

# MASTER IN MANAGEMENT (Part-time)

## SAMPLE OF COURSE PLANNER & TOPIC

### COURSE PLANNER

Week	Week Starting	Topics to be covered	Relevant Chapters	Block Release Dates
1	1 <sup>st</sup> September	Topic 1	1,2,3,	
2	8 <sup>th</sup> September	Topic 2	4	Block release 12 <sup>th</sup> /13 <sup>th</sup> Sept.
3	15 <sup>th</sup> September	Topic 3	6 & 7 & 10	
4	22 <sup>nd</sup> September	Topic 4	9	
5	29 <sup>th</sup> September	Topic 5	11& 13	
6	6 <sup>th</sup> October	Topic 6	5 plus BBC case study	
7	13 <sup>th</sup> October	Revision of topics 3,4,5 & 6		Block Release 17 <sup>th</sup> /18 <sup>th</sup> Oct.
8	20 <sup>th</sup> October	Topic 7	12	
9	27 <sup>th</sup> October	Topic 8	14	
10	3 <sup>rd</sup> November	Topic 9	15 plus 3M case study	
11	10 <sup>th</sup> November	Revision of topics 7, 8 & 9		Block Release 14 <sup>th</sup> /15 <sup>th</sup> Nov.
12	17 <sup>th</sup> November	Finalise assignment		
14	24 <sup>th</sup> November	Revision	Assignment due 24 <sup>th</sup> Nov	
15	1 <sup>st</sup> December	Revision		
16	8 <sup>th</sup> December	Revision		
17	15 <sup>th</sup> December	Revision		Examination dates to be confirmed

# TOPIC TWO

## MANAGEMENT

### **Recommended Reading:**

- Chapter 4 of Textbook

### **Recommended Supplementary Reading:**

- Mintzberg, H. (1990); 'The Manager's Job, Folklore and Fact', *Harvard Business Review*, March-April.
- Katter, J. (1999); 'What Effective General Managers Really Do', *Harvard Business Review*, March-April.

Note: Now that we have discussed the evolution and nature of work our next step is to focus on the managerial role in its many forms. This is an important chapter which you should study carefully. Evidently our study of management is the central theme of this module so our analysis of management starts, but does not end, with this chapter. It is perhaps useful to consider the content here as an over-arching framework that supports many of our subsequent topics.

### **The objective of this topic is to:**

- Introduce you to the process of management and the various perspectives that have influenced its development.

### **On completion of studying this topic you should be able to:**

- Define and explain the main activities of management
- Explain several competing perspectives on management
- Understand the process of management

- Understand how management behaviour is correlated to the strategy, structure and environment of the organization
- Explain the nature of strategic management
- Identify the behaviours of successful managers
- Appreciate the variability of the role.
- Explain how globalisation affects managerial activity

## **Introduction**

This topic examines a range of considerations related to management and organisational behaviour, focusing on themes which include an outline definition of management and of major perspectives on management, managerial rationality and strategy. The aim is to go beyond a mode of analysis which is purely descriptive of management behaviour and to show contingencies which impact on management policies. Of course the word 'manager' is a very familiar term to all of us and one that is liberally used to define a vast array of roles and responsibilities. Your local video store will have a manager, but how different or similar is his or her role to say that of your bank manager or indeed the manager of a large business division? Are the jobs basically the same? To help us answer this question let's begin by looking at the meaning of management.

## **The Meaning of Management**

The words 'manage' and 'manager' are derived from the Italian word *maneggiare* – to handle or train horses. But the activities of management and definition of the management function are diverse. Some key points of reference include:

- Henri Fayol provided the classic definition of management as a series of four key activities that managers must continually perform including, planning, organising, directing and controlling (Figure 4.1). This is termed the PODC tradition. A link can be seen with Taylorism which was discussed in chapter 2.

- In *The Practice of Management*, Drucker defined management in terms of its being both a function and a social group. Drucker noted that “management is charged with making resources productive”, but he also saw it as fulfilling the needs of social justice
- The concept of the organisation as a formal structure involves the supervision of employees directly in the production of goods or services (line management), whereas a staff manager supervises a service that is necessary to the organisation but is not the organisation’s core strategic or business activity.
- Sociological studies emphasize features of power and this relates to the control of work activities.
- ‘Organisational Behaviour’ is a term used to describe the behaviour of managers; these are individuals empowered to regulate and control the behaviour of others.

### **Major Perspectives on Management**

It is possible to define four major perspectives on management (Figure 4.2):

- The **science perspective** is articulated in the works of Frederick Taylor and Henri Fayol. This links to an idealised image of management, rationally orientated and focused on the achievement of managerial goals. Viewing management as a science suggests that its principles can be applied in any context.
- The **political perspective** provides a view of management that characterises the workplace as a purposeful miniature society with politics pervading all managerial work. Managers dynamically shape resources and outcomes by their actions, often through cooperation or alliances. Viewing management through the political lens suggests that

it has much to do with the idea of power dynamics and an ability to establish and control social networks.

- The **control perspective** conceptualises management as a controlling agent that serves the economic imperatives imposed by capitalist market relations. It involves the paradox of the controlling manager, who nevertheless needs to obtain the consensual commitment of his staff. This perspective reminds us of our earlier discussion on the paradox of seeking both control and commitment.
- The **practice perspective** conceptualises management as an activity aimed at the continued improvement of diverse, fragmented and usually contested complex practices. It acknowledges the role of the other perspectives, acknowledging the complex role of contradictory forces which affect management processes within organizational structures.

Identifiable practices include:

- **Primary social practices** aimed at transforming resources in the production of goods and services.
- **Secondary social practices** are directed at achieving overall integration and coordination of primary social practices through the design, implementation and monitoring of various administrative mechanisms.
- The practice perspective synthesizes these three key aspects of management – science, process and control – by conceptually reworking and integrating these elements within a model of management. This emphasises bureaucratic structures which support the attainment of organisational productivity. This functions as a mode of control which interrelates with the desire to extend the efficiency and lifespan of the organisation.

**Think Point:** *What do you think of these four perspectives of management? Go back to Figure 3.1 in Chapter 3. Where would you place the “practice” perspective on the conceptual schema? Do these four perspectives help us to understand managerial work and the uncertainties and conflicts found in managing people?*

### **The Process of Management**

It is important to ask both ‘what do managers do?’ and also why they do what they do. Sociologists adopt micro-level approaches whereas the approach of Fayol, adopted in the earlier C20th, emphasized a technical managerial rationality. Recently, approaches have emphasised the limits of rationality and the actualities of practice:

- Carlson, (1951), emphasised that managers have little time for long-term strategic planning because of constant interruptions from subordinates. Mintzberg (1973) noted that a proficiency in superficial activities was a guiding feature of managerial activity. These views clash with the rationalistic viewpoint of management as a purposeful, entirely useful process.
  
- Mintzberg (1975; 1989) classified work into ten various ‘roles’ within three organised sets of behaviours: interpersonal, informational and decisional (see figure 4.3). These roles emphasized the function of the manager as being at the heart of the organisation, as a “nerve centre”, the informational roles of the manager flowing from their interpersonal activity. This approach distinguished the activity of line management (concerned to monitor or disseminate information) as opposed to the figurehead- or leadership-orientated activities of senior staff. (***This is the article referred to under the supplementary reading for this topic.***)

- Kotter (1982) challenged the Fayol cycle (PODC) and emphasized the contextually specific nature of management. Rather this approach distinguished demands associated with *task responsibilities* such as setting goals, allocating and stewarding resources, meeting targets and identifying and solving problems, from demands associated with relationships (obtaining information, cooperation and support from other managers and motivating and supervising subordinates).
- Other features of recent research have emphasised features such as the level of education of co-workers; the significance of scanning the external environment as opposed to monitoring horizontal linkages relative to senior management; and the diversity of managerial activities in, for instance, pharmaceutical companies. Some recent work (Hales) tends to reinforce the ideas of the Fayol cycle of management activities, and other research has emphasised gender and cross-cultural aspects (Helgesen). This work has tended to build upon the earlier work of Mintzberg but to incorporate the gender feature.
- A further feature which has attracted research attention is that of work place harassment and bullying. Again, this shows the diversity of recent research approaches but emphasises some of the negative aspects of over-control of managers of their staff; also being recognised as a phenomenon linked to Taylorist or Fordist modes of production.
- A further feature of interest is that of organisational conflict. Managers regulate the organisational environment to ensure smooth productivity, and to make the most of their resources. This

inevitably involves the dimension of power, as it is exhibited in the control of both employee and firm output.

It is possible to note that these points disclose diverse research trajectories, in a research process which is not purely reflective of activity within firms but also has its own creative dimension. Thereby this is not just an objective narrative of behaviour observed in practice.

### **Managerial Rationality**

A number of competing theories are examined to give some insight into '*why managers do what they do*'. These goes beyond the narrow descriptive analysis of what they do and take the form of several theoretical schools:

- The **neoclassical approach** emphasizes the manager as 'agent' of the owner and investor, bent on the maximisation of profit. The importance of the market is emphasised and links are made to management as a rational purposive activity. Weber's account of managerial rationality emphasises different modes of legitimacy and argued that managers with knowledge and expertise are obeyed because the workers recognise that it is rational to obey them.
- The **contingency approach** focuses largely on the internal authority structure of the organisation. Joan Woodward (1965) took a contingency approach in her influential study of manufacturing technology in which she classified organisational structure and management behaviour according to the technical complexity of the manufacturing process. She argued that there was an inter-relationship between management hierarchy, elements of behaviour and technical rationality. She also argued that 'organic' or small-batch production organisations can be more effective in certain contexts. Contingency theory focuses on technological and structural determinants of

management activity, which are non-political aspects of management and therefore this theory is only partial as an explanation of management activity.

- The **political approach** incorporates elements of stakeholder and resource-dependency theories and focuses upon pressures, constraints and power relationships as causal explanations of managerial behaviour. This includes an approach which views the organisation as a coalition of stakeholder groups; some of which will be more decisive in terms of their influence on management.
- The **labour process approach** views capitalism as an approach which is both economically exploitative and socially alienating; profit is achieved not so much through the attainment of efficiency in the technical sense, but rather by extracting a maximum of output from workers at a minimum cost (Braverman, 1974).

A further approach which emphasises the limits on the rationality of management activity emphasises the feature of **strategic choice** (see Chapter 1, Figure 1.2). This theoretical viewpoint stresses that management is a social process whereby choices on various issues are taken by a dominant elite of leadership within the organisation. Internal and external demands, various constraints and choices operate to give management some degree of policy control in market contexts (Stewart, 1982).

**Think Point: *Based on your own work experience or that of family or friends, which approach to explaining managerial behaviour do you think represents reality? Think of examples to support your answer.***

## **Strategic Management**

A strategic choice perspective goes beyond a rationalistic view of management, bounding this within the frame of a variety of factors and exigencies – including political and decision-making activities but also taking into account uncertainties within and without of the firm. This leads towards a view of systemising the process of forming a strategic policy: this can typically be broken down as five steps: Mission and goals, environmental analysis, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and strategy evaluation (figure 4.5). These features tend to be followed in descriptive textual approaches and are prescriptive in orientation. They tend to describe what ought to be done rather than what is, and are therefore normative in nature.

## **Hierarchy of Strategy**

Note: As this dimension will be fully explored in your Strategy Module we shall only look briefly at it here.

It is also possible to form a view of strategic activity as multi-levelled; this follows the perspective of Michael Porter and has heavily influenced mainstream theories. Multi-divisional units can be viewed at three main levels:

- **Corporate-level strategy** describes the executive's overall direction in terms of their general philosophy towards the growth and the management of the organization's various business units.
- **Business-level strategy** deals with decisions and actions related to each business unit, the main objective of a business-level strategy being to make the unit more competitive. Three popular competitive strategies are found in mainstream management texts: cost leadership, differentiation and focus.
- **Functional-level strategy** refers to the major functional operations within the business unit, including research and development, marketing, manufacturing, finance and HR.
- The integration of these levels is emphasised in terms of the formation of strategic policies.

## **Global Capitalism and Managerial Behaviour**

The acceleration of the globalisation of economic activity is the defining political economic paradigm of our time, or as Hertz states “globalization is arguably about the unfettered pursuit of profit” (2002).

- A significant area of research study relates to the realisation of greater profit through economies of scale, consistent with low-cost leadership; this involves supplying global markets on an international basis. Economies of location are also utilised, these involves exploiting comparative national differences.
- Managers in global corporations face tension from two types of business pressures:
  - Demands for global cost reduction
  - Demands for product differentiation to meet local tastes (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1989).
- A shift towards integration of product lines, parts design, and control systems, is a feature of the drive for global efficiency, especially in technology-intensive areas.
- Standardisation and the drive to lower costs are set against needs towards a differentiation of product towards local needs. National regulatory requirements also differentiate homogenous product lines.

## **An Integrated Model of Management**

The three, related dimensions of management: activities, contingencies and behaviours - are brought together in the three-dimensional model (figure 4.7. Page 122). This model suggests that management is a multi-dimensional integrating and controlling activity which permeates every facet of workplace experience and shapes the employment relationship. These theories derive

from Hales' variation of classical theories, and shows how contingencies (external context, strategy and organisation) impinge on the other factors.

### **The Behaviour of Successful Managers**

Prescriptive texts orientated towards finding successful recipes for management can at least offer principles which can be used to build a more nuanced and individualised conception of managerial work (Figure 4.8). However, the causal link between the theories and organisational performance is complex in any given case and rarely predictive. It can be said that:

- Research may help to change how potential and practising managers think about their managerial role and their own effectiveness.
- Studies reviewed in this chapter of the book emphasise the importance of social relationships.
- Studies show consistently that an ability to understand the motives of others and develop a set of communication, networking and conflict-resolution skills are essential. (supporting the case for OB)

These points are generic in nature. Much will depend in any given case on the position of a manager within a hierarchy. Technical skills are less important at a higher level than skills of an interpersonal nature or those which address the difficulties of the creation of a strategic policy.

### **Discussion Questions**

- Reflect on your own work experiences and the various managers you have encountered in your career to-date. Draw up a list of those identifiable behaviours that were displayed by individuals you rated as effective managers.
- In what ways is the drive towards efficiency impacting on organisations operating in Ireland? What are the observable trends you see occurring?

- How does the increasing globalisation of markets impact on managerial behaviour?
  - Consider the Public, Private and Voluntary sectors – three very different employment landscapes. Identify the unique challenges for managers operating in each context. How different / similar are they?

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