

TOPIC: FORMAL ORGANIZATIONS

Types of Formal Organizations

- ◆ **Formal Organizations:** Secondary groups that achieve _____ through clearly established rules and procedures.
- ◆ Sociologists think about ___ types of formal organizations:

Utilitarian Organizations	Normative Organizations	Coercive Organizations
An organization that people join primarily for _____ rewards and/or material benefits. Ex: Businesses, schools.	An organization that people join due to shared morals, interests, or _____. Ex: Volunteer organizations.	An organization that people are _____ to join, often as punishment or treatment. Ex: Prisons, rehabilitation centers.

- ◆ Many formal organizations rely on **bureaucracy** to help them function.

EXAMPLE

Categorize the following examples as either utilitarian, normative, or coercive organizations. Remember, some organizations can fit under multiple categories, so use your best judgement. Some terms will be used more than once.

1	A psychiatric institution where patients are confined and daily activities are regulated and supervised.	
2	A volunteer-run advocacy group who travel to low-income areas and pass out free menstrual products.	
3	A corporation where employees receive a paycheck and benefits.	
4	A religious congregation where members all hold similar values and beliefs.	
5	A university where students receive an education and earn a degree.	

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PRACTICE

True or False? If false, choose the answer that best corrects the statement.

A formal organization is a primary group that emphasizes informal ties, rigid rules, and regulations.

- a) True.
- b) False; a formal organization is secondary group characterized by personal closeness and flexible rules.
- c) False; a formal organization is a primary group made up of friends who interact regularly and share a common goal.
- d) False; a formal organization is a secondary group designed to achieve specific goals, with well-established rules and regulations.

PRACTICE

Which statement best distinguishes a utilitarian organization from a normative organization?

- a) Utilitarian organizations exist within the government, whereas normative organizations are community based.
- b) Utilitarian organizations gain membership through coercion, whereas people join normative organizations freely.
- c) Utilitarian organizations offer financial compensation or material benefits, whereas normative organizations do not.
- d) Utilitarian organizations are joined mainly due to shared values/interests, whereas normative organizations offer financial compensation or material benefits.

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Bureaucracy

- ◆ **Bureaucracy:** An organizational _____ characterized by hierarchy, rules, and specialization.
- ◆ Weber saw this as part of the *rationalization of society*. Identified 6 traits of an _____ bureaucratic institution:
 - ① **Specialization:** People are assigned highly specialized jobs.
 - ② **Hierarchy of Positions:** Workers have a _____ ranking.
 - ③ _____ and **Regulations:** Keep operations predictable.
 - ④ **Meritocracies:** Hiring and promotion is based on _____, education, and competence.
 - ⑤ **Impersonality:** Personal feelings minimized to ensure professionalism.
 - ⑥ _____, **Written Communications:** Reliance on written records and reports.
- ◆ Many aspects of bureaucracy are useful (even necessary), but these systems are not always the most efficient.

EXAMPLE

Put a checkmark next to the features of an **ideal** bureaucracy, according to Weber's theory.

1	Professionalism prioritized over personal feelings.	
2	Hiring and promotion are based on social connections.	
3	Workers all share similar levels of power and prestige.	
4	Rules are flexible and change often.	
5	People have highly specialized jobs.	
6	Emphasis on formal communication.	

PRACTICE

Which statement **most accurately** distinguishes bureaucracies from formal organizations?

- a) Bureaucracies are groups that exist within formal organizations.
- b) All formal organizations function as bureaucracies.
- c) Bureaucracies are an organizational structure that can exist within formal organizations.
- d) Formal organizations are specialized groups that exist within bureaucracies.