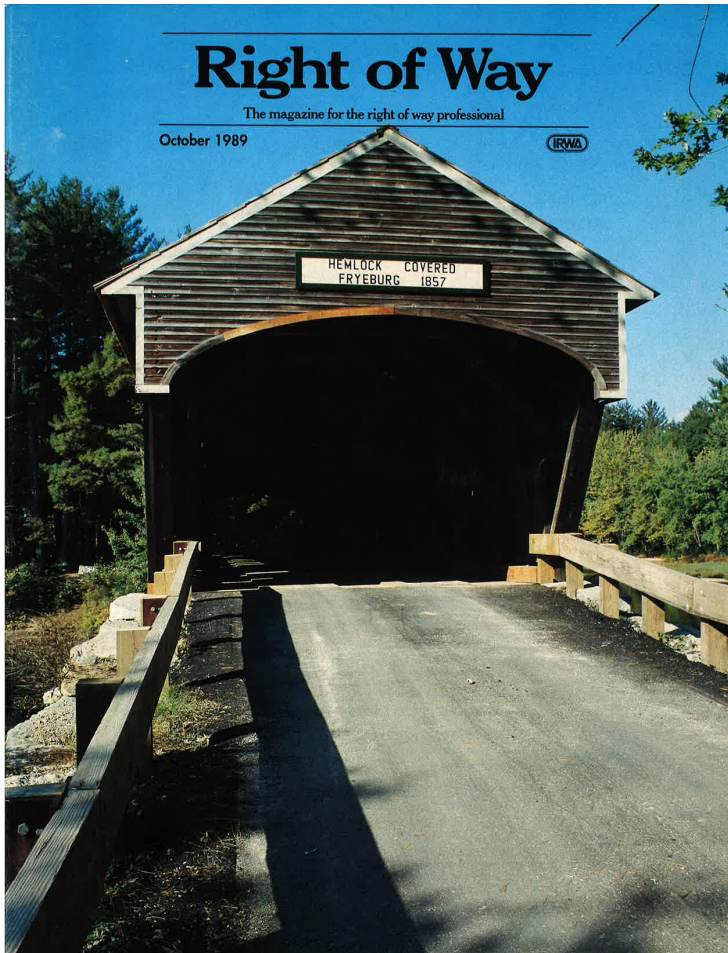


THE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT TEAM



A Proposal from the 1980s


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The choice of the title “Property Management Team” for the management group to be given the responsibility for managing the local government’s real property allows for a short discussion drawing on classical studies in interpersonal relations.

Over the past 25 years, profound changes in management theory have been observed. Changed social values and increased educational levels in the work force have required the manager to seek newer methods to maintain and improve the technique. Interpersonal relations have shifted toward more cooperation, openness in decision making and emphasis on performance based on labor-management trust. A goal of many organizations is to get workers highly involved in their jobs through quality improvement groups or labor advisory groups. Several writers, among them, Douglas McGregor, Rensis Likert, Chris Argyris and William Ouchi have presented studies in support of a change in worker-manager relations that result in greater productivity.

McGregor wrote in 1960 about two sets of assumptions management made about employees. These sets were given the catchy titles “Theory X” and “Theory Y.” Theory X portrayed the worker as lazy, lacking ambition and creativity and wanting above all else, security. Managers holding Theory X likely tend to manage using concepts that see management responsible for planning, organizing, and making important decisions. This type of

From our cover story to our individual articles, this issue of Right of Way Magazine heavily focuses on effective management, leadership skills and high performing teams. How much of a priority was this for the right of way industry in the 1980s? How different was their perception to ours today? The following is an article published from the October 1989 issue of Right of Way Magazine.

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clearly indicated that this was to be of an experimental nature when no budget was provided for the Team.

At the Team's first meeting, the Property Management Technician requested the name of the team to be changed to Property Management Committee. To provide an end to the story, the committee exists today with the beginning of a budget and reports regularly to the City Council with recommendations as to how the city's properties should be handled. ★

management directs people and assumes management responsible for motivating the worker. Theory Y utilized a different set of assumptions in which people were seen as being ambitious with work being a natural part of their jobs. These people seek responsibility and self-control in achieving goals. Theory Y produces delegation of important decision making, less passiveness and increased trust of employees. McGregor's contribution was that he forces managers to examine their assumptions about people and how these assumptions in turn, influence their own management practices.

Rensis Likert developed a questionnaire to measure characteristics of organizations, classifying management practices into four "systems." System 4 of his classifications leads to supportive relationships placing emphasis on team management. The leadership process in system 4 is important in getting the best possible results from the employee.

In Argyris' approach to management, he focused on individual needs and desires, recognizing a great need to begin treating people as adults. As people mature they should move from positions of dependence to ones of independence. Managers can foster this change by allowing employees an increased say in decisions and by creating jobs that are expanded in their scope. As with McGregor and Likert, Argyris pointed out the need for building on the ability of organizational members to use each other's unique talents toward goal attainment.

In the early 1980's, William Ouchi published his "Theory Z," an introduction of Japanese management techniques describing impressive productivity results in Japan. Of greatest benefit to American management technique was the concept of the importance of group consensus in decision making.

The concept of team management was being observed for the first time with management in the workplace being an essential part of the plan.

What should the Property Management Team consist of? The team should consist of a group of upper or middle management personnel with a dedication to lend separate independent opinions as to how the local government's property is to be managed. The team must be of a homogenous nature regarding their perception of the purpose of the job to which they are appointed. The team must have a reputation for an in-depth perception of the local governments purpose for chartering their team.

The Team size may vary depending on 1) the situation of the property to be managed, 2) the urgency at the time for its formulation, or 3) the length of time intended to evaluate its usefulness. It would be unreasonable to begin with less than seven members or more than 15. The selection of the optimum number will probably be determined by the level of management personnel allowed to participate in its beginning.

The original makeup of the Team will necessarily be influenced by the determination of the local government responsible for its formation. If budgetary constraints prohibit additional funding at the time of the initialization, it may be expected that a higher level of management personnel will be required to participate. In a small organization, this level of management will be expected to have the higher probability for success and will, at the same time, have the necessary experience to perform an ongoing evaluation as to the usefulness of the Team.

The City of Henderson, Nevada began a function of Property in an experimental stage with the City Council dedicating a group of seven key city personnel as a Property Management Team. This team included the City Manager, City Attorney, Public Works Director, Planning Director, Finance Director, Economic Development Director, and City Auditor.

To head this group of select management personnel, the City Council chose its Property Management Technician. It was