

8.17: Putting It Together- Management

Synthesis

Ship captains, jugglers, parking lots . . . Why have we used so many different analogies to describe managers and management? Because all of them are appropriate given the diversity of roles and responsibilities that managers have on any given day. They must truly possess a broad range of skills in order to react, adapt, plan, and change course swiftly to stay ahead of changes inside and outside of the organization. Perhaps the best way to sum it up is that managers and leaders need to be prepared because . . .



You can view the [transcript for “Life is like a box of chocolates”](#) (link opens in new tab) or the [text alternative for “Life is Like a Box of Chocolates”](#) (opens in new window).

Summary

Managers

Managers wear many hats and must bring with them an entire toolkit of skills—ranging from interpersonal to technical skills—in order to reach organizational goals and objectives effectively. Without the proper skill set, managers can find themselves unable to gain the trust and support of those around them, making their job more difficult and, in some cases, impossible.

Management Theory

Although the world of business has changed tremendously over time, the functions of management originally identified by Fayol in the early 1900s still hold. Fayol’s original five functions have evolved into the six key functions of management today, including planning, organizing, staffing, leading, controlling and motivating. What has changed is where and how managers perform these four primary functions.

Planning

Planning within a business ranges from the big picture to the very granular, from the organization’s foundational plan (for example, its vision and mission) and set of strategic plans to its daily operations plans. Each one builds upon the other, and without a well-developed set of plans that management can implement, an organization will likely drift from one venture or problem to another without ever really achieving success.

Organizing

The structure of an organization can have a tremendous impact on the organization’s ability to react to both internal and external forces. Organizational structure also determines the managers’ span of control, communication channels, and operational responsibilities. The organization should be structured in such a way that it reflects the company’s mission and supports its customer and product/services goals to the greatest advantage.

Leading

From autocratic to laissez-faire, leadership styles run the entire spectrum. Some of the most effective leaders are those who can adopt different styles to fit the situation at hand.

Controlling

The control function of management has two aims: to make order out of chaos and to evaluate whether the company's efforts and resources are being maximized. Remember that the "control function" doesn't give management license to be manipulative or autocratic. Instead it refers to the importance of control through *evaluation*, since evaluation is the key to knowing whether a company is producing the desired results or not.

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