

**SUCCESSFUL
COMMISSIONER-
ADMINISTRATOR
PARTNERSHIPS**



<http://go.to/funpic>

EFFECTIVE BOARDS

- Three characteristics common to the highly effective board (community):
 - The **willingness to address difficult issues** - often those that deal with the "big-picture" problems
 - The **ability or capacity** of the board as a team to deal with these issues
 - An **effective relationship** with professional staff

(John Nalbandian, 1999)

EFFECTIVE BOARDS

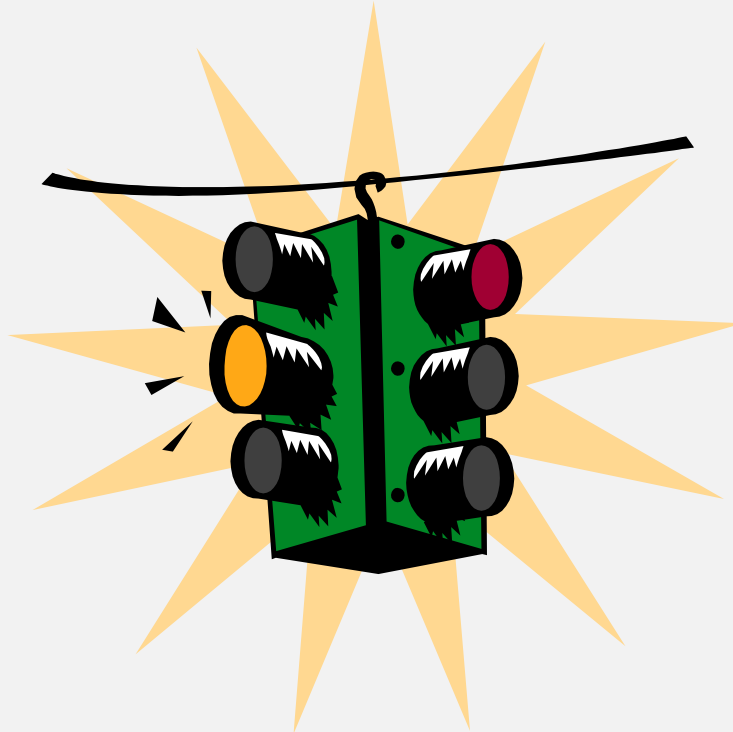
Obstacles that are often underestimated by boards and staff:

- I. Difficult, big-picture issues that raise questions of competing values, which many people are inclined to avoid because of the potential conflict involved

AVOIDING THE BIG PICTURE

- Value choices lead to conflict.
- We tend to avoid conflict.
- Easier to be an ombudsman.

COMPETING VALUES



POLITICAL VALUES*

- Representation
- Efficiency
- Social Equity
- Individual rights

*John Nalbandian

STEPS TO TAKE

- Identify values and understand Board's role as community building
- Identify community dreams/fears
- Build Board's capacity to deal effectively with big issues

A PUBLIC PARADOX

Public officials who bicker are considered uncivil and counterproductive. When public officials get along well, they are accused of back scratching and suppressing debate.

- “The Politics of Ugliness” Governing, June, 1997

SATISFACTION TRIANGLE

**How we feel with
regard to making
a decision**

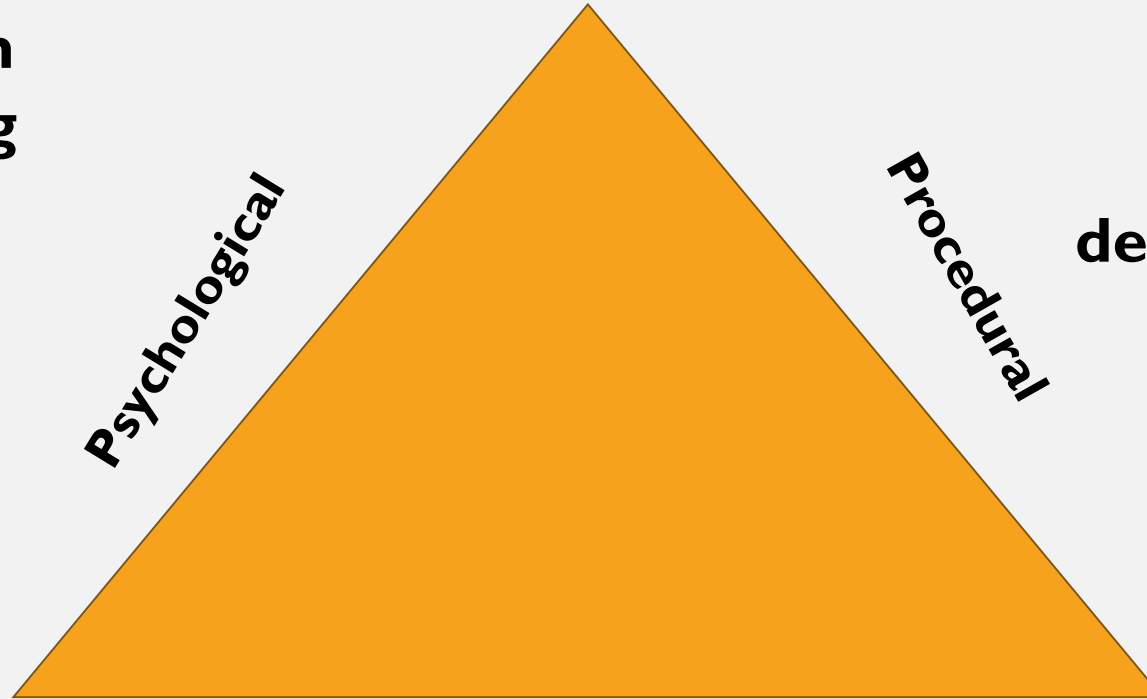
Psychological

Procedural

**How the
decision is made**

Substantive

The “bottom line” stuff.



EFFECTIVE BOARDS

Obstacles that are often underestimated by boards and staff:

2. Governing bodies operate under a set of conditions that impede the hard work it takes to focus on the big picture:
 - Vague task and role definition
 - No hierarchy
 - No specialization
 - Little feedback or evaluation of performance
 - Open meetings

MEMBERSHIP AND GROUP FORMATION

- Elections
- Promises



TERMS OF OFFICE AND BOARD LIFE CYCLE



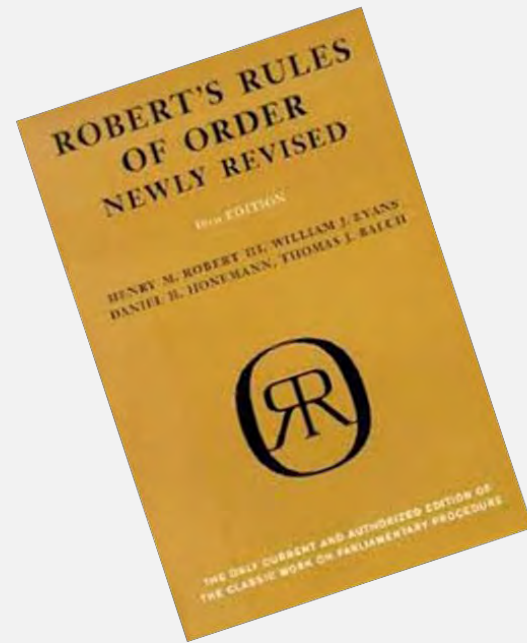
AUTHORITY AND POWER RELATIONSHIPS POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE RELATIONSHIP



Vs.



OPERATING PROCEDURES AND PROBLEM SOLVING ENVIRONMENT



STEPS TO TAKE

- Depersonalize issues
- Establish vision and set goals
- Build team expectations and teamwork
- Schedule regular retreats to assess effectiveness
- Develop effective relationship with staff

EFFECTIVE BOARDS

Obstacles that are often underestimated by boards and staff:

3. Ineffective relationships with the staff

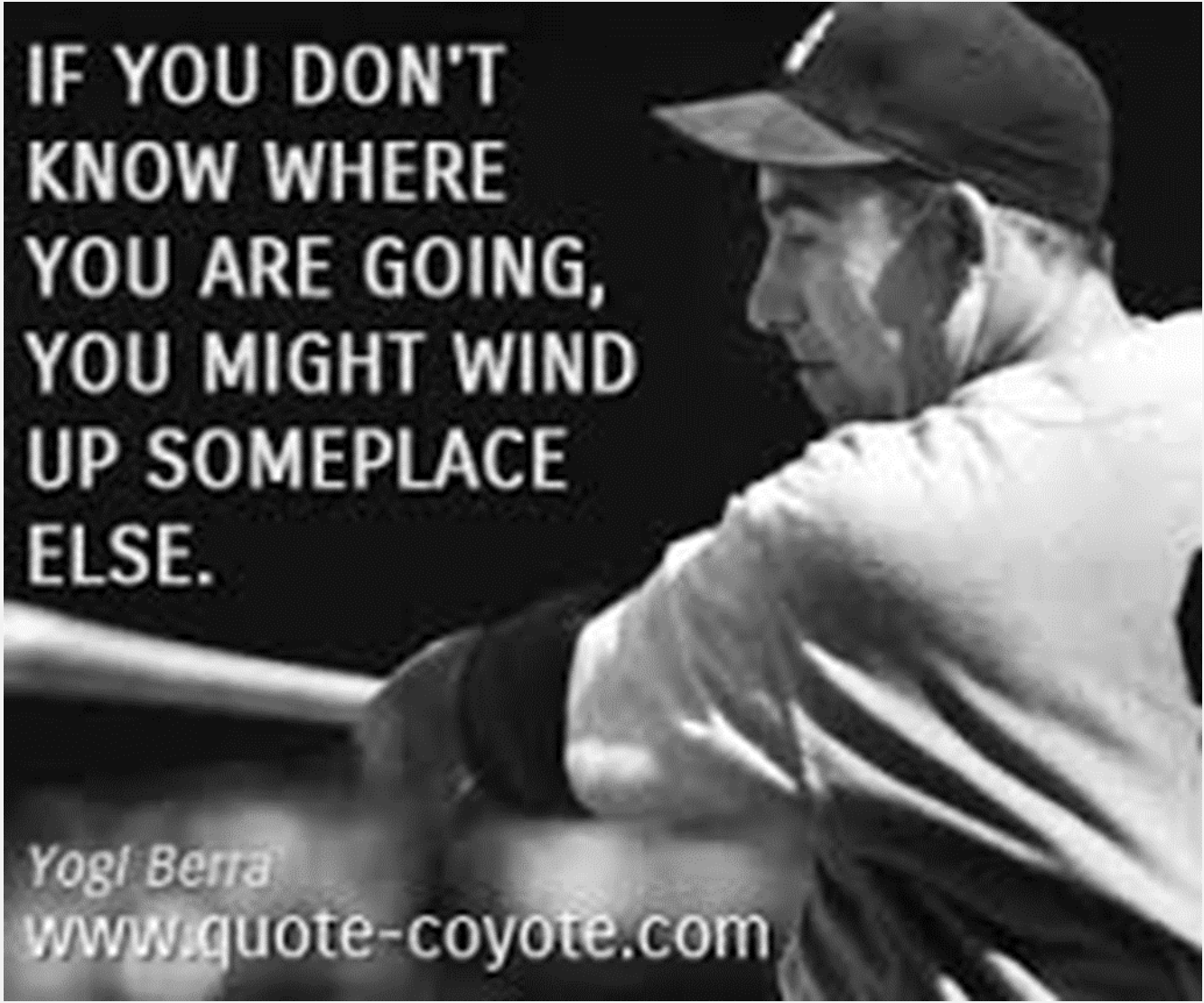
- Boards that don't work as a team
- Unprofessional Staff
- Diverse perspectives of Board and Staff

VISION AND STRATEGIC THINKING

“My responsibility is to get my 25 guys playing for the name on the front of the shirt and not the one on the back.”

Tommy Lasorda, Former Manager, Los Angeles Dodgers



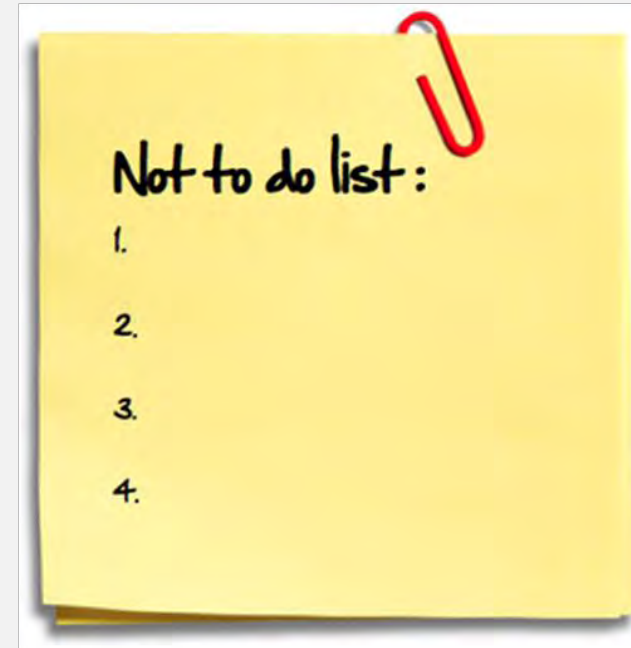
A black and white photograph of Yogi Berra in a batting stance, wearing a baseball cap and a light-colored jersey. The background is dark, and the lighting highlights his form and the bat.

IF YOU DON'T
KNOW WHERE
YOU ARE GOING,
YOU MIGHT WIND
UP SOMEPLACE
ELSE.

Yogi Berra

www.quote-coyote.com

STRATEGIC THINKING



VISION AND STRATEGY

- The foundation for a sound Council-Manager-Staff relationship begins with a clearly defined long-range vision and strategic direction for the organization.
- **“Legacy value” of big-picture focus**

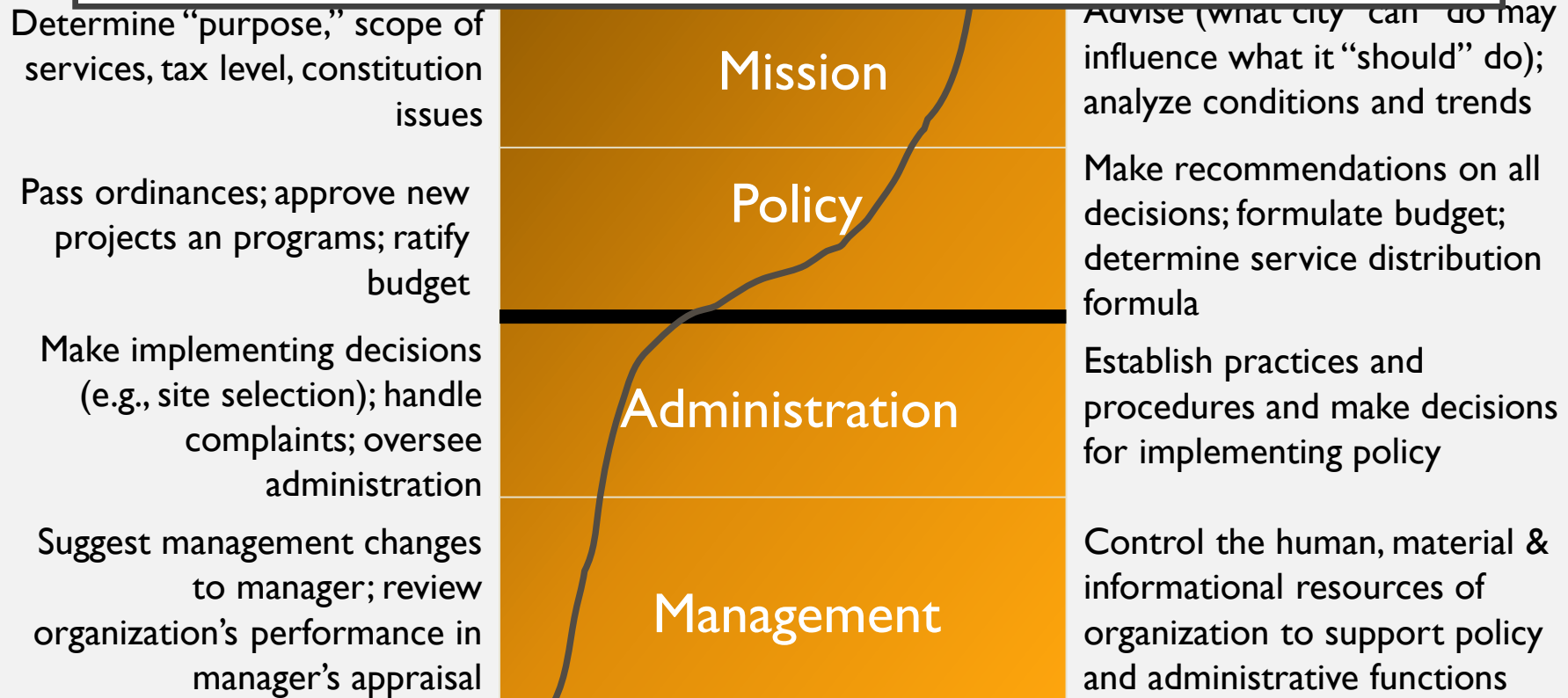
CLARIFY OF ROLES, GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

Research indicates that the primary cause of dysfunction in boards (and the board/staff relationship) is a ***lack of clarity in roles, goals and expectations***

ROLES

- Understand
- Negotiate
- Respect
- Assess

WHERE TO DRAW THE “LINE”



Manager’s Sphere

Source: Jim Svara, Dichotomy and Duality: Reconceptualizing the Relationship between Policy and Administration in Board-Manager Cities, Public Administration Review, Vol. 45, No. 1, pp 221 – 232)

COMPLEMENTARY ROLES



Robert Root-Bernstein: "Crystallization: Levo, Meso, and Dextro", 60 x 24 inches, paper construction, 2002

LOCAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

When goals are clearly defined and assigned (goals/organization), you can determine effectiveness. When resources are clearly set and staff/contract/volunteers properly assigned (fiscal/personnel), you can measure efficiency. When rules and processes are developed and feedback and report systems (procedures/information), you can establish control without “over controlling”, “meddling” or “micromanaging”.

	Goals	Organization	Fiscal	Personnel	Procedures	Information	
“What”	Vision and Values	Community	Bonds and tax levels	Service levels	Elections and initiatives	Newsletters, television and press	Policy Level
	Strategies and goals	Board	Budgets and debt management	Salary and benefits	Ordinances and resolutions	“State of the city”	
	Master work plan	Manager	Budget and finance plan	Hire and fire	Policies and procedures	Annual report	
“How”	Department work plan	Department heads	Budget control	Training and development	Standards and benchmarks	Monthly, quarterly reports	Administrative Level
	Team work plan	Operation managers	Service delivery	Supervision and discipline	Operating procedures	Progress reports	
	Individual work plan	Service employees	Individual services	Personal responsibility	Job checklist	Status report	
	Effectiveness		Efficiency		Control		

From Local Government Policy-Making Process, MRSC of Washington, used with permission.

LEVELS OF DECISION MAKING FRAMEWORK

Level of Decision	Description/Example of Decision	Authority for Decision
Strategic	Decisions affecting long-term priorities such as mission, institutional direction, values, priorities and principles.	Governing Board
Quality	Decisions affecting who are the organization's primary clientele, types of services, delivery systems that focus on the relationship of programs and departments to overall mission	Governing Board
Resource	Decisions affecting planning, budgeting, financing, marketing, and personnel. Budget approval process, setting rates and fees	Governing Board/Senior Managers
Administrative	Decisions about day to day practices, participation in community activities, selection of contractors, inter-local agreements	Governing Board/Senior Managers
Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)	Decisions affecting procedures used to handle routine transactions and normal form, process, method and application of policies	Managers/Staff
Rule	Decisions and regulations that guide or prescribe everyday conduct (parking, smoking areas, dress, etc.)	Managers/Staff

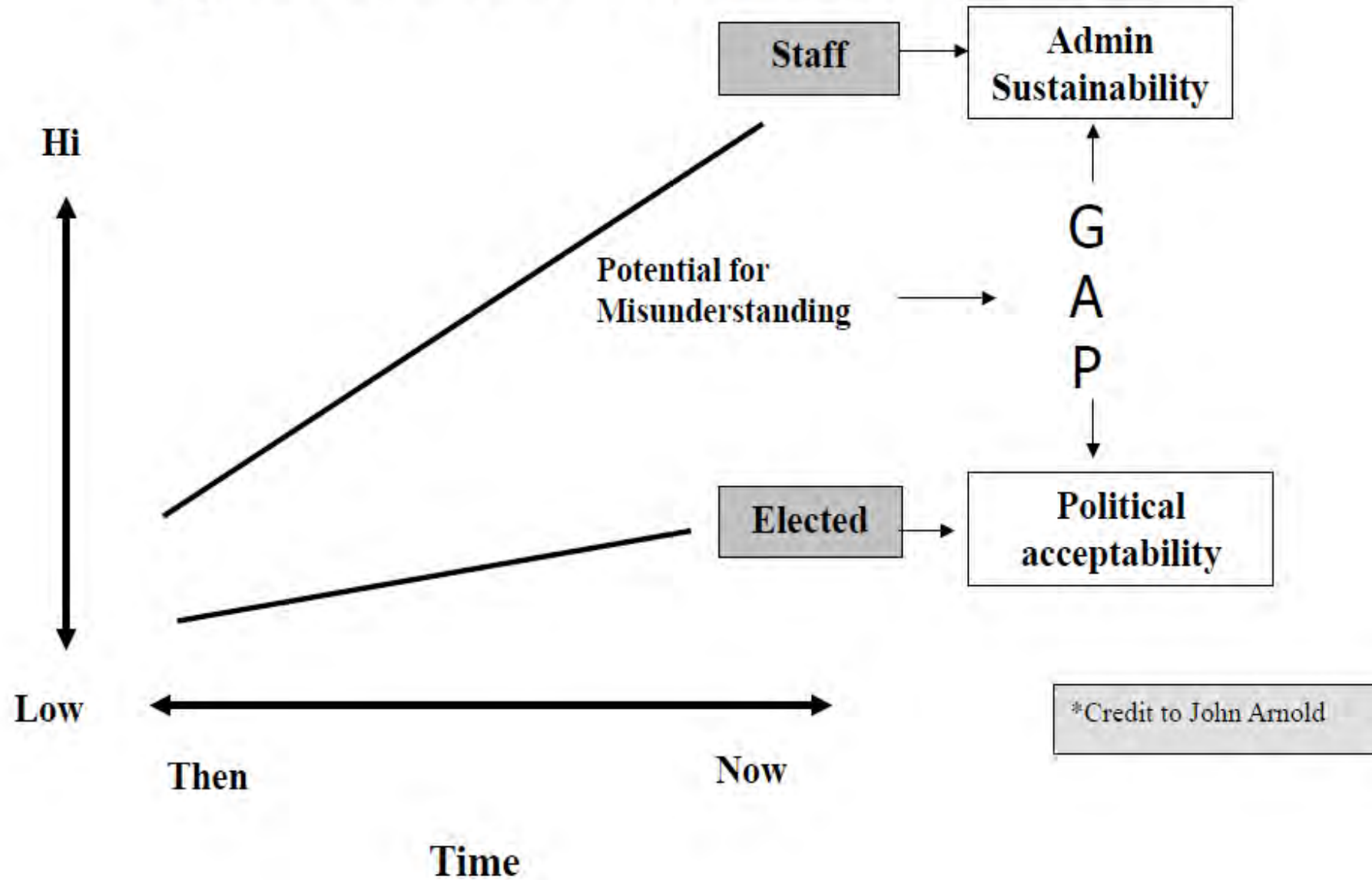
IMPORTANCE OF ROLE CLARITY



ROLES.....



Gap between Professional and Political Learning*



Characteristics of Politics and Administration

Political acceptability \longleftrightarrow Administrative sustainability

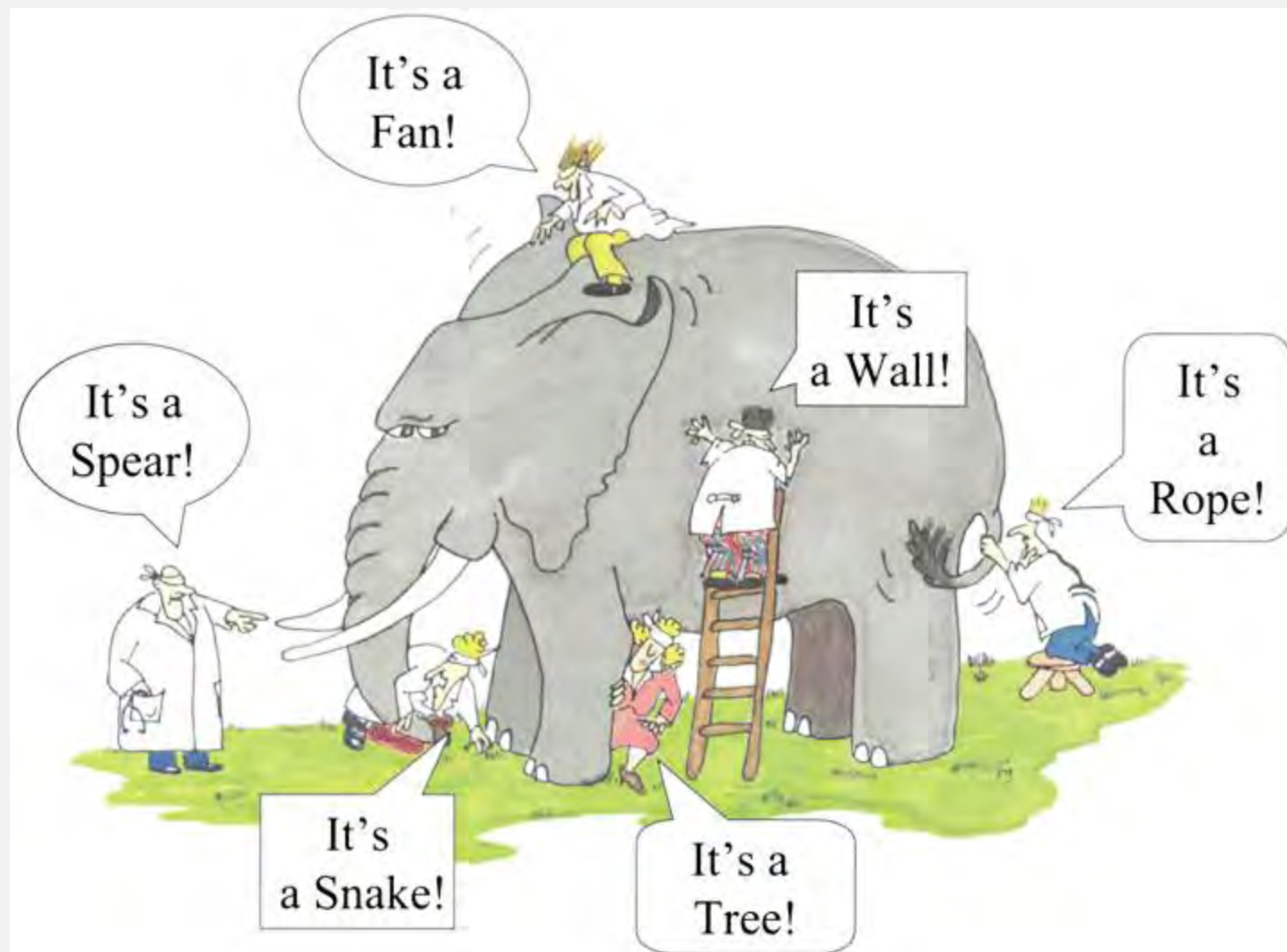
Characteristics	Politics	Administration
Activity	Game/allocation of values	Problem Solving
Players	Representatives	Experts
Conversation	"What do you hear?" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Passion ■ Dreams ■ Stories 	"What do you know?" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Data ■ Plans ■ Reports
Pieces	Intangible: Interests and symbols	Tangible: Information; money, people, equipment
Currency	Power (stories)	Knowledge (deeds)
Dynamics	Conflict, compromise, change	Predictability, cooperation, continuity

CAO and Senior
 Staff in the
 GAP
 \longleftrightarrow

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES: COUNCIL - STAFF

- ⦿ Representatives vs. Experts
- ⦿ Problem-solving Approaches
 - Playing the game vs. solving the problem
- ⦿ Story-telling vs. Reports:
 - “What do you hear?” vs. “What do you know?”
 - Role of city manager/key staff as translator
- ⦿ Conflict, compromise, change vs. harmony, cooperation, continuity

(Nalbandian, 1999)





How the customer explained it



How the project leader understood it



How the engineer designed it



How the programmer wrote it



How the sales executive described it



How the project was documented



What operations installed



How the customer was billed



How the helpdesk supported it



What the customer really needed

EXPECTATIONS



Dilbert.com DilbertCartoonist@gmail.com



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EXPECTATIONS

Expectation



Outcome

Disappointment

EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF AND BOARDS

Questions for the Board:

- What do WE expect of the Staff?
- What should the Staff expect of US?

EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF AND BOARDS

Questions for the Staff:

- What do WE expect of the Board?
- What should the Board expect of US?

SAMPLE OF BOARD'S EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF

- Don't cause us embarrassment
- Give us accurate and current data
- Leave personal bias out of reports; arguments should stand on own merits
- Provide guidance when requested
- Provide short, well-written reports
- Provide several options when suggesting possible solutions to a problem
- Present requested information in a timely manner
- Show us how to avoid known pitfalls of recurring issues
- Be accessible
- Be respectful regardless of how you feel personally
- Keep us equally informed; do not show favoritism
- Provide historical continuity where appropriate

SAMPLE OF BOARD'S EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF

- Be fair in dealing with us- don't automatically assume citizen is right and staff is wrong
- Read the material we have proposed
- Ask questions
- Examine all the facts and make the best possible decision
- Give criticism privately when appropriate
- Give public praise when and where appropriate
- If you make a decision based on politics, help us understand

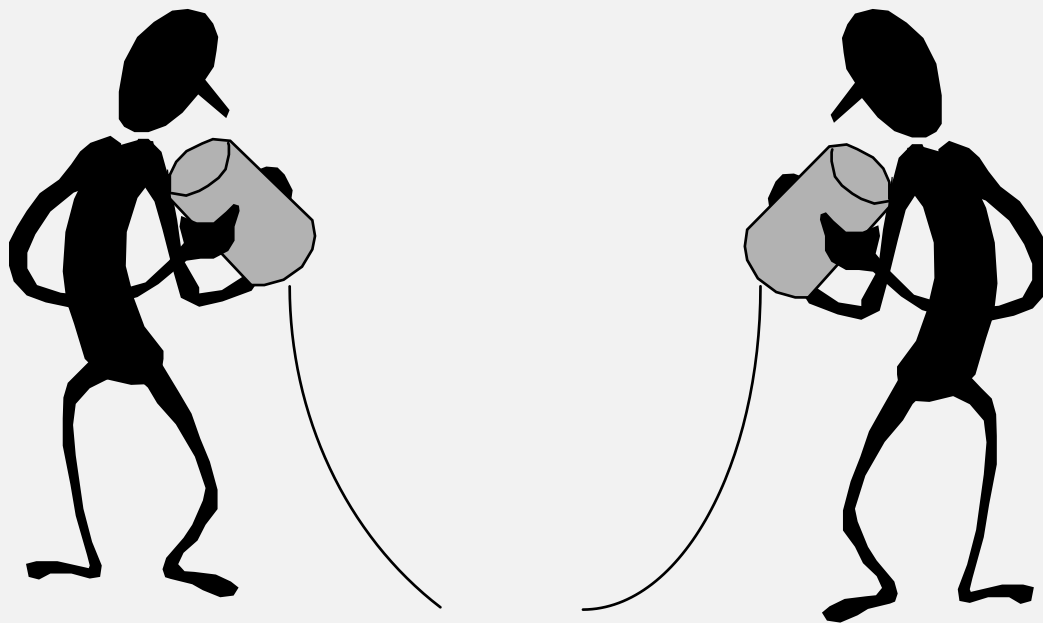
DEVELOP AND HOLD TO PROTOCOLS, FORMAL PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

- Formal Practices and Procedures that Can Minimize Conflict
 - Protocols – ground rules on how to work together
- Protocols should answer:
 - How do you want to be treated?
 - How do you think you should treat others?
 - How do others think you want to be treated?
 - How will we resolve conflicts?
- Samples available...

COMMENTS/DISCUSSION ON PROTOCOLS

- What's working?
 - What do we do well?
 - What exists – both formally and informally?
- What could we do better?
- What's missing?
- What needs action?

COMMUNICATION



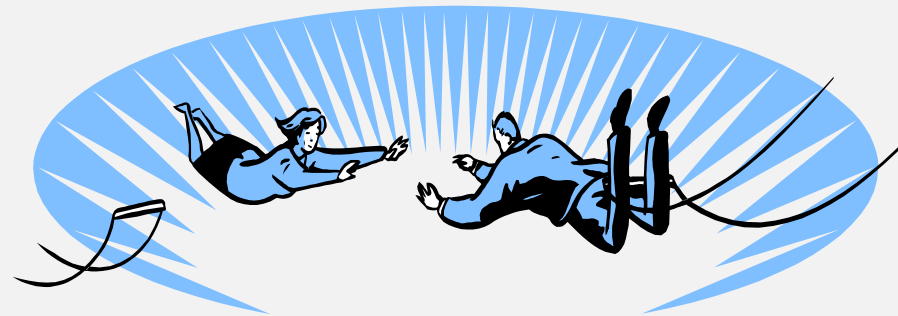
COMMUNICATE

- Discussion:
 - What's working?
 - What do we do well?
 - What could we do better?
 - What's missing?
 - What needs action?

ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN TRUST

You may be deceived if you trust too much, but you will live in torment if you don't trust enough.

— Frank Crane, American minister and author



ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN TRUST

1. Lead by Example
2. Communicate Openly
3. Know Each Other Personally
4. Don't Place Blame
5. Discourage Cliques
6. Discuss Trust Issues

See more at: <http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/building-trust-team.htm#sthash.J4rdOFYo.dpuf>

STEPS TO TAKE

- Team building
- Invest in professionalism
- Become aware of differences between Board and staff perspectives
- Develop and encourage translator role.

THE ANSWERS ARE IN THE ROOM...

**IF YOU ARE THE
SMARTEST PERSON
IN THE ROOM, YOU
ARE IN THE WRONG
ROOM!**

QUESTIONS

