Management Functions, Levels and Skills

1. Objectives

After studying this topic, students are expected to understand and able to explain:

✓ The meaning, functions and levels of management.
✓ The different categories and importance of good management skills.

2. Management

Definition: “The process of working with people and resources to accomplish organizational goals.”

Managers must be effective: achieve organizational goals.
Managers must be efficient: achieve organizational goals with minimum waste of resources.

3. Functions of Management

The four basic management functions: planning, organizing, leading and controlling.

- Planning
  Definition: The function of management of systematically making decisions about the goals to be achieved and activities or actions needed to achieve those goals that an individual, a group, a work unit, or the overall organization will pursue in the future.
  Plans are developed for the entire organizational unit and individuals for certain period of time.
  Its activities include:
  ✓ Analyzing current situations.
  ✓ Anticipating the future.
  ✓ Determining the organizational objectives.
  ✓ Deciding the activities to be involved.
  ✓ Choosing strategies.
  ✓ Determining resources to achieve organizational goals.
  ✓ Etc.

- Organizing
  Definition: “The management function of assembling and coordinating human, financial, physical, information and other resources needed to achieve organizational goals.”
Its activities include:

- Specifying job responsibilities.
- Grouping jobs into work units.
- Resource allocation.
- Etc.

**Leading**

Definition: The management function that involves the manager's efforts to stimulate high performance by employees and includes directing, motivating and communicating with employees, individually and in groups.

Its activities include:

- Directing the workforce.
- Motivating your subordinates.
- Communicating with employees.
- Etc.

**Controlling**

Definition: The function of management of monitoring progress and making needed changes to make sure that the organizational goals are achieved.

Its activities include:

- Setting performance standards that indicate progress toward long-term goals.
- Monitoring staff performance through performance data evaluation.
- Identifying performance problems by comparing performance data against standards and take corrective actions.

4. **Management Levels**

Refer to Figure 1.

![Figure 1: Management Levels](image-url)
 **Top-level Managers** *(Strategic Managers)*
  - Senior executives are responsible for the overall management and effectiveness of the organization.
  - They also focus on long-term issues and emphasize the survival and growth of the organization.
  - They are concerned with the interaction between the organization and its external environment.
  - Top-level managers include Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Operating Officer (COO); company President, Vice-President, and members of the top executive committee.

 **Middle-level managers** *(Tactical Managers)*
  - Managers located in the middle of the organizational hierarchy, reporting to top-level managers.
  - They are the link between top-level managers and frontline managers.
  - They are responsible for translating the general goals and plans developed by strategic managers into more specific objectives and activities.

 **Frontline Managers** *(Operational Managers)*
  - Lower level managers who supervise the operational activities of the organization.
  - They are the link between management and non-management personnel.
  - They implement the specific plans developed with middle managers and serve as the link between management and non-management personnel.

5. **Management skills**

 **Technical skills**
  Technical skill is the ability to perform a specialized task involving a particular method or process.
  The tasks can be in the areas of engineering, business, computer, etc.

 **Conceptual and decision skills**
  Conceptual and decision skills are about a manager's ability,
  - To recognize complex and dynamic issues;
  - To examine the numerous and conflicting factors that influence these issues and problems;
  - To resolve the problems for the benefit of the organization and its members.
You would use these conceptual and decision skills when you consider,
✓ The overall objectives and strategy of the organization;
✓ The interactions among different parts of the organization;
✓ The role of the business in its external environment.

➤ Interpersonal and communication skills
Interpersonal and communication skills are “people skills”. They are about the ability to lead, motivate and communicate effectively with others.
This skill is very important because managers spend most of their time interacting with people. The ability to get along with many diverse types of people is vital for a successful management career.

REFERENCES


