

8.7: Field of Management Theory

Learning Objectives

- Summarize Henri Fayol's contributions to the field of management theory
- Summarize the key functions of management today

Henri Fayol and Administrative Theory

Henri Fayol, ca. 1900



Figure 8.7.1: Henri Fayol, ca. 1900

Henri Fayol was born in Turkey in 1841. Fayol was a mining engineer who became the head of a large mining company. He wanted managers to be responsible for more than just increasing production. The story goes that he came to this insight when a mine was shut down after a horse broke a leg and no one at the mine had authority to purchase another. Fayol saw this as a direct failure of management to plan and organize the work. Following this, Fayol began experimenting with different management structures.

He condensed his ideas and experiences into a set of management duties and principles, which he published in 1916 in the book *General and Industrial Management*. Fayol incorporated some of Weber's ideas in his theories. However, unlike Weber, Fayol was concerned with how workers were managed and how they contributed to the organization. He felt that successful organizations, and therefore successful management, were linked to satisfied and motivated employees.

Fayol's five duties of management were as follows:

- **Foresight:** Create a plan of action for the future.
- **Organization:** Provide resources to implement the plan.
- **Command:** Select and lead the best workers through clear instructions and orders.
- **Coordinate:** Make sure the diverse efforts fit together through clear communication.
- **Control:** Verify whether things are going according to plan and make corrections where needed.

These duties evolved into the four functions of management: planning (foresight), organizing (organization), leading (command and coordinate), and controlling (control).

Fayol also proposed a set of fourteen principles that he felt could guide management behavior, but he did not think the principles were rigid or exhaustive. He thought management principles needed to be flexible and adaptable and that they would be expanded through experience and experimentation. Some of Fayol's principles are still included in management theory and practice, including the following:

- **Scalar chain:** An unbroken chain of command extends from the top to the bottom of the organization.
- **Unity of command:** Employees receive orders from only one superior.
- **Unity of direction:** Activities that are similar should be the responsibility of one person.
- **Division of work:** Workers specialize in a few tasks to become more proficient.

? Practice Question

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Key Functions of Management Today

Over the years, management theorists have built upon and refined Fayol's original work and, more recently, have combined the "command" and "coordinate" functions into one function: leading. Today, the key functions of management are considered to be the following: planning, organizing, staffing, leading, controlling, and motivating.

- **Planning:** Deciding what needs to happen in the future (today, next week, next month, next year, over the next five years, etc.) and generating plans for action.
- **Organizing:** Implementing a pattern of relationships among workers and making optimum use of the resources required to enable the successful carrying out of plans.
- **Staffing:** Job analysis, recruitment, and hiring of people with the necessary skills for appropriate jobs. Providing or facilitating ongoing training, if necessary, to keep skills current.
- **Leading/directing:** Determining what needs to be done in a situation and getting people to do it.
- **Controlling/monitoring:** Checking current outcomes against forecast plans and making adjustments when necessary so that goals are achieved.
- **Motivating:** Motivation is a basic function of management because without motivation, employees may feel disconnected from their work and the organization, which can lead to ineffective performance. If managers do not motivate their employees, they may not feel their work is contributing to the overall goals of the organization (which are usually set by top-level management).

All levels of management perform these functions; however, as with the skills required for effective management, the amount of time a manager spends on each function depends on the level of management and the needs of the organization. In the next readings we will explore each of these functions in greater depth.

? Practice Question

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