

# The roles of management in an organization

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



The success of an organization rests on the ability of managers to plan, organize, direct and control. ' The aim of this essay is to examine to what extent the above statement is an accurate appraisal of successful management? To illustrate the arguments put forward this essay will refer to the case study 'The launch of the centaur' taken from Paton et al text 'Organizations, Cases, Issues and Concepts'. The case study reports on the problems that occurred when Centaur replaced Paravel car manufacturers.

This essay will include a study of Henri Fayol's five key managerial elements in order to display whether it is essential to plan, organize, direct and control followed by practical examples drawn from the highlighted case study.

Fayol's career began as a mining engineer and then moved into research geology and in 1888 joined, Comambault as Director. The company was in difficulty but Fayol turned the operation round.

On retirement he published his work - a comprehensive theory of administration - described and classified administrative management roles and processes then became recognised and referenced by others in the growing discourse about management. Fayol categorized management into five key elements, which can be seen in appendix one. The first of the elements is planning; Fayol believes that planning " means both to access the future and make provision for it"[1] Fayol views the " action plan" as the most useful output of the planning process.

He notes that this plan must consider the firm's resources, work- in-progress, and future trends of the external environment. Fayol also believes that a good action plan must consist of continuity, unity, flexibility and precision. Pugh

and Hickson state that " The problems of planning which management must overcome are: making sure the objectives of each part of the organisation are securely welded together (Unity); using both short and long term forecasting (continuity); being able to adapt the plan in the light of changing circumstances (flexibility); and attempting to accurately predict courses of action Precision"[2].

The essence of planning is to allow the optimum use of resources. The views of Fayol and Pugh and Hickson illustrate the importance of planning when seeking to be a successful manager. The second of the elements is organizing, Fayol states that " personnel is the focus of this section"[3] He believes that managerial duties of an organisation must be realised through the use of personnel. He argues that despite the variety of business, every firm of similar employee size differs mainly in the " nature and relative value of constituent elements"[4].

The task of management is to build up an organisation that allows the activities to be carried out in an optimal manner. Pugh and Hickson state, " Central to this is a structure in which plans are effectively prepared and carried out. There must be unity of command and direction, clear definition of responsibilities, precise decision making backed up by an efficient system for selecting and training managers"[5]. The views of Fayol and Pugh and Hickson illustrate the importance of organizing when seeking to be a successful manager.

Fayol has identified that there are many key objectives of organising, which can be located on Appendix two The Fayol's third element comes logically

after the first two, plan and control his third element is to command. In relation to the question command is part of the ability to direct. Fayol states that commanding is " the responsibility of every manager"[6]. The purpose of this is to achieve the maximum contribution from all personnel to help with the interests of the organization. Pugh and Hickson state that with the " ability to command the manager obtains the best possible performance from subordinates"[7].

Organisations have a variety of tasks to perform so co-ordination is needed, which is the fourth of Fayol's elements and the other half of the ability to direct. Fayol has created a list of managerial duties/responsibilities, which are highlighted in Appendix 3 Fayol states " co-ordinating is the harmonisation of resources in their optimum proportions in order to achieve results"[8]. Pugh and Hickson backup Fayol's view " essentially this is making sure that one departments efforts are coincident with efforts of other departments, and keeping all activities in perspective with regard to the overall aims of the rganisation"[9]. Fayol identifies some of the key characteristics of a well co-ordinated organisation. These characteristics are highlighted in Appendix 4. The fifth and final of Fayol's five elements is controlling which logically checks the other four elements are performing correctly. Fayol states that controlling " consists of the ongoing, routine verification of plan implementation, instructions issued and principles"[10]. Controlling applies to all processes and its purpose is to identify weaknesses and problems that can be rectified and to prevent recurrences.

Fayol believes that organisations should be "cautious against infiltration of control"[11] such as duality of command. Fayol also stresses the need for independent, objective and impartial inspection. Pugh and Hickson believe that "to be effective, control must operate quickly and there must be a system of sanctions. The best way to ensure this is to separate all functions concerned with inspection from operation departments whose work they inspect"[12]. This backs up the view made by Fayol. The above views illustrate the importance of the ability to command when aiming to become a successful manager.

Fayol's managerial functions have been subject to in-depth analysis, which had led to the highlighting of various weaknesses. The main weakness is that the Fayol system is based upon assumption and clearly lacks consideration of human behaviour. One of his five elements taken from Pugh and Hickson (1996) "To forecast and plan - prevoyance" illustrates this. It is impossible to forecast every activity within the workplace e. g. arguments amongst staff, staff leaving the company and basically any emergencies that arrive.

Some might believe that Fayol's theoretical thinking placed too much importance on observation, Mintzberg (1989) himself suggests "If you ask managers what they do they will almost likely tell you that they plan, organize, co-operate and control. Then watch what they do. Do not be surprised if you can't relate what you see to those four words"[13].

Mintzberg undertook an extensive study of executives at work. He categorized management into three groups that are divided into ten roles which can be seen in Appendix

A Roles such as leadership, liaison, monitor, disturbance handler etc, which are not mentioned in Fayol's model of management, clearly illustrate that interpersonal skill have been neglected in his management approach. This is seen, as a major weakness because interpersonal skills are essential in the day to day running of a business, as stated above it is impossible to foresee the future. Chris Argyris and David McGregor highlight other weaknesses Argyris (1957) noted that if classical principles of formal rganization are used, employees work in a certain environment (Appendix 6). This approach to organisations and their management has been subject to substantial criticism. It employs close system assumptions in order to reduce uncertainty and maximise control. Many of its principles are based on common sense " Truism" and suffer from generality, in that they lack specific guidelines for applications. It regards the organisation as machine and people as its components, organisation without people. At its best it regards the individuals as only motivated by money.

It, therefore, disregards the social and more complex needs of individuals in organisations. In the late 1950s, Douglas McGregor stressed the importance of Understanding the relationships between motivation and human nature. He believed that managers attempted to motivate employees using one of two basic approaches. The first was a negative theory, labeled theory X. Theory X Followed the traditional view of management based on direction and control. It Suggested that managers were required to coerce, control or threaten employees in order to motivate them.

In contrast, the second was a positive theory, labeled Theory Y, and was based on new information about behavior. Theory Y suggested that managers believed that people are capable of being responsible and mature. Despite the above criticism the classical approach still remains influential even today. Many of its principles have formed the foundation for the development of the modern management concepts. It is advised that new managers should consider Fayol's model of management but also consider other theories from academics such as Mintzberg.