

Directing

Presented By-
Priya Sharma
Assistant Professor
Graduate School of Business
Tula's Institute, Dehradun



DIRECTING

Meaning and concept of Directing :

Directing is an important element of management without which nothing in the managerial process can achieve success. Direction is the very essence of management. Infact, it is the sum total of all managerial efforts to see the organisation marching towards its defined goals.

The managerial function of directing is like the activities of a teacher in a classroom. In order to teach, a teacher has to guide his students, maintain discipline, inspire them and lead them to the desired goal. It is a very important function in the management of any enterprise. It helps the managers in ensuring quality performance of jobs by the employees and achievement of organisational goals. It involves supervision, communication and providing leadership to the subordinates and motivating them to contribute to their best of capability. In this lesson we shall learn about this function in detail.

While managing an enterprise, managers have to get things done through people. In order to be able to do so, they have to undertake many activities, like guide the people who work under them, inspire and lead them to achieve common objectives. An office manager, for instance, has to supervise the activities of his subordinates, i.e., typists, office assistants, dispatchers, accounts clerks, etc. He has to issue instructions to them and describe and illustrate the work and related activities. He has to tell them what to do, and how to do it. The office manager can plan, organise and appoint people, but he can not get things done, unless he assigns specific duties to his subordinates and motivates them to perform well. All these activities of a manager constitute the directing function.

Definition of Directing :

- **According to S.S Chatterjee**, “Direction is the sum total of managerial efforts that is applied for guiding and inspiring the working teams to make better accomplishments in the organisation.”
- **According to Dale Opines**, “Direction is telling people what to do and seeing that they do it to the best of their ability. It includes making assignments, explaining procedures, seeing that mistakes are corrected, providing on the job instruction and of course issuing orders.”

Thus, directing is concerned with instructing, guiding, supervising and inspiring people in the organisation to achieve its objectives. It is the process of telling people what to do and seeing that they do it in the best possible manner. **The directing function thus, involves:**

- Telling people what is to be done and explaining to them how to do it.
- Issuing instructions and orders to subordinates to carry out their assignments as scheduled.
- Supervising their activities.
- Inspiring them to meet the managers expectation and contribute towards the achievement of organisational objectives.

Features of Directing :

They are explained as follows :

i) Directing Initiates Action:

Other functions prepare a base or setting of action, i. e., how action has to be carried on the directing initiate or start action. By giving directions or instructions the managers get the work started in the organisation.

ii) Directing takes place at every level:

Directing is a pervasive function as it is performed by managers at all levels and in all locations. Every manager has to supervise, guide, motivate and communicate with his subordinate to get things done. However, the time spent in directing is comparatively more at operational level of management. Directing takes place wherever superior subordinate relation exists.

iii) Directing flows From Top to Bottom:

Directions are given by managers to their subordinates. Every manager can direct his immediate subordinate and take directions from immediate boss. Directing starts from top level and flows to lower level.

iv) Performance Oriented:

Directing is a performance oriented function. The main motive of directing is bringing efficiency in performance. Directing converts plans into performance. Performance is the essence of directing. Directing functions direct the performance of individuals towards achievement of organisational goal.

v) Human Element:

Directing function involves study and molding of human behaviour. It improves interpersonal and intergroup relationship. It motivates employees to work with their best ability.

Importance of Directing :

Plans remain mere plans unless they are put into action. In the absence of direction, subordinates will have no idea as to what to do. They will probably not be inspired to complete the job satisfactorily. Implementation of plans is, thus, largely the concern of directing function. As a function of management, directing is useful in many ways. They are as follows :

- i) It guides and helps the subordinates to complete the given task properly and as per schedule.
- ii) It provides the necessary motivation to subordinates to complete the work satisfactorily and strive to do them best.
- iii) It helps in maintaining discipline and rewarding those who do well.
- iv) Directing involves supervision, which is essential to make sure that work is performed according to the orders and instructions.
- v) Different people perform different activities in the organisation. All the activities are interrelated. In order to co-ordinate the activities carried out in different parts and to ensure that they are performed well, directing is important. It thus, helps to integrate the various activities and so also the individual goals with organisational goals.
- vi) Directing involves leadership that essentially helps in creating appropriate work environment and build up team spirit.

Principles of Direction :

They are explained as follows :

i) Principle of Maximum Individual Contribution:

According to this principle, management should adopt that directing policy through which the employees get motivated and give their maximum individual contribution for the achievement of organisational objective.

ii) Principle of Harmony of Objectives:

According to this principle, there must be full coordination between organisational and individual objectives. Employees work in an organisation with an objective to get better remuneration, promotion, etc. On the other hand, organisational goal can be to earn more profits and to increase market share.

Sometimes it is seen that there is a conflict between the objectives of both the parties, e.g., organisation wants that it should get a major share of profit whereas employees perceives that as they work directly on the job, so more profit must be shared among them in the form of bonus. Management here must establish coordination between the objectives of both the parties/factors by adopting suitable method of direction.

iii) Principle of Unity of Command:

According to this principle, a subordinate should get directions from one officer at a time. If the subordinate gets directions from more than one officer, the subordinate will be unable to priorities his work. As a result, situation of confusion, conflict and disarrangement is created. By following this principle, effective direction takes place.

iv) Principle of Appropriateness of Direction Technique:

According to this principle, appropriate direction techniques should be used, e.g., to supervise effectively, to provide able leadership, to adopt free communication and to motivate through right medium.

v) Principle of Managerial Communication:

According to this principle, it should be monitored by the management that the subordinates get the same meaning for what has been said. This simplifies the job of the subordinates and they need not go to the managers repeatedly for enquiring.

vi) Principle of Use of Informal Organisation:

According to this principle, there must be a free flow of information between the seniors and the subordinates. The success of direction depends upon effective exchange of information to a great extent. Information should be given both through formal and informal mediums. Special attention should be given to the informal organisation. This strengthens the formal organisation.

vii) Principle of Leadership:

According to this principle, while giving directions to the subordinates a good leadership must be provided by the managers. By this, subordinates get influenced by the managers. In this situation, subordinates act according to the wish of the managers.

vii) Principle of Follow Through:

According to this principle, it must be monitored by management as to what extent the policies framed and issued directions have been enforced. Thus, it must be seen whether the employees are following the management or not.

If yes, then to what extent. As per this principle, the job of managers is not to sit idle after framing policies or issuing directions but to continuously take feedback. The advantage of this will be that if there is any problem in implementing a policy or a direction it can be removed then and there.

Components/Elements of Direction :

The important components of direction are as follows :

i) Motivation:

It is the process of inspiring and encouraging the people to do work. It is a skill of using the capability of manpower for the organization. It is a mental and physical presence of employee to do work. Effective motivation helps to raise the effective direction. Therefore, motivation is important aspect of direction.

ii) Leadership:

It is another important aspect of direction. It is defined as the process of influencing people to perform work effectively. In other words, it influences the behavior of employees or subordinate. According to time, situation and behaviour of followers, a leader must conduct his followers. therefore, it is an important aspect of direction.

iii) Communication:

Communication means transferring information from one person to another. In other words when the information is transmitted from one person to another and information receiver easily take the information, it is known as communication. It includes sending message and receiving message. After sending message receiver receives the message and understands it. Therefore message receiver responds and reacts about the message. In an organization manager must develop an effective communication system so that s/he may give instruction and guidance to the subordinates and motivate them to do the work to the best of their ability.

v) Supervision:

It is another important aspect of direction. Direction is not only to issue order but also supervising job of subordinates. It is an important function of every manager. So the manager's duty is to look after their work and examine that whether they have done according to the order issued or not and also help in solving their work problems.