Second Movement: Motivation

Let me know when he looks this way!

When an individual is employed by an organization, he or she agrees to a bargain: A certain level of work is expected and a certain amount of individual autonomy is sacrificed in exchange for some package of compensation, benefits, opportunities and influence on organizational decisions. Although the nature of this package varies widely from case to case, such a bargain characterizes all employment relationships — whether the individual is a volunteer, a full time staffer, a part-timer, or a star professional and whether the organization is a small community group, a large corporation, or a government bureau. Moreover, although individuals may be highly self-motivated, the nature of the bargain and how it is implemented and managed, will influence the individual’s morale, conscientiousness, inclination to excel, and desire to contribute to the organization’s mission. In sum, a fundamental challenge for an organization’s management is the motivation of its work force.

A critical element in this challenge is the fact that when individuals become part of an organization, they are asked to make personal contributions in a situation where the rewards of performance are usually attributed to the organization as a whole. The credit for an exquisite performance of Beethoven’s *Eroica Symphony* goes to the Cleveland Orchestra as a whole, and perhaps individually to its
The question of aligning individual and organizational interests is the subject of a field of study among economists and organizational scholars known as “principal
In this framework, we can characterize the workers in an organization as the agents with which the principals—management—contract to carry out the work of the organization. Since workers’ and managers’ interests may not be precisely the same, the challenge to management is to structure the conditions of work so that employees behave in a manner consistent with organizational interests and put forward their best efforts. To do this, managers must obtain the information they need to monitor workers’ performance, and they must, as Olson suggests, structure appropriate rewards and penalties to influence workers’ behavior.

Various conditions may influence how effectively principals can control agents and what particular strategies are most effective in different situations. These conditions include how easily principals can identify and measure the contributions of agents, how closely agents’ and principals’ interests coincide with one another in the first place, whether the principal-agent relationship is a permanent or transient one, and whether agents are worried about their reputations outside the immediate organizational setting (Pratt and Zechhauser, 1991).

Musical ensembles nicely illustrate the issues surrounding worker motivation, and the ideas suggested by collective goods and principal-agent theories. While musicians are commonly highly self-motivated because they intrinsically enjoy their art, they play in ensemble combinations that vary widely in how well their individual contributions are recognized and how well they can be held accountable for their individual efforts. There is no hiding or slacking in a vocal duet where an error or an omission can stand out like a tuba among flutes; however, singers in a chorus of 100 voices all singing the same tune face an entirely different situation. Between these extremes is a myriad of ensemble combinations, each with its own challenges to maintaining high player motivation and effort.

Certain characteristics of musical ensembles highlight the challenges of motivation. Here, paralleling the previous movement, we discuss five of these dimensions: the size of the ensemble, its internal heterogeneity of instrumentation and musical parts, the level of professionalism of its participants, the degree of stability in its workforce, and the character and complexity of particular jobs within the organization. Given the nature of collective goods, we can expect that the larger an ensemble, and the more homogeneous and transient its workforce, the more difficult it will be to maintain high levels of individual contribution to the organization’s performance. And, we may expect that the more professional the workforce (and the more competitive the market for professional positions), the more self-motivation and concern over reputation is likely to compensate for inadequate organizational incentives. The nature of particular jobs within the organization may also reflect some of these considerations. If players are part of instrument sections that are large or which play only supporting roles, the motivational challenges may be more severe. Or, if the work itself is too difficult or too easy, or if it is highly formal and allows little room for individual discretion, initiative, or creativity, motivational challenges may be greater because intrinsic satisfaction is lower.

Musical ensembles are rich in the variety of their approaches to the challenges
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of workforce motivation. They utilize a host of strategies for selecting who becomes and remains a member of the organization; for matching work assignments (parts) to players’ skills and preferences; for differentiating the status, working conditions and responsibilities of individual players; for distributing leadership responsibility among players; for monitoring, recognizing and rewarding the contributions of individual players both in practice and in performance; and for inspiring players through example, peer support and challenging assignments.

Ensembles pursue a variety of different approaches to motivation partly because of the range of circumstances in which these organizations find themselves, and because various components of motivational strategy can be substituted for one another within broad areas of discretion. Differences in management philosophy among ensembles also contribute to this variation. This will become clear when we consider two cross-cutting questions that emerge from this discussion: To what degree does reliance on central leadership and hierarchical arrangements hinder or help solve the motivational problems of ensembles? And, in what circumstances is a system of sharing authority, status and glory among players in an ensemble preferable, in motivational terms, to one in which status and authority are the rewards of competition?

The Circumstances for Motivation

It is the unusual worker who can do his or her best under all circumstances. The task of management is to adapt motivational strategies to organizational conditions so that free rider problems and other disincentives to performing well are overcome.

Organization Size

The larger the organization, the potentially more severe is the problem of free-riding characterized by individuals who coast, hold back their best efforts, or are otherwise less than fully dedicated to their work. Members of large groups realize that their individual efforts constitute only small parts of the group’s effort and may go unnoticed or unrewarded. In this circumstance, ensemble members can count on others to pick up the slack while avoiding accountability for their own performance. Moreover, the larger group may afford greater anonymity to individual members, hence avoiding the social pressure of colleagues or neighbors that would push them to shape up. In a large chorus, for example, singers with uncertain mastery of the tune or with little enthusiasm for the piece may decide to sing in hushed tones or simply mouth the words, without being detected. (Indeed, choral conductors of amateur or grade school choruses have sometimes encouraged poor singers to fake it!) Similar behavior could not be indulged in a trio or a quartet where each individual’s contribution is easily noticed, even if all singers have the same parts. The free-rider problem is less severe in small groups where
shirking is less difficult to detect and peer pressure from other members of the group is more likely to keep each individual player sharp (or flat, as the case may be!)

Heterogeneity

The more homogeneous an organization is internally, the greater will be the free rider problem. It is easier for a tuba player to shirk in an ensemble of 100 tubas than in an orchestra of a hundred musicians playing a variety of instruments of which only a few are low brass. (The potential for such behavior would seem substantial for example in the various tubafests that take place in cities such as Akron and Cincinnati, Ohio and San Jose, California during the Christmas season. However, in this case, erratic playing is not considered a terribly serious vice, and all manner of tuba players participate simply for the fun of it.) Though it is most significant for large ensembles, this homogeneity effect holds for groups of all sizes. Even a trio can experience less motivational difficulty if the three parts are differentiated by instrumentation or musical parts. For large homogeneous ensembles such as a chorus of male tenor voices, the motivational challenge is eased if the ensemble is divided into different sections, each with a different part to play, although the challenge will remain substantial if the sections are themselves large. For example, string orchestras commonly have fairly large, homogenous, first and second violin or viola sections in which individual contributions are hard to isolate.

Professionalism

If members of an ensemble each "march to their own drummers" the motivational challenges associated with free-riding may not be as serious as they otherwise might be. Individuals who pursue music as a career, for example, are most often substantially self-motivated by the love of the art, by desires for self-improvement, and by aspirations to secure the most desirable appointments. These motives help to align individual interests with that of the ensemble whose presumed purpose is to produce the best possible music. As Pratt and Zeckhauser (1991) put it: "If we can get work that we like, we needn’t worry about our boss’s standing over us" (p.14). However, even among professional musicians in major symphony orchestras, motivational problems remain. For example, the New York Philharmonic experienced such problems in the 1980s (Henahan, 1983)

If individuals aspire to solo careers or to positions of leadership within the ensemble world, especially if plum positions are scarce, they will be more likely to try to stand out among their peers rather than to hide or shirk responsibility. Indeed, they will seek out opportunities to shine. Similarly, such individuals will be less likely to risk their reputations by putting forth less than their best efforts. Thus, we may expect the motivational challenges to be less severe in professional ensembles or ensembles composed of aspiring artists than in ensembles where individuals do not aspire to professional recognition or have given up on
advancement. Even so, the potential for shirking impacts even at the highest levels of professional achievement. As reviewer Peter Goodman puts it: "It sometimes happens that performers slack off when they are not playing in one of the major locations, idling a little while preparing for a big effort somewhere else" (Goodman, 1987, p.II-8).

To the contrary, one may surmise that ensembles composed of highly accomplished or ambitious individuals might lead to problems of internal competition rather than slack. In some circumstances, efforts may be required to keep competitive urges under control in order to foster cooperation and internal composure. This effect seems less likely in smaller groups where individuals can more easily share attention and receive individual credit than in larger ones where they must subsume their interests and identity to that of the group. In this connection, there may even be a difference between trios and quartets. Goodman continues: "There's a tradition that chamber trios are assembled from prominent soloists who enjoy playing together and therefore choose occasionally to tour or record, as opposed to string quartets, whose delicate balance demands four musicians who work constantly as a unit to maintain the required blend" (Goodman, 1987, p.II-8).

The situation of amateur and volunteer members of ensembles is more ambiguous. On the one hand, amateurs join ensembles for the love of music and for the social rewards of participation. Thus, their interests may be intrinsically aligned with that of the group and they are unlikely to be as sensitive to the issue of individual recognition as professionals. For these reasons they are less likely to slacken their efforts in situations where such rewards are lacking. On the other hand, amateurs and volunteers may be less driven towards overall ensemble achievement and may feel less compelled to participate if the costs become too high:

The [University Circle Chamber Choir] volunteer group is made up of 44 singers selected from the University Circle Chorale. Some are students at the Cleveland Institute of Music and Case Western Reserve University. Others are older adults from Greater Cleveland.

Susan Davenny Wyner...the ensemble's musical director and conductor, has not attempted to forge the enthusiastic group into a choral instrument of smooth blend and pure intonation. Standing in a scattered arrangement rather than unified sections, the singers hold their pitch well enough to perform a cappella. But individual voices frequently pop out of the texture, and different vibratos are sometimes at war.

The program consisted of 18 selections from seven centuries of music...Had a professional choir attempted such a wide range of repertoire, it would have been expected to make some distinction among historic and national styles. But Wyner was content to let her singers sail from the Renaissance to the present without delving beneath the surface of the music or exploring the essential differences between pieces...The idea, apparently, was to enjoy reading through the rich variety of chorale literature. Singers and conductor communicated pleasure in performing together. (Salisbury, 1994, p.8-F)
Second Movement: Motivation

Some amateurs, however, may be driven by their own internal quest for excellence and achievement and may indeed be subject to the same motivational tendencies and inducements as professionals:

“It’s helpful for the youngsters to have the chance to play in a band with professionals and semi-professionals”, [Rufus Kern, founder of the Huntington Community Band] said. “...Of the 75 to 85 musicians who regularly perform in the six summer concerts, one-third are students, one-third community members who just like to play music, and one-third professional musicians, who make $30 a concert... [It gives me]...the chance to play challenging music that I wouldn’t normally get to play in school concerts”, added Diahann Kline, a high school clarinetist... “If it weren’t for the band, I’d never get to play this kind of music at all”, says Ken Sottys...a trumpet player who teaches in a private school...and performs with jazz and pops combos. (Delatiner, 1985, p.LI 11)

Instability

Transience in an organization has much the same effect as size or homogeneity. If players have no permanent association with the organization it becomes easier to shirk, escape detection or accountability, and avoid peer pressure. The itinerant musician may be the opposite of the one time shopper who can be easily exploited by the unscrupulous merchant (Pratt and Zeckhauser, 1991). Since that musician has no long term obligation, he or she may not be conscientious in performance. On the other hand, if the itinerant is a long-term job seeker and professional, the incentive to perform well may be quite strong. For example, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra uses free lance players for pieces requiring larger ensembles, or as substitutes when regular players are unavailable. Many of these free lancers have developed close relationships with the orchestra and are prime candidates when openings for regular positions occur (Hackman, 2002). Labor market competition also plays a role in motivating freelance players:

Mr. Wilson, who is 35 and lives in Washington Heights in Manhattan, can change musical styles in the space of a subway ride, traveling from one job to the next. He has to. He has some 2,000 competitors in the New York area alone, according to the American Federation of Musicians. “Most musicians freelance in a number of bands because you don’t have that many steady working bands...”, Mr. Wilson says. “I try to bring an openness to every situation.” (Orgill, 1996, p.24)

Finally, in ensembles with stable memberships, players will know each others’ styles, habits and capacities well, and will be more attuned to deviations from best performances than they would be if they were among strangers. Thus, the monitoring aspect of maintaining motivation is more manageable in less transient situations. Still, the impact of transience on motivation is not necessarily an excuse for mediocrity. Witness conductor Marin Alsop’s experience with the Long Island Philharmonic:

“When I finally went to hear the Philharmonic after I was appointed music director, I
found the playing really uninspired....It wasn’t really anyone’s fault, I guess. Just real dull playing, something very sleepy about it all. I wanted to get up and shake everybody, even the audience. You can’t just play notes! You have to play the music. And that’s much more difficult.”

“I want to turn the Long Island Philharmonic into the best orchestra it can possibly be,” she continued. “Now, I know it’s made up of freelance musicians but, believe me, I’ve been a freelance musician myself, and it is possible to inspire them. If a conductor comes onstage 200 percent prepared and completely committed, somehow that’s contagious and the players give their all.” (Page, 1992, p.6)

**Task Complexity**

As we have recognized, some ensembles are more heterogeneous than others, in terms of their instrumentation and the diversity of musical parts played by their members. As a result, some players occupy positions that are more vulnerable to motivational lapses than others. Some players, for example, such as first violins, clarinets, flutes or trumpets, are more likely to carry the melody line and may even have solo parts from time to time. Others, such as second violins, violas, cellos and basses, and low brass, are more likely to provide background harmonies and perhaps counter-melodies. Percussion instruments may be prominent in driving the rhythm of a performance, but some may have long periods during a performance in which they have nothing to do but follow along until the next clang of the cymbal or bang of the drum. Instrument players in the more supportive and less intense roles will generally be more motivationally-challenged because their contributions are less prominent and they are less likely to be singled out for compliments or criticism. (Unless, of course, the clang of the cymbal comes in at the wrong time!)

The cymbal player and the first violin in the same orchestra may be subject to different extremes of motivational difficulty. In a difficult piece, the violin player might be challenged by immense complexity, leading to frustration and loss of confidence or morale, while the cymbal player might be frustrated and bored with not enough to do. These considerations carry over to work of the orchestra as a whole. A piece of music that is too complex or difficult for the ensemble to master may be disheartening for all its members, leading to loss of motivation and slackening of effort. A piece of music that is too elementary or uninteresting, or played too often, may not be taken seriously, also leading to malaise. Thus, a matching of the ensemble’s capability to the level of difficulty of the music it attempts to perform, is an important and delicate management responsibility. The ensemble must be challenged without being frustrated and capable of mastery without being bored.

Experiences of classical ensembles at various points in music history when composers introduced radically new forms, illustrate the issue. The orchestras in Italy provide illustration perhaps in the extreme:

The rough-and-ready state of orchestras in the country that gave birth to the symphony
and the concerto may better be explained by Italians’ individualistic not to say anarchic spirit. This trait, healthy and productive in countless ways, can be fatal to group effort. Italian orchestra musicians frequently interrupt rehearsals to fight with each other or to talk back to conductors. “Dmitri Mitropoulos dropped dead on the podium while trying to get us to play Mahler, back in 1960,” says one veteran member of La Scala orchestra – the sadness in his voice tinged with unmistakable pride. (Sachs, 1987, p. 21)

Gianni Baratta of the Emilia-Romagna orchestra in Italy faces the same frustration:

One of my hopes is that the orchestra will gradually become less recalcitrant than most ‘traditional’ ensembles with regard to contemporary music. (Sachs, 1987, p. 26)

Another aspect of the work that can affect motivation is its degree of formality. If a piece is fully specified with no room for individual interpretation or experimentation it may be less interesting to accomplished players than one that allows more artistic freedom. A jazz ensemble, for example, may follow the basic plan of a classic piece by Duke Ellington but will have room for improvisation and individualized interpretations. A symphonic rendering of Mozart’s Jupiter Symphony leaves less freedom for individual maneuvering or ensemble interpretation. The degree of formality of a piece may cut both ways, however. A piece that is under-specified or which contains unresolved ambiguities may lead to frustration and exasperation, and even unwillingness to perform it:

Ultimate unplayability is offered by Schumann, who writes on one page “as fast as possible” and on the next “faster”. Don’t ask me. (Holland, 1999a, p.B3)

Refrain

A variety of factors may intensify the challenge of motivating workers in an organization. The world of musical ensembles illustrates that large size, internal homogeneity, lower levels of professional competence, transience, less intense or prominent job assignments, and organizational tasks that are too difficult or too easy, can exacerbate problems of motivation. Interestingly, however, some of these challenges contain the kernels of their own solution. Thus, ensembles can devise strategies for engaging their workers that simulate smaller scale, greater diversity, greater stability, more sensitivity to skill level, and greater attention and recognition of individual effort.

The Elements of Motivational Strategy

Managerial approaches to motivation may be thought of in four overlapping stages: recruiting motivated players; matching those players to appropriate work assignments; assigning status and responsibility to players and their leaders; and monitoring individual performance so that rewards and recognition may be appropriately distributed.
Recruitment

Selecting players who are self-motivated, believe in the purpose of the organization, set high standards for themselves, show enthusiasm for their work and are personally compatible with one another goes a long way towards achieving an ensemble whose membership can remain highly motivated and productive. As Pratt and Zeckhauser (1991, p.15) put it: “Those who share one’s objectives tend to carry them out.” However, ensembles recruit their members and weed them out in a variety of ways, not all of which are fully conducive to maintaining high morale and motivation.

Smaller groups often come together of their own volition when a few musicians with common interests, tastes or ideas, decide that they have something special to offer and would like to work together. This process of formation is likely to lead to highly motivated groups. And when members of such self-selected groups no longer feel excited about playing with one another, the ensembles are likely to dissolve of their own accord. Rock groups are particularly well known for coming together and coming apart this way:

Rock never stops, and neither does the parade of reunited and resuscitated rock bands. The four-act “Rock Never Stops” tour, which hits the Nautica stage tomorrow night, is proof of that...

“It’s nostalgic rock, but it’s good nostalgic rock,” Night Ranger guitarist Jeff Watson said cheerfully. His band known for mighty anthems and lavish power ballads, had a solid chart run in the mid-’80s.....before calling it a day in 1989. There was no animosity when guitarist Watson and Brad Gillis, bassist/vocalist Jack Blades and drummer Kelly Keagy went their separate ways... “When we got bumped out in the early ’90s by the grunge stuff, interest was already waning... Fitz [keyboardist Alan Fitzgerald] had left the band and our numbers were down and it just wasn’t feeling fresh or good and we needed a break. And it was a good break. Coming back together was a blast.” (Pantsios, 1999, p.17)

Larger and more formal ensembles are likely to have more systematic ways to engage new members. In some cases, the process may be gradual. Some players may initially be engaged as pick-up musicians on a part-time basis to satisfy the requirements of particular performances. Eventually some of these musicians may be employed on an ongoing basis as the permanent members of the ensemble become familiar and comfortable with their playing, or when an opening occurs and/or the ensemble becomes able to afford them on a permanent basis. The Long Island Philharmonic in the 1980s illustrated this process:

In music circles, (violin soloist) Mr. Tarack said, the caliber of the [Philharmonic’s] work is a given. He has no trouble, he said, recruiting from “New York City’s tremendous pool,” although 80 percent of the musicians who were there at the beginning remain on the orchestra’s roster, and at least 50 percent of the entire orchestra is from Long Island... Although the Philharmonic is still considered a “freelance orchestra”, since its season is too limited for full-time status, this consistency has produced the kind
of sound that only comes with musicians playing together regularly under one conductor. (Delatiner, 1986, p.LI 21)

In other instances, such as the better established symphony orchestras, players will be engaged through a highly formalized audition process (Lehman, 1995). The tradition of blind auditions, in which potential recruits are heard anonymously from behind a screen, offers both motivational advantages and disadvantages for ensemble players. On the one hand, this system strengthens the legitimacy that each player brings to the organization. Because their positions are achieved by merit of individual performance, without favoritism or prejudice as possible influences, chosen members gain respect for their skills. All ensemble members may be inspired to maintain their own skills as a consequence, and internal morale will not be undermined by suspicions of unfairness or disappointment in the capacities of one’s colleagues. Moreover, selection in this manner helps ensure that members’ skills are matched to the difficulty of the music that the ensemble intends to perform.

On the other hand, the blind audition system selects players in an artificial setting devoid of important aspects of the organizational environment. It does not test for skill in ensemble playing nor does it screen for personal rapport with other players, dedication to the ensemble’s particular goals, or understanding and appreciation of the style and tradition of the ensemble as a whole. Put into the real organizational environment, the skilled individual player who passes the blind audition with flying colors may not get along well with fellow players, may underachieve in a group setting, may undermine a sense of unity or purpose, or may demoralize or undermine his colleagues in other ways. This is perhaps one of the reasons that certain distinguished orchestras such as the Vienna Philharmonic choose their players from the “family” of students of current players. Such a system has other obvious problems, such as establishing barriers to outside candidates who may be truly outstanding. Overall, the selection process can be difficult no matter what system is used:

The first session of auditions for the Symphony – judged by Tilson Thomas and a committee of players – produced no hirings. “I like the ‘big’ musicians with expansive personalities, who I can then tone down when necessary,” Tilson Thomas says. “They [the orchestra] were used to choosing ‘team players’ who blend in more easily. We were not yet at the same place, so we made no choice.” (Schiff, 1995, p.31)

Work Assignments

Players usually come to musical ensembles with established competencies on particular instruments. Thus, it is rare, though not unknown, for members to be assigned to different instruments than they had initially in mind. I can still recall the experience of my oldest son Seth when he first joined his elementary school band. He wanted to play saxophone but all the sax positions were taken so his teachers convinced him to try the baritone horn (which at the time was bigger than
he was!) As a good sport, Seth took on the horn quite well and eventually moved onto the trombone, but his initial enthusiasm was dampened a bit by not having the instrument he originally preferred. Seth’s experience was not unique. Consider that of Grover Mitchell of the Count Basie Orchestra:

I really wanted a trumpet, but they assigned you ones they needed in their bands. They tried to stick me with a tuba. Finally, they gave me a trombone, because they said my arms were so long. I was 6 foot 3. I didn’t get into playing the trombone, though, until I heard Tommy Dorsey play it on the radio. (Scott, 1995, p.9-B)

Even within instrument sections, however, the differentiation of musical parts and status levels can affect, and be used by management to strengthen, motivation. Specifically, given the motivational (free rider) problems that stem from large, homogeneous groupings, ensembles can stimulate their players towards greater individual effort by differentiating their parts. Thus, a large violin section can be broken down into two or three subsections, each playing complementary but different musical lines. Since each of the subgroups is smaller, members’ contributions are easier to monitor, each player has greater individual impact, and free rider incentives are less severe. Naturally, this approach requires selection or adjustments to musical scores to permit such differentiation. Nonetheless, it is a strategy that can be used to maintain morale and effort within large instrument sections.

A related problem within larger musical ensembles is that some instrument sections play more prominent parts than others. Notably, lower register instruments such as basses or tubas, or percussion instruments, normally play supportive roles. As a result, they may receive less attention and become lax. But this problem may be ameliorated by appropriate differentiation of musical parts. Thus, musical pieces can be chosen, at least on occasion, to reverse the normal order and put supportive instruments in the spotlight. This is what the All-Star Excursion Band did in a concert at the Cleveland Museum of Art where the percussionists took the lead in singing the tune (Wolff, 1999).

An extension of this differentiation strategy is to ensure that opportunities for singular parts or solos are distributed throughout the ensemble so that players not normally in the spotlight have a chance to shine. This can be more of a problem for players of certain instruments than others:

...orchestral repertories of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries involve markedly larger cohorts of string players than they do of wind and brass players...While an oboist or trombonist aspires to be an orchestral musician, a large cohort of their string colleagues aspire to be the successors of Itzhak Perlman and the Guarneri Quartet...

...[But] while the wind, brass, and percussion players get to hear themselves in the orchestra as the performers of individual lines in a musical texture, the string players spend their lives submerged in choirs of sometimes dubious intonation. (Freeman, 1996b, p.13)
The irony here is that players of instruments normally in support roles may have a better chance to shine than players of lead instruments, simply because of the numbers involved in each instrument section.

Again, the strategy of distributing the glory depends on piece selection, but it is not uncommon for performances to highlight lower register and percussion instruments that normally play supportive roles. The model, for ensembles of modest size at least, is the small chamber group. In a 1987 performance, the Kronos Quartet appears to have achieved a standard wherein all players received individual attention in some manner:

Each player stood out as an individual Friday; along with the shared energy of commitment, one remembers especially the unusual intensity in tremolo of David Harrington (first violin), the emotional frankness of John Sherba (second violin) in his sudden solo in the Berg [Suite], the haunting moans and wails of the viola (Hank Dutt) in the Alfred Schnittke’s String Quartet No.1 and its evocatively handled “whistling” solo in the Sallinen, along with the unusually thoughtful and varied treatment of several contrasting pizzicato passages by Joan Jeanrenaud (cello). (Crutchfield, 1987a, p.49)

In ensembles that play popular music, there is much more flexibility in adjusting musical arrangements to share performance attention among different instruments. In jazz ensembles, of course, the practice of individual solos is well-developed and players of all instruments get their turn, including bass fiddles and drums.

In summary, the differentiation of ensembles into subgroups with specialized parts and periodic highlighting of the performance of subgroups or individual members who are normally not in the spotlight, may serve to significantly ameliorate the motivational problems associated with large, homogeneous, and supporting sections of the organization. The assignment of particular work tasks in an ensemble affects motivation in several other ways as well. It determines how well each player is matched to the work (instrument) that he or she enjoys. It also determines how well each player’s skills are matched to the level of difficulty of the task. While players normally want to be challenged and to play at the limits of their skills, assigning someone to first violin who is not yet capable of playing the more difficult parts for this position can lead to frustration and disillusionment.

**Status and Responsibility**

Introducing sub-groupings within homogeneous instrument sections creates new opportunities for differentiating individual status, responsibility and rewards within an ensemble. For example, to be a first violin rather than a second violin, or to be first or second chair in one’s section rather than a ninth or tenth chair, is a recognition of accomplishment, and the chair and subsection system serves as an incentive structure to motivate individual players towards higher levels of performance. But this system also has its limits and drawbacks:

A violinist or violist...may spend two hours every day practicing scales and orchestral passages, but as soon as he or she sits within the orchestra, other colleagues’ lack of
interest in careful preparation makes it difficult to determine if the practicing has accomplished anything. So long as a string player can aspire to a position on a higher stand, with the anticipation of a possibly higher salary, he or she may well practice diligently. But once a musician decides that he or she will never be promoted beyond the inside of the fourth stand and that it is unlikely that the conductor will ever hear poor playing, dull routine sets in, leading to less than satisfactory performance and to the visual appearance of men and women who no longer care about what they are doing. (Freeman, 1996b, p.13)

As with the system of blind auditions, the chair system can work both ways, depending on how it is managed and who belongs to the ensemble. For one thing, as Freeman observed, the system can be de-motivating if players give up on it. For another, the system can be used inappropriately in a punitive way by an autocratic music director. Nonetheless, if lower-chaired musicians are permitted to challenge occupants of higher chairs, and chairs are periodically reassigned through objective reevaluations, the inducement for the challenger to move up and the threat to the incumbent of demotion, may serve to spur each of these participants to maintain and improve their skills. However, without such periodic reevaluation, improved occupants of lower-ranked chairs or subsections may become frustrated and discouraged, while incumbents of higher chairs or subsections may become lax and complacent. There is also danger that too harsh a competitive system may injure the self-esteem and confidence of distinguished veterans. The challenge system seems to work well in ensembles of young players who revel in the competitive challenge and whose egos are resilient. It was a matter of great fun and excitement each time one of my children came home from school and announced a successful challenge for a higher chair; and it was fully expected that the honor might not survive the next round of competition.

But such a system is more problematic in a professional venue where careers hinge on status, recognition and respect, and where co-workers value a collegial relationship with one another. While the threat of reputation loss serves as a powerful incentive for longstanding veterans to maintain their high positions, actual experience of such losses can also have demoralizing consequences both for the veterans themselves and other ensemble members who fear being in that position in the future. This consideration argues for a system wherein incumbents maintain an edge in the competition but cannot be guaranteed their positions if performance differentials between incumbents and aspirants become too large. In any case, managerial judgment must determine the balance of status competition and respect for veterans that should prevail in such situations:

Like other American orchestras, now that mandatory retirement ages have been declared illegal, the Chicago Symphony has an abundance of superannuated musicians, an audible problem in the upper strings. Mr. Barenboim’s contract forbade him to fire anyone in his first two years as music director; now he is able, but disinclined to do so.

“I hope that a musician who has served an orchestra of this level for a long time has enough musical consciousness himself or herself to know that the time has come for
them to go,” he said. “You cannot really expect me or anybody else in my position to
go to somebody who has been playing in this orchestra for 40 years, giving the best of
themselves – their whole soul and body – and say, ‘Now you have to go because you are
not good enough anymore’. It should never arrive at that.” (Miller, 1994, p.27)

There is some evidence, of course, that excessive emphasis on status and
competition within ensembles of high professional achievement can be
counterproductive. As noted earlier, smaller chamber groups value their
egalitarian culture. And even in larger groups such as the Orpheus Chamber
Orchestra, the notions of hierarchy and status are dispiriting to these highly
accomplished, self-motivated players:

One of the great crises in the group’s history occurred in the early eighties, when one
violinist began to act like a virtual dictator every time she became concertmaster,
brushing aside all differences of opinion with maestro-like brusqueness. This was a
violation of the Orphian categorical imperative, and it led to an atmosphere of rancor
and tension. (Traub, 1996, p.104)

Intrinsic to the allocation of status and responsibility within an organization is
the distribution of authority and leadership. As with the differentiation of work
tasks and sharing of recognition, leadership can also be shared and distributed
within an organization. Sharing of top leadership responsibility is more common
in smaller groups where individuals can take charge of particular performance
pieces and the job of leader can rotate according to what piece is being played.
The Orpheus Chamber Orchestra has extended this idea to larger groups,
appointing a different concertmaster and different instrument section leaders for
each piece that it plays (Hackman, 2002). Indeed, there is no reason why, except
for the administrative complexity, entirely different assignments of chairs
throughout the ensemble cannot be made for different pieces or categories of
music; this would recognize, for example, that some players have more expertise in
Beethoven, while others are more masterful at Stravinsky. Such a system might
have important motivational benefits, endowing a substantial fraction of an
organization’s members with responsibility and recognition and helping to
overcome potential free-rider effects. However, such an approach can also be
tricky (e.g., by what process are assignments made?) as well as discouraging when
particular individuals are not capable of the responsibilities asked of them. Again,
the Orpheus experience speaks to this:

About fifteen years ago, two violinists were removed from the concertmaster rotation. It
was, Nardo Poy, a violist, recalls, “a very painful issue,” especially since the excluded
violinists had been with Orpheus from the outset. “We had to decide: Do we
accommodate people’s feelings, or do we accommodate the group’s wishes to have the
best leadership possible at all times?” On that occasion, the musical imperative won out
over the etiquette of group interaction. (Traub, 1996, p.104)

The alternative of centralized leadership under a strong musical director is
associated with ambiguous motivational consequences as well. Strong leaders of prestigious ensembles, because these ensembles represent unique employment opportunities for accomplished players, often have coercive power in their sticks. George Szell of the Cleveland Orchestra had a reputation as an autocrat who could browbeat his players into achieving magnificent results. But other leaders do manage to inspire their troops in less oppressive ways:

[Esa-Pekka Salonen]...leads with an assurance, dynamism and interpretive clarity that the musicians [of the Los Angeles Philharmonic] seem to find inspiring. And in virtually everything they played — particularly the Bartok Concerto for Orchestra and the Lutoslawski Symphony No.4 — they responded with a level of energy and excitement that one hears too rarely at orchestral performances. (Kozinn, 1994, p.B1)

Thus, inspirational central leadership cannot be dismissed as an important element of motivation. If conductors can articulate the ensemble’s vision and goals, and embody its spirit, they can often inspire their players to make their best contributions to the group. In orchestras, this extends beyond the conductor to the second in command, the concertmaster, as well. For example, Daniel Majeske, long time concertmaster of the Cleveland Orchestra was credited with maintaining the traditions of George Szell, long after that maestro’s tenure (Rosenberg, 2000).

Monitoring Performance

We have already touched on many of the ways in which performance is rewarded within ensembles and how these ways affect the proclivity of players to put forward their best efforts. The emphasis in this discussion has been on how ensembles can overcome the anonymity of large undifferentiated groups so that individuals can be induced, through rewards, recognition, or indeed by subtle or overt intimidation, into contributing their utmost to the collective product of the organization. The ways ensembles can do this are manifold. They can select self-motivated and talented players to begin with; they can assign the work in a manner that ensures that individuals are challenged and not frustrated, and hence derive intrinsic satisfaction from its performance; they can allocate status in a way that exploits players’ competitive spirits and drives for excellence; they can divide up responsibilities for tasks and leadership so that individuals and small groups receive appropriate attention and recognition of their individual efforts; and they can empower leadership with the opportunity to inspire excellence and discourage substandard performance.

One reason that these various approaches work is that they offer players individualized rewards for contributing to the collective good of the organization. Thus, solo opportunities and status positions are examples of the “selective incentives” that Olson (1965) recommended to overcome the free-rider problem. But an equally important reason, also emphasized in principal-agent theory, is that they improve the ability of organizational leadership to monitor individual performance more closely so that individual contributions to the collective good
can be isolated and identified. This is an obvious prerequisite to implementing individualized, selective rewards or penalties. Thus, individuals, not groups, compete for entry into the organization or for advancement to higher status positions; and auditions and chair-competitions provide leaders with the chance to evaluate players one at a time. Differentiating musical assignments and assigning solo parts also puts the spotlight on individuals, so that leaders can more easily determine, in practice or in concert, who is contributing what to overall performance. And decentralizing leadership, through section chairs, or sharing leadership through rotating positions, brings the monitor into closer range with individual members who are being observed as they perform their parts.

Strategic Balances in Achieving Motivation

Musical ensembles illustrate many ways for organizations to structure their practices and incentives so that individual interests become better aligned with overall organizational needs and players are motivated to put forward their best efforts. Nonetheless, ensembles also reveal some interesting tensions that arise in finding the appropriate combinations of motivational strategies. One of these tensions is the degree to which ensembles rely on centralized leadership and hierarchical structure versus more collegial arrangements. Another is the degree to which they rely on competition as a motivational strategy compared to cooperation and sharing.

Hierarchy and Central Leadership

As noted in the previous movement, hierarchical arrangements and central leadership arise as efficient means of coordinating the work of members of larger ensembles. Without designated leadership and division of authority, larger groups can become chaotic and difficult to keep on track. The motivational consequences of this management approach are more ambiguous, however. Formal, authoritative leaders can be inspirational and supportive, fair in their dealings and constructive in their guidance, lifting the spirits of group members and urging them on to make their best efforts. Moreover, a formal leadership structure – with subgroup and section leaders, a concertmaster and a conductor – can serve as ladder of opportunity containing incentives for members of the ensemble to excel so that they may be considered for future advancement. These motivational benefits of leadership and hierarchy are obviously more relevant to larger groups in which extended hierarchies are possible and where formal leadership is needed to address coordination problems. In some cases, such advancement is successful and in other cases it is not. Eugene Ormandy and Leonard Bernstein are well known for launching their conducting careers by successfully exploiting opportunities to fill in for ill conductors at short notice (Goodman, 1985b). Other, such as Maurizio Pollini, the Italian pianist, have had less successful experiences trying to make the leap to the rostrum (Holland, 1985).
To a certain degree, coercive or overbearing authoritarian leadership may succeed in eliciting greater effort from group members. George Szell was ruthless in his demands on Cleveland Orchestra players and in making personnel changes until he got what he wanted. But he was an inspired genius who had a clear vision for achieving excellence, and those who signed on and remained loyal to him gave their best and shared, at least vicariously, in his glory (Rosenberg, 2000). Still, formal leadership and hierarchy can also be demotivating if it is sufficiently oppressive and if it displaces individuals' sense of responsibility for the organization as a whole. If members of the Cleveland Orchestra lived in fear of George Szell and if they knew they had few alternatives for employment in such a prestigious organization, they had no choice but to respond to his scowls and do their best to satisfy his demands. However, many would argue that there is a limit to which such an approach can motivate and inspire better playing. The source of this limit is the fact that a top-down, command and control, hierarchy may not be able to take advantage of the inner resources of talented organization members. This appears to be a particular problem in symphony orchestras:

This arrangement makes matters awkward for the orchestral musician who desires to improve the quality of the orchestral product. The musician must not challenge the conductor's tempi or interpretation; he or she cannot even suggest that there might be a pitch or ensemble problem, much less how the conductor might fix it. (Levine, 1996, p.18)

If, as Michael Haber of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra describes it, a symphony orchestra operates like "one brain and two hundred hands", then the enthusiasm players bring to their performances will be limited to that of automata - responding to the stimulus of the brain (conductor) but bringing to bear none of their own inspiration or enthusiasm (Rosenberg, 1996). Worse than that, lack of control by musicians in an orchestra can lead to player stress:

During rehearsals or concerts, musicians experience a total lack of control over their environment. They do not control when the music starts, when the music ends, or how the music goes. They don't even have the authority to leave the stage to attend to personal needs. They are, in essence, rats in a maze, at the whim of the god with the baton....Extensive research has demonstrated that lack of control is a major cause of stress. (Levine, 1996. p.20)

Individual enthusiasm can be more effectively engaged if ensemble members have some control and assume responsibility for themselves. As Alfred Brendel observed, one of the elements of success of the Orpheus ensemble is "...the responsibility that each player takes for the entire score, and not just his own part" (Traub, 1996, p.104). That general sense of responsibility for the organization's overall performance is jeopardized when leadership is given over completely to dominant individuals with formal leadership authority, and players are absolved of it.

The question then becomes - under what circumstances will de-emphasis of
formal leadership and hierarchical arrangements bring motivational benefits? The answer appears to hinge on two key variables – size and level of professionalism. Size obviously affects the feasibility of running an organization informally and democratically. As the Orpheus ensemble has found, ways can be devised to decentralize and share leadership responsibilities in a fairly large group, certainly one on the order of two dozen individuals. Larger groups require greater formalization, but leadership styles and strategies can also be shaped so that members’ alienation is minimized. Indeed, even in a formally organized hierarchy the organization chart can be turned upside down so that the conductor becomes a servant of the players rather than the other way around, i.e., a reversal of who is principal and who is agent. This reflects the experience of the Colorado Symphony which was recently reorganized as a musician-controlled organization in which the music director became, in effect, an employee of the players. The Vienna Philharmonic and the London Symphony Orchestra are also self-governing in this way. They operate without a music director and engage their own visiting conductors. In such arrangements, the many players do delegate their authority to the (current contracted) leader for operational purposes, but they maintain a sense of ultimate control and individual welfare.

It remains a question, however, as to what kinds of organizations can best derive motivational benefits from nonhierarchical arrangements. This hinges on the issue of responsibility as well as maturity. Musicians of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra or the Colorado Symphony are highly skilled professionals who can inspire each other and are capable of making or evaluating the technical and creative decisions required of their ensembles. The same would not necessarily be true of an amateur group or a student ensemble. In these cases, an effective leader serves the important functions of teaching, inspiring, coaching, encouraging and indeed disciplining members towards their best efforts. This carries over even into the professional realm:

...if instrumentalists make mistakes it is not because they want to but because they don’t understand or have difficulties; so you must help them to overcome them...when you are conducting an orchestra you have to match your approach to the temperament of the players... (Judy, 1996b, p.35 quoting Pierre Boulez)

The propensity and talent of the leader to teach thus has much to do with whether the hierarchy has discouraging or inspirational consequences.

In summary, the questions of hierarchy and formal leadership hinge on comparing the benefits of potentially inspirational, encouraging and supportive central leadership that may emerge under a formalized approach, with the motivational energy that can be released when ensemble members assume responsibility for themselves. The latter appears more likely to dominate in smaller organizations and ones in which members have achieved high levels of competence and professional achievement.
Musical ensembles also have mixed experiences with competitive and collaborative approaches to managing their personnel. Clearly, ensembles depend critically on close cooperation among their members, and members must encourage and inspire each other if the best group performance is to be achieved. Yet, ensembles also utilize competitive strategies to spur their personnel – competitive auditions, competition for seats in a section, competition for solo parts, and competition for leadership of sections. Clearly both competition and cooperation can have positive and negative motivational effects. Reliance on cooperation always runs the risk that individuals will slacken their efforts and not carry their fair shares of the load. But cooperation and collaboration can inspire and provide the mutual supports that individuals may need to put forward their best efforts. Alternatively, reliance on competition runs the risk of building resentment or frustration among losers, and undermining cooperation between colleagues where that cooperation is critically needed. Yet, competition appeals directly to individuals’ self-interests and can potentially draw out individuals’ best efforts.

Again, the most effective balance of cooperative and competitive strategy appears to depend on circumstances. In smaller ensembles, competition may be unnecessary and destructive. In a quintet or an octet, everyone knows and can hear each other, and social pressure will operate to spur each individual towards his or her best effort and towards working well together. Creating permanent rankings or statuses in such small groups may stir resentments that can easily flare into conflicts and confrontations when individuals work in close quarters with one another. Even where skill levels are differentiated and the score requires allocation of musical parts of differing prominence among the players, the practices of rotating leadership from piece to piece and sharing the solo opportunities recommend themselves.

Small ensembles can make good use of competitive strategy at the audition stage, however. A small ensemble is a select group by its very nature, and when it comes time to recruit new members, existing members can be jointly involved in overseeing a rigorous competition for entry into the group. Once selected, the new member can feel that he or she has earned the respect of existing members and can be accepted into the collaborative milieu thereafter.

Within larger ensembles, competitive strategies become more attractive. Opportunities for advancement come more frequently in larger groups so that losers in one round of competition can look forward to bettering themselves at a later stage. Moreover, competitive approaches have the advantage in large groups of introducing an important element of objectivity into decisions about individual reward and recognition. While competition for chairs and solo parts must be judged by someone, they may be less subject to perceptions of favoritism if formalized into competitive procedures with established rules and criteria.

As noted earlier, competitive procedures may also work better in situations where egos are less easily bruised or where downside risks can be minimized. For example, in ensembles consisting of members with distinguished reputations,
holders of high status positions must be displaced with dignity and rewarded in alternate ways for their good service. This is necessary not only to maintain the morale of the displaced individuals, but for the entire membership of the ensemble as well. Individuals want to feel that they work for a compassionate and sensitive organization, and that they too will be treated with appropriate fairness and respect in such circumstances.

Priorities and Tradeoffs

As for coordination, it is clear that an organization can employ various combinations of strategies to motivate its participants. In this movement, we have identified a variety of motivational strategies: recruiting self-motivated players; designing work assignments that provide opportunities for players to shine; providing incentives to achieve higher status; sharing leadership responsibilities; monitoring and rewarding performance; and emphasizing pride in collective achievement of the ensemble as a whole. In general, all organizations can benefit from these strategies. Motivation will improve as more highly motivated participants are selected; as work assignments provide more opportunities for individual recognition; as greater opportunities exist for individual advancement and status; as leadership is shared more widely; as individual performance is monitored and connected with individual rewards; and as collective achievement inspires all participants. Again, however, ensembles facing different circumstances are able to exploit these strategies to varying degrees. Hence, the emphasis they put on each of them will necessarily differ from one type of ensemble to another.

Following the themes of the previous movement, we have considered a variety of organizational circumstances affecting motivation in this movement: size, heterogeneity, professionalism, instability and task complexity. The matrix in Table 2.1 is a variant of the one presented in Table 1.1 in the last movement, for a variety of ensemble stereotypes that face different motivational challenges. The stereotypical big band jazz orchestra, typical of those in the 1930s and '40s, was moderate in size—fairly large, but smaller than a full sized classical orchestra. It contained a variety of instruments, including woodwinds, brass, and percussion. Typically, it employed professional musicians, some of whom would be regulars and others who would also have other jobs and might come and go. The task at hand was a complex one, involving fairly intricate parts for each instrument section, including improvised passages, as well as weaving together of the contributions of different instrument sections. The suggested analog is a university which consists of diverse disciplinary departments staffed by professional faculty and some part-time adjunct faculty. The teaching of each discipline is a complex task, and integration of multiple, disciplinary curricula into the overall educational plans of students with different majors and minors, is also complex. The motivational challenge is largely to engage participants in a menu of work that is challenging and interconnected, but in a manner that maintains
flexibility and room for individual achievement, and causes a minimum of frustration.

The tubafest is a periodic (usually annual) event consisting of many (sometimes hundreds) of mostly amateur participants all playing variants of the tuba, including sousaphones, tubas, and baritone horns. Although there are many regulars in these events, many others participate from time to time. The music played in tubafests is usually simple, to accommodate the variety of skill levels, and to celebrate certain community themes such as the winter holiday period. The suggested analog is a student protest movement which also can be large, amateur, communal, involve diverse participants, and must focus on basic tasks like holding a rally or a march. The essential motivational challenge is to keep participants enthusiastic and contributing, given the large diverse group, the collective nature of the output, and the limits to providing individual rewards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.1 Ensemble Attributes and Motivation</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>size</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big band jazz orchestra</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tubafest</td>
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<tr>
<td>College wind ensemble</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men's church choir</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbershop quartet</td>
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The college wind ensemble is something like the professional jazz orchestra in its size and heterogeneity. However, its participants are more transient, have lower levels of training and face a more structured set of tasks, since the music is generally more formal and calls less frequently for improvisation. Players in the wind ensemble are students who generally are volunteers although some may be required to play in the ensemble as part of the curriculum for their music majors. Over time, student turnover reflects a relatively unstable work force. The suggested analog is a retail department store which has various departments with sales people who are trained in the individual requirements of their particular product inventories as well as in store-wide procedures. Here, vagaries of the labor market and the limits of long term career opportunities cause the workforce to be relatively transient. Tasks are relatively straightforward and specified by written procedures. The essential motivational challenge for this type of organization is to maintain the interest and dedication of participants in light of the high turnover and
the structured nature of the tasks at hand.

The men's church choir is relatively large, homogeneous, and transient, though perhaps less extreme in these dimensions than the tubafest. It also consists of mainly amateur players singing relatively simple music. The suggested analog is a government license bureau where officials at every station are responsible for doing the same tasks of issuing certain kinds of licenses according to pre-specified requirements. All of the license bureau employees share in the overall reputation of the bureau, just as members of the choir derive satisfaction from the collective output of their singing. The essential motivational challenge here is to motivate individuals within a milieu that makes it difficult to recognize individual effort and achievement.

The barbershop quartet is a very small organization, with a relatively homogeneous internal composition — although there is clear differentiation of roles within the context of male voice ranges. Typically, participants are dedicated amateurs singing relatively simple and straightforward music. Moreover, the group tends to be stable with little turnover among participants. The suggested analog is a small neighborhood law firm whose partners work together on cases. Each partner has expertise on particular aspects of the law and cases are relatively common and straightforward. The essential challenge is to motivate individuals while maintaining the egalitarian milieu which all participants value.

As in the previous movement, none of these stereotypes is completely characteristic of their musical counterparts in the real world, nor are the suggested nonmusical analogs exact. Again, however, they are useful for prioritizing motivational strategies best suited to organizations that resemble each stereotype. Table 2.2 suggests priorities among alternative motivational strategies for each ensemble stereotype. The matrix suggests that different types of ensembles will tend to rely on substantially different combinations of motivational strategies. The big band jazz orchestra is large and diverse enough to substantially motivate players by the promise of more prominent work assignments, e.g. solos and more prominent parts within instrument sections. It can also easily monitor and reward players for their performance. Changes in status can accompany changes in work assignments. Over the long term, recruitment can play a role as an important strategy for achieving and maintaining a motivated workforce. Recruitment can become even more effective if the ensemble as a whole has acquired a good reputation for its overall performance, hence attracting players seeking a prestigious and challenging place to work. However, the relatively large and diverse, transient, individualistic character of the ensemble makes it more difficult to rely on pride of collective achievement or sharing of leadership responsibilities as primary motivational devices.

The tubafest is substantially different. It is so large, homogeneous and lacking in professional characteristics that few of the conventional motivational strategies can be effective. Opportunities for monitoring and rewarding individual performance, sharing leadership or offering status incentives are few. To a certain extent work assignments can be crafted to help motivate individuals to contribute and improve themselves — for example, by breaking down the group into sections.
with parts of differing prominence. Even greater reliance can be put on recruitment of motivated players. Tubafests tend to be open enrollment affairs with little control over who participates, but those who do participate tend to do so out of self-motivation. In this context, management can be pro-active in identifying and recruiting potential players who might not be aware of the opportunity and who might bring both enthusiasm and skill to the ensemble. Finally, it is the irony of an ensemble like a tubafest, that despite its large size, and hence the inability of its individual players to claim much of the credit for the ensemble’s overall performance, that the ensemble may have to rely primarily on pride of collective performance as the key to motivation. Individuals participate voluntarily because they want to be part of the larger whole, and they get their kicks from the festive environment and from hearing what 500 tubas trying to play together actually sound like. Management that can focus the attention of the group on this collective milieu and achievement may have the most success in motivating individual players.

Table 2.2 Motivation Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>recruitment</th>
<th>work assignments</th>
<th>status incentives</th>
<th>sharing leadership</th>
<th>monitoring and rewarding performance</th>
<th>pride in collective achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Big band jazz orchestra</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tubafest</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College wind ensemble</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s church choir</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber-shop quartet</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a transient and selective group, with participants coming in and leaving every year, the college wind ensemble can put substantial emphasis on recruiting motivated players. Moreover, as a fairly large and formal ensemble with substantially differentiated parts, it can also utilize work assignments (i.e., more or less prominent parts), monitoring and rewarding of individual performance, and allocation of status (first and second chairs, etc.) as effective devices to manage motivation. Although school spirit may be invoked, motivating through pride of collective achievement is more difficult because the group keeps changing composition and because participation is only one of many activities and responsibilities undertaken by individual students. Finally, motivation through shared leadership is difficult because the ensemble is basically part of an instructional regime in which the faculty leader must maintain essential authority
and cannot easily delegate that authority.

The men's church choir is a communal organization in which participants are motivated less by private than collective factors. Thus, pride in a job well done is the immediate key to maintaining motivation while recruiting individuals with a communal spirit is the primary avenue for ensuring motivation over time. By sharing leadership responsibilities in the ensemble, credit for performance can be spread around, reinforcing the group spirit. Given the communal character and the size and homogeneity of the group, allocating work assignments, monitoring and rewarding performance, and offering status incentives, are less effective motivational strategies for this type of ensemble.

Finally, the barbershop quartet is obviously a very small and also egalitarian ensemble in which there are few opportunities to motivate through status incentives or the formal monitoring and rewarding of performance. (Performance monitoring happens more or less automatically through the close interaction and inevitable mutual feedback among the players.) In addition, since turnover is likely to be very low, and disruptive when it occurs, recruitment is not a strategy that can be extensively utilized either. Promoting pride in collective achievement of the group is effective since each participant can claim a substantial fraction of the credit. Moreover, sharing of leadership responsibilities can enhance this mutual claim of credit for performance. Finally, it is interesting that even in an ensemble this small, differentiation of skills (voice registers) and parts allows for effective use of work assignments as a motivational strategy. Overall repertoire can be shaped, and individual performance pieces chosen, to favor those who are contributing most.

Case Studies

Melville House, a small, institutional program for troubled teenage boys, opened on Long Island in 1972 (Young, 1985). It was staffed and managed by a small group of five close colleagues with complementary mental health, social work and business skills, all of whom believed that better and more innovative programming was needed to help teenage boys with severe behavioral problems. Three of the five members of the group had been professional staff members in a local state mental hospital, where they developed their concepts and understanding of the problems facing troubled boys.

Motivation was an extremely important dimension of Melville’s survival and early success. The members of the group had decided that the array of services heretofore provided by the state were inadequate and they were determined to challenge those services with something new. Yet, they required public funding to make a go of it. Not surprisingly, many bureaucratic barriers were thrown in their path, including difficulties in finding appropriate housing property in a local community that would tolerate their program and clientele; obtaining approval from governmental regulatory bodies for bringing their group home up to code; securing necessary licenses; and remaining financially solvent during periods of
delay between state reimbursements; and so on. Most of the team members had easier, more secure and more financially rewarding jobs before undertaking Melville House. They needed to make up in internal motivation what was lacking in external encouragement.

As an organization, Melville resembled a small chamber group with differentiated instrumentation, such as a string quintet. The different skills of its staff complemented one another, they enjoyed working together, they believed in the same organizational mission, and they relished the mutual challenge of undertaking a new and difficult repertoire. While there was some sense of seniority and deference within the ensemble as a result of different levels of experience, education and age, the group functioned as a team, held together by mutual respect and genuine affection, rather than a formal authority structure.

The members of the Melville team could be described as highly motivated, and that motivation was maintained by the sharing, collaborative milieu that they had established, rather than formal structural mechanisms. Perhaps of greatest importance, all members of the team shared a collective pride of achievement. What Melville House accomplished in helping troubled boys was indivisible, with substantial credit and pride accruing to all of the ensemble members. Also of great importance was the fact that each member of this ensemble had a rewarding work assignment, i.e., a prominent part to play reflecting his or her particular skills. Moreover, the members of the ensemble shared leadership – depending on the task at hand, one or the other team member could take the lead and had the opportunity to excel and receive recognition. By contrast, more formal organizational mechanisms played a much smaller motivational role: there was little formal monitoring and documentation of each others’ performance; there was no explicit recruitment program to attract new team members or discharge ones that did not perform, and there were no formal promotional or incentive programs through which members of the team could achieve greater status. In keeping with its likeness to a small chamber group, Melville House’s success in motivating its players relied on egalitarian measures that promoted mutual respect and recognition, and pride of collective accomplishment. As evidence of its success in exploiting these motivational strategies especially appropriate to small chamber groups, Melville House faced a dilemma after six years of operation in connection with whether the organization should expand its services and pursue a growth strategy. The members of the ensemble knew that becoming an orchestra rather than a chamber group would substantially change the character of the organization and require a new regime to maintain its high level of mutual dedication and enthusiasm.

The Salvation Army is also an organization that could be described as embodying high motivational levels of its members (Watson and Brown, 2001). But the Salvation Army is a large organization, more like a full symphony orchestra than a chamber group. It encompasses large numbers of paid employees and volunteers. As such it relies more on formal organizational mechanisms for motivation, especially: systematic recruitment of like-minded individuals who derive meaning and satisfaction in the religious beliefs and the self-sacrificing
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values of Salvation Army members; reinforcement of those religious and organizational values through educational programming; formal systems of goal setting and evaluation to assess performance and to promote individuals to positions of greater responsibility and status; and certainly strong central authority – based on a long tradition of charismatic and visionary leadership dating back to the 19th century.

While the latter may be the primary motivating mechanisms, the Salvation Army also engages some of the strategies of a chamber group – especially building collective pride in the achievements of the organization as a whole, and (recently) undertaking decentralization so as to create local work situations that allow for individual creativity and risk taking, and sharing of overall organizational leadership responsibility.

Perhaps the best analog for the Salvation Army, in terms of motivational issues, would be a community-based symphony orchestra. Much of its workforce is (initially at least) amateur, indeed volunteer, and even the professional core staff have been attracted to the organization because of their beliefs and love of the concept rather than any established record of virtuosity or sophistication in their working skills. Thus, the Salvation Army is able to motivate by attending primarily to their members’ emotional satisfaction while providing modestly for their basic material needs and financial security. Still, the size and complexity of this organization requires that motivational systems be put in place that play to the particular values and rewards of its constituents. It is an army with a heart, but it is still an army which depends on informed central leadership to implement appropriate, formal motivational strategies.

Diagnosing An Organization

As in the last movement, it is useful to ask: what kind of musical ensemble does my organization of interest most closely resemble? In connection with motivational issues, is it like a jazz orchestra, a tubafest, a college wind ensemble, a men’s church choir, a barbershop quarter or some other type of ensemble? With a comfortable metaphor in mind, one can proceed to construct an appropriate row in each of the two matrices of Tables 2.1 and 2.2, by first describing the circumstances under which the organization operates (Table 2.1), and then considering the priorities these circumstances require for employing a particular combination of coordination strategies (Table 2.2), just as we have done for the stereotype ensembles above. Again, different ensemble metaphors may be needed to describe different parts of the organization. The repair shop in an automobile dealership may be more like a jazz orchestra while the sales department may more closely resemble a men’s church choir. Indeed, large organizations are often complex and multi-faceted and may benefit from this kind of analysis at multiple levels.

The matrix analysis should yield a general sense of the nature of the organization’s motivational issues and the appropriate emphases to be put on
alternative motivation strategies. Whether the focus is on a particular part of the organization, or on the organization as a whole, it will also be helpful to ask more detailed questions about the fundamental conditions that create motivational challenges in the organization, and the combinations of motivation strategies that best apply to its particular circumstances. The experiences of musical ensembles suggest that the following questions are appropriate for diagnosing and resolving motivational issues, bearing in mind that each organization is different and solutions will vary accordingly.

First, certain areas of an organization will be more vulnerable to motivational problems than others. In order to focus on these areas, managers can ask themselves the following questions:

- Which parts of the organization feature relatively large numbers of workers doing similar kinds of work?
- Which parts of the organization have high turnover or depend on part-timers, consultants or other auxiliary workers?
- Which parts of the organization are dependent on workers who are not tied into professional career tracks?
- Which parts of the organization are responsible for supportive work where slippage is less noticeable?
- In which parts of the organization are worker skill levels mismatched with the difficulty of the work?
- In which parts of the organization is the work highly programmed and limited in the degree to which workers have discretion or can use their own creativity?

Parts of the organization that meet one or more of these criteria are likely to be the ones most vulnerable to motivational problems and which merit managerial scrutiny. With the potential targets identified, management can then ask itself about the applicability of a variety of strategies and solutions that ensembles employ:

- Can departments or sections be broken down into smaller groups, and can work within sections be further differentiated and individualized?
- Are there ways to allow more individuals to stand out through “solo” opportunities or leadership on particular projects or functions?
- Can the skills and preferences of workers be more precisely matched to their work assignments?
- Can additional ways be found to recognize and reward the contributions of individual workers?
- Are there ways to make the work more interesting or to give workers more discretion in shaping it?
- Can more robust advancement ladders be developed within large departments?
- Are there ways to highlight the work of supporting departments or to develop
projects where members of supporting departments have more prominent roles?

– Can the organization as a whole reshape its agenda so that work becomes more interesting and challenging or less frustrating?

– Can worker recruitment processes be improved to attract individuals better matched to the work at hand, more self-motivated, more attuned to the mission of the organization, and more comfortable working in teams?

– Can leaders be selected who can inspire by example and will not discourage or cause resentment among workers through autocratic behavior?

– Can leaders do a better job of articulating the vision and goals of the ensemble in a manner that inspires its players to contribute to its collective achievement?