Cambridge Elements

Elements in Organization Theory
edited by
Nelson Phillips
*Imperial College London*
Royston Greenwood
*University of Alberta*

STARTING POINTS

Intellectual and Institutional Foundations of Organization Theory

Bob Hinings
*University of Alberta*
Renate E. Meyer
*WU Vienna & Copenhagen Business School*
Starting Points

Intellectual and Institutional Foundations of Organization Theory

Elements in Organization Theory

DOI: 10.1017/9781108671286
First published online: August 2018

Bob Hinings
University of Alberta

Renate E. Meyer
WU Vienna & Copenhagen Business School

Abstract: This Element reviews the first 120+ years of organization theory, examining its development from the sociology of organizations and management theory. It is initially organized around two streams of thought. The first is found in political economy and the sociology of organizations with an emphasis on understanding the new organizations that arose in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The second derives from practitioner-scholars whose aim was to provide theories and approaches to managing these new organizations. The Element then shows how each of the streams of understanding and managing came together to produce organization theory. In doing this, it also describes how the institutional frameworks in academic associations, academic centres and journals came out of these approaches and how they strengthened the development of organization theory.

Keywords: organization theory, classical management, sociology of organization, comparative organization analysis, contingency theory

© Bob Hinings and Renate E. Meyer 2018

ISBNs: 9781108709323 (PB) 9781108671286 (OC)
ISSNs: 2397-947X (online) 2514-3859 (print)
# Contents

1. Introduction  
   page 1

2. Understanding Organizations: The Beginnings  
   7

3. Managing Organizations: The Classics  
   20

4. Understanding Organizations: The Establishment of an Approach  
   35

5. Comparative Management: No One Best Way  
   51

6. Conclusions  
   70

References  
77