INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

FOR MEASURING RELATIONAL WORK SYSTEMS

(RELATIONAL BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURES)

Professor Jody Hoffer Gittell
Heller School for Social Policy and Management
Brandeis University

April 2017

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESEARCHERS

You can tailor this protocol to your focal work process, and the workgroups involved in it. The data gathered through this protocol can be transformed into quantitative measures and used to predict relational coordination (as measured with the RC Survey) and performance outcomes, as shown for example in:

- Gittell, J.H., Seidner, R., Wimbush, J. (2010). "A Relational Model of How High-Performance Work Systems Work," Organization Science, 21(2): 490-506.
- Gittell, J.H. (2002). "Coordinating Mechanisms in Care Provider Groups: Relational Coordination as a Mediator and Input Uncertainty as a Moderator of Performance Effects," Management Science, 48(11): 1408-1426.
- Gittell, J.H. (2001). "Supervisory Span, Relational Coordination and Flight Departure Performance: A Reassessment of Post-Bureaucracy Theory," Organization Science, 12(4): 467-482.
- Gittell, J.H. (2000). "Organizing Work to Support Relational Coordination," International Journal of Human Resource Management, 11(3): 517-539.

The most comprehensive theoretical argument for how these organizational structures work can be found in:

- Gittell, J.H., Douglass, A. (2012). "Relational Bureaucracy: Structuring Reciprocal Relationships into Roles," Academy of Management Review, 37(4): 709-754.

The most comprehensive practical argument for how these organizational structures work can be found in:

- Gittell, J.H. (2009). High Performance Healthcare: Using the Power of Relationships to Achieve Quality, Efficiency and Resilience. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Gittell, J.H. (2003). The Southwest Airlines Way: Using the Power of Relationships to Achieve High Performance. New York: McGraw-Hill.

INVITATION TO PARTICPATE

- You have been asked to answer one or more sections of this survey, based on your area of expertise.

- Please answer all questions as they relate to [FOCAL WORK PROCESS], and to the staff who work in [FOCAL WORK PROCESS].

- In this survey, we are interested only in the organizational practices in place in **[TIME FRAME].**

- There is no need to send this survey to us. We will call you to schedule a phone appointment to find out your answers to these questions.

THANKS VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP!

I. HIRING

1. Who hires [WORKGROUP1]?

2. What is considered important in hiring [WORKGROUP1]?

3. Why is each trait considered important?

4. How do you select individuals with these traits in the hiring process?

SAME QUESTIONS FOR EACH WORKGROUP IN THE FOCAL WORK PROCESS

II. TRAINING

1. What kind of training does [WORKGROUP1] receive in your organization?

2. What are the competencies that the training is seeking to build?

3. Why is each trait considered important?

SAME QUESTIONS FOR EACH WORKGROUP IN THE FOCAL WORK PROCESS

III. JOB DESIGN

1. What is the job description for [WORKGROUP1]?

2. Does the job description include coordination?

3. If so, with which other workgroups in the [FOCAL WORK PROCESS]?

4. Does [WORKGROUP1] have a scope of practice that limits other workgroups from doing their work, or limit them from doing the work of others?

5. Is the scope of practice for [WORKGROUP1] currently under reconsideration? Explain.

SAME QUESTIONS FOR EACH WORKGROUP IN THE FOCAL WORK PROCESS?

IV. BOUNDARY SPANNERS

1. Is there a role that would qualify as a boundary spanner in [FOCAL WORK PROCESS]? \

2. If so, what are the responsibilities?

2. Which disciplines are they selected from?

3. What percentage of your clients/projects are assigned a boundary spanner?

4. How are clients/projects assigned to boundary spanner?

5. At what stages of the client/project journey does the boundary spanner's responsibility begin and end?

6. How many clients/projects per boundary spanner?

V. SUPERVISION AND/OR FRONTLINE LEADERSHIP

1. What are the responsibilities of the frontline supervisor in [WORKGROUP1]?

2. What is the balance between performance monitoring vs. coaching and feedback?

3. How are frontline supervisors selected and trained for [WORKGROUP1]?

4. How many frontline employees are there per frontline supervisor in [WORKGROUP1]?

SAME QUESTIONS FOR EACH WORKGROUP IN THE FOCAL WORK PROCESS

VI. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR QUALITY

1. How are people in [WORKGROUP1] held accountable for the quality of the [FOCAL WORK PROCESS]?

2. Which entities are accountable for quality? Is it by individual, by workgroup, by department, by organization, and/or for the [FOCAL WORK PROCESS] as a whole?

3. Is it primarily a proactive or reactive process, or mixed? Explain.

4. When an error has occurred, how do you figure out who is responsible?

5. Does this accountability process involve external organizations? How?

6. Does this process involve clients and/or family members? How?

7. How are quality data shared with each workgroup, and how often?

SAME QUESTIONS FOR EACH WORKGROUP IN THE FOCAL WORK PROCESS

VII. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR EFFICIENCY

1. How are people in [WORKGROUP1] held accountable for the efficiency of the [FOCAL WORK PROCESS]?

2. Which entities are accountable for efficiency? Is it by individual, by workgroup, by department, by organization, and/or for the [FOCAL WORK PROCESS] as a whole?

3. Is it primarily a proactive or reactive process, or mixed? Explain.

4. When an error has occurred, how do you figure out who is responsible?

5. Does this accountability process involve external organizations? How?

6. Does this process involve clients and/or family members? How?

7. How are efficiency data shared with each workgroup, and how often?

SAME QUESTIONS FOR EACH WORKGROUP IN THE FOCAL WORK PROCESS

VIII. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. What is the process for resolving conflicts between [WORKGROUP1] and other workgroups in the [FOCAL WORK PROCESS]?

2. How proactive are managers expected to be in mediating conflicts?

SAME QUESTIONS FOR EACH WORKGROUP IN THE FOCAL WORK PROCESS

IX. CROSS-FUNCTIONAL MEETINGS OR HUDDLES

1. Do you have cross-functional meetings or huddles related to the [FOCAL WORK PROCESS]?

2. What is their purpose?

3. How many times per week are these meetings or huddles held?

4. Who leads these meetings?

5. How frequently is each workgroup represented at the meetings? (always, usually, sometimes, never)

X. CROSS-FUNCTIONAL PROTOCOLS

1. Do you use any cross-functional protocols for [FOCAL WORK PROCESS]? Explain.

2. Which workgroups have their tasks included on the cross-functional protocols?

3. Do these cross-functional protocols include handoffs to external workgroups? Please explain.

4. For what percentage of your clients/projects do you use cross-functional protocols? What is the rationale for using or not using cross-functional protocols for a given client/project?

5. How were these developed? When? By whom?

XI. INFORMATION SYSTEMS

1. Which aspects of relevant information for the [FOCAL WORK PROCESS] are available electronically?

2. Who has access to each of these information fields? (include external work groups as well as clients and family members, if applicable)?

3. Do you have secure messaging between clients and/or families and the workgroups in the [FOCAL WORK PROCESS]?