# Weber’s Bureaucracy Theory:

#### **Bureaucracy is an administrative system designed to accomplish large-scale administrative tasks by systematically coordinating the work of many individuals.**

**Principle 1**: In a bureaucracy, a manager’s formal authority derives from the position he or she holds in the organization. We see more of an informal authority approach in which there is personal expertise, technical knowledge, moral worth, and the ability to lead and to generate commitment from subordinates.

**Principle 2**: In a bureaucracy, people should occupy positions because of their performance, not because of their social standing. (Some organizations and industries are still affected by social networks in which personal contacts and relations, not job-related skills, influence hiring and promotional decisions)

**Principle 3:** The extent of each position’s formal authority and task responsibilities, and its relationship to other positions in the organization should be clearly specified. When the task and authority associated with various positions in the organization are clearly specified, managers and workers know what is expected of them and what to expect from each other.

**Principle 4:** Authority can be exercised effectively in an organization when positions are arranged hierarchically, so employees know whom to report to and who reports to them.

**Principle 5:** Managers must create a well-defined system of rules, standard operating procedures, and norms so that they can effectively control behavior within an organization.

**The following are the advantages of Bureaucracy:**

1. The rules and procedures are decided for every work. Since employees are bound to follow the rules etc., the management process becomes easy.

2. The duties and responsibilities of each job are clearly defined there is no question of overlapping or conflicting job duties.

3. The selection process and promotion procedures are based on merit and expertise. It assists in putting right persons on right jobs.

4. The division of labour assists workers in becoming experts in their jobs. The performance of employees improves.

5. The enterprise does not suffer when some persons leave it. If one person leaves then some other occupies that place and the work does not suffer.

**The following are the disadvantages of Bureaucracy:**

1. This system suffers from too much of red tape (excessive formality) and paper work.

2. The employees do not develop belongingness to the organisation.

3. The excessive confidence on rules and regulations and attachment to these policies block the initiative and growth of the employees. They are treated like machines and not like individuals. There is neglect of human factor.

4. The employees become so used to the system, they resist to any change and introduction of new techniques of operations.

5. No importance is given to informal groups. Nowadays, informal groups play an important role in all business organizations.

6. There will be unnecessary delay in decision-making due to formalities and rules.

7. Bureaucratic model may be suitable for government organizations. But it is not suitable for business organizations because business organizations believe in quick decision making and flexibility in procedures.

**Evaluation:** Weber’s model will be performed in those enterprises where change is not anticipated. Big business houses and government departments use this type of organisation. Weber is credited for attempting to develop Bureaucratic model for the first time. Weber’s model has some drawbacks. It is rigid, it has impersonality (lack of emotional involvement), excessive cost of control, and excessive dependence on superiors. Inspite of these limitations this model is very useful in large enterprises.

* **Types of authority**

1. **Bureaucratic/Legal Authority**: People respond to this kind of authority because they believe that the requirements or laws.
2. **Traditional:** People respond to this kind of authority because they honor the past traditions.

E.g. parents and grandparents

1. **Charismatic authority:** People respond to this kind of authority because they believe that the individual has a special characteristics. E.g. Quaid e Azam.