The Three Lenses

Managerial Psychology

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John S. Carroll

Strategic Design Lens

Political Lens

Cultural Lens
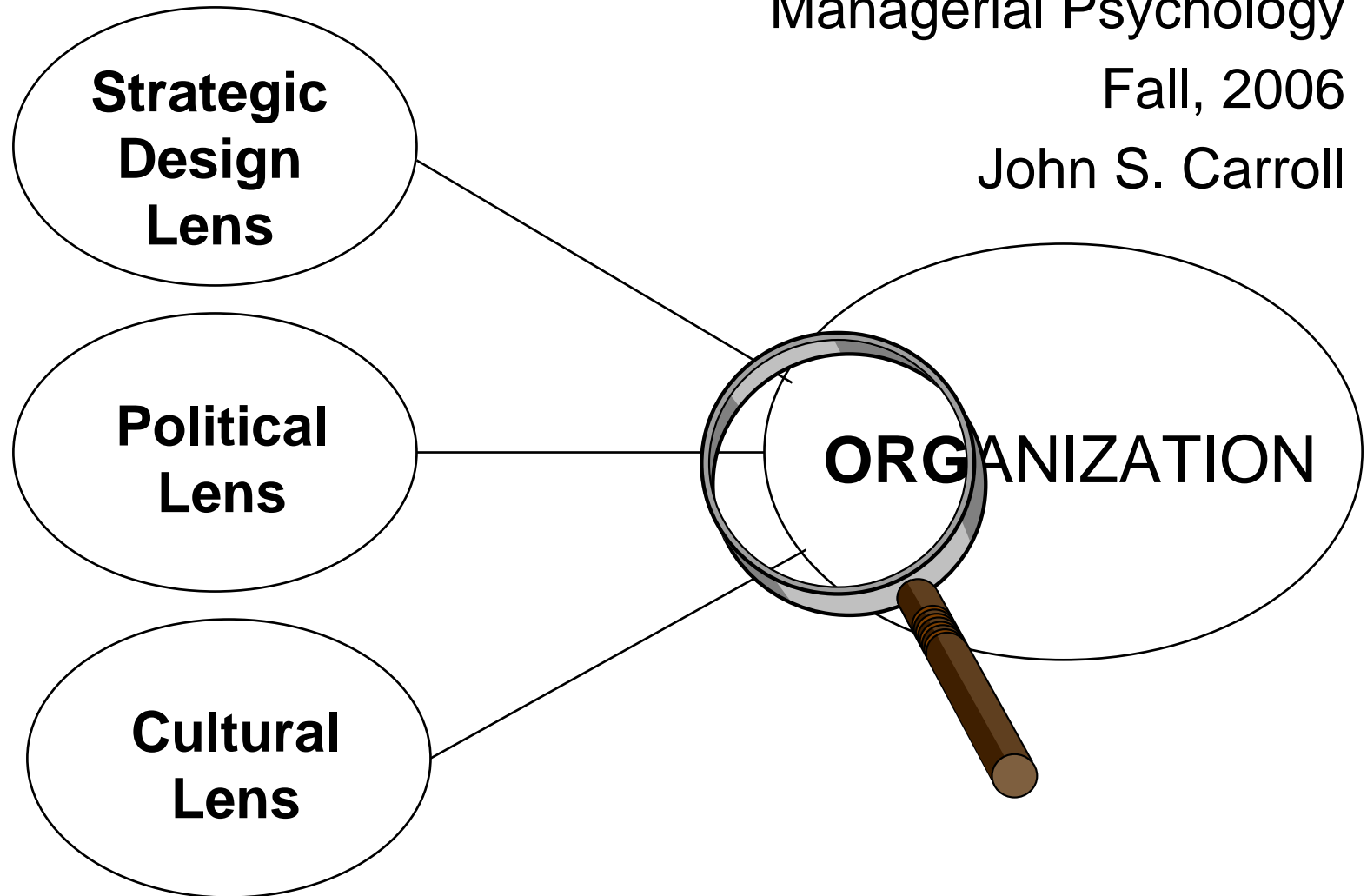
ORGANIZATION

Goals For Today

- Introduce the idea that organizations are a context for managerial psychology: human behavior depends on situations

- Introduce the Three Lenses, which form the framework for our MBA course, and will surface in our course from time to time

- Think about some examples of organizations and how they can be understood in multiple ways
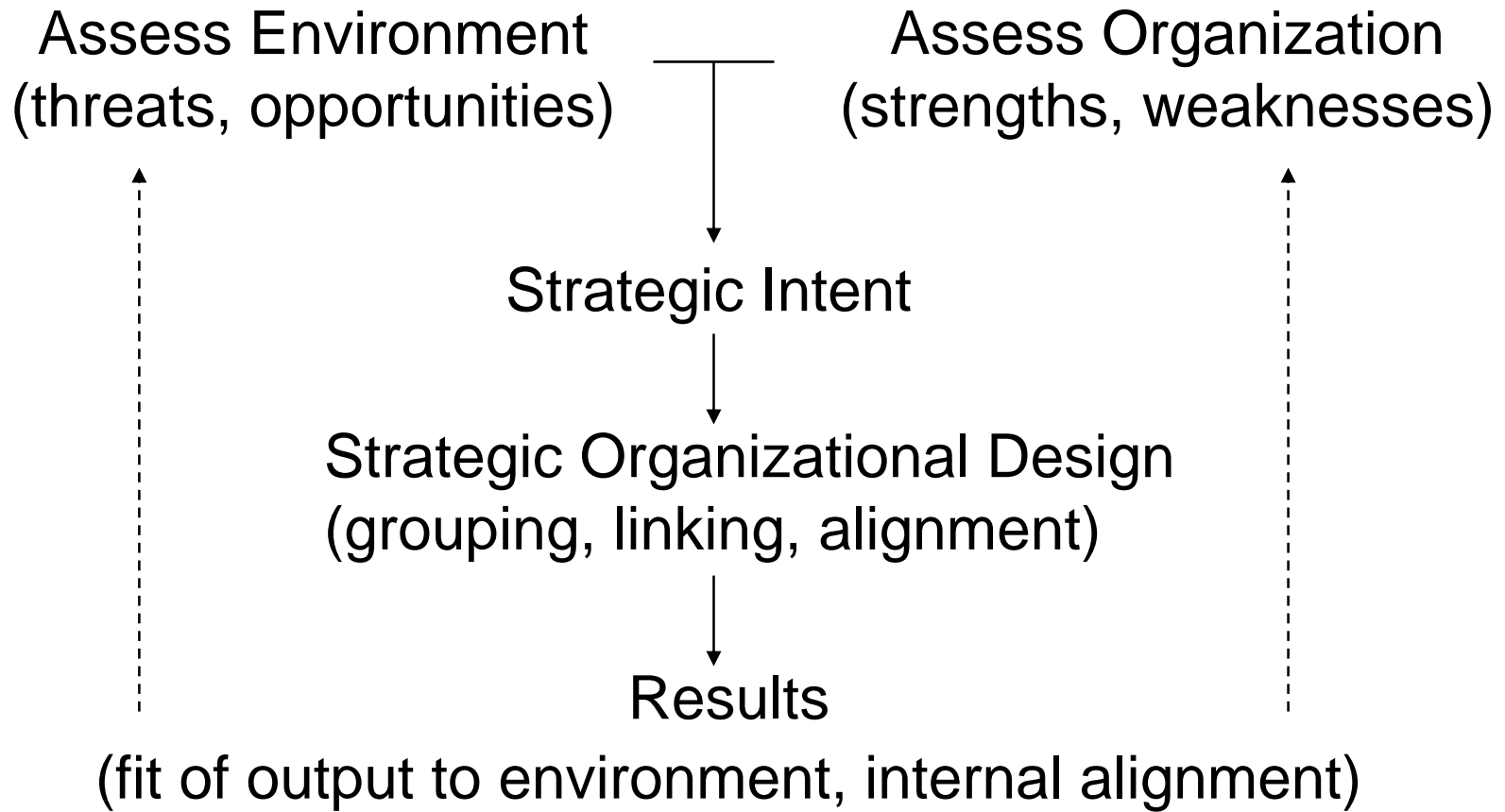
What's An Organization?

- A machine?

- An organism?

- A community?

- A distributed intelligence?

- A battlefield?

  Many different metaphors, theories and frameworks from the social sciences

Strategic Design Lens

- <u>Model</u>: organizations are designed (engineered) to achieve agreed-upon goals
- <u>Key processes</u>: grouping (formal structure), linking, alignment, fit to environment
- <u>Key concepts</u>: goal-directed, tasks, roles, information flows, interdependence
- <u>Leader</u>: strategist, designer, architect
- <u>Drivers of change</u>: lack of fit to environment, internal lack of alignment

Processes in Strategic Design

Assess Environment
(threats, opportunities)

Assess Organization
(strengths, weaknesses)

Strategic Intent

Strategic Organizational Design
(grouping, linking, alignment)

Results

(fit of output to environment, internal alignment)

Example: MIT

- MIT is a "matrix" organization with academic departments in schools but also labs and centers reporting separately
- MIT balances strategic goals of scientific discovery and student learning, along with more tactical objectives such as raising money and attracting top faculty and students
- Recent reorganizations: ESD, Bioengineering
- Linkage via meetings, Faculty Senate, committees, task force and other reports, SAP accounting
- Alignment through plans, performance measures, salary and promotion, faculty tenure

Is Strategic Design Enough?

- The basic idea of strategic design is "get people with the right knowledge and give them appropriate tasks to do and sufficient information to accomplish the organizational goals"

- But, how do you know the *right knowledge* if you are doing new things? How do you know who has the knowledge or the *ability to learn* and create? Who decides what is *sufficient information*? What are the *organization's goals* and what do I do if *my goals* are different? Why should I care? Who is actually in charge?

Political Lens

- <u>Model</u>: organizations are contests for power and autonomy among internal stakeholders
- <u>Key processes</u>: conflict, negotiation, coalition building
- <u>Key concepts</u>: power, influence, networks, autonomy, interests, dominant coalition
- <u>Leader</u>: coalition builder, negotiator
- <u>Drivers of change</u>: shifts in power of stakeholders (can be influenced by changes in design, environment, or strategy)

Example: MIT

- Stakeholders include faculty, students, administration, research staff, other staff, alumni, parents, Cambridge…

- Interests can diverge, e.g., does teaching reinforce research or compete for time?

- Conflict management by representative committees, voting, hierarchy

- Sources of power are money (tuition, grants), scientific prestige, position,…

Cultural Lens

- <u>Model</u>: organizations are shared mental maps, identities, assumptions
- <u>Key processes</u>: meaning and interpretation, attribution, "taken for granted" (cognitive), "invested with value" (normative)
- <u>Key concepts</u>: artifacts, symbols, myths, values, assumptions, identities, subcultures
- <u>Leader</u>: symbol of the culture, shaper of the culture, articulator of symbols and vision
- <u>Drivers of change</u>: challenges to basic assumptions, new interpretations

Example: MIT

- Artifacts: map, course numbers, building numbers, seal, ring, corridors, hacks, myths, other patterns of behavior

- Values: technology, invention, hard work, no frills, equality, "mind and hand"

- Assumptions: Be #1, Take Care of Yourself (only the strong survive), Work Is Most Important (and Quant Is Real Work), Rules Are Made To Be Broken, Cooperation

So What? Using The Lenses

- Diagnosing organizations
- Leading a team
- Leading change
- Developing yourself for a career
- Why do consultants get paid so much?
  - Smart people can be pretty dumb!
  - Managers get "stuck" with the familiar

Example: Dashman Co.

- Read the case
- What lens was Mr. Post looking through?
- What went wrong?
- Do the other lenses help understand what happened?
- Discuss in small groups

Example: Your Project Teams

- What are the goals of the project?
- What team member knowledge and skills are needed to succeed?
- How do we organize sub-goals and sub-tasks?
- How do we assign roles and responsibilities?
- How do we communicate with each other?
- How do we align individuals to the team goals?

Is rational coordination enough?