

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF MANAGEMENT COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is intended to introduce and expose the students to the principles and concepts governing the practice of management.

Management being a social science is a complex and pervasive field and its practice is greatly affected by the situational factors that each manager faces.

Students should try as much as possible to understand the principals and concepts of management in the light of where they are practised. It is therefore imperative that students of management should approach the course with open minds and flexibility.

While concepts of management may remain the same across boundaries the practice differs from country to country, from organization to organization and from individual to individual. The key to success in this course IS TO UNDERSTAND AND NOT TO MEMORISE.

Students should supplement the notes in the study text with readings from the recommended textbooks.

After each lesson the student should ALWAYS attempt to relate what has been learnt in the text to the management of the private and public sectors in Kenya. This calls for the student to have a thorough knowledge of the economic, political, legal, social, technological and cultural conditions prevailing in Kenya.

RECOMMENDED TEXT BOOK:

Management Theory and Practise By G.A. Cole
Essentials of Management by Koontz, H & O Donnee 7th Edition

- managers should strive for strict division of labour and each position should be staffed by an expert in that area, there should be a consistent set of rules that all employees must follow in performing their jobs (the rules must be impersonal and rigidly enforced),
- there should be a clear chain of command
 - everyone should report to one and only one direct superior
 - communication should always follow this chain and never bypass individuals,
- business should be conducted in an impersonal way (managers must maintain an appropriate social distance from their subordinates and not play favourites),
- Advancement within the organization should be based on technical expertise and performance rather than seniority or favouritism,

Legal authority and power—authority and power rest in the institution of office. The power an individual holds is legitimised in the office and does not personally belong to him.

An Evaluation of the Classical Organization Theories (also known as Classical Administrative Theories)

The classical administrative theories of Fayol and Weber have had a lot of impact on management even today. Many current textbooks in management are organized around Fayol's theoretical framework. Fayol's main contribution included the concepts of the Universality and transferability of managerial skills. Even today it is widely accepted that management skills apply to all types of group activity. The concept that certain identifiable principles underlie effective managerial behaviour and that these principles can be taught also continues to have validity today. Another contribution of these theories is that today many complex organizations are managed by the bureaucratic rules proposed by Weber. These theories however have certain limitations

- First these theories assumed that all organizations can be managed by the same set of rules and regulations. They failed to appreciate the difference between various organizations for example you cannot run a government department on the same rules used in a social organization like a club or a private company.
- Secondly, the classical approach can be effective under a stable environment, but with frequent changes (rampant today) it proves ineffective as conditions require modifications in management principles and bureaucratic rules. Following outdated rules and principles can be counterproductive.
- Third the classical theories undervalued the human element in organizations. It saw people as passive and capable of reacting only to organizational rules and economic incentives. It ignored such qualities as attitudes, emotions, creativity and initiative. It failed to accommodate the fact that people are capable of going against rules. In a bid to cover these inadequacies in the classical theories the human relations movement and the behavioural science approaches were developed.

THE BEHAVIOURAL SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT THEORY

Although most of the early theories ignored or neglected the human element in the workplace a few individuals dwelt on the basic framework of the classical school and came up with more people oriented theories. Notable among these were Mary Parker Follet and Chester Barnard, Hugo Munsterberg and Elton Mayo.

Changes such as acquisition and mergers creates a lot of competition and conflict at the initial stages. For example, when an organization is merged into another, a power struggle often exists between the acquiring and acquired organizations. Similarly, where certain changes are introduced into the organization conflict may arise between management and workers between those opposed to and those for the change.

8. Organizational Climate

An organizational character, personality or climate such as the amount of psychological distance organizational units maintain from each other, can be a major source of intergroup conflict. For example, there would be minimal conflict when professional groups have very much or very little distance psychologically from the administration than when they have medium distance.

9. Distortion of communication.

10. Attitude and value difference.

(C) Line Vs Staff Conflict

Line managers are those in charge of main operations of an organization while staff managers are those in advisory or supportive positions to provide line managers with specialized and expert services as may be required.

Line personnel are usually generalists while staff personnel are usually specialists.

Conflicts between line and staff are quite common. These conflicts arise from the sources already discussed as well as the following:

i. Territorial Encroachment

In general the staff personnel advises the line person. Often conflict arises when the line personnel feel that staff advice is taken too far while staff on the other hand may feel that they have a responsibility and right to give the advice.

ii. Conflicting Loyalties

Staff specialists may get into conflict with line personnel because what line personnel may require them to do in the interest of the organization may conflict with professional ethics of the staff personnel. This is especially so when the staff specialists want to adhere to a professional order that conflicts with tasks assigned by the organization.

iii. Separation of Knowledge and Authority

Some line executives may not have sufficient knowledge to carry out their responsibilities and may depend on lower ranking staff advisers to furnish them with the appropriate information. Such cases where higher authority lacks the necessary knowledge and has to rely on his juniors for knowledge may be a source of conflict between the groups.

(d) Consequences of Organization Conflicts

Organizational conflicts can be functional or dysfunctional to individuals and organizations.

i. Functional Consequences

Among the major functional results are:

- Dissociating elements in a situation may be removed and unity may be established. After open expression of conflict the combatants may feel closer to each other.
- After conflict new leadership may be brought into the organization because the former leaders may be found unsuitable under the pressures of conflict.
- All goals and policies may be modified or replaced by more relevant goals as a result of the conflict.
- Conflict may become institutionalised. After several instances of intergroup conflict, outlets may be established where potential conflict may be resolved.
- Informal group discussions between members of management and employees is an example of institutionalization of conflict.