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OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND SECRETARIAL PRACTICES

B.C.O.E.-144

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By: Prieti Gupta



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**Sample Preview
of the
Solved
Sample Question
Papers**

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QUESTION PAPER

June – 2023

(Solved)

OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND SECRETARIAL PRACTICES

B.C.O.E.-144

Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 100

Note: Attempt any five questions. All questions carry equal marks.

Q. 1. (a) Explain the concept of Digital Publishing Platform. What are publishing platforms?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 70, Q. No. 1 and Page No. 67, 'Publishing Platforms'.

(b) What role does Secretarial practice play in effecting functioning of an office?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-18, Page No. 145, Q. No. 1.

Q. 2. (a) What are the objectives of office management? Distinguish between Office and e-Office.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-5, Page No. 36, 'Objectives of Office Management' and Chapter-1, Page No. 2, Q. No. 1 and Chapter-14, Page No. 114, Q. No. 7.

(b) "Office management is the task of planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling the efforts of employees in the office to achieve the objectives of office." Elucidate the statement.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-5, Page No. 37, 'Functions of Office Management', 'Planning', 'Organizing' and Page No. 38, 'Co-ordinating' and 'Controlling'.

Q. 3. (a) Explain the meaning and functions of Web conferencing.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-14, Page No. 111, 'Meaning of Web Conferencing' and Page No. 116, Q. No. 3.

(b) Explain the advantages and disadvantages of using cloud computing.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-14, Page No. 116, Q. No. 4 and Page No. 112, 'Benefits and Drawbacks of Cloud Computing'.

Q. 4. (a) Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using forms in an organization.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-10, Page No. 79, Q. No. 6.

(b) What do you understand by an Electronic Form? Also mention its advantages.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-10, Page No. 80, Q. No. 7.

Q. 5. (a) Explain the role of office manager as Information disseminator, Leader, Organizer, Spokesperson and Motivator.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 49, Q. No. 1.

(b) What do you mean by etiquettes? How does it regulate professional, social and ethical behaviour in offices?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 18, 'What is Office Etiquettes' and 'Need and Importance of Office Etiquette'.

Q. 6. Distinguish between the following:

(a) Centralization and Decentralization

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 28, Q. No. 5.

(b) Internet Banking and Mobile Banking

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-15, Page No. 119, 'Internet Banking and Mobile Banking'.

(c) Recurring Expenditure and Non-recurring Expenditure

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-16, Page No. 132, Q. No. 8.

(d) Chequebook and Passbook

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-15, Page No. 118, 'Passbook and Cheque Book'.

(e) Minutes of Meetings and Reports of Meetings

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-21, Page No. 174, Q. No. 8(c).

Q. 7. (a) What is the status of Secretary of any trade or professional association? What functions does he perform?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-19, Page No. 152, Q. No. 1.

(b) Who is eligible to be appointed as Secretary of a government department? Briefly explain the administrative and executive functions of the Secretary of a government department.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-19, Page No. 154, Q. No. 4.

Q. 8. Write short notes on the following:

(a) System Automation

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 115, 'System Automation'.

(b) Closure

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-21, Page No. 174, Q. No. 7(ii).

(c) Open Agenda

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-20, Page No. 163, Q. No. 8(vi).

(d) Microsoft Publisher

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 71, Q. No. 2.

(e) Office Management

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-5, Page No. 42, Q. No. 1.



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OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND SECRETARIAL PRACTICES

BLOCK-1 : INTRODUCTION TO OFFICE



About the Office

INTRODUCTION

With the advancement in science, technology, industrialization, transport, communication, etc., the concept of the office has changed. It may be due to the increasing complexities in business. Now-a-days, offices are developed on the basis of scientific principle, while trained and qualified managerial personnel supervise the management and administration of offices. Office culture is impacted by growing interest in collaboration and teamwork. The corporate system has introduced treadmill desks, collaboration rooms, and nap spaces in office premises that offered a plethora of positive outcomes, such as a higher-level of interaction and transparency, more willingness to collaborate, higher-level of trust and accountability. However, it has become difficult for some employees to adjust to their new surroundings.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

MEANING OF OFFICE

In 1395, the English word “Office” first came into light that referred to a “place where business is executed”. Generally office is defined as the workplace where people are engaged in an assigned task in a hierarchical manner for the fulfillment of the organization’s common objectives and goals. “Office” provides space to business-related work, where an association’s representatives perform administrative work to help and acknowledge the items and objectives of the association. According to James Stephenson, “Office is that part of the business undertaking which is dedicated to the heading and coordination of its different exercises.” In modern terms, an office is usually the location where white-collar workers carry out their functions. The size of an office ranges from minuscule size to enormous structures devoted completely to one organization. Office management deals with the planning, design, and implementation of work in an organization and its offices.

OFFICE LAYOUT

Office layout refers to the systematic arrangement of office equipment, machines, and furniture and providing adequate space to office personnel for regular performance of work with efficiency. The main task of office manager is the proper allocation of space to each section by considering the interlinking of other sections, so that the activities of different sections can be coordinated and controlled easily. Faulty or improper arrangement of furniture, equipment and space for employees leads to unnecessary wastage of time and energy and increase in the cost of office operations. Office layout can be divided into two major categories: Process Layout and Group Layout. The following advantages can be derived by having a planned layout.

- No waste of time and energy of office personnel.
- Promotes efficiency of staff.
- Proper utilization of floor space.
- Easy supervision.
- Speed in inter-communication.
- Better use of office machines and equipment.

OFFICE LOCATION

Office location is the place or site where the office organization is situated. The selection of a business location is considered one of the most crucial tasks because it influences the employees’ job satisfaction and efficiency of work. The present and future plans of the business also depend on the office location. Various factors such as availability of sufficient space and transport facilities, to provide a healthy environment to its employees etc., are considered while making the decision about the office location.

OFFICE PROCEDURES

Office procedure is a set of rules or policies guiding the operations of an office. Office procedures set standards for how staff work together in the office. These rules help in creating a uniform way of doing things which leads to consistency, efficiency, and professionalism within the office environment. It helps in maintaining discipline, which also ensures efficiency

in the workplace. By knowing office procedures and allowing them to become part of a job description, employees can focus on daily tasks as a priority.

ROLE OF A COMPANY OFFICE

Decision-making and providing information are two important functions of an office. Various managerial functions such as planning, organizing, co-ordinating, directing, controlling, motivating, innovating and integrating falls under the category of decision-making. The providing information functions involve the services to company departments and units, customers, suppliers, investors, employers and regulating authorities. Depending on the function being performed in any organization, an office performs two types of roles, which are contributory role and a vigilant role.

EQUIPMENTS AND SKILLS USED IN OFFICES

Though the skills and equipment for working in an office depends on the type of office, generally they are quite the same.

Equipments Used in Offices

1. Paper-related equipment such as photocopy machines for making copies of documents; printers for printing documents and e-mails; shredders for disposing off unnecessary sensitive materials are required in offices.
2. Computers are important equipment used in every office for mailing, creating documents, scanning or data entry depending upon the type of office.
3. For the smooth functioning of the office's procedures, a good speed internet connection is a must for any office.
4. The right type of office furniture must be chosen as it makes the office look more pleasant and increases the employee's efficiency to work.

Skills Used in Offices

Communication Skills: Good communication skills (both written and oral) is a must for an employee for being successful in an office environment.

Management Skills: The employee must manage their workload by setting priorities and determining which tasks need to be done first. He must know the art of time management i.e., to manage his time efficiently for completing a maximum number of tasks throughout the day.

Problem-Solving Skills: Problem-solving skills help the employee to solve issues quickly and effectively. Employees must have co-ordination qualities to work together as a team and brainstorming techniques may be used for solving problems and completing projects.

Computer Skills: The experience and knowledge with specific types of software is the demand of time today. There is no surprise that applicants with computer skills have more chances of getting hired in the digital age.

TYPES OF OFFICES

Offices can be categorized into:

1. Traditional Office
2. Creative Office
3. Private Office
4. Coworking Office
5. Contiguous Office
6. Executive Suites
7. Enterprise Suite
8. Sublet

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1. What do you understand by the term Office?

Ans. The English word "Office" was introduced in 1395, which refers to a "place where business is executed" but the word has older roots. Office word is taken from the Latin word Officium, which didn't necessarily refer to a specific place but rather a bureau in the sense of staff, or the more abstract meaning of formal position. Generally, an office is a workplace where people are engaged in an assigned task in a hierarchical manner for the fulfillment of the organization's common objectives and goals. It can also be defined as the information processing unit that facilitates the responsible authorities to make sound decisions for achieving the organization's goals. Office offers a space where an association's representatives perform administrative work to help and acknowledge the items and objectives of the association. The word office is associated with business-related assignments. According to the modern view, an office is usually the location where white-collar workers carry out their functions.

In James Stephenson's words, "Office is that part of the business undertaking which is dedicated to the heading and co-ordination of its different exercises." The size of an office depends on the size of the business and the requirements. The office can range from a little office to floors of structures, up to and including enormous structures devoted completely to one organization. Both the structure and shape of offices are impacted by the top management. Office management involves the planning, design, and implementation of work in an organization and its offices. This includes creating a focused work environment and guiding and coordinating the activities of office personnel.

Q. 2. "Deciding about the business location is one of the most crucial tasks." Comment.

Ans. The place or site where the office organization is situated is called the office location. Deciding about the business location is one of the most crucial tasks, as employees' job satisfaction and work-life balance depends very much on it. The economical cost is also considered while selecting the business location.

ABOUT THE OFFICE / 3

Various other factors that must be considered while deciding about the office location such as :

1. Availability of Sufficient Space: In order to meet the present requirements to future expansions, there should be sufficient accommodation such as rooms and storage space, etc., and other facilities in an office.

2. Proximity to Other Departments: There must be appropriate proximity to other departments i.e., the office should be located in a central place and easily accessible to other sections or departments to facilitate coordination.

3. Availability of Transport Facilities: This is an essential factor for deciding plant location because appropriate and fast transport facilities provide convenience to office workers and other outsiders dealing with it.

4. Service Facilities: The other linked facilities such as banking, postal, internet, telephone, insurance etc., should have proximity to the office location.

5. Healthy Environment: The office surroundings should be free from dust, noise, congestion because the work efficiency of office employees can be impacted by it.

Q. 3. Differentiate between Process Layout and Group Layout.

Ans. The term office layout deals with the design and décor of an office. It takes into account all the equipment, supplies, accessories, and designs an arrangement needed for the proper functioning of an office. All are within the available floor space so that all procedures and personnel can work efficiently and effectively. In simpler words, it is the blueprint of the office floor, and hence, called the office floor plan. Office layout can be divided into two major categories: Process Layout and Group Layout.

In **process layout** men, machines and equipment are arranged on the basis of sequences of operation. In this, operations are arranged in sequences. Plants with a process layout may arrange work stations, machinery, tools and other equipment in groups according to the functions they perform. The overall purpose of a process layout is to provide manufacturing firms the ability to provide a variety of goods or services that each necessitate multiple processing requirements. The best example of process layout is to set the filing section next to the despatch section.

Group Layout is a kind of layout where persons doing similar activities or machines doing similar operations are grouped together. The examples of group layout are keeping all accounting machines in one room and making provisions for all typists in one room.

Q. 4. “An organization’s present and future plans must be taken into consideration while deciding about the location.” Comment.

Ans. Location is termed as a specific site where organizations set-up their business or manufacturing

plant and location planning includes selecting an optimum or ideal location after considering different possible alternatives.

Identifying manufacturing plant location (site selection) for producing goods or services is considered one of the important decisions that any organization takes from a strategy point of view. Both planning and managing the plant or site location comes under such a decision. Also, choosing the right location is a crucial element in the success of any organization as one of the major goals of the organization is to delight its customers, and for this, customers must be accessible within the organization’s reach. The selection of the right location can be achieved by formulating a location strategy. Through the location strategy, an organization can determine its market, product offering, demand forecast, appropriate manufacturing, and service setup place for easy customer access. There are different reasons that push organizations to get involved in making decisions for location planning. For example, supermarkets, banks, retail and fast food chains, etc. Consider location planning as an integral aspect of their marketing strategy and plan their locations to gain the advantage of market expansion in their relevant industry. Similarly, when the demand for an organization’s offering increases and it is not possible to meet such increased demand at the same location, then, the organization looks for location decisions. At the time of making decision-related to plant location, an organization must consider the below-mentioned forecasting needs for the long-term:

- The plan and policy of an organization to meet expansion needs
- Plans for product diversification
- Fluctuating market conditions
- Dynamic sources of raw materials
- Different other factors that may affect the decision of choosing the location.

Q. 5. What is a private office?

Ans. Private offices come in all sizes, from one person up to hundred, and is a lockable room that is located within a shared office facility and exclusively rented to an individual entity. Private offices provide a quiet, confidential and secure space to work, where one may leave his/her belongings, while simultaneously allowing him/her to join in with the wider professional community. Private offices are a cost-effective way of renting commercial space as one only pay for the floor space that he/she needs while enjoying access to communal meeting rooms, internet connection and breakout spaces. The most apparent advantage of a private office is privacy. Private offices are uniquely suited to businesses that require a degree of permanence to store paperwork, for example, and desire a degree of personalization.

Q. 6. Define coworking.

Ans. Coworking is a business services provision model that involves individuals working independently or collaboratively in shared office space. The typical user of a coworking facility is self-employed, a telecommuter, or a freelance worker. Some businesses use the spaces to provide employees with equipment, space and services that they could not otherwise afford. Larger enterprises sometimes use coworking facilities to provide office space when they have more than the normal number of employees working at any given time. In this case, the business may maintain a certain number of memberships to the coworking service. The owner of the space provides a work environment and, usually, office equipment and amenities found in a typical office. It is one of the most flexible and favoured types of office which allows one to work alongside other businesses in an open communal office.

Q. 7. “An employee must have good communication skills for being successful in an office environment.”
Comment.

Ans. The ability to communicate effectively with superiors, colleagues, and staff is essential for being successful in an office environment. Workers in the digital age must know how to effectively convey and receive messages in person as well as via phone, email, and social media. The type of communication skills depends on job description. Successful communication helps us better understand people and situations. It helps us overcome diversities, build trust and respect, and create conditions for sharing creative ideas and solving problems. Some employees need to write well and communicate through regular e-mails or some need to answer phone calls and speak to clients of the company on a regular basis. Thus, both written and oral communication are important for success. Developing communication skills can help in avoiding conflicts and help in better decision-making regarding business.

Q. 8. List the features of a private office.

Ans. Private office is a small rooms or cabinets which are separated from the open office by partitions. They are usually meant for top executives like Managing Director, Secretary, General Manager, Sales Department Manager and the like. Sometimes, a private office is provided to a group of people who are doing special projects, performing confidential work or need to concentrate on work. The features of a private office include:

1. A private office provides a good privacy for confidential work and discussions.
2. There is an absence of noise in a private office. Hence, greater concentration of mind is possible. This gives room for improvement of efficiency of staff.
3. A private office can be tidier and less regimented. Overcrowding or congestion is also eliminated.

4. Better lighting, ventilation, heating and cooling are available in private office. There is no transmission of diseases from one person to another.
5. It is more expensive to build separate offices.

TERMINAL QUESTIONS

Q. 1. What is the office layout? State its objectives.

Ans. Office layout means the systematic arrangement of office equipment, machines and furniture and providing adequate space to office personnel for regular performance of work with efficiency. According to Littlefield, “Office layout is the arrangement of equipment within the available floor space”. According to Hicks and Place, “The problem of layout relates to the arrangement in the space involved so that all the equipment, supplies, procedures and personnel can function at maximum efficiency”. In simpler words, it is the blueprint of the office floor, and hence, also called the office floor plan.

When a management decides to establish an office, it has to carefully define its plan for systematic and scientific segmentation of various departments and equipment for the office. The reason is that the systematic arrangement of office equipment leads to availing of maximum benefit from the space available. The office layout is based on the principle of division of labor. If the principle of division of labour is applied, every job of an office can be divided into many sections. All the sections may not be possible to accommodate in one room or on the same floor. Hence, office layout ensures full utilization of office space and the efficiency of operation is high.

The main objectives of office layout are as follows:

1. Utilization of Floor Space : The office layout aims to make full utilization of office space available. It attempts to minimize the wastages of office space. The scientific office layout design minimizes the cost of office and increases profit for it.

2. The Smooth Flow of Work : The office layout aims to bring efficiency in office operation. It attempts to reduce wastage of time and effort of time. The good office layout smoothens the overall activities of the organization and in turn, helps to reduce the cost.

3. Minimize Risk : Assets of the business are subject to the risk of loss by fire, accident and other damage. The scientific office layout helps to minimize the possibility of risk to business property. It protects office assets in a safe manner.

4. Maintain Safety and Security : There might be different types of accident in business which may cause risk to health and life of employees. The good office layout minimizes industrial accident and protects