

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT

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Summary

The purpose of this article is to argue that, despite the constant economic upheaval and incessant technological changes, strategies to increase the efficiency of management are still a useful and critically important for all companies.

The business strategy has been the subject of increased study and search for solutions, especially since the process from strategy formulation to strategy implementation is not efficient.

Key words: *teamwork, efficiency, business, relationship, opportunities*

The efficiency of the managerial work system and of management activities is an important process. The components of work-style are the different ways of behavior developed in the function of company opportunities, and the way the manager's act in order to realize company objectives in an efficient manner. Of the several components of the management work system I have selected the most important positive factors.

Efficient use of manager's time

Management science deals with those means and methods that contribute to efficient time use. Most of the time, manager fight with the lack of time, efficient time use has a rich psycho-social content, which can be categorized according to the following:

- f) the whole process is based on the postulation that managers want to do as many things as possible, which results in changing their attitude and behavior, and in wording the requirements of efficient time use;
- g) the practice of using and organizing working hours postulates certain psychological characteristics, like: memory, flexibility, observation, susceptibility, setting up priorities, developing and maintaining harmonic relations, work capacity and work load, etc.

In order to prevent incorrect conditions and situations, it is recommended that the manager's time use should be regular. In order to improve time use, the first step is to define the objectives in harmony with the requirements and the tasks. In the next step, daily time use has to be monitored and organized with the use of work registration, special register, calendar, etc. The next step is the comparison of fulfilled tasks with the objectives, because it helps to change the customs.

These way managers can eliminate those activities which do not have to be done because:

- they are not important for the objective;
- they can not be realized in the current period;
- they can be done by the subordinates;
- they are not efficient any more. The next step is to set up priorities.

Priorities have to be supervised periodically, and have to be altered in harmony with the new aspects. Once we have defined the priorities meeting the objectives, we can start planning.

Manager's work schedule

The continuous success of the flexible work schedule depends on a good faith effort by employees and their department director/division manager.

Work schedule of the managers is especially important from the point of view of efficiency. Certain elements have to be taken into account when compiling the work schedule.

Once we have taken the above characteristics into account, the manager and the management team have to respect certain rules in the interest of efficient management:

- elaboration of work programs should begin with the realistic estimation of time required to solve the problem(s);
- deadlines should be defined, leaving time for interruptions and unexpected events;
- those tasks should not be listed among the tasks of the manager which can also be done by the subordinates,
- the majority of time available should be devoted to solving the most important tasks;
- two or three parallel objectives should be planned;
- calm and concentrated efforts should be ensured for the solution of important tasks;
- solving top-priority issues should be planned for and connected with the period of maximum efforts;
- experts should be involved in the solution of really important questions;
- time should be reserved for the solution of unexpected and urgent issues.

At this point, we should speak about the schedule, work order, and time planning of the managers as well. In this field, the following are considered to be important: work graphics; registration sheet of the employees and of the individual issues; leaflets, notebooks, calendars; special file for the complicated problems. The best and the most frequently used method is the weekly work graphic.

Efficiency of business meeting

Independent from their nature, business meetings are usually organized to make decisions, or to get and provide information. These meetings consist of three phases: preparation; development; information about the decisions and the approved measures, and demanding their execution.

Preparation of the meeting is an important momentum to increase efficiency. For the maximum efficiency of business meetings, a lot of requirements have to be met in the preparation phase, of which we shall mention the following:

- a) definition of rational issues;
- b) proper structuring of the agenda;
- c) nomination of the team responsible for editing the documentation of the meeting, listing the obligatory items on the agenda;
- d) nomination of a small number of participants from those who work in the affected areas;
- e) guiding and supporting the team in charge of editing the documents in order to prepare a comprehensive and exact documentation;
- f) defining the venue of the meeting, preparation of proper environment;
- g) timely information of the participants about the content of the document to be discussed, and about the proposals recommended for the solution of the problems in time.

Some of the factors that influence and define the efficiency and profoundness of the discussion are mentioned below:

- h) experience and sense of tact in moderating the discussion;
- i) the attempt and effort of the participants to create good atmosphere;
- j) development of an economic, social and human behavior where economic efficiency and profitability are interwoven with the care of the economic units about their employees.

Perfection of the relationship between the manager and the subordinates

The existence of market economy determines and gives new perspectives to the relationship between the manager and the employees at all organizational levels. This relationship is individualized and different depending on the characteristic features and the authorities of the people involved. A similar transformation takes place as a consequence of economic transformation and the realistic operation of the economic units, because all these demands strict, and individual responsibilities, and efficient contribution from the manager and the executive staff, financial and moral encouragement harmonized with the achievements.

There are six rules that I believe a supervisor can follow to improve teamwork with subordinates:

1. *Describe the purpose of the work you and the team are doing.* What are you trying to achieve? Who are your potential customers and how will you create value for them? When people are clear about the purpose of their work, they are better able to understand their manager's concerns. When they are not clear about purpose, they don't feel part of a team. Furthermore, they won't think about innovative ways to achieve purposes they don't understand.
2. *Clarify roles and responsibilities.* Let people know who the team members are and how their roles relate to each other. When roles are unclear, people don't feel empowered to take responsibility. Or if the role is unclear, people may bump into each other's territory, causing unnecessary conflicts that undermine teamwork. In technology organizations, it's a good bet that subordinates know more about their jobs than do their managers.
3. *Make sure managers and subordinates understand each other's personality.* You may be motivated in different ways. It makes a big difference if one is a loyal productive obsessive who pushes for perfection according to inner standards while the other is a productive marketing personality, interested in what will sell and with a self-image as a free agent, always seeking better opportunities, either inside or outside your organization.
4. *Communicate and facilitate communication.* You can never communicate too much when it is a question of how work is progressing, what are the problems encountered, and what is needed from each person. The best teams have the most open communication and don't avoid creative conflict.
5. *Managers need to create trust by treating people fairly.* Relationships deteriorate when managers play favorites. Managers can and should be demanding and challenging as long as they are consistent in their treatment of people. Some managers believe they can stimulate productivity by pushing subordinates to compete with each other. Inevitably, this kind of leadership breeds distrust and undermines teamwork.
6. *Make evaluation a continuous and honest dialogue rather than a bureaucratic process.* Documenting inadequate performance may serve as a legal protection, but it doesn't improve the relationship between manager and subordinate. Often evaluations are made long after the events they evaluate have taken place—they are no help for improving performance and, furthermore, they may provoke angry disagreements.

With respect to the psycho-social field, the relationship between the manager and the employees includes all the aspects of the manager's and the employees' character. This relationship is complex, many-fold, and dynamic. Efficient relationship between the manager and the employees means the coordination of the different characters. If the manager is capable to form and shape the employees so that they become suitable for the execution of their tasks, that is a high-level expression of managerial qualities. In this process, the manager has to respect certain rules of behavior, of which we mention the most important ones:

- a) respecting the personality of the employees;
- b) knowing the employees through direct contacts;
- c) giving personal example;
- d) providing continuous information for the employees, and involving them into the new, and innovative activities;
- e) ensuring mutual respect and the atmosphere of confidence;
- f) using consistent principles in case of punishments and awards;
- g) ensuring highest possible interest of the employees;
- h) permanent and high-level control;
- i) ensuring well-balanced relations.

Organizations can improve employee performance by making it easier for their people to find new opportunities within an organization. According to the recent study, organizations can also develop the skills and knowledge of all talents, regardless of their position in the company. Some of these strategies include involving employees in company decision-making processes, a practice used by 60 percent of executives surveyed.

The manager and the official mechanisms

In order to ensure efficiency, the manager's work has to be prepared and thought over profoundly. In the course of managing the economic units in a differentiated manner, managers have to rely upon the services provided by the experts and the functional departments. Efficient plans and activities can be elaborated and performed with their involvement, and ad hoc measures and superficial solutions can be excluded.

Experts have outlined several trends of using the professional apparatus of the company hierarchical structure. We should keep in mind that the experts of the official mechanism can be utilized in several ways: control especially important activities; analyze and improve objectives and programs; study the technical, economic and social features of the economic unit; prepare proposals on the management process of the unit.

Expert involvement provides the manager with several advantages, of which we mention the following:

- a) improvement of the management process with the adaptation and use of expertise, and ensuring the necessary data;
- b) taking some of the burdens and work-load off the manager;
- c) introducing new elements into management work methods and work-style;
- d) participation in the definition and elaboration of corporate objectives.

The form and content of the manager's summary information

The summary information of the manager is a comprehensive report about the technical- production, economic-financial, social and human factors. This ensures profound knowledge about the corporate processes, and the foundations and control of the decisions.

Information and data provided for the manager can be prepared in the following forms: list of tasks; graphics; summary sheet (tables and graphics); exceptions from the rules; indices, etc.

When preparing summary information, the manager has to take into account the following requirements:

- a) the information should contain continuous information about the activities of the manager in question;
- b) the information should be regular and comprehensive;
- c) the data should reveal exceptional differences;
- d) the information should reveal the qualitative and quantitative relations among the economic, technical and human factors of the company;
- e) the information should contain sufficient frightening information which help the recognitions of incorrect situations,
- f) the information should be efficient in completion and use;
- g) it should provide general information about the operation of the company, and give profound analysis about the different departments, etc.

The summary information helps the manager to get acquainted not only with the production process, but also with the employees, and the socio-human factors of the company.

Efficient operation of the secretariat

Efficient operation depends not only on efficient use of time, but also on taking the burdens of certain activities off the shoulders of the manager.

First of all, we would like to discuss the issues related to working, hours. The secretariat plays a significant role in the efficient and rational use of time available for the manager. The secretariat should solve a wide variety of tasks and problems, including:

- a) filing activities, like signing the documents of the manager, filing, distributing, sending and categorizing them;
- b) actual secretarial activities, like copying, typing, translating, ordering documents, letters, telegrams, notes, notices, information, communication, and independent editing of different documents;
- c) compilation of data, including statistics, tables, graphics, and copying;

- d) publication of information, guidelines, etc. in the absence of the manager and provide information about the issues/events occurring in the absence of the manager;
- e) answering and selecting phone calls;
- f) preparation of business meetings;
- g) receiving visitors, and sending inconvenient people away;
- h) in-time indication of deadlines.

It is evident, that professional and successful execution of the above tasks require certain psychological characteristics like: memory; divided attention; quick reaction to problems, and quick understanding of the issues; discipline; professional integrity; tactful ness; cordiality; intellectual flexibility and adaptability; organizational talents; willingness to listen to the others; capability to develop and maintain exemplary human relations; well-balanced and stabile neurotic system, etc. These are the psychological characters that ensure proper basis for the fulfillment of the complicated, many-fold, varied, and difficult work of the secretariat which basically influences the manager's work and success.

Management training - necessity and efficiency

Management training is an important means of improving the competence of managerial personnel in any economy, and managerial talent is a necessary condition for successful economic development.

Above all we should emphasize that in the course of economic restructuring and orientation to market economy, the companies increasingly feel the lack of official managers capable to manage the most important fields of corporate life.

The issue of well-prepared managers, who rule and are capable to implement management science into practice, has to be discussed scientifically. For this reason it is vitally important that several rules, moments, and activities are taken into account in the course of recruitment, testing or interviewing, and employment: a) to be familiar with the offer of qualified labor force; b) recruitment of people with special talents already during the college years; c) testing the candidates with the preparation of certain plans, with competitive tests, or in other ways; d) their employment; e) their involvement into work under the leadership of the manager, or experienced experts; h) increase the level of professional qualifications; i) promote the development of corporate identity; j) ensure the permanency and respect of work-places, and guarantee that these jobs provide good opportunities for personal development. In this process of management training, marketing- and management techniques should be interwoven.

The following characteristics of the manager can be developed in the course of training: a) cooperation with people, the capability to develop a team, promotion of individual and team activities; b) the capability to understand the past and to foresee the future, and fight for permanent development; c) the capability to solve corporate issues; d) the capability to use technical, economic, legal, and psycho-social phenomena in the course of argumentation, and to understand the relationship among the above phenomena; e) the capability to select the important issues which deserve maximum effort; f) ensure the conditions for efficient work, and the capability to apply positive experiences; g) the capability to make decisions quickly; h) the capability to understand corporate problems, and to put them into a wider perspective; i) improve communication; j) learn the analytical methods of discussing the issues, and organizing the problems in a systematic way; k) the capability to learn modern management methods and means; l) harmony between the environment and the internal and external objectives of the company.

The above extensive and complex process requires the use of modern means. Of the modern and efficient methods used for the perfection of the manager, I should mention the following: the method of panel discussions; the method of role evaluation; planned training; solving the problems included in the file of management issues; extending (improving) the scope of activities of the manager; training tests of the managers, etc.

The precondition of management efficiency is that the manager should understand and support the employees. As a consequence of human nature, caution is recommended for the manager in his/her work with the employees. Besides caution, the managers should use different methods when dealing with the employees. However, this can be done only if the manager knows the employees, which is possible with the help of psychology, sociology, biology, medical sciences, and anthropology, with regular observation and control of the employees' concrete activities, and with the help of instincts. In certain cases, managers should ask professional opinion from psychologists, medical doctors, or other experts. This is the only way managers can ensure complete and efficient participation of the employees in the economic processes, in increasing profitability, and in finding professional

and human satisfaction at the workplace. As a result, the manager's work will also be successful, and will contribute to the development and success of the company.

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