# Visiting the Iron Cage: Bureaucracy and the Contemporary Workplace

# Chapter 13
# Visiting the Iron Cage: Bureaucracy and the Contemporary Workplace

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**Abstract**  Bureaucracy as an organizational form has always been a controversial issue and placed at the very heart of most discussions within organizational theory. One side of this prolonged discussion praises this administrative form as the 'rational' way to run an organization. It provides needed guidance and clarifies responsibilities, which enables employees to become more efficient. However, the opposition claims that in a non-linear world, where industrial organizations are forced to confront the challenging task of sensing and responding to unpredictable, novel situations of highly competitive markets, such an organizational form stifles creativity, fosters de-motivation and causes pressure on employees. Dealing with a bureaucratic form of organization and its consequences begs for a context. It would be appropriate to quit 'taking sides' and develop a sound analysis of this phenomenon under the conditions of today's global workplace environment. This chapter intends to delineate the conditions under which bureaucracy has emerged and the way it has been interpreted since its inception and develop a sound and appropriate analytical approach to its functioning given the prevailing conditions of the contemporary workplace.

## 13.1  Introduction

Dealing with the voluminous literature on bureaucracy requires strenuous endeavor. After spending a considerable amount of time and effort in trying to grasp the very insight of Weber's conception of bureaucracy, ending up in one of the most rigorous academic battlefields is almost inevitable; with detractors on the one side and proponents, though few, on the another. Bureaucracy has generally been labeled as the chief villain in the world of organization and management theory. The prolonged arguments regarding the effectiveness of bureaucratic

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organizational structures have leaped to their self-evident conclusions. The assumptions and premises of a typical bureaucratic organization are claimed to have failed to accommodate 'post-bureaucratic' organizational and managerial concerns such as teamwork, flexibility, adaptability, managing knowledge and employee contribution. Bureaucracy habitually implies inefficiency, slowness, top-down decision-making and waste of resources (Böhm 2006). There is an entire literature dedicated to revealing bureaucracy's imperfections.

On the other hand, bureaucracies are still quite prevalent. Bureaucracy has persisted throughout the last century and still does. Apparently, the need for the utilization of its constituting elements is still vibrant. It would be more constructive to alter our stance on the matter and embrace a more reasonable one rather than producing arguments of abstract celebration or denunciation of bureaucracy, praising it for its impartiality or condemning it for its conservatism, to approve its efficiency or damn its amorality (Du Gay 2005). The taken-for-granted assumptions of the 'linear' world have been shattered by the unprecedented level of interconnectedness which has been causing a great deal of change, especially, for the last couple of decades. Among the constellation of theories in the world of organizational studies none could afford to be treated as a universally valid administrative apparatus applicable to all organizations regardless of their functions including bureaucracy. Organizations are constantly in pursuit of developing unique capabilities to cope with the challenges in the business ecology and engage in symbiotic relationships through which they will manage to adapt to the environmental conditions and become a part of interdependent coevolution. The components that constitute bureaucratic rationality are still vibrant and the fingerprints of its very logic could be traced in many contemporary arguments, though re-presented via more fashionable buzzwords. It would be more appropriate to resist the firmly fixed habit that touts bureaucracy as an object of scorn and spend effort to establish forward and backward contextual linkages, which will eventually enable us to devise a neo-bureaucratic system of thought that is capable of being resilient and embracing complexity. This chapter intends to delineate the conceptual framework of bureaucracy and tap into the functionality of its qualities under the circumstances of current global conditions in a 'sine ira et studio' manner.

## 13.2   Weber and His Conception of Bureaucracy: Eliminating the Bugs

Max Weber was born in 1864 into a prosperous German bourgeoisie family. His family was wealthy Protestants and his father was a member of the Prussian House of Deputies and the Reichstag, or the imperial parliament, which gave him ample opportunity to meet prominent scholars and politicians in person (Clegg and Lounsbury 2009; Sheldrake 2003). Even his works in economy would alone be sufficient to qualify him as one of the most important theorists of the field, while his

political sociology was unique in kind and quality in its day and still remains a model of grand theory backed by detailed observations (Lune 2010). He is acknowledged among the distinguished scholars in sociology, though Weber's training was focused on legal and economic history.

Weber's ability to synthesize a broad range of interests into coherent conceptual frameworks on economics, religion, stratification, urbanism and research methodology is quite remarkable (Lune 2010). In his work, *History of Commercial Partnership* (Weber [1889] 2003), which has barely attracted attention of scholar analysis, Weber established many of the theoretical foundations that would be central to his corpus such as rationalization, the historical separation of household and business, and the construction of modern forms of organization and authority that would pave the way to the formulation of bureaucracy (Clegg and Lounsbury 2009). Weber wrote about his conception of bureaucracy first in his study on the *Economies of Antiquity*, and later, looked more intensively into the question of the development and growth of the modern administrative apparatus in *Economy and Society* (Morrison 2006).

Some of the prominent works of Weber's corpus became available in English when Talcott Parsons, an American visitor to Germany who was formally attached to London School of Economics, visited Heidelberg and learned of his reputation there (Clegg and Lounsbury 2009). As a consequence of the inaccurate translation of Weber's work, that fails to gain access to the underlying thoughts and contextual subtleties, the prolonged analytical studies on bureaucracy have been based on false grounds. Townley (2008) depicts the situation as follows:

> Influenced by Parsons (1959), organization theory's incorporation of Weber is based on two misconceptions: a selective and a historical interpretation of bureaucracy; and a misinterpretation of the concept of the ideal type. Thus read, Weber's reception into English laid the foundations of an abstract organization theory; the commonly assumed view of bureaucracy as synonymous with organization; and a prescriptive theory of bureaucratic organizations as superior to other formal organizations.

Thus, the entire concept of bureaucracy had been downplayed and reduced to a level of suggested 'ideal' organizational architecture ignoring the rationality that underpins the concept. When Weber's works were read and analyzed by English-speaking organizational scholars, who were unfamiliar to the corpus of contemporary German scholarship, this inevitably engendered analytical disengagement with Weber's scholarship as they failed to encompass the irrefutable influence of critical thinkers belonging to German school such as Nietzsche, Hegel or Marx on Weber's work as well as Immanuel Kant (Clegg and Lounsbury 2009). The present standing of Weber's work is that he has been arguably misread and oversimplified (Lune 2010). A quick scanning of organization textbooks would reveal that Weber is mostly mentioned as one of the classical theorists of management along with Taylor and Henri Fayol. Bureaucracy ushered a multifarious managerial research questions such as issues of motivation, emotionality and the individual's perception of work, which enabled the work concept to become no longer the sole concern for individual co-workers but a managerial concern (Styhre 2007). Taylorist management regime had put special emphasis on the extrinsic motivation of the workers, while

bureaucratic organization focused on the ability to understand the intrinsic motiva-
tion of the employees (Styhre 2007). Clegg and Lounsbury (2009) states:

> Weber's inscription as a part of the classical canon by management writers added a touch of
> class to a rather pedestrian set of concerns. . . .While Weber was familiar with the work of
> Taylor and other scientific management writers, they were not familiar with him. While
> Taylor proposed technologies to exert power, Weber explained them. It would be wholly
> incorrect to bundle Weber up as a scholar of the 'classical school', akin to F.W. Taylor or to
> situate his corpus within the narrative of formal management theories. They have very little
> in common at all. The 'Max Weber' known in most management and organization theory is
> therefore an exceedingly simplified caricature in which the nuance, depth and cultural
> embeddedness of the original texts had been lost.

Organization theory and management borrowed selectively from Weber's
description of bureaucracy underscoring hierarchical authority and task specializa-
tion as properties common to all organizations (Townley 2008). These features
have been embraced as the indispensable components of his 'ideal type', which had
been misconstrued by the scholar circles. Weber defined and explained the very
insight of bureaucracy via an ideal-type model of the bureaucratic form. The ideal-
type is an analytic concept and should in no way conjure up ideals. The ideal type
could be defined as a construct or a device used to identify the characteristics of
social phenomena such as bureaucracies (Linstead et al. 2009). It is hypothetical,
does not refer to something normatively ideal, 'but to an ideational type serving as a
mental model that can be widely shared and used' (Clegg 2011).

Weber was far from being in search for the formula for a utopian society, rather
he focused on describing the institutional arrangement that shaped our social
relations (Lune 2010). He examined social action within a context of social
interaction, not just viewing people as objects driven by impersonal forces (Clegg
and Lounsbury 2009). Weber had developed his ideal type in the context of German
state-building process in the nineteenth and early twentieth century and never
claimed to have devised a 'valid-for-all' formula, let alone one that would fit into
post-war American concerns (Clegg and Lounsbury 2009). Ergo, discussions
regarding the virtues or setbacks of bureaucracy would better be sensitive to context
and avoid ignoring the need to evaluate explanations and attitudes in terms of the
interplay between ideologies, interests and practices of various actors (Thompson
and Alvesson 2005; Townley 2008).

At this point it would be appropriate to highlight the relationship between
bureaucracy and rationality. Grint (2005) explains two essential ingredients of
bureaucracy; 'it was legal that it operated on the basis of procedures that could be
adjudged correct or otherwise through resort to a body of rules by those subject to
its authority and it was rational because it operated on the principles of expert
knowledge and calculability'. Rationality is central to Weber's work. It is a process,
which had evolved throughout the centuries. The advent of modernity, which
started to alter the social, political, technological and religious landscape in the
sixteenth century and became dominant at the end of nineteenth century, ushered in
a whole new world of meaning (Lune 2010). As coined by Weber, 'enchantment' of
the pre-modern world had been replaced by calculability (disenchantment) on

which the rationality as a value is built. Disenchantment began with the Greek philosophy and science, became salient in Renaissance and culminated in Calvinism. The result was the rationalization of worldly matters.

Rationalization of institutions postulates that the world had become increasingly calculable and controllable due to the advancements in sciences, technologies and forms of organization (Merz 2011). Weber suggested that while all human action was governed by what he called a 'means-ends rationality', this rationality was subject to change from one historical period to another' (Morrison 2006). As an engaged scholar, instead of describing the shift to scientific thinking as progress and seeing the results as a greater truth, he put special emphasis on the process of change and highlighted the importance of rationality as the core value of modern society, which encouraged setting clear goals and finding efficient paths toward their achievement (Lune 2010). According to Weber, development and success of bureaucratic administration is an indication of the triumph of 'formal rationality', which indicates the greatest amount of precise calculation (Morrison 2006). What makes rationality 'formal' is its 'straightforward, unambiguous, application of numerical, calculable standards' (Weber 1978). 'Bureaucracy's superiority lies in its formality, and with this, its guarantee of calculability' (Townley 2008). Formal rationality does not necessarily overlap operational efficiency. 'Ideally rational cannot be equated with perfectly efficient as Weber's early translators assumed, just as a bureaucracy cannot be assumed to be an ideal type organization' (Townley 2008). Bureaucracy as a tool of technical rationality was later replaced with the narrower conception of efficiency (Clegg 2011).

Merton (2012) delineates that formality facilitates the interaction of the office holders despite their private attitudes toward one another; thus, the subordinate is secured from potential arbitrary actions of his superiors, since the actions of both are constrained by a mutually recognized set of rules. The system of predetermined relations the various offices involves a considerable degree of formality and clearly defined social distance between the occupants of these positions. Bureaucracy aims to depersonalize the way of getting things done, which by itself, is not a good or a bad thing, nevertheless, has certain advantages over absolute and arbitrary power (Lune 2010). In a bureaucratic organizational structure roles and responsibilities, power and privilege are divided among a fixed and identifiable set of offices as well as the formally prescribed relationships among them (Lune 2010). Merton (2012) also points out that formality is manifested by means of a more or less complicated social ritual, which symbolizes and supports the pecking order of the various offices. When formality gets integrated with the way authority is distributed within the system, it minimizes friction by mainly restricting official contact to modes, which are previously defined by the roles of the organization.

Bureaucratic rationality inherently harbors domination through knowledge that eventually makes the system technically superior. Bureaucracy is about making things to become known: the construction of written documents and files; the identification of spheres of application; the formulation and application of rules (Fig. 13.1). Drawing definitional boundaries, becoming predictable, following a
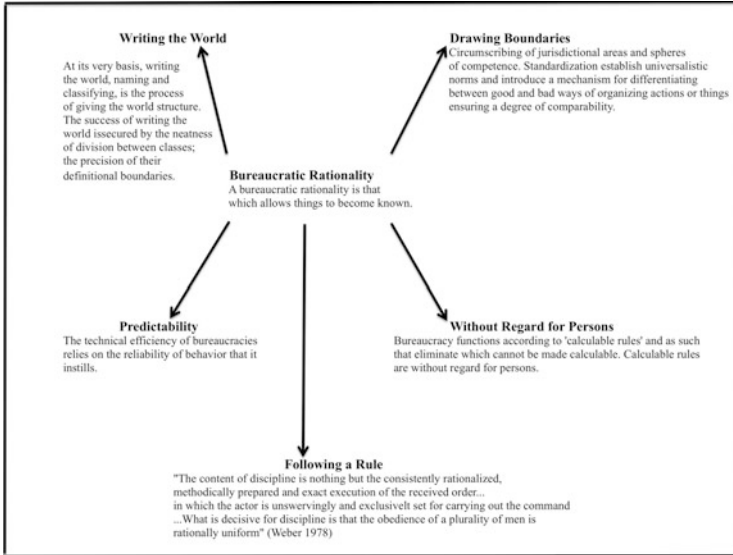
**Fig. 13.1** Bureaucratic rationality: making things known (adapted from Townley 2008)

rule and impersonality are conceded as the constitutive elements of bureaucracy. Weber (1925) states:

Bureaucratic administration means fundamentally domination through knowledge. This is the feature of it that makes it specifically rational. This consists on the one hand in technical knowledge which, by itself is sufficient to ensure it a position of extraordinary power. But, in addition to this, bureaucratic organizations, or the holders of power who make use of them, have the tendency to increase their power still further by the knowledge growing out of experience in the service.

A bureaucratic organization follows a clearly defined structure of offices and positions (Morrison 2006). Every series of actions is functionally related to the purposes of the organization, thus, in such an organization there needs to be an integrated series of hierarchized statuses in which inhere a number of obligations and privileges closely defined by limited and specific rules (Merton 2012). Bureaucratic organizational cultures are generally depicted by the strict formalized rules and structures with an intense focus on efficiency, stability and predictability (Berson et al. 2008). Following a rule provides discipline, thus, it distinguishes formal organizations from traditional organizations and informal groups (Townley 2008). Weber (1978) emphasizes that:

Management of the office follows general rules which are more or less stable, more or less exhaustive, and which can be learned. Knowledge of the rules represents a special technical expertise which officials possess. . . .The content of discipline is nothing but the consistently rationalized methodically prepared and exact execution of the received order. . . .What is decisive for discipline is that the obedience of a plurality of men is rationally uniform.
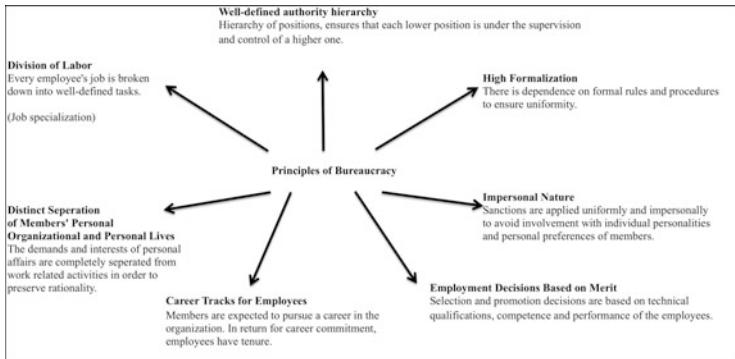
**Fig. 13.2**  Principles of bureaucracy (adapted from Robbins and Barnwell 2006)

There are clear principles in a bureaucratic organization (Fig. 13.2). Stringent hierarchy is a prominent one that characterizes the essence of such bureaucratic cultures, which involve clearly articulated division of labor, and strict control over the personnel (Höpfl 2006). Indispensable organizational qualities such as, predictability, precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, unity, lack of arbitrariness, reduction of friction are raised to the optimum point in the strictly bureaucratic administration, and especially in its monocratic form (Weber 1984).

The prevailing style of leadership in bureaucratic organizational cultures is known for their special emphasis on monitoring, organizing and coordinating (Cameron and Quinn 2005). Conformity is highly rewarded while ongoing employee management practices foment control and stability (Gregory et al. 2009). Bureaucracy requires officials to treat their subjects impersonally, *sine ira et studio* (without hatred or passion, and hence without affection or enthusiasm) and without respect to persons or status (Höpfl 2006; Townley 2008). Weber (1978) writes:

> ...homo politicus, as well as homo economicus, performs his duty best when he acts without regard to the person in question, sine era et studio, without hate and without love, without personal predilection and therefore without grace, but sheerly in accordance with the impersonal duty imposed by his calling, and not as a result of any concrete personal relationships.

Bureaucratic rationality encompasses means through which predictability is attained. Predictability refers to the routines, procedures, roles and rules that allow individuals to function or operate with certainty serves as the fertile ground on which longer-term decision making and security and efficiency of actions are cultivated. (Townley 2008). Besides, standardization of processes provide the ability to act flexibly to contingencies, thus rendering the system potentially more predictable; however, predictability does not imply the ability of knowing for certain every contingency (Townley 2008).

## 13.3   Buraucracy vs. Post-Bureaucracy

Post-bureaucratic postulations are dedicated to reveal the imperfections of bureaucracy and condemn it as ponderous and, thus, far from being resilient. The prefix 'post' is usually employed to describe the new state that is about to supersede or has already superseded the adjunct concept. Post-bureaucracy, intends to diagnose the fallacies of old bureaucracy via emphasizing the merits of the new set of managerial ideas, which are supposed to have fixed all the bugs inherent in bureaucratic system of thought. Proponents of post-bureaucratic arguments seem to be quite certain that bureaucracy itself fails to provide an enabling organizational environment for improvement and adaptation, so it is 'portrayed as a supplement as what is always already different and less accomplished than other forms of organization' (Styhre 2007). It is generally assumed that, by definition, bureaucracy is incapable of adapting. Such an inference is quite speculative and insufficient (Thompson and Alvesson 2005). Adler (2012) highlights the increasing number studies focusing on bureaucracy. He reminds us of the strong tendency to replace bureaucracy by markets or social networks advocated by post-bureaucratic discourses also inhere the risks of losing the benefits of bureaucracy not solely limited to operational performance and technical reliability, but also for the welfare of the employees, clients and the broader public.

In the light of fulsomely appreciated watchwords, such as self-organizing, teamwork, self-governance, lean-organizations and flexibility, bureaucracy confronts a barrage of counter-arguments more erosive than ever. The majority of the criticisms, however, are banal, constructed upon abstracted and utopian standards of efficiency (Clegg 2011). In spite of the prolonged disdain for bureaucracy, the evidence of the bureaucratic rationality could be found in almost every organizational setting and 'the scope of claims made about post-bureaucracy is not matched by a similar depth or scope of empirical support' (Thompson and Alvesson 2005). Adler (2012) draws attention to the ongoing prevalence of bureaucracies in both the private and public sector. Features of bureaucracy, such as documentation, strict control over well-defined performance criteria, formal procedures that ensure discipline through application of rules without regard for persons are still regarded as the plausible and 'essential tools for assuring efficiency, conformance, quality and timeliness' (Thompson and Alvesson 2005). Numerous writers pass negative judgment on bureaucracy without bothering to submit empirical evidence or systematic research to support their arguments (Styhre 2007). Popular discourses of contemporary management literature redefine the concept of 'work' and see it 'not as a painful obligation imposed upon individuals, nor as an activity undertaken for mainly instrumental purposes, but rather as a vital means to individual and self-fulfillment' (Du Gay 2000). Since bureaucracy is held responsible for the confinement of individuals in contemporary organizational settings, then there is a dire need for a savior (feasible set of applications) that will render employees free. However, a rather intriguing question remains unanswered: How?

Detractors of bureaucracy usually 'exchange the bureau with some form of organizational culture that is led by charismatic leaders' (Böhm 2006). In contrast with the personal detached bureaucrat, 'entrepreneurial new wave management is represented as calculatingly charismatic in essence' (Du Gay 2000). Increased flexibility should not allude to fewer or no rules in any organizational setting. Incorporation of teamwork into organizational processes has undoubtedly provided a framework for functional flexibility and utilization of employee expertise; however, fragmentation, highly specified tasks and existence of formal procedures are prevalent in spite of the decline in the demarcation of rules (Thompson and Alvesson 2005).

Hierarchy, which is the mainstay of Weber's conception of bureaucracy, is one of the most denigrated characteristics of bureaucracies. The 'hierarchy' and 'bureaucracy', though frequently used interchangeably, should be separated out because the first one is about managing up and down whereas the latter is about managing across (Birkinshaw 2010). Hierarchy is usually seen as the source of what is wrong in the contemporary world of organizations. Although vilified, a hierarchy is utilized by majority of the large corporations with success stories. Leavitt (2005) accentuates the fallacy that remained throughout the decades regarding the demise of hierarchies. He states that the arrival of the knowledge workers was supposed to initiate a whole new age that would sweep hierarchies away. The strict rule following the nature of a hierarchical organizational structure would be incapable of dealing with the sort of people who were adding value with their brains; nevertheless, hierarchies survived. He again draws attention to the quantum leap in information and communication technologies and how they revived the hopes of weeding out hierarchies. In the new mighty world of IT, each and every single employee could gain instant access to all the information available to base their actions on informed grounds, ergo, 'information would no longer have to flow tortuously up the hierarchy and decisions distortedly back down' (Leavitt 2005). Hierarchies survived, again.

Revolutionary new technologies are not necessarily epitomized by managerial repercussions (Balle 2007). As discussed by Thompson and Alvesson (2005), implications of incorporation of the information and communication technologies into work processes have been greatly exaggerated by many of the theorists in the field. Even in knowledge-intensive firms bureaucracy remains essential and 'formerly adhocratic arrangements may move towards more bureaucratic forms of governance over a period of time' (Alvesson and Thompson 2005). The proposed elements of knowledge management such as codification, storing and distribution, 'take the form of standardized, highly structured systems in areas such as software design or surveying as well as rules for the use of databases in order to recycle knowledge'. Knowledge management initiatives include efforts to develop measures to codify knowledge and then urge people follow particular procedures and comply with the associated templates and project metrics (Hansen et al. 1999). Installment of the state-of-the-art IT systems facilitate managerial power, rather than diminish its density. Post-bureaucratic arguments confidently state the belief in complexity, networks and emergence as means of being antithetical to bureaucracy.

In contrast with the taken for granted anti-bureaucratic assumptions, a hierarchy does not ensure inability to cope with the increasing complexity in the organizational environment. Kay (1997) states:

> ... the function of hierarchy is to reduce amount of complexity facing individual decision-makers in recognition of the tendency for individual cognitive capabilities to cluster around standard parameters. Furthermore, the amount of complexity an individual can handle is directly related to familiarity and practice opportunities and inversely related to unfamiliarity and novelty, which means that the complexity of individual tasks at lower levels is typically significantly higher than the content of tasks at higher levels.

Repercussions of bureaucracy 'motivated organization theory with both propulsion and repulsion' Starbuck (2003). Being intimidated by *bureauphobia* might drift us away from the heart of the matter given the vast array of companies organized in accordance bureaucratic principles (Styhre 2007). Many of the writers and contributors in the field of organization theory have treated bureaucracy as a static ideal type, instead of a living, changing and diverse set of practices (Alvesson and Thompson 2005). Bureaucracies are barely strictly mechanical systems, especially when the 'variety of processes, forms of working, communities, expert groups and other organizational resources safeguarding dynamic responses to external environments' involved in many of the bureaucratic organizational structures are taken into consideration (Styhre 2007).

On the other hand the world of organization studies should not turn a blind eye to the criticisms received by bureaucracy. Although the advent of highly developed information and communication studies did not alter the very core of organizational activities, it did, however, increase the speed of doing business and transformed the climate in which organizations are striving to survive. Over the last three decades, an integrated world economy has emerged with new markets opening up in previously closed regions, and new competitors with very different operating norms to those usually emphasized (Birkinshaw 2010). Globalization, which refers to entrenched and enduring patterns of worldwide interconnectedness, suggests a growing magnitude and intensity of global flows such that states and societies have become enmeshed in networks of interaction (Held and McGrew 2003). Rapid growth in information and communication technologies, intensified competitive forces, the vicissitudes and volatility of global markets have reshaped the organizational landscape to such an extent that continuous change has become a permanent phenomenon with organizations having to constantly reinvent themselves (Kamoche et al. 2002).

Organizations have to become more fluid in order to be able to develop capabilities that will enable them to tackle prevailing conditions of current global business landscape. This raises the need to manage complex information flows, grasp new ideas quickly and spread those ideas throughout the enterprise (Kanter 2003). Fluidity, is an important contribution of process philosophy to research on organization and management practice referring to the shift from being to becoming, from existence to 'in-the-making' (Styhre 2007). Knowledge is in perpetual flux and flows along various receptors across the organization and penetrates into work settings and effect unpredictable consequences. Complexity is conceded as

one of the prominent fluid epistemologies. The complexity theory is the study of the dynamic behaviors of complexly interacting interdependent and adaptive agents under conditions of internal and external pressure (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2008). It implies what is fluxing and fluid and operating in non-linearity (Styhre 2007). In a complex (non-linear) system a small exogenous event may trigger a change in the fundamental functioning of the system (Schneider and Somers 2006). Any organizational activity can feed back onto itself in ways that are positive (enhancing, stimulating) or negative (detracting, inhibiting) (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2009). Evolutionary change arises when a series of alterations and modifications ensue shifts in practice, which lead to the occurrence of conditions for further breakdowns, unanticipated outcomes and innovations (Orlikowski 1996).

Therefore, given the need for organic and fluid structures that are able to keep pace with the increasingly turbulent global environment, a neo-bureaucratic formation seems to be a sound resolution. We shall seek for new work architectures that increase our dependence on bureaucratic logics and forms of organizing in different ways from those typical of the classic Weberian bureaucracy, and this may be a more accurate description and interpretation of what is currently occurring and where it might lead (Reed 2005). Such neo-bureaucratic formations shall resemble 'biological organisms that are structured in accordance with a number of principles suggesting order, rules and routines – for instance, the metabolism is structured around recurrent temporal events – but does not fail to maintain a close attention to the external environment' (Styhre 2007). So, instead of insisting for a paradigm shift, it makes more sense to transform organizations into ecologies of innovation where effectiveness and efficiency co-exist through incorporation of the assumptions of complexity theory into bureaucratic rationality. 'Bureaucracy and complexity coexist effectively when those in position of authority acknowledge the existence and importance of complexity dynamics, and supplement their roles with enabling behaviors' (Marion and Uhl-Bien 2011).

## 13.4   Conclusion

The very insights of bureaucratic mindset are timeless regardless of the organizational setting, whether a for-profit organization, government agency or a non-profit organization. However, evolution is inevitable. Like computer software, bureaucracy and its attributes should be upgraded organically in line with the demands imposed by the ecology in which organizations strive to survive. Many of the drawbacks identified for bureaucracy are a result of the way in which bureaucracy has been operationalized rather than being inherent to the concept (Robbins and Barnwell 2006). Encouraging employee involvement in novelty, creating and preserving an appropriate organizational social context for continuous communication and enabling rigorous social interactions between individuals and groups in a way that will produce feedback networks are more than necessary efforts in today's organizations. Nevertheless, these efforts are supposed to be made in a bureaucracy

characterized by a hierarchical structure. Both are vital to organizations (especially large ones) as autonomy and self-discipline are to the individual (Leavitt 2005). Iron is required, but not for building a cage.

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