

WorkStyle Preferences and Positions of People in Organizations

PATTERNS[®]



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Over the past two decades, top management has increasingly expected middle managers to coordinate projects and people. This shift toward supervisory work and away from organizational influencing of goals and directions has left many middle managers feeling confused and unappreciated.

Maradell Peters, McFletcher consultant, notes, "Middle management is comprised largely of people who have invested their entire careers in their companies. During the volatile late 80s and early 90s when the going got rough, supervisory activities got bumped up to middle managers, and have so remained, because of their proven loyalty, expertise and experience." Four factors drove this shift in middle management's role:

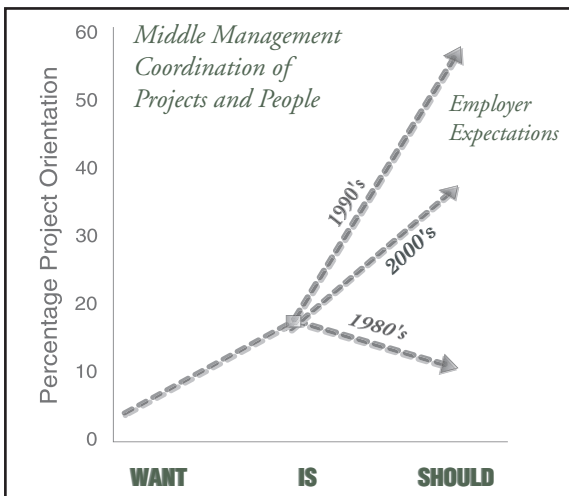
- Restructuring eliminated supervisory positions
- Cross-functional and integrated work required tighter coordination
- Short-term crisis management overshadowed strategic activities
- Supervisory skills training disappeared

MISALIGNMENT BETWEEN WORKSTYLE PREFERENCES and EXPECTATIONS -

A Lonely Role!

STILL

Although employers expect middle managers to coordinate projects and supervise people to a high degree, this group shows no preference for these activities, nor do they actually carry out these activities to any greater degree than do others. As reported in our Patterns Brief, *We're*



SUPERVISION ACTIVITIES "BUMPED UP" TO MIDDLE MANAGEMENT

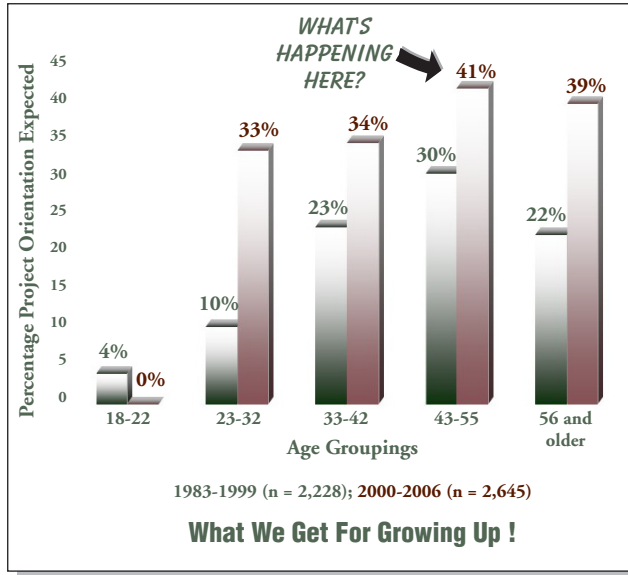
- Facilitate* cross-functional work
- Guide* employee involvement
- Monitor* for customer satisfaction
- Share* information
- Schedule* work priorities
- Train* employees and suppliers
- Coordinate* with others
- Inform* for process improvements



All In the Integration Spin, the modern workplace requires a tremendous amount of integration. Yet few choose to actually coordinate either projects or people. Organizations around the world can attest to the resulting losses of momentum, opportunity, productivity, and business.

"MIDDLE MANAGERS ARE TRULY IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS GROWING DEMAND FOR INTEGRATION!"

over



Age-related Expectations ^{STILL} Add to the Integration Spin

Similar to those in middle management positions, those who fall within the 43 to 55 year-old age bracket, regardless of position or management level, are expected to coordinate and supervise to a high degree. And, in the mid-2000's, this dynamic continues.

What can organizations do to satisfy their need for integration while using the workforce's preferences and experience base? First, consider the value that middle managers and seasoned members offer in guiding the organization's direction and providing leadership for this new millennium. Then, explore ways to satisfy supervisory requirements other than "bumping up" that role to middle management or veteran performer levels. **The companion Patterns Brief, *Stay on Top of It*, will give you a wealth of options for aligning integration needs through new roles, structures and technologies.**



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Call, fax, e-mail, or look us up on the web to learn about McFletcher's products and processes which create new ways to integrate projects and people.
A consultation without obligation is available.

Ask for the companion Patterns Briefs!

The McFletcher Corporation is a pioneer in the concept and practice of Work Alignment and a recognized resource for workforce and workplace trends. The WorkStyle Patterns® Database study referred to in this brief included 17,238 employed individuals from a variety of North American industries and professions.

