Lection №3

Data models

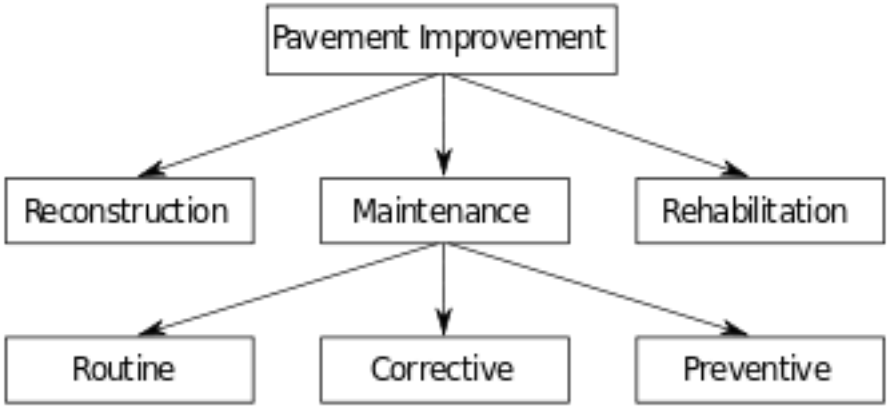
Flat model

The flat (or table) model consists of a single, two-dimensional array of data elements, where all members of a given column are assumed to be similar values, and all members of a row are assumed to be related to one another. For instance, columns for name and password that might be used as a part of a system security database. Each row would have the specific password associated with an individual user. Columns of the table often have a type associated with them, defining them as character data, date or time information, integers, or floating point numbers. This may not strictly qualify as a data model, as defined above.

	Route No.	Miles	Activity
Record 1	I-95	12	Overlay
Record 2	I-495	05	Patching
Record 3	SR-301	33	Crack seal

Hierarchical model

In a hierarchical model, data is organized into a tree-like structure, implying a single upward link in each record to describe the nesting, and a sort field to keep the records in a particular order in each same-level list. Hierarchical structures were widely used in the early mainframe database management systems, such as the Information Management System (IMS) by IBM, and now describe the structure of XML documents.

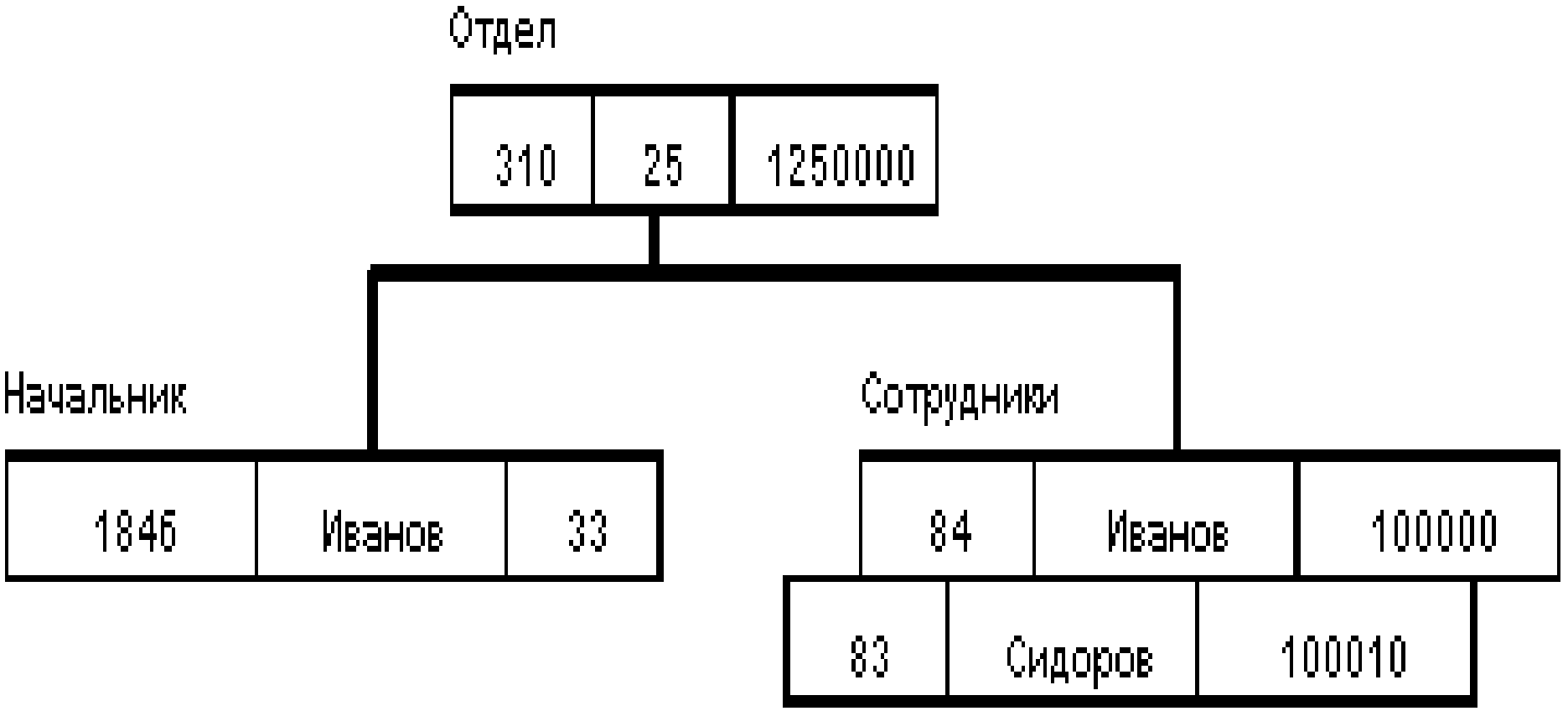


Hierarchical model

This structure allows one 1:M relationship between two types of data. This structure is very efficient to describe many relationships in the real world; recipes, table of contents, ordering of paragraphs/verses, any nested and sorted information. However, the hierarchical structure is inefficient for certain database operations when a full path (as opposed to upward link and sort field) is not also included for each record.

Mother–child relationship: Child may only have one mother but a mother can have multiple children. Mothers and children are tied together by links called "pointers". A mother will have a list of pointers to each of her children.

Hierarchical model

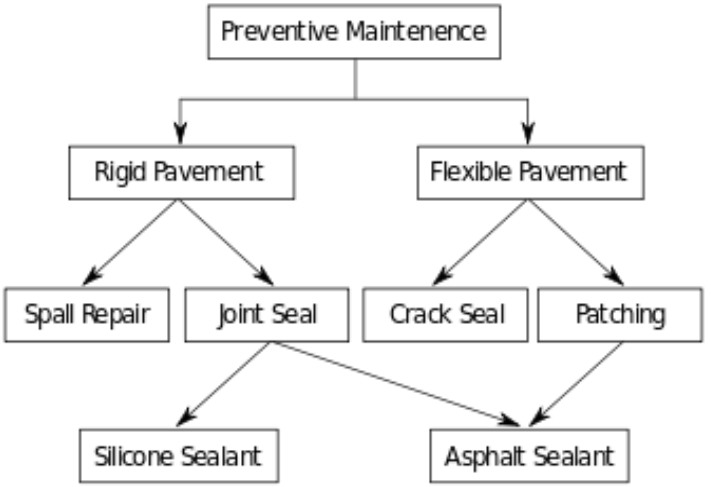


Hierarchical model

Typical operations:
- Find a tree in a DB (for example, department 310);
- Go to another tree;
- Go from one to another record in a tree (for example, from department to the first employee);
- Go from one to another record by hierarchical order;
- Insert a record;
- Delete a record.

Network model

The network model (defined by the CODASYL specification) organizes data using two fundamental concepts, called records and sets. Records contain fields (which may be organized hierarchically, as in the programming language COBOL). Sets (not to be confused with mathematical sets) define one-to-many relationships between records: one owner, many members. A record may be an owner in any number of sets, and a member in any number of sets.

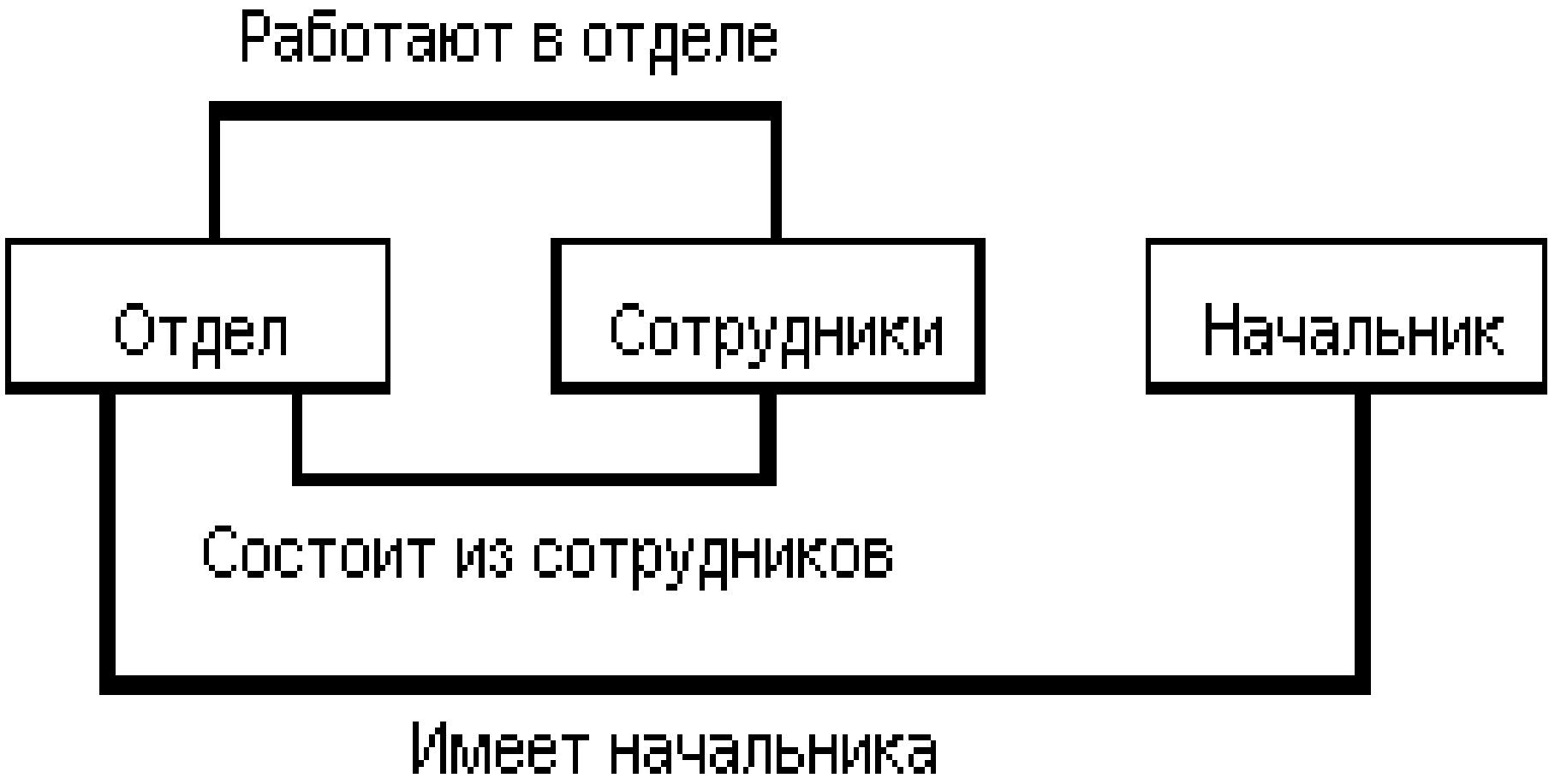


Network model

The network model is a variation on the hierarchical model, to the extent that it is built on the concept of multiple branches (lower-level structures) emanating from one or more nodes (higher-level structures), while the model differs from the hierarchical model in that branches can be connected to multiple nodes. The network model is able to represent redundancy in data more efficiently than in the hierarchical model.

The operations of the network model are navigational in style: a program maintains a current position, and navigates from one record to another by following the relationships in which the record participates. Records can also be located by supplying key values.

Network model



Network model

Although it is not an essential feature of the model, network databases generally implement the set relationships by means of pointers that directly address the location of a record on disk. This gives excellent retrieval performance, at the expense of operations such as database loading and reorganization.

Most object databases use the navigational concept to provide fast navigation across networks of objects, generally using object identifiers as "smart" pointers to related objects. Objectivity/DB, for instance, implements named 1:1, 1:many, many:1 and many:many named relationships that can cross databases. Many object databases also support SQL, combining the strengths of both models.

Relational model

See next lection ...

Objectional model

Any record or table can be an object or set of object. Any object can consist of many other objects.