

BASIC MANAGERIAL ROLES AND SKILLS

Managerial Roles

To meet the many demands of performing their functions, managers assume multiple roles. A role is an organized set of behaviors. Henry Mintzberg has identified ten roles common to the work of all managers.

The ten roles are divided into three groups:

- Interpersonal
- Informational
- Decisional

The performance of managerial roles and the requirements of these roles can be played at different times by the same manager and to different degrees depending on the level and function of management. The ten roles are described individually, but they form an integrated whole.

1. Interpersonal Roles

The **interpersonal roles** link all managerial work together. The three interpersonal roles are primarily concerned with interpersonal relationships.

- **Figurehead Role:** The manager represents the organization in all matters of formality. The top level manager represents the company legally and socially to those outside of the organization. The supervisor represents the work group to higher management and higher management to the work group.
- **Liaison Role:** The manager interacts with peers and people outside the organization. The top level manager uses the liaison role to gain favors and information, while the supervisor uses it to maintain the routine flow of work.
- **The leader Role:** It defines the relationships between the manager and employees.

2. Informational Roles

The **informational roles** ensure that information is provided. The three informational roles are primarily concerned with the information aspects of managerial work.

- **Monitor Role:** The manager receives and collects information about the operation of an enterprise.

- **Disseminator Role:** The manager transmits special information into the organization. The top level manager receives and transmits more information from people outside the organization than the supervisor.
- **Spokesperson Role:** The manager disseminates the organization's information into its environment. Thus, the top level manager is seen as an industry expert, while the supervisor is seen as a unit or departmental expert.

3. Decisional Roles

The **decisional roles** make significant use of the information and there are four decisional roles.

- **Entrepreneur Role:** The manager initiates change, new projects; identify new ideas, delegate idea responsibility to others.
- **Disturbance Handler Role:** The manager deals with threats to the organization. The manager takes corrective action during disputes or crises; resolve conflicts among subordinates; adapt to environmental crisis.
- **Resource Allocator Role:** The manager decides who gets resources; schedule, budget set priorities and chooses where the organization will apply its efforts.
- **Negotiator Role:** The manager negotiates on behalf of the organization. The top level manager makes the decisions about the organization as a whole, while the supervisor makes decisions about his or her particular work unit.

Managerial Skills

Managers at every level in the management hierarchy must exercise three basic types of skills: technical, human, and conceptual. All managers must acquire these skills in varying proportions, although the importance of each category of skill changes at different management levels.

Technical skills:

- Technical skills refer to the ability and knowledge in using the equipment, techniques and procedure involved in performing specific tasks.
- These skills require specialized knowledge and proficiency in the mechanics of a particular.
- Technical skills lose relative importance at higher levels of the management hierarchy, but most top executives started out as technical experts.

Human skills:

- Human skills refer to the ability of a manager to work effectively with other people both as individual and as members of a group.
- Human skills are concerned with understanding of people.
- These are required to win cooperation of others and to build effective work teams.

Conceptual skills:

- Conceptual skills involve the ability to see the whole organization and the interrelationships between its parts.
- These skills refer to the ability to visualize the entire picture or to consider a situation in its totality.
- These skills help the managers to analyze the environment and to identify the opportunities.
- Conceptual skills are especially important for top-level managers, who must develop long-range plans for the future direction of their organization.