

Mintzberg, H. (1973). *The Nature of Managerial Work.* New York: Harper & Row.

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8 Schools of Thought on A Manager's Job

- 1) The Classic School
- 2) The Great Man School
- 3) The Entrepreneurship School
- 4) The Decision Theory School
- 5) The Leader Effectiveness School
- 6) The Leader Power School
- 7) The Leader Behavior School
- 8) The Work Activity School

The Classic School

The classic school of what a manager does is POSCORB, which is an acronym developed by Luther Gulick, which stands for:

P – planning; O – organizing; S – staffing; D – directing; C – coordinating; R – reporting; B – budgeting.

The father of this school of thought was Henri Fayol, who introduced these 5 basic managerial functions: planning, organizing, coordinating, commanding, and controlling.

Carnegie theorists (Carnegie Institute of Technology, now Carnegie-Mellon University) describe the manager as an un-programmed decision maker who programs the work of others.

Charles Lindblom (1968) view of managers contrasts with the economist view of managers, in that he views managers moving away from ills rather than towards goals. Goals are flexible and are adjusted to fit the means available. Managers make stepwise and incremental change. However, according to the economists, the manager acts rationally to maximize profits. Decision making begins with problems and goals and then the courses of actions and consequences are laid out before the manager.

The Leader Effectiveness School

The study of leadership is the study of interpersonal behavior between the leader and the led. "Leadership is a relational concept implying

two terms: the influencing agent, and the persons influenced. Without followers there can be no leader." (Katz and Kahn, 1966)

In the 1960's "humanists" focused attentions to managerial styles, criticizing an autocratic, task-oriented style, and advocating participative, people-oriented style. More recently, empirical social psychologists have been arguing for situational or contingency theories of leadership effectiveness. Mintzberg feels that excessive attention was placed on two basic styles – autocratic and participative, and a lack of understanding of the interpersonal behaviors has slowed progress in determining factors that produce successful leaders. Humanist theorists include: McGregor (1960), Likert (1961). Contingency theorist include: Fiedler (1966), Campbell (et al, 1970).

Leader Power School

Melville Dalton (1959) conducted a famous study of middle managers, and concluded informal social forces of bureaucracy tend to dominate individual action.

Richard Neustadt's (1960) book "Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership" found that effective power of the President is dependent on the style of the man and how he approaches his job.

Darwin Cartwright (1965) in "The Handbook of Organizations" cites a 5-part scheme of power by French and Raven:

- 1) Reward; 2) Coercive; 3) Referent; 4) Legitimate; 5) Expert

Leader Behavior School

George Homans (1950) concluded from William F. Whyte's study of street gangs that the leader is the best informed of the group, and that there is a hierarchy of leader authority.

Some Distinguishing Characteristics of Managerial Work

These characteristics are based on observations and recorded activities by managers in a daily log.

- 1) Pace and quantity of work is much work at an unrelenting pace. A major reason that managers adopt this pace and workload is because of: a) their job is open-ended, b) the manager is responsible for the success of the organization, c) there are no tangible mileposts where work is finished and managers are perpetually preoccupied.

- 2) Activity is characterized by brevity, variety, and fragmentation. There is great variety on a daily basis focusing on distinct issues. Meetings dealing with one complex issue or a multitude of issues. To some extent the manager tolerates interruption because he does not wish to interrupt the flow of current information. The manager is encouraged by the realities of his work to develop a particular personality, to overload himself with work, to do things abruptly, to avoid wasting time, to participate only when the value of participation is tangible, to avoid too great of an involvement with any issue – in essence, very proficient at working superficially.
- 3) There is a preference for live action. Managers gravitate towards the more active elements of his work activities that are current, specific, well defined, and non-routine. Managers desire to have the most current information, and instant communication and feedback.
- 4) Managers are attracted to the verbal media. They prefer face to face meetings and telephone conversations. 3-types of activities took place at scheduled meetings: a) ceremony, b) strategy-making, and c) negotiation.
- 5) Managers are between the organization and a network of contacts. The manager maintains communication relationships with 3 groups: superiors, outsiders, and subordinates. To gain access to outside information, these managers developed a network of informers, a sort of self-designed external information system which included peers, friends, and co-directors).
- 6) Managers have a blend of rights and duties – a) the manager is able to make a set of initial decisions that define his long-term commitments. He has the power to develop his own information channels, but does not control the day to day information that flows to him, and b) the manager exerts his own will by controlling or using the activities he must engage in to benefit or position himself.

The Manager's Working Roles

A role is defined as an organized set of behaviors belonging to an identifiable office or position (Sarbin and Allen, 1968). Thus, actors, managers, and others play roles that are predetermined, although individuals may interpret them in different ways.

Set of 10 Managerial Roles Divided Into 3 Groups: Interpersonal, Informational, and Decisional

Interpersonal Roles

- 1) Figurehead – the manager is a symbol, obliged to perform a number of duties.
- 2) Leader – the manager defines the atmosphere in which the organization will work. Powers of charisma or position of office are used to transmit information, make strategic decisions, integrate individual needs and organizational goals, to bring individual and organizational needs into common accord, and it is the leader role that the managerial power manifests itself (legitimate, formal authority).
- 3) Liaison – the manager deals with the significant web of relationships that the manager maintains with numerous individuals and groups outside the organization.

Informational Roles

- 1) Monitor – the manager is continually seeking, and being bombarded with information that enables him to understand what is taking place in the organization and its environment by monitoring a) internal operations, b) external events, c) analyses, d) ideas and trends, e) pressures.
- 2) Disseminator – the manager sends external information into his organization and internal information from one subordinate to another. 2 types of information: a) factual, b) value (preferences versus facts).
- 3) Spokesman – the manager transmits information out to his organization's environment to speak on behalf of the organization.

Decisional Roles

- 1) Entrepreneur – the manager acts as initiator and designer of much of the controlled change of the organization. By using the monitoring role, he seeks opportunities, sees problems, and initiates actions to improve situations. Managers can be involved in improvement project design at 3 levels: a) delegation (all responsibility to others), b) authoritarian (delegates design, but retains choice making), c) supervision (retains design and decision in projects).
- 2) Disturbance handler – the manager deals with involuntary situations and change beyond their control, such as crisis or emergencies.

- 3) Resource allocator – as a formal authority, the manager must oversee the system by which organizational resources are allocated. 3 essential elements of resource allocation: a) scheduling of time, b) programming work, c) authorizing actions.
- 4) Negotiator – managers participate in negotiation activities.

5 Basic Reasons Why Organizations Need Managers

- 1) The prime purpose of the manager is to ensure that his organization serves its basic purpose and maintains efficient production of its specific goods or services.
- 2) The manager must design and maintain the stability of their organizational operations. (leader)
- 3) The manager must take charge of their organization's strategy-making system, and therein adapt his organization in a controlled way to its changing environment. (monitor, entrepreneur, leader)
- 4) The manager must ensure that his organization serves the ends of those persons who control it.
- 5) The manager must serve as the key informational link between his organization and its environment. (liaison, monitor, disseminator, spokesman, negotiator)
- 6) As a formal authority, the manager is responsible for the operating of his organization's status system. (figurehead, spokesman, negotiator)

Variations in Manager's Work

Researchers (Nealey and Fiedler, 1968; Campbell, et al, 1970) found that there were more similarities in managerial jobs than differences.

Contingency theory of managerial work contends that the work of a manager is determined by a set of 4 variables:

- 1) Environment – culture, nature of industry, competition, rate of change, type of technology, age, and size of the organization.
- 2) Job – level of hierarchy, functions supervised
- 3) Person – the managers values, personality, and style.
- 4) Situational – includes periodic patterns, the change-stability cycle, periods of threat or disruption, new job patterns adopted, and societal shifts.

In the book “Managerial Behavior” by Leonard Sayles, he points out that managers need to balance change and stability in their organizations.

Katz and Kahn cited 3 types of leader behavior (1966):

- 1) Introduction of structural change or policy formation
- 2) Interpolation of structure, improvisation
- 3) Use of structure formally to keep the organization in motion and in effective operation or administration

Science and the Manager's Job

There are two necessary components for a science of managing:

- 1) Precise description of managerial work
- 2) Systematic improvement of it

Frederick Taylor, the father of "scientific management," provided the first expression of this process in the field of management. Taylor first described precisely the procedures (or programs) actually used in performing a task and then he "re-programmed" the procedures, that is he systematically redesigned them. Once the procedures were made explicit, a necessary first step had been taken toward automating them.

There are 7 areas where managers and analyst can cooperate:

- 1) opportunity and problem finding
- 2) cost-benefit analysis
- 3) model building
- 4) contingency planning
- 5) real time analysis
- 6) project monitoring
- 7) adaptive planning

Points for more effective managing:

- 1) Sharing information – the manager has access to significant and privileged information, and must give conscious attention to the dissemination of information to subordinates. The manager must realize that subordinates cannot tap the same information and resources, and cannot make effective decisions without the proper information. There are two drawbacks of sharing information: a) confidentiality, b) dissipating power.
- 2) Dealing consciously with superficiality. Managers must balance giving depth to certain issues and marginal involvement with others. There is a great deal of delegation involved.
- 3) Sharing the job if information can be shared. Sharing heavy workloads with the management team reduces the work load and allows individuals to specialize in certain roles. The main disadvantage to this is it takes a considerable amount of time in

communication, and problems arise if there are communication breakdowns.

- 4) Making the most of obligations. Turn to your advantage those things you are obliged to do.
- 5) Freeing self from obligations. Making the most of obligations is necessary, but not a sufficient condition if a manager is to gain control of his job. They must be able to free themselves to attend to more important issues, as needed.
- 6) Emphasizing the role that fits the situation. Managers must adapt their role to best suite the situation or environment.
- 7) Seeing a comprehensive picture in terms of its details. A manager must be able to see the whole picture while looking at the details like a jigsaw puzzle.
- 8) Dealing with a growing coalition. Managers must balance benefits and power between coalitions.
- 9) Using the management scientist. A trend in larger organizations is to use the skills of a management scientist to help deal with increasingly complex problems. Cooperative agreements must be made with the analyst, and work to gain their support.

8 basic skill sets that managers might be taught:

- 1) working with peers
- 2) leadership
- 3) conflict resolution
- 4) information processing
- 5) decision making under ambiguity
- 6) resource allocation
- 7) entrepreneurship
- 8) introspection