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# UNIT 1: DIRECTION AND SUPERVISION

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## Unit Structure

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## 1.0 Learning Objectives

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After learning this unit, you will be able to understand:

- Nature and need of Directing.
- Importance and principles of Directing.
- Supervision.
- Role and functions of a Supervisor.

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## 1.1 Introduction

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In the previous unit, you learned about Staffing which is one of the most important functions of management. It comprises managing manpower in an organisation involving the identification of requirement of personnel, their recruitment, selection, training, development, appraisal, promotion, transfer, compensation, etc. in an organisation.



Fig 1.1 Introductions

In this unit, you will learn about direction. Every manager, to get things done by subordinates, has to direct them. The directing is considered as an initiating function. Here you will study about direction and supervision. Motivation, Leadership and Communication are discussed in the next chapter.

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## 1.2 Direction

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In the process of management, the planning organising and staffing are not enough. These are to be supported by effective directing and efficient controlling. Every manager must direct his subordinates, to get things done. The directing is considered as an initiating function.

Organisation is the sum-total of human and non-human resources. These resources are utilised in apt ways in order to achieve the desired results. Through direction, the management conveys and motivates individuals in the organisation to function in the desired way to get organisational objectives. Without direction, other managerial activities like planning, organising, and staffing become ineffective.



**Fig 1.2 Directing and Supervising**

Here the manager will direct, instruct, guide and oversee the presentation of every workers so as to obtain already defined goals. It is the main part of the management process which is responsible for planning, organising, staffing.

Direction would primarily include human factors that explain guidance to workers in order to do work. In case of management, direction refers to activities that are shaped to inspire subordinates in order to work efficiently and professionally.

### **1.2.1 Definition of Directing**

In the words of Urwick and Brech, “directing is the guidance, the inspiration, the leadership of those men and women that constitutes the real core of the responsibility of management.”

Thus directing involves, issuing orders and instructions, overseeing of the subordinates and supervising the work being performed by them.

According to Haiman, “Directing consists of a process or technique by which instruction can be issued and operations can be carried out as originally planned.” Broadly, the process of directing involves the following elements:

- Issuing orders and instructions to the subordinates regarding the work being performed by them.
- Guiding, counselling and educating the subordinates and telling them the way of doing the given job.
- Supervising the work being performed by them on the regular basis to ensure that they have been working according to the plan.

- Maintaining and inspiring the subordinates for following given orders and instructions and working in the given direction.

### 1.2.2 Nature of Directing

There are certain characteristics related to directing which are:

1. **Pervasive Function:** As directing is essential at every levels in an organisation, so it is the duty of the manager to give related guidance and to boost his subordinates.
2. **Continuous Activity:** In an organisation, direction serves as continuous activity throughout life in an organisation.
3. **Human Factor:** It is seen that directing is associated with subordinates and as human factor. As both are complex and unpredictable, hence direction serves as an important part.
4. **Creative Activity:** With direction, you can alter any plans into performance as in the absence of this; people will become stationary and physical resources results in no meaning.
5. **Executive Function:** As seen, direction is done with all managers and executives at certain levels without working of an enterprise.
6. **Delegate Function:** It is a function which is related to direction that deals with human beings.

### 1.2.3 Need and Importance of Directing

Directing is at the core of managing process. The presentations of various accomplishments in organisation revolve around it. In spite of sound planning, a suitable organisational structure, effective staffing and efficient controlling, the desired results may not be obtained without proper directing. It is only through directing process, the organisational actions are commenced for attaining its objectives.

In detail, the importance of directing can be understood on the basis of the following factors.

1. **Directing helps in achieving Co-ordination:** The Co-ordination is considered as a by-product of effective directing. In the process of directing, every manager assimilates the activities of all the subordinates through

supervision, guidance and counselling for achieving pre- set organisational goals.

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2. **It is a means of motivation:** To accomplish the-objectives of organisation, it is necessary to encourage the workforce there. The employees are motivated to work willingly and efficiently, through the process of directing. The superior who guides the activities of underlings stimulates them to follow given orders and instructions whole-heartedly.
3. **Directing supplements other managerial functions:** In the process of managing, the manager has to perform many management functions such as planning organising, staffing and controlling etc. To achieve desired results from all these functions, the directing function is crucial. Through directing, other managerial functions are initiated and actuated. With ineffective directing, the managerial functions remain less effective or completely ineffective.
4. **Directing helps in coping with changing environment:** The changing business environment may force the organisation to initiate change in its functioning, structure or goals. Such changes can be presented and managed effectively with the help of directing. Through directing, the manager provides vibrant headship and free and frank communication with subordinates as to convince them regarding the positive side of change. They may be taken into confidence and persuaded for accepting the change and giving their full cooperation for implementing it.
5. **Directing facilitates order and discipline among employees:** Disciplined workforce is needed for the effective organisational operations. Through the process of directing briefings and instructions are given to the subordinates and they are inspired and motivated to follow them. The main purpose of directing is to get things done by subordinates. By supervising, guiding, educating and overseeing the activities of subordinates, they are made to work in a disciplined manner.

#### 1.2.4 Principles of Directing

In order to make directing more effective and meaningful, certain principles are followed. Some important principles of directing are as follows:

1. **Harmony of objectives:** The establishment is a collective entity of the people. It embodies the interest of various groups of the people such as owners, employees, customers, financiers and the society etc.

According to this principle, to secure maximum prosperity for the organisation and to work for the interest of other groups in a better way, all conflicting objectives must be synchronized so that they strengthen and promote each other. In this regard, F.W.Taylor has painted out that an effective direction depends on the harmony of objectives.

Interestingly enough, Henri Fayol talks about the sacrifice of their personal interest for achieving the objectives of organisation, because their personal interest may be served better only if a common goal of organisation is achieved efficiently.

2. **Unity of command:** According to this principle while directing subordinates, every subordinate should get all orders and instructions regarding the work only from one superior. An application of this principle implies unified direction of subordinates' activities by one superior. In doing so, discipline can be maintained among them their activities can be controlled effectively and dual command is avoided.
3. **Direct supervision:** Directing becomes more effective if it is complemented by the personal touch of the superior. The superior maintains direct contact with subordinates, looks into their needs and requirement, helps them in performing their job and solve their difficulties promptly. The subordinates who are content tend to contribute more for the accomplishment of organisational goals.
4. **Participative leadership:** It is interesting to observe that participative leadership on the part of superior helps in making directing more effective. If the superior respects and listens to the views of subordinates, they become more loyal and sincere and give more cooperation to him. According to this principle to encourage the performance levels, subordinates should be taken into confidence and must be consulted at least on the matters that are related to them before making decision by the superior.
5. **Follow up:** Issuing orders and instructions is the chief task of direction. In order to make directing, more effective it is necessary to take up some follow up actions by the superior. He should motivate subordinates to follow given directives and work accordingly. He must be vigilant when he oversees the working of subordinates, check their performance and guide them to follow suitable course of action for doing the Job.
6. **Unity of direction:** In order to get the entire organisation functional is absolutely quintessential to make the whole process of directing more

meaningful which makes it imperative to follow the principle of unity of direction. According to this principle, there should be one head and one plan for a group of activities, which are similar and have same objective. For example, all activities related to production should have one plan i.e. the production plan and this plan should be implemented under the command of production manager. By adopting this principle, duplication and repetition of activities is curtailed and benefits of specialisation are secured.

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### **Check your progress 1**

1. According to this principle, there should be one head and one plan for a group of activities, which are similar and have same objective. For example, all activities
  - a. Unity of direction.
  - b. Unity of command.
  - c. Direct Supervision.
  - d. Participative Leadership.
2. According to this principle while directing subordinates, every subordinate should get all orders and instructions regarding the work only from one superior.
  - a. Unity of Command.
  - b. Unity of direction.
  - c. Direct Supervision.
  - d. Participative Leadership.

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## **1.3 Supervision**

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The act of supervision entails overseeing and administering the tasks of underlings who may lack full knowledge of the concept at hand. Supervision does not mean control of another but guidance in a work, professional or personal context.

There are several elucidations of the term "supervision," but typically, supervision is the activity carried out by supervisors to manage the productivity and progress of employees who report directly to the supervisors. For example,

first-level supervisors supervise entry-level employees. Depending on the size of the organisation, middle managers supervise first-level supervisors; chief executives supervise middle-managers, etc. Supervision is a management activity and supervisors have a management role in the organisation.

Occasionally, writers will substitute "leadership" and "supervision." Both activities are closely related. Supervision requires leadership. Leadership does not necessarily have to involve supervision.

### 1.3.1 Role of a Supervisor

Supervisor serves as an important role in an organisation. In an organisation, the role of supervisor is to monitor the employees working. The work of supervision is carried out at companies, factories where the supervisor will monitor products. It is found that a supervisor is part of management team which will serve as position of first line managers. First line manager is a person who will work for many functions that will help in meeting the productivity. With this reason, a supervisor is only called as manager that has important role at execution level.

**A supervisor plays multiple roles at one time:**

1. **As a Planner:** A supervisor functions as a planner as he/she has to plan for daily working schedules in an establishment. In planning, he bifurcates and delegates the work among different workers as per their abilities.
2. **As a Manager:** Since supervisor is part of management team, so ultimately to operate the working he was called as operative manager.
3. **As a Guide and Leader:** A supervisor guides the people working under him with necessary plan to be performed daily.
4. **As a Mediator:** A supervisor is a person who will communicate and work in between the management and workers. He serves as a coordinator among management as well as workers.
5. **As an Inspector:** An important function of supervisor is to monitor, standardise rules for workers, time scheduling and carried out performance for workers on daily basis. In the other way it serves as an inspector by inspecting rule, work, and production apart from the progress of workers at an individual and collective level.



6. **As a Counsellor:** A supervisor sometimes plays the role of a counsellor when he/she involves in workers problems. At that time he has to really become a person that can make the worker satisfied with responses.

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### 1.3.2 Functions of a Supervisor

To manage the function related to workers and progress, supervisor plays an important role. Being the part of management team, the supervisor works closely with concerned manager to do various functions involved. The idea behind performance of certain functions is to take care about stability and soundness to an organisation with the idea of achieving profits with more productivity. With this, supervisor concerns with following functions:

1. **Planning and Organising:** Supervisor's plans for day-to-day work and performs schedule for workers by showing and helping them about the nature of work.
2. **Provision of working conditions:** As seen, supervisor serves as an important function by doing physical settings in an organisation by arranging physical resources at correct place.
3. **Leadership and Guidance:** As studied, supervisor is a sort of leaders for workers who handle all workers problems. He persuades workers through target and production scheduling with the aid of instructions and guidelines.
4. **Motivation:** A supervisor is important management personnel that link him with workers to pursue any work and to provide incentives to workers at various levels.
5. **Controlling:** The main aspect of supervisor is to:
  - Takes care about the performance of workers against certain time schedule
  - Ensure and check the work progress
  - Locate for any deflection in making solutions
  - Involved in self-problem solving solution thereby reporting it to top management
6. **Linking Pin:** It is work of supervisor to improvise on solutions over problems that exist among management and workers. The work of communicating and passing of relevant information to workers with the demand of management is the core concept which supervisor handles.

Direction,  
Supervision  
And Controlling  
And  
Coordination

7. **Grievance Handling:** The supervisor can handle the grievances of the workers effectively. For this, he has to do the following things :
  - He must maintain personal one-to- one contact with workers.
  - He should win the confidence of the workers by solving their problems.
  - He should tackle worker problems on humanitarian grounds.
  - If he cannot tackle them independently, he can take the help and advice of the management to solve it.
8. **Reporting:** A supervisor has an important role to report about the cost, quality and any such output, which can be responsible for increasing productivity.
9. **Introducing new work methods:** The supervisor needs to be updated and conscious of all new developments and amendments regarding the production and market trends. This makes it easier for him to inspire his workers. A knowledgeable senior will always command the respect and support of his subordinates. So, the work of supervisor is to invent latest technique which saves production time and involves less workers wastage which could result in:
  - Higher productivity
  - High morale of workers
  - Satisfying working condition
  - Improving human relations
  - Higher profits
  - High stability
10. **Enforcing Discipline:** A supervisor can undertake many steps to maintain discipline in the concern by continuous checking and necessary measures such as strictness in orders and instructions, keeping an account of general discipline of factory, implementing penalties and punishments for the undisciplined workers. All these above steps help in improving the overall discipline of the factory.

### 1.3.3 Effective Supervision

To be a role model one must be performing at optimum even on an individual level, the effectiveness of a supervisor is judged on the basis of how he is contributing to his organisation by his work at an individual level as well. Thus, he and his effectiveness can be measured in terms of his qualities, his supervisory process and the result of his actions. All these are to be related to the contributions to the achievement of organisational objectives. Following are some of the elements of effective supervisory practices:

1. **Leadership:** It is an act influencing activities related to individual or groups so as to attain goals in a particular manner. With this, an individual or group is able to share willingly to achieve goals.
2. **Closeness of Supervision:** It is the degree of closeness where the supervision varies from close-supervision to free-supervision. The quality of good supervisors is to monitor and supervise with less close supervision. It is seen that a close supervision will result in low morale and motivation as it stops the satisfaction as per the strongly feelings of subordinates.
3. **Employee-orientation or Human Relations:** It is studied that both employees and work are taken care with the help of two styles such as employee-oriented and production-oriented. It is seen that in employee oriented style, there exists great stress in interaction of employee's jobs where as in production oriented style, the production and technical aspects depends on jobs and employees.

Thus, effective supervision is employee-oriented which enables and enlightens the minds of subordinates assuring them that their interests are taken into consideration in organisational practices. High producing workers are also of this opinion that they prefer employee-oriented technique because supervisors take personal interest in them, which persuades them to serve better.. In this atmosphere, the various problems being faced by workers can be discussed with the supervisors concerned in order to find out their optimal solution.

4. **Group Cohesiveness:** In this, the belongingness to high-producing group enhances the members' regard for dignity of their own job. The amount of dignity assigned by group members to their own jobs is highly associated with group cohesiveness. An effective supervisor attempts for maintaining group cohesiveness by infusing confidence and trust in employees.

5. **Delegation:** Appropriate delegation leads to higher productivity, in the organisation. Effective supervision implies adequate delegation. A supervisor should not make any decision, which his subordinates can make. This not only develops confidence in the subordinates but also motivates them for better performance, making them independent and in the process saving a superior's time to concentrate for other work.
6. **Other Factors:** It is found that there are certain factors apart from discussed above where supervision serves as an effective trend. In this, the subordinates will feel that the supervisor which can set superiors and satisfy their needs in terms of promotion, recognition and work-centred will get more benefits.

### Check your progress 2

1. A supervisor's multiple roles at one time is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. As a Planner
  - b. As a Guide and Leader
  - c. As a Mediator
  - d. All of the above
2. \_\_\_\_\_ are the elements of effective supervisory practices.
  - a. Closeness of Supervision
  - b. Employee-orientation or Human Relations
  - c. Group Cohesiveness
  - d. All of the above

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## 1.4 Direction and Supervision

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Sometimes, confusion arises between direction and supervision. The basic reason for such confusion is the context in which the term supervision is used. Therefore, two terms- direction and supervision- differ in terms of context and content. The term supervision is used in two ways.

First, it is used as an element of direction and, therefore, every manager in the organisation performs the function of supervision irrespective of his level in

managerial hierarchy. In this context, supervision involves guiding the efforts of others to achieve the stated objectives.

For example, Terry and Franklin have defined supervision as, “guiding and directing efforts of employees and other resources to accomplish stated work outputs.” Thus, the scope of supervision is much more limited as compared to that of direction, which includes motivating and leading employees and communicating with them, besides guiding them.

Second, the term supervision is used to denote the functions performed by supervisors- a class of personnel between management and operatives. When supervision is used in this context, it includes all supervisory functions, which include planning organising, staffing, directing and controlling with varying emphasis on different functions. In this context, Newman and Warren have defined supervision as the day-to-day relationship between an executive and his immediate assistant and covers training, direction, motivation, Co-ordination, maintenance of discipline, etc.

Thus, it becomes much wider than directing particularly at supervisory level.

### Check your progress 3

1. Which among the following explained supervision as, guiding and directing efforts of employees with several different resources to complete stated work outputs?
  - a. Terry and Franklin.
  - b. Peter.F.Drucker.
  - c. George.R.Terry.
  - d. None of the above
2. \_\_\_\_\_ defined supervision as daily interaction among executive and immediate assistant in terms of training, direction, motivation, Co-ordination, maintenance of discipline.
  - a. Newman and Warren.
  - b. George.R.Terry.
  - c. Peter.F.Drucker.
  - d. Terry and Franklin

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## 1.5 Let Us Sum Up

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In this unit we have learnt that directing serves as managerial function that is mainly related with influencing, guiding, supervising and inspiring of subordinates in a will planned manner.

It is studied that the process of directing will cover issuing of orders and instructions along with guidance, counselling, adequate knowledge to subordinates, work supervision and thereby maintaining and inspiring subordinates.

It is found that there are several important principles of directing which will include harmony of objective, unity of command, direct supervision, participative leadership, follow up and unity of direction.

The broad meaning of supervision is the style of watching over the work or tasks of another who lacks in knowledge of concept at hand. It does not effect on the control of another but will able to guide in work, professional or personal.

The scope of supervision is limited to that of direction having motivating and leading employees along with communication among them inspite of giving guidance to them.

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## 1.6 Answers for Check Your Progress

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**Check your progress 1**

**Answers:** (1-a), (2-a)

**Check your progress 2**

**Answers:** (1-d), (2-d)

**Check your progress 2**

**Answers:** (1-a), (2-a)

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## 1.7 Glossary

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1. **SWOT analysis** – Analysis is intended to match the firm's strengths and weaknesses with the opportunities and threats posed by the environment.

2. **Organisation chart** - A graphic representation of organisational structure.
3. **Planning** - It is the process of deciding in advance what is to be done, when and where it is to be done, how it is to be done and by whom.
4. **Managers** - They are the individuals charged with monitoring the workflow, integrating efforts, meeting goals and providing leadership.
5. **Mission** - The organisation's purpose or fundamental reason for existence of work in order to improve worker efficiency.

Direction and  
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## 1.8 Assignment

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Discuss the role of supervisor in making the company production double. What steps are taken by him to do so?

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## 1.9 Activities

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What do you understand by Supervision? How is it different from Direction?

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## 1.10 Case Study

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Based on your observations at workplace or at any organisation, explain the difference between Direction and Supervision in your own words.

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## 1.11 Further Readings

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1. Principles of Management, B.S. Moshal, Galgotia Publications.
2. Management Text and Cases, VSP Rao and V. Hari Krishna, published by Anurag Jain for Excel books.
3. Principles of Management, Edition 2, P. C. Tripathi and P. N. Reddy, Tata McGraw Hill Publishing Company.
4. Essentials of Management, Harold Koontz and Heinz Weihrich, Tata McGraw Hill.