

MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

SUMMARY

Managers must first recognize when they are managing and when they are not - when they are actually doing work of a management nature and when they are really doing something else that their job seems to require.

Every manager attends meetings to get ideas on how to do various kinds of work more effectively, but the subject of managing is a distinct kind of work that can be distinguished as such from all the other functional kinds of work required in the operation of a company. Managing is a separate and distinct activity and as such, is subject to study and improvement.

THE ELEMENTS OF MANAGEMENT

There are six fundamental elements that together form the task of managing:

I. Planning

- A. Analyzing the present situation
 - 1. Establish/reconfirm the basic purpose of the unit, company or task (Mission)
 - 2. Establish/reconfirm the basic operational qualities to be used to enhance performance (Values)
 - 3. Gather information - collecting data relevant to the opportunities or problems at hand
- B. Setting goals
 - 1. Determine what results would most effectively exploit the opportunities
 - 2. Establish quantified targets for these results

II. Organizing

- A. Communicate goals
- B. Establish/update a clear structure for achieving the goals

- C. Create/update systems to achieve the goals
- D. Assign responsibilities
- E. Acquire the necessary resources to achieve the goals

III. Controlling/Monitoring

- A. Measure results against plan
- B. Determine reasons for variances
- C. Take corrective action

IV. Fostering Continuous Improvement

- A. Rethink routine operations regularly
- B. Review major projects by asking: What did we learn? What could we have done better?

V. Developing People

- A. Measure individual performance against the work to be done
- B. Identify gaps in performance
- C. Coach/train to close gaps in performance
- D. Identify future development opportunities for staff members

- E. Provide education/resources to help staff members grow on and off the job

VI. Leading

- A. Lead the search for opportunity
- B. Live your values especially in tough times
- C. Set a vision for the future
- D. Communicate that vision in work and deed

- 2. Activity Area Managing
 - a. Research and Development
 - b. Production
 - c. Marketing
 - d. Finance and Control
 - e. Personnel
 - f. External Relations
- 3. Solving Special Problems
- 4. Clerical or Routine Work

TIME - YOUR MOST PRECIOUS ASSET. HOW WELL DO YOU USE IT?

Time is the most democratic of all resources. We all have exactly the same amount available to us. Effective use of time is the hallmark of the effective manager.

Surprisingly, most of us do not really know how we spend our time. A useful experiment is to keep a time log for one week, jotting down tasks we are actually doing in 15 minutes blocks. When the week is over, study the log. What time was wasted by unnecessary duplication? By lack of planning? By doing tasks that could have been handled by others? Raising awareness of where time goes invariably opens the door for improvement.

When a manager takes an important person on a tour of the business premises, that's not managing; it's performing a sales or a public relations function. When a manager signs payroll checks this, again, is not managing; it's performing a clerical function. When a manager gets involved in specific problems such as how the office should be laid out, how a major grievance should be settled, or how new financing should be accomplished, he or she becomes an industrial engineer, labor relations counselor, or a financier.

This point should not be misunderstood. We are not saying that a manager should never do anything but manage. In a small company, the manager must do many things that are not managing because there is no one else available to do them. But there should be a consciousness of the time spent managing. One should be sure that "managing" work, which is the most important, gets done first before one permits themselves the luxury and the fun of getting involved in specific tasks. Every manager must constantly guard against the natural human desire to spend time on easy, pleasant, or interesting tasks, at the expense of the difficult work of managing.

FOUR LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT

Managing can be classified into four levels:

- 1. General Managing
 - a. Searching for opportunities
 - b. Setting direction
 - c. Organizing for higher efficiency
 - d. Financial planning and budgeting
 - e. Controlling/monitoring performance
 - f. Developing people

All four must be worked at by a manager.

GOOD MANAGER: AN EXAMPLE

- 1. General Management. 40%
- 2. Activity Area Management. 30%
- 3. Solving Special Problems. 20%
- 4. Clerical or Routine Work. 10%

POOR MANAGER: AN EXAMPLE

- 1. General Management. 5%
- 2. Activity Area Management. 50%
- 3. Solving Special Problems. 30%
- 4. Clerical or Routine Work. 15%

Notice the unbalanced situation between the two managers. The percentages for each of the four levels will vary with the size of the company. We all tend to place the greatest emphasis on the things in which we are most interested. A manager has a strong tendency to continue to take an active interest in and to devote a good deal of personal time to the function in which he or she has the majority of previous experience. There is nothing wrong with this if this person does not at the same time neglect the other activity areas.

DELEGATE LOW-LEVEL ACTIVITIES

The effective manager should set objectives, and organize the work so that all obstacles to accomplishment are removed. The technical details should be left to the technician. A manager should be careful to devote as little time as possible to clerical and routine work. This type of work is usually easy to do and can be delegated to others. Perhaps at one time it was necessary for the manager to do this type of work if he or she started as a one-person business. But managers spend time foolishly when they continue to do this kind of work instead of training others.

A manager who receives a manager's salary for doing low level work is not giving value received and if this individual is the owner, he or she is not being "charged." To put it another way, a manager must expect to be paid a good deal less than the going managerial salary if time is continually spent on low-level activities. If this person is the owner, there will be less profit made. It is important to continue to improve the productivity of labor, but it is just as important to improve the productivity of managers. A manager has been defined as

“a person who makes things happen.” More than ever, industry now needs men and women who can make things happen at a greater rate than in the past.

There is always room for improvement. If everyone who considers him or herself a manager will strive conscientiously to devote as much time as necessary to managing before permitting him-or herself the luxury of doing work of a non-managing nature, there will be a greater contribution to one’s own personal success while at the same time helping raise the level of management effectiveness in the tooling and machining industry.

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