Management of our forefathers flashcard

The Tower of Babel, Great Wall of China, the pyramids of Egypt, the discovery of America, Napoleon’s victories, more than historical milestones these are manifestations that the practice of management has been around since people began to organize for a common purpose. But while management practice has a vast history, the formal study of management began as part of the Industrial Revolution in Europe. The development of modern management theories was brought about by the need for increase the efficiency of factories via the inputs of its human capital (workers). As a conceptual task it is the balancing of resources vis-a-vis economic, technological, social and political facets of the environment. In the studies that followed, it turned out that more than economic and technological solution, a philosophical shift was needed.

The Science of Management In the early 1800s, new factory systems were built and began to spread. American businesses soon felt the crunch in coping with the demand given the limitations in the availability of skilled labor. The forerunners of scientific management were confronted with decisions on how to optimize work and increase productivity. The call was first heeded by an engineer by the name of Frederick W. Taylor, planted the seed in the evolution of modern management thought.

Having been exposed to the realities of factory life, Taylor saw the inefficiencies and felt the need to provide a systematic way of working. He believed that there was a way to optimize work that will result not only to increased production but a better working condition and compensation for workers. Taylor was confronted with the question of ‘ was there one best way of doing a job’? Equipped with a sense of mission and his learnings from the

academe Taylor devoted his skills to develop a solution. Through an amalgamation of existing philosophies and scientific experimentations Taylor developed scientific management. Taylor's ideas originated from his experiences and experiments in three companies: Midvale Steel, Simonds Rolling Machine, and Bethlehem Steel.

Stoner (1999) states: " Taylor based his managerial system on his own production-line time studies. This approach marked the true beginning of scientific management". What he presented as Cole (1996) put it was more than a ' new method' but a revolutionary solution. His studies became the focal point in the development of management thought.

Taylor began a movement that gave empowered people to take control of their environment. While Taylor's scientific reflected the sentiments of his time it prepared a fertile ground for subsequent developments in the study of management. Followers came forth with their studies which anchored from Taylor's principles to solve the problems related to the rationalization of resource utilization, need for reward for accomplishments. Unfortunately, a major problem that the pioneers of scientific management did not anticipate was the way organizations utilized theories depending on what would benefit them while ignoring the interest of workers.

Mejia, Balkin and Cardy (2005) relate, that being the utopian Taylor never realized the possibility of misuse of his teachings. Despite the misuse, Stoner (1999) acknowledges the positive effects of scientific management can still be seen today via the modern-day assembly lines of factories as well as

those in non-industrial organizations, ranging from fast-food service to the training of surgeons .