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# **PUBLIC MANAGEMENT IN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS: EXPLAINING PERCEPTIONS OF WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF INFLUENCE**

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## **Abstract**

The notion that public managers influence organizational performance is common in public administration research. However, less is known about why some managers are better at influencing organizational performance than others. Furthermore, relatively few studies have systematically examined managerial influence and scholars have yet to investigate either quantitatively or systematically managerial influence in the White House. Utilizing original survey data collected from former White House officials who served in the Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and Clinton administrations, this study applies empirical public management theory to examine for the first time the key determinants that shape perceptions of chief of staff managerial influence. The findings demonstrate how several core concepts in public management theory help explain the dynamics that drive perceptions of managerial influence, thereby providing a new contribution to the literature on public management.

**Keywords:** administrative presidency; chief of staff; managerial influence; public management

## **INTRODUCTION**

During the summer of 1994, President Bill Clinton embarked on a major shake-up of his senior advisers when he replaced chief of staff Thomas F. ‘Mack’ McLarty III with then-budget director Leon E. Panetta (see Horvitz 1994). Over the previous year and a half, Clinton had developed a reputation for allowing too many advisers unfettered access to Oval Office meetings while McLarty—a lifelong friend and Washington outsider nicknamed ‘Mack the Nice’—had been unable to control or correct the disorganization and miscommunication that ensued. By Clinton’s own recollection, ‘There used to be chaos around here. Every day we would have three, four meetings lasting hours and hours. I’d sit in them, and we’d make decisions like a committee. And every day I’d read about them in the papers. It got so that the public had an impression that I was indecisive’ (Hamilton 2007, 468). Stepping in to rectify the situation, Panetta—known throughout the Washington Beltway for his management and negotiation skills—asserted himself in ending Clinton’s open-ended bull sessions by streamlining the management of policy and personnel. Ultimately, Panetta’s influence in redirecting operations at the White House and his continued leadership during his three-year tenure as chief of staff helped solidify his reputation among White House personnel (e.g., see Drew 1995; Hamilton 2007).

The narrative that developed amid the transition from McLarty to Panetta implied that where McLarty appeared to lack influence in his managerial duties, Panetta was able to instill it over White House personnel as the succeeding chief of staff. But why, exactly, was Panetta perceived to be more influential than McLarty and how did his approach help set a new tone for changing the way business was conducted in the Clinton White House? In the broader context, what are the qualities and characteristics that formulate overall perceptions of chief of staff influence and how might such assessments connect and relate to White House organizational performance?

Although public administration scholars have long understood that managers possess significant potential for exerting influence over personnel and the functions of their organizations, relatively few studies have systematically examined why managers are perceived as influential or how such evaluations relate to organizational performance. Indeed, although previous studies on managerial influence have accumulated a great deal of knowledge through in-depth qualitative examinations (McGregor 1974; Doig and Hargrove 1987; Hargrove and Glidewell 1990; Behn 1991; Thompson and Jones 1994; Ban 1995; Cohen and Eimicke 1995; Riccucci 1995; Holzer and Callahan 1998), only recently have scholars begun to utilize theoretical models and quantitative techniques to conduct more systematic research (e.g., O'Toole and Meier 1999; Meier and O'Toole 2011). Furthermore, scholars have rarely examined key political institutions in their attempts to uncover causal relationships between managerial actions and characteristics and their impact on the relevant organizations (but see Romzek 2000; Rosenthal and Bell 2003). This is particularly true concerning research on the institutional underpinnings of the contemporary American presidency, where although importing public administration theory to explain presidency-centric phenomena has become a somewhat standard practice (Arnold 1998; Robinson 2004; Hult and Walcott 2004; Walcott and Hult 1987, 1995, 2005; Vaughn and Villalobos 2009), studies on the managerial dimensions of the presidency have focused almost entirely on descriptive treatments of institutional arrangements, structural evolution, and personnel dynamics (e.g., Burke 2000; Patterson 1988, 2001; Kumar and Sullivan 2003).

In this study, we address this gap by applying a robust theoretical model to explain the dynamics that shape assessments of White House chief of staff management. The main contributions of this approach are three-fold: first, it extends the application of an established theoretical model to managerial rather than organizational-level performance; second, it expands the theoretical paradigms of public management into the analysis of the U.S. presidency; and, third, it yields important insights not only into management in the modern presidency, but also the political dynamics of administrative leadership more generally, with prospects for future application to other political institutions.

We conduct our study by applying measures of former White House officials' perceptions derived from the Chief of Staff Project (COSP) (Cohen 2002) to the key theoretical dimensions of the public management model developed by Kenneth J. Meier and Lawrence J. O'Toole, Jr. (Meier and O'Toole 2001, 2004; O'Toole and Meier 1999, 2003), hereafter referred to as the 'MO model.' The MO model is particularly useful for our purposes here as it allows scholars to identify the ways in which key management concepts affect managerial performance. In addition, by employing former White House officials' perceptions for our analyses, we are able to access indicators of influence otherwise unattainable. Our findings indicate that the core theoretical components of the MO model serve as robust predictors of individual-level dynamics that drive perceptions of managerial influence as they relate to executive performance.

### **Managerial Influence: Theory and Empirics**

Every president since Richard Nixon has relied on a chief of staff (see Table 1). As Bradley Patterson (2001, pp. 119, 348) notes, chiefs of staff are burdened with the job of managing 'the whole institution of the White House,' essentially serving as a 'system manager: boss of none, but overseer of everything.' In other words, the White House chief of staff is the individual responsible for managing the bureaucracy that the president commands; the importance of the position is underscored by a rich body of scholarly knowledge about what it is chiefs of staff do (see Cohen 2002 for an extensive review). For instance, some scholars have examined the traditional roles of the chief of staff (e.g., administrator, advisor, guardian) and concluded that 'chiefs of staff who are effective in their major duties will have a positive impact on the administration' (Cohen 2002, p. 480; see also Cohen and Krause 2000; Cohen, Dolan, and Rosati 2002; Cohen, Hult, and Walcott 2012, Cohen, Vaughn, and Villalobos 2012). These major duties consist of a blend between managing and coordinating the administrative structure of the institutional presidency. In addition, chiefs of staff have been observed in the manner they sometimes become more directly involved with the work they oversee, such as in helping with negotiations on Capitol Hill (Patterson 2001,

pp. 119-21). Nevertheless, attempts to examine chief of staff influence in a systematic manner have remained elusive. Here, we contend that the theoretical tools needed to begin producing this systematic, empirical knowledge already exist in public administration theory, particularly within the field of public management. Specifically, we argue that the leading determinants of organizational performance can also help explain the influence key managers in both public and political institutions wield within their organizations. This includes the White House chief of staff position, which represents arguably the highest ranking administrative position in a political institution in the United States.

[Insert Table 1 here]

To demonstrate this, we employ the MO model, which provides a platform for developing a rich theoretical explanation for the determinants of managerial influence and how they relate to administrative performance. In developing the MO model, Meier and O'Toole condense several decades of accumulated knowledge into a testable theory that identifies key factors related to organizational performance. In brief, the theory holds that organizational performance is a function of stability, internal and external management dynamics, and environmental factors. The thrust of the argument is that management matters; that is, leadership efforts made by organizational elites to maintain stability, exploit opportunities, and buffer organizational assets have an indelible impact on an organization's ability to serve its purpose. Whereas Meier and O'Toole (2007) have focused their efforts to explore the production of performance at an organizational level, we expand the model's reach to examine managerial-level performance metrics. In that vein, we build on Meier and O'Toole's previous work by focusing our efforts on an empirical examination of the various components of their theory, which is expressed in mathematical form as follows:

$$O_t = \beta_1(S + M_1) O_{t-1} + \beta_2(X_t/S)(M_3/M_4) + \varepsilon_t$$

For this equation,  $O$  denotes a measure for organizational performance,  $S$  is a measure of stability, and  $M$  denotes management. Internal management ( $M_1$ ) denotes management's contribution to stability through alterations to organizational structure and operations. External management ( $M_2$ ) represents a balance between an organization's networking versus risk-averse buffering efforts. Although  $M_2$  is not explicitly included in the MO model, its two components— $M_3$  and  $M_4$ —are featured independently, with  $M_3$  representing managerial efforts to exploit the environment of the organization, and  $M_4$  representing managerial efforts to buffer the unit from environmental influences.  $X$  is a vector of environmental forces,  $\varepsilon$  is an error term, the other subscripts denote time periods, and  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  are estimable parameters. In all, the components of the MO model described above hold that organizational performance is a function of how management balances internal dynamics with a diffuse external environment.

Our study focuses on examining managerial influence, which signifies a major dimension of chief of staff performance that can be explained by the same factors previous research has shown drives organizational performance. We base this contention on the logic that the role managers play (i.e., in applying a particular organizational structure and coordinating style, affecting relations between personnel, controlling and vetting information flow and access, etc.) collectively captures a significant share of what shapes overall White House performance. Indeed, as Walcott and Hult (1995, 2005; see also Hult and Walcott 2004) note, chief of staff performance is largely dependent on the chief's ability to leverage the strengths of the organization and external assets against internal challenges and outside forces, such that performance depends on being able to harness resources, navigate the encroaching organizational and oppositional hurdles, and ultimately produce achievements. From a personnel perspective, how staff members ultimately evaluate a manager should largely depend on how well they perceive managers are able to wield influence to meet the various expectations that come with such a role. Thus, just as key managerial dynamics affect the way institutions perform, so too should those same dynamics reflect how influential managers are perceived in their attempts to lead their organizations.

With respect to the position of chief of staff, no individual is better situated to influence the operation of a presidency, particularly given the gatekeeper role that provides full access to the president and the ability to control the access of other White House officials. The administrative position and gatekeeper role allow chiefs of staff to have a great amount of influence over the information flow and processes that presidents employ to make many of the decisions that shape executive performance. In the spirit of Light's (1984, p. 18) definition of influence as 'an advisor's ability to change outcomes from what they would have been,' we connect chief of staff influence to White House organizational performance. Accordingly, we test the extent to which variables representing the key

theoretical components of the MO model, along with a number of contextual variables, drive White House personnel perceptions concerning a chief of staff's administrative influence as a proxy for White House organizational performance.

### Hypotheses

The hypotheses we test in this study derive directly from the key components of the previously introduced MO model, the first of which is stability. Stability (S) refers to those elements that minimize interruptions in bureaucratic production and promote 'constancy in the design, functioning, and direction of an administrative system over time' (Meier and O'Toole 2007, p. 506). O'Toole and Meier (2003) identify five separate types of stability: structural, mission, production (or technology), procedural, and personnel. Here, we focus on structural stability vis-à-vis White House organization as well as personnel stability as it relates to chief of staff experience, presidential experience, the chief of staff's working relationship with the president, and the chief of staff's working relationship with Congress.

Regarding how White House organization, as a measure of structural stability, may affect perceptions of chief of staff influence, we expect those who work for a chief of staff within a more clear-cut, hierarchical structure (rather than a less structured, 'spokes-of-the-wheel' approach) are more likely to have to depend on the chief of staff to get to the president. Similarly, a more hierarchical approach makes a president more reliant on the chief of staff to manage and control information flow. Accordingly, we hypothesize *the more hierarchical the organization of the White House, the more influential the chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H1).

Another important factor that may condition chief of staff influence is experience. In referencing the benefits of experience, O'Toole and Meier (2003, p. 47) point out that 'multifaceted skills acquired in the trenches can make a significant difference in performance.' For our purposes, experience is defined as a chief of staff's general political background prior to coming to the White House. A lack of political experience may result in a learning period in a president's term during which a less experienced chief of staff may need to test numerous administrative approaches before settling on a particular managerial strategy. For personnel working in close quarters with a chief of staff who is unfamiliar with one's duties, managerial mistakes and changes in approach may lead to an unstable working environment characterized by a chief of staff who struggles to juggle the many managerial tasks at hand while trying to become familiar with the political games of the Beltway. Accordingly, we generally expect *the more experience a chief of staff had in the political arena prior to one's tenure, the more influential the chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H2a). On the other hand, when considering presidential experience as it relates to chief of staff influence, it may be that a more experienced president is less likely to rely on the chief of staff such that *the more experience a president had in the political arena prior to becoming president, the less influential his chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H2b).

Regarding a chief of staff's relationship with the president and Congress, we generally expect chiefs of staff with a more positive reputation in their dealings with both their boss and lawmakers in Congress are more likely to be able to engage with and influence such political actors. Accordingly, we expect *the better the general working relationship between a chief of staff and a president, the more influential the chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H3a) and *the better the general working relationship between a chief of staff and Congress, the more influential the chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H3b).

With respect to internal management ( $M_1$ ), our focus here lies in determining the extent to which perceptions concerning more centralized chief of staff approaches tend to correlate positively with perceptions of managerial influence. It should be noted that this approach is different from testing the effects of *actual* measures of centralization (see Ponder 2000; Rudalevige 2002; Villalobos 2013). Although centralization is intrinsic to hierarchy, this study distinguishes between hierarchy as a perceptual measure of how structural stability affects the environment a chief of staff operates within versus perceptions of the type of centralized (or decentralized) role a chief of staff embraces in carrying out one's managerial duties. Accordingly, in terms of a chief of staff's administrative role, centralization depends on the extent to which a chief of staff is perceived as willing and able to coordinate the workings of the administration. We contend that personnel are likely to perceive chiefs of staff who seem to eschew their coordinating responsibilities as less influential compared to those who strongly embrace the



role and attempt to use it as a means to direct the administrative agenda in a more straightforward, stable manner. Accordingly, we hypothesize *the more a chief of staff embraces one's coordinating responsibilities, the more influential the chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H4).

Closely related to a chief of staff's administrative role is management style, which may vary from a hands-on chief of staff who spends a large amount of time on White House management issues to a chief of staff who prefers to delegate managerial responsibilities, the latter of which can lead to less stable structure and operations. Thus, we expect *the more a chief of staff tends towards a hands-on management style, the more influential the chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H5a). In particular, a chief might be especially influential if the president prefers to delegate and therefore provides the chief of staff with greater discretion in directing White House operations. As such, we further hypothesize *the less a president tends towards a hands-on management style, the more influential the chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H5b).

Our measures for networking (M<sub>3</sub>) concern the extent to which personnel have access to both the chief of staff and the president. Opportunities derived (or restricted) due to accessibility may affect the extent to which personnel can advocate their preferences, provide advice and input for the decision-making process, and take on more responsibilities for an administration. We expect that a more accessible chief is more likely to be attentive in dealing with other personnel and involved in administrative affairs, thereby gaining a reputation for being a major player in an administration. Accordingly, we hypothesize *the more accessible a chief of staff is, the more influential the chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H6a). Similarly, the less accessible the president, the more personnel staff may look to and depend on the chief of staff, and vice-versa. As such, we expect *the less accessible a president is, the more influential the chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H6b). Accessibility aside, we also employ a chief of staff's level of visibility as an indicator of how well known and influential one is within an administration. Accordingly, we posit *the more visible a chief of staff is as a public spokesperson for an administration, the more influential the chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H7).

With respect to buffering (M<sub>4</sub>), we consider the manner in which a chief of staff may serve as a proxy for the president in order to perform tasks the president may be reluctant to perform himself, such as fighting political battles on behalf of the president and/or seeking to draw blame and criticism away from the president to protect that president's political interests. We also consider the extent to which a chief of staff may act as a 'reality-tester' by attempting to minimize a president's vulnerability to potential policy/political hazards by keeping the president fully informed of an administration's progress rather than trying to shield the president from any negative developments. As such, we hypothesize *the more a chief of staff acts as a guardian or proxy for the president, the more influential the chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H8) and *the more a chief of staff acts as a reality-tester for the president by actively attempting to warn the president of potential policy/political hazards, the more influential the chief of staff is likely to be perceived* (H9).

Finally, the model accounts for the manner an organization's environment (X)—that is, contextual factors such as constraints, resources, and external demands—may shape performance. For this, we develop several additional theoretical expectations, including: the organizational proximity between White House personnel and the chief of staff, whether government was divided, whether a major crisis took place during a chief of staff's tenure, and the manner in which presidential approval may have transferred to a particular chief. With regards to proximity, we expect a staffer's institutional position within the executive branch in relation to where the chief of staff operates within the White House may affect one's perception of chief of staff influence. Specifically, those proximate to the chief of staff are more likely to observe the chief of staff's efforts, as well as instances where the president looks to the chief for help and advice. As per the makeup of Congress, chiefs of staff serving at a time of divided government may find themselves more immersed in political negotiations with legislative opponents than those serving a president with majority support in the legislative branch. Accordingly, the additional challenges faced by a president under divided government may lead to greater dependence upon the chief of staff, which should increase perceptions of chief of staff influence. In addition, if a chief of staff is serving at a time of a major foreign policy crisis, such an event may have a significant influence on the manner in which one perceives the president and key members of the administration. Generally speaking, we expect White House personnel are likely to rally around a chief of staff during a time of crisis as a show of in-group unity, thereby bolstering the chief's perceived level of influence. Finally, the extent to which the public approves of the president's overall job performance (Edwards

1990; Brace and Hinckley 1992, 1993) may also spill over to affect a staffer's perceptions concerning chief of staff performance. Indeed, if the president is experiencing exceptionally high (or low) approval ratings, staff may connect such appraisals to the role the chief of staff has played in helping to run the administration.

### Using the MO Model and COSP Survey Data to Examine Managerial Influence

The abstract nature of the MO model allows scholars to apply it to many different organizations for a variety of purposes, operationalizing performance as appropriate based on the function of the bureaucratic organization under examination and the nature of the research question. Indeed, in previous studies, the MO model has generated hypotheses for testing the determinants of organizational performance for bureaucracies as disparate as Texas school districts (Meier and O'Toole 2001, 2002, 2003), law enforcement agencies (Nicholson-Crotty and O'Toole 2004), and a wide assortment of municipal government services in the United Kingdom (Andrews *et al.* 2005). Here, by matching the key components of the MO model with measures of chief of staff-specific indicators, we are able to ensure a meaningful correspondence between the theoretical underpinnings of the model and the analyses reported in this study.

Because so much of what the chief of staff does happens behind closed doors, our use of former administration officials' perceptions provides us with a unique opportunity to uncover important new insights concerning the key factors that shape chief of staff managerial influence. Our approach falls in line with previous research demonstrating correlations between perceptual managerial and organizational performance indicators. Several studies indicate organizational performance may be predicted by a variety of perceptual managerial measures, including human resource management (Huselid 1995; Delaney and Huselid 1996), human capital measures (Gates and Langevin 2010), human resource bundles (MacDuffie 1995), intellectual capital indicators in management accounting (Tayles *et al.* 2007), employee motivations (DeVoe and Iyengar 2004), and organizational citizenship behaviors (Turnipseed and Rassuli 2005). Nevertheless, as with all observational studies, one should keep in mind that although variability on the dependent and independent variables between cases allows for an informed evaluation of the potential causal effects of our independent variables on chief of staff influence, our study does not include a pre-test/post-test structure (as in a controlled experiment) such that one cannot *unequivocally* confirm unidirectional causality for correlational relationships. Moreover, by employing White House staffers' perceptions of chief of staff influence we do not claim or imply that such measures represent *actual* chief of staff influence. Rather, our use of White House staff perceptions provide valuable proxy measures for better understanding White House organizational performance across different chiefs of staff and administrations. The inferences drawn from our findings and conclusions are reported within such confines and should be interpreted accordingly.

For our purposes, we match conceptually consistent data measuring White House personnel perceptions of chief of staff influence to the various nodes of the MO Model using the Chief of Staff Project (COSP) survey data. The COSP questionnaire was mailed in two stages to individuals listed in the White House Office (special assistant level and above), select positions within the Executive Office of the President (EOP) (i.e., Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, Office of Management and Budget Director and Deputy Director, and the U.S. Representative to the United Nations), and cabinet and deputy cabinet officials that served in the Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and Clinton administrations.

The United States Government Manual was used as the primary source for determining COSP survey recipients. Respondents were asked to complete a 67-question survey for each chief of staff with whom they worked. Of the 776 individuals who were mailed surveys, 198 returned them, for an overall response rate of 25.5% (see Table 2 for a breakdown of personnel by administration and position served). Former Clinton officials had a 21.4% response rate, while 29.5% of the former Reagan-Bush officials who received questionnaires returned them. Some of these individuals served more than one chief of staff and/or position such that our sample constituted a total of 336 observations.

[Insert Table 2 here]

Within our sample, there was only one person for the White House/Cabinet Mixed position, leading us to exclude this position from the data analyses to avoid drawing any unreliable or invalid inferences from our findings. In addition, there were also a number of missing responses for some of the survey questions, resulting in an N of 296 for our main analyses.

As previously mentioned, in explaining the determinants of managerial perceptions, we focus here on how key factors shape perceptions of chief of staff influence. Using a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from *no influence* (1) to *extremely influential* (7), we measure perceptions of chief of staff influence in our analysis by asking: ‘In sum, on a scale of 1 to 7, how much *influence* do you feel the COS [chief of staff] had while serving in the Administration?’ All of our other main variables taken from the COSP questionnaire are measured in similar fashion (a supplemental appendix containing the full questionnaire is available at <http://works.bepress.com/jdvillalobos/> and upon request).

In addition to the questionnaire measures, we also include measures of several key contextual factors mentioned above. For our measure of proximity to the chief of staff, we construct an ordinal control variable that measures the proximity to the chief of staff, where ‘1’ denotes a cabinet level position, ‘2’ denotes a mixed position, and ‘3’ denotes a White House level position. Next, we measure divided government as a dichotomous variable where ‘1’ denotes a time period for which divided government was present for the majority of a chief of staff’s tenure and ‘0’ otherwise. For the presence of a crisis, we assign a code of ‘1’ for which a respondent who experiences at least one major foreign policy crisis during their tenure serving under a chief of staff and ‘0’ otherwise.

Last, we measure presidential approval as the overall average percentage change for the duration of a given chief of staff’s tenure in serving a president. Since the survey questions measure perceptions of a chief of staff’s performance for the total time serving a given president, we operationalize our presidential approval measure to reflect aggregate measures of average change. Unfortunately, we are thus unable to disaggregate our presidential approval measures to reflect monthly or yearly changes in perception. Nevertheless, the multiple numbers of respondents for each of the chiefs we examine (e.g., 50 respondents for Leon Panetta) allows us to conduct robust cross-sectional analyses across multiple administrations and varying environmental conditions.

## Results

Our analyses examine the tenures of ten White House chiefs of staff across three administrations from 1981 to 2001. For our main model, we estimate the data using ordered logit since our dependent variable is an ordinal survey response measure. We report robust standard errors clustered by chief of staff. Our unit of analysis is the response of a given former White House staff member. To account for any possible issues with endogeneity or multicollinearity in the data, we assessed the variance inflation factor (VIF) for our model to verify the validity and reliability of our empirical approach. The mean VIF value for our model is 1.98 and thus well below the VIF value of 10 that scholars consider to be the excess point for multicollinearity (Tables A1-A16 in the aforementioned supplemental appendix provide further information detailing the pair-wise correlations, descriptive statistics, and frequency distributions for all of our main variables).

The results for our main model shown in Table 3 suggest that some managerial dimensions matter more than others in determining perceptions of chief of staff influence. In particular, measures representing both stability (S) and external management (M<sub>2</sub>) exhibited statistically significant relationships with our dependent variable, including: White House organization, a chief of staff’s working relationship with both the president and Congress, the accessibility of both the chief of staff and the president, as well as measures of chief of staff visibility, guardianship of the president, and role as the president’s reality-tester. Concerning our environmental controls, we also find that proximity, divided government, and the presence of a crisis further condition such perceptions. At the same time, none of our internal management (M<sub>1</sub>) measures are related in a statistically significant way with chief of staff influence.

[Insert Table 3 here]

Regarding managerial stability, we find that the structural design in White House Organization, a chief of staff’s relationship with the president, and the chief’s relationship with Congress each significantly affect perceptions of chief of staff influence. Specifically, the minimum to maximum predicted probability results suggest that working within a more hierarchical organization may increase perceptions of chief of staff influence by 15.88 percentage points ( $p < .001$ ). Meanwhile, the predictive probability results also suggest that chiefs having an excellent relationship with the president and Congress may increase perceptions of chief of staff influence by 23.23 ( $p < .001$ ) and 10.1 ( $p < .05$ ) percentage points, respectively. These results corroborate H1, H3a, and H3b.



With regards to networking, the minimum to maximum predictive probability results indicate that chiefs of staff who are highly accessible are 6.01 percentage points more likely to be considered influential in networking directly with staff than those who are not ( $p < .05$ ) while higher levels of presidential accessibility can limit a chief's ability to serve as a gatekeeper and may thereby lower perceptions of chief of staff influence by about 6.62 percentage points ( $p < .05$ ), thus corroborating H6a and H6b. Regarding our third networking measure, we find that a chief of staff's visibility as a spokesman for the administration can further increase perceptions of their administrative influence. Specifically, the minimum to maximum predictive probability results indicate that extremely visible chiefs of staff are 15.51 percentage points more likely to be considered influential than less visible chiefs ( $p < .001$ ), which corroborates H7.

Concerning our two buffering measures, we find that both chief of staff guardianship and a chief of staff's role in serving as a reality-tester have a suggestive, though only marginally significant ( $p < .1$ ), impact on enhancing officials' perceptions of chief of staff influence in an administration. In line with our expectations for H8, the minimum to maximum predictive probability results indicate that a chief of staff who acts largely as a guardian or proxy for the president is 8.52 percentage points more likely to be considered influential than one who does not. Likewise, in line with H9, the minimum to maximum predictive probability results indicate that chiefs who take on the role of reality-tester by actively attempting to warn the president of potential policy/political hazards are 10.91 percentage points more likely to be considered influential than those who do not embrace such role.

Managerial components aside, the results for our contextual variables suggest that closer proximity to the chief of staff may increase perceptions of influence while the presence of a crisis may lower perceptions, though these findings are only marginally significant ( $p < .1$ ). More notably, our results show that a state of divided government increases the likelihood that a chief of staff will be perceived as more aggressively involved in dealing with congressional opponents and working to move the president's policy agenda through the legislative arena. Specifically, the minimum to maximum predictive probability results indicate that chiefs working during a state of divided government are about 8.98 percentage points more likely to be considered highly influential than those serving under a state of unified government ( $p < .05$ ). These findings fall in line with transaction cost models of decision making for which one would expect the president to increase centralization of the policy process—often by employing the chief of staff to serve as a key negotiator—in competing with the legislative branch for control over policy development and, later, bureaucratic entities answering to multiple principals at the implementation stage.

### **MO Model Applicability (Sensitivity Analysis)**

Apart from the main analysis we conduct to test our hypotheses, we also conduct a sensitivity analysis that employs index measures for each of the MO model components in order to test the validity of applying the MO model as our framework. To do this, we first performed an oblique rotation factor analysis for our main survey-based measures to determine how well the variables load—that is, how highly correlated they are with each of their corresponding MO model component subcategories (e.g., stability, internal management, networking, and buffering). The results of our factor analysis demonstrate that ten of our thirteen items loaded highly on their respective factors (see Table 4).

[Insert Tables 4-5 here]

To conduct a follow-up sensitivity analysis, we next constructed index measures for each of the MO component subcategories, leaving out the items that did not load well ( $< .5$ ). We then ran a new ordered logit regression analysis using the index measures for each of the MO model components and our environmental controls. The results of this sensitivity analysis were largely consistent and, in fact, stronger than that of our main model, thereby corroborating our application of the MO model framework in this study (see Table 5).

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

Our study contributes to the literature on public management in a variety of ways. First, we have extended the application of an established theoretical model to managerial rather than organizational-level performance. We have also expanded the increasingly vital theoretical paradigms of public management into the field of presidential studies, thereby also extending management theory into the analysis of political institutions. Consequently, our study has yielded suggestive and important insights not only about management in the modern presidency but also the political dynamics of administrative leadership more generally. Furthermore, our findings and insights have

normative merit for policy makers, practitioners, and White House personnel interested in social science research concerning the traits, characteristics, and management practices that shape White House policy and political processes. As such, the application and expansion of our approach—both with respect to the White House as well as other organizational entities—provides a new template for better assessing managerial performance, one that moves away from the speculation so often circulated publicly by the media (or otherwise spread privately among key insiders) and more towards a systemic, objective means of evaluation.

In light of these findings, future studies should consider whether the general relationships identified here persist or change in important ways by expanding the application of our survey measures to include more recent chiefs of staff and developing and applying alternative chief of staff (and other White House) managerial performance measures. Subsequent survey samples should also extend beyond the White House proper to include a greater number of Cabinet members and their deputies. Scholars could then further examine the effect that proximity may have on personnel perceptions assuming that perceptions more closely track actual influence over outcomes for observers closer to the action. Scholars should likewise delve more deeply into the connections and distinctions between perceptual and direct performance indicators, including factors that can be objectively coded such as internal/external centralization of the policy process or political experience. Regarding the latter, one might consider the general correspondence and relative differences between the subjective, 7-point scale measures of presidential and chief of staff political experience we employ versus observable indicators measured in years (Tables A17-A33 in our supplemental appendix provide a full account of such measure comparisons, a list of all observed indicators, and the relevant descriptive statistics, both overall as well as individually for each of the presidents and chiefs of staff included in the analyses presented in this article).

Although not idiosyncratic, observable indicators may be limited in capturing the relative scope and significance of the *kind* of experience brought to the table in the way subjective perceptions can. For instance, Erskine Bowles had only four observable years of notable political experience prior to becoming chief of staff that included serving two years as White House Deputy Chief of Staff, reflected by a score of 4.06 (out of 7) from his peers on our subjective scale. By comparison, although Thomas McLarty logged more than twice as many observable years of prior political experience, his record rested on relatively less notable or relevant positions, including state legislator in Arkansas, chairman of the Arkansas State Democratic Party, and treasurer for Bill Clinton's failed gubernatorial bid in 1980, reflected by a lower score of 2.58 on our subjective scale. Given such comparative differences, the pros and cons of employing subjective versus objective measures for political experience (and other managerial performance indicators) merit further scholarly debate.

Researchers should also continue to explore other dimensions of chief of staff influence. For example, it would be interesting to examine differences in perceptions across policy domains. Given previous research on measures of presidential performance and accountability in the domestic versus foreign policy realms, much remains to be uncovered with respect to managerial questions across both domains. Scholars may also consider the *manner* in which chiefs of staff wield their influence. For instance, future studies may explore the difference between those chiefs of staff who take on a 'neutral broker' versus 'self-advocate' approach to managing the White House. Chiefs serving as neutral brokers presumably fit the mold of the 'passion for anonymity' that is often tied to public administrators who place organizational goals above politics and their own political agendas (Brownlow 1958). Meanwhile, chiefs of staff who act as self-advocates likely wield influence as power to affect outcomes, either with the primary intent to benefit their own agendas (which may not always be of benefit to overall organizational performance; e.g., Donald Regan) or perhaps to increase and maintain control of the bureaucratic apparatus with the primary intent to protect the interests of the White House and maximize organizational performance.

Scholars could further consider the differences between a chief of staff's political and policy influence in advising the president. In terms of how personnel view chief of staff managerial approaches, scholars may also move beyond general perceptions of overall influence to explore whether and to what extent White House officials vary in their perceptions of what constitutes a 'properly balanced' management approach (e.g., perhaps one that is neither too centralized nor too inattentive to subordinates' performance). Last, with regards to theory, scholars may also consider other literature employing different branches of public administration research, particularly pertaining to principal-agent models and studies on organizational hierarchy and information flow (e.g., Hammond and Miller 1985; Miller 1993; Wood and Waterman 1994; Hammond and Knott 1996; Waterman and Meier 1998; see also Rudalevige 2005; Walcott and Hult 2005).

Future research could deepen understanding of how chiefs operate within the bureaucratic apparatus, how a chief's perceived managerial behavior and strategies reflect overall organizational performance perceptions and, ultimately, how such dynamics connect and contribute to tangible bureaucratic outputs and outcomes. In particular, this area of research will benefit greatly if scholars continue moving towards more direct measures of the dynamics that shape managerial performance, a more nuanced consideration of the relationship between perceptual performance measures and actual management practices and outputs, and more careful approximation and anchoring of such factors and their casual mechanisms.

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**Table 1** *White House Chiefs of Staff in the Modern Era, 1969-2014\**

<b>Chief of Staff</b>	<b>Tenure</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Party</b>
Harry Robbins Haldeman	1969-73	Richard M. Nixon	Republican
Alexander M. Haig, Jr.	1973-74	Richard M. Nixon	Republican
Donald H. Rumsfeld	1974-75	Gerald Ford	Republican
Richard M. Cheney	1975-77	Gerald Ford	Republican
William H.M. Jordan	1979-80	Jimmy Carter	Democrat
Jack H. Watson, Jr.	1980-81	Jimmy Carter	Democrat
<b>James A. Baker III</b>	<b>1981-85</b>	<b>Ronald Reagan</b>	<b>Republican</b>
<b>Donald T. Regan</b>	<b>1985-87</b>	<b>Ronald Reagan</b>	<b>Republican</b>
<b>Howard H. Baker, Jr.</b>	<b>1987-88</b>	<b>Ronald Reagan</b>	<b>Republican</b>
<b>Kenneth M. Duberstein</b>	<b>1988-89</b>	<b>Ronald Reagan</b>	<b>Republican</b>
<b>John H. Sununu</b>	<b>1989-91</b>	<b>George H.W. Bush</b>	<b>Republican</b>
<b>Samuel K. Skinner</b>	<b>1991-92</b>	<b>George H.W. Bush</b>	<b>Republican</b>
James A. Baker III**	1992-93	George H.W. Bush	Republican
<b>Thomas F. McLarty III</b>	<b>1993-94</b>	<b>Bill Clinton</b>	<b>Democrat</b>
<b>Leon E. Panetta</b>	<b>1994-97</b>	<b>Bill Clinton</b>	<b>Democrat</b>
<b>Erskine B. Bowles</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>Bill Clinton</b>	<b>Democrat</b>
<b>John D. Podesta</b>	<b>1998-01</b>	<b>Bill Clinton</b>	<b>Democrat</b>
Andrew H. Card, Jr.	2001-06	George W. Bush	Republican
Joshua B. Bolten	2006-09	George W. Bush	Republican
Rahm I. Emanuel***	2009-10	Barack Obama	Democrat
William M. Daley	2011-12	Barack Obama	Democrat
Jacob Lew	2012-13	Barack Obama	Democrat
Denis McDonough	2013-present	Barack Obama	Democrat

\*COSP data includes personnel for those chiefs of staff shown in bold text.

\*\*James Baker's brief second stint as chief of staff is excluded from our analyses.

\*\*\*After Emanuel left his post to run for mayor of Chicago, Peter M. Rouse stepped in briefly as 'acting' chief of staff from October 1, 2010 to January 13, 2011.

**Table 2** *Chief of Staff Project (COSP): Personnel by Position Level*

<b>Position Level</b>	<b>Reagan</b>	<b>Bush</b>	<b>Clinton</b>	<b>Total</b>
White House Assistant	30	11	35	76
White House Deputy Assistant	28	17	47	92
White House Special Assistant	49	12	48	109
White House Mixed	3	0	2	5
White House/Cabinet Mixed	1	0	0	1
Inner Cabinet	2	1	0	3
Inner Cabinet Deputy	2	0	5	7
Outer Cabinet	3	4	5	12
Outer Cabinet Deputy	6	5	20	31
Total	123	50	162	336

**Table 3 Examining Perceptions of Chief of Staff Influence (Ordered Logit Regression with Robust Standard Errors Clustered by COS)**

Independent Variables	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+sd/2
<b>Stability (S)</b>				
White House Organization	.419*** (.129)	3.26	.1588	.0402
COS Experience	-.032 (.111)	-.29	-	-
POTUS Experience	.075 (.234)	.32	-	-
COS Working Relationship w/POTUS	1.021*** (.143)	7.14	.2323	.0682
COS Working Relationship w/Congress	.254** (.11)	2.31	.1010	.0274
<b>Internal Management (M<sub>1</sub>)</b>				
COS Administrator Role	.156 (.182)	.86	-	-
COS Management Style	.04 (.077)	.53	-	-
POTUS Management Style	-.04 (.076)	-.52	-	-
<b>External Management (M<sub>2</sub>)</b>				
COS Accessibility (M <sub>3</sub> )	.149** (.09)	1.66	.0601	.0157
POTUS Accessibility (M <sub>3</sub> )	-.178** (.086)	-2.09	.0662	.0218
COS Visibility (M <sub>3</sub> )	.414*** (.121)	3.43	.1551	.0422
COS Guardianship (M <sub>4</sub> )	.213* (.133)	1.60	.0852	.0200
COS Reality-Tester (M <sub>4</sub> )	.275* (.203)	1.36	.1091	.0280
<b>Environmental Controls (X)</b>				
Proximity to the COS	.258* (.197)	1.31	.0348	.0117
Divided Government (1,0)	1.312** (.664)	1.98	.0898	NA <sup>†</sup>
Crisis (1,0)	-.536* (.326)	-1.65	.0357	NA <sup>†</sup>
Presidential Approval	-.047 (.358)	-.13	-	-
N	296			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.3577			

Dependent Variable: In sum, on a scale of 1 to 7, how much *influence* do you feel the COS [chief of staff] had while serving in the Administration?

<sup>†</sup> The predicted probability score for a half standard deviation above and below the mean is not applicable for the significant results of this variable since it is dichotomous.

p < .1\*, p < .05\*\*, p < .001\*\*\*

**Table 4 Oblique Rotation Factor Analysis**

	Factor 1 (S)	Uniqueness
White House Organization	.5239	.7266
Chief of Staff Experience	.8249	.3262
POTUS Experience	-.0926	.0884
COS Working Rel. w/POTUS	.5973	.4922
COS Working Rel. w/Congress	.8424	.2985
	Factor 2 (M <sub>1</sub> )	Uniqueness
COS Administrator Role	.8415	.2402
COS Management Style	.8761	.2229
POTUS Management Style	.0070	.0288
	Factor 3 (M <sub>3</sub> )	Uniqueness
COS Accessibility	.8595	.2210
POTUS Accessibility	.9033	.1994
COS Visibility	.0125	.3751
	Factor 4 (M <sub>4</sub> )	Uniqueness
COS Guardianship	.8210	.3261
COS Reality-Tester	.8563	.2700

**Table 5 Chief of Staff Influence Sensitivity Analysis with Index Measures (Ordered Logit Regression with Robust Standard Errors Clustered by COS)**

Independent Variables	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+-sd/2
<b>MO Model Components</b>				
Stability (S)	1.02*** (.217)	4.70	.2384	.0712
Internal Mgt. (M <sub>1</sub> )	.271** (.142)	1.91	.0996	.0209
External Mgt. Networking (M <sub>3</sub> )	.273** (.14)	1.94	.0986	.0149
External Mgt. Buffering (M <sub>4</sub> )	.728*** (.174)	4.19	.2178	.0628
<b>Environmental Controls (X)</b>				
Proximity to the COS	.28** (.127)	2.21	.0380	.0128
Divided Government (1,0)	1.4* (1.042)	1.34	.0955	NA <sup>†</sup>
Crisis (1,0)	-.382*** (.223)	-1.71	.0254	NA <sup>†</sup>
Presidential Approval	.31 (.539)	.58	-	-
N	296			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.2971			

Dependent Variable: In sum, on a scale of 1 to 7, how much *influence* do you feel the COS [chief of staff] had while serving in the Administration?

<sup>†</sup> The predicted probability score for a half standard deviation above and below the mean is not applicable for the significant results of this variable since it is dichotomous.

p < .1\*, p < .05\*\*, p < .001\*\*\*

**SUPPLEMENTAL APPENDIX\***

**WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF PROJECT:  
COSP Questionnaire Guide (Likert Scale)**

We provide below the general introductory material used for the questionnaire, followed by the specific questions applicable to this study. The entire questionnaire that includes other items not applied to this particular study is available upon request.

**Biographical Information:**

Please list the titles and roles that you held, and the duties you performed, while serving in the \_\_\_\_\_ administration, while \_\_\_\_\_ was Chief of Staff (COS), and the approximate dates of your service in each of those capacities:

**Instructions:**

For each of the following questions, please circle a number between 1 and 7 which best represents your opinion. All answers to this survey will remain confidential (unless you specify otherwise). There is space at the bottom of each section in which you can make additional comments/suggestions if you would like.

**DEPENDENT VARIABLE**

**COS General Influence:**

In sum, on a scale of 1 to 7, how much *influence* do you feel the COS had while serving in the administration?

*Not Influential*                      1              2              3              4              5              6              7                      *Extremely Influential*

**INDEPENDENT VARIABLES**

**COS Experience:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you characterize the *COS's general political background* prior to becoming COS (i.e., how much experience did the COS have in the political arena before becoming COS?)?

*No Political Experience*                      1              2              3              4              5              6              7                      *Very Politically Experienced*

**POTUS Experience:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you characterize the *President's general political background* prior to becoming President (i.e., how much experience did the President have in the political arena before becoming President?)?

*No Political Experience*                      1              2              3              4              5              6              7                      *Very Politically Experienced*



**White House Organization:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you characterize the organization of the White House—hierarchical, with a strong COS in charge, a spokes-of-the-wheel system in which the president operated as his own COS, or something in between?

*Spokes of the Wheel* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *Hierarchical*

**COS Working Relationship w/POTUS:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you characterize the COS's *general working relationship* with the *President*?

*Poor* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *Excellent*

**COS Working Relationship w/POTUS:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you characterize the COS's *general working relationship* with the *Congress*?

*Poor* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *Excellent*

**COS Administrator Role:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, to what extent did the COS attempt to *coordinate* the White House administrative process (e.g., overseeing the President's schedule; ensuring the smooth operation of the White House)?

*Not A Coordinator* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *Very Much A Coordinator*

**COS Accessibility:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, how *accessible* was the *COS* to you?

*Not Accessible* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *Extremely Accessible*

**POTUS Accessibility:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, how *accessible* was the *President* to you?

*Not Accessible* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *Extremely Accessible*

**COS Management Style:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you characterize the *COS's general style of managing* the White House (i.e., how much time and involvement was spent by the COS on White House management issues)?

*Delegating* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *Hands-On*

**POTUS Management Style:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you characterize the *President's general style of managing* the White House (i.e., how much time and involvement was spent by the President on White House management issues)?

*Delegating* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *Hands-On*

**COS Visibility:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you characterize the COS's *visibility* as a public spokesman for the Administration?

*Not Visible*                      1              2              3              4              5              6              7                      *Extremely Visible*

**COS Guardianship:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, to what extent was the COS a *proxy* for the president who, among other things, performed tasks the President was reluctant to perform himself, fought political battles on the President's behalf, and sought to draw blame and criticism away from the President in an attempt to protect the President's political interests?

*Not A Proxy*                      1              2              3              4              5              6              7                      *Very Much A Proxy*

**COS Reality-Tester:**

On a scale of 1 to 7, to what extent did the COS act as a *reality-tester* for the President by actively attempting to warn the President of potential policy/political hazards and giving him the 'bad news'?

*Not A Reality-Tester*                      1              2              3              4              5              6              7                      *Very Much A Reality-Tester*

**Table A1** *Pair-Wise Correlations between COS Influence and the Main Explanatory Variables*

	COS Influence
COS Experience	.5129
POTUS Experience	.0522
White House Organization	.5108
COS Working Relationship w/POTUS	.6059
COS Working Relationship w/Congress	.5393
COS Administrator Role	.5241
COS Management Style	.3785
POTUS Management Style	-.0978
COS Accessibility	.1815
POTUS Accessibility	-.0034
COS Visibility	.5460
COS Guardianship	.5564
COS Reality-Tester	.6525

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**Table A2** *Pair-Wise Correlations between all Main Variables\**

	COS Influence	COS Experience	POTUS Experience	White House Organization	COS Working Rel. w/POTUS	COS Working Rel. w/Congress	COS Admin. Role
COS Influence	1.0000						
COS Experience	.5129	1.0000					
POTUS Experience	.0522	.0006	1.0000				
White House Organization	.5108	.2898	.0147	1.0000			
COS Working Rel. w/POTUS	.6059	.2663	.1177	.2244	1.0000		
COS Working Rel. w/Congress	.5393	.6136	-.0194	.1907	.4023	1.0000	
COS Administrator Role	.5241	.2856	-.0173	.4347	.3854	.2969	1.0000
COS Management Style	.3785	.2502	.0216	.4447	.2191	.1280	.4769
POTUS Management Style	-.0978	-.0649	.1047	-.2824	.0017	-.0088	-.1388
COS Accessibility	.1815	.1283	.0462	.1426	.1863	.1970	.2199
POTUS Accessibility	-.0034	-.0300	.0762	.0055	.0533	.0516	.0319
COS Visibility	.5460	.4361	.0245	.3034	.2763	.3920	.2927
COS Guardianship	.5564	.4234	.0251	.3308	.3963	.3384	.4649
COS Reality-Tester	.6525	.5476	.0265	.2955	.5275	.6191	.4414

\*Continued below on the next page.

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**Table A2 Pair-Wise Correlations between all Main Variables (Continued)**

	COS Management Style	POTUS Management Style	COS Accessibility	POTUS Accessibility	COS Visibility	COS Guardianship	COS Reality-Tester
COS Management Style	1.0000						
POTUS Management Style	.0523	1.0000					
COS Accessibility	.1412	.0667	1.0000				
POTUS Accessibility	.0361	.1122	.5777	1.0000			
COS Visibility	.2020	.0194	.1779	.0845	1.0000		
COS Guardianship	.2786	-.0882	.1746	-.0059	.4449	1.0000	
COS Reality-Tester	.2410	.0148	.1726	.0257	.5274	.5664	1.0000

**Table A3 COS Influence (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
2	2	5	6	0	0	0	1	3	17
3	5	8	6	0	0	0	1	1	21
4	4	8	6	0	1	0	2	2	23
5	14	14	18	0	1	0	0	7	54
6	22	35	37	3	0	5	5	13	120
7	23	19	34	2	1	1	2	5	87
Observations	72	90	107	5	3	6	12	31	326
Mean	5.497								
Std. Dev.	1.480								
Variance	2.189								



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**Table A4 COS Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	3	4	2	0	0	0	0	1	10
2	6	9	11	0	0	0	2	2	30
3	5	5	7	1	0	0	1	3	22
4	4	12	8	1	0	0	1	2	28
5	11	7	11	0	0	3	1	4	37
6	13	13	12	0	2	0	1	8	49
7	31	42	57	3	1	3	6	11	154
Observations	73	92	108	5	3	6	12	31	330
Mean	5.470								
Std. Dev.	1.860								
Variance	3.460								

**Table A5 POTUS Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
4	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
5	3	3	5	1	0	1	1	2	16
6	16	13	13	0	1	3	0	9	55
7	55	73	90	4	2	3	10	20	257
Observations	75	92	109	5	3	7	12	31	334
Mean	6.680								
Std. Dev.	.677								
Variance	.459								

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**Table A6 White House Organization (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	5
2	5	4	9	0	0	2	0	1	21
3	3	8	6	0	0	0	2	1	20
4	9	15	10	0	0	0	2	10	46
5	17	20	26	0	1	1	2	3	70
6	28	23	26	2	2	2	6	9	98
7	12	19	30	3	0	1	0	6	71
Observations	75	91	108	5	3	6	12	31	331
Mean	5.215								
Std. Dev.	1.519								
Variance	2.308								

**Table A7 COS Working Relationship w/POTUS (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
3	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	4
4	2	7	6	0	0	0	1	1	17
5	14	17	18	1	1	0	3	7	61
6	28	33	36	1	1	2	2	9	112
7	27	33	44	3	1	2	5	12	127
Observations	74	91	107	5	3	4	12	30	325
Mean	6.012								
Std. Dev.	1.048								
Variance	1.099								

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**Table A8 COS Working Relationship w/Congress (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	5
2	6	5	10	0	0	0	1	1	23
3	4	12	13	0	1	0	1	4	35
4	11	11	10	1	0	1	4	7	45
5	10	18	15	1	1	1	2	4	52
6	18	18	30	0	1	0	1	10	78
7	22	27	27	2	0	2	3	3	86
Observations	73	92	106	4	3	4	12	30	324
Mean	5.142								
Std. Dev.	1.658								
Variance	2.748								

**Table A9 COS Administrator Role (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	2	3	3	0	0	0	0	1	9
3	1	6	2	0	0	0	0	3	12
4	6	4	9	0	0	0	2	0	21
5	17	21	25	1	0	0	1	9	74
6	23	32	32	1	2	4	4	10	108
7	25	24	31	3	1	1	3	7	95
Observations	74	90	102	5	3	5	10	30	319
Mean	5.708								
Std. Dev.	1.226								
Variance	1.503								

**Table A10 COS Management Style (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	6
2	4	5	4	1	0	0	1	1	16
3	7	13	10	0	0	0	1	2	33
4	6	7	14	0	0	0	2	7	36
5	21	20	22	0	1	2	1	8	75
6	17	27	36	1	0	3	5	8	97
7	15	14	20	3	1	1	1	5	60
Observations	72	89	107	5	2	6	11	31	323
Mean	3.095								
Std. Dev.	1.570								
Variance	2.466								

**Table A11 POTUS Management Style (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	11	17	15	1	0	1	1	1	47
2	21	25	33	0	1	2	2	11	95
3	17	15	25	1	1	1	3	8	71
4	11	9	15	2	0	1	4	4	46
5	8	15	10	0	0	2	1	2	38
6	5	8	6	1	0	0	0	2	22
7	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	3	8
Observations	74	90	107	5	2	7	11	31	327
Mean	3.095								
Std. Dev.	1.570								
Variance	2.466								

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**Table A12 COS Accessibility (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	1	2	4	0	0	1	1	4	13
2	0	3	13	0	0	0	0	1	17
3	0	5	11	0	1	0	0	1	18
4	2	10	23	0	0	2	0	11	48
5	7	16	13	1	0	2	2	4	45
6	20	25	23	2	0	0	5	6	81
7	46	30	21	2	2	2	4	4	111
Observations	76	91	108	5	3	7	12	31	333
Mean	4.318								
Std. Dev.	1.916								
Variance	3.672								

**Table A13 POTUS Accessibility (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	0	3	13	0	0	1	1	2	20
2	2	13	35	1	0	2	0	14	67
3	7	8	11	0	0	2	0	4	32
4	5	18	10	0	0	0	1	5	39
5	20	22	19	1	2	2	5	2	73
6	18	12	9	2	0	0	3	0	44
7	23	16	11	1	1	0	2	4	58
Observations	75	92	108	5	3	7	12	31	333
Mean	4.327								
Std. Dev.	1.913								
Variance	3.661								

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**Table A14 COS Visibility (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
2	3	6	11	1	0	1	2	2	26
3	13	12	15	0	1	1	2	4	48
4	12	21	17	0	1	1	1	7	60
5	8	18	20	0	1	0	1	10	58
6	19	20	24	2	0	3	3	7	78
7	14	12	19	2	0	0	3	1	51
Observations	72	91	106	5	3	6	12	31	326
Mean	4.773								
Std. Dev.	1.599								
Variance	2.558								

**Table A15 COS Guardianship (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
2	3	6	7	0	0	0	3	1	20
3	3	4	6	0	0	0	1	2	16
4	10	18	10	1	0	1	1	4	45
5	22	24	25	1	0	2	1	5	80
6	22	22	31	2	3	2	4	14	100
7	11	16	23	1	0	1	2	4	58
Observations	72	90	104	5	3	6	12	30	322
Mean	5.208								
Std. Dev.	1.429								
Variance	2.041								

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**Table A16 COS Reality-Tester (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	White House Assistant	White House Deputy Assistant	White House Special Assistant	White House Mixed	Inner Cabinet	Inner Cabinet Deputy	Outer Cabinet	Outer Cabinet Deputy	Total
CODE	11	12	13	14	21	22	23	24	
1	3	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	7
2	3	6	8	0	0	0	2	2	21
3	2	8	7	0	0	0	0	2	19
4	11	19	8	0	0	0	2	5	41
5	17	18	19	0	2	0	0	6	62
6	17	27	29	3	1	3	5	9	94
7	18	11	28	2	0	1	1	5	66
Observations	71	87	100	5	3	4	11	29	310
Mean	5.181								
Std. Dev.	1.574								
Variance	2.479								



**Table A17 Presidential and Chief of Staff Experience: Comparing Objective and Subjective Measures (1981-2001)**

<b>President</b>	<b>Subjective (Means)*</b>	<b>Objective (Years)**</b>
Ronald Reagan	6.439	15
George H.W. Bush	6.76	23
Bill Clinton	6.839	20
<b>Chief of Staff</b>		
James A. Baker III	6.474	7
Donald T. Regan	3.094	4
Howard H. Baker, Jr.	7	21
Kenneth M. Duberstein	5.818	13
John H. Sununu	6.125	11
Samuel K. Skinner	4.529	16
Thomas F. McLarty III	2.581	9
Leon E. Panetta	6.78	25
Erskine B. Bowles	4.059	4
John D. Podesta	6.628	11

\*Subjective measures are based on the means from our 7-point Likert scale survey scores (see the full descriptive statistics in Tables A19-A33).

\*\*Objective measures are based on years of observed experience (see Table A18).

**Table A18 Objective Presidential and Chief of Staff Political Experience (Years)\***

<b>President</b>	
Ronald Reagan	Political launch with Goldwater campaign (1964); Governor of California campaign (1966); Governor of California (1967-75); Presidential candidate (1976); Political Activism with the Ronald Reagan Radio Commentary series and Citizens for the Republic political action committee (1976-79); Presidential candidate (1979-80)
George H.W. Bush	Chairman of the Republican Party for Harris County, Texas (1964); U.S. Senate candidate (1964); U.S. House of Representatives candidate (1966); Member, U.S. House of Representatives (TX) (1967-71); U.S. Senate candidate (1970); U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. (1971-73); Chairman of the Republican National Committee (1973-74); Chief of the Liaison Office to the People's Republic of China (1974-75); Director of Central Intelligence (1976-77); Presidential candidate (1980); Vice President of the U.S. (1981-89)
Bill Clinton	Assistant to Senator Fulbright (1967); Coordinator for McGovern-Shriver '72 (1971); U.S. House of Representatives candidate (1974); Attorney General of Arkansas candidate (1976); Attorney General of Arkansas (1977-79); Governor of Arkansas candidate (1978); Governor of Arkansas (1979-81); Governor of Arkansas candidate (1980); Governor of Arkansas candidate (1982); Governor of Arkansas (1983-1992); Presidential candidate (1991)
<b>Chief of Staff</b>	
James A. Baker III	U.S. Congressional candidate (1969); Chairman, George H.W. Bush Senate campaign (1970); Finance Chairman of the Republican Party (1971); Gulf Coast Regional Chairman, Nixon Presidential Campaign (1972); Undersecretary of Commerce, President Ford (1975); Chairman, Gerald Ford election campaign (1976); Attorney General of Texas candidate (1978)
Donald T. Regan	U.S. Treasury Secretary (1981-85)
Howard H. Baker, Jr.	U.S. Senate camp (1964); U.S. Senate candidate (1965); U.S. Senator (1966-84); Presidential candidate (1980)
Kenneth M. Duberstein	Legislative Assistant to Senator Jacob K. Javits (1966); Director, Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, U.S. General Services Administration (1970-76); Deputy Under Secretary, Department of Labor (1976-77); Assistant to the President, Legislative Affairs (1981-83); Member, Congressional Liaison Team for Reagan-Bush '84 (1984)
John H. Sununu	New Hampshire House of Representatives campaign (1972); New Hampshire House of Representatives (1973-75); Governor of New Hampshire campaign (1982); Governor of New Hampshire (1983-87); Chairman, National Governor's Association (1978-88)
Samuel K. Skinner	U.S. Attorney, Northern District of Illinois (1968-75); U.S. Attorney (1975-77); Vice Chairman, President Reagan's Commission on Organized Crime (1984-88); U.S. Secretary of Transportation (1989-91)
Thomas F. McLarty III	Arkansas House of Representatives candidate (1970); Arkansas House of Representatives (1971-73); Treasurer, gubernatorial election for David Pryor (1974); Chairman, Arkansas State Democratic Party (1974-76); Member, Democratic National Committee (1976-77); Treasurer, gubernatorial election for Bill Clinton (1980)
Leon E. Panetta	Legislative Assistant to Senator Thomas Kuchel (1966-69); Assistant to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (1969-70); Assistant to John Lindsay, New York Mayor (1970-71); U.S. House of Representatives candidate (1976); Member, U.S. House of Representatives (CA) (1977-93); Director, Office of Management and

Erskine B. Bowles	Budget (OMB) (1993-94) Gubernatorial campaign for Hargrove Bowles (father) (1972); Fundraiser for Clinton-Gore '92 (1992); Head of the Small Business Administration (SBA) (1993); White House Deputy Chief of Staff (1994-95)
John D. Podesta	Counsel on the Majority Staff of the Senate Judiciary Committee and Chief Minority Counsel for two Senate Judiciary Subcommittees (1979-81); Chief Counsel for the Senate Agricultural Committee (1987-88); Assistant to the President, Staff Secretary, and Senior Policy Advisor (1993-95); Counselor to Senator Thomas Daschle (1995-96); White House Deputy Chief of Staff (1997-98)

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\*Rounded to the nearest year. Years where overlap occurs due to holding more than one position (or activity) at a time are counted as a single year of experience.

**Table A19 POTUS Experience (Overall Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	2	.6
4	4	1.2
5	16	4.79
6	55	16.47
7	257	76.95
Total	334	100
Mean	6.68	
Std. Dev.	.677	

**Table A20 COS Experience (Overall Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	10	3.03
2	30	9.09
3	22	6.67
4	28	8.48
5	37	11.21
6	49	14.85
7	154	46.67
Total	330	100
Mean	5.47	
Std. Dev.	1.86	

**Table A21 Reagan Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	1	.81
4	1	.81
5	16	13.01
6	30	24.39
7	75	60.98
Total	123	100
Mean	6.439	
Std. Dev.	.811	

**Table A22 G.W. Bush Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	1	2
4	0	0
5	0	0
6	8	16
7	41	82
Total	50	100
Mean	6.76	
Std. Dev.	.657	

**Table A23 Clinton Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	3	1.86
5	0	0
6	17	10.56
7	141	87.58
Total	161	100
Mean	6.839	
Std. Dev.	.499	

**Table A24 J. Baker Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	0	0
2	1	2.63
3	0	0
4	1	2.63
5	3	7.89
6	6	15.79
7	27	71.05
Total	38	100
Mean	6.474	
Std. Dev.	1.059	

**Table A25 Regan Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	2	6.25
2	10	31.25
3	9	28.13
4	6	18.75
5	4	12.5
6	1	3.13
7	0	0
Total	32	100
Mean	3.094	
Std. Dev.	1.254	

**Table A26 H. Baker Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	0	0
5	0	0
6	0	0
7	31	100
Total	31	100
Mean	7	
Std. Dev.	0	

**Table A27 Duberstein Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	2	9.09
5	7	31.82
6	6	27.27
7	7	31.82
Total	22	100
Mean	5.818	
Std. Dev.	1.006	

**Table A28 Sununu Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	1	3.13
4	2	6.25
5	5	15.63
6	8	25
7	16	50
Total	32	100
Mean	6.125	
Std. Dev.	1.1	

**Table A29 Skinner Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	0	0
2	2	11.76
3	0	0
4	6	35.29
5	5	29.41
6	4	23.53
7	0	0
Total	17	100
Mean	4.529	
Std. Dev.	1.231	

**Table A30 McLarty Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	8	25.81
2	12	38.71
3	3	9.68
4	3	9.68
5	3	9.68
6	2	6.45
7	0	0
Total	31	100
Mean	2.581	
Std. Dev.	1.544	



**Table A31 Panetta Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	1	2
5	0	0
6	8	16
7	41	82
Total	50	100
Mean	6.78	
Std. Dev.	.545	

**Table A32 Bowles Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	0	0
2	5	14.71
3	9	26.47
4	6	17.65
5	9	26.47
6	3	8.82
7	2	5.88
Total	34	100
Mean	4.059	
Std. Dev.	1.434	

**Table A33 Podesta Experience (Descriptive Statistics)**

Likert Scale	Frequency	Percent
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	1	2.33
5	1	2.33
6	11	25.58
7	30	69.77
Total	43	100
Mean	6.628	
Std. Dev.	.655	