



Just some thoughts to ponder...

Louie Blake S. Sarmiento

Master of Arts in Industrial/Organizational Psychology

Member, SGL Membership Committee

Member, SGL Revitalization Committee





- **Why did you become a member of the Odd Fellows?**
- **How long have you been an Odd Fellow?**
- **What made you stay as an “involved” member?**
- **How many members does your lodge have NOW?**
- **How many members do you initiate in a year?**
- **How many of them STAY as members?**
- **How many members are ‘actually’ involved in your lodge?**
- **Did you ever wondered or asked why they did not stay?**
- **Or did you ever wondered why your lodge doesn’t attract people to join and stay as members?**
- **DID YOU GET THE ANSWERS?**
- **WHAT DID YOUR LODGE DO AFTERWARDS?**

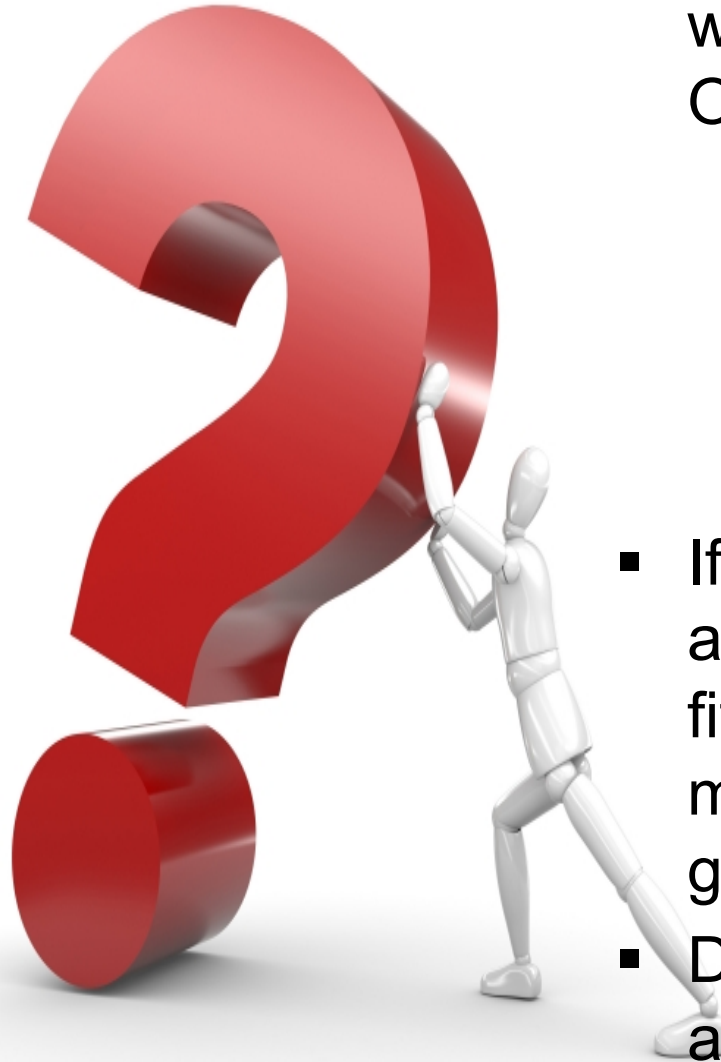


- What age did you join the Odd Fellows?
- How old are you now?
- What is the average age of your lodge or Grand Lodge membership?
- Are you happy with the current situation of your lodge?
- **With the current age of our members and leaders, where do you think the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs will be 10 years from now and onwards?**

International organizations in the 21st Century

Fraternal Organization/ Socio-civic Club	No. of Members	No. of Lodges/ Councils/Clubs	No. of Countries
Freemasons	-+ 6 million	-+ 30,000	-+ 50
Knights of Columbus	-+ 1.8 million	-+ 15,000	-+ 20
Elks	-+ 1 million	-+2,100	-+ 5
Lions	-+ 1.3 million	-+ 45,000	-+ 205
Rotary	-+ 1.2 million	-+ 34,282	-+200
Kiwanis	600,000	-+16,298	-+80
Odd Fellows	-+188,086	-+ 10,000	-+ 28

- Are we still a great fraternal organization?
- Or are we just living an **ILLUSION** based on the great achievements of the past?
- Is this because of the changing times?
- Or is it because we got stuck in the old times?



- What is the age bracket that we want to target to be members of the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs?
 - 70 and above?
 - 50 to 70?
 - 30 to 50?
 - 16 to 30?
- If so, are our lodges' environment and 'senior' members ATTITUDES fit to ATTRACT and RETAIN members belonging to this age group? Or all age groups?
- Do our "services" and "attitudes" allow people to see the 'great' value of Odd Fellowship?

- How many years have you been an officer?
- Have you ever met anyone who's been a representative or officer of their jurisdiction for 10 years or more?
- Do you think that the solutions to our membership problems can be solved by changing rules, regulations and laws of our Order?
- If so, what is our basis when we amend and vote on a legislation or proposition?
- Is it what **YOU** think is the right thing to do or what **OUR** members think is the right thing to do? Are they backed up with empirical data? Do we use **RESEARCH** and **STATISTICS** when we decide or convince people to choose the right decision for the good of the Order?
- **Are we leading Odd Fellowship the way **OUR MEMBERS** want to be led or are we leading the way **WE (OFFICERS)** want to lead Odd Fellowship?**

- Where do the **Sovereign Grand Lodge** want Odd Fellowship to go in the current Century and onwards?
- Where do **Grand Lodges** want to go?
- Where do the **Quasi-Independent Grand Lodges** want to go?
- Do you know where do the general population (**lodge members**) want to go?



▪ ARE WE **ALL** GOING
THE SAME DIRECTION?

Where is Odd Fellowship now?

- *“Just trying to hold on. Our lodges are dying.”*
- *“Odd Fellowship has lost its human-side. It became a business-and-ego oriented organization rather than a service-oriented group.”*
- *“It’s just a bunch of old people trying to protect funds, invest money in the market, pay bills and maintain an old building.”*
- *“Just old people trying to hold power and authority.”*
- *“Boring and dry meetings.”*
- *“Old members still trying to boss around so we stopped attending meetings.”*
- *“I thought it is a fraternity but people are not really that warm and welcoming to each other”.*
- *“Odd Fellowship lost its values and principles. It is just a theory but no action. It wasn’t this way back then.”*
- *“It just doesn’t make any sense to me. I don’t get it.”*
- *“They initiated me and I really do not know what it is so I don’t really see its value.”*

Do you know about the Odd Fellows?

- *“I never heard about it until you asked.”*
- **Common misconceptions and stigma by the public:**
 - *“It is a secret society (Oh, Illuminati!)”*
 - *“It is a cult”*
 - *“People who do satanic rituals”*
 - *“A religious group”*
 - *“It is a copy of Freemasonry”*
 - *“Group of senior citizens”*
 - *“Grumpy old people”*
 - *“Where old people play BINGO”*
 - *“It is a dead organization”*
 - *“Just a bunch of old guys wearing weird attire and calling themselves Grand Pooba and such”*

- **Is our marketing strategy for Odd Fellowship **up-to-date** or **out-of-date**?**
- Do we offer what people look for in an organization?
- Do we show what people want to see in an organization?
- Are we representing Odd Fellowship very well in public?
- Are our values, attitudes and projects appealing to them?
- **Are our current membership **CONTENTED** of our services?**
- What do our members need?
- What products do our members want to see/buy from our organization so they will value Odd Fellowship more?

I. TASK



- **What really is the Independent Order of Odd Fellows?**
 - What is our reason for existence?
 - What do we aim to do?
 - What do we aim to contribute to humanity?
 - How do we plan to attain them?
- How many of our members are knowledgeable about Odd Fellowship?
- How much does the public know about us?
- Can non-members clearly understand what we are about?

What is the Odd Fellows? (Members)

- To improve and elevate the character of man (and woman)?

WHAAAAAAT?

HOW?

- Make the world a better place?

OH REEEEEALLY?

HOW?

- Visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead and educate the orphans?

THAT'S IT?

- **DO WE OFFER WHAT THE CURRENT GENERATION WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?**

- **If so, do the public actually know about it???**


WHAT PEOPLE **WANT** IN AN ORGANIZATION THEY WOULD LIKE TO JOIN:

- To fight disease
- To fight hunger
- To fight poverty
- To work on the environment
- To go on charity walks
- To help humanity
- To work with equality
- To have fun
- To have family events
- To work on education
- To work in the community

WHAT PEOPLE **DON'T WANT** IN AN ORGANIZATION THEY WOULD LIKE TO JOIN:

- Status quo organizations
- Boring routines
- Memory work
- Too much death
- Discrimination (racism, gender discrimination, etc.)
- Inequality
- Cliques
- Closed-mind sets
- Out-dated values

Fraternal times survey (2012)

- 
- Should we adopt an international mission and vision fit in the 21st Century and onwards but truly related to our original principles?
 - That is specific.
 - That is not be vague.
 - That sounds attainable.
 - That doesn't sound like a "cliché"
 - That we can **ALL** agree of?
 - That we can **ALL** practice and achieve as Odd Fellows?

To Improve and Elevate the Character of Mankind...



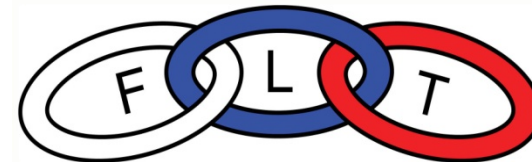
- Is the Odd Fellows really the largest UNITED fraternal Order in the world under one head”?



Deutscher Odd Fellow-Orden



ODD FELLOWS



IOOF

- Marketing wise as an “international” Fraternity:
 - ✓ We do not have a “united” trade name (public name) that the public would recognize that we **ALL** belong to one group.
 - ✓ We do not have a “united” worldwide logo that looks exactly the same.

To Improve and Elevate the Character of Mankind...



So, should we adopt an international trade name and logo that really looks the same?



THE REAL SECRET OF
FREEMASONRY
MAKING GOOD MEN BETTER



Should we adopt a universal slogan?

- **Slogan:** a phrase that expresses the aims and nature of the Odd Fellows as a fraternal organization:
 - ✓ Must summarize what we do as an organization
 - ✓ Must be 'catchy'
 - ✓ Must be 'easily' understandable



KNIGHTS
OF COLUMBUS
IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

Should we also adopt our founding date in our international trademark?

- The Independent Order of Odd Fellows was founded on April 26, 1819.

- Example: Since 1819 or Est. 1819



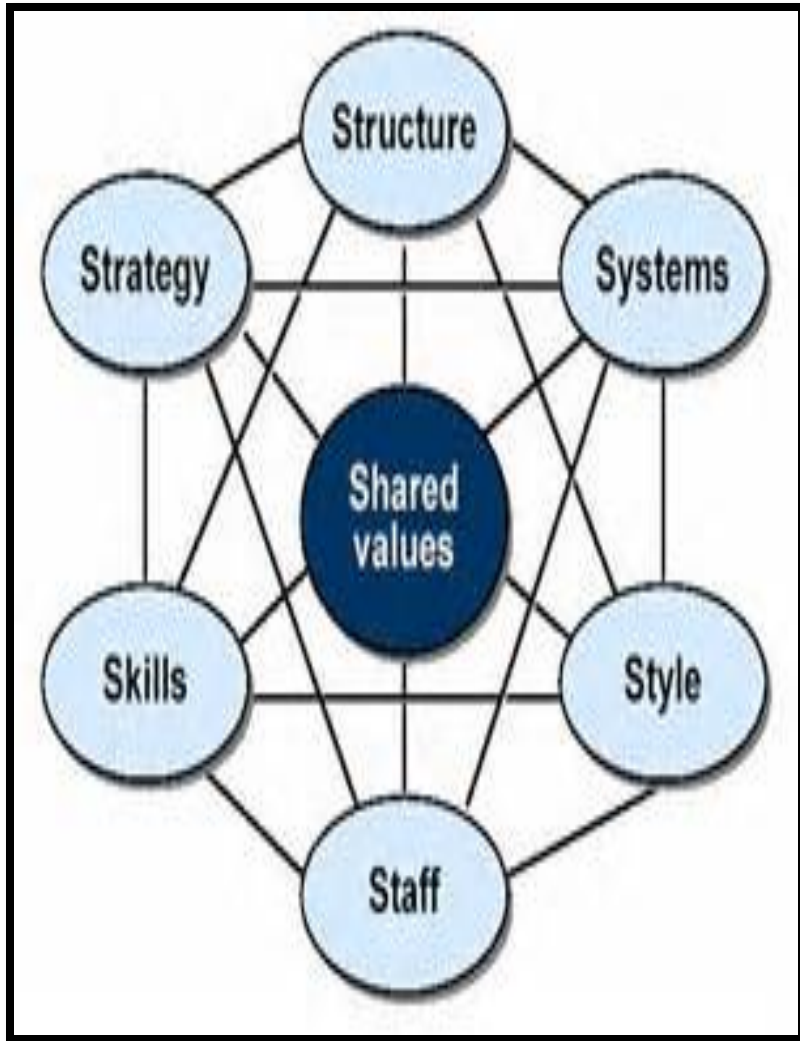
the *SINCE 1810*
ODDfelloWS
making friends, helping people



Possibilities?



II. PEOPLE ANALYSIS



- Who REALLY is an Odd Fellow?
- How should an Odd Fellow think and act as a person?
 - Many say it is a “way of life”, What then is the way of life of an Odd Fellow?
 - Do we really practice Odd Fellowship?
- Are our members’ values and attitudes aligned?
- Should we formulate an Odd Fellows “Code of Ethics” based on the rituals and teachings of the Order?



- Are our rituals effective in improving and elevating the character of our membership?
- Are our objectives and purposes as a fraternity clearly stated in our rituals?
- Do the majority of our membership **understand** our rituals?
- Do our membership really practice the principles taught in our rituals?
- Do our rituals make sense to people who join?
- Are our rituals that valuable to them?
- Or is it just a waste of time?

- Our rituals were created as a “rite of passage”, correct?
- Or have we become so focused on our rituals that we no longer practice **PRACTICAL** Odd Fellowship of having fun together, of treating each other as brothers and sisters and of being involved in the community?
- Or have we become more of a charitable club that we have made our rituals “DULL” and “BORING” that the ones being initiated no longer get impressed and see its value?
- Have we become more of a charity?
- We give away millions of dollars to charity but do we even support **OUR OWN** members when they are in need of help?
- If not, have we lost our “**Fraternal**” side and become more of a business or charity?

▪ There are Grand lodges with millions of dollars in their bank account and have lodges in their jurisdiction that needs their halls to be fixed but **WE** rather deny to lend or help them fix their halls. Rather, we choose to give thousands to charity groups not related to Odd Fellowship.

▪ There was a Theta Rho Club who needed a venue for installation of officers and the lodge denied them to use the Odd Fellows Hall for installation, **WHY IS THAT?**

▪ There is a lodge that do not have a Lodge Hall and asked another lodge if they can share their hall with them and were denied. **IS THIS ODD FELLOWSHIP?**

▪ If we do not also care for our membership first, we **WILL NOT** have charities to support in the future anymore because we will no longer have enough members who can help raise money and volunteer for good causes.





- Do we even approach and shake hands when we meet an Odd Fellow or Rebekah in public and proudly say ‘Hey, I am also an Odd Fellow’?
- Do we give the “**Odd Fellows hand grip**” when we approach a brother or sister in public or in the lodge?
- If not, then what is the value of our “hand grip”?

**▪ IS IT
MEANINGLESS?**

III. STRUCTURE

- Is the current organizational structure effective or ineffective?
- Does it promote equality and true democracy?
- Are we still stuck in a beaurocratic style of leadership?
- Do our membership need more authority and less autonomy to be effective?
- Or more autonomy and less authority?
- What do members think about our leaders?
- What is the leadership style members would prefer?
- Are our leaders staying in their offices too long that it hampered the growth and improvement of our Order?
- Is our way of communication effective or ineffective?
- Efficient or inefficient? Out dated or updated?
- How can we improve our jurisdictional and international governing system?

Are our Grand Lodges and Sovereign Grand Lodge functioning:



- **Just as a central Office of Record?**
- **Just as a center of Authority?**
- **Or also as an agency of Service?**
- **A source of Unification?**
- **An agency of Promotion?**
- **An agency of inspiration?**
- **If so, do we have the “right” people and “right” attitudes to deliver all these services efficiently and effectively?**

IV. TECHNOLOGY



- Are our technologies aligned with the current century?
- Are the technological changes we are doing aligned with the skills and talents of our membership?
- Do our members and employees have the necessary skills to fit the fraternal services needed in the current century?
- Should we train our members and employees to deliver the necessary services our members and non-members look for?
- What then are those services?

Several things that they want to be changed:

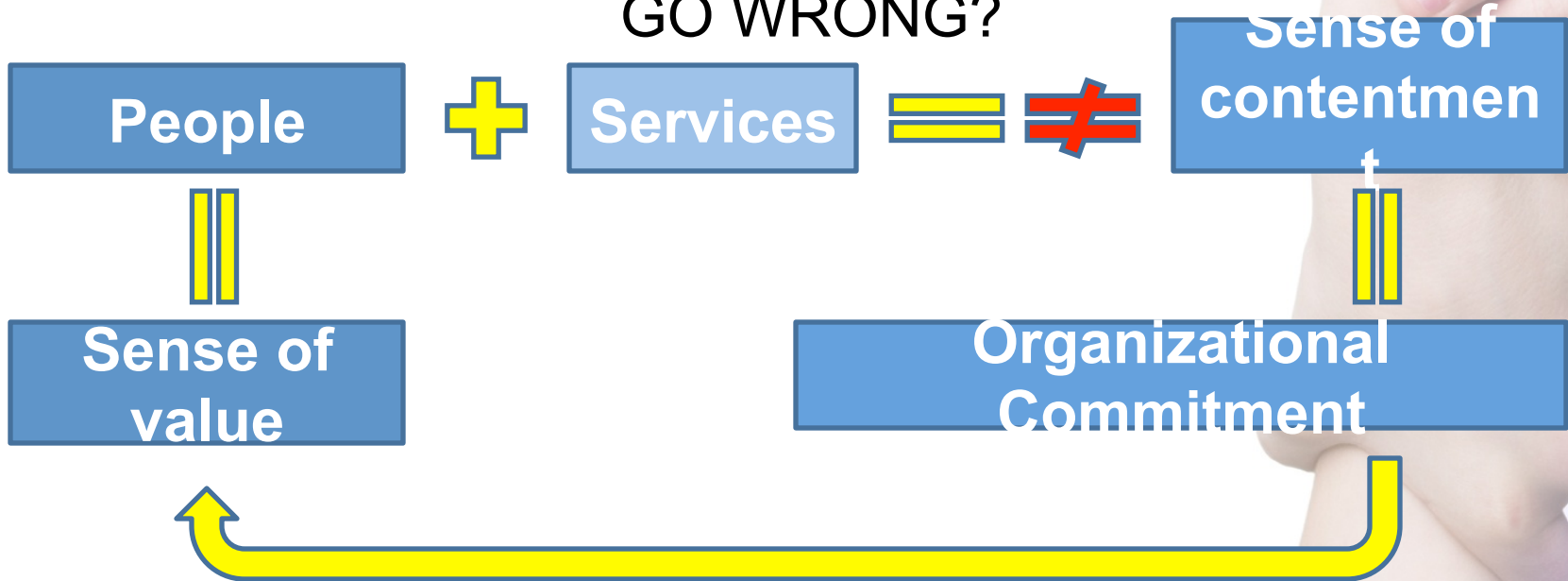
- Indifference of our members in general (internal conflicts)
- Lack of unity in promoting our Order
- Lack of knowledge in presenting what our Order stands for.
- Lack of dedication to the ideals of Odd Fellowship
- Lack of “charisma” and skills to attract and RETAIN new and younger members
- Unwillingness to tolerate each other (young members versus senior members)
- Aging and stagnant membership
- Very slow succession of officers and representatives (Stagnant leadership)
- Closed-minded and difficult members who are the “reason” why lodge is not growing and why younger ones are not participating.
- An attitude of apathy and non-involvement
- Out-dated technology, products and services
- Individualism: Lodge caring only for their own.
- Lodges that are really doing nothing .

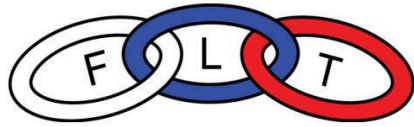
Several things that they want to be changed:

“I joined, went through the steps, attended 4 to 5 meetings and all I saw was confusion, chaos and bickering. I now do not attend, nor do I want to. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows needs to get itself in order **INTERNALLY before they let everyone else see it.”**

- Anonymous (Confidential)

SHOULD WE EVALUATE OUR SERVICES AND MEMBERS AS AN ORGANIZATION AND FIND OUT WHERE DID WE GO WRONG?





ODD FELLOWSHIP?

...it is about the lesson of tolerance which results to harmony and understanding between people despite different religious, political, social and ethnical backgrounds.

...it is about bridging the gap of differences and serving as venue where acquaintances and even enemies can become true friends using the purest and practical form of fraternity.

...it is about promoting a culture of caring and sharing, of not leaving each other behind, of thinking beyond oneself and of helping others in need.

...it is a legacy we continue for over 250 years.

I AM A PROUD MEMBER OF THE ODD FELLOWS!

METHODS

▪ QUALITATIVE

- **Archival research:** reviewed and read over 250:
 - *History books, GL, SGL and IC journals and analyzed them using Organizational Development, Industrial/Organizational, management and marketing concepts.*
- **Comparative analysis:** compared status of organization with similar groups
- **Informal interviews:** interviewed members of the organization.
- **Naturalistic Observation:** observation of the organization, its leaders and members.

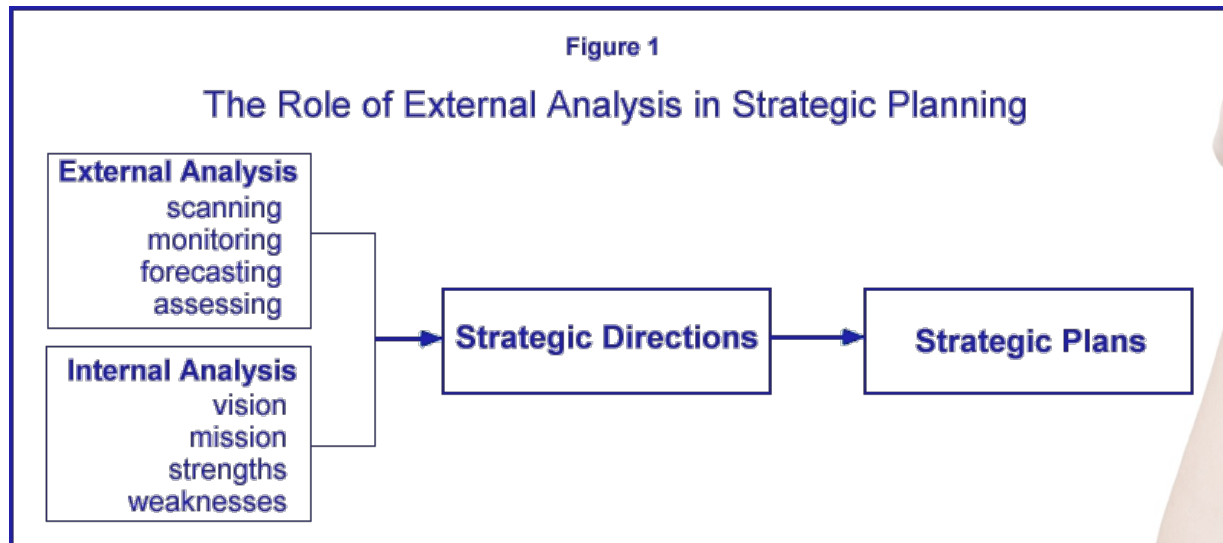
QUANTITATIVE

- **Survey:** Method I still need to do to verify assumptions and give recommendations based on statistical data.

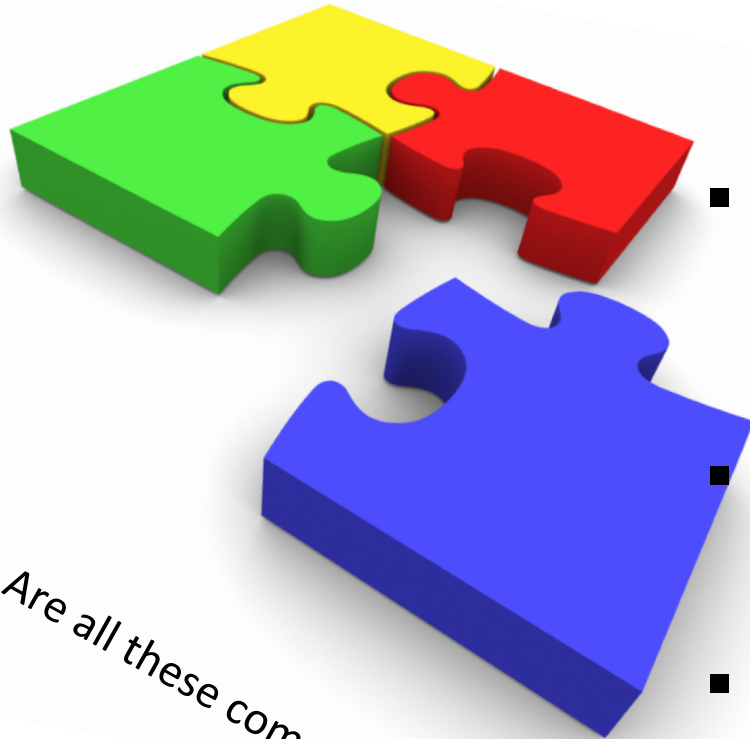
What is organizational analysis?

The study of the processes that characterize all kinds of organizations including:

- Business firms
- Government agencies
- Labor unions
- Voluntary associations such as sports clubs, charities, fraternal lodges and political parties.



Components of the organization:



Are all these components aligned?

- **Task:** defined as a mission or purpose of existence of organization.
- **People:** human part of the organization that performs different operations in the organization.
- **Structure:** the basic arrangement of people in the organization.
- **Technology:** intellectual and mechanical processes used by an organization to transform inputs into products or services.

Effective way for leaders and members to:

- Identify/verify problems.
- Discover inefficiencies that have arisen.
- Develop strategies for dealing with problems, inefficiencies and organizational challenges.
- Implement strategies and make decisions based on research (empirical data and statistical facts).
- Evaluate decisions/changes made.

**WHERE ARE
WE NOW?**

How do we get there?

**WHERE DO WE
WANT TO BE?**