TASKS VS. JOBS

Professor Peter Cappelli

First – some terms

- What is a task?

- What is a job? (series of tasks)

- How do we determine what is in a job?

- Jobs are arranged into organization charts
  - Identify reporting relationships and decision rights

HOW TO DESIGN JOBS

Professor Peter Cappelli

How jobs are designed becomes complicated when people have to work together….

Frederick Winslow Taylor

Tries to Impose Order

- Design jobs in ways that are easiest to do – early ergonomics

- Take complicated jobs like machinist and break them down into individual tasks

- Assign simple tasks to low-skill workers

- Tell everyone exactly how their tasks should be performed

- Piece-rate payments – share the gains with workers

DRAWBACKS AND RETHINKING JOB DESIGN

Professor Peter Cappelli

Wharton
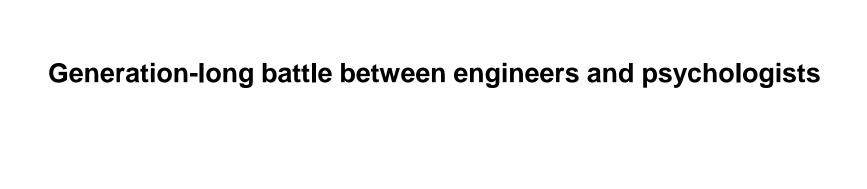UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA   ONLINE

What's the drawback?

People soon hated those jobs

Rethinking job design from a human rather than an engineer's perspective

- What is it that people like about work?
  - Social interactions
- What is it that they like about jobs per se (beyond the paycheck)?
  - Autonomy (control)
  - Variety
  - Appreciating the significance of their effort
  - Getting feedback on specific tasks

Generation-long battle between engineers and psychologists

The Rise of the Japanese Auto Industry

- Powerful lessons from the Toyota production system

- What's different about it?
    - Workers control the engineering decisions about their job
    - Much greater autonomy and control
    - The individual tasks are just as boring BUT quality and productivity are far better

- What's the downside? Workers are in control – unlike Mother's Restaurant

Thinking about systems of work where practices fit together

- The managing people practices reinforce each other
  - Profit sharing and participation, e.g.
- Those practices collectively drive competitiveness
  - Holt Chemical company
  - Nordstrom

Management of people can drive strategy

…it's not just about execution