Relational job design

What is it?

- Selecting for teamwork is a process of identifying and selecting people who demonstrate the relational competencies needed to coordinate with others in interdependent roles, and to support coordination among others
- The process is usually led by hiring managers and HR departments
- Relevant for any role that requires interdependent work - from frontline employees to top managers and board members
- Relevant whether it's a new hire or an internal promotion
- Can be relevant when selecting external partners and vendors

What is it used for/ Purpose?

- Selecting for teamwork is one of the structural interventions that supports relational coordination and desired performance outcomes in the Relational Model of Change

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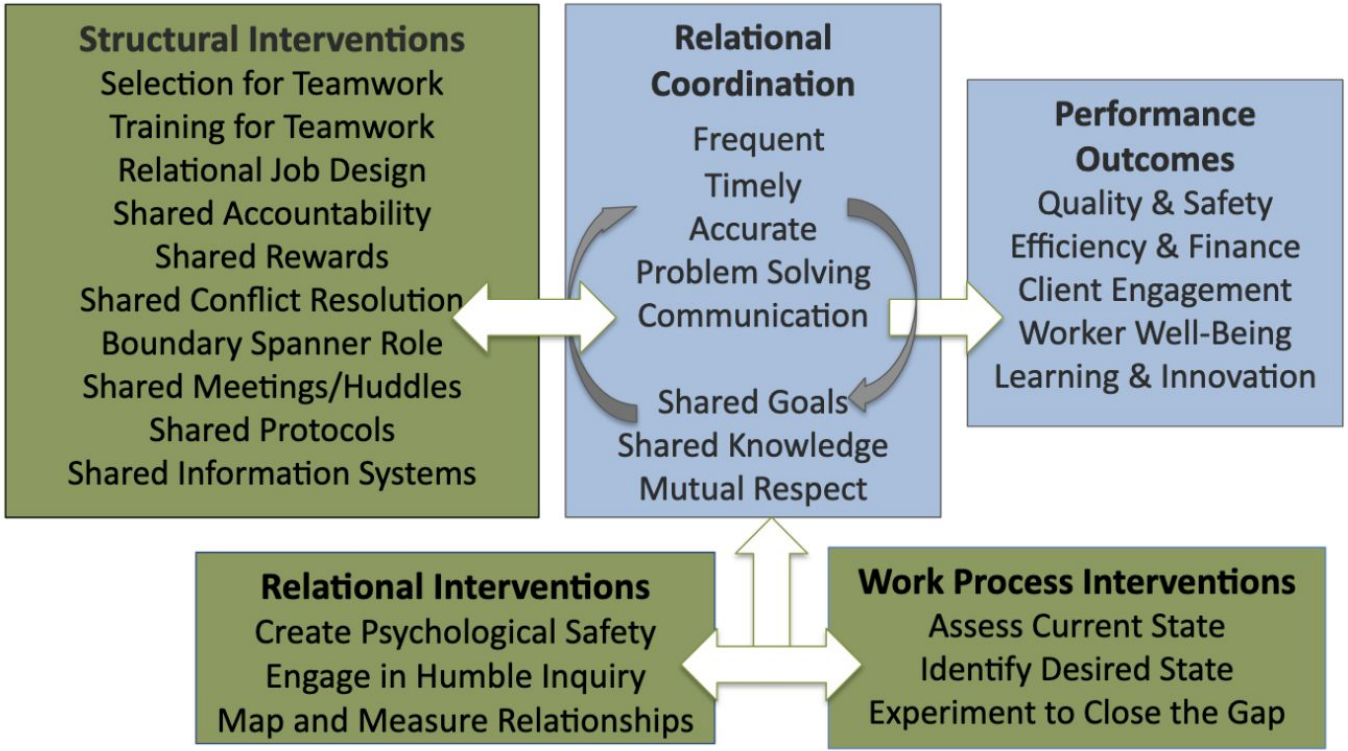
Relational job design is part of the Relational Model of Change



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Other structures in the Relational Model of Change

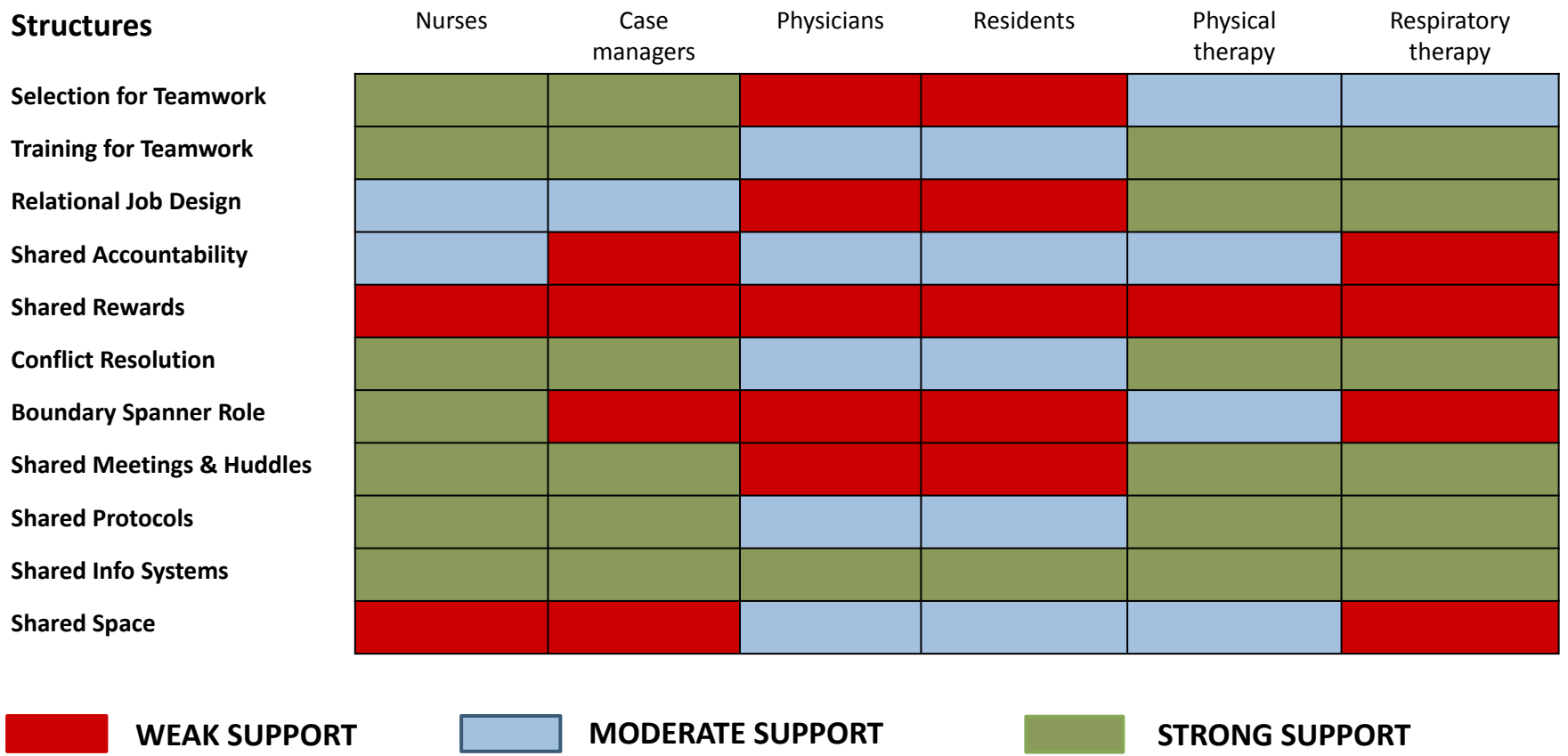
- Selecting & training for teamwork
- Relational job design
- Shared accountability & rewards
- Shared conflict resolution
- Boundary spanner roles
- Shared meetings & huddles
- Shared protocols
- Shared information systems
- Shared space

A summary of the evidence:
Bolton, R., Logan, C., & Gittell, J. H. (2021). Revisiting relational coordination: A systematic review. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *57*(3), 290-322.

Gittell, J. H. (2016). Structural interventions in *Transforming relationships for high performance: The power of relational coordination*. Stanford University Press.

RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

Identify needs using the Org Structures Assessment Tool



Many jobs were designed to be siloed but relational job design has been a trend since the 90's

The organizational principles involved in Taylorism and Fordism have pushed us to . . . restrict communication among the people responsible for the way in which the different parts are performed . . . They have led us to divide the internal structure of large organizations into a series of functionally distinct divisions as well . . . But from the cognitive perspective, the problem is that it limits the hermeneutic process, the cycle back and forth between parts and wholes, through which cognitive structures evolve.

If one looks at innovations in business practice and the critique of existing organizational structures within the management literature, the thrust is in precisely the opposite direction. The attempt is to break down barriers . . . between divisions and departments, and encourage direct, rich and textured communication … forcing people who previously operated at arms length to confront coordination problems directly and resolve them cooperatively.

Piore, M. J. (1993). The social embeddedness of labor markets and cognitive processes. *Labour*, *7*(3), 3-18.

RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

Jobs increasingly require coordination with others

- People in different jobs often need to work together to deliver a service for the customer
- Adam Grant and Sharon Parker have written about the benefits of relational job design
- How to design jobs that have clear technical *and relational* responsibilities?

Grant, A. M., & Parker, S. K. (2009). Redesigning work design theories: The rise of relational and proactive perspectives. *Academy of Management Annals*, *3*(1), 317-375.

RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

Why relational job design?

- Job design often overlooks relationships between jobs
- But people in different jobs need to work with others to deliver high performance outcomes
- Relational job design
  - Can design jobs for overlap between roles
  - Can design boundary spanners between roles
  - Can design in more interaction with the customer

RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

Step 1: Job analysis - obtaining information about existing jobs

- Collect and record job information
- Check for accuracy
- Use the info to determine which technical and relational capabilities are needed for each job
- Write job descriptions based on this info
- Update job descriptions from time to time as jobs evolve

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Benefits of job analysis

- A good job analysis helps us to understand an organization's *recruitment needs*
- We not only need to know *how many* workers are needed (quantity of demand) but what *capabilities* are needed to achieve our organization's goals
- Job analysis provides the basis for many other HR practices - selection, training, compensation, performance monitoring, etc.

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Key questions for job analysis

- Job content
  - Tasks required
  - Time allocation across tasks
- Job context
  - Conditions and demands of the job
  - Technologies used
  - Interdependence with other roles
- Worker requirements
  - Based on job content and context

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Methods for gathering information for job analysis

- Interviews
- Questionnaires & surveys
- Observing workers (could include electronic monitoring)

Consider benefits and drawbacks of each method

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Step 2: Beyond job analysis – to job design

- Existing jobs are often based on *outdated goals or technologies*
- Not enough to simply analyze *existing* jobs as a basis for developing job descriptions and making hiring decisions
- Rather determine which jobs are needed to achieve the organization's *current goals based on current technologies*
- Time to go from *job analysis* to *job design*

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Job design

- Start with organization's strategy and purpose
- Identify tasks that are needed to achieve it
- Divide tasks into jobs
  - Horizontal division of labor
  - Vertical division of labor
- How broad should these jobs be?
- How flexible should the boundaries between job be?
- How to design the jobs to support coordination?

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Horizontal division of labor

If these jobs are interdependent, the job descriptions should clearly state both technical *and* relational responsibilities.

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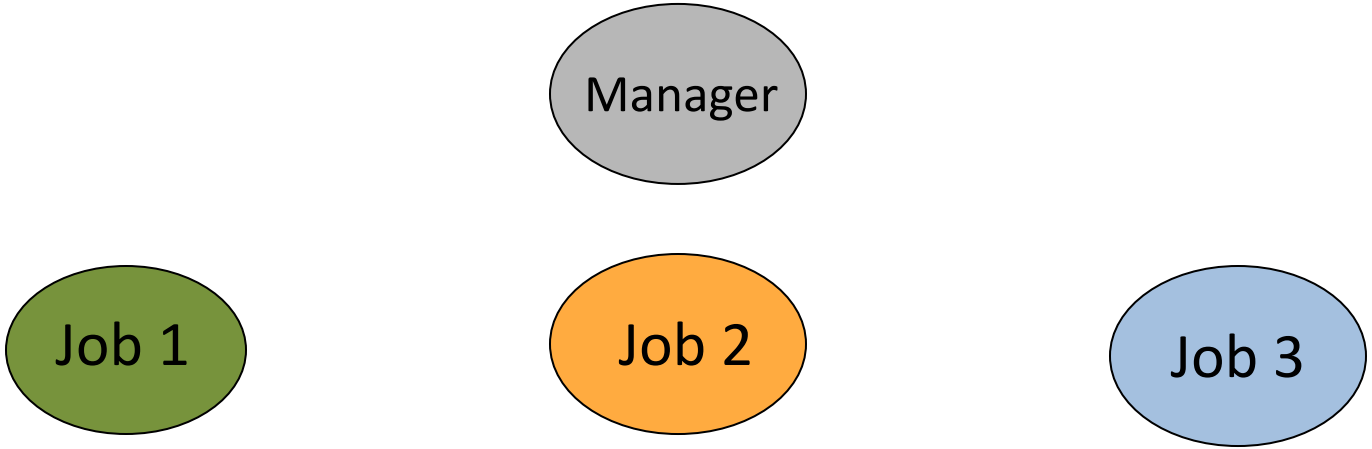
Vertical division of labor



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Specialized jobs - or broad jobs?

- Scientific mgt (specialized)
  - Discover one best way using time and motion studies
  - Highly specialized jobs
  - Employees can focus efforts
  - Develop expertise
  - Achieve efficiency

    Taylor (1911)

- Human relations (broad)
  - Consider human factors such as the meaning of work, how people interrelate
  - Broader jobs
  - Job rotation
  - Achieve greater satisfaction/meaning/ motivation

    Hackman and Oldham (1978)

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Specialized jobs vs. broad jobs

Specialized jobs allow greater focus

Manager

Job 1

Job 2

Job 3

Broad jobs - more workers assigned to broader job - allows greater capacity sharing

Jobs 1, 2, 3 combined

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Benefits of specialized vs. broad jobs

Which is best for:

- Quality?
- Efficiency?
- Worker well-being?
- Customer well-being?
- Ability to balance changing workload?

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How to achieve the benefits of broad jobs without losing the benefits of specialization?

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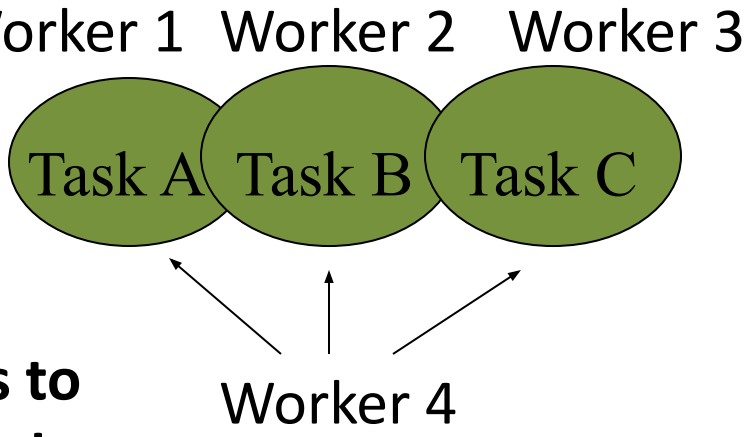
Hybrid approaches to job design

Hybrid is attempt to get the benefits of broad **and** specialized jobs

Flexible job boundaries



Boundary spanners to coordinate across jobs

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Flexible job boundaries help to support coordination between jobs

"Each person has a specific job, but part of the job is to help the other person. Then it's easier to work in a more efficient manner."

Gittell (2003). *The Southwest Airlines Way: Using the Power of Relationships to Achieve High Performance*.

RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

Boundary spanners help to coordinate between jobs

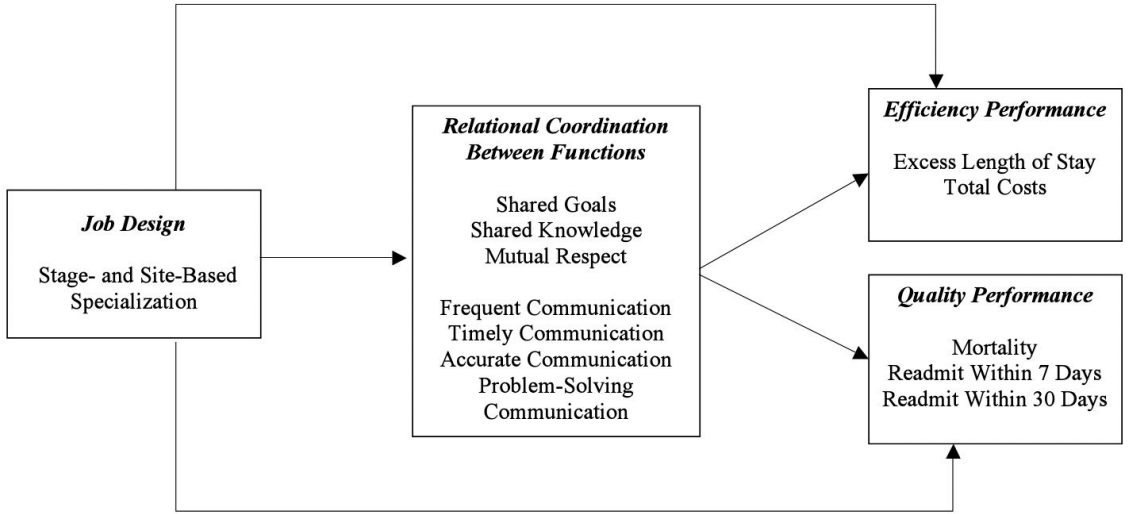
"The operations agent's job is important. It's their responsibility to coordinate the flight. You need someone quarterbacking the flight departure."

Gittell (2003). *The Southwest Airlines Way: Using the Power of Relationships to Achieve High Performance*.

RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

Relational job design can improve performance by supporting relational coordination between jobs

New physician job design specialized in hospital care to enable easier coordination other jobs in the hospital



[a]This figure illustrates how the impact of job design on quality and efficiency performance is mediated through relational coordination.

FIGURE 1. Mediated Model of Job Design, Relational Coordination and Performance[a]

Gittell, J. H., Weinberg, D. B., Bennett, A. L., & Miller, J. A. (2008). Is the doctor in? A relational approach to job design and the coordination of work. *Human Resource Management*, *47*(4), 729-755.

RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

Relational job design increased physician coordination with the other functions

TABLE II Relational Coordination Under Traditional Job Design Versus Hospitalist Job Design[a]

	RC With Physician	RC With Residents	RC With Nurses	RC With Therapists	RC With Case Managers
Nurses	3.34 4.30 ($p = .0000$) ($t = -9.74$) ($df = 440$)	3.90 3.97 ($p = .1939$) ($t = -0.86$) ($df = 430$)	4.31 4.40 ($p = .0958$) ($t = -1.31$) ($df = 285$)	3.80 3.94 ($p = .1368$) ($t = -1.10$) ($df = 292$)	3.96 4.16 ($p = .0151$) ($t = -2.17$) ($df = 410$)
Therapists	2.10 2.69 ($p = .0008$) ($t = -3.18$) ($df = 225$)	2.19 2.79 ($p = .0011$) ($t = -3.10$) ($df = 204$)	3.89 4.07 ($p = .0256$) ($t = -1.96$) ($df = 276$)	4.34 4.21 ($p = .8270$) ($t = 0.94$) ($df = 227$)	3.70 3.81 ($p = .1828$) ($t = -0.91$) ($df = 258$)
Case Managers	3.22 4.17 ($p = .0000$) ($t = -6.86$) ($df = 378$)	3.29 3.20 ($p = .7013$) ($t = 0.53$) ($df = 314$)	4.26 4.18 ($p = .8303$) ($t = 0.96$) ($df = 344$)	3.16 3.20 ($p = .4250$) ($t = -0.19$) ($df = 254$)	4.38 4.62 ($p = .0199$) ($t = -2.07$) ($df = 225$)

[a]Unit of observation is the provider response ($n = 893$). Each cell shows relational coordination as reported by the provider type in the left-hand column with respect to the provider type in the top row, first under traditional job design (first number in each cell) then under hospitalist job design (second number in each cell). Physicians and residents were not surveyed and therefore do not appear in the left-hand column. One-tailed *t*-tests, with unequal variance where needed, were used to test for significance of difference between the two means.

Reduced excess length of stay

TABLE VII **Mediated Model of Job Design, Relational Coordination, and Performance[a]**

	Excess Length of Stay	Excess Length of Stay	Excess Length of Stay
Physician job design	–.59* (.011)		–.29 (.250)
Relational coordination between other team members and the physician		–.53*** (.000)	–.46*** (.000)
Probability of assignment to hospitalist	–2.59* (.048)	–3.27* (.011)	–2.99* (.021)
Patient severity of illness	–.47*** (.000)	–.46*** (.000)	–.46*** (.000)
Patient age	–.02* (.012)	–.02** (.009)	–.02** (.009)
Patient gender	.37 (.118)	.34 (.143)	.35 (.126)
Constant	3.31*** (.000)	5.39*** (.000)	5.20*** (.000)
R squared	.18	.21	.21
Observations	304	304	304

Reduced total costs of care

	Log Total Costs	Log Total Costs	Log Total Costs
Physician job design	−.13* (.037)		−.07 (.273)
Relational coordination between other team members and the physician		−.10** (.005)	−.08* (.030)
Probability of assignment to hospitalist	−.94** (.007)	−1.09** (.001)	−1.01** (.004)
Patient severity of illness	.13*** (.000)	.13*** (.000)	.13*** (.000)
Patient age	−.01** (.050)	−.01** (.005)	−.01** (.004)
Patient gender	.04 (.493)	.04 (.564)	.04 (.520)
Constant	8.51*** (.000)	8.90*** (.000)	8.85*** (.000)
R squared	.22	.23	.23
Observations	312	312	312

Relational job design can also be motivational

- Organizations strive to motivate employees to go “above and beyond” their job
- Relational job design that includes relationships with customers or clients can be motivating.

Grant, A. M. (2007). Relational job design and the motivation to make a prosocial difference. *Academy of management review*, *32*(2), 393-417.

RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

How to do relational job design

- Job context
  - Organization's strategy and purpose
  - Interdependence between jobs - requires coordination
  - Conditions and demands of the job
- Job content
  - Tasks required, including time allocation
  - *Include coordination with colleagues, customers, suppliers*
- Worker requirements
  - Based on job content and job context
  - *Include relational competencies along with technical* competencies

Start with organization's strategy and purpose context

Identify interdependence using relational map and RACI

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Relational job design using relational mapping

- Choose a job that needs to be designed or redesigned.
- What are the goals it is dedicated to achieving?
- Which other job does this job need to coordinate with in order to achieve those goals? Add those jobs to the relational map.
- Consider clients, external partners and suppliers.
- Use the following colors to draw lines between the squares that indicate CURRENT strength *of RC* between the focal job and each other job:
  - STRONG RC = GREEN
  - MODERATE RC = BLUE
  - WEAK RC = RED

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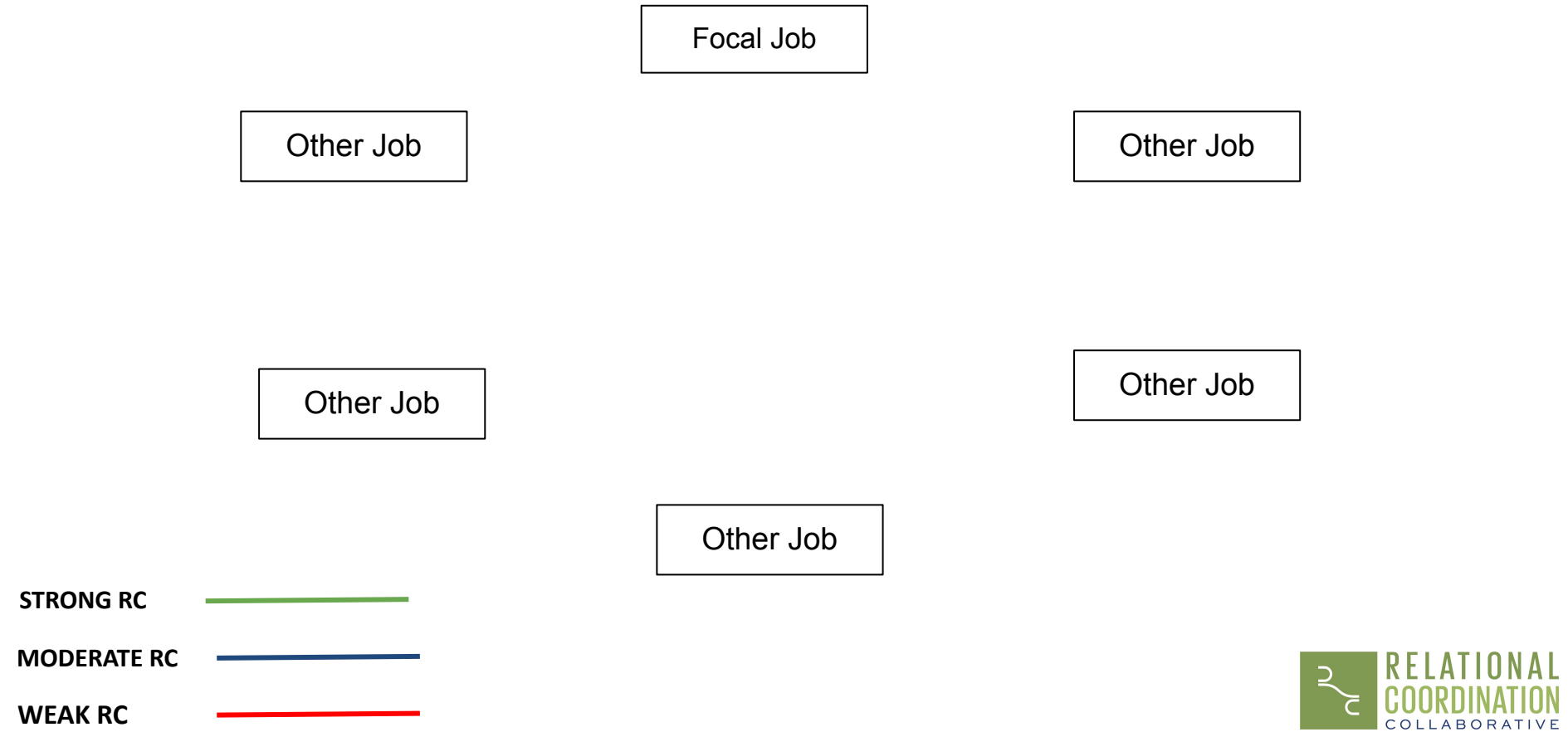
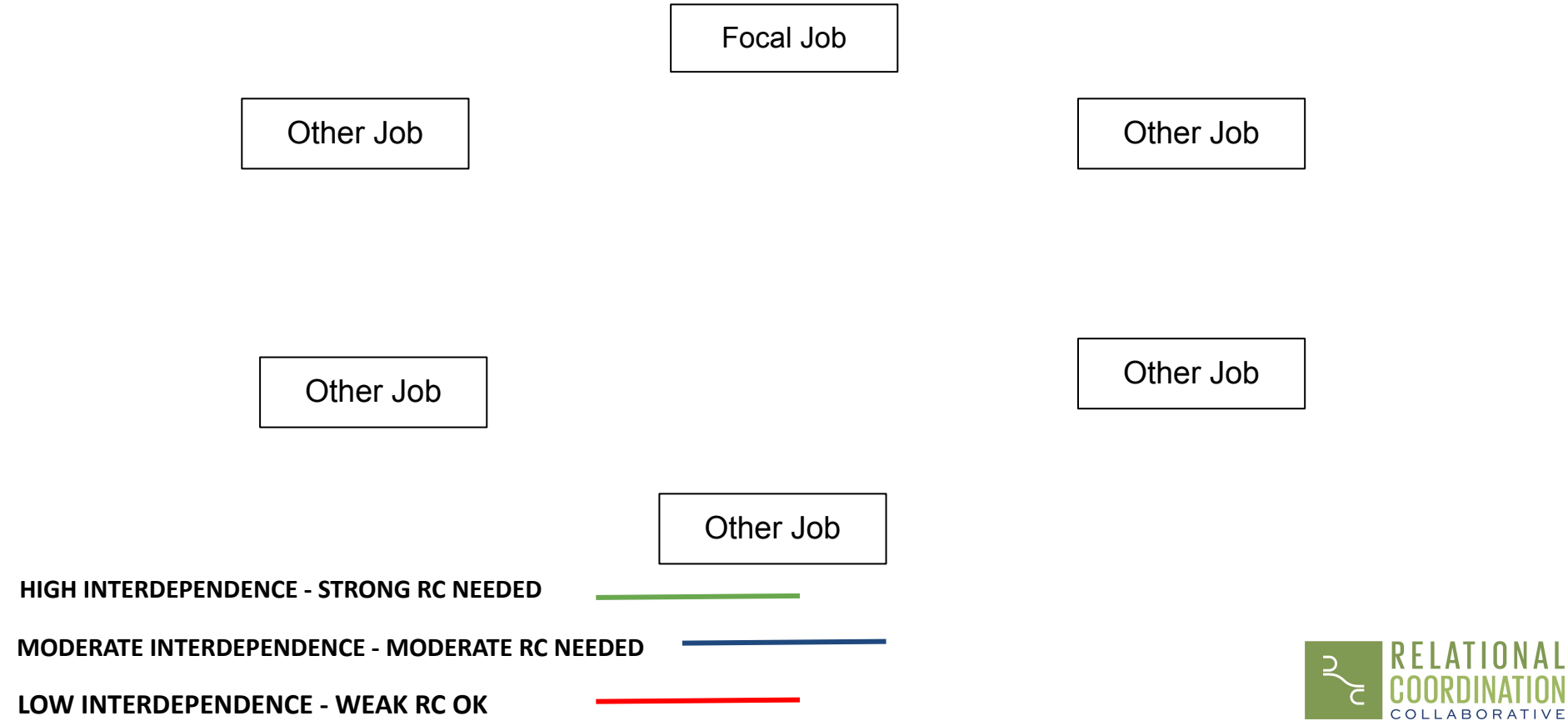
Current relational map for [focal job]



RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

Recommended relational map for [focal job]



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Reflect on findings from relational map

- Where is relational coordination currently strong for this job? Where is it moderate or weak?
- Where does it *need* to be strong due to high interdependence?
- How can you design this job to better support relational coordination where it is needed most?

RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

Relational job design using RACI

RACI is a model that describes the participation of various roles in completing tasks or deliverables for a project or process. The four key responsibilities most typically used are: responsible, accountable, consulted and informed. RACI is often used to define roles and responsibilities in cross-departmental projects.

The RACI model is also known as a responsibility assignment matrix or linear responsibility chart.

RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

Relational job design using RACI

Responsible: Those who complete the task.

Accountable: The one ultimately answerable for the correct completion of the deliverable or task, ensuring the prerequisites of the task are met, and delegating the work to those *responsible*.

Consulted: Those whose opinions are sought, such as subject-matter experts, and with whom there is two-way communication.

Informed: Those who are kept up-to-date on progress, often only on completion of the task or deliverable, and with whom there is just one-way communication.

No option called Coordinate. But you could use C to indicate Coordinate rather than Consult, if there's interdependent work requiring coordination.

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Sample RACI Chart

Tasks	Job 1	Job 2	Job 3	Job 4
Task 1	A	R	I	C
Task 2	A	R	I	C
Task 3	A	C	R	I
Task 4	A	C	R	I
Task 5	A	I	C	R
Task 6	A	I	C	R

RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

Relational job design

Relational job design tool - relational mapping

Relational job design tool - RACI model

SAMPLE relational job description

RELATIONAL COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE