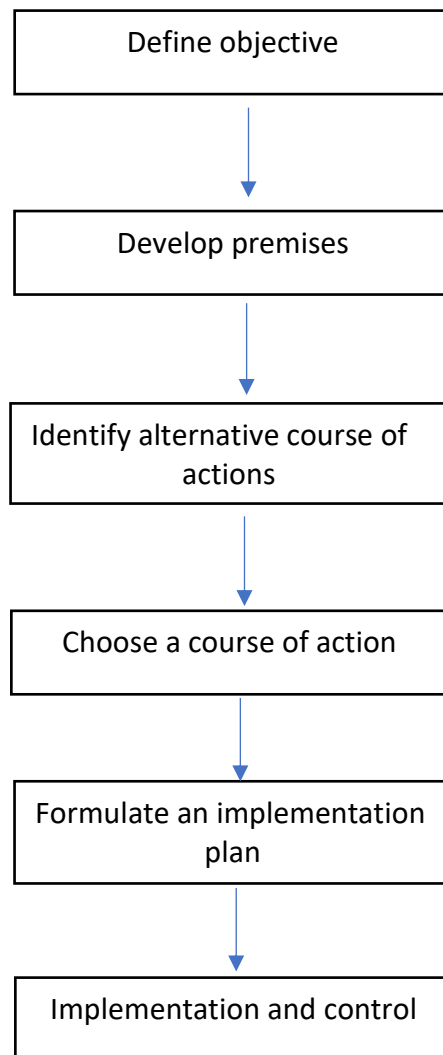


INFORMATION SYSTEM PLANNING

Planning is primary management function which is a process of setting objectives for the future and lay out the action necessary to reach those objectives.

Steps involved in Information system Planning:-



1. Strategic Planning;

The purpose of this planning is to develop long-term objectives for the entire organization and for its major business units and more so to specify the general strategies for acquisition of resources needed to accomplish these objectives.

It includes the following:-

- a) The establishment of broad long-term objectives for an enterprise.

- b) Accessing the company's current position relative to these objectives and in particular considering the threats and opportunities provided by the environment.
- c) Considering alternative strategies for reaching the objectives in the competitive business environment.
- d) Outlining the organizational structure and the total resources needed to implement the plan.
- e) The planning for the implementation process.

The MIS strategic plan includes:-

- ii) Statement of the objectives to be achieved.
- iii) Projection of the future MIS environment.
- iv) Projection of the future user environment.
- v) Projection of the future industry environment.
- vi) Definition and evaluation of strategic alternatives in relation to the organization strategic plan and the selection of the preferred alternative.
- vii) The establishment of the required infrastructure plans and the personnel requirements.
- viii) The plan for the organizational structure of the MIS department.
- ix) A detailed financial plan indicating the benefit and the cost to be incurred.
- x) The plan for the implementation of the strategic plan.

2. Tactical and Operational Planning

This involves the prioritizing and laying out in detail the acquisition of hardware, software and telecommunication equipment. This planning is expressed in terms of the budgets which specify the resources committed to a given plan for a given project or time period. Budgets can be fixed or flexible, and an organization can use spreadsheet as the main budgeting tool.

Planning can be TOP-DOWNS whereby the process starts with the senior management. This may ignore what is going on at the bottom.

It can also be BOTTOM-UP where the junior staffs are encouraged to come up with their own departmental plans. However this may not align well with the strategic objectives of the organization.

The role that information systems play in the planning process is to be used in developing plans such as forecasting and identifying and comparing alternative causes of action. There is need therefore to make use of financial ratios to justify our various plans.

Elements of Good Planning

1. VISION: This is a view of what top management has for organization. It create model that represent what organization would look like and what it will achieve in future environment which it will operate.

2. MISSION: This is the bottom line purpose of organization i.e. what is why it exists.

3. GOALS: These are broad statement of the end results that organization intend to achieve in fulfilling its mission.

4. OBJECTIVE: These are specific and tangible measures of result that organization want to achieve.

5. STRATEGY: A statement on how to reach the vision and achieve the objectives taking care of environment available resources and constraints.

6. CONSENSUS AND COMMITMENT: The leadership must be dedicated to achieving the vision and mission.

Importance of Planning in MIS

1. Alignment with Organizational Goals:

- **Strategic Alignment:** Planning ensures that the MIS aligns with the organization's strategic goals and objectives. It helps in designing systems that support business processes, enhance productivity, and provide relevant information to decision-makers.
- **Goal Setting:** Clear planning sets specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals for the MIS, ensuring all efforts are directed towards achieving the organizational objectives.

2. Resource Management:

- **Efficient Allocation:** Planning helps in the efficient allocation of resources, including time, money, and personnel. It ensures that the resources are used optimally to achieve the desired outcomes.
- **Cost Control:** Proper planning helps in estimating costs accurately and controlling expenditures, avoiding cost overruns and financial inefficiencies.

3. Risk Management:

- **Risk Identification:** Through planning, potential risks and challenges can be identified early. This allows for the development of strategies to mitigate these risks, ensuring smoother implementation and operation of the MIS.
- **Contingency Planning:** Planning includes preparing for unexpected events or failures, ensuring the organization can quickly recover and maintain continuity of operations.

4. System Integration and Coordination:

- **Integration:** Planning ensures that the MIS is integrated with other systems within the organization, facilitating seamless data flow and interoperability between different departments and functions.
- **Coordination:** It promotes coordination among various stakeholders, including IT staff, end-users, and management, ensuring everyone is on the same page and working towards common objectives.

5. Enhanced Decision-Making:

- **Informed Decisions:** Planning helps in gathering and analyzing the necessary information, which is crucial for making informed decisions. It ensures that the MIS provides accurate, timely, and relevant information to managers.
- **Data Quality:** Proper planning ensures the implementation of data governance practices, enhancing the quality and reliability of the data used in decision-making processes.

6. Scalability and Flexibility:

- **Future-Proofing:** Planning for scalability ensures that the MIS can grow and adapt to future organizational needs without requiring complete overhauls or significant disruptions.
- **Flexibility:** It ensures that the system can be modified or expanded as per changing business environments and technological advancements.

7. Performance Measurement and Improvement:

- **KPIs and Metrics:** Planning includes setting key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the MIS. This helps in continuous monitoring and improvement of the system.
- **Feedback Loops:** It establishes feedback mechanisms to assess user satisfaction and system performance, enabling continuous improvements and adjustments.

8. Legal and Regulatory Compliance:

- **Compliance:** Planning ensures that the MIS complies with relevant laws, regulations, and industry standards, avoiding legal issues and penalties.
- **Security:** It includes planning for robust security measures to protect data and information systems from breaches and cyber threats.

9. Innovation and Competitive Advantage:

- **Innovation:** Planning encourages the adoption of new technologies and innovative solutions that can provide a competitive edge to the organization.
- **Market Adaptation:** It helps the organization to quickly adapt to market changes and technological advancements, maintaining its competitiveness.