

Seventh Edition

Public Administration

An Action Orientation



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Orientation, Seventh Edition**

**Robert B. Denhardt, Janet V. Denhardt,
and Tara A. Blanc**

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PREFACE

The seventh edition of *Public Administration: An Action Orientation* updates the text by taking it through President Obama's first term and into his second term, following a very close election. It discusses the implications of the recent economic crisis, explores the resulting budget deficits at all levels of government as well as the increase in the national debt, considers the possible ramifications of the Obama health care reform effort, and covers recent political moves to limit collective bargaining for public employees.

Most notably, the book has been revised to more completely examine performance in government, on the one hand, and efforts to engage citizens in the work of public and nonprofit organizations, on the other hand. Placed in the context of the history of reform in the field, we now have extended our discussion of management reforms such as the New Public Management, updated material on advances in information and communication technology, and given more emphasis to performance management systems. In addition, we have included important new material dealing with leadership, organizational theory, and bureaucracy; expanded the discussion of special purpose governments, including school districts; and given a closer look at the increasingly important connection between public administration and civic action or citizenship. We particularly emphasize new efforts to promote transparency, collaboration, and participation in public and nonprofit organizations, with much of this discussion centering on the New Public Service. We have once again reordered the chapters to create a more logical progression of material given the large number of revisions since the organization of the previous edition. Additionally, new vignettes asking "What Would You Do?" give students the opportunity to think about and discuss their responses to specific and realistic challenges in public service. Finally, we have inserted in each chapter a reference to CourseReader.

CourseReader for *Public Administration: An Action Orientation*

ISBN-13: 9781133939214 (Public Administration: An Action Orientation with Printed Access Card for CourseReader)

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In addition to reviewing important public administration issues, we have selected certain readings that highlight the focus of each chapter. Assigning readings can often be a difficult process. Within each chapter, you will come across reading assignments that are easily accessible within the Cengage Learning CourseReader. We have designed the CourseReader selections to tie in seamlessly with the section material. Keeping in mind that we must make the most of the time today's busy students can allocate to extra reading, we've handpicked one selection per chapter that will add the most to their study, reinforce the concepts from the text, and help them apply what they've learned to events around them. You may assign the questions that accompany the readings as graded or completion-based homework or use them to spark in-class discussion.

CourseReader is an easy-to-use and affordable option to create an online collection of readings for your course, and this is the first and only introductory book to political science offering a customizable e-reader. You may assign the readings we've recommended for each chapter without any additional setup, or you can choose to create and customize a reader specifically for your class from the thousands of text documents and media clips within CourseReader. You can also

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Students will find open access to tutorial quizzes for every chapter, while instructors have access to the Instructor's Manual for *Public Administration: An Action Orientation*.

Instructor's Manual for *Public Administration: An Action Orientation* online
ISBN 13: 9781133949145

The Instructor's Manual includes an introduction on teaching public administration, ideas on preparing and designing a syllabus, a section on using supplementary textbooks, an overview and test bank including multiple-choice, true/false, and essay questions for each chapter, and a section on ideas for class activities.

Like previous editions, the seventh edition contains subtle but telling differences from other books in the field. We assume that students in an introductory course in public administration don't want to learn about the profession only in the abstract, but are interested in influencing the operations of public agencies, as managers from the inside or as citizens from the outside. They want to acquire the skills necessary for changing things for the better.

For this reason, it is important that the text not only introduce students to the scholarly literature of public administration, but also that it helps them develop the insights and abilities that will make them more effective and responsible actors. This book contains a good deal of material that is basic to working in or with public organizations. At the same time, the discussion attends to the complex and often confounding values that distinguish work in the public sector. Most significant, however, is the focus on personal values and interpersonal skills that are crucial to effecting change in public organizations.

Another feature of the book is its balanced attention to the work of managers at all levels of government and in nonprofit organizations. Although the federal government is a powerful model for the study of public administration, managers of state and local agencies are important actors in the governmental process, and their work is acknowledged and examined as well. Similarly, we show how managers of associations, nonprofit and "third-sector" organizations, and even traditionally private organizations are now confronting

the same issues faced by administrators in the public sector. In fact, we frequently use the term *public organizations* to describe all such groups involved in the management of public programs.

This edition also gives proper attention to the global dimensions of public administration today. No longer is administrators' work confined to their own organizations or even to their own jurisdictions. The complexity of modern life means, among other things, that administrators must be attentive to developments around the world as well as to those at home. Decisions made in a foreign capital may affect the work of a public administrator even more significantly than those made only miles away. Today, knowledge of international affairs and comparative issues is important not only to those who work in other countries but also to all who work in public administration.

Public Administration: An Action Orientation remains distinctive in its treatment of the ethics of public service. The topic of ethics is thoroughly covered in a separate chapter, and references to ethical concerns appear throughout the text. Ethical issues cannot be separated from action. Indeed, every act of every public servant, at whatever level of government or in any related organization, has an important ethical dimension. For this reason, we have made a strong effort to discuss the ethical considerations that are a part of all administrative activities.

Finally, *Public Administration: An Action Orientation* was the first text on this subject to be fully integrated with the Internet resources that are available to assist public administrators and those studying public administration. In each chapter, we highlight “networking” resources available to students, including websites that contain material that supplements the text, provides examples and case studies, and links the student to other materials available online.

In this text we talk about action, but we also invite students to act. At the end of each chapter are self-diagnostic materials and exercises (cases, simulations, discussion points, and so on) designed to supplement students' cognitive learning with behavioral practice. These activities impart a sense of not only what public administration looks like to the impartial observer, but also what it feels like to the manager or private individual engaged in public action. Students have opportunities to test, practice, and improve their skills. We have included a list of key terms and definitions in the glossary and have recommended additional readings in each chapter. There are very exciting possibilities in public administration today. Working to solve important public problems, sensing the human drama involved in such work, and gaining the satisfaction of doing something really worthwhile make being involved in public organizations quite fascinating. The perspective adopted here—focusing on the experiences of people acting in the real world of public organizations and on the skills needed for managerial success—permits a lively and interesting presentation of the field. We particularly hope to convey, in a personal and direct manner, the challenges and rewards of public service.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people contributed to this book. From our work with members of the American Society for Public Administration, the National Academy of Public Administration, the International City Management Association, and the Alliance for Innovation, we have gained special appreciation of the complexity of public management and of the dedication and hard work required for public service. We hope we have conveyed the commitment and concern that guide the work of the best public managers; they deserve great credit and respect.

In the first edition of the text, Bob's colleagues in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Missouri-Columbia were a great source of help and support. In subsequent editions, good colleagues and friends at the University of Colorado, the University of Delaware, Arizona State University, and the University of Southern California have made important contributions.

We wish to thank the reviewers who provided invaluable feedback on the sixth edition for our use in creating this new edition. They are Marcus Castro, University of La Verne; William Riggs, Texas A&M International University; Cryshanna Jackson, Youngstown State University; Willie Britt, Golden Gate University; and Bradley Best, Buena Vista University.

Finally, this book is dedicated to all of our children, who have been a constant source of joy, wonderment, and pride. Thanks to all.

Robert B. Denhardt, Janet V. Denhardt, and Tara A. Blanc

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PERSONAL ACTION IN PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

Public administration is concerned with the management of public programs. Public administrators work at all levels of government, both at home and abroad, and they manage nonprofit organizations, associations, and interest groups of all kinds. The substantive fields within which public managers work range across the varied interests of government and public affairs, from defense and national security to social welfare and environmental quality, from the design and construction of roads and bridges to the exploration of space, and from taxation and financial administration to human resources management. Though public administration varies tremendously in its scope and substance, those who work in public organizations share certain commitments. Among these, none is more important than a commitment to public service.

In this book, we examine the work of public administrators in many different kinds of organizations and define the political and historical context within which public and nonprofit organizations operate. We examine the commitments that underlie the notion of public service and the opportunities and constraints they place on public action. We examine the many technical fields, such as planning, budgeting, personnel, and evaluation, with which public administrators must be familiar and consider the personal and interpersonal talents needed by successful public managers. Most importantly, we emphasize the knowledge, skills, and values that *you* will need to be both effective and responsible as you act in the public interest.

Although we introduce many different areas of public administration, we do so from a particular point of view that provides a unifying theme in our examination of administrative work in public and nonprofit organizations. This point of view holds that there is something very special about public administration: your work in public service is distinguished by its pursuit of democratic values, and this concern affects nearly everything you do as a public manager. As a public administrator, you are obligated not only to achieve efficiency and effectiveness, but also to be responsive to the many bodies that help define the public interest: elected officials, members of the legislature, client or constituent groups, and citizens generally. This special obligation requires that you be ever mindful of managerial concerns, political concerns, and ethical concerns and that you develop structures and processes that take into account all three. The result is a particularly complicated approach to getting things done, but one that has special rewards. From service to the public, you may gain a very special sense of accomplishment and personal satisfaction, one that comes from helping others and from pursuing the public interest.

What Is Public Administration?

We have already described public administration as the management of public programs. But to elaborate on this definition, it helps to know a little history. Happily, there is only a little history to learn because public administration, at least in this country, is a relatively young field of study. Of course, people have been engaged in the management of public programs for thousands of years. (For example, imagine the administrative headaches involved in building the Egyptian pyramids!) However, the self-conscious study of public administration is a fairly recent development, often dated to the work of French and German scholars in the late nineteenth century. Public administration as we know it today in the United States began as the study of government administration, and that study began as part of late-nineteenth-century efforts to reform governmental operations. Most scholars and practitioners date the beginnings of the deliberate study of public administration in this country to an 1887 essay written by Woodrow Wilson (then scholar, later president). Although some have recently questioned the influence Wilson had on the field, there is no question that his essay marks the symbolic beginning of American public administration.

Wilson's essay was basically reformist in nature, and highly practical. It was designed to address the inefficiency and open corruption that had become a part of government during the late 1880s and to suggest certain remedies within the administration of government. Wilson argued that although scholars and practitioners had focused on political institutions (such as Congress or the presidency), too little attention had been paid to administrative questions—the questions of how the government actually operates. The result, according to Wilson, was that it was becoming “harder to run a constitution than to frame one” (Wilson, 1887, p. 200). Wilson first wanted the work of government agencies to be accomplished more effectively. He felt that such organizations would operate best if they pursued the private sector's commitment to efficient or “businesslike” operations. Wilson, of course, wrote in a period during which business, industry, and technology were developing in rapid and surprising new ways. Like others, he admired the managerial philosophies that business seemed to be developing. Among these notions, Wilson particularly favored the idea of concentrating power in a single authority atop a highly integrated and centralized administrative structure. His recommendation of a strong chief executive has been echoed by writers (and chief executives!) even to the present.

The men and women who followed Wilson in discussions of what came to be called public administration were very practical people, concerned with reforming governmental structures and making them more efficient. But they were also quite careful to place these concerns within the context of democratic government. How might the principles of democracy, including such lofty ideals as liberty and justice, be extended throughout government and throughout society? Indeed, Leonard D. White, one of the most thoughtful of the early writers, commented that “the study of public administration . . . needs to be related to the broad generalizations of political theory concerned with such matters as justice, liberty, obedience, and the role of the state in human affairs” (White, 1948, p. 10). As we will see, a continued concern for operating efficiently while at the same time operating in a way consistent with democratic values marks the field of public administration even today.

Values of Democracy

Because their commitment to democratic values so clearly affects the work of those in public and nonprofit organizations in this country, it may be helpful to briefly review some of the key commitments we associate with democratic governance. The term *democracy* well reflects its roots: the Greek words *demos*, meaning “people,” and *kratis*, meaning “authority.” Generally speaking, democracy refers to a political system in which the interests of the people at large prevail. However, it is clear that within these broad parameters there are many different conceptions of democracy. For example, at the end of World War II, representatives of the United States, Great Britain, France, and Russia met to consider the “democratization” of Germany. Yet, it soon became apparent that the Russian idea of democracy was quite different from the Western view. While Westerners associated democracy with such ideas as free elections, freedom of the press, freedom of movement, and the freedom to criticize the government, the Russians had quite a different conception. For them, democracy did not necessarily mean government by or of the people, but rather whether government policy is carried out *in the interest* of the people.

Even today, the term *democratic* is used in many different ways by many different people. For example, North Korea, a highly authoritarian state, claims aspects of democracy such as a multiparty system. In the American experience, however, there is general agreement that democracy refers to a political system—a way of ordering power and authority in which decision-making power is widely shared among members of the society. Or to put it in terms of control, democracy is a system in which many ordinary citizens exercise a high degree of control over their leaders. (In either case, the opposite would be an *oligarchy*, government by the few, or an *autocracy*, government by one.)

But democracy is defined not only in terms of processes or procedures (for example, rule by many), but also by several important cultural values that are typically pursued in a democratic society. Among these, three—individualism, equality, and liberty—have been of special importance to those who have helped shape the American idea of democracy. The first is *individualism*, the idea that the dignity and integrity of the individual is of supreme importance. Individualism suggests that achieving the fullest potential of each individual is the best measure of the success of our political system. It is the idea of individualism that is reflected in the familiar phrasing of the Declaration of Independence—that all persons are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights and that it is the purpose of government to secure those rights.

Second is the idea of *equality*, which does not mean that all persons are equal in their talents or possessions, but that each individual has an equal claim to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. In this view, each person should be seen as an end, not as a means; no one should be a mere tool of another. Moreover, equality in the field of government would suggest that differences in wealth or position are not sufficient reasons for giving one group preference over another. In a democracy, each one has an equal claim to the attention of the system and should be able to expect just outcomes.

A third central value of a democratic society is *liberty*, or freedom. This idea suggests that the individual citizen of a democracy should have a high degree of self-determination. You should have the maximum opportunity to select your own purposes in life and to

choose the means to accomplish them. Liberty is more than just the absence of constraints; it suggests the freedom to act positively in pursuit of one's own ends. Only by allowing individuals the freedom to choose, it is argued, will social progress occur.

The influence of these themes on the development of public administration is undeniable, although, as we will see, people differ over the degree to which they influence the day-to-day operations of public agencies. Similarly, the way in which democracy has been operationalized in the American political tradition has had important influences on the operation of public organizations. For example, take the traditional separation of legislative, executive, and judicial functions. The primary task of the legislative branch is to make policy through the enactment of legislation, the primary task of the executive branch is the faithful execution or implementation of policy, and the primary task of the judicial branch is the interpretation of the law, especially as it relates to constitutional guarantees.

David Rosenbloom of American University has argued that these three functions of government are related to three views of the role of public administrators in American society (Rosenbloom, 1993, p. 15):

1. The *managerial approach* to public administration, which Rosenbloom connects to the executive function, emphasizes the management and organization of public organizations. As with Wilson, this view sometimes suggests that management in the public sector is very much like that in the private sector; that is, it is primarily concerned with efficiency.
2. The *political approach* to public administration, related to the legislative function in government, is more concerned about ensuring constitutional safeguards, such as those already mentioned. Efficiency becomes less a concern than effectiveness or responsiveness.
3. Finally, the *legal approach* to public administration, related to the judicial function, emphasizes the administrator's role in applying and enforcing the law in specific situations. It is also concerned with the adjudicatory role of public organizations.

Although we will examine these various approaches in more detail as we move through the book, it is important to understand at the outset that all actions of public administrators take place within an important political context: a commitment to democratic ideals and practices. Yet, today, that ideal is somewhat tarnished. Americans' trust in government has been steadily declining over the last several decades. Questions are being raised not only about the quality and productivity of government, but also about the responsiveness of government to the people (see the box "Public Administration in History: The Democratic Dream"). This tension will be a persistent theme as we examine contemporary approaches to the study and practice of public administration. Borrowing a phrase from earlier times, the task of public administrators today is still to "make democracy suitable for modern conditions." Doing so in a time of confusion and mistrust will be a special challenge to those in public administration as we move through the twenty-first century. Restoring trust in government and public service is not merely a responsibility of elected officials; it is a responsibility of appointed administrators as well. Keep this in mind as we examine the various approaches and techniques that are appropriate to public administration today.

Public Administration in History

THE DEMOCRATIC DREAM

The predominant American political belief—attained, pretended, or otherwise—from before the establishment of the republic and throughout the nation’s history has been the democratic dream, nominally based on some version of popular representation and governance. Virtually every political structure and reform has been predicated on some mode of the democratic, egalitarian ethos, even as they oscillated back and forth between its Jeffersonian and Hamiltonian poles. Indeed, to imagine a widespread domestic political movement (and probably foreign policy initiative) that does not in some very visible manner drape itself in the sacred vestment of democracy is inconceivable.

It is in this ambience that American political philosophies, politics themselves, and even certain professions (e.g., public administration) were created and nurtured. Not surprisingly, public service and public administration in the United States have shared a similar democratic coloration. From the early days of the professional public administrator—when Woodrow Wilson temporarily partitioned “politics” and “administration” into separate entities—we find a solid stream of democratic theory underpinning and underlining contemporary public administration.

But the Constitution cannot serve as a singular political poultice for whatever ails the body politic. Within the country at large, there is a tangible sense that as often as appeals are made to the nation’s democratic benchmarks, these are more calls to a fading faith than references to reality. Americans are apparently disenchanted with their politics, both in terms of substance and process. Our public life is rife with discontent. Americans do not believe they have much to say about how they are governed and do not trust government to do the right thing.

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Contrasting Business and Public Administration

One issue, however, deserves further comment up front. Even though work in public and nonprofit organizations is guided by commitments to democratic ideals, it is also involved with management, and, for that reason, public administration is often confused with business management. Indeed, such confusion has occasionally been prominent in the field of public administration. (As we have already seen, early writers in the field often suggested that government should become more like business, a sentiment heard even today.) Certainly, there are some similarities between business and public administration. Managers across all sectors—public, private, and nonprofit—are involved in questions of organizational design, the allocation of scarce resources, and the management of people. But most observers would agree that the primary distinction between business and public service is that business is

primarily concerned with making a profit, while public service is concerned with delivering services or regulating individual or group behavior in the public interest. All would agree that the context of public and nonprofit management significantly alters the work itself. Nonprofit management is characterized by ambiguity, pluralistic decision making, and visibility (see the box “Exploring Concepts: Public Administration Is Different from Business”).

Exploring Concepts

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IS DIFFERENT FROM BUSINESS

- The objectives are much more ambiguous.
- There are multiple decision centers.
- Public administrators operate with much greater visibility.

Ambiguity One difference between public administration and business management lies in the purposes to be served. In most businesses, even those with service objectives, the bottom-line profit is the basic measure of evaluating how good a job the organization is doing. In turn, the performance of individual managers can, in many cases, be directly measured in terms of their unit’s contribution to the overall profit of the company. This is not true of public or nonprofit agencies, where the objectives of the organization may be more ambiguous and where making or losing money is not the main criterion for success or failure.

Often the objectives of public and nonprofit organizations are stated in terms of service; for example, an agency’s mission may be to protect the quality of the environment or to provide an adequate level of rehabilitative services to the disabled. Yet, such service objectives are much harder to specify and to measure. What does “quality” mean with respect to the environment? What level of service to the disabled is “adequate”? The difficulty of specifying objectives such as these makes it harder to assess the performance of government agencies and, in turn, their managers. Moreover, most businesses wouldn’t tolerate a money-losing operation in a depressed area, but a public or nonprofit organization, though equally attentive to the money being spent, might well consider meeting human needs more important than the financial “bottom line.”

Pluralistic Decision Making A second difference between work in public service and in business is that public service, at least in a democratic society, requires that many groups and individuals have access to the decision process. As a result, decisions that might be made rapidly by one individual or a small group in a business might, in a public or nonprofit organization, require input from many diverse groups and organizations. Consequently, it is difficult to speak of specific decision centers in government. W. Michael Blumenthal, a business executive who became secretary of the treasury, described the situation this way:

If the President said to me, you develop [an economic policy toward Japan], Mike, the moment that becomes known there are innumerable interest groups that begin to play a role. The House Ways and Means Committee, the Senate Finance Committee, and every

member on them and every staff member has an opinion and seeks to exert influence. Also, the Foreign Relations Committee, the oversight committees, and then the interest groups, business, the unions, the State Department, the Commerce Department, OMB, Council of Economic Advisers, and not only the top people, but all their staff people, not to speak of the President's staff and the entire press. (Blumenthal, 1983, p. 30)

The pluralistic nature of public decision making has led many business executives who have worked in the public or nonprofit sectors to comment that this feature makes public and nonprofit management much more difficult than management in the private sector. But, as Blumenthal points out, “the diversity of interests seeking to affect policy is the nature and essence of democratic government” (Blumenthal, 1983, pp. 30–31). Many have also found that this aspect of public service is particularly challenging and rewarding.

Visibility Finally, managers in public and nonprofit organizations seem to operate with much greater visibility than their counterparts in industry. Public service in a democratic society is subject to constant scrutiny by both the press and the public. The media seem to cover everything you do, and this may be a mixed blessing. On the one hand, media coverage enables the leaders of the organization to communicate rapidly to external and internal audiences. On the other hand, the media's constant scrutiny of policy positions and their labeling of inconsistencies and policy differences as weaknesses can be limiting to free discussion of issues in their formulation stage. And, of course, the occasional intrusions of the press into even the most mundane personal matters can be excessive; one local newspaper even reported a problem a new city manager was having with his refrigerator! Yet, executives in government realize that it is essential to a democratic society that their work be visible to the public and subject to the interest and control of the citizenry. Indeed, one of the current concerns of public executives is how to increase the “transparency” of their work, something we will explore in more detail later.

What Would You Do?

You have just been appointed city manager of a city of 30,000 in the upper Midwest. While the economy of the area is generally stable, there is talk of one of the area's major industrial firms moving out, taking much-needed jobs from the community. On the other hand, that firm has been a persistent contributor to pollution in the area. The city council seems evenly divided on whether to make an effort to keep the firm and its jobs or simply let it go. In your first six months on the job, what would you do?

Thinking about Public Administration Today

With this background, we can now think more carefully about how the field of public administration has traditionally been described and how we might develop an action orientation toward the study of public administration suitable to a contemporary world. In terms of definition, many early writers spoke of administration as a function of government,

something that occurred in many shapes and forms throughout government. There were obviously administrative activities performed in the executive branch, but there were also administrative functions performed in the legislative and judicial branches. Some even noted that from time to time any single official might engage in both legislative and administrative functions.

Somewhat later, public administration was viewed as merely concerned with the activities of the executive agencies of government. In the words of an early text, public administration is concerned with the “operations of the administrative branch only” (Willoughby, 1927, p. 1). By the 1950s, such a perspective was so firmly entrenched that the leading text of that period stated, “By public administration is meant, in common usage, the activities of the executive branches of national, state, and local governments; independent boards and commissions set up by Congress and state legislatures; government corporations; and certain other agencies of a specialized character” (Simon et al., 1950, p. 7). Modern definitions of public administration have returned to the traditional view, giving attention to administrative officials in all branches of government and even focusing on those in non-profit organizations.

For our purposes, a formal definition of the field may be less important than trying to discover how public administration is experienced by those in the “real world.” Our commitment to an action orientation suggests that we try to determine the kinds of activities engaged in by public administrators and the environmental factors that help to shape their work. We have already seen how the ambiguity of service objectives, the pluralistic nature of governmental decision making, and the visibility of management in the public and non-profit sectors create a context in which managerial work is significantly different from that in other settings. From the standpoint of the real-world administrator, the things that really make the difference in the way you operate are not whether you are employed by a government agency, but whether you work under circumstances that feature an ambiguity of objectives, a multiplicity of decision centers, and high public visibility.

Networking

The leading national organization for those in the field of public administration is the American Society for Public Administration. See www.aspanet.org. Other related organizations with helpful websites include the National Academy of Public Administration at www.napawash.org; the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management at www.appam.org; the International City Management Association at www.icma.org; the American Political Science Association at www.apsanet.org; the Alliance for Nonprofit Management at www.allianceonline.org; the Independent Sector at www.independentsector.org; and the Academy of Management, Public and Nonprofit Division at <http://division.aomonline.org/pnp/>.

Publicness These features in turn all derive from the simple fact that the public or non-profit manager is pursuing public purposes. In terms of the actions and experiences of the public administrator, therefore, we may say that it is the “publicness” of the work of the public or nonprofit manager that distinguishes public administration from other

similar activities. This view of the administrator's role suggests that, as a public or non-profit manager, you must operate with one eye toward managerial effectiveness and the other toward the desires and demands of the public. It recognizes that you are likely to experience an inevitable tension between efficiency and responsiveness as you work in governmental or nongovernmental organizations, a tension that will be absolutely central to your work.

Let us highlight some of the implications of this orientation. Many commentators point out that the distinction between public and private management is no longer simply a distinction between business and government or between profit and service. In fact, more and more frequently, we encounter situations in which traditionally public organizations are pursuing enhanced revenues (profits?), and traditionally private organizations are concerned with the provision of services. What is important is not merely what is being sought, but rather whose interest is being served. On this basis, a private enterprise is one in which private interests privately arrived at are paramount. A public organization, on the other hand, is one in which public interests publicly arrived at are paramount.

There is a trend in our society for greater openness and responsiveness on the part of many organizations. Most associations and nonprofit organizations would fit this mold, and managers in those organizations must certainly be attentive to both efficiency and responsiveness. But many corporations as well are finding it important to open their decision-making processes to public scrutiny and involvement. The range of organizations engaged in public service (and the applicability of public and nonprofit management) seems ever-increasing.

Certainly this trend has become even more important over the last couple of decades as more and more public problems require building collaborations or networks involving public, private, and nonprofit organizations (O'Leary & Bingham, 2009). In part this result has come about as government staffing has been decreased and more and more services are contracted out to private and nonprofit organizations. In part it has come about because the complexities of the problems we face require the involvement of many groups. Building networks of organizations to address public problems obviously makes solutions more difficult. "As more public programs are delivered by private and nonprofit actors, and as many more public programs rely on intricate public-private-nonprofit partnerships, it is ever harder to make sure the right dots are connected well" (Kettl, 2009, p. 26). Similarly, these arrangements make issues of responsibility and accountability more difficult as well, but they do represent the changing face of public administration that you will encounter.

The Global Context We need to also recognize that changing economic conditions have combined with technological developments to mean that public administration is no longer bound by national borders, as the traditional definitions of the field implied. Today the international dimensions of public administration are more important than ever. Understanding the activities of political and administrative officials in other countries is important not only for those who will spend part of their careers outside the United States, but also for those who will work at home. Increasingly, city managers, even in small communities, find that to be effective in local economic development activities, they must be experts