

Management Functions and Behaviour

By: Archana Sharma

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BBA, MBA, B.Com, BMS, M.Com, BCA, MCA
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Sample Preview of The Chapter

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MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS AND BEHAVIOUR

ROLE OF A MANAGER

Tasks of a Professional Manager



INTRODUCTION

A manager in an organisation is just like the steering of a Car. He has to do multi-dimensional tasks at one time. He is a doer, a go getter, a thinker, a people oriented man and what not. There is an exhaustive list of tasks that he needs to perform. His jobs can never be well-defined as every time he needs to innovate himself depending on the situation. A good manager always knows how to use his strengths and how to kill his weakness to convert them into his strengths. In other words, a manager is one in all.

This chapter elaborates how a professional manager can get the maximum inputs from the minimal resources.

Tasks of a Professional Manager

A person who is keen to learn and gain a competitive edge over his competitors in his field can be termed as a professional manager, no matter whether he has a professional degree for himself or not. A professional manager knows that management is a kind of discipline that he should always follow. He knows that he has his top priority as his company's perspective and that all his actions are well governed and defined in terms of the company's perspectives. He also needs to be responsible for his and his team's performance. He should know how to deliver the maximum results by utilising the minimum resources in terms of men, machines, materials and money.

Providing Purposeful Direction to the Firm

It is the sole responsibility of a manager to set the goals and objectives keeping in mind the growth of his company in the mind. It is the manager who should find the direction and then go accordingly with his team to accomplish the set goals and objectives. A manager is more like the captain of a ship who has the first task to set the direction in which his ship would move. Thereafter, he delegates his duties to his crew members. Similarly, it is the manager who studies hard to find out in which manner his team would move ahead to get the desired results. His actions and decisions are evaluated on the sole basis of whether they are meeting the company's objectives or not. He should remain consistent with the objectives of the company.

Managing Survival and Growth

In this globally competitive world, a manager should know how to beat the competition to be a winner in the race. He should formulate strategies to come up as a fore-runner. He should take it as a foremost responsibility that his company grows leaving all the competitors behind. It is a well known fact that survival of the fittest is possible and no matter how strong your company is, if it remains complacent and does not grow would definitely be overtaken.

There are two sets that need to be taken care of. The first condition is the internal set of factors that include technology, efficiency of labour, competence

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of managerial staff, company image, financial resources, etc.

There are different examples that can be quoted in this context. For example, there were many companies in textile sector in fifties. However, some time later, when Reliance came up with innovative technologies, many companies were closed. Several mills also turned up as unprofitable and eventually were shut down.

The other factors are the external ones such as the firm control.

Maintaining Firms' Efficiency in Terms of Profit Generation

Efficiency comprises a right ratio between the output to the input. It is the sole responsibility of the manager to retain this healthy ratio for ensuring the success of an organisation. He needs to chalk out a strategy how effectively he can work out to bring in maximum output with the limited input. The more is the output, the more would be the profit of an organisation that could then be used for the expansion of the business, technology upgradation, dividend paying and other growth prospects.

It is the profit that gives one a confidence to take risks and think big to grow. However, an unfit and obsolete technology can turn a profitable technology into an unprofitable one.

Meeting the Challenge of Increasing Competition

It is truly said that survival of fittest is possible in this world. One needs to prepare himself and his organisation to beat the cut throat competition to emerge as a winner. One should continuously be able to innovate himself, he needs to have good ideas and a broad vision with high aims and objectives so that he can have a foresighted vision. This way he would be able to beat the competitors. For example, a few years back, **Times of India** was a leader. However, with time, things are changing. New newspapers are coming in, however, **Times of India**, every time, is coming up with a new strategy to kill the competition. In foreign nations, competition is directly linked to obsolescence. The market leaders, no matter in cars, washing machines etc., keep on bringing in new models from time-to-time.

Managing for Innovation

Innovation is continuously finding new ways and methods to come up in a better way. In present terminology, we can related innovation to the value as it imparts its services to the existing products and services. The innovation, in this way, should be directly correlated to the value it can give to the customer.

We can see innovation happening in each and every section of the product. No matter whether it is TV, Radio, music system, car or computer, every thing is being updated from time-to-time.

Therefore, it is the job of manager to remain in close touch with the customers to get adequate feedback from them. He should train his salesmen in a way that they are able to get in direct touch with an organisation. In other words, they should know how to keep their eyes, ears and brain open to get into new ideas. It is the manager who maintains a direct link with customer and company. Therefore, he should know how to communicate the innovative ideas to the top management so that they get implemented.

The other big job of the manager is to keep track of the competitors' activities. He should keep a strong vigil on all kinds of promotional activities being done by the competitors. Keeping the competitors products and services in mind, he should always bring in innovative products. His technology should be market and customer-oriented. A manager who knows the pulse of the market can read well what the market wants from his company. Eventually, he can modify his product depending on the needs of the market. He needs to quickly innovate and adapt to the changing statement. Even the organisation needs to be flexible enough to accommodate the series of changes that are required to tap its toes with the changing market statistics.

Building Human Organisation

Building an organisation is a challenging task. The organisation must have a competitive, hardworking and dedicated team to ensure that the team as apart of an organisation gets success in all of its endeavour. A manager should know how to retain the competitive people in his team. All the interests of the hardworking personalities should be kept in mind. Even US president **Ronald Reagan** says, "Surround yourself with the best people you can find, delegate authority and don't interfere." This point should be kept in mind by all the managers. A manager who cannot work on a team management can never ever be a good manager. The basic principles followed here for team making is that there should be a division of labour, specialisation of work and mutual give and take.

Price Water Coopers has been engaging its employees in regular get together to make it sure that the teams feel more like a family. Many other software companies such as the Infosys are also giving the Employees Stock Ownership Plan to their employees.

Retaining Talent and Inculcating Sense of Loyalty

Hiring a quality team is easily done. However, retaining them comes to be difficult part. There needs to be a good working ambience to ensure that the talented employees in an organisation are retained in an organisation. All possible aspects of an individual worker should be kept in mind. He should always be given adequate freedom so that he can freely give his own ideas. If there is a bossy kind of environment, the ideas of the employee would be killed. He should the working quality of each of his employees. He should also know how to recognise, appreciate and nurture the talent by rewarding him. He should know what are the needs, drives and desires of his employees that are motivating him to excel. The powerful motivational factors are the hard work, money, power status etc and these factors should be kept in mind.

Sustaining Leadership Effectiveness

A good manager should definitely know how to retain his team and how to influence his team. He should have a subtle influence on his team members so that all of them work towards the accomplishment of the organisation's objectives. The leader needs to have a vision, who can think and plan ahead while carrying ahead his team members as well.

Maintaining Balance between Creativity and Conformity

Although passing on a new idea is quite creative and challenging, however, its implementation is a real tough task. Thus, a manager should know how to get an access to creativity and conformity in one individual. In different kind of organisations, therefore, the management makes sure that the people get adequate freedom so that they can float their ideas freely. While the advertising agency and newspapers have rather different kind of freedom. Thus, it is imperative for an organisation to have people who have forward an idea and yet another team who can work on the effective implementation of this idea. And ultimately, it is the manager who should know how to retain both these divisions to receive maximum efficiency from them.

Postponing Managerial Obsolescence

At times, when the manager gains an experience of around 20-25 years, he has no motivation left around as he has everything of his choice in terms of status, money, etc. Even his working skills do not match with the working skills of young managers. Therefore, he feels obsolete. It is at this piece of time when the organisation should redesign his job description to make

sure that his rich experience does not get wasted. He could be delegated a task of giving training programmes. The young managers can also benefit from these programmes.

Meeting the Challenge of Change

A good manager is person who quickly changes himself to the changing environment. No matter in which organisation he belongs to, he should know how to adept himself to the changing environment.

For example, people have had complaints of the soap getting drained away when kept in water. Therefore, the companies manufacturing soaps worked out with a formula to reduce the draining away of soaps.

Similarly, looking at the demand of different kinds of hairs, Sunsilk introduced wide range of shampoos to ensure that their product works amid tough competition.

Coping with Growing Technological Sophistication

Production and information handling are the two core areas where an organisation needs to work hard as these two features keep on changing. There have been new softwares coming in off and on. From Pentium II to Pentium III, Pentium III to Pentium IV and then to Pentium V, even the PCs are becoming upgraded quickly. Depending on the market needs, new products are coming up. Eventually, it is the duty of a manager to see the competition and then to change the dynamics of his organisation accordingly.

Coping with Growing Public Criticism and Political opposition – Both Objective and Irrational

No matter how big the organisation is, it often remains the soft target of political outfits for some or the other reason. Therefore, an organisation should know how to grow with it.

For example, Tata Nano which had to be rolled from West Bengal could be rolled from there. Ratan Tata had to meet end number of politicians to get a green signal for the same. However, ultimately, a political outfit led by Mamta Bannerjee did not allow him to do that and he had to decide to shift the same.

Coping with Increasing Levels of Aspiration

Improvement in information technology is a trend that is followed everywhere. Those with better lifestyles are no doubt leaders to adopt the innovative technology. In the mean time, they also pave a way for the lower socio-economic segment to adapt the same technology. These people aspire to have the same kind of lifestyle as the upper strata of people have. Thus, a manager should understand the difference and the aspiration of workers at different levels.

Maintaining Relations with Various Society Segments

A firm is no doubt a part of the society. Eventually it needs the society in one way or the other and gets in puts from it in the form of money, men, materials, machines, technology and processes. Interacting with these kinds of societies, it creates an impact that could be seen in one or the other form.

ACTIVITY

Activity A. Identify the managers whose prime task is to plan and steer the future of your company. What are the various survival and growth options which your company has adopted in the recent past?

Ans. Our general manager who takes care of our entire range of publications under Free Press group of publications has a primary task to plan and steer the future. He is the person who take care of the entire gamut of activities undertaken by all the team members. He accepts the ideas extended by all the team members. Thereafter, he organises a brain storming session where all the team members are allowed to express their opinion on that particular issue.

After a thorough brain storming session, those ideas are scrutinised and a budget is being defined to see as to whether there is ample scope to take up that idea or not.

Our company in last few years has adopted many plans that adopt aggressive working session. It is leaving no stone unturned to become an international group. It is constantly signing new deals and tie-ups with international companies.

Further, the company is on an expansion spree. We are literally adding more number of bureaus to get a good circulation number.

Activity B. What is your company's ranking in terms of profit generation within the industry? Which is the most efficient company in your industry? List at least three ideas that can improve your company's efficiency?

Ans. Our newspaper Free Press Journal is an established name in the newspaper industry. It is being circulated in India from the pre-independence era. The editorial board of the newspaper is quite strong and has been retaining a good and creditable content.

In Madhya Pradesh, it is the largest read daily among the newspapers. Eventually it witnesses a high ad count and therefore there is a good profit being made in the deal.

It is a well known fact that *Times of India* is a brand leader in the newspaper industry. It leads from the front. The newspaper remains unbeaten in terms of quality, content and marketing strategy. It comes as the first choice of the newspaper readers.

The three ideas that can improve the company's efficiency is increasing the editorial strength across the country. It is mandatory because this way, more stories would be featured from different areas of India that can help in increasing circulation in that particular area. This would eventually bring in more advertisements thereby increasing the profit generation.

Secondly, a good paper quality is need of the hour. The customers have been giving this feedback, however, the management is yet to lend its ears. Last but not the least, the printing quality also gets to be improved.

Activity C. List the firms whose products compete with your firm's products. Write down specific options you would adopt to fight this competition.

Ans. In general we find no stiff competition in our regional belt as there are no other English dailies in Madhya Pradesh. Many newspapers have come and gone, however, none of the newspapers in English language have been able to sustain in Madhya Pradesh.

Activity D. List all such key personnel who you think are loyal to the company. What do you think are the reasons for their loyalty?

Ans. There is not a big list of people who being key personnel are loyal to my company. However, a few of them include our director, our marketing manager, our printing division head, our account department head and our editor.

The other people who are loyal to our company are those in the lower grade including the watchman, peons, printing staff, computer operator etc.

While the top hierarchy is the one who are who's who of our organisation, they just cannot think of moving out of an organisation as their name has become synonymus to the organisation. Similarly, there is yet another reason of their being loyal to the organisation. All their motivational needs are being well looked by the top management. They are being given chauffeur