

Mitsuyasu Ishikawa

Professor Bush

PA 715

September 20, 2008

Response paper for Policy analysis on September 20

When we try to bring some renovation to our stiff routine working situation, we need to analyze what is problem and find a way to solve. However, normally, we don't know how to advance it systematically and successfully. In this meaning, the eightfold path is interesting and helpful.

According to Bardach (2005), there is the eighthold path of the analytic work in problem-solving: (1) define the problem, (2) assemble some evidence, (3) construct the alternatives, (4) select the criteria, (5) project the outcomes, (6) confront the trade-offs, (7) decide and (8) tell your story.

Especially, defining the problem is the most difficult element for me. We may be able to get a image of a problem easily, but it might be vague. To realize a problem as a clear image may be difficult.

Like Bardach says, policy analysis typically bridges all political ideologies by reliance on the normative standard of maximizing welfare and on social science theorizing about the comparative advantages of different institutions for different purposes. Bardach also says that we should better not simply to echo the issue rhetoric in your problem definition, but use it as raw material for a provisional problem definition that you hope will prove analytically useful. Bardach also pointed out that it often helps to think in terms of deficit and excess.

But when it comes to applying this to real world problem, it would be difficult. I'd like to take the experience of Hurricane Katrina as an example. According to the article "Chaos Management Skill Essential (PA Times, Oct, 2005)", in emergency management, the keys to effective crisis management are following elements: competent-leadership to arrest crisis situations by resorting to flexible

and dynamic structural arrangement way, the ability to position and reposition the multi-institutional and human actors at different levels and jurisdictions as changing dynamics, time, and surprises dictate in the field, and making things happen by mobilizing material, human and technological resources and capacities in a well coordinated manner. Especially, in emergency management, coordinating with each other beyond bureaucracy might be most important element for efficient management. There is some debate over whether government should make plans to coordinate with businesses to help in crises by using the strengths of the businesses. And this article raises the question of what the relationship should be between government and business so that crises are managed efficiently. And also from the article "Wal-Mart's Response to Hurricane Katrina", I could say that bureaucracy might be a problem which makes government react to the crisis slowly and hesitate to share information with private sector. These might be the Bardach's (1) define the problem in this case. And we can assemble some evidence, too.

However, this is not a quantitative problem but a qualitative problem. And it is difficult to conduct the Bardach's (3)-(6) path. My recommendation for this case is that government needs to cut through layers of bureaucracy to improve the government's response, and use every resource no matter it is public sector or private sector. However, it might be difficult to select the criteria and project the outcomes for this conclusion because it is difficult to collect quantitative data to make it persuasive.

It might be difficult to apply Bardach's eighthold path to real world problems. But when we try to grab an image what is problem, it is still useful. I got a hint how to analyze what is problem and find a way to solve from Bardach's eighthold path.