Here are the definitions for the terms on slide 7 in “Introducing Management.”

1. **Unity of command**: Each employee participating in the operation reports to only one supervisor. This minimizes the possibility that an employee will receive conflicting instructions from several different supervisors. This reduces confusion, enhances clear communications, stops people from going off on tangents, and improves coordination and integration of resources.

2. **Scalar principle / centralization**: Authority flows from top to bottom in an organization. Senior management holds decision-making power, usually with input from middle management or professionals with relevant expertise. Decisions made at the top are relayed to middle and lower levels of management, where these decisions are implemented.

Unity of command and the scalar principle / centralization are closely related. Every employee has only one boss and authority always flows from top to bottom in an organization.

3. **Division of labor / departmentation**: Employees are assigned tasks by matching (a) the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) necessary to complete these tasks with (b) the KSAs possessed by the employees. This creates clusters of specialized knowledge and competencies within an organization, matched with the specialized kind of work people are asked to do. Thus an organization may have a finance unit, a marketing unit, a programming unit, a maintenance unit, and so on.

4. **Span of control**: There is a range in the number of subordinate employees that a manager can supervise (“control”) effectively and efficiently. With too many subordinates, the manager loses touch with them and can’t be sure tasks are being completed on time and up to standard. With too few subordinates, the manager will be tempted to over-manage, interfering with small tasks or details and interrupting the flow of work. “Span of control” refers to the area between too many subordinates and too few, where the manager is able to monitor employee performance without over-managing.

Note that there are no fixed rules about how large or small span of control should be. This varies according to a number of factors, among them:

- **Geographical dispersion**: Span of control will be smaller when subordinates are spread out across several locations, larger when subordinates are concentrated in one place.

- **Subordinate capabilities**: Highly capable, well motivated subordinates require less supervision, in which case span of control will be larger. The opposite also applies. Less motivated subordinates require greater supervision, narrowing the span of control.

- **Manager capabilities**: A skilled, experienced manager will better understand the tasks that subordinates must complete, will better understand those subordinates, and have better relationships with them. Such a manager will be able to supervise more subordinates than a one who lacks these attributes.

- **Training and development vs. performance**: If the manager must or chooses to engage in subordinate training and development (T & D), that manager will necessarily have a smaller span of control (other things being equal) than will a manager who focuses solely on employee performance. T & D requires greater direct interaction with individual subordinates than does monitoring performance.
Similar, routine or repetitive tasks: Subordinates largely engaged in tasks like these are easier to supervise and require less specialized individual attention. This allows the manager a larger span of control. But once again, the opposite also holds. Specialized, non-routine or non-repetitive tasks require managers to interact with subordinates more directly, narrowing the span of control.

Supervisor duties: The number of duties assigned to a supervisor affects how many subordinates the supervisor can handle. A supervisor who is involved in multiple and/or complex projects will need to keep her/his span of control smaller, in part by delegating authority, than a supervisor whose projects are limited in number and/or complexity.

Administrative tasks: The supervisor who must handle numerous administrative (as opposed to operational) tasks is likely to have a smaller span of control. Examples of administrative tasks are preparing job descriptions, performing employee performance evaluations, and administering employment policies.

Formal organizational rules and regulations: It is a basic principle of organizations that management has the right to manage. Policies, rules, regulations, and standards are means by which managers communicate what is expected of employees in terms of workplace behavior, job performance and quality of work.