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Unity of command

Unity of command was originally suggested by **Henri Fayol** as one of his primary principles of management. Fayol suggested that employees should only receive instructions from a single superior. If this principle was undermined then it would bring about violations in authority, and discipline would be jeopardized. Ultimately, Fayol argued, the stability and order of the organization would be threatened.

Many subsequent theorists have disagreed with Fayol; and given the fact that he was writing in the late 1940s, he could not have anticipated the changes in **organizational structure** and in the way in which work is carried out. None the less, he proposed that any form of dual command would lead to uncertainty and hesitation, and ultimately to conflict between managers.

Fayol, Henri, *General and Industrial Management*. London: Pitman, 1967.