

MANAGEMENT

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After going through this material, you will be able to understand:

- (a) the meaning of management as a process,
- (b) the interdependence some of the variables involved in the process and
- (c) what one should do to practice the process.

The word 'management' comes from the Latin 'manus' and refers to the driver controlling a team of horses pulling a cart or chariot by manipulating the reins. The range of definitions by scholars in the field varies based on their traits and perception of practice into theory. However the meaning of the word and the elements involved in the process of management conceptually remain the same. But an understanding of the interrelations of interdependent variables in its breadth and depth is vital for practicing management.

In very simple words management is an attitude to accomplish, in an articulated environment. People have so many different attitudes and traits in approaching tasks of their concern. Hence their working styles differ and get reflected in the performance. One of the traditional attitudes of accomplishing is to do whatever is possible within one's capability and leave the rest to chance - then wait for luck to play in favour, otherwise consider it as fate. It is more of a reactive approach than proactive in dealing with the uncertainties of future. This needs to change and an attitude of positive and proactive approach of management has to be inculcated.

Accomplishment always starts with purposes, intentions, targets, goals, objective or any of these based on a vision. Without such clarity of purpose there is no need to manage, as otherwise also many things may or may not happen. The more precise and higher the intentions are, the higher becomes the risk of achieving it. Strategies for risk reduction or risk aversion assume significance in management and hence the need for an array of tools and techniques to tackle it.

The process of management broadly encompasses five stages. It is a cyclical process as far as each task in hand and its integration is concerned. They are initiating, planning, organizing, implementing and controlling. Manager has to initiate action based on the opportunities and adverse situations conceived by him. The scope of the objective will be based on the level of the manager in the organization and the task to be achieved. The planning process should address the strategies for utilization of opportunities, resources and addressing the adverse and uncertain situations.

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There is a need to have common understanding of the objectives of the organization among all concerned in very clear and specific terms. This can be achieved only by proper communication. A clear and common understanding will help all involved in the process for working towards the same objective. Communication at personal levels can be tuned to even motivating individuals and improving the morale of organizations.

Most organizations we talk about are formal in nature and are constrained by legislations, rules, and regulations. The need for innovativeness in management is to rise above the constraints for performance. Innovativeness is core of any management function and it should percolate to all levels and functions in organization. Managers perform irrespective of the constraints and uncertainties.

If organizations or people have only one course of action in any situation, there is no need for management. Choosing from options available is decision making. The quality of decision making is the ability of the person deciding to predict its outcome and its ultimate match with the reality. Opportunities and adverse effects will never wait for decision and it is the timeliness of the decision that takes you forward. The process of decision making involves risk of choosing the wrong option and is very often irrevocable.

Managers in the past were constrained with limited resources. Then came the need to mobilize the required resource for accomplishing the objectives. But today managers are more concerned about choosing the right resource for the right purpose. Apart from other material resource, Time has become a very valuable resource, and prioritizing and apportioning time for the important activity than the urgent activity has become the order of the day.

People are afraid of problems and there is a notion that solving problems is sequel to management. Problems arise out of situations. Same situation is perceived differently by different people depending on how it is affecting or not affecting you as a stake holder. Usually it is the inability to foresee situations and to act on it leads you to a problem. Those who foresee and act always perceive problems as opportunities for taking care of themselves. Managers always foresee the situations they have to face in achieving targets.

The above description is not to make management process a complicated one but to show its interdependence on various functions in organization. Organization simply means a group of people with a common purpose. Usually we talk of formal organizations with structure, hierarchy, authority etc., but it can also be informal like family, cultural groups, social groups etc. Even in informal organizations or groups, when purposes are perceived, management process mentioned above is essential in their accomplishment.

Activities create data. When data are utilized, they become information which binds the organization in the fulfillment of objectives. The information technology has revolutionized the structure, style and functions of organizations for increasing productivity.

. So, it is obvious that the management process is only commonsense in a systematic frame work. The more you realize it the process will become comfortable and enjoying. Management also has to be done as an activity, just like any other job, where the job content is the management process.

Every job has a content part and if the person does that only, he is a worker. But every worker can see management content in his work, and he gets it done through somebody or wants to reflect on others. When the content of management increases in the job he becomes more of a management worker or manager.

The above discussion was to take you to a transformation in thinking, acting, doing and becoming a manager for improving personal performance. But it requires one to follow a logical series of steps.

1. Develop a positive feeling for accomplishment in thinking about a goal, purpose, target and activity.
2. Specify your intentions in greater detail and develop suitable strategies.
3. Recognize your reactive actions and shift to proactive thinking and actions.
4. Look for opportunities and tackle problems by converting them to opportunities.
5. Look for something new and innovative in every action.
6. Identify and assess your risks for making them affordable.
7. In any situation look for alternative options and choose the best.
8. Be communicative in what you are doing and what you expect from others.
9. Realize the potential of information in your organization and use it for improving your productivity.
10. Realize your resourcefulness and make use of it.
11. Assess the value of time and use it judiciously.
12. Assess the managerial content of your job and do that.
13. Try to feel the progression in you towards a manager.
