



Management Skills for Newly-Appointed Managers Training Course

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1 - The Functions of Management

Managers can be viewed as individuals within organisations whose principle aims are to achieve organisational goals by holding positions of authority and making decisions about the allocation of the resources available.

Management tries to encourage individual activity that will lead to reaching organisational objectives and tries to discourage individual activity that hinders organisational goal attainment.

Managers hold a critical position and there are several major functions that they must perform in order to maintain an efficient operation.

These functions can be listed as:

- 1 Planning**
- 2 Organising**
- 3 Staffing**
- 4 Leading**
- 5 Controlling**

A manager is required to assume such diverse roles as figurehead to spokesperson, whichever the situation demands. A good manager must therefore be as flexible as they are knowledgeable.

Managers are a relatively new area of interest for the human race. Up to the industrial revolution, the role did not exist and it is only in the twentieth century that there has been such an enormous increase in the number of managers, mostly confined to the western world. If the existence of managers is recent, the study of management is even more recent and many of the practical problems facing managers do not have a sound theoretical basis. The researchers are still arguing while the managers struggle on with what they have learnt for themselves.



Most managers would agree that successful management involves using resources efficiently. This can be viewed as having three main components:

Managing Tasks

Managing Individuals

Managing Groups

Managing Tasks includes Objective Setting and Planning, Organising and Controlling and Time Management.

Managing Individuals includes Delegation, Communication and Motivation.

Managing Groups includes Teambuilding and Leadership and Assertiveness.



2 - Effective Teambuilding and Leadership

In many organisations, teamwork is used as a key tool in improving effectiveness. Therefore every manager should have a good idea how teams are formed and maintained.

A "team" differs from a "group" because of these identifiable features:

- A definable membership
- Common goals
- Interdependence
- Interaction
- Ability to act as a unit
- Group consciousness

Benefits of teamwork

There are five positive contributions which teams and teamwork can make to an organisation:

Co-ordination - Teamwork is needed to co-ordinate complex tasks which involve a number of operations or stages. This is particularly true where a range of knowledge and skills is required.

Ideas - Creativity thrives on interaction between people. Different viewpoints and experiences encourage new ideas.

Decisions - There are two advantages in using teams to make collective decisions. First, a range of different suggestions can be considered and debated. Second, people will have more commitment to decisions when they are involved.

Support - Because teams can give individuals a place and an identity in a larger organisation, they offer a way in which individuals can feel recognised, appreciated and looked after. They are also great fun.

Induction - The team can introduce new recruits to the style, methods, values and priorities of the organisation (and of the team).



Leading teams

In order to supervise, manage and lead a team successfully, you must first ensure that the team is intrinsically sound.

The best teams have the following eight ingredients:

- 1 Clarity in team goals**
- 2 Clearly defined roles**
- 3 Clear communication**
- 4 Beneficial team behaviours**
- 5 Well defined decision procedures**
- 6 A balanced participation**
- 7 Established ground rules**
- 8 Awareness of group process**

Effective leadership is about achieving results. The leader has three main areas of responsibility:

- Achieving the task**
- Building and maintaining the team**
- Developing the people in the team**

There are also certain leadership functions which must be carried out in order to ensure that a team achieves its purpose and goals.

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Initiating | Getting the work of the team going and keeping it moving. This is very important in the early stages of a team's work. |
| Regulating | Influencing the direction and pace of the team's work |
| Informing | Bringing information or ideas to the team. Becomes increasingly important as the team carries out its tasks |
| Supporting | Creating an emotional climate which makes it easy for members to contribute and which holds the team together. This is needed throughout the team process. |
| Evaluating | Helping the team to evaluate its decisions, goals, processes and performance. Especially needed as the team comes to the end of its work, or of one phase. |



3 - Objective Setting and Planning

Objective setting

Objectives, goals, targets - it doesn't matter what word is used; they are what guides action at work and outside.

Purposeful management requires a clear knowledge of the purpose. Every business, every department and every manager needs a clear set of objectives to determine how effort and resources should be expended. They also provide criteria against which success can be measured.

Developing your objectives can be difficult but is essential for effective management. Start by writing out a list of headings which describe the main areas of your job. For each heading write a single sentence which describes success in that aspect of your job. Ideally these objectives should be:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time framed

Specific - Specific means that the objective is clear and unambiguous. It should consist of only one sentence. If you can't write it in one sentence, you are probably unclear on what exactly you are trying to achieve.

Measurable - The best objectives are measurable. A measurement gives absolute information on how successful you are and how far you have achieved the objective. However, some objectives, particularly those to do with people, are very difficult to measure. They should still be included in your list; and you ought to spend time on them even if it is hard to measure your achievement.

Achievable - An objective should be achievable but may not be realistic, because it would require too much of your time, or because it would conflict in some way with other objectives. Your objectives should be achievable within the constraints of your ability and your resources. They should also be realistic within the constraints of all other things you have to achieve.



Time framed - An objective without a time frame is a wish. You just do not do things that have no deadline. All your objectives must have a time frame. A straightforward example of this is a sales target where you are expected to achieve sales of, say, £100,000 by December. However you should note that some objectives may have an on-going time frame.

Defining your objectives in this format can be very difficult, particularly when it comes to the management of people and other interpersonal issues.

Nevertheless, it is worthwhile developing them as best you can as they will help you enormously in deciding how to spend your time.

Planning

It is usual to classify plans according to a time scale.

Whatever the time frame, every plan contains the same elements. Many of these you decide subconsciously, nevertheless they are inherent in planning.

An objective - what we are planning to achieve

Constraints - These are the resources available to us to execute the plan. They are viewed as constraints because their importance lies in not having enough of them. If we had a limitless supply, they would not feature in planning.

Course of action - This involves evaluating the different options available to us which would achieve the objectives and are within the constraints. At its simplest, this might just mean making a list.

However, in most cases, it will require considerable analysis and, probably, trial and error. The result is a series of steps which will achieve the objective.

Sub plans - Most plans except the very simplest, contain plans within plans. These might include budgets, logistics etc. Sub plans can be added as necessary. A complex plan will inevitably include sub plans and each one of these may be complex enough to have all the components of a plan.



Contingency - A special type of sub plan which asks "what if something goes wrong". Clearly it is impossible to plan for everything that could go wrong. However, it is advisable to plan for two types of contingency: the worst case scenario and the most likely things to go wrong.

Schedule - A plan without a schedule will never be implemented. Each stage of the course of action should have it's deadline and each sub-plan should take it's schedule from that of the master plan.

Plans inevitably involve other people and planning should, therefore, always be considered as a written activity, since the finished document will become the principle means of communicating the detail to those concerned.



4 - Delegation

Delegation is a valuable tool for those with staff reporting to them. In many cases there are tasks which can be done by other members of staff, but you end up doing them yourself for a number of reasons: habit, fear etc

Delegation means getting members of staff to carry out tasks which are currently part of the manager's job. Effective delegation has two powerful results: It frees up the manager's time and it provides a means of developing staff.

There are a number of steps for effective delegation:

- 1) Identify tasks which could be delegates**
These normally include everything except purely managerial functions. Look for tasks which are repeated or routine, they represent the best return on your time. Avoid delegating tasks which you dislike; they will tend to be regarded as dumping.
- 2) Identify people who can take on these delegated tasks.**
They must have the ability, the time and the willingness.
- 3) Carefully define the task in terms of the outcomes which are expected.**
Sell the task to the person and make a contract of the agreement. The more explicit the agreement, the less trouble you will have later on.
- 4) Organise the task by providing the person with the resources, training, authority etc they need to carry out the task.**
Agree when the person will report back and what will happen if they need help in the interim time.
- 5) Walk away**
- 6) Provide support when required**
- 7) Thank them for doing part of your job**



5 - Communication

Communication is one of the most important tools that a manager has to ensure the smooth running of an operation. For successful communication, a model involving six steps has been devised:

- Step 1 What are you trying to achieve with this communication?
 What are your objectives?
- Step 2 Who do you need to communicate with in order to achieve those
 objectives?
- Step 3 What is the best method of communication to use?
- Step 4 Match the best method to the recipient.
- Step 5 Get feedback.
- Step 6 Respond to feedback.

There are four fundamental communication skills:

- **Reading**
- **Writing**
- **Speaking**
- **Listening**

Surprisingly, out of this list, the two most important communication tools are **Speaking** and **Listening**.

Speaking:

Some important points to note when speaking are:

Clarity - Speak clearly, don't mumble

Tone - Sound friendly and interested

Modulation - Vary your voice so that it sounds interesting



Listening:

For most people Listening is their weakest communication skill. Better listening comes from doing the following:

Concentrate

Don't interrupt

Don't judge

Clarify understanding by asking questions

Reflect back

Good listening is essential for the management of people. Those around us at work are continually sending us messages which we don't receive - sometimes because we didn't observe and sometimes because we didn't listen.

Body Language:

Research has shown that less than half of the meaning we pick up in spoken conversation comes from the words themselves. More than half comes from the tone of voice and the non-verbal signals known as body language. From a manager's point of view, good body language involves:

Eye contact

Look at the person when you are talking to them and when they are talking to you. Do not stare. Let your eyes scan the triangle on the person's face bounded by the eyebrows and the mouth.

Handshake

Keep your hand dry and apply a moderate pressure for around six seconds. Make eye contact, smile briefly and break the eye contact downwards.

Personal Space

Be careful never to stand too close to someone. Any encroachment is likely to be very uncomfortable for the person. Once rapport has been achieved, you can safely stand a little closer, but be aware of any body movements which show that they are uncomfortable and back off accordingly.



Seating

Never stand when someone else is sitting unless it is your intention to dominate or intimidate them.

Gestures

Open gestures are more welcoming and encouraging, whereas closed gesture e.g. folded arms, are defensive and discourage the other person. Hand gestures also send signals. Putting your hands behind your head or "steepling" in which fingers are joined to look like a church, both send the message that you feel in control - which can be off-putting for the person you are talking to.

Reading other people's body language

- Approach each encounter with an open mind.
- Do not pay too much attention to faces.
- Detect anxiety by looking at hands and feet. Watch for "leakage" as inner tensions are relieved by small, subconscious controlled movements.
- Liars betray themselves in several ways. Watch for fewer than normal gestures and increased self touching. This usually involves the hands rubbing, pulling or stroking ears, nose or cheeks.
- Be careful when interpreting body language. The rules here are very general and apply to most people. However, they are strongly affected by culture and upbringing.



6 - Motivation

Having the right people in a well organised process is useless if those people don't work hard and expend effort to achieve the goals and objectives of the work groups.

It is part of the manager's role to ensure, as far as possible, that staff are willing to make that effort - that they are motivated.

Getting this effort from your staff requires you to:

- Understand how motivation works
- Be aware of what motivates each member of your staff
- Identify the ways in which you can contribute to their motivation

Motivation is the extent to which people apply effort to achieve goals so that their needs can be satisfied.

Needs are complex and can be satisfied both inside and outside the workplace. Needs also tend to be very individualistic and what might greatly motivate one person, might not the next.

An example of this is money. An undeniable factor in influencing a person's motivation - through achievement, and the satisfying of material needs but sometimes financial rewards do get people to work, but not necessarily to work harder.

Managers must find out what factors have an effect on each member of their staff and how they can be influenced. Appropriate rewards must be chosen for each person and linked to performance

A clear link must be made between effort and performance as perceived by the members of staff. Clear procedures must be established for the evaluation of individual levels of performance

One of the manager's primary roles is ensuring that staff can perform and that resources and organisation don't act as barriers.



Undesirable outcomes from high performance must be minimised e.g. accidents etc.

Jobs must be designed to:

- Enhance the personal satisfaction that people derive from work
- Make the best use of people as a valuable resource

To ensure good motivation tasks should:

- Combine to form a coherent whole job
- Provide some variety of pace, method, location and skill
- Provide feedback on performance both directly and through other people
- Provide some degree of discretion and control
- Include some responsibility for outcomes

The whole job should:

- Provide opportunity for learning and problem solving
- Have some career path
- Provide opportunity for development that is relevant to the person
- Enable the person to contribute to decisions affecting their jobs
- Provide a sufficient social and group contact and support
- Provide adequate resources

Many of the jobs in your organisation may not provide much opportunity for motivation and satisfaction. By rethinking the job it may be possible to improve this situation.



7 - Appraisals

Appraisals are an inherent part of managing people. They may be carried out informally and consist merely of employees being told what to do and given feedback on what they have done in an informal and unstructured way.

Alternatively it may be part of a formal system of performance management. This will probably include goal setting and a formal regular review with some sort of form to be filled in and signed.

However, it is done, the aims of appraisal are:

1. **To define performance standards**
2. **To identify levels of performance**
3. **To identify barriers to performance**
4. **To correct these barriers**
5. **To improve performance**
6. **To motivate employees to improve their performance.**

Other aims of appraisal may be:

- To reward performance**
- To identify promotion potential.**

The first step in the process is to **set goals**. A goal tells the employee exactly what is expected of them in terms of performance and timing. A goal can also act as a spur to motivate the employee to a certain performance level. Finally, a goal gives the opportunity to assess and evaluate performance against a requirement.

Having agreed on the appropriate goals both the manager and employee need to know what progress is being made so that corrections can be made.

This requires a control loop of monitoring, comparing and correction.

This is a continuous process which may be conducted formally or informally.



Most organisations require some formal procedure to ensure that this process takes place and to provide some sort of record.

This procedure, called review, covers only the formal part of the process at regular but usually quite long intervals. The day to day part is left to the discretion of manager and employee.

The formal review forms part of an appraisal system which may be used for reward or development or both.



8 - Staff Selection and Development

To manage any operation, you need the right materials and machines, a user friendly work place and most importantly, the right staff.

Finding the right person for the right job helps to maintain a positive workforce and training keeps people motivated and interested.

Staff selection involves:

- 1 Defining the job in terms of both tasks and responsibilities
- 2 Defining the person - what sort of person would suit the job?
Use the Seven Point Plan to determine the suitability of a candidate - how to they match up to the following criteria:
 - Physical
 - Circumstances (travel to work etc)
 - Attainments (qualifications/skills)
 - Aptitudes
 - Intelligence
 - Disposition (dependability etc)
 - Interests
- 3 Design a rating system to assess different candidates
- 4 Seek applicants
- 5 Screen applicants against the rating system
- 6 Test applicants, if appropriate
- 7 Interview applicants against the rating system
- 8 Take the person who comes closest to the person spec. and who, therefore comes out highest in the rating scheme.



It is also best to take the selection process as objective as possible to eliminate bias and to get the person most likely to succeed.

Training involves:

- 1 Defining the job, as in selection
- 2 Defining the tasks which will have to be carried out
- 3 Defining the knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSA) the person will need to do these tasks
- 4 Assessing the job holders against the KSA's
- 5 Identifying the gaps and design training to fill them
- 6 Running the training
- 7 Evaluating has it filled the gaps identified

Training should be carried out as a rational and continuous process. It may be carried out in a number of ways: in a formal setting, on the job by a more experienced colleague or as one to one coaching. The method doesn't matter as long as it fills the gaps successfully.

Controlling

Controlling involves monitoring the process and its outputs and comparing these to what was supposed to be achieved. There will frequently be a discrepancy. This may not be anybody's fault, just a series of unforeseen events which have made things go wrong.

Once these discrepancies have been detected, some corrective action must be taken. At its simplest, that may just be to point out to an operator that things aren't quite right. More serious corrections may need to be applied to the process, the organisation or even the plan. In some rare circumstances, the objectives may even need to be changed.



Monitoring is the key to controlling.

It simply means knowing what is going on in every aspect of the operation. This presupposes a sound understanding of the process, a good reporting system and being present regularly to observe the process in action.

There are two kinds of monitoring - knowing what is going on at any given time and knowing what is going on in terms of trends.

Matters of the moment tend to pre-occupy us in the working situation to the extent that slow and subtle changes can go unnoticed.

