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Analytical Study of Management Skills for Peak Performance in Organizations

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Abstract:

The primary objective that every organization seeks to achieve is profit maximization. But some organizations fail in this regard because of mismanagement or lack of specific skills required to cope with changes in their business environment. To avoid this, people who wish to be successful managers need to learn how to manage. A manager to be effective and efficient must have theoretical knowledge of management and the managerial skills which enable him/her to deal with internal and external challenges of the organization. The purpose of the present paper is to explore various managerial skills necessary for visualizing the significance of the organization at macro level taking into account its vision, mission, goals and objectives. This exploratory study would help managers to formulate appropriate strategies to minimize cost and maximize profit in the long run.

Keywords: Management, Managerial skills, Performance

1. Introduction

Management is viewed differently by different people and scholars. Management is principally the task of planning, coordinating, motivating and controlling the efforts of others towards a specific objective, as explained by James Lundy. The researcher also defines management as a process of getting work done or achieving objectives with and through people. Others define it as an art and science of achieving objectives with and through people. Peter F. Druker said that 'management is doing things right'. Management is what a manager does - by Louis Allan. According to Lawrence A, management includes guiding human and physical resources into dynamic, hard-hitting organizational unit to attain its objectives to the satisfaction of those served and with a high degree of morale and sense of attainment on the part of those rendering service.

Dawn (2003) has identified management as planning goals and specifying the purpose of the agency, organizing people, finances, resources and activities; staffing, training, and socializing employees; leading the organization and the staff; and controlling, monitoring, and sanctioning when needed. According to Henry Fayol, "to manage is to forecast and to plan, to organize, to command, to coordinate and to control." F.W. Taylor further describes management as the art of knowing what you want to do and then seeing that it is done in the best and cheapest way. In Harold Koontz opinion "management is the art of getting things done through and with an informally organized group".

According to Peter Drucker, the assumptions that characterize management, namely management is applicable in all organization, management is not about a manager doing the work himself with assistance of people. It is about leading people so that the knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies of each individual contribute to the concerted effort to the accomplishment of the work being done. The purpose of management policy and management strategy is service to customers in accordance with their needs. The scope of management is broad. It includes the internal and external organizational environment. According to Terry, management is not people, it is activities like working, reading, swimming or running. People who perform management can be designated as

managers. Management concerns the responsibility and is everything that affects the performance of an organization and its results irrespective of whether they are internal or external to the organization as cited by (Jan Tibamwenda 2010).

2. Objectives of the study

- To identify the required managerial skills for peak performance in an organization.
- To analyze the qualities of a good manager.

3. Literature Review

Management is concerned with the coordination of activities of a business in order to achieve the defined objectives. Management is often included as a factor of production along with, machines, materials, and money. According to the management guru Peter Drucker (1909-2005), the basic task of management includes both marketing and innovation. Management consists of the interlocking functions of creating corporate policy and organizing, planning, controlling and directing an organization's resources in order to achieve the objectives of that policy. Some people agree that in order to evaluate a company's current and future worth; the most important factors are the quality and experience of the managers. Management is an act or skill of controlling and making decisions for a business department for better performance.

Koontz (1961) stated that most people would agree that management means getting things done through and with people. According to John Reh, a manager is the person responsible for planning and directing the work of a group of individuals, monitoring their work, and taking corrective action when necessary. Managers may direct workers directly or they may direct several supervisors who direct the workers. Knootz 'O' Donnel believes that management is the creation and maintenance of an internal environment in an enterprise where individuals working in groups can perform efficiently and effectively towards the attainment of group goals. It is the art of getting the work done through and with people in formally organized groups.

The manager must be familiar with the work of all the groups he/she supervises, but does not need to be the best in any or all of the areas. It is more important for the manager to know how to manage the workers than to know how to do their work well. Management theory of Fayol (1949) has stated five functions of management-planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and providing feedback. Further, Weber (1947) explains bureaucratic management as a clear division of labor, rules and procedures. Planning, budgeting, programming, allocating tasks, organizing, staffing, controlling, monitoring, problem solving, ensuring order and predictability, efficiency are very important tasks of managers. Hanson (1986) found that a manager's ability to manage is three times stronger in explaining firm profitability than all other factors combined.

Managers are challenged with making decisions, formulating goals, creating a mission, enacting policies and procedures, and uniting individuals in the organization so that the completion of all of these and other related tasks can be accomplished. Hecht (1980) pointed out that any organization is a complicated system of interactions between people working at various levels in that organization and reacting with the social, economic, cultural, political, and competitive systems which surround it. An organized or cohesive group of people working together to achieve commonly agreed goals and objectives. The basic objectives of most commercial organizations are to create a product or service that customers will buy, thus creating profit (McGovern, 1999).

According to Alia Nikolakopoulos, planning is a process of the organizational management structure and is the first step for management. In the planning phase, a manager sets goals for his department and defines the actions that must transpire to reach those goals. This phase may involve plans for revenue and expense management, inventory control, labor and regular daily tasks for the department. Managers use the plans created in this process as a foundation for all other aspects of the organizational management system. For the second step named organization, managers use the plans created in the planning phase to organize the execution of goals. Managers allocate responsibilities to various team members according to the skills, labor hours and job definition of each employee. Some employees receive authority to delegate additional responsibilities to other team members. This type of organization relieves undue burden from the primary management team and allows each department within a company to work more efficiently.

Easterby-Smith (1986) remarks that management work is complex and variable; it seems far more easy to do than it is; managing involves ordering and coordinating the work of others, but to do this managers first have to create similar order within themselves; managers deal with the unprogrammed and complex problems, that is, those which cannot be reutilized through ordinary organizational process; managers need to be able to move between technical, functional and cultural boundaries, to build order from fragmentation. Wrapp (1967) suggest that all managers must have the view of the organization and know everything of importance that is going on within it. The general management is about formulating precise objectives, conceptualizing problems, reflecting on trends, developing the organization, that is, it is a very high-level strategic and change-led activity.

4. Managerial Roles

All managers have one thing in common, to play the role of a leader, problem solver, counselor and guide. Managers must be highly skilled and fair. According to Henry Mintzberg, the managerial roles are divided into five categories:

- **Interpersonal Roles**

According to Henry, the top managers spend a lot of time interacting with other people such as suppliers, customers, government's officials, community leaders, etc. Therefore, top managers have to perform various interpersonal roles like conflict resolution, resources allocation, timely and accurate decisions, negotiating, etc.

- **Information Roles**

Top level managers monitor and scan the environment for relevant information which they use for the interest of the organization. Information roles are a way of doing the right things at the right time.

- **Decision Roles**

Henry Mintzberg opined that top managers makes decisions and solve organizational problems. Top managers should encourage and support employee's involvement and participation in decision-making. Appropriate decision roles played by managers will help to solve organizational problems.

- **Promotion of superior performance**

Every manager in his/her respective organization should possess skills which help to produce superior performance.

5. Qualities of Good managers

There are some qualities required by managers in order to perform various managerial functions (planning, organizing, directing and controlling) effectively. These are:

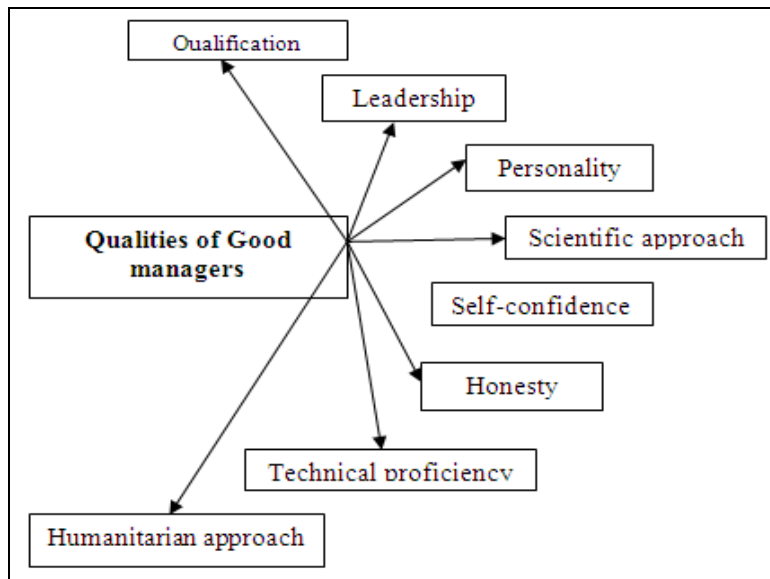


Figure 1

- **Qualification (Technical proficiency)**

Qualification means that the manager must have an appropriate level of education. Education will help him or her in formulating policies, making decisions, communicating and understanding different matters effectively. Technical proficiency involves the technical knowledge of managers to understand the system, procedures and the methodology used in the organization for the production purpose. Managers must possess technical skills to understand, communicate and lead the technical staff in the organization. It is very important that every manager should be educated and knowledgeable person.

- **Leadership**

Leadership refers to the ability of a manager to influence employees to work hard in the desired manner. The quality of leadership helps managers to work with others for better achieving the set goals.

- **Personality**

A manager should have accommodating heart, good human relations, so that the employees feel free to approach him or her for resolving different issues.

- **Scientific approach**

Scientific approach helps managers to take most suitable decisions concerning planning, organizing and selection of employees in the organization.

- **Self-confidence**

Managers must have good quality which enable them to be confident about their decisions-making. Before taking any decision, manager should have adequate information necessary to take an efficient decision.

- **Honesty**

Honesty means that a manager must be ethical and possess good moral values.

- **Humanitarian approach**

The humanitarian approach enables managers to treat their subordinates as humans and not as machines. A manager must respect the emotional and psychological needs of his/her subordinates.

6. Ten Golden Managerial Skills

We say that, in order to achieve the organizational goals, managers have to plan, organize, take decisions, solve problems and control the whole managerial process. To facilitate this, manager needs to possess certain skills. According to Robert Katz, managerial skills include:

1. Interpersonal skills
2. Human relation skills
3. Conceptual skills
4. Time management skills
5. Decision making skills
6. Computer skills
7. Communication skills
8. Leadership skills
9. Innovative skills
10. Analytical skills

Table 1

- **Interpersonal skills**

Managers should have the ability to build strong relationship with their subordinates by displaying supportive leadership behavior so that the organizational objectives are achieved with a combined effort of all the members of the organization and the individual needs of the members are also taken care of.

- **Human relation skills**

Human relation skills are skills that enable a person to work well with others for accomplishing certain job. All managers at different levels need to have human relation skills so as to get work done efficiently through people by using available resources. This means that human relation skills includes the ability to work with, communicate with, and understand other employees in the organization for achieving the objectives.

- **Conceptual skills**

The environment is complex and changing faster than ever before which makes the future uncertain. In a situation like this, having conceptual skills is crucial. A person with conceptual skills has the ability to understand the situation as it is. He is able to see the bigger picture, formulate a corporate vision, determine what should be done and perceive the strengths and weaknesses of the organization in which he works. As a result, he is able to conceptualize how the various parts can work together to achieve certain corporate objectives. Based on this, he is able to formulate strategies for doing what needs to be done (Jan Tibamwenda 2010:22). A manager with strong conceptual skills can analyze and study a complex situation deeply and develop strategies for the better functioning of organization (Dodra, 2012).

- **Time management skills**

Time management skills are required by all managers for better performance. For this a manager needs to prioritize and organize his work. Time management skills enable a manager to know the work which must be done at the right time and which work can be delegated to other people.

- **Decision making skills**

Decision making skills are paramount skills for every manager in organization. As we know that every day the organizations are facing different problems which require the managers to take a number of appropriate decisions, so it is recommended that, they must possess decision-making skills influenced by their analytical and conceptual abilities .

- **Computer skills**

John Ivancevich et al. () further argue that managers at all levels need computer skills in order to increase their productivity. This is because we live in an information age characterized by information and communication technology. In

such a situation, computer enable managers to access the required information for decision-making and helps in enhancing organizational performance (Jan Tibamwenda, 2010)

- **Communication skills**

Communication skills are very important for every manager, as they have to inform the subordinates about what needs to be done, how is it to be done, where it is to be done, and when it is to be done. Communication skills can also help in getting feedback from the customers. Managers further use the communication skills to explain the vision, mission, objectives and goals effectively to the employees for better performance.

- **Leadership skills**

Leadership skills are required by all managers in different levels. A leader is a person who motivates, guides, leads his team members and provides them with right resources so that the goals can be achieved. A leader recognizes the strengths and the weaknesses of his team members and allocates tasks accordingly. A good leader is the one who empowers his team members to act independently if the situation demands so. A manager must possess all these leadership skills to be successful (Aastha Dogra 2012).

- **Innovative skills**

Innovation is a unique skill present in efficient managers as it helps the managers in generating and implementing a new idea. A manager should bring new ideas in the company which will help the organization to be competitive in the scenario of world business.

- **Analytical skills**

This list will be incomplete without analytical skills. These skills help managers to identify deeply the key factors related to any issue, thereby helping managers to evaluate the problem before taking any decision.

7. Conclusion

All managers at different levels in the organization need to possess managerial skills for better performance of their tasks. Managerial skills will help them to deal with numerous issues such as those related to customers, problems of employees, scanning of internal and external environment, optimization of resource utilization, ability to take risks, make appropriate decisions, visionary ideas for positive organizational climate and culture and so on. Thus, managers must possess the managerial skills necessary for achieving organizational objectives. Lastly, all managers should be aware of business writing, corporate presentation, public speaking, sales, marketing skills, etc.

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