

# sección especial en idioma inglés

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developing your management philosophy

## a discipline fraught with doubts and myth

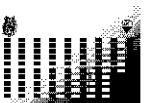
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A PHILOSOPHY OF management has to do with a system of thought centering on a kind of work known as management. Involved in this kind of work, to a greater or lesser degree depending on the individual's job level, is about 10% or 11% of the work force in this country today. Managers are people who guide and direct the efforts of others within some kind of organizational setting in an

attempt to reach goals or objectives not ordinarily obtainable through the efforts of one person. Thus the elements of coordination, authority, and responsibility are always implicated.

It is usually customary to think of a philosophy as being built on truths or principles relating to a particular area or discipline.



Basic fundamentals and beliefs are examined and analyzed, and rules and criteria for human conduct are developed. But principles and rules are not enough; they may serve as good leads and regulators so long as the practitioner realizes that they do not always apply. Principles may supplement the manager's thinking, but they do not replace it. The art of management lies in recognizing the manner in which principles and rules are applied as well as in identifying circumstances which indicate that they *should* not be applied.

Since management always concerns people, the manager's philosophy should include a strong insight into his relationships with others within the organization. Bases for his behavior toward his superiors, his peers, and the people whom he manages should be established. Application of the process of management is considered an art; the science lies in "knowing" the principles, rules, components, techniques, and so on, of the process of management.

### *Major Management Components*

If an individual wished to form an organization of any type and for any purpose, his first direct concern would be that of the *authority* or right to form such an establishment. Thus the first component of management deals with authority and responsibility. Before any action is taken by a manager on any level, authority for such action must be granted and responsibility must be delegated for the performance of such action. Once authority and responsibility are accepted, the person has obligated himself and he becomes accountable to his superiors. The manager has two primary problems related to authority—its source and its nature. In this country, authority flows from the ultimate source of American citizenry to owners, top managers, lower managers, and on down the scalar chain. The nature of authority has to do with the specific types and limitations of decisions one may make. The good manager must know

from whence his authority to manage comes and precisely what it entails.

Once this right has been established, it is necessary to consider the *objectives* or goals desired. Every organization, every organizational division, every department, and every job must have a purpose or reason for existence. All activities should be directed toward these objectives. Too many managers become so involved in the specific functions and minutiae of their work that they forget what its true purpose is. It is vital that the goals must be established before organizations or jobs are determined; only then should action be taken.

However, the manner in which an administrator is expected to help achieve organizational objectives may create a conflict because of his *ethical standards*. This means simply the criteria by which his actions are judged either by himself or by others. Thus a management philosophy may also be a moral philosophy. The conflict is magnified because there is no definite set of standards that has a universal appeal. We may speak of "business ideals," what is "right" and what is "wrong" what our social obligations and our responsibilities to the government, employers, and business owners are. The manager's philosophy must recognize that social responsibility involves the whole of business actions and the entire social structure. And it must include ethical principles as criteria for his behavior.

In order to properly utilize his philosophy of management, the manager must develop that most valuable human characteristic—*leadership*. Even the meaning of the term is obscure, but we consider a leader to be one who represents a dynamic force within a group and who leads that group toward the established goals or objectives. The successful leader must have a definite sense of purpose and his work must include three major tasks. First, he must render decisions concerning the people and things placed under his guidance. Next, he must develop skill in delegating responsibilities concerning those decisions to his subordinates.

And, finally, he must be able to communicate in an effective manner with members of his group. It is safe to say that no one can lead without doing these three things.

To aid the administrator in the performance of his three major tasks, it is essential to establish broad, general guides to actions. Such guides are called *policies*, and they are designed to facilitate the obtaining of the organizational objectives. Properly established, they will help to prevent deviation from the chosen course of action; they help to promote better cooperation and coordination of effort, thus making the work of delegation less difficult; and they encourage employees to take more initiative on their own. Carefully formed policies which are completely disseminated may become an integral part of any manager's philosophy.

But then the manager must consider the specific types of activities necessary to reach the desired goals. Activities which may be clearly distinguished from other phases of work or actions are called *functions*. All work must be broken down into major functions and subfunctions and their selection must be logical as to relationships. For example, every organization must produce to create something of value—goods or services—it must distribute those things it has created, and it must finance the process. There may, of course, be many other functions performed by the organization as a whole. The individual manager also has specific kinds of work to do. He will find that his work involves planning or setting a basis for action. He must assign tasks and delegate authority and responsibility, he must try to achieve coordination of effort among his subordinates, and he must exercise the function of regulation or control. Finally, there are the many types of operative functions which simply represent all nonmanagement work.

When it has been determined what kinds of work are necessary within the organization, the manager must then consider the *human faculties* required to perform those

kinds of activities. That is, organizations must be built around functions and not around people. The management philosophy concerning the human element has gone through a metamorphosis from considering labor simply as a commodity whose price was controlled in the marketplace to the present-day view of the human relationist. The progressive manager must realize that he is employing the whole man whose makeup cannot be cut up into pieces. It is necessary that the worker's needs other than those of an economic nature be evaluated and catered to.

However, the human faculties cannot be employed in the performance of their assigned functions unless there are physical factors available for their use. The factors of *physical environment* refer to all tangible items within the organizational setting other than the human beings themselves. Included may be the building in which work is to be done, the machinery and equipment, lighting, air conditioning, and paper clips. Management skills always have been, and always will be, affected by technological innovations, using the term in a broad sense to include the very early use of the lever as well as the most modern control systems. The manager's philosophy should reflect the type of attitude which is essential to the utilization of technological advancement.

While the physical environment may present many problems, they cannot really be solved without due consideration of the *organizational structure* as a whole. The structure of any formal organization consists of the relationships among the three components just mentioned. These components are the functions or kinds of work necessary, the human faculties needed to do those kinds of work and the physical factors required for the work performance. When an organization is being built, these three components are established, analyzed, and provided in the order just given. Among these three components lie the manager's problems, and it is among them that he will find his solutions.

But no matter how sound the organization-

nal structure is, little is likely to be accomplished without the fundamental basis for action given in a *plan*. A plan is, of course, the result of the first basic function of management—planning. It represents managerial decision making in advance and involves the determination of human activities to be performed in the future. The truly complete plan will answer the familiar questions of what, why, where, by whom, when, and how. In addition, the plan should include some means by which it can successfully be implemented. Fortunate is the organization which has managers who are skilled in the work of creative planning.

How creative the manager's plans are may be partially determined by their *attitude and morale*. The problem becomes even more important when the attitude and morale of managers is reflected in the operative workers. Moreover, morale (a state of mind at any moment of time) and attitude (a learned reaction) may greatly affect motivational factors and the productivity of the employees. Sooner or later all management work must come to focus on the workers, and there is little doubt that a satisfactory state of morale and attitude play a great part in worker achievement.

The twelfth and final component of the process of management is that of *control*. As management itself is universal so is the func-

tion of regulation or control; all formal organizations must undergo some type of regulation to exist. It comprises an activity that permeates the entire organization and involves all the members. But regardless of what or who is being controlled, there are always three steps in the process. First, definite standards or criteria must be established. Next, performance must be measured against these standards by using some type of check or inspection. Finally, action is taken—the same action if performance meets standards, corrective or remedial action if it does not.

### *In Conclusion*

It well behooves all managers to develop their own system of thought relating to the work they are supposed to do. It is hoped that reflective thinking on the topics mentioned so briefly in this article will offer some aid in developing a management philosophy. The discipline of management is fraught with doubt, myth, and uncertainty. Lack of knowledge, mis understandings, and frustration are the rule of the day for the individual who manages. Confusion also abounds among the scholars and technical writers in the field. It may well be the duty of all concerned to become involved in attempts to bring more clarity and certainty to one of the most vital kinds of activities engaged in by man—that of leading other people.



*The Major Components of the Process of Management*

