

## 6.14: Current Trends in Organization and Job Design

### Learning Outcomes

- Explain the advantages of flatter organizational structures.
- Explain the benefits of employee empowerment.
- Explain the trend toward flexible work schedules.

### Flatter Organizational Structures

When Gen. Stanley McChrystal took charge of the U.S. Joint Special Operations Task Force in 2003, he recognized that traditional tactics of warfare were failing in Iraq. McChrystal wrote in his book *Team of Teams* that “To defeat a network, we had to become a network.” A network in this context is a collection of small cross-functional teams that have been empowered to self-organize, self-manage, and self-execute.

The traditional career ladder follows a hierarchical path; entry-level position followed by promotions up the chain with broader responsibilities and less job or skill specificity. A flat structure model focuses on horizontal growth, digging deeper, expanding knowledge and getting better at core competencies. The benefit to employees is greater autonomy, as they have the freedom to work amongst each other without the titles of hierarchy slowing down communication.

### Practice Question

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...essments/12209>

### Employee Empowerment



In many industries, the option to work from home is becoming increasingly popular.

At the core of all of the trends in organizational structure is employee empowerment. The traditional hierarchical structure took away most of an employee’s power to make decisions. The movement is to trust the employee’s ability and to give him or her the authority to make decisions, even mistakes. The benefit to organizations can be greater productivity, innovation, and customer service. The responsibility of the organization is to clearly lay out the roles and responsibilities to decrease ambiguity.

A good example of empowerment is flexible work arrangements (FWAs). FWAs include reduced workload (part time), compressed work weeks, and remote work (telework). The most important aspect of a FWA policy is that the organization believes that the employees and their managers know best as to how, when, and where to complete their work. Remote work is prevalent throughout most industries and can range from working from home on certain days when needed to fully remote workers with no corporate office. These arrangements will work only if the organization values productivity over face time.

### Practice Questions

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...essments/12210>

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...essments/12211>

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