Organizational Design, Diagnosis, and Development

Session 19

Techno-structural Interventions, II

Employee Involvement

Objectives

- To provide background and history of employee involvement efforts
- To examine the underlying behavioral dynamics of employee involvement
- To review several employee involvement interventions and their outcomes.

Foundation Studies

- Tavistock Institute for Human Relations
- Insurance company studies
- Harwood studies
- Leadership studies

Quality of Work Life

- **More control and autonomy for workers**
- **Recognition for those who have contributed to meeting organizational goals**
- **A sense of belonging to the workplace**
- **Opportunity for progress on the job**
- **Extrinsic rewards for work**

Problems with QWL Programs

- Isolated change effort
- Change is piecemeal
- Worker involvement limited to a few issues that are not critical to core business
- First line supervisors and middle management are not involved in the change effort
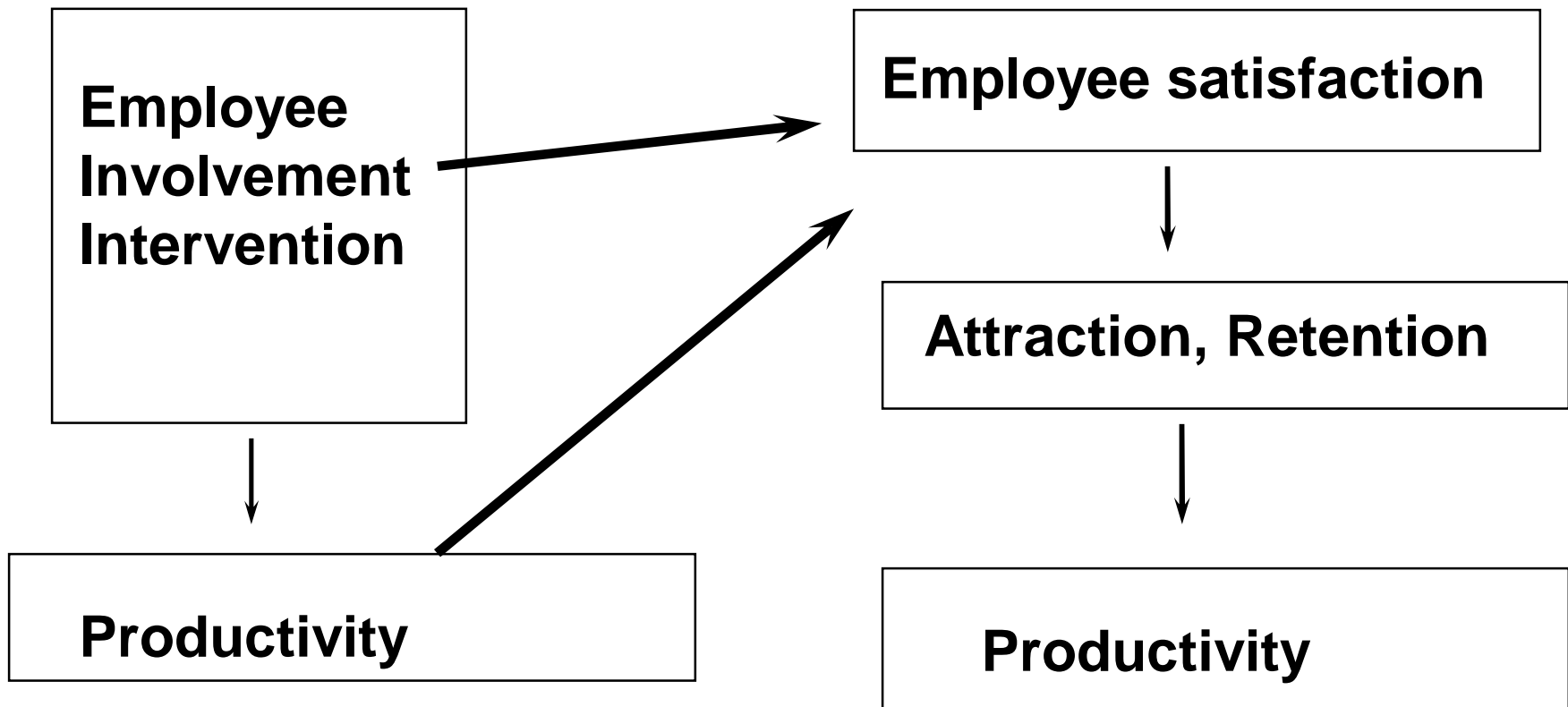
Key Factors in Involvement

- Power
- Information
- Knowledge & skills
- Rewards

Involvement and Productivity
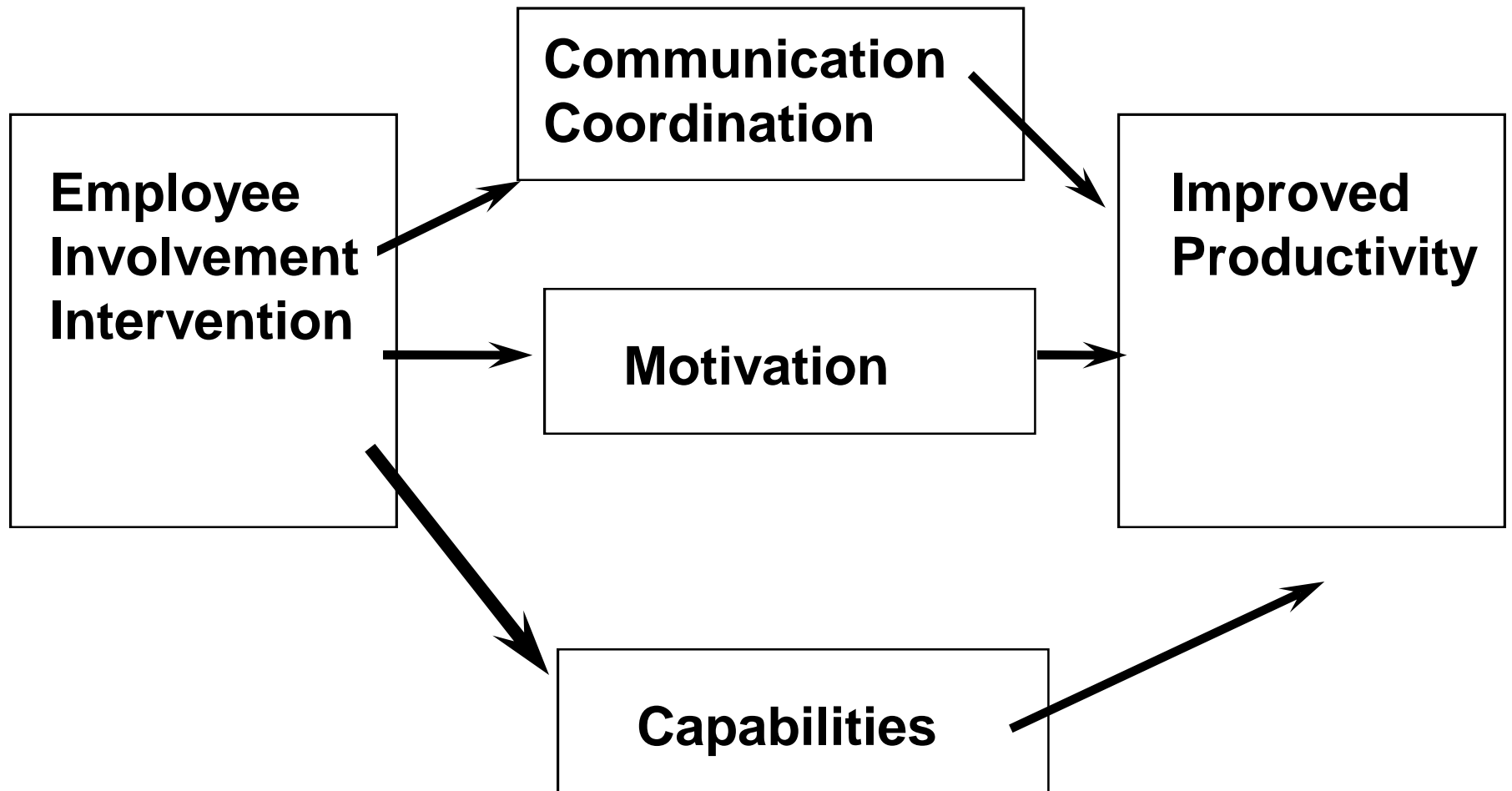
Secondary Effects on Productivity

EI Interventions

- **Parallel structures**
- **Union - management projects**
- **Quality circles**
- **High involvement organization**
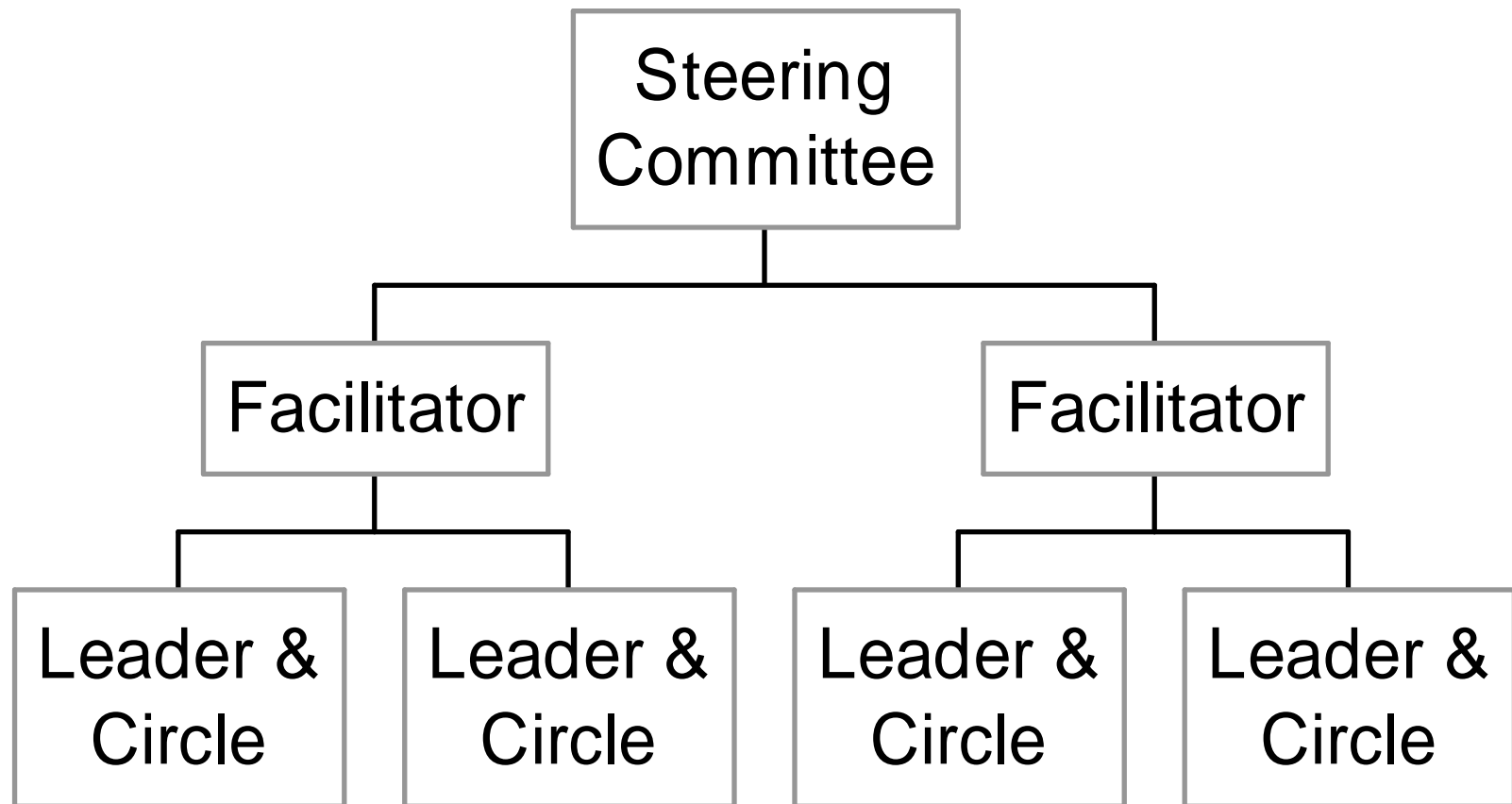- **Total quality management**

Parallel Structures

- Define structure purpose & scope
- Form steering committee
- Communicate with organization members
- Form problem solving groups
- Address issues
- Implement & evaluate change

Union Management Projects

- The process: These typically consist of committees that plan the projects. The focus is often on productivity improvements
- The results: Unless the projects are directly related to productivity improvement, results are meager in terms of productivity

Quality Circle Structure

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                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │   Steering   │
                    │  Committee   │
                    └──────┬───────┘
              ┌────────────┴────────────┐
        ┌─────┴──────┐            ┌──────┴─────┐
        │ Facilitator│            │ Facilitator│
        └─────┬──────┘            └──────┬─────┘
        ┌─────┴─────┐              ┌─────┴─────┐
   ┌────┴───┐  ┌────┴───┐     ┌────┴───┐  ┌────┴───┐
   │Leader &│  │Leader &│     │Leader &│  │Leader &│
   │ Circle │  │ Circle │     │ Circle │  │ Circle │
   └────────┘  └────────┘     └────────┘  └────────┘
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Quality Circles

- Group of employees usually form same work group
- Goal is to identify and solve work-related problems
- Has a group appointed leader
- Proposals submitted to steering committee

High Involvement Organizations

- **Flat, lean structure**
- **Jobs which entail worker discretion, skills, & feedback**
- **Open information systems**
- **Career systems**
- **Thoughtful employee selection**
- **Employee training**
- **Reward systems & personnel policies that encourage trust and commitment**

Total Quality Management

- Create a quality philosophy
- Institute leadership
- Eliminate meaningless goals
- Create trust
- Re-focus on process
- Walk the talk
- Focus on continuous improvement
- Retrain

Implementing TQM

- Get top level commitment
- Train members in quality methods
- Start the improvement projects
- measure progress
- Reward accomplishment

Backwards & Forwards

- Summing up: Today's session included a look at the history and dynamics of employee involvement efforts as well as an examination of specific types of interventions included the most recent of high involvement organizations and continuous improvement projects.
- Looking ahead. At our next session, we look at job design interventions