

# MODERN MANAGEMENT THEORIES AND PRACTICES

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# MODERN MANAGEMENT THEORIES AND PRACTICES: A CRITICAL OVERVIEW

## **Introduction**

Managing is one of the most important human activities. From the time human beings began forming social organizations to accomplish aims and objectives they could not accomplish as individuals, managing has been essential to ensure the coordination of individual efforts. As society continuously relied on group effort, and as many organized groups have become large, the task of managers has been increasing in importance and complexity. Henceforth, managerial theory has become crucial in the way managers manage complex organizations.

The central thesis of this paper is that although some managers in different parts of the world could have achieved managerial success without having basic theoretical knowledge in management, it has to be unequivocally emphasized that those managers who have mixed management theory in their day-to-day practice, have had better chances of managing their organizations more efficiently and effectively to achieve both individual and organizational objectives. Therefore, managers of contemporary organizations ought to appreciate the important role they play in their respective organizations if they are to achieve set goals. Secondly, there is need to promote excellence among all persons in organizations, especially among managers themselves.

To address these concerns, the paper will proceed along the following spectrum: management will be defined for purposes of conceptual clarity; management objectives, functions, goals, and essentiality, will be highlighted; the importance of managerial skills and the organizational hierarchy will be sketched; the importance of women in the organizational hierarchy will be emphasized; reasons for studying management theory will be enumerated; the different management theories, the core of the paper, will be discussed at length; the

significance of management as a practice will be contextualized; and 'the way forward' in form of a conclusion will be offered.

### **Definition of Management**

Management is the art, or science, of achieving goals through people. Since managers also supervise, management can be interpreted to mean literally "looking over" - i.e., making sure people do what they are supposed to do. Managers are, therefore, expected to ensure greater productivity or, using the current jargon, 'continuous improvement'.

More broadly, management is the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, efficiently accomplish selected aims (Koontz and Weihrich 1990, p. 4). In its expanded form, this basic definition means several things. First, as managers, people carry out the managerial functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling. Second, management applies to any kind of organization. Third, management applies to managers at all organizational levels. Fourth, the aim of all managers is the same - to create surplus. Finally, managing is concerned with productivity - this implies effectiveness and efficiency.

Thus, management refers to the development of bureaucracy that derives its importance from the need for strategic planning, co-ordination, directing and controlling of large and complex decision-making process. Essentially, therefore, management entails the acquisition of managerial competence, and effectiveness in the following key areas: problem solving, administration, human resource management, and organizational leadership.

First and foremost, management is about solving problems that keep emerging all the time in the course of an organization struggling to achieve its goals and

objectives. Problem solving should be accompanied by problem identification, analysis and the implementation of remedies to managerial problems. Second, administration involves following laid down procedures (although procedures or rules should not be seen as ends in themselves) for the execution, control, communication, delegation and crisis management. Third, human resource management should be based on strategic integration of human resource, assessment of workers, and exchange of ideas between shareholders and workers. Finally, organizational leadership should be developed along lines of interpersonal relationship, teamwork, self-motivation to perform, emotional strength and maturity to handle situations, personal integrity, and general management skills.

### **Management Objectives, Functions, Goals, and Essentiality**

#### *Management Objectives*

There are basically three management objectives. One objective is ensuring organizational goals and targets are met - with least cost and minimum waste. The second objective is looking after health and welfare, and safety of staff. The third objective is protecting the machinery and resources of the organization, including the human resources.

#### *Management Functions*

To understand management, it is imperative that we break it down into five managerial functions, namely; planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling.

Planning involves selecting missions and objectives and the actions to achieve them. It requires decision-making - i.e., choosing future courses of action from among alternatives. Plans range from overall purposes and objectives to the most detailed actions to be taken. No real plan exists until a decision - a commitment

of human and material resources – has been made. In other words, before a decision is made, all that exists is planning study, analysis, or a proposal; there is no real plan.

People working together in groups to achieve some goal must have roles to play. Generally, these roles have to be defined and structured by someone who wants to make sure that people contribute in a specific way to group effort. Organizing, therefore, is that part of management that involves establishing an intentional structure of roles for people to fill in an organization. Intentional in that all tasks necessary to accomplish goals are assigned and assigned to people who can do them best. Indeed, the purpose of an organizational structure is to help in creating an environment for human performance. However, designing an organizational structure is not an easy managerial task because many problems are encountered in making structures fit situations, including both defining the kind of jobs that must be done and finding the people to do them.

Staffing involves filling, and keeping filled, the positions in the organization structure. This is done by identifying work-force requirements; inventorying the people available; and recruiting, selecting, placing, promoting, appraising, planning the careers of, compensating, and training or otherwise developing both candidates and current jobholders to accomplish their tasks effectively and efficiently.

Leading is the influencing of people so that they will contribute to organization and group goals; it has to do predominantly with the interpersonal aspect of managing. Most important problems to managers arise from people – their desires and attitudes, their behavior as individuals and in groups. Hence, effective managers need to be effective leaders. Leading involves motivation, leadership styles and approaches and communication.

Controlling, for example, budget for expense, is the measuring and correcting of activities of subordinates to ensure that events conform to plans. It measures performance against goals and plans, shows where negative deviations exist, and, by putting in motion actions to correct deviations, helps ensure accomplishment of plans. Although planning must precede controlling, plans are not self-achieving. Plans guide managers in the use of resources to accomplish specific goals; then activities are checked to determine whether they conform to the plans. Compelling events to conform to plans means locating the persons who are responsible for results that differ from planned action and then taking the necessary steps to improve performance. Thus, controlling what people do controls organizational outcomes.

Finally, coordination is the essence of manager-ship for achieving harmony among individual efforts toward the accomplishment of group goals. Each of the managerial functions discussed earlier on is an exercise contributing to coordination. Because individuals often interpret similar interests in different ways, and their efforts toward mutual goals do not automatically mesh with the efforts of others, it, thus, becomes the central task of the manager to reconcile differences in approach, timing, effort, or interest, and to harmonize individual goals to contribute to organizational goals.

Although these management functions concern the internal environment for performance within an organization, managers must operate in the external environment of an organization as well. Clearly, managers cannot perform their tasks well unless they have an understanding of, and are responsive to, the many elements of the external environment – economic, technological, social, political, and ethical factors – that affect their areas of operation.

### *Goals of All Managers*

First and foremost, the logical and publicly desirable aim of all managers in all kinds of organizations, whether business or non-business, should be a surplus. Thus, managers must establish an environment in which people can accomplish group goals with the least amount of time, money, materials, and personal dissatisfaction or in which they can achieve as much as possible of a desired goal with available resources. In a non-business enterprise such as units of a business (such as an accounting department) that are not responsible for total business profits, managers still have goals and should strive to accomplish them with the minimum of resources or to accomplish as much as possible with available resources. A manager who achieves such an aim is said to be a strategic manager.

The second goal or aim of all managers is that they must be productive. Indeed, government, and the private sector recognize the urgent need for productivity improvement. Productivity improvement is about effectively performing the basic managerial and non-managerial activities. Simply defined, productivity is about the output-input ratio within a time period with due consideration for equality.

Lastly, productivity implies effectiveness and efficiency in individual and organizational performance. Effectiveness is the achievement of objectives. Efficiency is the achievement of the ends with the least amount of resources. Managers cannot know whether they are productive unless they first know their goals and those of the organization.

### *The :Essentiality of Management in Any Organization*

Managers are charged with the responsibility of taking actions that will make it possible for individuals to make their best contributions to group objectives. Thus, management applies to small and large organizations, to profit and not-

for-profit enterprises, to manufacturing as well as service industries. However, a given situation may differ considerably among various levels in an organization or various types of enterprises. The scope of authority held may vary and the types of problems dealt with may be considerably different. All managers obtain results by establishing an environment for effective group endeavor.

In addition, all managers carry out managerial functions. However, the time spent for each function may differ. Thus, top-level managers spend more time on planning and organizing than do lower-level managers. Leading, on the other hand, takes a great deal of time for first-line supervisors. The difference in the amount of time spent on controlling varies only slightly for managers at various levels.

The manager is, therefore, the dynamic, life-giving element in every business. Without the leadership of the manager, resources of production remain mere resources and never become production. In a competitive economy, the quality and performance of the managers determine the success of a business; indeed, they determine its survival.

Furthermore, today, we no longer talk of "capital" and "labor", but we talk of "management" and "labor". While the "responsibilities of capital" and the "rights of capital" have disappeared from our vocabulary, today we hear of the "responsibilities of management" or "prerogatives of management".

Thus, the emergence of management as an essential, a distinct and a leading institution is a pivotal event in social history. Management is likely to remain a basic and dominant institution as long as human civilization itself survives. Management, which is the organ of society specifically charged with making resources productive, that is, with the responsibility for organized economic



advance, reflects the basic spirit of the modern age. In fact, because management is indispensable, this explains why it grew so fast and with so little opposition. Hence, the developed and developing worlds have an immense stake in the competence, skill and responsibility of management.

### **Managerial Skills and the Organizational Hierarchy**

Managers require four main kinds of skills, namely: technical, human, conceptual and design. What do each of these skills mean?

Technical skill is knowledge of and proficiency in activities involving methods, processes, and procedures. Thus, it involves working with tools and specific techniques.

Human skill is the ability to work with people; it is cooperative effort; it is teamwork; it is the creation of an environment in which people feel secure and free to express their opinions.

Conceptual skill is the ability to serve the “big picture”. It is also about recognizing significant elements in a situation, and to understand the relationships among the elements.

Design skill is the ability to solve problems in ways that will benefit the enterprise. To be effective, particularly at upper organizational levels, managers must be able to do more than see a problem. In addition, they must have the skill of a good design engineer in working out a practical solution to a problem. Managers must also have that valuable skill of being able to design a workable solution to the problem in the light of the realities they face. It has, however, got to be mentioned that the relative importance of these skills may differ at various levels in the organization hierarchy.

For purposes of elaboration, technical skills are of greatest importance at the supervisory level and less at the middle-management level, human skills in the frequent interactions with subordinates at all levels, conceptual skills not critical for lower-level supervisors but gain in importance at the middle-management level. At the top management level, conceptual and design abilities and human skills are especially valuable, but there is relatively little need for technical abilities. The assumption, especially in large companies, that chief executives can utilize the technical abilities of their subordinates. In smaller firms, however, technical experience may still be quite important.

### **Women in the Organizational Hierarchy**

In recent times, women have made significant progress in obtaining responsible positions in organizations. Among the reasons for this development are laws governing fair employment practices, changing societal attitudes toward women in the workplace, and the desire of companies to project a favorable image by placing qualified women in managerial positions.

However, in some organizations, women have difficulties in making it to the top. Besides historical reasons, discrimination has been one of the main reasons why women do not make it to the top.

### **Why Study Management Theory?**

Theories are perspectives with which people make sense of their world experiences (Stoner et. al. 1995, pp. 31-2). Theory is a systematic grouping of interdependent concepts (mental images of anything formed by generalization from particulars) and principles (are generalizations or hypotheses that are tested for accuracy and appear to be true to reflect or explain reality) that give a framework to, or tie together, a significant area of knowledge. Scattered data are

not information unless the observer has knowledge of the theory that will explain relationships. Theory is “in its lowest form a classification, a set of pigeon holes, a filing cabinet in which fact can accumulate. Nothing is more lost than a loose fact” (Homans 1958, p. 5).

However, the variety of approaches to management analysis, the welter of research, and the number of differing views have resulted in much confusion as to what management is, what management theory and science is, and how managerial events should be analyzed. This is why some scholars have called this situation “the management theory jungle” (Koontz 1961, pp. 174-188; 1962, p. 24; 1980, pp. 175-187). Since that time, the vegetation in this jungle has changed somewhat, new approaches have developed, and older approaches have taken some new meanings with some new words attached to them, but the developments of management science and theory still have the characteristics of a jungle.

There is a body of opinion that says that management theory evolved during and after Second World War; it has only been studied in-depth since then. The industrial revolution that brought in mass production, specialization, seeing people as critical resource, all intensified management as a critical area of discourse.

Principles in management are fundamental truths, explaining relationships between two or more sets of variables, usually an independent variable and a dependent variable. Principles may be descriptive or predictive, and not prescriptive. That is, they describe how one variable relates to another – what will happen when these variables interact.

managers who apply theory to managing must usually blend principles with realities. Once managers know about theory, they will have the capacity to forestall future problems that may occur in the enterprise.

At this point it is worth distinguishing management theory from management techniques. Contrary to the theory we have discussed above, techniques are essentially ways of doing things; methods of accomplishing a given result. In all fields of practice, including management, they are important. Techniques normally reflect theory and are a means of helping managers undertake activities most effectively.

In the field of management, then, the role of theory is to provide a means of classifying significant and pertinent management knowledge. For example, in the area of designing an effective organization structure, there are several principles that are interrelated and that have a predictive value for managers. The theory of management is grouped into the five functions of management.

In sum, there are basically three main reasons why we have to study management theory. First, theories provide a stable focus for understanding what we experience. A theory provides criteria for what is relevant. Second, theories enable us to communicate efficiently and thus move into more and more complex relationships with other people. Third, theories make it possible – indeed, challenge us – to keep learning about our world. By definition, theories have boundaries.

### **Management Theories**

Contemporary theories of management tend to account for and help interpret the rapidly changing nature of today's organizational environments. This paper will deal with several important management theories which are broadly classified as

follows: The Scientific Management School comprising the works of Frederick W. Taylor and Lillian Gilbreth's motion study, among others; the Classical Organizational Theory School comprising the works of Henri Fayol's views on administration, and Max Weber's idealized bureaucracy, among others; Behavioral School comprising the work of Elton Mayo and his associates; the Management Science School which I discuss at the end of this section; and Recent Developments in Management Theory comprising works such as Systems Approach, Situational or Contingency theory, Chaos theory, and Team Building approach. For lack of time and space, this discussion will provide a general description of some of the scholars in each of these management theories and the successes that they achieved.

### *Scientific Management School*

The first management theory is what is popularly referred to as Frederick Taylor's Scientific Management. Frederick Taylor started the era of modern management. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, he was decrying the "awkward, inefficient, or ill-directed movements of men" as national loss. Taylor consistently sought to overthrow management "by rule of thumb" and replace it with actual timed observations leading to "the one best" practice. He also advocated the systematic training of workers in "the one best practice" rather than allowing them personal discretion in their tasks. He further believed that the workload would be evenly shared between the workers and management with management performing the science and instruction and the workers performing the labor, each group doing "the work for which it was best suited".

Taylor's strongest positive legacy was the concept of breaking a complex task down into a number of subtasks, and optimizing the performance of the subtasks; hence, his stop-watch measured time trials. However, many critics,

both historical and contemporary, have pointed out that Taylor's theories tend to "dehumanize" the workers.

Nevertheless, Taylor's postulations were strongly influenced by his social/historical period (1856-1917) during the Industrial Revolution; it was a period of autocratic management that saw Taylor turning to "science" (hence, his principles of scientific management) as a solution to the inefficiencies and injustices of the period. It has to be stated that scientific management met with significant success among which included: the science of cutting metal, coal shovel design that he produced at Bethlehem Steel Works (reducing the workers needed to shovel from 500 to 140), worker incentive schemes, a piece rate system for shop management, and organizational influences in the development of the fields of industrial engineering, personnel, and quality control.

It has to be acknowledged that from an economic standpoint, Taylorism was an extreme success. Application of his methods yielded significant improvements in productivity. For example, improvements such as his shovel work at Bethlehem Works, which reduced the workers needed to shovel from 500 to 140. Henceforth, Taylor proposed four great underlying principles of management.

First, there is need to develop a 'science of work' to replace old rule-of-thumb methods: pay and other rewards linked to achievement of 'optimum goals' - measures of work performance and output; failure to achieve these would in contrast result in loss of earnings. Second, workers to be 'scientifically' selected and developed: training each to be 'first-class' at some specific task. Three, the 'science of work' to be brought together with scientifically selected and trained people to achieve the best results. Finally, work and responsibility to be divided equally between workers and management cooperating together in close interdependence.

Alongside Taylor's postulates is Gilbreth's motion study. The ultimate result of this study led to the centrality of efficiency in organizations. Gilbreth was particularly interested in how he could reduce the unnecessary motions resulting from bricklaying at a construction site; he succeeded in reducing the motions from 18 to 4. He then proposed that each worker should be involved in doing his or her own work, prepare for the next higher level, and training their successors.

### *Classical Organizational Theory School*

In this category of management theory are the works of Max Weber's bureaucratic theory and Henri Fayol's administrative theory. Weber postulated that western civilization was shifting from "wertrational" (or value oriented) thinking, affective action (action derived from emotions), and traditional action (action derived from past precedent) to "zweckational" (or technocratic) thinking. He believed that civilization was changing to seek technically optimal results at the expense of emotional or humanistic content.

Weber then developed a set of principles for an "ideal" bureaucracy as follows: fixed and official jurisdictional areas, a firmly ordered hierarchy of super and subordination, management based on written records, thorough and expert training, official activity taking priority over other activities and that management of a given organization follows stable, knowable rules. The bureaucracy was envisioned as a large machine for attaining its goals in the most efficient manner possible.

However, Weber was cautious of bureaucracy when he observed that the more fully realized, the more bureaucracy "depersonalizes" itself - i.e., the more completely it succeeds in achieving the exclusion of love, hatred, and every purely personal, especially irrational and incalculable, feeling from execution of

official tasks. Hence, Weber predicted a completely impersonal organization with little human level interaction between its members.

Henri Fayol's administrative theory mainly focuses on the personal duties of management at a much more granular level. In other words, his work is more directed at the management layer. Fayol believed that management had five principle roles: to forecast and plan, to organize, to command, to co-ordinate, and to control. Forecasting and planning was the act of anticipating the future and acting accordingly. Organization was the development of the institution's resources, both material and human. Commanding was keeping the institution's actions and processes running. Co-ordination was the alignment and harmonization of the group's efforts. Finally, control meant that the above activities were performed in accordance with appropriate rules and procedures.

Fayol developed fourteen principles of administration to go along with management's five primary roles. These principles are: specialization/division of labor, authority with responsibility, discipline, unity of command, unity of direction, subordination of individual interest to the general interest, remuneration of staff, centralization, scalar chain/line of authority, order, equity, stability of tenure, initiative, and esprit de corps. Fayol clearly believed personal effort and team dynamics were part of an "ideal" organization.

Fayol's five principle roles (Plan, Organize, Command, Co-ordinate, and Control) of management are still actively practiced today. The concept of giving appropriate authority with responsibility is also widely commented on and is well practiced. Unfortunately, his principles of "unity of command" and "unity of direction" are consistently violated in "matrix management", the structure of choice for many of today's companies.



### *Behavioral School*

The key scholar under this category is Elton Mayo. The origin of behavioralism is the human relations movement that was a result of the Hawthorne Works Experiment carried out at the Western Electric Company, in the United States of America that started in the early 1920s (1927-32). Elton Mayo and his associates' experiments disproved Taylor's beliefs that science dictated that the highest productivity was found in 'the one best way' and that way could be obtained by controlled experiment. The Hawthorne studies attempted to determine the effects of lighting on worker productivity. When these experiments showed no clear correlation between light level and productivity the experiments then started looking at other factors. These factors that were considered when Mayo was working with a group of women included rest breaks, no rest breaks, no free meals, more hours in the work-day/work-week or fewer hours in the work-day/work-week. With each of these changes, productivity went up. When the women were put back to their original hours and conditions, they set a productivity record.

These experiments proved five things. First, work satisfaction and hence performance is basically not economic - depends more on working conditions and attitudes - communications, positive management response and encouragement, working environment. Second, it rejected Taylorism and its emphasis on employee self-interest and the claimed over-riding incentive of monetary rewards. Third, large-scale experiments involving over 20,000 employees showed highly positive responses to, for example, improvements in working environments (e.g., improved lighting, new welfare/rest facilities), and expressions of thanks and encouragement as opposed to coercion from managers and supervisors. Fourth, the influence of the peer group is very high - hence, the importance of informal groups within the workplace. Finally, it denounced

'rabble hypotheses' that society is a horde of unorganized individuals (acting) in a manner calculated to secure his or her self-preservation or self-interest.

These results showed that the group dynamics and social makeup of an organization were an extremely important force either for or against higher productivity. This outcome caused the call for greater participation for the workers, greater trust and openness in the working environment, and a greater attention to teams and groups in the work place. Finally, while Taylor's impacts were the establishment of the industrial engineering, quality control and personnel departments, the human relations movement's greatest impact came in what the organization's leadership and personnel department were doing. The seemingly new concepts of "group dynamics", "teamwork", and organizational "social systems", all stem from Mayo's work in the mid-1920s.

### *Recent Developments in Management Theory*

Under this category of theory are the Systems Approach, Situational or Contingency theory, Chaos theory, and Team Building theory.

The systems theory has had a significant effect on management science and understanding organizations. A system is a collection of part unified to accomplish an overall goal. If one part of the system is removed, the nature of the system is changed as well. A system can be looked at as having inputs (e.g., resources such as raw materials, money, technologies, people), processes (e.g., planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling), outputs (products or services) and outcomes (e.g., enhanced quality of life or productivity for customers/clients, productivity). Systems share feedback among each of these four aspects of the system.

The Systems Theory may seem quite basic. Yet, decades of management training and practices in the workplace have not followed this theory. Only recently, with tremendous changes facing organizations and how they operate, have educators and managers come to face this new way of looking at things. The effect of systems theory in management is that it helps managers to look at the organization more broadly. It has also enabled managers to interpret patterns and events in the workplace - i.e., by enabling managers to recognize the various parts of the organization, and, in particular, the interrelations of the parts.

The situational or contingency theory asserts that when managers make a decision, they must take into account all aspects of the current situation and act on those aspects that are key to the situation at hand. Basically, it is the approach that "it depends". For example, if one is leading troops in Iraq, an autocratic style is probably best. If one is leading a hospital or University, a more participative and facilitative leadership style is probably best.

The Chaos theory is advocated by Tom Peters (1942). As chaotic and random as global events seem today, they are equally chaotic in organizations. Yet for many decades, managers have acted on the basis that organizational events can always be controlled. Thus, a new theory, known as chaos theory, has emerged to recognize that events are rarely controlled. Chaos theorists suggest that systems naturally go to more complexity, and as they do so, they become more volatile and must, therefore, expend more energy to maintain that complexity. As they expend more energy, they seek more structure to maintain stability. This trend continues until the system splits, combines with another complex system or falls apart entirely. It will need an effective manager for the latter worst scenario not to happen.

The last management theory is the Team Building approach or theory. This theory emphasizes quality circles, best practices, and continuous improvement. It is a theory that mainly hinges on reliance on teamwork. It also emphasizes flattening of management pyramid, and reducing the levels of hierarchy. Finally, it is all about consensus management – i.e., involving more people at all levels in decision-making.

### *Other Management Theories*

In this category are the works of Edward W. Deming and Douglas McGregor. Edward Deming is the founder of modern quality management and is regarded by the Japanese as the key influence in their postwar economic miracle. He postulated several assumptions: create constancy of purpose for continual improvement of products and service; adopt the new philosophy created in Japan; cease dependence on mass inspection; build quality along with price; improve constantly and forever every process planning, production, and service; institute modern methods of training on-the-job for including management; adopt and institute leadership aimed at helping people to do a better job; drive out fear, encourage effective two-way communication; breakdown barriers between departments and staff areas; eliminate exhortations for the workforce – they only create adversarial relationships; eliminate quotas and numerical targets; remove barriers to pride of workmanship, including annual appraisals and Management by Objectives; encourage education and self-improvement for everyone; and define top management's permanent commitment to ever-improving quality and productivity and their obligation to implement all these principles.

Douglas McGregor (1906-1964) postulated management ideas as contained in "Theory X" and "Theory Y". Using human behavior research, he noted that the way an organization runs depends on the beliefs of its managers.

“Theory X” gives a negative view of human behavior and management that he considered to have dominated management theory from Fayol onwards – especially Taylorism. It also assumes that most people are basically immature, need direction and control, and are incapable of taking responsibility. They are viewed as lazy, dislike work and need a mixture of financial inducements and threat of loss of their job to make them work (‘carrot and stick’ mentality).

“Theory Y”, the opposite of “Theory X”, argues that people want to fulfill themselves by seeking self-respect, self-development, and self-fulfillment at work as in life in general. The six basic assumptions for ‘Theory Y’ are: work is as natural as play or rest – the average human being does not inherently dislike work, whether work is a source of pleasure or a punishment (to be avoided) depends on nature of the work and its management. Second, effort at work need not depend on threat of punishment – if committed to objectives then self-direction and self-control rather than external controls. Third, commitment to objectives is a function of the rewards associated with their achievement. Satisfaction of ego and self-actualization needs can be directed towards the objectives of the organization. Fourth, the average human being learns, under proper conditions, not only to accept but to seek responsibility. Fifth, high degrees of imagination, ingenuity and creativity are not restricted to a narrow group but are widely distributed in the population. Lastly, under the conditions of modern industrial life, the intellectual potentials of the average human being are being only partly utilized.

There is, however, one theory or approach, the quantitative approach that is hardly used and known by managers. It emerges from operations research and management science. It is a mathematical and statistical solution to problems using optimization models, and computer simulations. It is most effective

management decision-making rather than managerial behavior. The management theories that have been discussed, important as they are, have to be translated in practice by managers. To this discussion I now turn.

### **Management as Practice**

Managing, like all other practices – whether medicine, music composition, engineering, accountancy, or even baseball – is an art; it is know-how. It is doing things in the light of the realities of a situation.

Yet managers can work better by using the organized knowledge about management. It is this knowledge that constitutes science. However, the science underlying managing is fairly crude and inexact. This is true because the many variables with which managers deal are extremely complex. Nevertheless, such management knowledge can certainly improve managerial practice. Managers who attempt to manage without management science must put their trust to luck, intuition, or what they did in the past.

In managing, as in any other field, unless practitioners are to learn by trial and error, there is no place they can turn for meaningful guidance other than the accumulated knowledge underlying their practice; this accumulated knowledge is theory.

For practical purposes, all managers must develop three sets of skills, namely; conceptual, technical, and human (see Fleet and Perterson 1994, p. 25). Conceptual skills allow the manager to develop relationships between factors that other people may not see. Managers who have well-developed conceptual skills are able to apply different management theories to the same situation. For a manager to be technical, it implies that he or she should act professionally. Professionalism demands that the manager performs his or her duties within

established procedures, rules and regulations. Any behavior that compromises the manager's professional etiquette is certainly bound to interfere adversely with the organization's productivity. Lastly, a manager should be able to see members of the organization as human beings who have needs and psychological feelings and emotions. These needs and feelings must be positively harnessed for the good of the organization; motivation of the employees, therefore, becomes a critical factor in increasing productivity.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it has to be restated that management is the process of designing and maintaining an environment for the purpose of efficiently accomplishing selected aims. Managers carry out the functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling. Managing is an essential activity at all organizational levels.

However, the managerial skills required vary with organizational levels. Although women have made progress in obtaining responsible positions, they still have a long way to go. The goal of all managers is to create a surplus and to be productive by achieving a favorable output-input ration within a specific time period with due consideration for quality. Productivity implies effectiveness (achieving of objectives) and efficiency (using the least amount of resources).

Managing as practice is art; organized knowledge about management is science. The development of management theory involves the development of concepts, principles, and techniques. There are many theories about management, and each contributes something to our knowledge of what managers do. Each approach or theory has its own characteristics and advantages as well as limitations. The operational, or management process, approach draws on each "school" and systematically integrates them.

Finally, the organization is an open system that operates within and interacts with the environment. The systems approach to management includes inputs from the external environment and from claimants, the transformation process, the communication system, external factors, outputs, and a way to reenergize the system. No doubt, a manager who makes serious attempts to translate theory into reality is bound to increase productivity more than a manager who chooses to use the 'fire brigade' or trial and error approach.



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