

Fayols management functions, mintzbergs and katzs skills are important



There is continued debate as to the relevance in the modern workplace of the views of some of the older management theorists eg, Fayol (1841 - 1925), Mintzberg (1939-) and Katz (1926-). Since these theories were produced there have been vast changes in markets, communication systems, automation and technology. This has led some modern commentators to question whether their theories have any real value and application in the 21st century.

The management functions, roles and skills that were outlined by the three management theorists above as a necessity within management have been described as being the “ three distinctive categories to aid the job description of managers.[1]” However to fully appreciate and form an opinion on whether Fayol’s functions, Mintzberg’s roles and Katz’s skills remain important and relevant to part of the modern day manager, one must first define what management is and identify the requirements of a modern manager.

Management is defined as “ The process of coordinating and integrating work activities so that they are completed efficiently and effectively with and through other people.[2]” However what is required of a modern day manager is far less clearly defined than a century ago, with wide variations in the size and nature of the enterprise as well as a range of internal and external factors that will impact on the business.[3]

Henri Fayol is considered by many to be the founding father of management theory. Fayol was employed to develop and implement a management theory within the mining company where he worked . Fayol noticed that

none of the managers had received any general or role specific training for their positions. With the increasing importance on the role of the manager and the changing nature of the business world, a common set of functions and principles that could be acknowledged by all and universally adopted was a necessity. This led to the development of Fayol's 14 principles of management, released in 1915.

Of greater importance were the 5 functions of management developed by Fayol that focussed on the relationship between employees and their superiors (management). These 5 functions were: planning (foresight), organising, commanding, co-ordinating and controlling. Through planning Fayol hoped to combine the "unity, continuity, flexibility and precision"[4] of the organisation towards a common purpose. Fayol considered planning to be the most difficult of the 5 functions as it required the participation of the entire organisation, on all levels. His 9th principle of management, the Scalar Chain, featured in this planning process. In addition, organising sought to ensure a more efficient running of the day-to-day activities of the company through structuring resources, both human and material, for more effective production within the workplace. Through commanding, Fayol sought to optimise the return from employees within the enterprise. Effective managers would display "personal integrity and communicate clearly" with workers, ensuring their thorough knowledge of personnel creates "unity, energy, initiative and loyalty and eliminates incompetence." [5] The co-ordination of organisations encouraged synergy - the harmonising of employees and the organisation as a whole. Fayol actively promoted weekly meetings for managers and heads of departments to discuss issues of

common interest thereby maximising the flow of communication (both upwards and downwards) within organisations. Finally, by controlling feedback and identifying weaknesses within the organisation Fayol sought continual improvement and constant development of various aspects of the business from both the employees and management.

Sub conclusion on why still relevant today. eg Although Fayol's work related to the early part of the 20th century, his theories are still of general application but do have their limitations considering the technological advances since his death in 1925 etc Do same for other two.

Henry Mintzberg sought to update and expand on Fayol's theories of management functions, doing so in 1973 when he published his findings in the 'The Nature of Managerial Work'[6]. In this article, Mintzberg established 3 categories of management roles with 10 interrelated subcategories that he believed all managers should adhere to for effective management within the workplace. Mintzberg's 3 categories of managerial activities were; interpersonal roles, information processing roles and decision making roles[7].

Within these 3 activities, Mintzberg clearly defined the roles that managers could play and the potential of each managerial role in optimising managerial effectiveness. Interpersonal roles focus on authority and positional status. Within this managerial activity, Mintzberg defined 3 distinct associated roles: figurehead, liaison and leader.

The informational processing role, relates to the intake, interpretation and subsequent dissemination of information. Mintzberg believed that managers  
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should actively seek information and understand the workings of the organisation (monitor) as well as pass on external information to members of the organisation (disseminator) and vice versa; announcing internal information to outsiders (spokesperson).

Mintzberg's third managerial activity is decisional roles. (Always use present tense, rather than past as we are arguing that their theories are still relevant) This involves managerial positions that require decisions to be made and making choices that significantly affect the organisation.

Mintzberg concluded that managers should seek change (entrepreneur), represent the organisation (negotiator), supervise over the allocation of resources within the organisation (resource allocator) and be responsible for corrective and disciplinary action when disturbances arose (disturbance handler). These basic managerial requirements remain as vital in today's commercial environment as they were when M stated them almost 40 years ago. Through revisiting Fayol's contribution to what a manager's work should be, Mintzberg was able to make develop, enhance and modernise R's ideas for application to more modern commercial scenarios and the changing nature of the business world in the 1970s.

Expand sub conclusion.

Robert Katz asked the question ' what makes a good manager?'[8]after studying management theorists prior to his era, most notably, Fayol. He concluded that it was a necessity for a successful manager to display and enhance three fundamental skills. These skills were technical, human and conceptual. He found that the importance of such skills depended upon the

size of the organisation and the extent of reliance that was placed on managerial responsibility.

The first of these elements, technical skills, required a comprehensive understanding and aptitude for a specialised activity, notably one involving “ methods, processes, procedures, or techniques”[9]. The human skill relates to the ability of a manager to communicate, motivate and understand fellow workers[10]. Katz believed that a successful manager would be sensitive to the needs of those around them with the ability to judge potential reactions and outcomes and to then make an educated decision on the correct course of action to carry out. Katz divided human skills into two categories, leadership ability within the unit and ability within interpersonal relationships. The third and final skill that Katz believed essential to a successful manager was conceptual. Conceptual skill meant that the manager was able to observe the organisation as a whole and comprehend that one decision would affect the enterprise, both internally and externally, with the impact on the industry as a whole.

When deducing whether Fayol’s functions, Mintzberg’s roles and Katz’s skills are still relevant to modern day managers, one must first establish the traits and skills that a successful modern manager must possess. A worldwide survey conducted by the Galen Consulting Group in 2007 concluded that managers should have 7 “ habits” to ensure that they would be effective with their fellow workers, enabling a harmonious environment that would still remain productive. Entitled “ The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Mangers (2007)[11]” the survey collated results of previous studies such as the

Google initiative and research by the Business Insider (date). The survey <https://assignbuster.com/fayols-management-functions-mintzbergs-and-katzs-skills-are-important/>

describes 7 habits that are required of managers (what are these 7 habits - summarise). It is notable that these “ Seven habits” can be traced back to Fayol’s functions or the subsequent revision by Mintzberg or Katz (give examples).

The results of the survey concluded that the primary skill or habit that is required of a successful modern day manager is to be a ‘ good coach’. Therefore a contemporary manager must provide feedback, both positive and negative and give guidance for employees, specifying where they have either made a mistake or completed a task to a high standard.

Secondly it is essential to have regular communication with employees, both formal and informal and preferably on a one to one basis to discuss solutions to problems and the employee’s performance over a certain period. With one-on-one chats, constructive feedback is essential to ensure the employee isn’t intimidated and feels comfortable to approach the manager with any queries or issues in the future. The ability to motivate staff within the organisation will often promote a harmonious and conducive environment, ensuring greater productivity and a greater chance of retaining staff. This is inferred in Katz’s human skill aspect, where managers are expected to communicate well with staff. Similarly, the ability to ‘ coach’ an employee or staff member is an integral aspect of Katz’s conceptual skill. This is an example of how Katz’s skills theories are still highly relevant to modern successful managers.

Ali: You are using the 2007 Galen Group as the authoritative source for your conclusions. It is that important, state above “ the authoritative Galen

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study". Be more general in conclusion: eg Communication and feedback are now widely acknowledged in the modern workplace to be vital in promoting individual contributions, achieving synergy and enhancing teamwork which in turn assists in meeting corporate goals.

The second habit that is required of a successful modern manager is the ability to empower the employees (delegation of responsibility?) working with the manager and to involve all in team exercises. This ability allows for employees to be given greater freedom and responsibility which may assist individual job satisfaction - you already said this above By involving all within the workplace and not discriminating from worker to worker a manager is able to achieve a positive, friendly environment, thus ensuring greater productivity. Empowering and giving freedom to employees, the second habit of a successful manager of today, ties in the Mintzberg's interpersonal roles of management. More, specifically it describes the role of the leader and liaison, who are responsible for staffing and training as well as maintaining communication within the organisation. This demonstrates the interpersonal role of Mintzberg's theory is still highly relevant to the roles of successful managers of today.

For a manager to be highly successful they must first gain the respect of their employees. This remains as true today as it was when Fayol was writing. This can be achieved in a number of ways, e. g. setting a good example for fellow workers to follow By getting to know employees both on a professional level and becoming familiar with their lives outside of the workplace workers will feel comfortable talking with their superiors. This will also ease the transition for new workers who will quickly become integrated

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to the group within the workplace. Attaining the respect of employees is more quickly obtained by promoting their careers and interests. This habit of a highly successful manager can be traced back to Katz's human skill which describes the "ability to work with, understand and motivate others"[12]. This demonstrates that the human skill element of Katz's skills of management is still relevant today.

Through being productive and results-orientated managers will optimise results with a higher rate of efficiency. By focusing on attaining specific results and prioritising work to employees this goal is more achievable and relates to the fourth habit that is a necessity for contemporary managers; being productive and being results orientated. This habit can be traced back to all three theorists and their hypotheses. Fayol's fourth function; co-ordinating, sought to "unify and harmonise[13]" the team behind a common goal. This is evident today in organisational mission statements, corporate goals and team targets which are aligned to these higher level objectives. Modern day team managers focus the team on a specific goal.

Similarly, Fayol's fifth function, commanding, is also an essential ability of managers who instruct employees and assign tasks under their leadership. Finally, Mintzberg's decisional roles remain important in being results orientated as managers are called upon to make important decisions that will affect results and outcomes for the organisation. Successful modern managers demonstrate focus on achieving results within available resources and thereby reveal the continued importance and relevance of Mintzberg and Fayol's broad theories..

The ability to have a clear vision and strategy for any circumstance the organisation may face is paramount to becoming a successful manager. Through setting organisational mission statement, corporate strategies and goals and team targets, this ensures synergy throughout the organisation. All constituent parts of the organisation understanding their individual roles, how these feed into achieving objectives and why they are important. This ensures that the organisation stays on target even in adverse conditions e. g. the Global Financial Crisis and ensures that the team will still remain effective and efficient. The continued importance of corporate vision has been demonstrated in the recent global economic turmoil. This habit or skill of a manager is comparable to both the planning and organising functions of Fayol. Through drawing up plans of action that that coalesce “ unity, continuity, flexibility[14]” the planning function of Fayol’s ‘ 5 functions of management’ is still important for contemporary managers. Similarly through the organising function, managers use “ capital, personnel and raw materials[15]” to guide the organisation as outlined by Fayol. Thus both the organisation and planning function are shown to remain important to managers of today.

The final habit of a successful manager is to have a sound knowledge of technical skills and to be able to give hands on advice to employees by working side-by-side with them. Similarly it is important to understand the challenges of working and to comprehend the difficulties and the stress of the position, thus being able to relate to employees it times of difficulty. This final habit of successful managers can be traced back to Katz’s technical skill. Katz believed that an “ understanding of and proficiency in a specific

kind of activity” was a necessity and managers should be competent in a “specialised skill[16]” and thus being able to help employees. Katz’s technical skills theory is shown to still be relevant to contemporary managers.

Conglomerate eh?

Possible Conclusion

As the world enters more modern civilization, organizations also morph into more complex and competitive context. Thus, such situation will become more challenging for today’s managers in maintaining the viability of current organizations. Regarding to those issues, it is important to comprehend in depth on manager’s work.