

What is management

It is very difficult to give a precise definition to the term management. It is essentially the common elephant which is explored by several blind men and explained according to individual confined experiences. Management essentially has been evolutionary in growth. Different thinkers laid stress on different aspects. Since it is a field which has borrowed heavily from other disciplines hence the tendency has been to view and interpret it from very different angles. The economist looks upon it as a resource like land, capital and labour. The bureaucrats interpret it as a system of authority to achieve business goals. The sociologists considers managers as a part of the class of elite in the society. The psychologist defines it as way to understand and motivate people. For mathematician and scientist it is the quantitative technique to increase productivity and decrease costs.

Management refers to the process of coordinating and integrating work activities so that they're completed efficiently and effectively with and through other people.

1. The *process* refers to the ongoing functions or primary activities engaged in by managers.
2. Coordinating others' work activities is what distinguishes a manager's job from a nonmanagerial one.
3. **Efficiency** is getting the most output from the least amount of inputs, the goal of which is to minimize resource costs.
4. **Effectiveness** is completing activities so that organizational goals are attained; often described as "doing the right things."

Some important definition which came up during its process of evolution are as follows:

F.W. Taylor: Management is the art of knowing what you want to do and then seeing it is done in the best and cheapest way.

Henry Fayol: To manage is to forecast and to plan, to organize, to command, to coordinate and to control.

Ralph Davis: Management is the function of executive leadership anywhere.

George Terry: Management is a distinct process consisting of planning, organizing, actuating and controlling performed to determine and accomplish the predetermined objectives by the use of people and resources.

Lawrence Appleby: Management is the development of people and not just that of the organization.

Dalton Macfarland: Management is the process by which managers create, direct, maintain and operate purposive organizations through systematic, coordinated, cooperative human effort.

Stanely Vance: Management is simply the process of decision making and control over the action of human beings for the express purpose of attaining predetermined goals.

Peter Drucker: Management is work, and as such it has its own skills, its own tools, its own techniques its own principles and its own ethics. It is the organ, the life giving, acting, dynamic organ of the institution it manages.

Jhon Mee: Management may be defined as the art of securing maximum results with a minimum of effort so as to secure maximum prosperity and happiness for both employer and employee and give the public best possible service.

NATURE/CHARACTERISTICS OF MANAGEMENT

1) Management is a process: It is a process of planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling. These functions are performed continuously and simultaneously and not necessarily in any serial order.

It is possible to acquire knowledge for handling the different functions of this process through experience and without any theoretical training. However it becomes a more effective and efficient with the help of training and formal knowledge.

2) It is a social process: It takes place only through people. It is this pervasiveness of human element that gives management its special character as a **social process**.

3) It involves group effort: Management came into existence when a group (animal?) decided to join individual strength and abilities to attain a common and predetermined objective. However, now it has attained a new dimension and even the individual efforts have been recognized to possess management principles. Self-actualization, in fact, was recognized as the ultimate level by Maslow while propounding his theory of motivation.

4) It aims at achieving pre-determined objectives: All organization - be they political, social or commercial purpose - are essentially groups of individuals formed for common objectives.

5) It is a distinct entity: It is a distinct work. It involves “getting things done through others” rather than “doing” itself.

6) It is a multi-disciplinary subject: It draws upon many other disciplines such as physics, mechanics, anthropology, sociology, psychology and other social sciences.

7) Co-ordination is its essence: The whole idea of co-ordination is to adjust, reconcile and synchronize individual efforts so that group effort becomes more effective and help achieve the common objective.

8) It is a system of authority: Management is a rule-making and rule enforcing body, and within itself it is bound together by a web of relationship between superiors and subordinates.

9) It is all pervasive: Unlike the common perception, management is not limited just to business organization, but exists at all levels be it the government of a nation, scientific research, religious organizations or even sports.

10) It is an essential human activity: It has always been a part of human society ever since the dawn of civilization. The life today has become so complex that entire world will collapse without it.

11) It is a profession: It is backed by a systematic body of knowledge. A number of its principles need proper learning and formal education. But it fails (unlike medical and legal) to qualify the test of professionalism relating to restricted entry.