



Soft Skills – What You Haven’t Been Told about Delivering Successful Systems

Soft Skills in Healthcare Teams and Enterprises

Dr. Wiljeana Glover

Postdoctoral Associate, MIT Lean Advancement Initiative

INCOSE Symposium
June 22, 2011

- Introduction of Soft Skills in Healthcare Operations and Systems Engineering
- “Soft Skills” in Healthcare Teams
- “Soft Skills” in Healthcare Enterprises



The Connotation of “Soft Skills”



Interpersonal Skills
Psychosocial Traits

The social and motivational traits, behaviors, or abilities of an individual or group used to perform a task

Examples

Trust

Confidence

Empathy

Adaptability

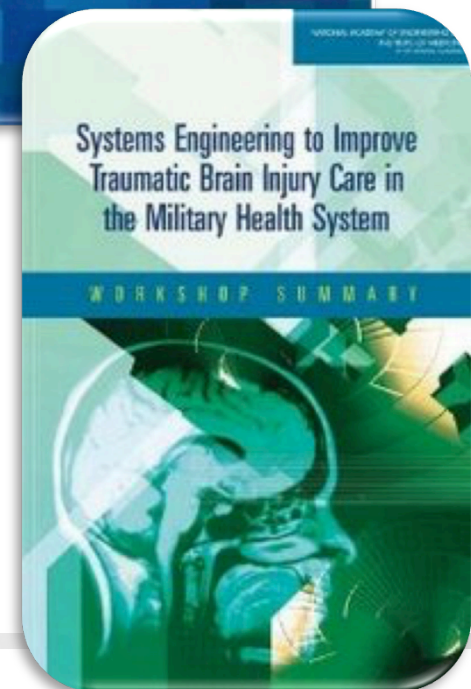
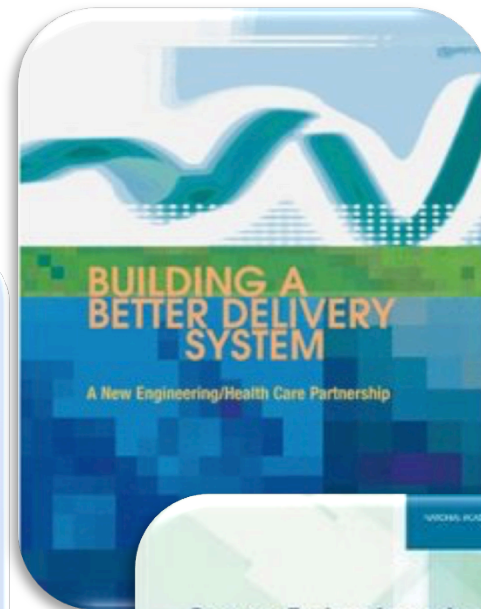
Self-control

Supporting Theories

Sociotechnical
Systems Theory

Macroergonomics

Emotional
Intelligence



The Complexity of Healthcare Teams and Impact of “Soft Skills”

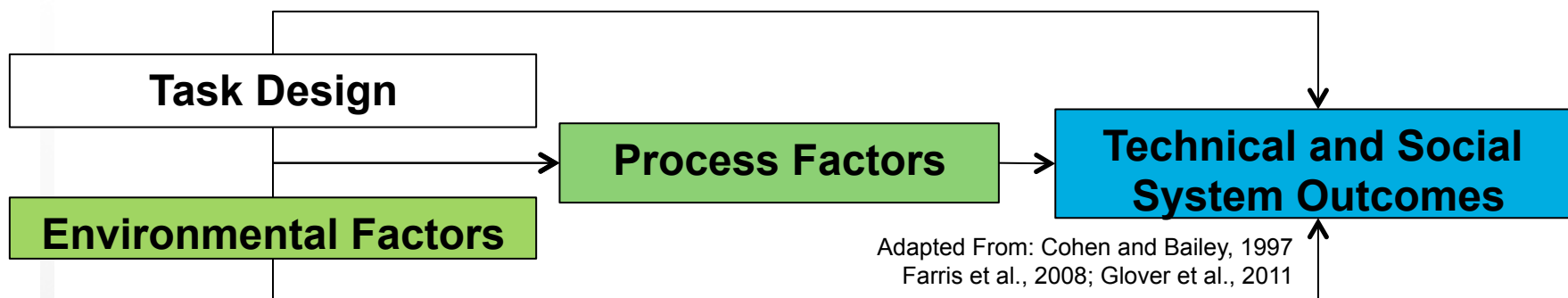


Physician, Nurse, Residents,
Cleaning, Supply Technician

Soft Skills from
Healthcare Research
Psychological safety
(i.e., my team is safe
for interpersonal risk
tasking)
(Edmonson, 1998)

How do “soft skills”
impact the
performance of
healthcare service
teams?

Research on “Soft Skills” in Healthcare Teams



Management Support (MS)

Our team:

- Had enough contact with management to get our work done
- Had enough help from others in our organization to get our work done

Internal Processes (IP)

Our team:

- Communicated openly.
- Valued each member's unique contributions.
- Respected each others' opinions/feelings.



Study of Op. Rm. Improvement

(Glover et al., 2009)

- *MS*(5.0/6.0): supportive event context
- *IP* (5.7/6.0): higher level of internal harmony and coordination

Post Traumatic Stress Innovations: U.S. Military Enterprise Analysis



Related Line and Community
Organizations



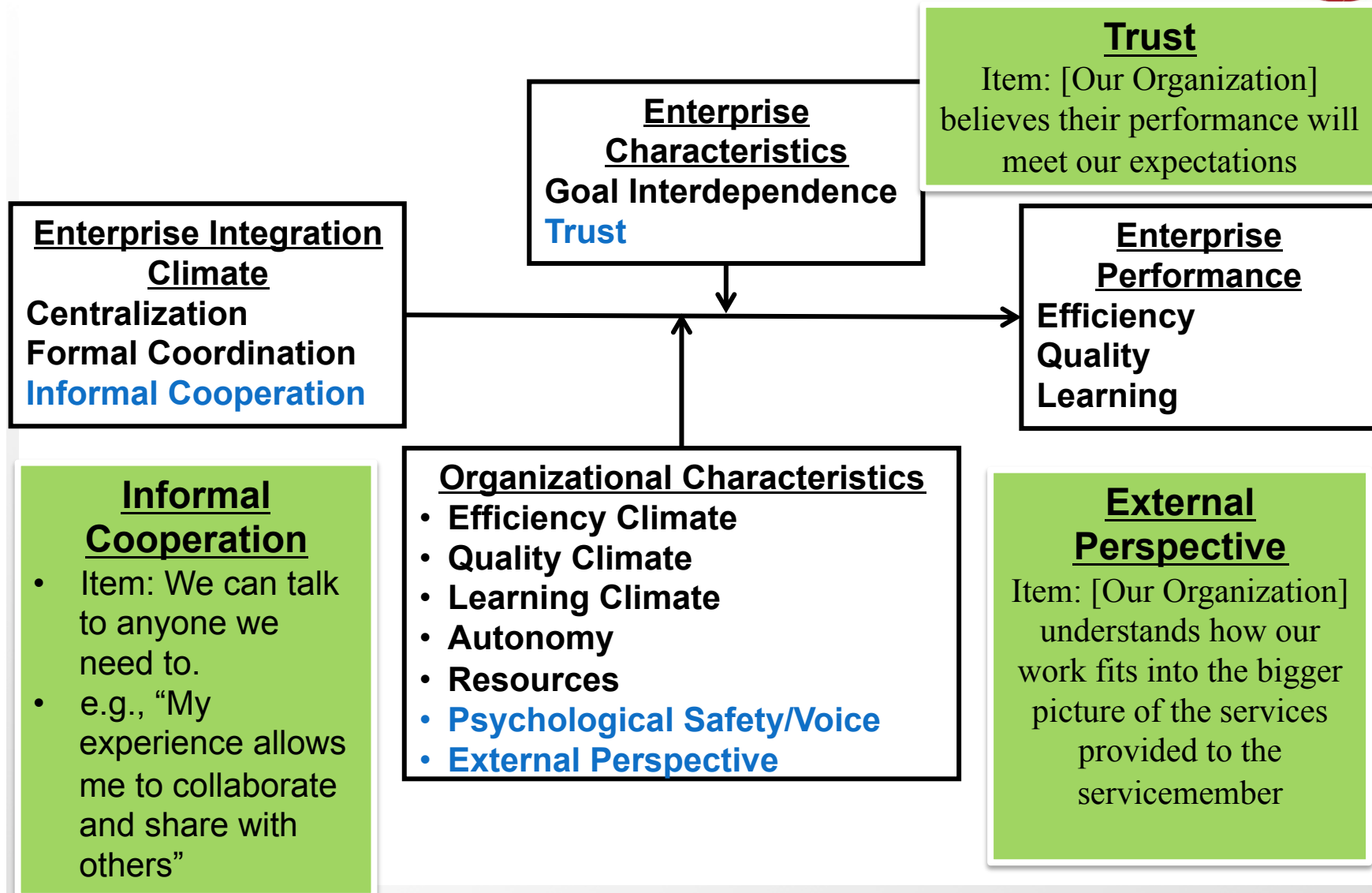
Primary Care, Family Care,
Pharmacy, Inpatient Care, HC
Business



Psychologist, Psychiatrist,
Nurse, Social Worker,
Technicians

How do “soft skills”
impact the
performance of
healthcare service
enterprises?

Ongoing Research to Understand Impact of “Soft Skills” in Healthcare Enterprises



- “Soft Skills” do Impact Performance of Healthcare Teams
 - Soft Skills may be more inherent in HC, but no evidence to say they are any less important
 - *Internal Processes* like *Psychological Safety* among the most studied
 - Organizational/Environmental Characteristics should also be considered as they impact “soft skills”
- Additional Research Needed to Understand Impact of “Soft Skills” on Healthcare Enterprises



Wiljeana Glover
wjglover@mit.edu