

Case Study: A day in the life of a bank manager

It is 7:15 a.m. in California, and Monika, a 32-year-old bank manager and mother of two, is driving downought up in day-to-day problems. She usually arrives at the branch of Security Pacific National Bank by 8 a.m. To help plan her typical hectic day, Monika already has a three-page list of things to do that she prepared last night.

The deregulation of banks has increased competition and made it much more necessary for bank managers to be proactive in attracting new business. As a result, Monika's number one priority is customer service, keeping the current customer satisfied and attracting new customers. To bring in new customers, she tries to make visits each day to potential business clients. Unless she finds the time for such visits, she is unlikely to meet her goal of expanding the branch's business-customer base. She has already scheduled several appointments for this afternoon. One visit will be to a Chinese restaurant whose proprietor is interested in taking consultancy services from Security Pacific National Bank regarding investment and industry.

Near the top of her list is a new-customer campaign that has most recently been aimed at Certified Public Accountants. She has already sent letters to local CPAs, trying to interest them in a special type of account that lets the account holder write himself or herself a loan as needed. Now, as she fights the traffic moving toward the heart of Silicon Valley, Monika is thinking about follow-up phone calls.

Monika is also thinking about a personnel problem. One of her assistant managers, Yashika, was recently promoted to a better job at a larger branch. While she is happy for Yashika, the promotion has left her branch with only one assistant manager instead of the usual two.

The situation makes Monika's job much more difficult because she must absorb some of the extra workload. Hopefully, she will have a replacement soon. As Monika arrives at the office, she is quickly immersed in several activities. First, she reviews her circulation file. The file contains new procedures she is to initiate at the branch, as well as information about new promotions (such as discounts on travelers' check or incentives to open checking accounts) that must be implemented immediately.

Next, she reviews reports from the previous day's activities. One report shows rejected debits, indicating insufficient funds. On the basis of a customer's account history, Monika must decide whether to cover a check or let it bounce—a task that would usually be handled by an assistant manager if the branch were not short-handed because of Yashika's promotion. The remaining assistant manager is busy coordinating the counting of cash deposits from the night depository. Since this is a Monday, a large number of deposits were made by business owners over the weekend. As a result, Mondays are especially busy. On other days,

Monika holds staff meetings at 9 a.m.. often to review the bank's various products, such as the seven types of checking accounts that staff members must be able to explain to customers.

At 10 a.m. the branch opens, and customers begin pouring in. During the peak time in the middle of the day, Monika becomes what she calls a "utility player," pitching in wherever needed. She might review loan applications, talk with customers, or handle special problems such as the breakdown of an automated teller machine. If customer lines get particularly long, she works at a teller window. She must also sometimes deal with irate customers, who may be upset because lines are long or a mistake has been made.

Still, as much as possible, she likes to leave the operations of the branch to her assistant managers. Otherwise, she might easily get caught up in day-to-day problems and lose sight of her main task-getting more customers for the bank. An added pressure is the fact that the teller lines close at 3 p.m. each day. All paper records of the day's transactions must be ready to be picked up by courier at 3:30 for transfer to the regional office.

Monika likes working with her staff. She says when people do well, "that's not only a reflection of their achievement but a reflection of my achievement as well." Conversely, she states that when an employee does not do well, "you feel like you're failing, too." She explains, "This year we've had to let go of two or three people. That's not easy, especially when you know they're good, they are trying their best, but they just weren't careful enough."

Questions-

- 1 To what extent does Monika's day coincide with the managerial work methods identified by Mintzberg? What roles are evident in her activities?
2. Identify the Planning, organizing, leading and controlling function performed by Monika
3. What work agendas does she seem to have? How do technical, human, and conceptual skills come into play in her job?
4. Compare the functions of management with the managerial roles.