

Either the future is really murky
Or, I must be going blind!

Forward Engagement

Integrating Forecasting with Policymaking

Spring 2004

Elliott School of International Affairs
The George Washington University



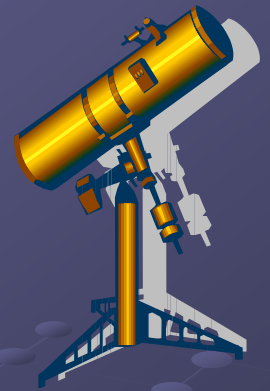
Section I: Introduction

Presented by: Steve Cahall



Introduction

“A plan is nothing - planning is everything”



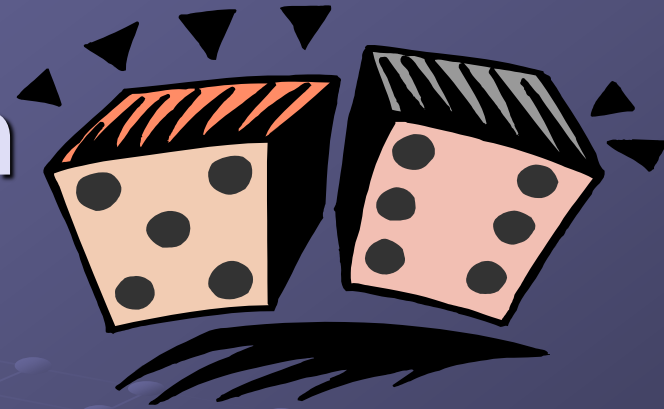
● Why Think about the Future?

- Increasing rate of historical change.
- Governments need to anticipate and respond early in order to effectively manage change.
- Need to institutionalize forecasting as a regular part of policy making process.

● What is Forward Engagement?

- Systematically thinking about the future.
- Enabling public policy to engage the future sooner rather than later.
- Envision a desirable future and actively manage change.

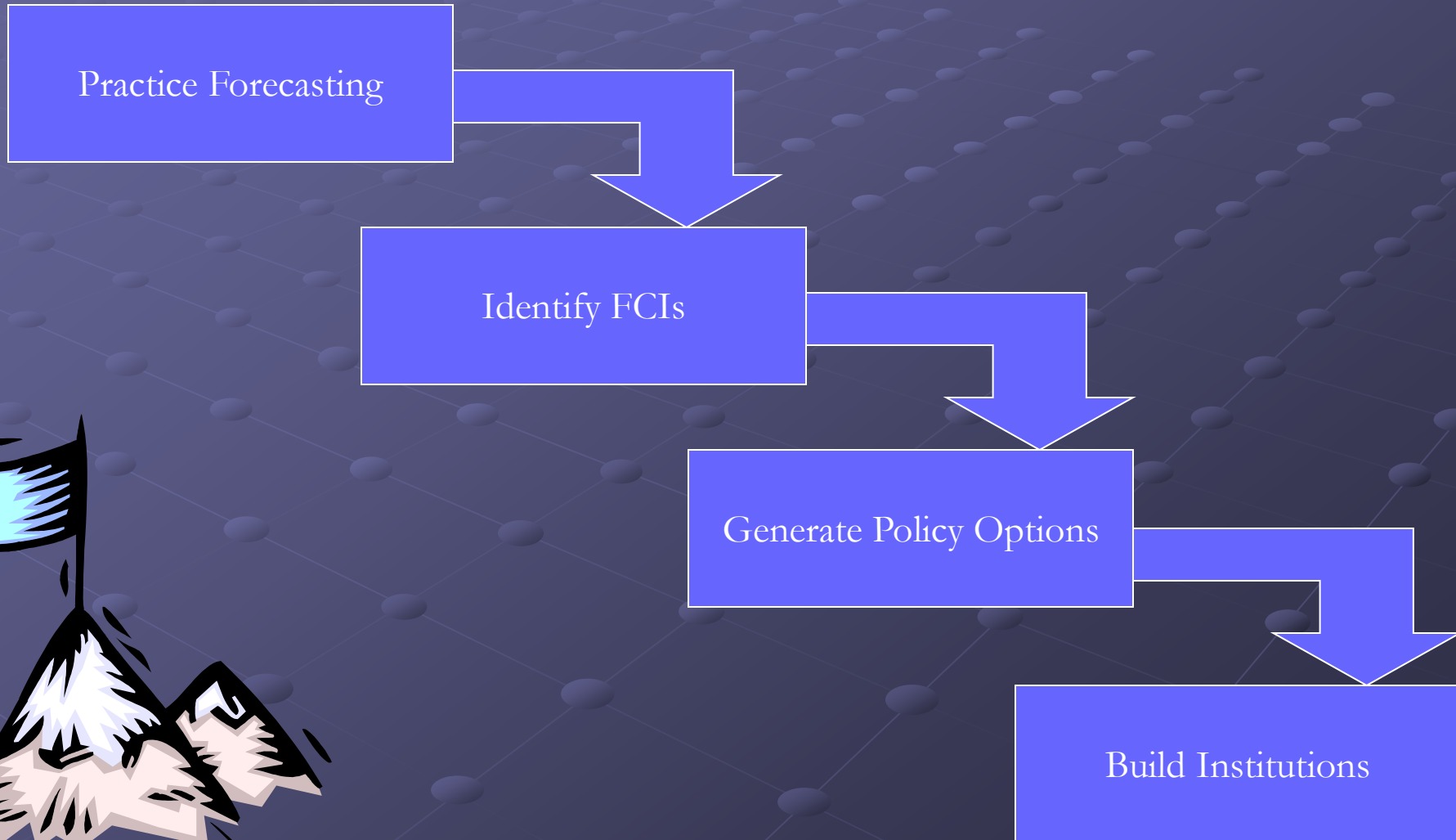
Introduction



- What are the stakes?
 - Global leadership of the United States
 - Liberal democratic system
 - Survival of the International State System
 - Environmental Sustainability
 - Societal Stability
 - Survival of Humanity

Introduction

● What have we done in Class?



Future Contingencies of Interest (FCIs)

- New developments in any human endeavor with profound implications for society.
- Magnitude and velocity necessitate action now to affect their occurrence and outcome.

Future Contingencies of Interest

Security

- Nanotechnology
- Genetics
- Environment
- Energy
- Disease
- Artificial Intelligence

Economics

- High technology textiles
- Energy
- Rejection of Capitalism by developing world
- India
- China
- Environment
- Developing countries default on IMF loans

Security

- Increased asymmetric warfare
- Geopolitical shifts and alliances
- Revolutionary weapons development
- Surveillance
- Demographics
- State disintegration

Governance

- Internet governance
- Water Scarcity
- Mass privatization
- Space colonization
- Regionalism
- Disease
- State disintegration

Nodes

- Dynamic points of intersection among FCIs.
- Developments in one area have ripple effects in other areas.
- Cause and effect operate in a positive feedback loop.

Key Nodal Players

- Technology
- Energy
- Demographics
- Environment
- Health
- Multipolarity
- North-South Divide

Section II

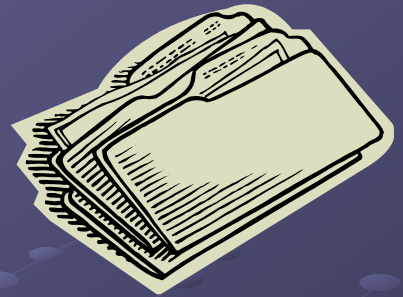
Institutionalizing Forward Engagement

Presented by: Melissa Nachatelo



Case for a Planning Institution

- Increasing Interconnectivity of developments in Human Affairs.
- Future Planning within government highly disaggregated.
- Lack of strong directional pull that imparts coherence to US policies concerning the future.
- Government Policy lags development rather than lead.



National Commission on Strategic Planning (CSP)

● CSP Mandate

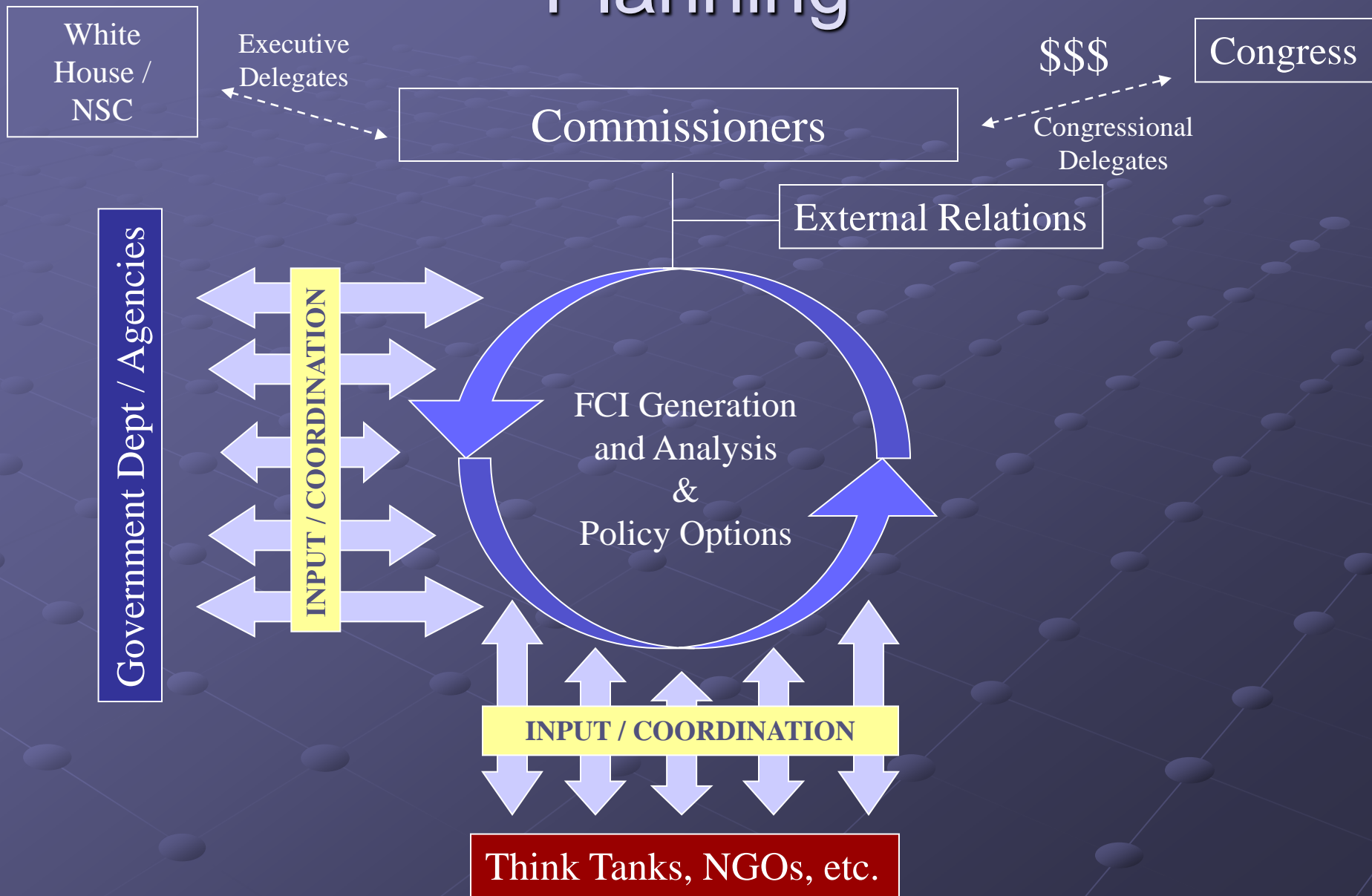
- Identifying FCIs pertinent to U.S. interests
- Coordinating government efforts to implement a national strategy for U.S. policy.
- Provides input to executive and legislature to facilitate forward-leaning policy.

National Commission on Strategic Planning

● Characteristics

- Centralized, Coordinative institution charged with long-term forecasting and policy planning.
- Joint Commission serves both the Executive and Legislative branches of government.
- Plays an advisory role.
- Composed of Political Appointees, executive staff and Subject Matter Experts
- Life of the Commission automatically renewed

National Commission on Strategic Planning



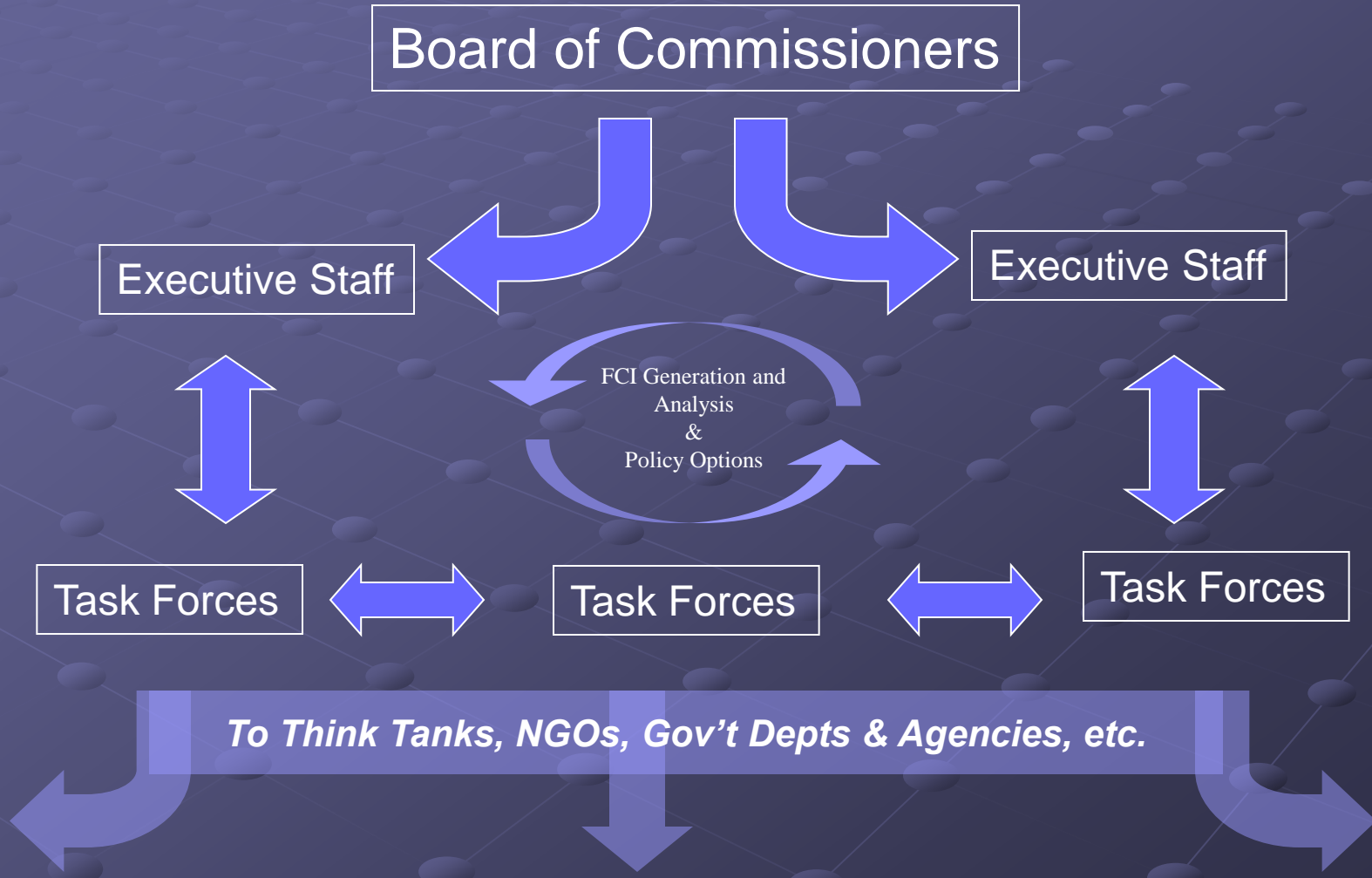
Key Functions of the CSP

- Identify FCIs.
- Robust understanding of the issues and interactions.
- Identify policy options.
- Provide coherence to overall U.S. Policy by working with Executive and the Legislative.
- Conduct periodic review of policy options and assess impact of policies.
- Participates in the executive budget and program review process.

Section III: CSP Structure

Presented by: Sean Connell

CSP Organization



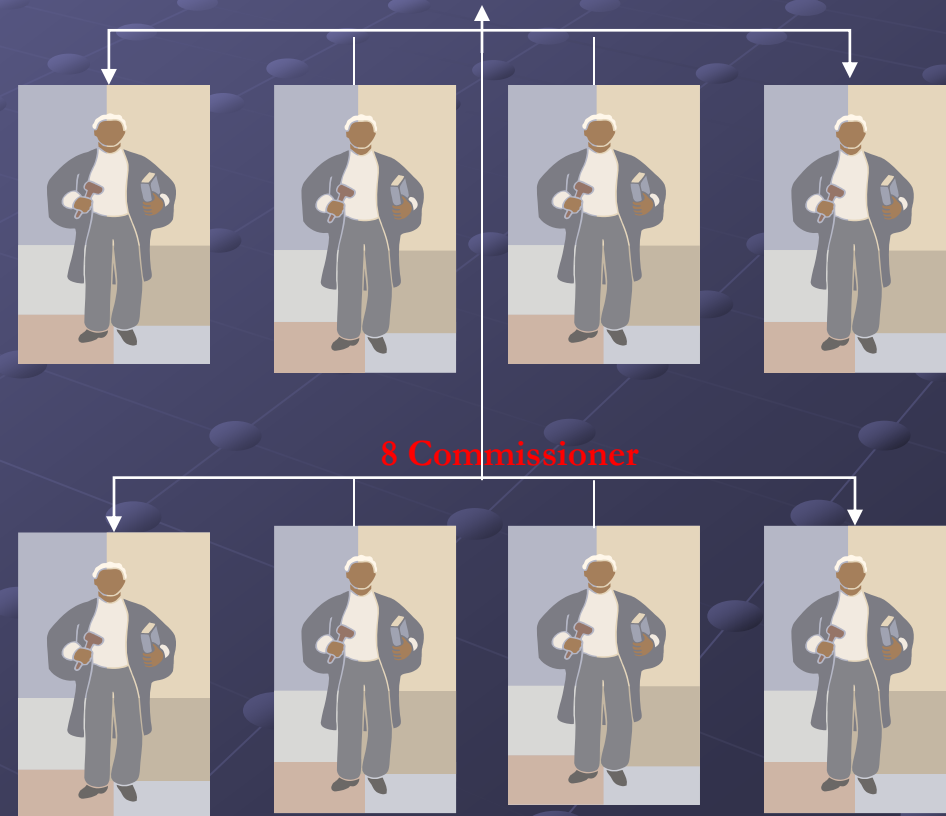
Board of Commissioners

- Nine Commissioners
- 5 appointed by President
- Only 3 from the same party
- At least 2 private citizens
- 2 appointed by Senate
- 2 appointed by House
- 3 year terms
- Staggered appointments

Chief Commissioner



“I’m the
Big Boss
Lady”



Functions of the Board of Commissioners

● Chief Commissioner

- Appointed by the President

● Commissioners

- Responsible for crystallizing issues
- Conceptualizing policy options for congress and the executive

Executive Staff



Executive Director



General Counsel



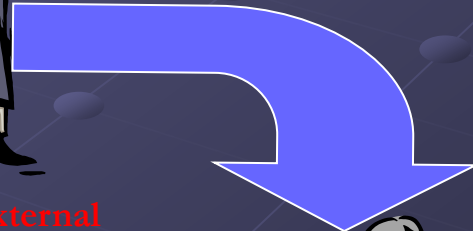
Deputy Director



Director of External Relations



Govt. Agency Liaisons



Congressional Liaisons

Functions of Executive Staff

● The Executive Director

- Reports to the Board of Commissioners
- Responsible for managerial, operational and administrative aspects

● The Deputy Director

- Reports to the Executive Director
- Represents the Commission in the budget and program review process

● Director of External Relations

- Reports to the Deputy Director
- Main point of contact for all Executive, Legislative and Government Agencies
- Public outreach coordinator

Functions of Executive Staff (Cont.)

● General Counsel

- Advisor on Legal issues

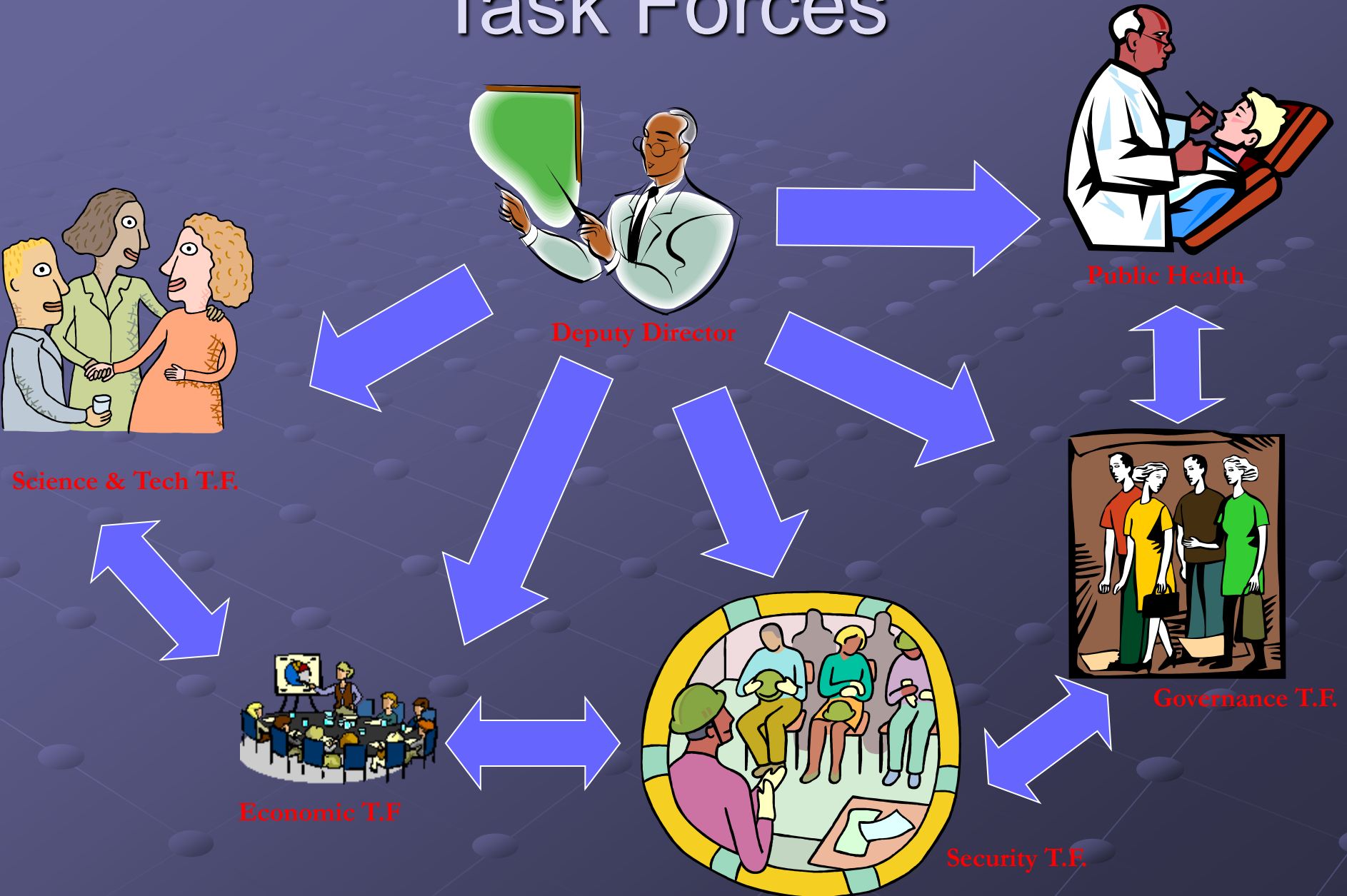
● Government Agency Liaisons

- Works with the Director of External Relations
- Liaise with Executive Agencies

● Congressional Liaisons

- Reports to the Director of External Relations
- Liaise with Executive Agencies

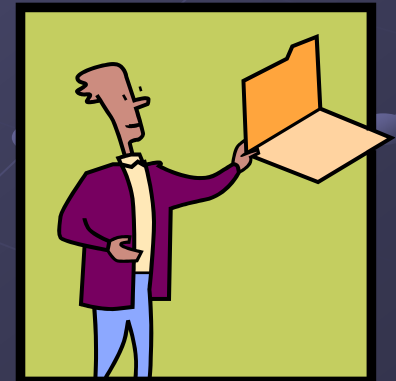
Task Forces





Section IV: Case Study

Presented by: Emily Waechter



A Case Study in Genetics

● Objective

- To trace an example through the Commission's policy-making process.

● Step 1: Identify the Issues

- Uses roundtables, Delphi method, expert consultations to generate ideas.
- Perceives that developments in Genetic Engineering could have positive and negative consequences.

Understanding the Issues

● Step 2: Research

- Generates a report based on input from think-tanks and research institutions.
- Considers socio-economic benefits and fallout of genetic engineering.
- Report projects current trends, such as population.
- Also considers possible wild-card scenarios, like new forms of biological weapons.
- Allows commission to develop a full understanding of issues.

Translating Issues into Policy

- Step 3: Developing Policy Options
 - Science/Technology Task Force forms suggestions for addressing issues.
- Genetic Engineering Policies could include:
 - Complete ban on all cloning
 - Increased federal funds for R&D in genetics
 - Constructing a regulatory agency to govern genetically-modified foods.
 - Increasing the retirement age if life expectancy increases

Enhancing Policies

● Step 4: Infusion into the Policy Process

- Recommendations considered by Congress and President to develop legislation.
- Policies should “sunset” to promote periodic review
- President can work to achieve international support for policies.

● Step 5: Research Continues

- Commission monitors progress in genetic engineering.
- Has policy had the desired effect? Are new issues emerging?
- Continuous process of updating policies.

Section V: Conclusion





Challenges

- Commission will require policymakers to buy into the benefits of long-range planning.
- There also must be some public support for the establishment and maintenance of the Commission.
- Long-range planning may be overshadowed by more immediate issues.
- CSP must remain non-partisan
- CSP's recommendations may create disdain in agencies who are having budgets or programs cut.
- Liable to be ignored because of the lack of enforcement capabilities.
- As a high-profile government entity, the Commission will create a reputation.



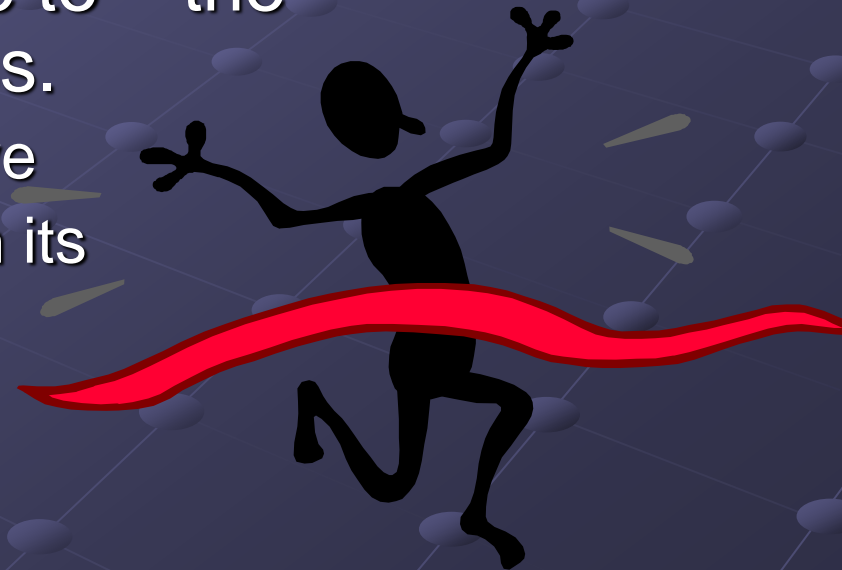
Conclusions



- As the 9/11 Commission has shown, there is a growing need for coordination and planning across government agencies.
- A need exists not only to prevent possible threats, but to foster future opportunities.
- An opportunity exists now to create an institution that will think about the future.

Conclusions

- Our current system is focused on specialized, reactive policy development.
- The CSP is the best way to institutionalize long-range planning in a way that will be available – but not intrusive to – the President and the Congress.
 - Both legislative and executive branches will have a stake in its success.



Questions

