

# British management theory and practice the impact of fayol

[Business](#), [Management](#)



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This paper re-examines the impact of Fayol's work on theory and practice of management in Britain, first, in the interwar period and second, in the post-war period of 1945 to the late 1960s. Lyndall Urwick, a respected British management thinker and writer described Fayol as " the most distinguished figure which Europe contributed to the management movement up to the end of the first half of the present century"(Smith I, Boyns T, 2005) in Urwick's publishes and translated speeches.

Urwick supported Fayol's general principles of management ensuring an influence on post-war British management theories known as the neoclassical school during the 1950s. Fayol's principles took place among theories within scientific management bundle which offered an intelligent inputs coupled to a genuine belief in industrial efficiency. Further research into British management practice during that era, Fayol's influence proved problematic due to the emphasis of British management on pragmatism and narrow focus on control which allowed little, if any, accommodation for Fayol's model.

Twenty years or so after Second World War, Fayol's impact, especially after Urwick's intervention, was on management theory however not management practice. Since 1970, the focus of management thinking had turned away from the functions of management towards to understanding management and managing through an examination of what managers do. This article concludes whether Henri Fayol's contribution is relevant today. This suggests

that the history academics realized his work had significantly contributed to the study in management today, and Fayol's ideas continued to be more influential in the realm of theory than practice in Britain.