Teams may fail without proper training and support.
 - Teams are often poorly integrated into the organization's hierarchy.
 - Individuals often feel that their contributions to the team dilute their personal success and few teams have found effective means to deal with “freeloaders.”
 - Teams are also usually not represented at top levels of organizations, sending a mixed message about their importance.

Reading 6.1: Restructuring Teams for Re-engineered Organizations

U.S. and Japanese Culture Differences

Individualism versus Collectivism

Conflict and Conformity

Power and Authority

Time Orientation

Cultural and Demographic Homogeneity

Reading 6.1: Restructuring Teams for Re-engineered Organizations

Three Keys to Successful Teams

Value and Endorse Dissent
Encourage Fluidity of Membership
Enable Teams to Make Decisions

Reading 6.2:

HRM Outsourcing: The Make or Buy Decision

- Five competitive forces driving organizations to outsource HR activities:
 - Downsizing
 - Rapid growth or decline
 - Globalization
 - Increased competition
 - Restructuring

Reading 6.2:

HRM Outsourcing: The Make or Buy Decision

- **Operational Rationales for Outsourcing:**
 - Size of the HR function in the organization. Small firms lack resources and large firms gain economies of scale.
 - Specialized HR expertise and objectivity; also reduced liability and risk for the employer through the use of outside specialists in legally sensitive HR areas.
 - Innovations and economies of scale in HRIS technology used by outside vendors that simplify transactions and reduce HR costs.
 - Time-sensitive issues that are better handled by outsourcing.
 - Temporary or cyclical increases in HR needs.