

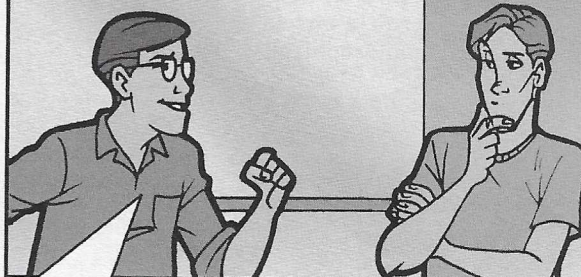
We can make decisions about how best to do our job without always having to ask a manager or the owner. For example, if someone spills her drink on accident, I can just make another one so she will still be a happy customer. I don't have to get approval for fairly common-sense solutions. So, some decision-making power is decentralized to employees. You know, like the Rebel Alliance.



Well, it's not as cool as being empowered with the Force. But I see its advantages.



So, back to the points I was making, the Empire and the Rebel Alliance both had a fairly flat organizational chart. In other words, there weren't that many levels of bureaucracy or management or whatever between the head commander and the lowest troop.



In contrast, the Old Republic had many layers of bureaucracy. That's why they were very slow in their decision-making abilities. When the Emperor took control, he effectively flattened the organizational chart of the universe.



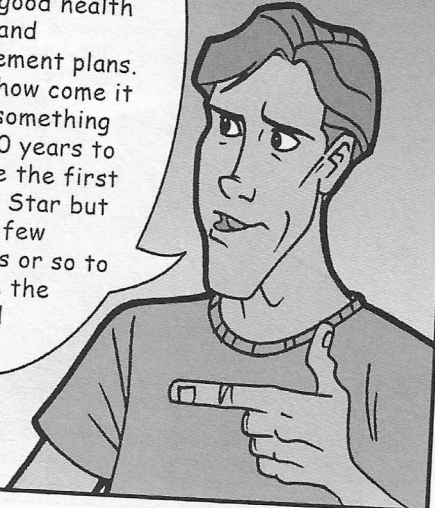
I love me some *Star Wars*, but you two are meganerds.

Anything else?



Well, another distinction made in organizations concerns line versus staff positions. Line positions are those with power, like commanders or managers or vice presidents and presidents. In contrast, staff positions are those that perform support functions like human resource management that inform folks about the latest laws and the like.

It doesn't seem like the Empire would have had very good health care and retirement plans. Hey, how come it took something like 20 years to create the first Death Star but only a few months or so to create the second one?



Well, I guess maybe when they shifted to a more centralized structure, they could make decisions more quickly?



This reminds me of a quote by Laura Ingalls Wilder, who once said, "The trouble with organizing a thing is that pretty soon folks get to paying more attention to the organization than to what they're organized for."

Life on the prairie was so philosophical.



So, David, I forgot to ask - how was your date with what's-her-name?



Let's just say her *Second Life* avatar is Princess Leia, so I was very impressed.

I guess you really can't judge by first appearances. I took her for a Paris Hilton type. Of course, I really thought she was going to take the internship too, but at least you got a date out of it. Sometimes you can be quite impressive.



That's what she said!





I can't wait to build on my collection of free pens and stress balls!

Bye, Tess!

May the Force be with you!



OK, I'm on it!

Oh yeah, let's meet up at the career fair tomorrow. Maybe that will give us some ideas so our next attempt at employee recruitment will be more successful than our first one.



One element we're going to need for our business plan is some idea about our management and organization. Why don't you take a stab at writing an organizational chart and I'll take a look at it and make edits?



I thought your experience is that places paid you and you still didn't work?

That may have also been the case, at times.



I think the main reason is to try to get some startup financing. After your recent recruiting experiences, I think we're never going to get anyone to work without some startup cash.

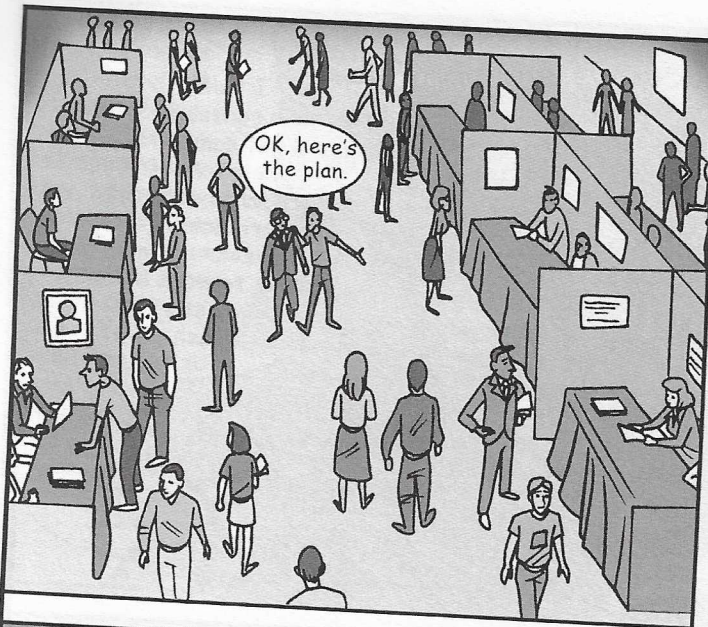
That has been my experience.



On to more pressing business, I'm starting to realize the fatal flaw in our business plan.

Is it that we don't have one?

Pretty much. One more time... Why should we write one again?

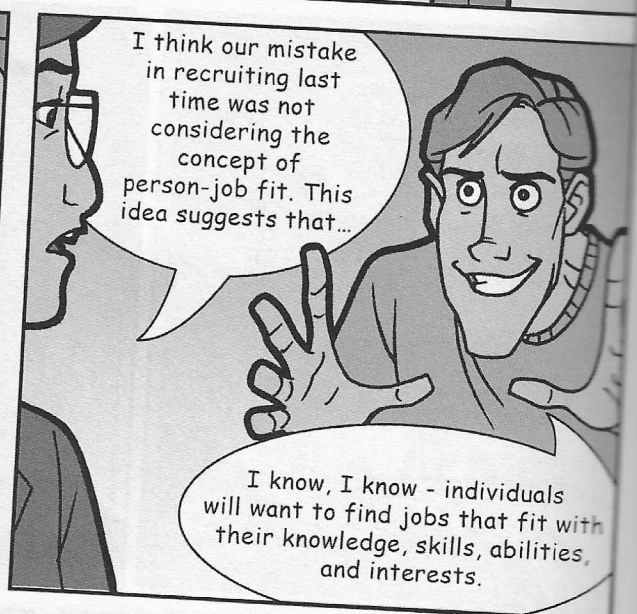


OK, here's the plan.

David, I think I'm one step ahead of you. If we casually walk by each booth and avoid eye contact whenever possible, I think we can maximize our collection of free stuff while minimizing the number of people we have to talk to. Hey, it looks like that place is giving out bottle-opener keychains. Let's go!

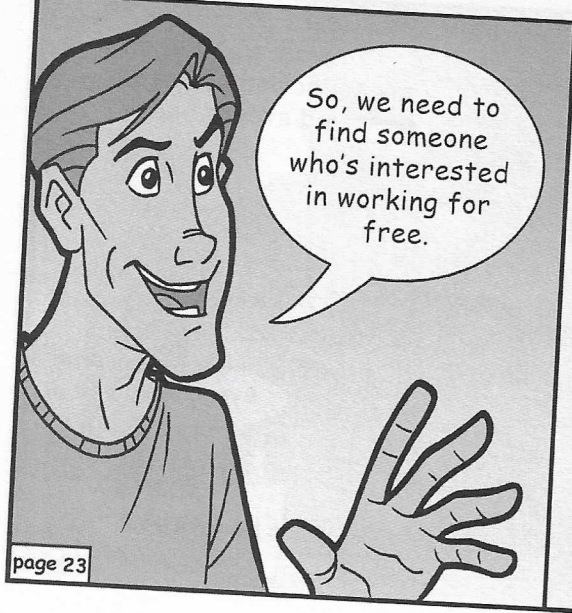


Whoa there! The point of us coming here is to scout out the kinds of folks we will eventually try to hire.

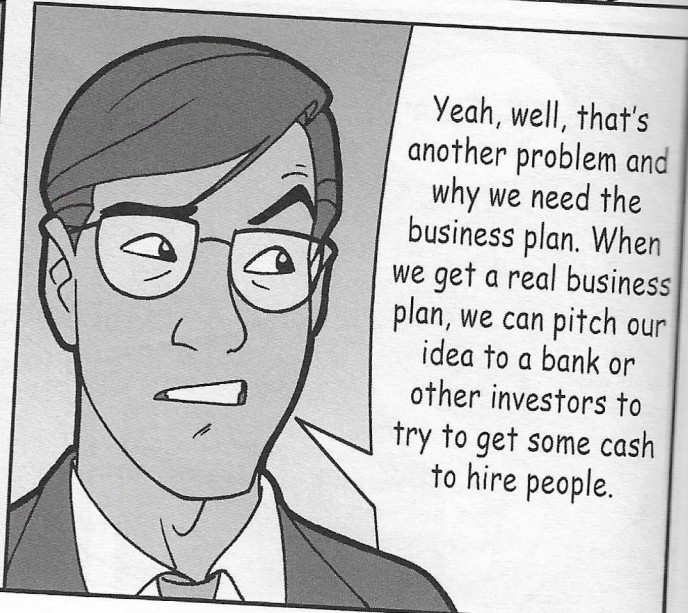


I think our mistake in recruiting last time was not considering the concept of person-job fit. This idea suggests that...

I know, I know - individuals will want to find jobs that fit with their knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests.

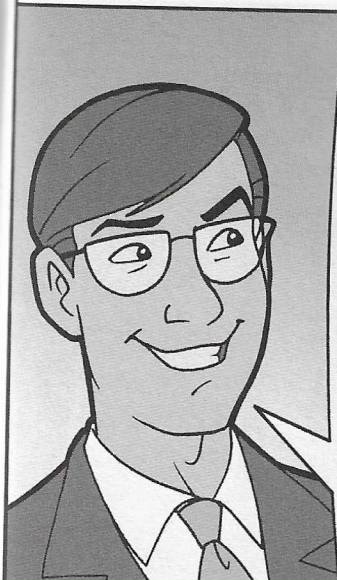
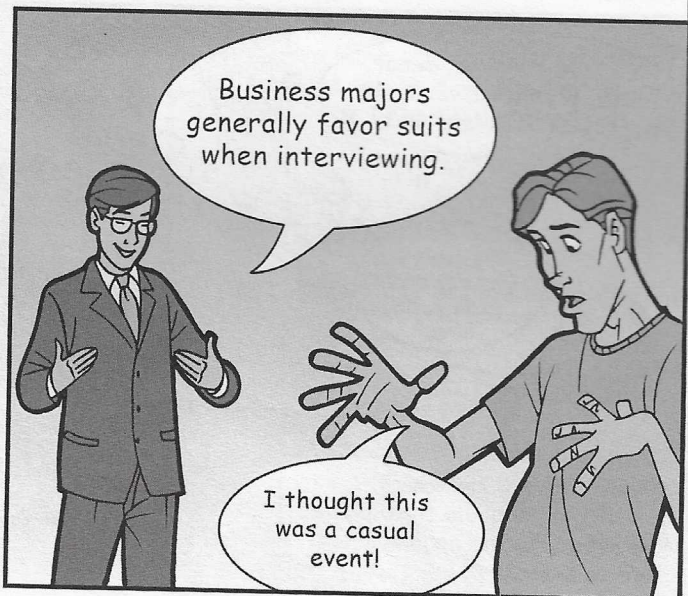
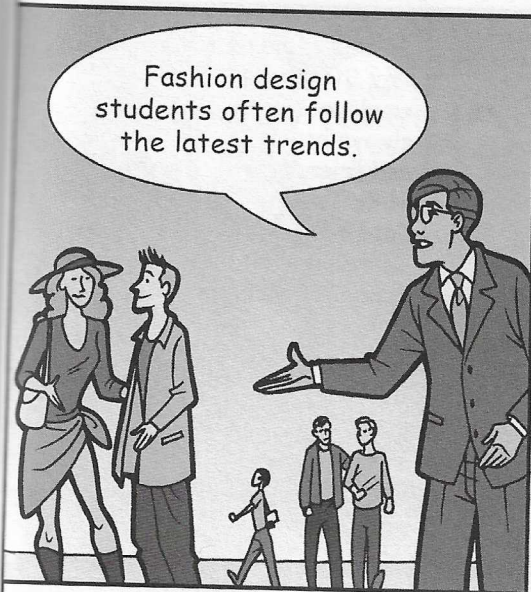
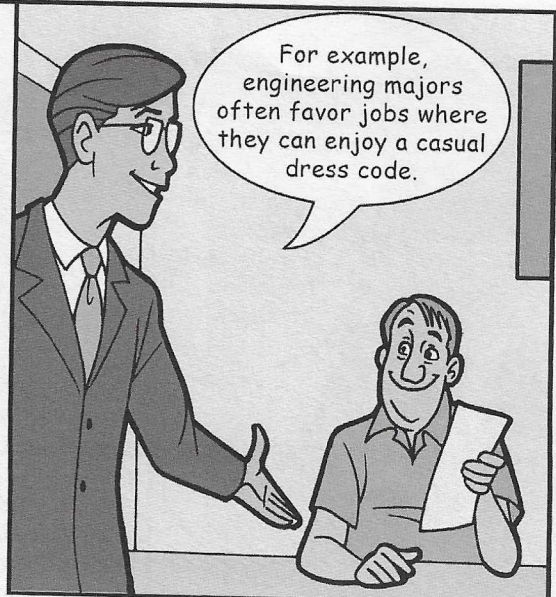


So, we need to find someone who's interested in working for free.

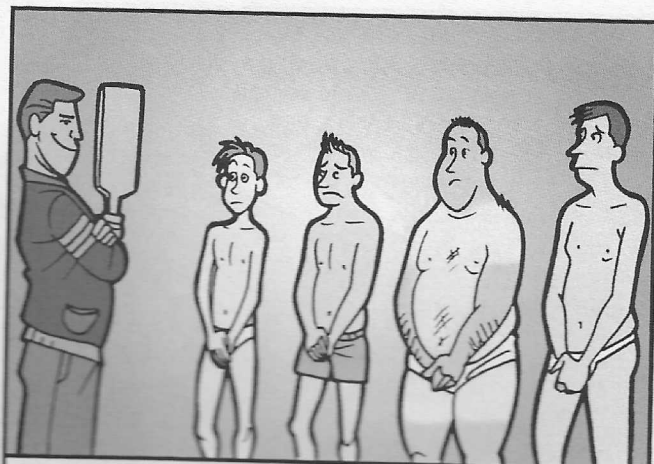


Yeah, well, that's another problem and why we need the business plan. When we get a real business plan, we can pitch our idea to a bank or other investors to try to get some cash to hire people.

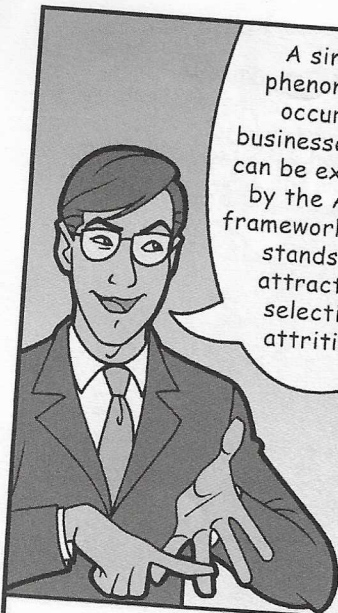
Still, a match between employee and job is based on more than money. The person-job fit idea suggests that people in similar occupations often have similar personality characteristics and that people whose characteristics match those of others in a given field are more likely to excel in that kind of career. For example, you can see elements of individuality at job fairs if you look carefully.



A similar idea called person organization fit suggests that individuals seek to find a fit with particular organizations. You may have noticed that a lot of organizations have members that are more alike than the rest of the population.

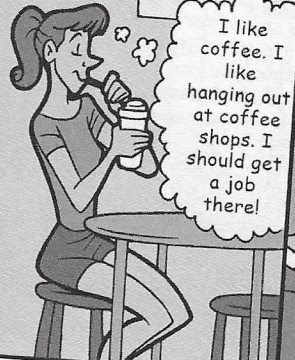


For example, fraternities, sororities, jocks, geeks, and other groups of people tend to flock to their respective organizations.

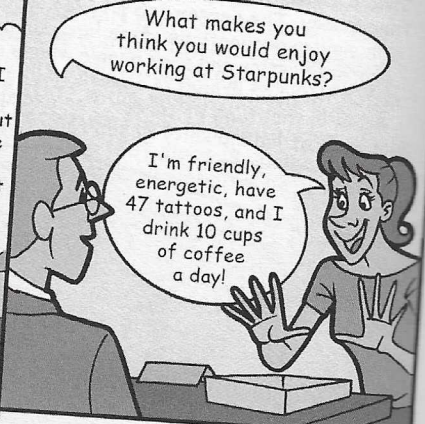


A similar phenomenon occurs in businesses. This can be explained by the A-S-A framework, which stands for attraction, selection, attrition.

Individuals are attracted to certain kinds of jobs because they seem like a good fit to their personality.



I like coffee. I like hanging out at coffee shops. I should get a job there!



What makes you think you would enjoy working at Starpunks?

I'm friendly, energetic, have 47 tattoos, and I drink 10 cups of coffee a day!

Then, organizations try to select individuals that they see as a good fit with the organization.



I said a mocha, decaf, soy, grande latte on the rocks! This is a venti!

Why can't you just say small, medium, and large?

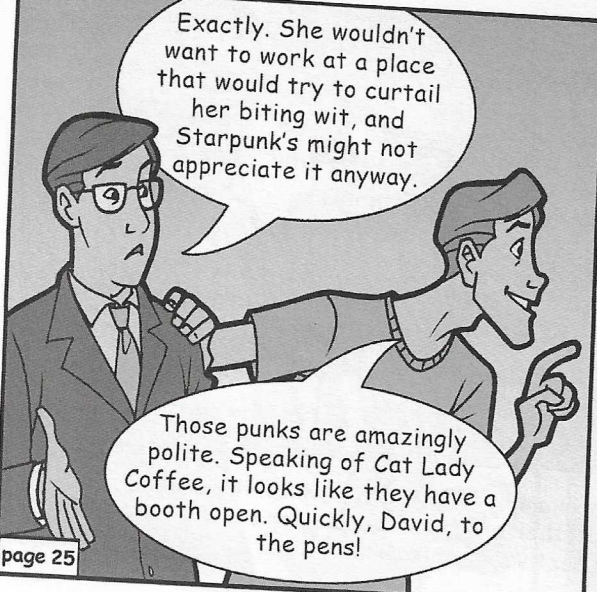
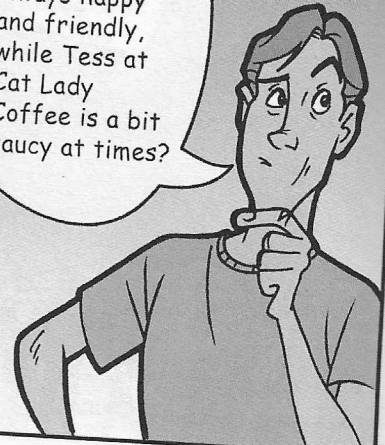
Either through firings or quitting, individuals that aren't like others in the organization tend to leave.



I Quit!

CH

So this explains why Starpunks employees are always happy and friendly, while Tess at Cat Lady Coffee is a bit saucy at times?

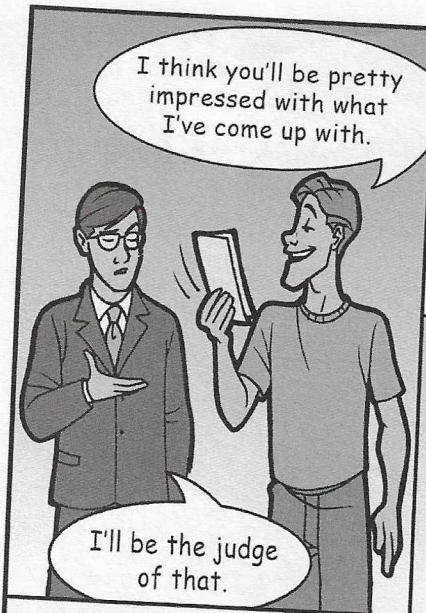


Exactly. She wouldn't want to work at a place that would try to curtail her biting wit, and Starpunks might not appreciate it anyway.

Those punks are amazingly polite. Speaking of Cat Lady Coffee, it looks like they have a booth open. Quickly, David, to the pens!

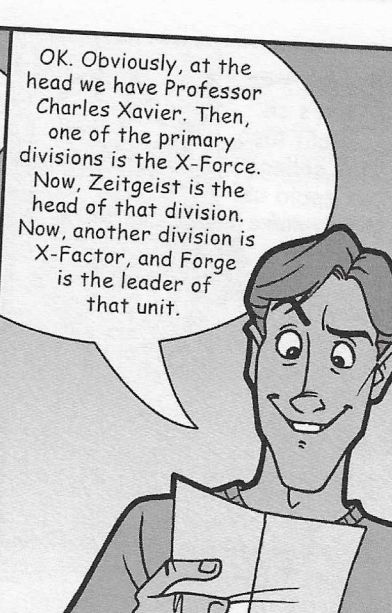


You two look familiar. Two of my regulars. I'll be sad to see you two graduate.



I think you'll be pretty impressed with what I've come up with.

I'll be the judge of that.

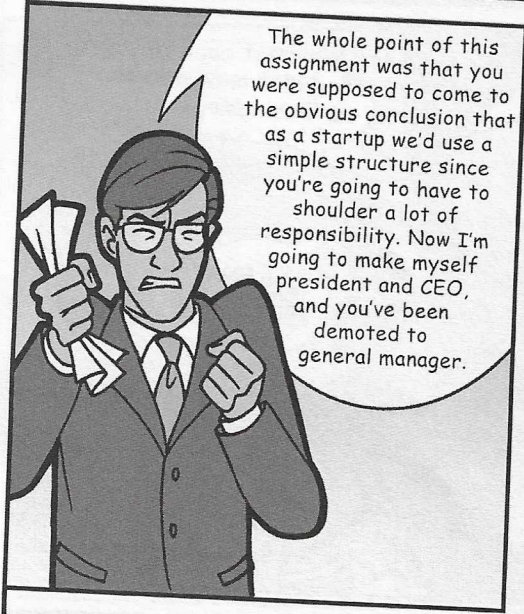


OK. Obviously, at the head we have Professor Charles Xavier. Then, one of the primary divisions is the X-Force. Now, Zeitgeist is the head of that division. Now, another division is X-Factor, and Forge is the leader of that unit.

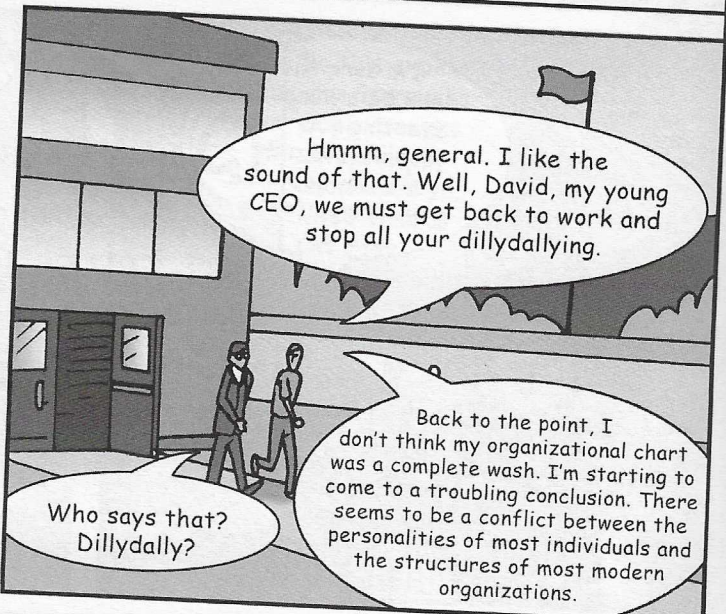


Huh? Let me see that.

Dude, you were supposed to be creating an organizational chart for our future restaurant. This is an organizational chart of the X-Men and their related spinoff organizations.



The whole point of this assignment was that you were supposed to come to the obvious conclusion that as a startup we'd use a simple structure since you're going to have to shoulder a lot of responsibility. Now I'm going to make myself president and CEO, and you've been demoted to general manager.



Hmmm, general. I like the sound of that. Well, David, my young CEO, we must get back to work and stop all your dillydallying.

Who says that? Dillydally?

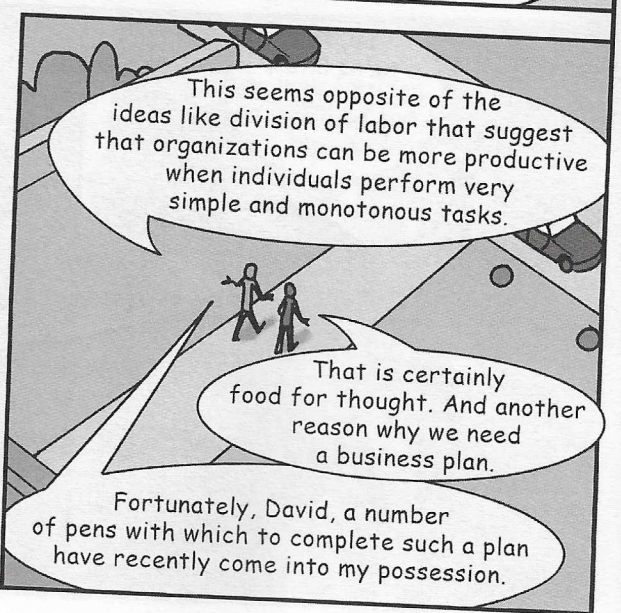
Back to the point, I don't think my organizational chart was a complete wash. I'm starting to come to a troubling conclusion. There seems to be a conflict between the personalities of most individuals and the structures of most modern organizations.



How do you mean?

Well, it seems that a lot of employees will want jobs that will have a variety of tasks, require some level of responsibility, and allow for some level of decision making. If the job gets too boring, they're likely to skip work or quit.

OK.



This seems opposite of the ideas like division of labor that suggest that organizations can be more productive when individuals perform very simple and monotonous tasks.

That is certainly food for thought. And another reason why we need a business plan.

Fortunately, David, a number of pens with which to complete such a plan have recently come into my possession.

THE STORY SO FAR...

Atlas and David are planning their future restaurant, the No Cover Café, and their next step is to get organized. The challenges of organizing date back to biblical times, where Moses's organization of the Hebrew nation was associated with, perhaps, the earliest recorded example of span of control (*where span of control refers to the number of individuals that should report to a single individual*).

While organizational concepts have existed for centuries, Atlas and David are more concerned with modern organizational challenges. Such challenges are often associated with organizational bureaucracy, a term that originally referred simply to an office but is now associated with rules, regulations, and control activities that are common to modern organizations. The term is often given a negative connotation and is associated with slow decision making or inefficiencies (think "registrar's office"); however, Max Weber's conceptualization of an ideal bureaucracy in the early 1900s included potentially positive attributes such as division of labor (the idea that production is more efficient when it is divided into simpler tasks), hierarchy of authority (includes unity of command where subordinates only report to a single manager), formal selection (hiring based on qualifications), formal rules and regulations, and logical decision making based on rationality as being central to the effective management of organizations.

To aid modern organizations, a number of structures can be found to help communicate information and implement top management decisions. Such structures range from a simple structure where the entrepreneur or a single manager makes most decisions, to a multidivisional structure common of extremely large multinational firms. Other common structures include functional, SBU, matrix, and network structures.

Organizational structure is important in part because it impacts the performance of individuals. For example, in centralized organizations, decisions come from the top (such as from the CEO), whereas in a decentralized organization, more decisions are relegated to lower levels of the organization. Implications of structure for individuals relate to concepts such as person-job and person-organization fit that examine how well an individual fits the particular job or organization, respectively. The A-S-A (attraction-selection-attrition) framework is useful for understanding how certain types of individuals tend to be attracted to organizations to create an enduring organizational culture.

IN OUR NEXT EPISODE...

Atlas and David have finally developed a unique business concept, but as Mary Kay Ash once noted, "A mediocre idea that generates enthusiasm will go further than a great idea that inspires no one." As our story continues, Atlas and David will need to effectively communicate their message to a number of prospective stakeholders, starting with those that could potentially fund their (yet unwritten) business plan. Will the plan be mediocre like Atlas' grade point average or inspirational like David's witty dating repartee? We shall find out in "Atlas Black: Management Guru."