Abstract

Information Analysts observe the elements of an organization in order to gain information unavailable through interviewing and the investigation of hard data. In the past the process of observation has been intuitive at best. This article describes and develops a systematic methodology for analyzing the internal organizational environment. The approach is based on a framework used in film criticism called mise-en-scéne analysis. Seven major concrete and abstract elements which influence organizational decisions are identified: office lighting and color; office design, space, and location; clothing of decision makers; individual and group decision making; abilities of decision makers; attention to multiple objectives; and cognitive maps of decision makers. The systematic framework for observation developed in this article is an alternative to the common sense approach to observation. The major advantage of the mise-en-scéne approach is that it allows the Information Analyst to classify, document, and interpret important factors which usually remain at the subconscious level.

Keywords: Information analyst, information analysis, observation, organizational environment, mise-en-scéne

ACM Categories: 1.3, 3.39, 3.49, 3.50, 3.51

Introduction

It has been widely acknowledged in recent years that numerous components of an organization's internal environment subtly influence its decision makers [17, 21, 32]. The Information Analyst (IA), desiring to assess the impact of an organization's internal environment on decision makers, has had to rely chiefly on an intuitive approach. This study describes and develops a systematic methodology for analyzing elements of internal organizational environments. The approach enables the IA to appropriately classify, document, and interpret perceptions which usually remain at the intuitive level.

Information Analysts' methods for assessing information needs

According to Davis [9] the Information Analyst works with users of the system to define information requirements. The IA should be "concerned with organizational information needs, organizational forms, and the human use of information."

Information Analysts usually rely upon three methods for assessing organizational needs for information. These are interviewing, investigation, and observation. Interviewing is the process of obtaining oral opinions from members of the organization. Investigation constitutes gathering facts and opinions from existing documents. Observation means obtaining information that is neither spoken nor written.

Both interviewing and investigation are addressed in recent MIS textbooks and handbooks [12, 15, 18, 39]. Most texts adequately discuss the structuring and content of an interview, and Jenkins and Johnson [20] extend the art of interviewing by including communication through body language. Numerous texts describe sampling procedures for gathering hard data. Yet little has been written about analytic methods for observation of organizational elements. Usually it is suggested that an IA use "common sense" to verify interviews and hard data.

Intuition or common sense, and subjectivity are independent and should not be confused. An
intuitive or heuristic approach to observation implies that an IA notices and interprets organizational elements without the use of a systematic process, while the systematic or analytical approach requires that detailed steps must be followed. Subjectivity, however, is present in both approaches. Subjectivity is the expression of the individuality of the IA, and is consequently a key factor that contributes to the abilities of the IA.

The approach to observation developed in this article, while subjective, is systematic. Referred to as mise-en-scène analysis (pronounced mez-an-sen), this methodology is a generally accepted framework for analyzing and critiquing films. Using mise-en-scène analysis, film critics systematically examine what appears in one shot of a film, considering the actors and their costumes, the decor of the set, lighting, camera angle, and editing in order to determine how these elements of mise-en-scène contribute to the meaning of the film as intended by the director [19]. Using mise-en-scène analysis, organizational equivalents of these filmic elements can be observed, interpreted, and conveyed to others by the IA.

Extensive analysis of organizational elements of mise-en-scène provides a valuable crosscheck on typical interview and hard data. Nichols [31], in discussing mise-en-scène film criticism, points to the:

Value and importance of a visual reading of film that takes careful note of (mise-en-scène) . . . since these elements may often alter or reverse information communicated by speech or narrative code, sometimes called the plot.

Organizational elements of mise-en-scène communicate. What they communicate in an organization may contradict, support, or modify the organizational narrative code, or story, as told to the IA by organizational members in interviews. Hence, the use of information collected through mise-en-scène analysis as a crosscheck on verbal information may eventually result in modification of the proposed information system(s) in order that the system designed better supports the actual decision making processes in the organization.

A Methodology for Mis-en-scène Analysis in an Organization

Clearly, analyzing a film, and analyzing part of a decision making process are not the same. And yet, the systematic approach developed by film critics provides an adaptable framework for examining the organizational elements of mise-en-scène.

A film critic using this method does not change the film in any material way. A critic does not redirect or re-edit the film. The main purpose is to analyze what exists on the film itself. Similarly, an IA using this methodology does not change or redirect the elements of an organization or the abstract perceptions of decision makers. Instead, the IA seeks to understand how concrete and abstract elements might contribute to the decision making processes, and thus the informational needs of the organization.

As used in film criticism, the mise-en-scène approach is characterized as systematic because 1) it provides standard classifications of filmic elements for analysis, 2) it allows the replication of analysis by another critic using the same framework, and 3) the scope of the analysis is limited to what the film itself represents. Other films made in the past by the director are not considered.

In the same manner, mise-en-scène analysis as used by an IA in an organization is a systematic approach to observation because it 1) provides a standard methodology and standard classification for analysis of organizational elements that influence decision making, 2) allows other IA’s to apply the same analytic framework to the same organization, and 3) limits analysis to the organization as it exists during the current stage in its life cycle.

Glossary of organizational terms and their filmic equivalents

Table 1 is a list of terms used in film criticism and their equivalents in information analysis. This comparison is useful for the IA in order to more completely understand the benefits and limitations of observation and, in particular, the mise-en-scène analysis presented here.
The Information Analyst

Bobker [6] portrays the film critic as someone who "dissects and analyzes the work" in order to provide insight to the director's "technique and purpose" and to direct attention to specific elements that are worthy of special consideration. The role of the IA similarly involves analyzing information needs and uses by applying an analytical framework that breaks down the complex components of an organizational environment into examinable elements. While analyzing information needs and uses the IA is called upon to provide subjective insights concerning the methods, or techniques, and objectives, or purposes, of the decision makers. In addition, the IA should call attention to specific elements that are worthy of special consideration. This is accomplished by pointing to examples which are representative of the organizational environment.

Stage in an Organization's Life Cycle

The film in *mise-en-scène* criticism represents a complete product, whose whole is greater than the sum of its parts. These parts are the thousands of still frames which together form a moving picture. In this framework, one stage in an organization's life cycle is equivalent to a film. Perhaps it is meaningful to think in terms of the four stages of EDP growth as suggested by Gibson and Nolan [14]. Many decisions and EDP or information systems projects comprise each stage.

A typical two hour film is comprised of 172,800 frames [41]. It would be an overwhelming task to examine each frame separately for the minute meaning each might hold. Similarly, an organization contains hundreds of thousands of activities that are part of the current stage in its life cycle. The IA would certainly admit that it is an impossible task to analyze the entire stage. Consequently, a more suitable unit of analysis is discussed below.

**Project or Set of Decisions**

Scenes are composed of several shots edited together. Each scene encompasses a complete statement and many scenes are used in the film. In an organization, a project can be viewed as a scene. These projects are building blocks which comprise each successive stage in the organization's life cycle. The IA is often called on to identify information requirements for a complete project, but often does not have the luxury of observing the decision processes during the entire project.

**Representative Sample of Decision Making as Observed by the IA**

In *mise-en-scène* criticism of a film, the shot is the unit of analysis, rather than one frame, or the entire film. Shots contain all of the elements of *mise-en-scène*, while providing a more manageable unit of analysis than the individual frame. For the IA, a shot in organizational terms can be viewed as a representative slice or sample of the decision making process. The IA must therefore analyze observations obtained on days...
that the IA visited the organization, and draw conclusions that will affect the information needs for the entire project. A framework for systematic observations is needed to enable the IA to organize observations and gather more complete and accurate information in the limited time the IA has available.

Information from Interviews and Investigation

In a film, the narrative code is provided in the dialogue spoken by the actors. The organization’s narrative code can be conceptualized as oral and written information. This information may be obtained by the IA through interviews or investigation of written reports. Often the IA will find that the information obtained by interviewing and investigating is incomplete, inaccurate, or completely false. There is no substitute for interviewing or investigation of hard data, yet the IA should seek additional methods to confirm or disconfirm information obtained in this fashion.

Organizational elements of mise-en-scène and their filmic equivalents

Seven specific elements that must be observed by the IA are listed in Table 2. Similar to the parallel drawn in the glossary in Table 1, a parallel between filmic elements of mise-en-scène and organizational elements of mise-en-scène is developed. This analogy is useful since it facilitates acceptance of the methodology as it is applied to organizations. Rather than a mere checklist of items for observation, the seven elements represent a complete framework for systematic observation. The comparison reminds the IA that each category is both observable and essential within an organizational setting, just as they are in film. As the filmic elements are comprehensive within the mise-en-scène framework, so are the organizational elements.

Office Design, Space, and Location

In film analysis, sets and background are analyzed to understand location, status of characters within them, and the period of time portrayed. In an organizational setting, the office as a place for decision making is analyzed. Location of office in relation to others, size of office, types of equipment, and furnishings can all be considered as part of this element. Further discussion of the behavioral impact of office environment is succinctly developed by Pile [33].

Office location provides the IA with important clues to interpreting information needs. Inaccessible office settings tend to decrease interaction frequency and increase task-oriented messages, whereas more accessible settings

| Table 2. Filmic Elements of Mise-en-scène and Their Organizational Equivalents |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| **Filmic Elements of Mise-en-scène** | **Organizational Elements of Mise-en-scène** |
| Sets and backgrounds             | Office design, space, location of offices, and equipment |
| Lighting and color               | Office and boardroom lighting, furnishings, and graphics |
| Costumes                         | Clothing worn by decision makers |
| Abilities of actors              | Abilities of decision makers |
| Focus and depth of field         | Attention to multiple objectives |
| Camera angle                     | Cognitive maps of decision makers |
| Number of actors in shot         | Group or individual decision making |
increase interaction frequency and informal messages [23, 35]. Distribution of offices along the perimeter of the building, similar to links in a chain, is more likely to result in reports or memos being held up in one or more offices, while office clusters encourage sharing of information and participative decision making [33, 35]. Office location should alert the IA to possible factions within the organization. People whose offices are separated may tend to view the organization differently and drift further apart in their objectives. Research has shown that people separated by more than 25 yards, even though their offices are on the same floor, rarely experience significant communication [1].

The use of space within each office should also be assessed by the IA. Placement of the desk in the office has been shown to effect superior/subordinate relationships. Executives who allow themselves much room behind their desk while tightly enclosing their visitor with their back against the wall, put themselves in the strongest possible power position [24]. People who do not use their desk as a barricade between themselves and others may be more willing to encourage differing viewpoints and give individual attention more readily to those who need it [45].

The use of office equipment to store information as well as the use of calculators, CRT's, etc., will indicate to the IA how much information the decision maker is willing to store and process personally. An office calculator on a manager's desk may be interpreted as a sign of overattention to detail [24].

Office Lighting and Color

Interpretation of color and lighting in film analysis is very similar to the interpretation of those elements in organizational analysis. In films, colors of room furnishings are considered, as is the lighting. In an organization the IA must observe the effect of lighting and the effect of the colors of the walls, floors, upholstery, and graphics in offices. One of the most comprehensive sources on the interplay of light, color, and environment is Birren [4]. Lighting and color are taken together for the IA's observation because color is a property of light, and both have been shown to have a definite influence on organizational members and their reactions to their environment.

Status of organizational personnel is identifiable to some extent by the type of light under which they work. We have observed in most organizations that the stenographic pool, supervisory personnel, technicians, and lower level employees usually work under cool-white fluorescent light, while most upper level executives work in incandescent, or warm-tone, fluorescent lighting. For vanity reasons people prefer warm illumination [4]. Incandescent lighting permits the executive to create a flattering image by making use of the warmer tones and more defined shadows it supplies.

Lighting also tends to influence the type of messages sent. Dim lighting encourages people to talk more softly, and there is a tendency for more personal communication to take place. Conversely, bright lights are more arousing, and interacting with strangers in brightly lit areas is more difficult at first [23]. It is worthwhile for the IA to consider the role lighting plays in decision makers' perceptions of a situation. Use or rejection of computer facilities, reference libraries, and storage rooms for documents, may all be related to the positive or negative interpretation assigned these elements because of their lighting.

Color is another important element to be observed. Either the decision maker is able to choose the color scheme, or it is under the control of the organization. The IA needs to investigate company policy in this regard and in either case the IA should take note. If the decision maker chooses the color scheme, insights to that individual's personality might be obtained. If the organization controls the color scheme, the IA should observe how the decision maker might be influenced by the color.

If the IA learns that the decision maker chooses office color, it is useful to understand the color preferences associated with certain personality types [4, 5]. A person with an outwardly-integrated personality, who wishes to be well adjusted to the world tends to prefer red. The red end of the spectrum is associated with extroversion [4]. A preference for yellow is associated...
with a high intellect and a high desire for self-fulfillment. Most inwardly-integrated personalities favor blue, which is associated with conscious control of emotions [4]. The color green suggests that a person who chooses it as their favorite has a balanced personality [5].

Even when colors are not chosen by office occupants, the IA should take note since colors may influence moods [23]. Aaronson, as cited in Sharpe [40], conducted a study attempting to associate mood with color. Active, outgoing, and assertive moods were similarly triggered by red and orange, while yellow was active without conflict. Blue and blue-green yielded a calming and socializing effect, while white related to obedience, and gray to depression.

Extensive use of neutral colors i.e., beiges and off-whites without strong accent colors, may be interpreted to mean that decision makers are functioning in an unstimulating or even monotonous environment [4]. An overabundance of colors may also be detrimental to concentration, and it has been noted that in experimental situations more errors occur when too many colors are present [40].

The brightness of the walls also influences the concentration of the office occupant. Bright walls encourage physical activity and draw attention away from the task, whereas mental concentration is enhanced by softer colored surroundings. A deeper colored end wall which faces the office occupant when looking up from work aids relaxation, both visual and emotional [4].

Clothing Worn by Decision Makers

Actors’ costumes are an overt manifestation of the personality of characters in a film. Clothing in an organization can also be examined as “costume,” indicating both functional roles and self images of employees. Stone [43] feels that “for most individuals the major medium of communication by appearance is clothing.”

Kefgen and Touchie-Specht [22] point out that certain types of clothing are automatically perceived to be associated with specific behavior. This principle is understood by organizations that dictate a corporate uniform. Molloy [28] analyzed the IBM dress code, and his studies reveal that the clothing of IBM sales-people was a large factor in customers purchasing IBM equipment over that of a competitor. The IA should be aware that when organizational members agree to wear a corporate uniform this is in itself meaningful. Langner [25] states that, “By wearing the uniform of a particular group, a man shows by his clothing that he has given up his right to act freely as an individual but must act in accordance with and under the limitations of the rules of his group.”

Even where there is no corporate dress code, successful executives adopt a uniform. The male version is a conservative two or three piece suit [28], and the female version is a two piece skirted suit, not a slacks set [29]. Variations of this business uniform provide clues for the IA in terms of decision making style and informational needs.

The more rigidly a decision maker adheres to the successful executives’ uniform the more the person is anxious to advance in the organization. In a high level position, the managers who wear conservative suits wish to be perceived as authoritative [26]. Sport coats or casual wear indicate to others in the organization that the decision maker believes in more participative decision making, or at least is not as rigid in role interpretation as a decision maker desiring central control would be. Further detail on the meaning of organizational dress is discussed by Flugel [13] and Molloy [28, 29].

Abilities of Decision Makers

In films, actors play roles assigned to them which delineate particular characters and advance the narrative. In an organization, actors can be thought of as decision makers. As actors may or may not possess ability to play a particular role well, the organizational members may or may not be qualified decision makers.

Complexity theory, studied by Schroder, Driver, and Steufert [38] and Bariff and Lusk [3], can help the IA come to terms with managers’ abilities to formulate problems, process information, and make decisions. Managers with low levels of differentiation have the ability to handle only limited classifications of information. People with low abilities to integrate information face information overload. Those who think in terms of direct tradeoffs tend to have a difficult time facing decisions with a large number of alternatives.
While researchers are currently involved with the difficult task of finding simple and valid methods for measuring complexity and the ability of decision makers to handle complexity, the authors' experience indicates that systematic observation of decisions being made within an organization can indeed aid the IA in determining information requirements of the firm.

One way to observe information overload is to look at a manager's desk. Burger [7] describes the desk as a place to arrange papers while you work on them, and not as a place to store them. Piles of papers on a manager's desk may indicate that the manager has a problem with information overload, since one of the strategies for coping with information overload is to let papers accumulate until they can be processed at a later date [10]. The presence of certain types of material, such as periodicals or trade journals, may indicate to the IA that not only is the manager processing necessary information, but is seeking additional information from other sources [35]. Our experience has shown that people who accumulate these materials use extra-organizational models, as described by Pounds [34], to structure and solve problems within the organization. These examples of simple observation on the ability of decision makers to process information provide key information to the IA.

**Attention to Multiple Objectives**

Film analysis examines which objects the director brings into sharp focus while others remain softly out-of-focus in the background. Depth of field is the sharpness before and behind the plane of focus. A greater depth of field implies that a director wants the viewers to consider many objects in the shot. A shallow depth of field indicates that a director wants to emphasize the importance of a single object or person in a film.

In organizations, a number of conflicting objectives exist. Handling multiple objectives simultaneously is the equivalent of greater depth of field, while concentrating on only one objective at a time is the equivalent of shallow depth of field. An excellent overview of treating multiple objectives is presented by MacCrimmon [27].

It has recently become popular to think in terms of multiple goals, both long and short term, and furthermore, those goals with which society in general is concerned. The organizational rhetoric, or narrative, used may imply that decision makers are very interested in ecological issues, but observation may uncover that the priority for ecological issues is extremely low. Although it is impossible to observe the actual decision process, the IA can observe the attention paid to multiple objectives. The use of optimization techniques or preoccupation with daily or short term decisions will imply that the decision makers prefer to focus on single objectives even though they say otherwise. The IA should also try to observe how the manager uses past experience in the decision process. Comparing the situation of the organization to events at other organizations usually results in decisions that are satisficing rather than optimizing. Observation of these key aspects of the decision process is important as the IA attempts to identify the information requirements to suit individuals in the organization.

**Cognitive Maps of Decision Makers**

In film, the camera angle represents the perspective the director wants to convey. For example, angles can be used to indicate superiority or inferiority of characters. In the organization the IA can conceptualize camera angle as being the unique cognitive maps of decision makers. Cognitive maps are discussed in a collection of significant articles edited by Downs and Stea [11]. Cognitive maps are observable as the spatial expression of decisions made, or how people locate themselves in the organization [16]. Cyert and March [8] describe the organization in terms of coalitions that tend to view the organization from the perspective of their own department. Similarly, individuals see the corporation from a particular perspective.

The IA must observe these cognitive maps in order to confirm or refute the information obtained during interviews with people in the organization. The IA should be able to come to a better understanding of the integration of the corporation and the need for information to maintain the desired balance between departmental decoupling and corporation integration. The IA may observe that a supervisor in a department believes it is necessary to be central to the needs and objectives of the organization. Sayles [36] advocates observing the differences in reactions...
of managers in order to determine their cognitive maps. He describes five observable classes of managerial style and links these to manager’s conceptions of the organizational world. Thus, the IA should be consciously aware of managers’ interactions with other organizational members.

Interactive Decision Making Between Groups and Individuals

In film, editing involves the use of cuts, or transitions from long shots to close-ups, etc. For the IA the number of actors in a shot corresponds to the number of people taking part in an organizational decision. As editing provides smooth or uneven transitions between individuals and groups, decision making may involve smooth or uneven interactive processes between individual decision makers and groups. Schein [37] elaborates on group problem solving and decision making in organizations. Furthermore he describes in detail how a consultant can systematically observe, record, and interpret communication process variables in a group setting. These observable variables include frequency of interaction, direction of interaction, and patterns of interruption. In this manner, the IA can systematically observe decision making in the organization in order to more appropriately define information requirements.

Conceptual model of organizational elements of mise-en-scène

The definitions equating organizational elements of mise-en-scène to filmic elements of mise-en-scène have been detailed on the previous pages. The interrelationships are depicted graphically in Figure 1.

Included in the model are a set of decisions or a project representing how humans in the organization use information. Elements of organizational mise-en-scène are characterized as either concrete, i.e., by color and lighting, offices, and clothing, or abstract, i.e., by the abilities of decision makers, their attention to multiple objectives and their cognitive maps.

Individual and group decision making are influenced by both the abstract and concrete elements of mise-en-scène, hence their central position in the model. The interactive and dynamic nature of the decision making process, where responsibility rests one moment with the individual, and the next moment with a group, is depicted by the dual arrows. One feeds back into the other in an ongoing process. Individual and group decision making, and the interactions between them as shown in the model, closely parallel the rhythm of editing in a film, which is characterized by shifts from a closeup of an individual to a longer shot of a group, and back again.

Applying the Mise-en-scène Methodology

The methodology of mise-en-scène analysis is useful because observations of organizational elements which usually remain at a hidden and untapped level become clear and salient, ready for integration into the IA’s understanding. To suggest specific interpretations of elements without knowledge of the specific organizational context is irresponsible. When the IA uses the mise-en-scène tool, the IA is aware of the organizational context in which these elements are occurring. This should not be construed to mean that interpretation of these elements is easy, that they hold a foregone conclusion, or will be identical across IA’s. What mise-en-scène analysis provides is specific, recognizable elements which should be taken into consideration when assessing informational needs of organizational decision makers. Interpretations will and must vary.

Mise-en-scène analysis is only one method an IA should use for collecting information. Multiple methods are usually advocated in order to achieve a more accurate picture [2, 37], and mise-en-scène should be considered as one of many methods which is useful but not sufficient by itself. Use of mise-en-scène can enrich, deepen, and supplement information collected through other, more traditional methods.

When used in conjunction with other techniques, the IA should be aware that recommended techniques for collecting information in other ways often conflict with the principles of mise-en-scène analysis. For example, many interviewing texts stress that the location of the interview be somewhere other than the typical office milieu.
Approach for Information Analysts

Toward Multiple Decision Maps of Decision Making

Figure 1. *Mise-en-scène Elements of an Organization and Their Relationship to Decision Making*
experienced by the interviewees. Stewart and Cash [42] comment on the choosing of the interview location writing that, "A comfortable, attractive, and noise-free location will aid communication by enhancing concentration and motivation—both parties will 'feel like' communicating. Interruptions disrupt thought patterns and concentration and may destroy the mood you are trying to create." Thus, good interviews are often conducted in settings which are intentionally stripped of the crucial elements of organizational mise-en-scène in order to concentrate on narrative. This would be analogous to reading a film script or hearing the film's sound track, sans the visual elements.

Indeed information is gained from interviewing under the above conditions, but information is lost by removing the person interviewed from the decision making context. For this reason, mise-en-scène analysis, used in conjunction with interviewing, serves to recapture information that may be purposely ignored in interviews.

Just as there are many ways to conduct interviews or investigate hard data, there are many ways to apply mise-en-scène principles. Mise-en-scène analysis may be highly structured or relatively unstructured just as are interviews. The IA may use a camera to capture the concrete elements of organizational mise-en-scène, just as an interviewer may wish to tape record an interview for later reference, accuracy, and completeness. Again, use of a camera would not be a requisite for employing this method, any more than it is essential that interviews be taped in order to gain insights from them. In fact use of a camera may be a disadvantage in some instances. Just as a person may withhold certain information while being tape recorded, a person may wear different clothes or hide a stack of papers, and consequently misrepresent elements of mise-en-scène.

Another technique for applying mise-en-scène, and the one favored and used by the authors, is to systematically observe the mise-en-scène during a visit to the organization and then go through a debriefing period after each visit. This procedure involves written documentation of all observations regarding mise-en-scène elements. This is a useful way to go about using mise-en-scène analysis for three reasons: 1) it provides documentation of information which typically remains unshaped at the subconscious level, 2) the written record gained is more extensive than what could be accomplished through notetaking during an organizational visit, and 3) the written record serves as a memory aid for material which might soon be forgotten or submerged as unimportant or inconsequential once the organizational visit is over.

The IA should use the observation techniques throughout each visit to the organization. Of particular importance are the systematic observations made during interviews, group meetings, and in informal settings. The debriefing method discussed above insures a better sampling of activities observed, a greater number of data points, and a less intrusive method of observing organizational elements than the use of a camera to document mise-en-scène.

Conclusion
Observation is one way in which an IA can obtain information about decision making and information requirements of decision makers. In addition to interviewing and investigation of hard data, observation is a necessary activity of an IA.

Observation is important for three reasons. First, observation may reveal information unobtainable through interviewing or investigation. Secondly, observation may serve to confirm or negate the information obtained through the other methods. Thirdly, observation is an unobtrusive measure [44] that makes no additional demands on staff time, and does not rely on total staff cooperation as do other methods such as questionnaires or interviews.

Mise-en-scène analysis, as adapted and conceptualized here, is a valuable tool for systematically observing and analyzing an organization's concrete and abstract internal environment as it influences an organization's informational needs.

A framework has been developed in order to enable the IA to understand the technique of mise-en-scène analysis as it is borrowed from film criticism and transformed conceptually for use in observing environmental variables in an organization. Methodology for mise-en-scène includes systematically observing and analyzing concrete
elements such as lighting and color of the surroundings, office design and equipment, and the clothing of decision makers. It also includes systematically observing and analyzing abstract elements such as abilities of decision makers, their attention to multiple objectives, and their cognitive maps. Lastly, the dynamic shifts between individual and group decision making, which serve to interrelate all of the above elements, are considered.

The value of the mise-en-scène approach is that it adds structure to the unstructured observations the IA currently undertakes in an organization. By concentrating on the abstract and concrete elements discussed in this article, the IA will achieve a more comprehensive and understandable view. Just as the IA adds structure to the interview by planning key questions, the IA can add structure to observation by planning observations of key elements. An IA attempting to observe without sensitivity or structure, such as mise-en-scène analysis provides, may, as Nadler points out about consultants in general, “spend hours observing, see nothing and report no useable data” [30].

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