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Roles of Business Managers

i. Introduction:

Everyone is a manager. People learn how to manage their lives and their relationships with others. They learn how to organize their time and work. In business, management is usually a team of people who operate the business and try to get the work done. They organize the time and work, and they manage relationships among the employees who work together.

ii. Definition of a manager:

A manager is an individual within an organization who is responsible for planning, coordinating, and overseeing various activities and resources to achieve the organizations' goals and objectives. Managers are typically tasked with making decisions, providing leadership and ensuring that their teams or departments function effectively and efficiently. Their roles and responsibilities can vary widely based on their level within the organization, the specific department or area they oversee, and the organization's size and industry. Managers play a crucial role in guiding and facilitating the work of their team, ensuring that tasks are completed, and helping to achieve the overall mission and success of the organization.

iii. Roles of managers:

Management has five main jobs: to plan, direct, control, coordinate, and organize. Managers at different levels spend different amounts of time on these jobs. For instance, a president is a manager who spends a lot of time on planning. A supervisor is a manager who spends more time on directing.

1. **Planning:** the most important job of management is planning the goals of a business and how these goals will be completed. In planning, managers must consider five variables: personnel, money, machines, materials and methods. There are steps in the planning process:

a. **Goal Setting:** Planning starts with setting clear and specific goals and objectives for the organization. These goals provide a sense of direction and purpose, helping the business manager and the team know what they are working toward. Goals can be related to financial targets, market share, product development, or any aspect of the business.
b. **Resource Allocation:** A manager must decide how to allocate the organization's resources, including human resources, finances, time, and materials, to accomplish the set goals. Effective planning ensures that resources are used efficiently and effectively, maximizing the return on investment.
c. **Risk Management:** Business managers must identify potential risks and uncertainties that can impact the organization's operations and take steps to mitigate them. This includes considering both internal and external factors, such as market competition, economic conditions, and regulatory changes. By anticipating and planning for risks, managers can develop strategies to minimize their impact.
d. **Decision Making:** Planning helps in informed decision-making. It provides a structured framework for analyzing various alternatives and selecting the best course of action. Managers can evaluate the pros and cons of different options and make decisions that align with the organization's objectives.
e. **Performance Evaluation:** Planning provides a basis for performance measurement and evaluation. Managers can compare actual results with the planned objectives to assess whether the organization is on track or needs adjustments. This feedback loop is essential for continuous improvement.
f. **Adaptation to Change:** The business environment is dynamic and constantly changing. Effective planning allows managers to adapt to these changes more effectively. It's not just about setting a static plan but also about being flexible and responsive to new opportunities and challenges.
g. **Long-Term Sustainability:** Planning often involves strategic planning, which looks beyond short-term goals and focuses on the long-term sustainability and growth of the organization. It helps in charting a path for the future and ensuring the business's viability.

In summary, planning is a crucial managerial function that provides a roadmap for achieving organizational objectives. It enables managers to make informed decisions, allocate resources efficiently, manage risks, and adapt to changing circumstances. Successful planning ultimately contributes to the overall success and sustainability of the business.

2. **Directing:** managers also direct and supervise. Managers usually know their workers well so that they can lead and give instructions. Managers must communicate clearly with workers so that they will understand their jobs and responsibilities. Good managers get the cooperation of all their workers. Directing is a difficult job for managers; however, good supervision of workers is essential for business success.

a. **Leadership:** Business managers play a central role in providing leadership to their teams. They set the tone for the organization and establish a vision, mission, and values that guide the actions and behavior of employees. Effective leadership inspires and motivates employees to work towards common objectives.

b. **Delegation:** Delegation is a key aspect of directing. Managers must assign tasks and responsibilities to employees based on their skills and abilities. Delegating tasks allows managers to focus on strategic activities while empowering employees to take ownership of their work.

c. **Motivation:** Motivating employees is a critical part of directing. Managers use various techniques and strategies to inspire and engage their teams. This may include providing recognition, offering incentives, setting clear expectations, and creating a positive work culture that encourages employees to perform at their best.

d. **Supervision:** Managers are responsible for overseeing the work of their teams. They monitor progress, assess performance, and provide feedback. Effective supervision ensures that employees are working in alignment with the organization's goals and that tasks are completed efficiently.

e. **Conflict resolution:** Conflicts can arise in any workplace, and it's the manager's role to address and resolve them. By facilitating open communication and mediating conflicts, managers can maintain a harmonious and productive work environment.

f. **Training and Development:** Managers are also responsible for the development of their employees. They identify training needs, provide opportunities for skill development, and mentor employees to help them grow professionally. Investing in employee development can lead to improved performance and job satisfaction.

g. **Performance Evaluation:** Performance appraisal is a key aspect of directing. Managers assess employees' performance against established goals and objectives. This process helps identify areas for improvement, rewards high achievers, and supports career development.

h. **Change Management:** In a constantly evolving business environment, managers play a crucial role in managing change. They must guide employees through transitions, communicate the reasons for change, and provide support and resources to adapt to new processes or strategies.

3. **Controlling:** managers control too. They decide on the quality of work or the products. Is the work good? If the quality is low, the managers look for the reasons. Managers decide if the workers are fast or slow. Are the workers good or bad? Are there enough workers? Is the plan working? If necessary, the managers hire more workers or make changes in the company policy. Managers control the workers, time, material, and the job.

a. **Performance Measurement:** Controlling begins with establishing performance standards and benchmarks for various aspects of the organization, such as production, sales, costs, quality, and employee performance. These standards serve as a basis for evaluating actual performance against expected performance.

b. **Monitoring:** Business managers must continuously monitor the ongoing activities of the organization. This includes tracking key performance indicators (KPIs), financial metrics, project progress, and other relevant data. Monitoring ensures that operations are running smoothly and in alignment with the established standards.

c. **Comparing Actual vs. Planned:** Controlling involves comparing the actual results and performance with the predetermined standards and goals. This comparison allows managers to identify any variances or deviations. Variances can be positive (exceeding expectations) or negative (falling short of expectations).

d. **Identifying Deviations:** When managers detect deviations or discrepancies between actual and planned performance, they need to investigate the causes. This might involve analyzing the root causes of problems, conducting performance reviews, or evaluating the impact of external factors like market changes or regulatory shifts.

e. **Corrective Actions:** Controlling is not just about identifying problems; it's also about taking corrective actions to bring performance back in line with the established standards and objectives. Managers may need to make adjustments to processes, allocate resources differently, or provide additional training and support to employees.

f. **Feedback Loop:** Controlling provides a feedback loop that allows managers to continuously learn from past performance. By analyzing the outcomes of the control process, managers can refine their planning and decision-making for the future.

g. **Compliance and Quality Assurance:** In industries with regulatory requirements or quality standards, controlling ensures that the organization complies with these rules and maintains the desired level of product or service quality. This is particularly important in sectors like healthcare, manufacturing, and finance.

h. **Efficiency and Cost Management:** Controlling plays a crucial role in managing costs and promoting efficiency. By closely monitoring expenses, managers can identify opportunities to reduce waste, streamline operations, and improve the bottom line.

i. **Goal Achievement:** Ultimately, the controlling function aims to help the organization achieve its objectives and goals. By consistently monitoring and regulating performance, managers can ensure that the organization is moving in the right direction and that resources are being used effectively.

4. Coordinating:

another job of managers is to coordinate. All parts of an organization need to work together. Workers must understand their jobs and how to do them efficiently. When there are problems, the manager must solve them. Good managers must communicate well to coordinate goals and plans. All managers at every level must coordinate well in order to keep an organization together.

a. **Integration of Activities:** Coordinating involves integrating various activities and functions across the organization. Managers must ensure that the efforts of different departments, teams, and individuals align with the overall objectives of the organization.

b. **Synchronization of Processes:** Coordinating ensures that business processes and workflows are synchronized to avoid bottlenecks, delays, or inefficiencies. This can involve designing efficient workflows, setting priorities, and optimizing the sequence of tasks.

c. **Communication:** Effective coordination relies on clear and open communication. Managers facilitate communication among different departments, teams, and individuals, ensuring that information flows smoothly and that everyone is aware of their roles and responsibilities.

d. **Conflict Resolution:** Managers often find themselves in the position of resolving conflicts and disputes that may arise between various departments or team members. Effective coordination includes addressing conflicts in a constructive manner to maintain a harmonious work environment.

e. **Project Management:** Coordinating is particularly critical in project management. Managers must oversee the planning, execution, and monitoring of projects, ensuring that timelines are met, resources are utilized efficiently, and project goals are achieved.

f. **Cross-Functional Collaboration:** Many organizations rely on cross-functional teams to tackle complex challenges or innovation projects. Coordinating ensures that individuals from different functional areas work together seamlessly, sharing expertise and collaborating effectively.

g. **Change Management:** When organizations undergo changes, such as implementing new processes or adopting new technologies, managers play a key role in coordinating these transitions. They must ensure that employees adapt to change smoothly and that the organization continues to operate effectively during transitions.

h. **Quality Control:** Coordinating also encompasses quality control efforts to maintain and improve the quality of products or services. Managers are responsible for establishing and maintaining quality standards and processes that ensure consistent and high-quality outcomes.

i. **Feedback and Improvement:** Coordinating involves collecting feedback from different parts of the organization and using that feedback to make continuous improvements. Managers must create a culture of learning and adaptation within the organization.

5. **Organizing:** the fifth job of management is to organize. All businesses have a basic structure which determines the power and authority of each level of the organization. For example, a company may have only one vice-president or it may have several who are in charge of separate departments such as production, marketing, or finance. Within each department, there are managers who organize the workers and their jobs to increase efficiently. All workers know their jobs and their bosses. The key success in the business world is good management.

a. **Structuring Resources:** Business managers organize the various resources of the organization, which include human resources, financial assets, physical facilities, equipment, and information systems. They determine how these resources should be allocated, managed, and integrated to support the organization's goals.

b. **Division of Labor:** Organizing often involves breaking down complex tasks and projects into smaller, manageable components. Managers determine how work should be divided among employees or teams to maximize efficiency and specialization, ultimately improving productivity and quality.

c. **Establishing Roles and Responsibilities:** Managers define roles and responsibilities for employees within the organization. This clarity ensures that each individual knows their specific job and how it fits into the broader organizational structure. This clarity is vital for accountability and effective teamwork.

d. **Creating Organizational Structure**: Managers design the organizational structure, which defines the hierarchy, reporting relationships, and lines of authority. This structure can take various forms, such as functional, matrix, or divisional structures, depending on the organization's needs and objectives.

e. **Workflow Design:** Managers design workflows and processes that define how tasks are executed, sequenced, and integrated. This includes streamlining processes to minimize inefficiencies and bottlenecks and adapting workflows to changing needs.
f. **Job Design:** Organizing encompasses job design, which involves creating job descriptions and specifications that match employees' skills and the organization's requirements. Effective job design can lead to job satisfaction, improved performance, and reduced turnover.
g. **Time Management:** Managers also play a role in time management. They establish timelines and schedules for projects and tasks, ensuring that they are completed in a timely manner.
h. **Information Management:** Organizing includes managing information flow within the organization. Managers establish information systems and procedures to ensure that the right information is available to the right people when needed.