

DIRECTING

The process of instructing, guiding, counselling, motivating, and leading people in an organisation to achieve the organisational goals is known as **Directing**.

Directing not only includes order and instructions by a superior to the subordinates but also includes guiding and inspiring them. It encompassed many elements like motivation, leadership, supervision, besides communication. It is a managerial function which is performed throughout the life of an organisation.

In the words of Ernest Dale, "Direction is telling people what to do and seeing that they do it to the best of their ability".

In the words of Theo Haimann, "Directing consists of the process and techniques utilised in issuing instructions and making certain that operations are carried on as originally planned".

After planning, organising the structure of the organisation and arranging the necessary human force, the next important step is directing. Directing aims to ensure that activities of all the employees are mobilised towards the organisational goals. It is the connecting link between the functions of management, i.e., planning, organising, staffing and controlling.

Features or Characteristics of Directing

The characteristics of Directing are as follows:

- **Directing initiates action:** The other functions of management, i.e., planning, organising, staffing, etc., create conditions for managers to take appropriate actions, whereas directing function initiates actions in an organisation. It converts plans into action. It is the key managerial function performed by the managers.
- **Directing is pervasive:** It is pervasive as it takes place at every level of management. It takes place wherever superior-subordinate relations exist. Every manager has a subordinate who works under him and is responsible for getting things done.

- **Directing is a continuous process:** Directing is an ongoing activity. It takes place throughout the life of an organisation, irrespective of the people in the organisation. Managers give orders to their subordinates, motivate them, and guide them on a continuous basis.
- **Directing flows from top to bottom:** It flows from top to bottom through the organisational hierarchy. In directing, every manager directs his subordinates and takes instructions from his immediate boss. It is a function of a superior, i.e., the superior motivates, guides, and supervises his subordinates to achieve the organisational goals.
- **Directing deals with people:** It is concerned with the direction of human efforts towards organisational goals. It can be said that directing is a delicate function, as it deals with people, and human behaviour is complex and highly unpredictable.

Importance of Directing

The importance of directing are as follows:

- **Directing Initiates action:** Directing sets an organisation into motion, and helps other managerial functions to initiate and activate. It helps the managers to supervise, communicate, lead, guide and motivate the subordinates to achieve the organisational goals. For example, a superior guides his subordinates and explains the task, which will help the subordinates to start the work and achieve the goal.
- **Directing leads to integrated group activity:** The organisational objectives can be achieved only when individual efforts are integrated. Directing integrates employees' efforts in such a way that every individual effort contributes to organisational performance. For example, a leader can convince his subordinates that group efforts will help to achieve organisational goals.
- **Directing attempts to get maximum out of individuals:** Directing helps superiors to realise the potential and identify the capabilities of individuals by motivating and guiding them. By using the elements of directing, i.e., supervision, motivation, leadership, and communication, the efficiency of employees can be raised.

- **Directing helps to implement changes:** Directing helps to introduce changes in an organisation. Generally, people in an organisation resist changes. Effective communication, supervision, motivation and guidance help to overcome such resistance at the workplace. For example, the introduction of a new method of doing a particular task in a factory is resisted by workers, but when managers explain the purpose, guide and provide them training and rewards, it can be easily accepted by the workers.
- **Directing provides stability and balance in the organisation:** Stability and balance are maintained in an organisation with the help of directing because it fosters cooperation and commitment amongst employees, and helps to achieve balance amongst various groups, departments, units, etc. For example, every individual has personal goals, but the managers integrate the efforts of all the individuals towards the achievement of organisational goals through guidance, motivation, supervision and communication.

Principles of Directing

Effective directing is an art, that a superior can learn through practice. However, managers or superiors can follow some principles while directing

- **Maximum Individual Contribution:** This principle says that the directing function should create self-confidence amongst the subordinates and motivate them so that they give their best to the organisation. Objectives of an organisation are achieved at the optimum level only when every individual in the organisation makes a maximum contribution. Therefore managers should try to elicit the maximum possible contribution from each subordinate. It is the duty of the managers to explore and find out the hidden talents of the subordinates. For example, timely rewarding the workers can motivate them to contribute maximum towards the organisation's goals
- **Harmony of Objectives:** This principle says that management should harmonise the individuals' objectives with organisational objectives. Every individual joins the organisation to satisfy their needs both their physiological and psychological needs. They are expected to work for

the achievement of organisational goals. They will perform their tasks better if they feel that it will satisfy their personal goals too. Therefore managers should harmonise or reconcile the personal goals of employees with the organisational goals.

- **Unity of Command:** According to this principle, each subordinate should receive orders and instructions from one superior only. If a subordinate is made accountable to two bosses simultaneously, there will be confusion, conflict, disorder and indiscipline in the organisation. Therefore, every subordinate should report to one manager only.
- **Appropriateness of Direction Techniques:** According to this the manager should use correct direction techniques to ensure the efficiency of direction. The techniques used should be suitable for subordinates, organisation and the situation. Goals can be accomplished only when an efficient direction is given.
- **Managerial Communication:** According to this, there should be a systematic flow of [communication](#) between the superiors and subordinates to achieve the goals of the organisation. A good system of communication between the superior and subordinates helps to achieve mutual understanding. Upward communication, i.e., taking feedback from the subordinates helps a manager to understand the subordinates and allows the subordinates to express their feelings. So proper feedback is needed from the subordinates.
- **Strategic Use of [Informal Organisation](#):** Management should try to identify, understand and use informal groups to strengthen formal and official relationships to improve the effectiveness of direction.
- **Effective Leadership:** According to this principle, managers should exercise good [leadership](#) while directing the subordinates. They should act as leaders so that they can influence the activities of subordinates to achieve the goals of the organisation. As leaders, they should guide and council subordinates in their personal problems too to win the confidence and trust of their subordinates.
- **Direct Supervision:** Direction becomes more effective when there is a direct personal contact between the superior and his subordinates. Morale

and commitment of employees are improved through direct contact. Therefore, direct supervision should be used wherever possible.

- **Principle of Follow through:** After issuing orders and instructions, the subordinates must be monitored. A manager should find out whether the subordinates are working properly and the problems they are facing regularly because directing is a continuous process. He should act accordingly after following through with the activities of the subordinates.

CONTROLLING

Every organisation aims at achieving some goals from its business activities and it is essential to ensure whether or not the firm is performing activities according to the pre-determined goals. The controlling function of management helps an organisation in ensuring the same. Hence, **Controlling** means comparing the actual performance of an organisation with the planned performance and taking corrective actions if the actual performance does not match the planned performance. Controlling cannot prevent the deviation in actual and planned performance; however, it can minimise the deviations by taking corrective actions and decisions that can reduce their recurrence.

Definitions of Controlling:

- "Managerial Control implies the measurement of accomplishment against the standard and the correction of deviations to assure attainment of objectives according to plans." - **Koontz and O' Donnell**
- "Control is the process of bringing about conformity of performance with planned action." - **Dale Henning**

Nature of Controlling

1. Controlling is a **goal-oriented** function of management. It aims at ensuring that the resources of the organisation are used effectively and efficiently for the achievement of pre-determined organisational goals.

2. Controlling is a **continuous** process. It means that once the actual performance and standard performance of a business are compared and

corrective actions are taken, the controlling process does not end. Instead, the firms have to continuously review the performance and revise the standards.

3. Controlling is **all-pervasive**. It means that the controlling function is exercised by the firms at all levels of management. The extent of control and nature of the function may vary at every level. Also, a [controlling process](#) is required in both non-business and business organisations.

4. Controlling process is both a **forward-looking** and **backward-looking** function. As a forward-looking function, it aims at improving the future performance of an organisation on the basis of its past experiences. However, as a backward-looking function, it measures and compares the actual performance and planned performance (fixed in past) of the organisation.

Importance of Controlling

Controlling function is important for every organisation due to the following reasons:

1. Accomplishing Organisational Goals

Controlling is a goal-oriented process as it aims at determining whether the pre-determined plans are being performed accordingly and whether required progress is made towards the achievement of the objectives. With the help of controlling, an organisation can keep the business activities on the right track and can achieve the organisational goals effectively and efficiently, and take the necessary corrective actions if required.

2. Judging Accuracy of Standards

An effective controlling process can help an organisation in verifying whether or not the firm has set the standards accurate. It also helps in keeping a check on the changes taking place in the [business environment](#) and making required changes in the standards whenever it is necessary.

3. Making Efficient Use of Resources

Controlling helps an organisation in reducing wastage of resources, as it aims at ensuring that every activity of the firm is performed according to the pre-determined goals.

4. Improving Employee Motivation

As controlling process includes comparing the pre-determined goals of an organisation with its actual performance, it properly communicates the role of employees in advance. It means that the employees know in advance on what standards their performance will be measured, compared, and appraised. This set of pre-determined goals motivates them to give a better performance.

5. Ensuring Order and Discipline

An efficient control system in an organisation can help its managers in creating an atmosphere of discipline and order in the firm. Besides, controlling also helps in keeping a continuous check on the employees so they can minimise undesirable activities, such as theft, corruption, fraud, etc.

6. Facilitating Coordination in Action

Controlling process also helps an organisation in facilitating coordination between different divisions and departments by providing the employees with unity of direction. In other words, every employee and department of the organisation is governed by a pre-determined set of goals. It also motivates employees in achieving these common goals through [coordination](#) to avoid duplication of efforts.

Features of a Good Control System

1. **Suitable:** *A good control system should be suitable for the needs and nature of the organisation.*
2. **Simple:** *A good controlling system should be easy to operate and understand.*
3. **Economical:** *The cost of setting, implementing, and maintaining a control system should not be more than the benefits gained from it.*
4. **Flexible:** *A good control system should have the ability to adjust according to the changing business environment and internal conditions.*
5. **Forward Looking:** *A good control system should move in a forward direction so that the managers can easily determine the deviations before they actually happen in the organisation.*
6. **Objective:** *The standards of the organisation, its measurement of performance, and corrective actions should be impersonal and objective.*

7. **Management by exception:** A good control system should focus its attention on the significant deviations which are crucial for the organisation, instead of looking for the deviation which does not have much impact on the business.

Limitations of Controlling

1. Difficulty in Setting Quantitative Standards

When an organisation cannot define its standards in quantitative terms, the controlling system becomes less effective. **For example**, it is difficult to measure the human behaviour of employees in quantitative terms, which makes it difficult for the firm to measure their performance from the standards.

2. Little Control on External Factors

The controlling system of an organisation can effectively control the internal factors; however, it is not easy to control the external factors of an organisation. **For example**, a firm can check and control any change in its production (internal factor), but cannot keep a check on the changing technological advancement, government policies, etc. (external factors).

3. Resistance from employees

The effectiveness of the controlling system highly depends on whether or not the employees have accepted the process. It means that if the employees think of the control system as a restriction on their freedom, they will resist the system. **For example**, the employees of an organisation might object when they are kept under various restrictions making them feel their freedom is being taken.

4. Costly Affair

Controlling is an expensive process, which means that every employee's performance has to be measured and reported to the higher authorities, which requires a lot of costs, time, and effort. Because of this reason, it becomes difficult for small business firms to afford such an expensive system. Besides, a controlling system is effective only when the benefits gained from it exceed the expenses made on them.